

ETERNAL MONDAY

an original screenplay by

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EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Under a corner streetlamp, a black cat sits in the spill of light as it leisurely flicks its tail back and forth.

The feline's ears perk up, and it jerks its head around to peer down the street.

Headlights from an approaching car illuminate the animal.

The cat scampers across a lush, well-kept lawn and sits on a welcome mat on a porch of one of many cookie-cutter houses. Its head follows a cop car drive past as it makes its rounds.

A mobile phone RINGS.

The cat jerks its head around toward—

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The mobile phone RINGS again.

A baby CRIES.

A man SNORTS in his sleep and then CURSES.

A lamp flickers on a bedside table.

NICK ROGERS, 30s, in boxer shorts and a t-shirt, lunges for his iPhone and knocks it on the floor. He CURSES again and reaches for it, BANGING his head against the nightstand.

CATHERINE ROGERS, 30s, GROANS as she rolls over in bed and pulls Nick's pillow over her head.

Nick swings his legs to the floor and sits up as he answers the phone and puts it to his ear.

NICK
(into iPhone)
Hello! Hello?

MOM (V.O.)
Hello, honey. Did I wake you?

NICK
Mom, I've told you we're three hours
ahead of you. It's after one.

MOM (V.O.)
Oh, I'm sorry. I always forget about
the time difference. I'll call you
in the morning.

NICK
It's okay ... I'm up now.

Nick stand and walks into—

IN HALLWAY

MOM (V.O.)
How are you, Catherine, and the boys?

NICK
(rubbing face)
We're fine. What's the matter, Mom?

BILLY, 5, pads out of his bedroom, rubbing his eyes.

MOM (V.O.)
Well ... I don't know how to say
this, sweetheart, but ...

BILLY
Daddy, I want a drink of water ...

NICK
(to Billy)
Just a minute, buddy.
(into iPhone)
Mom, spit it out. The last time you
called in the middle of the night—

MOM (V.O.)
Cody Peterson is dead.

Nick stiffens. He picks up Billy and squeezes him.

NICK
What...? Um, how?

MOM (V.O.)
Heart attack.

NICK
But he's only—

MOM (V.O.)
Thirty-five—same age as you.

Billy tugs on Nick's t-shirt and WHINES.

Nick carries Billy into—

IN KITCHEN

Nick flips on the light.

NICK
Was Cody sick or something?

MOM (V.O.)
No, he went to the gym, ate healthy,
and the doctor said he was as fit as
a fiddle at his last physical.

Nick catches the reflection of his slight paunch in the window
as he sets Billy on the counter. He sucks in his gut before
filling a plastic cup with water and giving it to Billy.

NICK
So, what do they think caused it?

MOM (V.O.)
Margie thinks it was stress. He had
a very stressful job.

NICK
(leaning against
counter)
Cody sold promotional golf tees.
How stressful can that be?

MOM (V.O.)
I guess golfers are demanding. Anyway,
I'll let you know about the funeral
arrangements once I hear from Margie.

NICK
I appreciate that.

MOM (V.O.)
Are you okay?

Nick rubs the bags under his eyes as he stares at his
reflection in the window.

MOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Nick?

NICK
I haven't seen or talked to Cody in
fifteen years.

MOM (V.O.)
(sighing)
That happens when you grow up.

Catherine appears, bouncing, HUNTER, 1, on her hip.

NICK
Thanks for calling, Mom.

MOM (V.O.)
All right, sweetie. Love you!

NICK
Love you, too.

Nick lowers his iPhone and stares into space.

CATHERINE
What was that about?

Billy holds out the empty plastic cup.

Without looking, Nick takes the cup and sets it in the sink.

NICK
Cody Peterson died.

CATHERINE
Who?

NICK
My best friend, growing up.

CATHERINE
(rolling her eyes)
It couldn't have waited until morning?

NICK
We were close when we were kids.

Hunter WHIMPERS.

Catherine puts him against her shoulder and rubs his back.

CATHERINE
How come you've never mentioned him?

NICK
(shrugging)
Mom and I moved after Dad died, and
Cody and I went to different schools.

Nick turns toward the window over the sink.

CATHERINE
(squeezing his shoulder)
I'm sorry, Nick.

Without turning around, he sets his hand on hers.

NICK
Thanks, babe.

CATHERINE
(picking up Billy)
I'm putting these two back to bed.

As Catherine leaves with the boys, she switches off the light.

Nick sees the black cat cutting across the backyard.

As if it can feel Nick's gaze, the feline stops and stares in Nick's direction.

Nick steps back from the sink, spooked.

An alarm clock RINGS.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH - MORNING

Nick yawns as he grabs the newspaper. He gazes at the skyline of a large metropolitan city across the river, hazy in the distance like a fairytale kingdom.

Nick yawns again as he scratches himself. He turns to go inside when he notices a half-chewed dog bone behind a bush.

Crouching, Nick picks up the bone and studies it. Emotion wells up in his face, but he swallows the feeling.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Hunter CRIES in a highchair.

Catherine, still in her sleep t-shirt and hair askew, CHATTERS into her iPhone as she packs a sack lunch and busies herself.

Billy HUMS as he plays with action figures while eating cereal.

Nick drops the bone in the garbage, staring at it a moment.

Nick pours himself a cup of coffee. He adds sugar and cream and closes his swollen, blood-shot eyes as he stirs.

FLASHBACK - EXT. COUNTRY - DAY

A YOUNG CODY runs down a kudzu-lined dirt road. He stops and turns around, his smooth face bathed in a glow from the soft, morning light, and motions for someone to follow him.

A YOUNG NICK runs up to him, grabbing the baseball cap from Cody's head, and runs past him.

Cody GIGGLES and takes off in hot pursuit.

END OF FLASHBACK

Cereal and milk splash onto Nick.

NICK
Goddammit, Billy! What have I told
you about playing at the table?

Billy WHIMPERS and begins to CRY as Nick cleans up the mess.

Hunter SCREAMS.

NICK (CONT'D)
Cath! Would you get off the goddamned
phone for a minute and help me?

Catherine narrows her eyes at Nick.

CATHERINE
(into iPhone)
I'll have to call you back. Nick
just switched into asshole mode.

NICK
I hate it when you say shit like
that to your friends.

CATHERINE
What can I help you with?

NICK
Can you make Hunter stop crying?

CATHERINE
He wants you to pick him up.

Nick scans the kitchen, the noise and suppressed emotion
overwhelming him.

NICK
I can't deal with this!

Nick starts to walk out.

Catherine picks up Hunter and comforts him.

CATHERINE
I've told you Hunter wants more of
your attention. I thought you, of
all people, would understand that.

Nick flinches and walks out.

IN BATHROOM - LATER

Nick furiously masturbates in the shower, climaxes, and then
rests his forehead against the shower tile. He GROWLS and
bangs his fists against the narrow confines of the shower.

EXT. LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT TRACK - DAY

A commuter train clatters over a bay bridge toward the city.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Shoulder to shoulder with the other passengers, Nick holds onto a hand strap with one hand while scrolling through emails on his iPhone with the other.

The train stops and the doors open. Although the car is already packed, more passengers board and push Nick into the corner of the train.

Nick stands taller to breathe easier. He shuts his eyes and leans his head back against the wall, inhaling deeply.

FLASH BACK - EXT. WOODS - DAY

Sunlight filters through a moss-green canopy of leaves as the boys GIGGLE and SQUEAL.

Young Cody and Young Nick doff their t-shirts and toss them behind them as they run through the tall grass of a verdant field with a cloudless, blue sky stretching above them as far as the eye can see.

They hurl themselves to the ground. Young Nick lays his head on Young Cody, his body perpendicular to his friend's.

Young Cody picks two blades of grass and gives one to Young Nick. They put the blades of grass in their mouths.

Young Nick's eyelids grow heavy and begin to flutter.

END OF FLASHBACK

The train lurches to a stop.

The doors open, and the passengers disembark.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Nick ascends the subway steps to a CACOPHONY of traffic and construction. He presses the button on the traffic light to cross the intersection. He yawns and rubs his eyes.

FLASHBACK - EXT. WOODS - DAY

Young Cody sticks out his tongue at Young Nick, which is stained deep purple.

Young Nick LAUGHS.

Young Cody gazes at Young Nick. He plucks a blackberry from a bush and offers it to Young Nick, who opens his mouth and accepts the blackberry from Young Cody.

Young Nick chews it slowly and swallows, before smiling.

Young Cody grins back at Young Nick.

A truck HONKS.

END OF FLASHBACK

Nick shakes his head to clear it. He's carried along with a tide of pedestrians toward a large office building with a massive, navy-blue sign that reads: THE UTOPIAN COMPANY.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

A mob of office workers push into the car and press Nick against the back of the elevator. He looks up at the top of the car and SIGHS.

FLASHBACK - EXT. DILAPIDATED SHED - DAY

Young Cody and Young Nick lean against the back of the shed with their shorts pulled down and furiously masturbate. They steal glimpses of each other in their complicity as their hands move up and down rapidly.

The boys climax and let the orgasm wash over them.

Guilt overcomes Young Nick. He starts to move away, but Young Cody puts his arm around Young Nick and pulls him close.

The boys SIGH.

Someone SNEEZES.

END OF FLASHBACK

Startled, Nick bumps against the people around him who GRUMBLE.

The elevator door opens and a STRANGER in stylish and timeless clothes steps off the car. He SNEEZES again. No one reacts.

NICK

Bless you.

The stranger turns and stares at Nick as if he just noticed him for the first time while the elevator doors close.

The other people in the elevator regard Nick in confusion and turn around again and look ahead at the closed doors.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Nick maneuvers through a beehive of gray cubicles with navy-blue accents, while office workers push past him in both directions. Nick finally arrives at his desk near the center.

Seeing the angry, red blinking light on his desk phone, Nick takes the brown sack lunch from his messenger bag and tosses it into a desk drawer.

Plopping down into an office chair, it SQUEAKS and almost tips over. He adjusts it while he opens his email program on his desktop. Hundreds of messages appear in his inbox.

A LOW BUZZ from the hundreds of other office workers builds and ebbs as the hands of the clock fast forward under a large navy-blue plaque that reads: THE UTOPIAN COMPANY - WE'RE IN THE COMFORT BUSINESS.

Nick's phone RINGS. He answers it.

NICK
(into phone)
The Utopian Company, Nick speaking.

CUSTOMER (V.O.)
Nick? I was trying to reach Tom
Hayworth!

NICK
Oh, he must be away from his desk.
May I put you on hold?

Nick stands and cranes around toward an empty cubicle decorated with college football paraphernalia. He scans the office and spies TOM, a younger man, chatting up a FEMALE COWORKER at large copy/fax/printer/scanner.

Nick SWEARS under his breath.

NICK (CONT'D)
Thank you for waiting. Tom is in a
meeting. I'm happy to help you.
What's your account number?

IN CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Nick sits in a meeting with his team. He yawns and drinks coffee, refocusing his attention on the PRESENTER.

Nick yawns and notices a FEMALE COLLEAGUE to his right taking notes on a pad is actually writing I AM SO FUCKING BORED over and over. He suppresses a chuckle.

To his left, Tom swipes his way through nude photos of women in a hookup app on his smartphone. All the women in the various profile seem to look identical: blond hair, big breasts, and a vacant expression.

Nick rolls his eyes. He yawns and reaches for his coffee.

EXT. ROOFTOP - AFTERNOON

Nick exits the building with his sack lunch and a can of soda. He stretches in the warmth of the sun. Shading his eyes with a hand, he glances at his watch.

INSERT - Watch face showing approximately three o'clock.

Nick's eyes adjust to the bright sunlight and he notices the stranger in the corner of the roof, staring in the distance as he smokes a cigarette.

Nick hesitates and then approaches the stranger.

NICK
(clearing his throat)
You shouldn't smoke.

The stranger looks over his shoulder at Nick.

NICK (CONT'D)
It'll kill you.

The man grins and turns around to face Nick.

STRANGER
I appreciate your concern, but I can assure you smoking won't kill me.

NICK
How can you be sure?

The man inhales and studies Nick before exhaling.

STRANGER
Trust me, I just know.

NICK
Sorry, it's just my dad smoked two packs a day when I was kid, and ...

The stranger drops the cigarette and rubs it out with his shoe.

STRANGER
You're the guy who blessed me in the elevator, aren't you?

NICK
I kind of sound like the Pope, huh?

STRANGER
That's who started it, actually.

NICK
Pardon?

STRANGER
The tradition started during the plague. People would cough and sneeze before they got sick and died, so the Pope suggested one say, "God bless you."

NICK
Huh ...

STRANGER
(leaning against the railing)
You work for The Utopian Company, don't you?

NICK
Most everybody in the building does.

STRANGER
What does The Utopian Company do, anyway?

NICK
We're in the comfort business.

STRANGER
What does that even mean?

NICK
(chuckling)
I've worked here for almost fifteen years, and I don't really know. We make the intangible tangible, I guess.

STRANGER
Sounds like you're comfortable, then.

Nick frowns and shifts his weight between his feet.

NICK
Who do you work for?

STRANGER
I work for myself.
(MORE)

STRANGER (CONT'D)
I'm a photographer and retouching
expert. I guess I'm in the business
of illusion.

NICK
Which is worse? Being comfortable?

STRANGER
Or an illusion?

NICK
Yeah.

STRANGER
Probably being comfortable. When
you're comfortable, you do nothing
because it's all an illusion—you
have no idea anything is wrong.

The stranger stretches.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
I better get back.
(sardonically)
Better not let your lunch get cold.

NICK
(remembering sack
lunch)
Yeah, pretty lame, isn't it?

STRANGER
Not at all, it shows someone cares
about you.

The man takes a few steps and turns around.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
By the way, thank you for your
blessing. It's nice to be noticed.

NICK
Don't mention it.

Nick watches the stranger walk back into the building. He
takes out his sandwich and gazes at it. He unwraps it and
takes a bite, chewing slowly. Nick SIGHS. He tosses it in
the garbage can and enters the building.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Nick wanders into the breakroom and purchases a candy bar
from the vending machine. He tears off the end of the wrapper
and takes a bite and chews.

Nick sees MYRTLE, 43, a frazzled, female coworker, frantically printing and collating packets of documents on a mammoth copy/fax/printer/scanner.

NICK
How's it going, Myrtle?

Myrtle GRUNTS without glancing up from her task.

NICK (CONT'D)
We started working here about the same time, didn't we?

MYRTLE
God, that was more than forty-eight hours ago! How would I remember?

Myrtle attempts to smooth her hair down in vain.

MYRTLE (CONT'D)
Wait a minute, we were in the same orientation class, weren't we?

NICK
Yeah. You made fun of the trainer when she had her back turned.

MYRTLE
That's right ... She quit before the end of the year.

NICK
I never thought either one of us would be here this long. Do you think we've gotten comfortable?

MYRTLE
(turning to Nick)
Do I look comfortable?

NICK
Never mind.

Nick pops the last of the candy bar into his mouth and tosses the wrapper into the garbage can.

MYRTLE
For the record, Nick, I haven't grown comfortable. I just haven't gotten uncomfortable enough to leave.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Nick leans on his desk as he listens to a conference call drone on while writing I AM SO FUCKING BORED over and over on

a notepad. He stops and stares at it before writing I AM SO FUCKING COMFORTABLE, and then studies it.

His iPhone RINGS.

Nick picks it up and peers at the screen. He sets the receiver of his desk phone on his desk and answers his iPhone.

NICK
Hi, Mom.... Uh-huh ... Uh-huh ...
(writing on his notepad)
Yeah ... I don't know. I'll need to
talk to my boss and Catherine....
All right ... Okay. Love you, too.
Bye.

Picking up the receiver of his desk phone, Nick glances over his shoulder at MIKE, 40, similar to himself, sitting at his desk and on the phone in a glassed-in office.

IN MIKE'S OFFICE - LATER

Mike hangs up the phone as Nick KNOCKS on the doorframe.

MIKE
Nick! How are you, bud?

NICK
Good. Um, you got a minute?

MIKE
Yeah, come in and close the door. I
need to talk to you, too.

Nick hesitates and then closes the door. He takes a seat.

MIKE (CONT'D)
What's up?

NICK
Well, a friend of mine died and—

MIKE
I'm sorry, Nick. My condolences.

NICK
Thanks. Anyway, I'm considering
flying home for the funeral and—

MIKE
You know bereavement leave is only
for immediate family, right?

NICK
Yes, I understand that.

MIKE

And aunts, uncles, and cousins don't count as immediate family, just—

NICK

Right, got it.

(beat)

The service is on Thursday, so I would fly out Wednesday after work, but I might need Friday off, too.

MIKE

Sure, just send me a time-off request, and I'll approve it.

NICK

Thanks. I'll talk to Catherine tonight and let you know tomorrow. What did you want to talk to me about?

MIKE

About the director position ...

NICK

(beat)

Jesus, I don't believe this!

MIKE

Nick—

NICK

I've received top marks on my annual reviews and have the most seniority in our department.

MIKE

(sighing)

Leadership wants to go in a different direction.

NICK

You gave it to Tom, didn't you?

MIKE

(casting eyes downward)

Like I said, leadership wants—

NICK

I've got a decade worth of experience over Tom. He's never even at his goddamned desk.

MIKE

It's out of my hands—

NICK
And I'm tired of constantly picking
up his slack.

MIKE
Watch it, bro, you're on thin ice!

Nick and Mike hold eye contact before Nick looks away.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I need team players. You can be a
team player, can't you, Nick?

NICK
(beat)
Yeah. I'm a team player.

MIKE
That's my man. You can leave the
door open on your way out.

Nick rises and stops with his hand on the doorknob.

NICK
You doing okay with the divorce?

MIKE
Yeah, it should be final at the end
of the month.

NICK
How do you like your new place?

MIKE
It's comfortable and close to the
office. I love being a bachelor
again.

NICK
Yeah, Tom was telling the team about
the new strip club you two checked
out. He said you really enjoyed
that lap dance he bought you.

Mike stares at Nick and swallows.

NICK (CONT'D)
Tom can be a real team playa, huh?

Mike watches Nick walk past his desk to the elevators.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Nick storms out to the sidewalk and pauses. He glances in both directions and rakes his fingers through his hair before stomping down the street.

Nick covers several blocks when he sees and enters—

INT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - CONTINUOUS

The saloon is typical of any local neighborhood watering hole. It's empty except for the BARTENDER, 50s, a big lug of a guy with a face that's seen its share of fights and a warm smile.

Nick takes a seat on a stool at the bar.

BARTENDER
(laying a cocktail
napkin on the bar)
What'll you have?

NICK
Jack and Coke.

Nick notices the napkin.

INSERT - A napkin with an illustration of a broken clock and the text: IT'S ALWAYS HAPPY HOUR SOMEWHERE

The bartender sets an old-fashioned glass on the napkin.

Nick raises the glass and throws half of its contents back. He leans on his elbows and rubs his temples.

STRANGER (O.S.)
Looks like you could use a blessing.

Nick turns around and sees the Stranger smiling at him.

NICK
What are you doing here?

STRANGER
I usually stop by on my way home.
(offering his hand)
I'm Jay, by the way. I should have
introduced myself earlier

NICK
(shaking his hand)
Nick. I could've done the same.

JAY
Utopian folks usually keep late hours.

NICK
I left early.

JAY
Got thirsty, huh?

Nick sips his Jack and Coke.

NICK
I was up for a promotion and ...

JAY
(sitting beside Nick)
Sorry to hear that.

NICK
(shrugging)
I used to think working hard paid
off; turns out you buy the boss a
lap dance to get a promotion. Now I
have to report to this younger prick.

JAY
Life isn't fair. Believe me, I know.

NICK
You're right about what you said
earlier: I am comfortable.

JAY
I didn't mean—

NICK
You were right, though. I've been
asleep for the past few years because
I didn't want to see the truth.

JAY
Which is...?

Nick finishes his drink and motions to the bartender for
another.

NICK
I'm a pussy.

JAY
Afraid, you mean?

NICK
Afraid of not being good enough,
smart enough, young enough—

JAY
You're not old.

NICK
I'm not young, either. I stayed too long where I'm at. Other employers will question that.

JAY
Some, maybe, but not all.

Nick rubs his face.

NICK
Why I'm telling you this? I don't open up to people, especially ...

JAY
Someone you just met?

NICK
Yeah.

JAY
If you don't get it off your chest, you could have a heart attack.

Nick stares at Jay.

JAY (CONT'D)
What is it?

NICK
My best friend just died from a heart attack. We're the same age.

JAY
Oh, man, I'm sorry to hear that.

The bartender sets another drink in front of Nick.

JAY (CONT'D)
As far as death goes, a heart attack is quick. You don't suffer long.

NICK
(sipping his drink)
I keep remembering the night my dad died. I must have been thirteen or so. I snuck into Cody's bedroom. He pulled his Spider-Man sheets back, and I climbed into bed with him. He draped his arm over me. I can still remember the way he smelled—like summer never ended.

JAY

Cody sounds like a good friend. I wish I had a friend like that.

NICK

Man, that's exactly how I've felt since Cody died—like I'm all alone.

JAY

Not if the ring on your left hand is an indication.

NICK

(taking a drink)

Yeah, I know, but sometimes it seems like I'm a stranger in my own home. I don't know how to connect with my wife or kids.

(taking another drink)

Sometimes, I imagine what my life would be like if something happened to them.

(off Jay's look)

I know, I know—I'm a complete asshole. I don't want anything bad to happen to them, sometimes I just want to...

JAY

Be alone with no responsibilities.

NICK

This is the first real conversation I've had with another guy. Usually, I'm standing around at a barbecue with a bunch of men I only know because of my wife and kids, drinking beer and shooting the shit about, politics, and lawnmowers.

JAY

Always stuff outside ourselves, huh?

NICK

Yeah ... we can't show any weakness.

JAY

(raising his glass)

Real men show weakness!

Nick CLINKS his glass against Jay's.

They both crack up.

NICK

Damn, seems forever since I laughed.

JAY

Yeah, I know what you mean ...

They maintain eye contact, and then Nick looks away.

NICK

I need to take a leak.

JAY

(pointing)

In the back.

Nick stumbles to restroom.

BARTENDER

(drying a glass)

He reminds me of somebody else I
once met with a sob story.

Jay scowls at Bartender.

JAY

You're all heart, Wolf. I had no
idea you were so compassionate.

WOLF

(sighing)

I'll always be the bad guy, won't I?

JAY

You were the one who poured that
first drink.

WOLF

I didn't buy it for you. I didn't
make you drink it, either.

JAY

No, what was his name...?

WOLF

Jay ... I keep telling you it's not
about who—it's about you.

JAY

Have I ever told you how infuriating
your riddles are? Give it to me
straight, Wolf. I can take it.

Wolf eyes Jay as he pours a drink.

WOLF

Can you?

Wolf sets a drink in front of Jay.

Jay eyes the glass and then looks at Wolf.

WOLF (CONT'D)

The truth is right in front of you,
Jay. It would be hilarious if it
weren't so goddamned tragic.

JAY

I don't understand what that means.
Give me a clue.

WOLF

There are rules, Jay, and they must
be followed.

JAY

How can I even play the game if I
don't know the goddamned rules.

Wolf leans onto the bar and looks in Jay's eyes.

WOLF

You can't sit on the sidelines
forever; you got to get in the game
and learn the rules while you play.

JAY

Everyday I come in here and you jerk
my chain.

WOLF

And everyday you come back. What
does that say about you?

Jay shakes his head and downs the booze in one gulp.

Nick returns and stumbles again.

JAY

Watch your step.

NICK

I think I need something to eat.

JAY

(standing)

Come on, I know a place not far from
here. Some grub will sober you up.

NICK

(finishing drink)

That'd be swell.

Nick removes his wallet, but Jay waves it away.

JAY
(to Wolf)
Add it to my tab.

EXT. EGGSCCELLENT DINER - EVENING

Nick and Jay sit in a booth by the front window of a mom-and-pop restaurant squeezed between two old factory buildings. The "O" in the neon OPEN sign flickers on and off.

NICK (V.O.)
This is the best. Omelet. Ever.

JAY
(chuckling)
That's the whisky talking.

INT. EGGSCCELLENT DINER - CONTINUOUS

Nick takes another bite of a stuffed omelet and a pile of hash browns. Closing his eyes, he savors it before swallowing.

Jay eats a slice of quiche and a cup of soup.

NICK
Reminds of hanging out at the Waffle House with my buddies after a night of drinking. I was always so damned hungry. I miss those days ...

JAY
It's a different kind of hunger.

Nick pushes food around his plate with his fork.

NICK
Yeah ...

JAY
I like that out-of-control feeling when I have liquor in my belly--nothing bothers me and everything feels possible. It numbs me, yet also makes me feel alive.

NICK
I don't like feeling out of control.

JAY
You'd be surprised how quickly you get used to it.

NICK
I like to call the shots.

JAY
Always? You don't like the thrill of
danger? Being able to blame whatever
happens on the booze?

Nick takes a sip of iced water.

NICK
What danger does a white-collar worker
and married father of two face?

JAY
Maybe your malaise is a symptom of
your need for a little danger.

NICK
I don't do anything that needs to be
blamed on booze or anything else.

JAY
If we don't blame something or someone
else, we only have ourselves to blame.

Nick shifts on the vinyl seat of the booth.

NICK
Are you dangerous?

Jay stares at Nick, and then LAUGHS.

JAY
No, I'm too busy blaming myself.

NICK
(relaxing)
You seem like you've got it together.

JAY
Be careful, I'm a photographer. I
am a master of light and illusion.

NICK
(laughing)
You're messing with me.

JAY
Perhaps danger isn't the right word.
Maybe we all just want an adventure.

Nick sits back in the booth and wipes his mouth with a napkin.

NICK
It's been a long time since I had an
adventure or did anything spontaneous.

JAY

What was your last adventure?

Nick sips from his coffee cup and thinks.

NICK

Catherine, my wife, and I drove up to the mountains and camped. I still had my tent I bought in college. Me and some buddies used to get away on the weekends. Catherine hated everything about it—the bugs, no running water, sleeping on the ground.

JAY

Doesn't sound like your wife is much of an outdoor girl.

NICK

She is as long as she's indoors.

JAY

So, call your buddies and go camping, then. They're probably hungry for an adventure, too.

Nick pushes food around on his plate with a fork.

NICK

Catherine gave my tent away.

JAY

You can buy a new one.

Nick picks up his cup and sips some coffee.

NICK

My buddies have moved all over the place, and we've lost touch. Maybe that's why I keep thinking about Cody. I just feel ...

JAY

Alone?

NICK

I have a wife and family.

JAY

You can still feel alone in a crowd.

NICK

I shouldn't feel alone.

JAY

There are lots of things we shouldn't think or feel but we still do. It's normal—it doesn't make you an asshole.

NICK

Cody and I used to have new adventures everyday. It didn't matter where we went or what we did as long as we were together.

JAY

You still can.

Nick's iPhone RINGS.

INSERT - IPHONE

Catherine's name and picture appear on the screen. Nick presses the button to text "I can't talk right now."

BACK TO SCENE

NICK

(motioning for check)

No, I have responsibilities.

EXT. EGGSCCELLENT DINER - TWILIGHT

Jay smokes a cigarette. He drops it to the ground and rubs it out with his foot as Nick exits the restaurant

JAY

Thanks for dinner.

NICK

Thanks for the drinks and listening. Now that I've sobered up, I'm embarrassed. This isn't really me.

JAY

That's a shame. I like the me you were tonight.

NICK

You know what I mean.

JAY

Your secrets are safe with me.

(noticing sun setting)

Are you heading back to the office?

NICK

Yeah.

JAY
I'll walk with you.

Nick and Jay meander down the street.

NICK
I've told you everything about myself,
yet I know nothing about you.

JAY
There's not much to tell.

NICK
Are you married?

JAY
I was. Well, technically I still
am. She left me.

NICK
I'm sorry.

JAY
Me, too, but what can I do.

NICK
Any kids?

JAY
(beat)
Not really.

NICK
Not really?

Jay stops and turns to face Nick.

JAY
What do you miss most about Cody?

Nick considers Jay's question.

FLASHBACK - INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Young Cody and Young Nick sit beside each other on a sofa,
Young Nick's leg hooked over Young Cody's, while Young Cody's
arm is around Young Nick's shoulder. They watch T.V.

END OF FLASHBACK

NICK
Just that closeness, always wrestling
and leaning against each other. I'm
an only child. Cody was the brother
I always wished I had.

JAY
You mean physical affection with
another guy.

NICK
(swallowing)
How do you do that?

JAY
Do what?

NICK
It's like you're inside my head.

JAY
(chuckling)
Isn't it obvious, Nick? You're not
the only one who feels that way.

Nick studies Jay and tentatively steps closer to him.

Tires SQUEAL.

They turn to see a truck skid down the street toward them.

Jay pushes Nick out of the way as the truck hits a street
light pole, which snaps and impales Jay through the chest
while the horn of the truck continues to BLEAT.

Nick rushes to Jay.

NICK
Oh my god! Oh my god!

Jay opens his mouth to say something; blood GURGLES out. He
tries to tell Nick something before he goes still.

Nick remains frozen.

SIRENS pierce the night.

Finally, Nick reaches forward and shuts Jay's eyes.

EXT. STREET CORNER - LATER

Nick sits on a bench, shellshocked.

A POLICE OFFICER takes notes.

POLICE OFFICER
Did you say his name was Jay?

NICK
Yes.

POLICE OFFICER
Do you know his last name?

NICK
No, we just met today. Did you find
his driver's license?

POLICE OFFICER
We checked his wallet. He has no
I.D. I guess we've got a Jay Doe.

NICK
Jay was a photographer. We worked
in same building--the sixth floor.

The police officer studies Nick a moment.

POLICE OFFICER
We'll check that out tomorrow. We've
got your contact information if we
have any further questions. You're
free to go, Mr. Rogers.

The police officer walks away as paramedics load the covered
stretcher with Jay's body into an ambulance. Nick remains
where he is until the ambulance drives away.

JAY (V.O.)
Isn't it obvious, Nick? You're not
the only one who feels that way.

EXT. LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT TRACK - NIGHT

The train RUMBLES across the river to the suburbs.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Nick stares ahead as he rides the train in silence.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The black cat cleans itself on the porch. A car turns into
the driveway and its headlights flood the porch and blind the
cat. It scampers away.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Catherine washes dishes as Nick lumbers inside.

CATHERINE
(not looking up)
I saved some pizza for you. It's in
the fridge.

NICK

I already ate.

CATHERINE

I had a hell of a day. Right after you left this morning, I chipped a nail, so I had to go to the salon with Hunter to get it fixed. We had book club in the afternoon, and no one but me read the book again. Sara served the most godawful wine. Fortunately, I had to leave early to pick up the dry cleaning. Billy was a terror today, and I had to bake three dozen cupcakes for his end-of-year party tomorrow.

NICK

A man died in front of me tonight.

Catherine turns off the water. She pivots and notices the red splattered on Nick's white shirt.

CATHERINE

Is that blood?

NICK

A truck ran into a light pole. It snapped and impaled him.

CATHERINE

I don't think that will come out.

NICK

He tried to say something to me, but he started spitting up blood and then he ... died.

CATHERINE

Take your shirt off. I'll soak it.

NICK

After he died, I closed his eyes. His eyelids were so thin ...

Catherine starts to unbutton his shirt.

Nick pushes her away.

NICK (CONT'D)

His name was Jay.

They stare at each other a moment, and then Nick walks out.

IN BATHROOM

Nick turns on shower and strips off his clothes.

Catherine leans against the doorframe and watches him.

CATHERINE

I can't believe you saw that.

Nick steps into the shower and begins to scrub himself.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Did you work with James?

NICK

Jay.

CATHERINE

Sorry, Jay ... Is there anything I
can do to make you feel better...?
Do you want a cupcake?

Nick turns off shower and yanks a towel off a rack.

NICK

No, I don't want a fucking cupcake!

CATHERINE

I'm sorry, Nick. I'm trying to help,
but you're so distant nowadays, and
then you blow up, and I feel like I
can't do or say anything right.

Nick stops toweling off and looks at her.

NICK

I know. I'm sorry. I didn't mean
to take it out on you.

Nick kisses Catherine's forehead and enters—

IN BEDROOM

Nick takes a pair of boxer shorts from a dresser and steps
into them. He sits on edge of the bed and rubs his face.

NICK (CONT'D)

One minute Jay was alive, and a minute
later ... he was gone.

Catherine sits beside Nick and rubs his back.

CATHERINE

It's weird how your friend, Colby—

NICK
(closing his eyes)
Cody.

CATHERINE
Sorry—Cody—died the day before, and
now this guy. It's so weird ...

NICK
Yeah ... I guess there are no
guarantees for any of us.

Catherine rests her head on Nick's shoulder and they share a
brief, tender moment.

CATHERINE
What can I do to make you feel better?

NICK
(quietly)
You could just, you know, hold me.

CATHERINE
(beat)
Okay.

They lie side by side. Catherine wraps her arm around Nick
and spoons him. He stares ahead, his body tense.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
It's hot.

Catherine rolls over to her side of the bed.

Nick relaxes and shuts his eyes.

IN KITCHEN - MORNING

Nick enters and sees pancakes with a pat of melting butter.

CATHERINE
(winking at him)
I made your favorite today.

NICK
(smiling)
Thanks.

Nick kisses Hunter's head, who attempts to put slices of banana
in his mouth while sitting in his highchair, and tussles
Billy's hair, who is eating his own breakfast.

Nick pours syrup on his pancakes and forks a bite into his
mouth. He opens the newspaper and flips through the pages.

NICK (CONT'D)
I can't find anything about Jay.

CATHERINE
Who?

NICK
(sighing)
The guy who died in the accident
last night.

CATHERINE
Oh yeah ...

EXT. LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT TRACK - DAY

A commuter train clatters over a bay bridge toward the hazy skyline of a large metropolitan city.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Nick scrolls through news apps on his iPhone, searching for news about Jay's death and frowns.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Nick ascends the subway steps and looks in the direction of the corner where Jay died. All the debris has been cleared as is if nothing happened—even the pole has been replaced

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Nick approaches the CONCIERGE at her desk.

NICK
Excuse me.

CONCIERGE
How may I help you?

NICK
I'm looking for a photographer who
works in the building.

The concierge taps on her keyboard and studies her monitor.

CONCIERGE
No photographers are in the building.

NICK
His first name is Jay. I think he
mentioned he works on the sixth floor.

CONCIERGE

I'm sorry, sir. I only see The
Utopian Company on the sixth floor.

NICK

Are you sure?

The concierge swivels her screen around to show him.

NICK (CONT'D)

Okay. Thanks for checking.

The elevator door PINGS and opens. A crowd of people exit.
Nick runs to board.

IN ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Nick remains lost in thought as the elevator car fills. The
doors close and the elevator ascends.

The elevator PINGS and stops on the sixth floor. The doors
open and Nick notices Jay step out.

NICK

Jay?

Jay makes eye contact with Nick, his expression uncertain.

The others on the elevator look at Nick as if he's crazy.

Nick lunges forward and presses the button for the next floor
as the other passengers GRUMBLE.

The elevator stops and the doors open.

Nick dashes onto—

IN SEVENTH FLOOR

Nick runs down hallway and enters—

IN STAIRWELL

Nick races down the stairs and onto—

IN SIXTH FLOOR

Nick exits the elevator and hurries down the hallway, scanning
the nameplates by doors. He makes a complete loop back to
the elevator, and then retraces his steps without any luck.
Nick approaches a FEMALE CUSTODIAN.

NICK

Where's the photographer who works
on this floor? His name's Jay.

The custodian shakes her head and moves away.

Nick turns around and scans the hallways around him as he rubs the back of his neck.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Nick struggles to focus on his work, yet his mind wanders.

INSERT - NOTEPAD

Nick traces over the name "Jay Doe" again and again.

EXT. ROOFTOP - AFTERNOON

Nick rushes outside to find the rooftop empty.

He glances at his watch, and then approaches the corner where he had spoken with Jay the day before.

Nick gazes out at the surrounding city, and then notices a fresh cigarette butt. He picks it up and inspects it. Nick turns and looks in the direction of the entrance.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - EVENING

Jay exits the building and walks down the street.

Nick exits a coffee shop across the road and follows Jay.

Jay weaves in and out of the crowd.

Nick struggles to stay with Jay. He eventually loses track of Jay and finds himself in front of the Happy Hour Bar.

INT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Nick homes in on Wolf, who's drying glasses behind the bar.

NICK
Excuse me. I was in here yesterday
about this time.

WOLF
Jack and Coke, right?

NICK
That's right. Do you remember the
guy I was talking to?

WOLF
Yeah, I know Jay. We go way back.

NICK
He said he stops in after work.

WOLF

Not today.

NICK

I'm trying to reach Jay. He was in an accident last night, and I just want to make sure he's all right.

WOLF

Don't worry about Jay. He can take care of himself.

NICK

I need to ask him myself.

Wolf slowly dries another glass.

WOLF

Jay said you're a good guy. Go home and forget you met him.

NICK

Is Jay in some kind of trouble?

WOLF

(chuckling)

Jay's only enemy is himself.

NICK

How can I find him?

WOLF

Why do you want to find him?

NICK

I told you: I want to know he's okay.

WOLF

You don't have to be honest with me, buddy, but be honest with yourself. Why do you want to find Jay?

NICK

I want to know the truth.

WOLF

Are you sure you want to know the truth? It may surprise you.

NICK

Look, I'm in a hurry, and I don't want to lose him.

Wolf CHUCKLES. He writes something on a cocktail napkin.

WOLF

Believe me, Jay isn't going anywhere.

Nick peers at the napkin.

Thunder CRACKS.

EXT. 86 LIMBAUX PLACE - EVENING

In the rain, Nick gazes up at an old brownstone building at the end of a sketchy street. A DRUNKEN YOUNG WOMAN staggers past him, bumping his shoulder, and enters the building.

INT. 86 LIMBAUX PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Nick enters a cavernous foyer with a grand staircase. The furniture is a blend of styles that could be retro and contemporary, giving the place and its occupants a timeless atmosphere. MEN and WOMEN move through the lobby and up and down the stairs as if it were one big house party.

Glancing up, Nick sees Jay peering down at him from the third floor landing. Their eyes lock. Jay inhales on his cigarette, and moves away in an exhalation of blue smoke.

Nick hurries up the stairs.

When he reaches the third floor, Nick notices the doors of all the apartments are open. People mill about from room to room, LAUGHING and CHATTERING.

Jay stands at the end of the hall near a window seat. A breeze blows through the open window, causing the gauze curtain to flutter and bathing him in a peach light as the waning sunlight tears through the stormy clouds. Jay smokes his cigarette as Nick approaches him.

Two EFFEMINATE MEN in tight black sweaters, chinos, and garish makeup mince by Jay, one stopping to blow him a kiss.

Jay LAUGHS.

The two men TITTER and scurry away.

Nick stares after the two men, and then frowns at Jay.

NICK

(swallowing)

They're queers.

JAY

(smirking)

I know.

Jay walks away. He stops in a doorway and turns around.

JAY (CONT'D)
And you're wet.

Jay disappears inside—

IN JAY'S APARTMENT

Nick follows Jay.

JAY (CONT'D)
I bet you could use a drink.

Jay enters a kitchenette and pours whisky into a rocks glass.

NICK
(leaning on counter)
I'd prefer answers.

JAY
(handing Nick the
glass)
I have no answers.

Nick sips the whisky and sets his messenger bag in a chair.

NICK
I saw you die, Jay. I saw a light
pole sticking through your chest, so
how are you alive and talking to me?

JAY
You wouldn't believe me.

NICK
You're standing here in front of me.
How can I not believe you?

JAY
Because I can't believe it myself.

NICK
Okay, don't try to convince me of
anything. Just give me the facts.

Jay CHUCKLES as he moves to the window and taps on the glass
with his finger.

JAY
Every day at sunset, I die. I never
know how it'll happen, but I never
die the same way two days in a row.

NICK
That's impossible.

JAY
I said you wouldn't believe me.

NICK
Are you telling me you just heal
yourself and come back to life?

JAY
I wake up every morning in bed in
this apartment no matter where I am
in the city when I died.

Nick storms over to Jay, grabs his shirt, and rips it open,
revealing Jay's woundless chest.

NICK
(stepping back)
Jesus ... this can't be real.

A DRUNK GIRL IN FROCK appears in the doorway.

DRUNK GIRL IN FROCK
Jay ... give me a kiss.

JAY
(going to her)
Not now, baby. I have a guest.

DRUNK GIRL IN FROCK
Come on, I kiss better than he does.

JAY
It would be rude.

DRUNK GIRL IN FROCK
Give me one kiss, and I'll go away.

JAY
Promise?

DRUNK GIRL IN FROCK
Promise.

Jay gives her a long, smoldering kiss.

Nick finds himself aroused by watching Jay kiss the girl.

Jay breaks the kiss and pulls away from her.

DRUNK GIRL IN FROCK (CONT'D)
I lied.

A DRUNK MAN ON ROLLER SKATES zooms by and grabs the girl and
pulls her along in his wake.

Jay LAUGHS and closes the door.

NICK
These people are insane. What kind
of place is this?

JAY
My guess is some in-between place.

NICK
In between where?

JAY
Life and ... death, I guess.

NICK
Wouldn't that make you a ghost?

JAY
(crossing his arms)
Why did you come here, Nick?

NICK
I told you. I saw you die last night,
and then I saw you alive this morning.
Why did you run away from me, anyway?

JAY
I didn't run away from you.

NICK
I got off at the next stop and came
down to your floor. I couldn't find
a photography studio or you.

JAY
I was there.

NICK
You knew I thought you were dead.
You must have guessed I'd come looking
for you. Why didn't you wait for me?

JAY
Because no one has ever come looking
for me before.

NICK
What do you mean no one's ever come
looking before? You die and come
back to life. Somebody had to notice.

JAY

I live in the peripheral vision of the world. You pass me on the street as you wonder what to eat for dinner or you glance at your smartphone. There's no reason to notice me.

NICK

But the server in the diner saw you.

JAY

And she forgot me when I walked out.

NICK

So your body just disappeared from the morgue this morning and nobody realized it?

JAY

I don't know. I always wake up here.

NICK

The bartender knows you. He's the one who told me where to find you.

JAY

Wolf ...

Jay turns his back to Nick and goes to the window.

NICK

(approaching Jay)

He knows about you, doesn't he?

JAY

Does that mean you believe me?

NICK

Answer my question!

JAY

Yes, Wolf knows I die at sunset.

NICK

If he knows, can he help you?

JAY

Hell if I know. Wolf says things that don't make any sense. It's like he's toying with me.

NICK

Then let's go back to the bar and make him give us some answers.

JAY
 Nick, you have no idea who you're
 dealing with. I sometimes wonder if
 Wolf is the Devil himself.

NICK
 Then why do you keep going back?

JAY
 (leaning his forehead
 against window)
 Because I have no one else to talk
 to—who understands.

Nick touches Jay's shoulder.

NICK
 Jay ...

JAY
 Go home, Nick. Just forget we met
 and ever had this conversation.

NICK
 I can't.

JAY
 Why?

NICK
 Because you were kind to me ... the
 same way Cody used to be kind to me.

Jay turns around and faces Nick.

Gingerly, Nick puts his hand on Jay's chest and rubs it.

NICK (CONT'D)
 There's not one goddamned mark.

JAY
 Can you feel my heart beating?

NICK
 Yes ... it's like a horse galloping.

They're eyes meet.

Nick pulls his hand back, but Jay catches him by the wrist.
 Jay holds eye contact with Nick while he explores his hand.

JAY
 How else am I like Cody?

NICK
(swallowing)
I don't know.

JAY
Do I look like him?

NICK
No.

JAY
Sound like him?

NICK
Not really.

JAY
(touching the inside
of Nick's wrist)
Then why do I remind you of Cody?

NICK
(his voice quivering)
You just make me feel like he did.

JAY
Like how?

NICK
I don't know how to describe it.

Jay puts Nick's hand on his crotch.

JAY
Like this?

NICK
(whispering)
Sometimes ...

Jay reaches over and feels Nick's crotch.

JAY
And what did you do when you made
each other feel like this?

NICK
We jerked off.

JAY
Did you touch each other?

NICK
Sometimes.

JAY
Do you want me to touch you?

NICK
I don't believe this.

JAY
Do you want to touch me?
(beat)
Do you?

NICK
(whispering)
Yes.

JAY
(smiling)
Follow me.

Jay lets his shirt fall to the floor as he disappears into-

IN BEDROOM

The room is spartan: full-sized bed, nightstand, table lamp, chest of drawers, mirror, a chair next to a floor lamp, and an old stereo system with a turntable.

Jay puts a record on the turntable and sets the needle in the groove. His pants fall to the floor revealing white briefs.

SOPHISTI-POP flows from the speakers, which further adds to the ambiguity of time and place.

Jay turns around and gazes at Nick.

JAY (CONT'D)
You're still wet.

Jay reaches past Nick, their bodies almost touching, and flips a switch. A metal ceiling fan begins to spin slowly above them as if even it too feels the effect of the heat.

Nick shivers.

Jay unbuttons Nick's shirt and lets it fall off Nick's shoulders.

JAY (CONT'D)
I thought you'd be hairy.

NICK
I always hated being smooth.

Jay shrugs and runs his hand across Nick's chest.

JAY
Your heart is racing.

NICK
(fidgeting)
I should go.

JAY
(unbuttoning Nick's
khakis)
We're just two buddies helping each
other out—just like you and Cody.

Nick stares at the floor as his pants fall to his ankles.

Jay pulls off his briefs and begins to fondle himself.

Slowly, Nick glances up and watches Jay. He begins to touch himself through his boxer briefs.

JAY (CONT'D)
Let's get comfortable.

Jay climbs on the bed and pats the space beside him.

Nick takes a DEEP BREATH, pulls off his boxer briefs, and sits next to Jay, both leaning against the headboard.

Jay moves his thigh against Nick's thigh.

Nick INHALES SHARPLY.

JAY (CONT'D)
Did Cody used to do that?

NICK
Yeah.

JAY
Do you like it.

NICK
Yeah.

They begin to masturbate, watching each other, and then make eye contact. Jay caresses the rest of his body and MOANS and SIGHS he responds to the sensation. Nick follows suit. In spite of the overt sexual nature of the moment, Jay and Nick continue to gaze at each other's faces, almost experiencing a more intense intimacy through eye contact.

NICK (CONT'D)
Can I ... touch you?

JAY

Be my guest. You want me to touch
you, too?

Nick nods and reaches between Jay's legs. Jay follows his
lead, and they begin to stroke each other.

As their excitement builds, they move closer until their faces
are only inches apart. Finally, Jay leans in and kisses Nick
on the mouth.

Nick's body shakes as he orgasms. Jay's climax follows a few
seconds later. As the sensations ebb, Nick pulls away and
rubs his mouth.

NICK

I'm not gay.

JAY

I didn't say you were.

NICK

Then why did you kiss me?

JAY

Because it feels nice.

Nick stares at Jay and then reaches for his clothes.

NICK

I've got to go.

Jay rolls onto his side. He draws on the bed with his finger.

JAY

I know.

NICK

How do you know I've got to go?

JAY

I've been in your shoes before. I
know what you're feeling right now.

As the implication of what Jay said sinks in, Nick quickly
finishes dressing.

NICK

Thanks for everything. Glad you're
not really dead.

JAY

(chuckling)
Good night, Nick.

NICK

Good night.

Nick almost trips over his feet in his attempt to flee the apartment.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Nick hurries down the steps and reaches the sidewalk when he realizes he left his messenger bag in Jay's apartment.

Glancing up at the building, Nick sees Jay watching him from the window. Jay moves away from the window.

Nick SIGHS and heads back into-

IN LIMBAUX PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Nick hurries up the stairs to the third floor and KNOCKS on the door before entering into-

IN JAY'S APARTMENT

NICK

I forgot my bag!

Nick's about to leave when he hears a SCRATCHING SOUND.

IN BEDROOM

Nick crosses to the stereo, takes the needle off the record, and turns it off.

Nick turns around and sees Jay lying in the center of blood-stained sheets, his eyes open and staring at the ceiling, and a knife sticking out of his chest.

NICK (CONT'D)

Shit!

Nick's eyes dart around the room, and then he panics and flees.

IN HALLWAY

Nick collides with the fey men from when he first arrived. He CURSES as they GIGGLE at him. He jumps to his feet and races down the stairs.

EXT. LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT TRACK - NIGHT

A commuter train clatters over a bay bridge away from the brightly lit skyline of a large metropolitan city.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Nick sits in a seat and stares ahead.

A POLICEMAN enters the car to make his rounds.

Nick sinks down in his seat and turns his head toward the window until the policeman exits into the following car.

Nick closes his eyes and SIGHS before he leans his head against the window.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The black cat lies in the flower bed, flicking its tail slowly as Nick walks up the steps.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nick enters and finds Catherine alone, glassy-eyed, in the spill of light from the television, eating from a bag of chips.

CATHERINE
(without looking up)
Hi, honey. How was your day?

Nick stands motionless and watches her.

NICK
I think I killed another man.

CATHERINE
That's nice. Do you want something to eat?

NICK
Did you hear me?

CATHERINE
I can heat up the Hamburger Helper if you need me to ...

Nick watches Catherine take a chip from the bag and stuff it in her mouth without looking away from the television.

NICK
I'm going to turn in.

Nick leans over to hug Catherine. She squeezes him and kisses his cheek without taking her eyes off the television.

As he walks away, he stops, and glances back at Catherine.

NICK (CONT'D)
Did you hear anything about Jay?

CATHERINE

Who?

NICK

The guy from my building who died.

CATHERINE

I don't think you mentioned that.

NICK

(walking back to her)

I told you about him last night,
remember? I was pretty shook up.

Catherine glances up at him, as if she's seeing him for the first time.

CATHERINE

Are you sure? I don't remember you
mentioning him at all.

Nick stares at Catherine and then enters—

IN BEDROOM

Nick strips down to his boxer briefs and slips under the covers. He switches off the light and stares at the ceiling.

INSERT

Jay lies in a pool of blood in his bed with a knife in his chest.

BACK TO SCENE

Gingerly, he wraps his arms around his torso and hugs himself.

EXT. HOUSE - PRE-DAWN

The black feline cleans itself on the welcome mat in the darkness just before dawn.

Nick steps onto porch to fetch the newspaper and the black cat darts into the hedge.

Nick kneels and holds his hand out to the feline.

NICK

Hey, kitty ...

The black cat cautiously pokes its head out of the bushes and sniffs Nick's hand before rubbing against it and PURRING.

Nick notices the feline is missing part of its ear. He rubs its head.

NICK (CONT'D)
How many lives have you used up
already?

Nick stills and considers what he said.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - MORNING

Nick stands outside with two paper cups of coffee.

He watches a woman with smeared makeup sleep against the wall
with her frock bunched around her as if she were an exotic
flower turned inside out.

Jay emerges from the building and stops when he sees Nick.
They observe each other a moment before Jay approaches Nick.

NICK
(holding up cup)
I brought you coffee. I hope you
take cream and sugar.

Jay smirks as he accepts the cup.

JAY
It won't kill me.

Nick looks away.

NICK
I left my bag last night. When I
came back, I found you in bed with a
knife in your chest.

JAY
(sipping coffee)
Sorry you saw that.

NICK
I panicked. At first, I thought
whoever stabbed you could still be
there, and then I worried somebody
would walk in and think I did it.

JAY
Another reason to keep to myself.

NICK
Do you know who killed you? Was it
one of the other residents?

JAY
(sighing)
I don't remember anything.

NICK
But you must have seen the blood
when you woke up—and the knife.

JAY
I woke up in clean sheets without a
knife. My death is usually random.
(motioning down the
street)
Shall we?

Nick and Jay walk down the street.

JAY (CONT'D)
(sipping his coffee)
I didn't expect to see you again.

NICK
Why?

JAY
I figured I traumatized you for life.
(off Nick's look)
The kiss.

NICK
Yeah, well, seeing your corpse made
me forget about that.

JAY
(putting his hand on
Nick's shoulder)
Again, my sincere apologies.

Nick glances at Jay's hand and stops.

NICK
I haven't been able to stop thinking
about you ... and what we did. One
second, I feel guilty, and the next,
I want to do it all over again.

JAY
We didn't do anything wrong.

NICK
I'm married.

JAY
I'm not another woman.

NICK
Somehow, that makes it worse.

Nick starts walking and Jay hurries to catch up.

JAY

Look, you've got young kids and your wife is too tired to put out, so you blew off some steam with another guy. It happens all the time!

NICK

Why do I feel confused?

JAY

You're not gay, Nick.

NICK

How can you be so sure after ... what we did together?

JAY

You think you're the only buddy I ever helped out?

NICK

Are you gay?

JAY

I just need a release now and then.

NICK

So why not pick up a woman?

JAY

They get attached. They want more. They follow me and see me die, and then run into traffic and get hurt. Guys are less complicated.

NICK

The situation remains complicated.

JAY

Nick ...

NICK

How many other guys were before me?

JAY

I didn't keep count.

NICK

More than the fingers on one hand?

JAY

That's not fair.

NICK

Two hands?

JAY
You didn't strike me as the jealous
type.

NICK
I don't know what I am, anymore ...

Jay finishes his coffee and tosses the cup in a trash can.
He lights a cigarette.

JAY
You're a nice guy, Nick. I bet you
have a beautiful wife, two adorable
children, and a devoted dog--

NICK
I used to.

JAY
Pardon?

NICK
I had a dog named Max. I had to put
him down last month. He was my best
bud. How sad is that? I'm a grown
man who's only friend was a dog ...

JAY
Jesus, and I thought I was wounded.
(throwing down
cigarette)
Go home to your wife, take her roses,
screw her brains out, and tell her
you love her. Teach your kids how
to play baseball and get a new dog,
but forget we met. You'll only get
messed up if you stick around me.

Jay brushes past Nick and jogs across the street before the
light turns red.

NICK
You're going the wrong way, Jay!

JAY
I thought you understood, Nick! I'm
not going anywhere!

Nick watches Jay turn the corner and disappear.

EXT. THE UTOPIAN BUILDING - DAY

Nick drains the dregs of his coffee and tosses the cup into a
trash can. He SIGHS and lumbers inside.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Nick, deep in thought, meanders through the congestion of coworkers toward his desk.

Mike steps out of his office as Nick passes.

MIKE

Nick, in my office!

Nick stops, turns on his heel, and enters—

IN MIKE'S OFFICE

MIKE (CONT'D)

Shut the door.

Nick shuts the door and notices Tom glowering at him. GEORGE HORNSBY, 50s, a formidable executive, stands behind Tom.

Mike sits behinds his desk but doesn't ask Nick to do so.

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's come to our attention that you refused to help several of our bronze and silver tier clients yesterday.

NICK

I never refuse to help a client.

MIKE

You received calls from Bill Evans from Cloud Networks, Melinda Lopez from DataSys, and Ted Marx from CRM Experts and refused to assist them.

NICK

Actually, I took the calls and reviewed their accounts with them as is the protocol.

TOM

They left me several voicemails, pissed about being passed off to me.

NICK

They asked to be connected with their account manager, which is you, Tom, because they wanted to understand why you had not recommended the service plans that are more advantageous for their business needs. If the calls went to your voicemail, it must be because you weren't at your desk.

MIKE

Well, perhaps it would have been best if you had processed those change of service agreements yourself.

NICK

I did offer, Mike, but they asked to specifically speak with Tom. Also, I had a record day for call intake for my own roster of clients, who are mostly gold and platinum tier.

Nick smiles innocently, although enjoying the awkward moment for Mike and Tom in front of George.

GEORGE

(clearing throat)

Tom, I assume you contacted these clients immediately and processed the service agreement changes.

Tom steals a glimpse of Mike, who grimaces.

TOM

Um ...

MIKE

Tom will take care of it now.

Mike stares at Tom until he takes the hint and excuses himself.

NICK

Did you need anything else, Mike?

MIKE

(forcing a smile)

No, Nick. We appreciate the clarification.

GEORGE

Mike, I'd like for Nick and Tom to send me their monthly client reports for the last two quarters.

MIKE

I can run those for you now, George.

GEORGE

I'd like for Nick and Tom to send them to me personally.

NICK

I'll take care of it now, sir.

Nick suppresses a smile as he exits.

IN CUBICLE

Nick WHISTLES as he takes a seat.

Tom looks over the edge of his cubicle and glares at Nick.

TOM
I know what you up to, Rogers.

NICK
(turning on PC)
I don't know what you mean, Tom. I
was just doing my job.

MYRTLE (O.S.)
A good example for you to follow,
huh, Tom?

Tom turns and glares at the cubicle on the other side of his,
and then sits down.

Nick grins and opens his email.

EXT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - AFTERNOON

The Happy Hour neon sign flickers.

WOLF (V.O.)
Your friend came sniffing around for
you yesterday.

INT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Jay rubs his finger around the edge of his rocks glass.

JAY
I figured as much when he showed up
at my place.

WOLF
Are you letting your guard down?

JAY
I suppose someone had to see me bite
the dust eventually.

WOLF
What did you tell him?

JAY
The truth! What else could I say?

BARTENDER
You shouldn't have done that, Jay.

JAY

It doesn't matter. I told him not to come around again.

WOLF

Do you think he'll listen to you?

JAY

Surely, this situation has happened before. What did you do then?

WOLF

(wiping bar with towel)

I'm not a fan of cleaning up other people's messes, if you get my drift.

JAY

Leave him alone. Nick's a good guy. Besides, he won't be back.

WOLF

Let's hope you're right—for his sake.

JAY

Do what you want with me, Wolf, but leave Nick out of it. He's not to blame.

WOLF

Who says blame has anything to do with it? I simply keep things in a ... natural order.

JAY

Why do I keep coming back here?

WOLF

We all need somebody to talk to.

JAY

(standing)

Put it on my tab.

Jay heads toward the exit.

WOLF

You act like I'm a devil, Jay. Has it ever crossed your mind I might be an angel looking over your shoulder?

JAY

(smirking)

Now I know you're threatening me.

EXT. THE UTOPIAN BUILDING - EVENING

Nick exits with a spring in his step. He smiles as he places a call on his iPhone as he walks to the train station steps.

CATHERINE (V.O.)
Hi, honey. How are you?

NICK
I'm stoked. Guess who was named
Director of Operations for the
Southeast Region?

CATHERINE (V.O.)
That's fantastic! How much of a
raise did they give you?

NICK
I don't know. I have to meet with
Human Resources tomorrow when they
announce it. Mike told me the news
before I left.

CATHERINE (V.O.)
Well, whatever number they offer,
you need to counter.

NICK
Cath, I've been passed over so many
times, I just want to enjoy the taste
of victory for a moment.

CATHERINE (V.O.)
But—

NICK
Cath, enough. Put your best dress
on and find a sitter for the kids.
I want to go out and celebrate.

CATHERINE (V.O.)
Okay, but tomorrow I want you—

NICK
See you in a bit.

Nick ends the call and stands at the entrance of the train station, his enthusiasm soured. He looks down the street where he saw Jay die, the Happy Hour Bar, and Limboux Place.

INSERT IPHONE

Nick pecks out the following text in Messages:

"Change of plans. Have to work late. We'll celebrate later. Don't wait up."

BACK TO SCENE

Nick hesitates and then sends the text. He walks down the street.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - EVENING

The sleeping girl from that morning stands up and stretches.

KNOCK ON THE DOOR

INT. JAY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jay, wearing only a pair of jeans, opens the door and finds Nick smiling sheepishly.

JAY
You shouldn't be here.

Nick peers over Jay's shoulder.

JAY (CONT'D)
(crossing arms)
I'm alone.

Nick averts his eyes.

NICK
I got a promotion.

JAY
Congratulations. You should take your wife to dinner and celebrate.

NICK
I've been passed over for a promotion for the last few years. I wasn't supposed to get this one, either.

JAY
(beat)
What changed?

NICK
I met you.

JAY
Nick ...

NICK
Let me in, Jay.

JAY

And what?

Nick's gaze travels down Jay's naked torso before settling on the floor.

NICK

You need a friend, Jay. You need someone to ...

JAY

Rescue me?

NICK

I can't go back to how my life was before and leave you alone to die every night.

JAY

Why not?

NICK

Let me come in, Jay.

JAY

Why not?

NICK

Because I got to know you, and I want to get to know you better.

JAY

Nick—

NICK

How could we do what we did and not walk away with some kind of connection?

Jay tries to shut the door, but Nick blocks the door with his body. Nick manages to squirm inside and closes the door.

The two men face each other, bodies tense and ready to pounce, before Jay grabs Nick.

Each struggles to overpower the other in a dancelike clash where each gains the advantage before quickly losing it.

Nick manages to push Jay down to his knees. Falling on top of Jay, they roll across the floor until Nick sits on top of Jay and pins his hands over his head. They stare at each other, their chests rising and falling as they try to catch their breath, a sheen of sweat on their faces.

Nick leans over until his face is inches from Jay's, and then begins to slowly rub his pelvis against Jay's groin.

Leaning in, Nick smells Jay's skin and thrusts his hips against Jay's body.

Jay GASPS.

Nick releases Jay's hands and sits up. They maintain eye contact as Nick unbuttons his shirt and tosses it aside.

Jay reaches up and touches Nick's chest. Nick raises his arms, revealing the hair hidden in his armpits. Jay runs his fingers through the patch of fur and brings his fingers to his nose. He inhales Nick's scent.

Nick pushes Jay's arms over his head against the floor and leans over to bury his nose in Jay's armpit. He rubs Jay's scent all over his face, and then repeats the process on the other side of Jay's body.

Jay throws his head back and SIGHS as Nick rubs his face against Jay's neck and hairy chest.

They grind against each other.

Nick sits up and unfastens his khakis and removes his erect penis. He rubs it slowly, glancing up to ensure Jay is watching him.

Jay wets his lips.

Moving backward off Jay's body, Nick pulls Jay up into a sitting position. He moves Jay's hands onto his erection, and then unfastens Jay's jeans, removes his penis, and begins to stroke it.

They stare into each other's eyes as they masturbate.

As the intensity builds, they press their foreheads against each other and close their eyes, their short, ragged breaths in sync.

Their NOISES grow higher in pitch as their orgasms near.

Nick's mouth moves closer to Jay's, as if pulled by a magnet. He licks Jay's lower lip before gently biting it and falling into a deep kiss.

They kiss each other hungrily, Nick grabbing the back of Jay's head to push his tongue as deeply into Jay's mouth as possible.

They both wax into body-shaking climaxes before waning into a loose embrace.

NICK (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 I'd never admit this to anybody else,
 but I need this.

Jay squeezes Nick.

Tears slowly roll down Nick's face

JAY
 I'm sorry about Max.

NICK
 You remembered his name.

JAY
 I remember lots of things.

NICK
 Sometimes, I get tired of being tough.

JAY
 You don't have to be tough with me.
 I like it when you let yourself go.
 Were you like this with Cody?

NICK
 (chuckling)
 I was never like this with Cody.

Jay pulls back and studies Nick.

JAY
 You okay?

NICK
 Yeah. I still want to bolt, but the
 urge to stay seems stronger.

JAY
 I felt that way at first, too.

Jay stands and goes to the kitchen. He turns on the tap and
 lets the water run.

NICK
 Tell me about the others.

JAY
 There's nothing to tell.

NICK
 Where did you meet them?

Jay removes a dish rag from a drawer and holds it under the running water.

JAY

It's hard to say. You see, time is flat for me.

NICK

What do you mean?

JAY

I've been living the same day over and over again for so long, time seems like a long stretch of highway in the desert, with no beginning nor ending. Looking back is like peering into a rearview mirror and seeing the past obscured by a haze of heat shimmering off the hot asphalt of the present.

NICK

That's poetic.

JAY

I spend most of my life in my head.

Jay turns off tap and wrings excess water from the dish rag.

NICK

Where did you meet the first one?

JAY

In a hotel bar. In the beginning, I managed the monotony of my days by drinking in a different place every night. We struck up a conversation.

NICK

Did he proposition you?

JAY

He invited me up to his room for a drink. He was from Florida, had a sailboat, very tan. In fact, he had a tan line where his wedding ring should have been.

Nick glances at his own wedding band.

JAY (CONT'D)

He put on some porn while we sipped our drinks. He started rubbing himself. I did the same, and, well, you know how the story ends.

NICK
What happened afterward?

JAY
We kept on chatting like nothing
ever happened. I couldn't get out
of there fast enough, and I barely
made it into alley before sunset.

NICK
And the rest of them?

JAY
Same story, different cast. Whenever
I had an itch that needed to be
scratched, I'd find a hotel popular
with business travelers.

NICK
You never brought any of them here?

JAY
No. Always in their hotel rooms,
get off, and out before sunset.
(returning to Nick)
Enough questions-let's clean you up.

Jay wipes the sweat from Nick's brow and face. He lifts each
of Nick's arms and cleans them, under his arms, his chest,
torso, and nether regions. Nick watches Jay.

JAY (CONT'D)
(off Nick's look)
I can't send you home sweaty.

NICK
It's funny how something so simple
can feel so good.

JAY
We'd all benefit from more tenderness.

Jay stands and returns to the sink to rinse the dish rag.

Nick joins him and takes the damp cloth from Jay.

NICK
Allow me to return the favor.

Jay hesitates, but gives the wet rag to Nick.

Nick cleans Jay's face and body with the cloth. When Nick
finishes, he drops the dish rag in the sink.

JAY
Thank you for an unexpected evening.

NICK
Thanks for letting me in.

Jay glances at the window and sees the sun is about to set.

JAY
You should go.

NICK
I'll stay with you, so you don't
have to be alone.

JAY
I prefer you leave. This has been a
nice moment. I don't want to sully
it with you seeing me die again.

NICK
Do you trust me?

JAY
Yes.

NICK
We'll figure this out, together, and
set you free.

JAY
This is much bigger than you and me.

NICK
Trust me.

Jay nods.

Nick hugs him.

NICK (CONT'D)
So many good things have happened
since I met you. I almost feel like
you're my lucky charm.

JAY
I'm just an average guy who dies
every night at sunset. Go on, get
out of here.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - DUSK

Nick stands outside and watches the sun set. As the darkness
descends on him, he turns and steals one last glimpse at Jay's
window before walking away.

EXT. LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT TRACK - NIGHT

The train races away from the neon skyline over the river to the safety of the suburbs.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

A disheveled Nick sits on the train. He reaches up to touch his lips with his fingertips and then brings him to his nose to inhale Jay's scent.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The black cat scurries into the hedge as the headlights of Nick's car cut across the front yard. It peeks out of the bush as Nick approaches.

Nick sits down on the step and holds his hand out. Gingerly, the cat eases out of the hedge and sniffs at him before rubbing its head against his hand. Nick scratches it behind the ears as he stares at the illuminated city in the distance.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Nick creeps through the front door, shuts it, and listens to the silence.

IN BILLY'S BEDROOM

Nick gazes down at Billy asleep in his bed. He tussles his hair and tentatively leans over and kisses the boy's head.

IN NURSERY

Nick peeks at Hunter in his crib and pulls the blanket up over the sleeping toddler.

IN BEDROOM

Nick stops in the doorway and studies an unconscious Catherine, without makeup, wearing a large, baggy t-shirt, and SNORING softly with her mouth open and a glamour magazine splayed on her chest.

Nick sets the magazine on the nightstand. He switches off the bedside lamp and undresses in the dark.

He slips into bed and stares at the ceiling, rubbing his fingertips across his lips.

EXT. HOUSE - PRE-DAWN

A toddler CRIES.

INT. HOUSE - NURSERY - CONTINUOUS

A sleepy Nick staggers in and picks up a CRYING Hunter from his crib. Nick bounces his son in his arms, and Hunter stops crying. He WHISPERS to his son and kisses his head.

NICK
Let's get the newspaper.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Nick carries Hunter onto the porch.

The cat darts into the bushes.

NICK
(to Hunter)
What do you say we buy some cat food?

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAWN

Dressed in a t-shirt, shorts, and baseball cap, Nick carries Hunter down the aisle and surveys the selection of cat food.

EXT. GROCERY STORE - DAWN

As Nick carries Hunter and a bag of cat food across the parking lot, he sees a large box in a recycle bin. Nick approaches the bin and runs his hand over the box.

EXT. HOUSE - PORCH - MORNING

Nick sets a plastic dish of cat food on the porch.

Cautiously, the cat ventures on the porch, sniffs the bowl, and begins eating. It PURRS as Nick rubs its head.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Nick covers Billy's eyes and leads him to the large box. He removes his hand and Billy stares ahead, confused.

BILLY
It's a box.

NICK
Well, it's a box, but it can also be a hideout or a spaceship or whatever you want.

BILLY
How?

Nick picks up some markers off the coffee table and removes the cap from one.

NICK
First, you draw a door and then some
windows ...

Nick draws rectangles on the box. He picks up a pair of
scissors and cuts a door in the side.

Billy grins.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Nick emerges from the subway stairwell and covers his eyes
with his hand to block the glare from the sun as he scans the
sidewalk in front of The Utopian Company Building.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Nick glances around the lobby and reluctantly boards the
elevator.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Myrtle smiles at Nick as they cross paths.

MYRTLE
Congratulations, Mr. Director.

NICK
(grinning)
Thank you.

Nick enters his cubicle and sets his messenger bag on the
floor. As he turns on his computer, he notices Tom's cubicle
is dark.

Myrtle walks back to her cubicle.

NICK (CONT'D)
Hey, Myrtle. Where's Tom?

MYRTLE
He called in sick.
(whispering to Nick)
Tom boy came down with a bad case of
humiliation.

Nick CHUCKLES. He sits at his desk and grows introspective.

IN CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Nick sits in a meeting with George, Mike, and OTHER DIRECTORS.
He glances at his watch and peers through the glass wall toward
the elevators with longing.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - EVENING

Jay exits the lobby and sees Nick waiting for him. He approaches Nick cautiously.

NICK
You're working late.

JAY
(beat)
I was on a deadline--no pun intended.

They stand with their hands in their pockets, distracted by the SOUNDS OF THE CITY.

NICK
I want to get to know you better.

JAY
I thought we already had.

NICK
Let me take you to dinner.

JAY
You already did, remember?

NICK
But this time, I don't want to do all the talking. I want to learn about you.

JAY
(beat)
I'd hate to disappoint you. I'm not very good at talking about myself.

NICK
(shrugging)
Spending time together is a start.

Jay glances down the street.

JAY
Nick ... this is getting complicated.

NICK
I'm just talking about a meal and conversation, Jay--nothing more.

Jay SIGHS and nods his head.

Nick puts his arm around Jay and leads him down the street.

EXT. ANY WAY YOU SLICE IT PIZZA - EVENING

JAY (O.S.)
This is, um, an interesting place.

INT. ANY WAY YOU SLICE IT PIZZA - CONTINUOUS

Jay stares into the large eyes of a fake giant squid attacking a miniature Nautilus submarine hanging above the table. He glances around at the other off-the-wall decorations.

JAY
How did you find it?

MYRTLE
My coworker, Myrtle, told me about it. She's always in search of the best pizza in the city.

JAY
Hmm ...

Jay sips his beer and continues to scan the restaurant.

Nick removes the paper wrapper binding his napkin to his cutlery and rolls it into a tiny scroll, and then unrolls it and rolls the opposite way.

A SERVER sets a large pizza on a stand in the center of the table.

Jay leans over and inspects it.

JAY (CONT'D)
This pizza has honey on it.

NICK
(grinning)
Try it. You'll like it.

Jay frowns, but picks up a slice and gingerly take a bite. His mouth stretches into a smile.

JAY
I like the sweet and savory together.

NICK
I'm usually not a fan of feta, but it works with the honey.
(picking up a slice)
Catherine hates it, but I had a feeling you'd dig it.

JAY
You sound a bit down on Catherine.

NICK
She's a good wife and mother ...

JAY
But...?

NICK
(sighing)
Sometimes, I wish she would, you
know, get me.

JAY
No one gets us all the time.

NICK
(chewing)
You get me.

JAY
I hardly know you.

NICK
(wiping his mouth)
You don't feel a connection with me
after everything we've done together?

JAY
Sex doesn't make you closer to
someone. Sometimes, it creates more
of a barrier.

NICK
When Cody and I jerked off together,
it made us tight-like brothers. You
never felt that way with any of the
business travelers?

JAY
When I met guys at hotels, it was
always a one-time thing.

NICK
Sounds lonely.

JAY
It wasn't company I was looking for.

NICK
I've seen you every day this week.

JAY
(chewing slowly)
I know.

NICK
What do you make of it?

JAY
(sighing)
I don't know. You're not the first
to ask me to dinner, but ...

NICK
But what?

JAY
You're the first one I've met who
makes me not want to be alone.

NICK
Is that a good thing?

JAY
Before, it was easy to stay in the
moment because every day was the
same. Now, I find myself thinking
about the last time I saw you and
wondering when I'll see you again.

Their eyes meet.

JAY (CONT'D)
(whispering)
I can't believe I told you that.

NICK
(smiling)
I'm glad you did. I was beginning
to wonder if it was only me.

They both grin as they eat in a comfortable silence.

EXT. ANY WAY YOU SLICE IT PIZZA - EVENING

Jay stands near the door and finishes a cigarette.

Nick exits. He opens Jay's hand and pours a few after dinner
mints in his palm.

JAY
(smiling)
Thanks.

NICK
(smiling)
You're welcome.

They hold eye contact for a moment. Jay steals a glimpse of
his watch, and then gives Nick a sheepish look.

JAY

Sorry.

NICK

You're the only person I know who still uses a watch. Most people check the time on their phones.

JAY

I don't own a cell phone.

NICK

You're kidding!

JAY

Who am I going to call?

NICK

(averting his eyes)

I want to share something with you.

Nick puts his arm around Jay's shoulders and leads him down the street. They are both hyper-aware of the physical contact, but they easily pass as brothers or old friends.

JAY

So, where are we going?

NICK

Down to the river.

JAY

To throw me in the water?

Nick glances at Jay and furrows his brow.

JAY (CONT'D)

It's a song. Surely, you know Talking Heads' version.

NICK

Talking Heads were before my time.

Jay stops and concentrates.

NICK (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Slowly turning in a circle, Jay scans his surroundings.

JAY

(voice shaking)

Are Talking Heads still around?

Nick moves his thumbs across his iPhone.

NICK
Talking Heads' last album was released
in 1988. They haven't been active
since 1991. Jay, how long have
you...?

Jay leans back against a building and rubs his face.

NICK (CONT'D)
Do you remember Madonna or Prince
or, um ... George Michael?

JAY
(shaking his head)
Talking Heads were popular, but I
don't remember which album or year.
I can still see Jordan dancing around
the kitchen to one of their songs.
(moving his lips)
I can almost recall the lyrics ...

NICK
Maybe it's not important, Jay.

JAY
But it has to be, or else I'd
remember.

Nick puts his hands on Jay's shoulders and looks in his eyes.

NICK
Tell me what you remember.

JAY
(beat)
She was six-months pregnant. That's
all I know.
(rubbing his temples)
It's getting late. What did you
want to show me again?

Nick wraps his arms around him, and Jay leans into him.

NICK
You could call me. If you had a
cell phone, I mean.

JAY
So you could ask me questions I don't
know the answers to and listen to my
silence?

NICK
Maybe you might smile at the sound
of my voice and tell me what you ate
for lunch or a bad joke you overheard
about an aardvark who walks into a
bar that will make me groan.

Jay LAUGHS and pulls away. He shakes his head.

JAY
You make it sound enticing.

NICK
But ...

JAY
The connection will always go dead
on my end.

NICK
I can call you back the next day.

JAY
Nick ...

NICK
Let me help you.

JAY
You can't save me, Nick! Cody's dead
and I'm—

NICK
But you're not!

JAY
(glancing at sun)
But I soon will be.

NICK
This isn't about Cody. I'm not the
kind of man who can stand by and
watch you suffer night after night.

JAY
Maybe you shouldn't see me, anymore.

Jay turns and storms away.

NICK
(calling after Jay)
But then I suffer.

Jay stops but doesn't turn around.

NICK (CONT'D)

If you trust me, maybe we can figure out a way to set you free.

JAY

Nick, you're getting too involved.

NICK

No one has gotten involved enough.
(going to Jay)
Have you let anyone in before me?

JAY

How do you know I've let you in?

NICK

Because you keep pushing me away.

JAY

(turning)

I knew you were trouble from the moment I first saw you.

Nick turns Jay around to face him. He runs the backs of his fingers down Jay's cheek and lifts his chin to force Jay to look him in the eye.

NICK

You feel that energy between us?

Jay swallows and nods.

NICK (CONT'D)

That's the stuff stars and planets are made of—a whole universe there for us to explore together.

JAY

Or between us.

NICK

Stop it!

JAY

I've survived this long because I've always managed to keep my lens on other people during the day and drinking, smoking, and sometimes fucking the evenings away—and it's worked for me!

NICK

Until now.

Jay trembles and closes his eyes.

JAY

Until now.
(opening his eyes)
God, I want to ...

They scan their surroundings and venture into an alley.

Jay pushes Nick against the wall. He kneels and unzips Nick's fly and begins to give him head.

NICK

(knees buckling)
Oh my god, you're good at that.

Gradually, Nick straightens up and begins to run his fingers through Jay's hair.

A door SLAMS open and a BORED ASIAN BUSBOY carries two bags of garbage out of a kitchen. He sees Jay and Nick, but throws the trash into the dumpster, and returns inside.

NICK (CONT'D)

(gasping)
If you keep that up, you're going to
make me come.

Nick looks up and sees laundry fluttering on clotheslines above him.

In the distance, a tugboat BLOWS ITS HORN.

NICK (CONT'D)

Oh god!

Nick hunches over.

Jay's head and hand slow down. He rises to his feet and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand.

NICK (CONT'D)

Why did you do that?

JAY

I just wanted to make you feel good
... and so whenever I think of you,
I'll remember what you taste like.

Nick slowly leans forward and kisses Jay.

NICK

Now, when I think of you, I'll taste
what you taste when you think of
me—until I can actually taste you.

JAY
(smiling)
Something to look forward to ...

The tugboat BLOWS ITS HORN again.

NICK
(zipping his fly)
I still want to show you something.

EXT. RIVER BANK - DUSK

Nick leads Jay to a historic suspension bridge with many walkers, joggers, and bicyclists crossing in both directions. A man changes a tire on a car along the side of the street.

NICK
(pointing across the river)
I live over there. Sometimes, if I work late and the weather's nice, I like to walk across the bridge to the train station where I park.

As if on cue, the bridge lights up in the darkening sky.

JAY
It's magical.

NICK
(taking Jay's hand)
Come on ...

JAY
I can't.

NICK
Why not?

JAY
I can't leave the city. If I try to cross any of the bridges leading off the island, my body feels as if it's is being torn apart.

NICK
You're kidding ...

JAY
Believe me, I've tried every bridge. I can't even make it a quarter of the way before I have to turn around.

Nick slips his arm around Jay's shoulders.

NICK
Man, you're so tense.

JAY
I always hold my breath in
anticipation this time of day.

NICK
(glancing around)
I don't see any danger.

JAY
Don't worry. It'll happen. If I'm
lucky it will be quick and as painless
as possible.

Nick leans his head against Jay's head.

JAY (CONT'D)
Thanks for a nice evening ... and
waiting with me.

Nick squeezes Jay's shoulder.

The jack under the car SNAPS and shoots a piece of metal that
hits Jay in the head.

Jay falls to the ground.

Nick SCREAMS and kneels down beside Jay.

PEOPLE GASP and SHOUT and point in Nick and Jay's direction.

Nick closes Jay's eyes, gets to his feet, and steps back. A
crowd pushes past him as if they don't see him standing there
and try to revive Jay.

ON BRIDGE - NIGHT

Nick puts his AirPods in his ears.

INSET OF iPHONE

"Take Me to the River" by Talking Heads is cued in Apple Music.
Nick's thumb presses the play icon.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick walks slowly across the bridge under the soft lights as
pedestrians and bicyclists pass him.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Nick bends down and rubs the head of the black cat, who
reclines on the porch.

It PURRS a moment, and then nips him and then licks the bite.

Nick enters—

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Catherine SNORES with her head thrown back against the top of of the sofa. Although a pretty woman, she wears no make up, her hair is pulled back with a scrunchie, and she wears a stained, oversized t-shirt with yoga pants.

A glass of white wine sits on the coffee table along with photos, a scrapbook, and supplies. Nick picks up some pictures and sifts through them.

INSERT PHOTOS

Nick and Catherine wearing birthday hats as Billy beams in front of a cake with lit candles.

A younger Nick and Catherine grin and toast margaritas at a beachside resort.

A glowing Catherine, six months pregnant, sits peacefully in a rocking chair in a freshly painted nursery.

BACK TO SCENE

A melancholy smile unfurls on Nick's face.

Nick kneels next to Catherine and brushes a strand of hair out of her eyes.

Startled, Catherine sits up and MUMBLES something.

NICK
Sorry, it's just me.

CATHERINE
Oh ... I must have fallen asleep.

NICK
Long day with the kids?

CATHERINE
They were pretty good today, actually.
Have you eaten?

NICK
I grabbed something on my way home.
Sorry I've been working so late.

CATHERINE
Have you? I hadn't noticed.
(MORE)

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

(glancing at scrapbook)

I thought I could finish this tonight,
but I realized I don't have the right
embellishments, and I need a four-
leaf-clover punch.

NICK

A what and a what?

CATHERINE

(sighing)

The embellishments are the little
stickers that go on the page, and
the punch cuts shapes out of the
paper. You never listen, do you?

Nick picks up her glass and sips some wine.

NICK

I guess not.

Catherine flips a few pages of the scrapbook.

CATHERINE

We have a good life, don't we, Nick?
We're really lucky ...

Nick gazes at Catherine a moment, and then kisses the top of
her head.

NICK

Yeah, we got it good.

CATHERINE

Oh, I almost forgot. Christine is
bringing the girls to visit Mom this
weekend, and I'd love to see them.

NICK

Oh ... when do we need to leave?

CATHERINE

Since they're arriving tomorrow and
leaving early on Sunday, I thought
I'd drive up with the boys in the
morning. Mom's place is so small, I
figured you'd enjoy a weekend to
yourself. You don't mind, do you?

NICK

(smiling to himself)

No, stay as long as you want.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - MORNING

Nick stands with his messenger bag, a duffle bag, and two paper cups on the sidewalk.

Jay grins when he exits the building and sees Nick.

JAY

I woke up with you on my mind. I
was hoping you'd be waiting for me.

Jay takes the coffee and sips it.

NICK

I've got good news: Catherine is
taking the boys away for the weekend.
I'm footloose and fancy free.

Jay studies Nick while he sips his coffee.

NICK (CONT'D)

I brought some clothes. I thought I
could stay with you.

JAY

I've never had anybody stay with me.

NICK

Is it okay?

JAY

Do you think it's a little awkward?

NICK

We'll have the whole day together—not
just a few hours before sunset.

JAY

(shaking head)

First, you want to feed me pizza
with honey, and now a sleepover.

NICK

Am I twisting your arm too much?

JAY

(chuckling)

Let's put your bag in my apartment.

EXT. THE UTOPIAN BUILDING - DAY

Nick and Jay walk in companionable silence and stop outside.

NICK

Tell me something.

JAY

What?

NICK

When you thought of me this morning,
did you taste me?

JAY

(grinning)

Does that freak you out?

NICK

No. I think I'd like to know what
you taste like, too.

They smile at each other.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Nick WHISTLES as he walks to his cubicle.

His coworkers exchange glances as Nick passes them.

Myrtle steps in front of him, a worried expression on her
face.

MYRTLE

Mike wants to see you first thing.

Noticing Myrtle's tension and his coworkers staring at him,
Nick walks around Myrtle and sees his cubicle has been trashed.
He turns to Myrtle.

NICK

Who did this?

IN MIKE'S OFFICE

Mike closes the door as Nick sits in front of his desk.

MIKE

This morning security caught Tom in
the act of vandalizing your cubicle

NICK

I knew he blamed me for losing the
promotion, but I never never thought
he'd get into crazy shit like this.

MIKE

We gave Tom the option of taking
some time off and to seek counseling,
but he refused, so we let him go.

NICK

You think you know someone, and then they do something like this. I guess we dodged a bullet, huh?

MIKE

(rising to his feet)

Let me show you your new office.

IN NICK'S OFFICE

Mike flips on the light and steps aside for Nick to enter.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I.T. set up your laptop. Just log in with your username and password. You've got a laser printer, table and chairs for meetings, and, of course, a great view.

Mike peers out the window at the skyline.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Over two million people live and work here, yet the city can still seem like a lonely place. Did you know nine percent of the locals have never left the city?

Nick sets his messenger bag down behind his desk.

NICK

Maybe they have their reasons.

MIKE

You know, we've worked together a long time, and I barely know you. We should go for a drink sometime. Are you free tonight?

NICK

Sorry, I already have plans.

Mike smiles to cover his disappointment.

MIKE

Well, another time, then.

Mike leaves.

Nick sits and runs his hands over the surface of his desk. He leans back in his chair and stares out at the city.

EXT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - EVENING

WOLF (O.S.)
Where were you yesterday?

INT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - CONTINUOUS

JAY
I worked late.

WOLF
(wiping the bar)
It's unlike you not to stop in on
your way home. I worried something
might have happened to you.

JAY
You know better than that.

WOLF
I wondered where you might be ...
and the company you might keep.

Jay picks up his glass and shakes the ice.

JAY
Like I said, I worked late, and then
I grabbed a bite to eat.

WOLF
Did you go home?

JAY
It was a such a nice night, I went
for a walk.

WOLF
Down to the river?

Jay stares at Wolf.

WOLF (CONT'D)
Lucky guess?

JAY
(whispering)
Let me go, Wolf ... please.

Wolf SIGHS as he leans on the bar.

WOLF
You know I can't do that, Jay.

JAY
(standing)
Then quit following me.

Jay marches toward the door.

WOLF
I don't have to, Jay. Word always
gets back to me.

Jay stares at Wolf, and then exits.

EXT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Jay stops, his mind racing. He looks to his left and sees Nick approaching, grinning at him. Jay takes off in the opposite direction, his legs and arms pumping madly.

NICK
Jay!

Nick chases after Jay.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - EVENING

Nick, out of breath, staggers up the steps and rests against the railing.

EXT. JAY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Nick KNOCKS on the door.

NICK
Jay, open the door.

JAY (O.S.)
Go home, Nick!

NICK
My stuff is in your apartment.

The door opens and Jay hands Nick his bag.

NICK (CONT'D)
What's wrong? Why did you run away?

JAY
Wolf knows I went down to the river
last night.

NICK
You live on a island. Most people
go near the river sometime each day.

JAY
He knows I was with you.

NICK
Jay, I know you're scared of him—

JAY
You don't get it! I'm not worried
about myself; I'm afraid for you!

NICK
What's he going to do? Serve me
cheap liquor?

JAY
Do you not comprehend how dangerous
Wolf is? Somehow, he is connected
to my dying every night, and then
raises me from the dead in the
morning. He could be God, Nick, so
imagine what he could do to you.

NICK
Do you want me to go?

JAY
No ... but I could never live with
myself if something happened to you
because of me.

They both realize what he just said and LAUGH.

NICK
You really feel that way?

JAY
Yeah, I do.

NICK
I said I'd help you, and I mean it.

JAY
Other than good intentions, Nick,
what plan do you have that can trump
a possible god?

The Drunk Man on Roller Skates zooms by behind Nick.

NICK
My plan is you're going to let me
in, we'll have a drink, order some
takeout, and figure out our options
together. What do you say?

JAY
Okay, but I have one question.

NICK
What is it?

JAY
How many egg rolls do you want?

IN BEDROOM - LATER

The spill of fading sunlight stretches across the bedroom floor, scattered with takeout containers, as the sun grows heavier in the sky.

Jay leans against the headboard of the bed as Nick performs oral sex on him.

Jay runs his fingers through Nick's hair. He lifts Nick's head from his penis and they kiss. Jay caresses Nick's face.

JAY (CONT'D)
Are you sure you've never done this?

NICK
(smiling)
I had a good teacher.

Nick goes down on Jay again.

Jay grabs a handful of Nick's hair and holds Nick's head still as he begins to thrust deeply into his throat, throws his head back, and CRIES OUT.

Nick sits up and wipes his mouth, grinning, and lies on the bed next to Jay. Sweat covers their naked bodies. The metal ceiling fan oscillates above them.

JAY
So, what's the verdict?

NICK
I thought you'd taste salty, but
your cum tastes sweet.

Jay reaches for a cigarette and lights it.

JAY
A guy from Des Moines who sells
tractors told me it's because I eat
a lot of fruit.

They both LAUGH.

JAY (CONT'D)
 Supposedly, celery, cinnamon, and
 parsley sweeten semen, too.

Nick reaches for the cigarette and takes a drag off of it.

JAY (CONT'D)
 A friend of mine told me you shouldn't
 smoke. He said it'll kill you.

NICK
 Don't believe everything you hear.

Jay takes the cigarette and puts it out in an ashtray.

He reaches into the drawer of the night table and sets a small
 brown bottle and a plastic tube on the bed.

Rolling over and straddling Nick, Jay leans over into Nick's
 face and kisses him slowly.

JAY
 Fuck me.

Excitement builds on Nick's face. He greases himself with
 the lube before lifting Jay's behind.

JAY (CONT'D)
 Hold on.

Jay unscrews the top on the brown bottle and holds it against
 his left nostril and inhales. He repeats the process with
 his right nostril and then offers it to Nick.

NICK
 What is it?

JAY
 Poppers--relaxes the muscles down
 there and make your cock feel alive.

Nick tentatively SNIFFS from the bottle and feels a rush.

Jay grabs the bottle, screws the lid on, and tosses it aside.

NICK
 Jesus ...

Jay grins and raises his hips to sit on Nick's erection.
 They maintain eye contact as they join their bodies.

Once Jay adjusts to feeling of Nick's penis inside him, they
 begin a slow rhythm that builds into a feral coupling and
 climax that ebbs into a sensual and intimate denouement.

Dazed from the physical release and poppers, Nick and Jay take a moment to recover.

JAY
Fuck ... that was incredible.

NICK
Don't pull out yet. I want to stay connected to you.

They kiss.

Jay leans over and nuzzles his face in Nick's neck.

NICK (CONT'D)
Have you done this with a lot of guys?

JAY
Fucking? Just a few times. Once out of curiosity, twice because I was out-of-my-mind horny, and the last time because I really liked the guy.

Nick smiles and runs his hands softly down Jay's back.

JAY (CONT'D)
That's nice. Jordan used to do that.

NICK
Your wife, right?

JAY
Yeah.

NICK
When did you last see her?

JAY
A few days before I woke up here.

NICK
Does she still live in the city?

JAY
Probably. She was always a downtown art girl. I can't imagine her living anywhere else.

NICK
Let's find her.

JAY
(sitting up)
What for?

NICK

If Jordan was the last person you
saw before you woke up here, maybe
she might have an answer.

Jay rolls off Nick and swings his legs off the bed.

JAY

I need to take a piss.

Nick watches Jay disappear into the bathroom. He stares into
space for a moment, and then reaches for his iPhone.

INSERT IPHONE

Catherine's text message reads "Miss you" followed by several
photos of Billy and Hunter laughing and smiling with the girls.

BACK TO SCENE

Nick smiles.

A THUD comes from the bathroom.

IN BATHROOM

Nick enters and finds Jay lying on the floor. Blood is on
the edge of the bathtub.

Kneeling, Nick cradles Jay's lifeless body. He leans against
the bathtub and pulls Jay's body against his, holding him as
the sun finally sets and the apartment darkens.

DAWN

Nick wakes and sits up, rubbing the back of his neck and
stretching. He realizes Jay has vanished and scrambles—

IN BEDROOM

Nick finds Jay asleep in his bed.

He crawls beside Jay and takes him in his arms.

Jay stretches and SIGHS as he rolls over onto his back. He
opens his eyes and sees Nick's face. Jay smiles.

JAY

Good morning.

NICK

Good morning. How do you feel?

JAY
I feel like waking up with someone
is something I could get used to.

Nick kisses Jay. They make out and rub their bodies together
as the bedroom begins to fill with the soft morning light.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - DAY

Jay and Nick emerge from the building and walk to the sidewalk.
They glance in both directions.

NICK
We have a whole Saturday to ourselves.
Which way do you want to go?

JAY
Let's make things right today. We'll
only walk straight and take right
turns until we end up back here.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

A SERVER sets two plates in front of Jay and Nick at an outside
table. Jay and Nick dig into their food.

NICK
Mmm ... this brisket is incredible.

Jay reaches over with his fork and scoops up a bit of brisket.
He brings it toward his mouth and notices Nick staring.

JAY
Sorry. I shouldn't have—

NICK
No, I like that you felt comfortable
enough to do that.

JAY
Jordan and I used to do that with
each other all the time.

NICK
You still hunger for her, don't you?

JAY
Don't you still hunger for Catherine?

NICK
I feel like I've been eating the
same thing for fifteen years.

JAY
I'm envious of you. I never had the
chance to grow tired of my family.

NICK
I guess we always want what someone
else has.

Jay stares at his plate and begins to slip away.

Nick forks some food from the Jay's plate. They eat the food
and grin at each other.

EXT. HOME FURNISHINGS STORE - DAY

Handmade, contemporary furniture in different types of wood
sits in front of a small store down a village street.

Jay runs his hand across the furniture and smiles. Nick opens
the door and ushers Jay inside with a hand on his back.

INT. HOME FURNISHINGS STORE - CONTINUOUS

Jay sits in a Mission chair of dark-brown leather and wood.
He runs his hands across the smooth armrests.

JAY
Jordan and I planned to buy a chair
like this with an antique floor lamp.
We were going to read in it while
the other took care of the baby.

NICK
Buy it.

JAY
(standing)
It's in the past.

NICK
You could make it part of your
present.

JAY
(looking away)
I can't get it back to the apartment.

NICK
I can give you a hand.

JAY
No, I mean, I think it's against the
physics of my universe, like trying
to walk across a bridge.

NICK
Have you tried?

JAY
It's a big, expensive experiment.

Jay brushes by Nick.

Nick grabs Jay's arm and stops him.

NICK
If we're going to free you, maybe we
need to start pushing the boundaries.

JAY
Not today, Nick. It's too soon.

Nick loosens his grip and allows his hand to slide down Jay's arm into his hand and squeeze it.

EXT. MUSEUM - DAY

A modern building sits at the end of a landscaped green space.

JAY (V.O.)
I never think to come here.

INT. MUSEUM - CONTINUOUS

Nick and Jay stroll through a gallery and study the paintings.

NICK
Me, either.

They see a nineteenth-century paintings of young men bathing in a swimming hole and working class men wrestling and boxing, nude black-and-white photographs of laborers with bushy mustaches, and Greek statues of the ideal male form.

NICK (CONT'D)
Cody and I used to skinny dip in a pond in the woods. It's not the same as swimming in a pool, though.

JAY
We used to swim naked at the YMCA.

NICK
That's weird.

JAY
In the early twentieth century,
swimsuits were made of wool and bred
bacteria that spread cholera and
(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

typhus in the water. Boys and girls swam separately. Once chlorination and filtration improved, boys still swam nude until pools became open to all genders in the 1970s.

NICK

Fresh fruit, celery, cinnamon, and cholera ... You're a fount of knowledge.

Jay rolls his eyes and moves on to another painting.

NICK (CONT'D)

These remind me of how comfortable I felt being naked with Cody.

JAY

I guess clothes separate the man as much as they make him.

NICK

Probably why I hate wearing a suit.

JAY

You could wear your birthday suit.

They CHUCKLE.

Nick glances at the perfection of a headless Greek statue.

NICK

Then again, I don't think people would appreciate my body on display like this.

JAY

Why not?

NICK

I don't have a body like the guys on the fitness magazines.

JAY

The guys in fitness magazines are not necessarily healthy. Who has the time to hit the gym that much let alone stay on such a strict diet?

NICK

But you don't see bodies like mine on billboards and TV—just guys with six packs. I don't even like to take my shirt off in public anymore.

JAY

I'd rather see a regular guy over a male model any day because he's not artificial—he's real.

NICK

I guess I need to see more of those images before I can agree with you.

Nick moves on to another piece of art and leaves Jay reflecting on what Nick said.

EXT. THE UTOPIAN BUILDING - DAY

The windows gleam in the afternoon sunlight.

NICK (O.S.)

I swear I walked this entire floor and never saw this doorway.

JAY (O.S.)

You have to know where it is.

KEY SLIDES INTO LOCK AND TURNS

INT. THE UTOPIAN BUILDING - JAY'S STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Jay and Nick enter a tiny studio filled with a tripod, lighting equipment, reflectors, scrims, and a background stand with a light blue backdrop. Prints of photographs hang clipped to a wire with tiny metal clips.

Nick walks around and inspects the equipment and photographs.

Jay picks up a camera sitting next to an iMac on a desk. He snaps a picture of Nick.

NICK

(whirling around)

What are you doing?

JAY

(snapping more pics)

What does it look like I'm doing?

NICK

(turning away)

Don't waste your film.

JAY

(pursuing Nick)

It's a digital camera—no film.

NICK
(laughing)
Stop!

Jay takes another photograph, and then turns on lights.

JAY
You said you needed to see more bodies
like yours to agree with me about
how sexy regular guys are, so ...

NICK
Are you serious?

JAY
You're an attractive guy, Nick. I
want to show you what I see.

Nick LAUGHS and swings his arms.

NICK
Where do I stand? What do you want
me to do?

JAY
Just stand where you are and tell me
a story.

Jay moves closer and snaps photographs from different angles.

NICK
What kind of story?

JAY
Tell me about how you and Cody spent
your summers.

NICK
Well ... we'd head off into the woods
every morning. We'd catch bugs and
lizards and snakes. We'd pick
blackberries and gather pecans.
When it got hot in the afternoon,
we'd skinny dip and take naps on the
grass while the water evaporated
from our skin and you know ...

JAY
Why are you embarrassed about
masturbating with your best friend?

NICK
Because ... it's not polite to let
someone else see you naked.

JAY
(chuckling)
Polite?

NICK
That's what your parents tell you
when you're a kid—and, you know, sex
is dirty.

JAY
You're a grown man. Do you still
believe that?

NICK
(beat)
I guess I still do.

JAY
Take off your shirt.

NICK
What?

JAY
Take off your shirt. I want to prove
you have nothing to be ashamed of.

NICK
This feels weird.

JAY
I'll take mine off, too.

Jay strips off his shirt and waits as Nick slowly removes his
t-shirt. Jay lays them over the back of the chair.

Jay directs Nick to turn and look this way and that. Jay
encourages Nick while he snaps pictures.

Jay shows Nick some of the images on the camera's display.

NICK
Wow ... you're good.

JAY
With the same lighting, you look
just as handsome as the guys on the
covers of the fitness magazines.

NICK
Before I met Catherine, I used to
feel confident about myself when I'd
go out drinking with my buddies. I
was still hitting the gym on a regular
basis and I was still young and lean.

JAY
Yeah, like guys are supposed to look
in their twenties.

NICK
But now I'm getting closer to forty,
and I have the dad bod.

JAY
Every age has its own beauty. Now,
take off your shorts.

NICK
I don't know, Jay ...

JAY
How can I show you that you look
just as good as an underwear model
if you keep your shorts on?

Nick LAUGHS and stares at the floor.

Jay removes his jeans.

Nick SIGHS and steps out of his shorts. He hands them to
Jay, who lays them over the back of the chair.

Jay continues to snap more images of Nick from different angles
while talking to him and making him LAUGH.

JAY (CONT'D)
Let's imagine that you're thirteen
again, and I'm Cody, and we're just
goofing around.

Setting the camera down, Jay goes to a cart and retrieves a
bottle of oil. He rubs it over Nick's arms, legs, and torso,
and then adjusts Nick's hair.

Jay snaps more pictures.

Nick loosens up and begins aping he-man poses.

JAY (CONT'D)
Touch yourself.

NICK
How?

JAY
Get to know your body. Feel your
skin. Run your fingers through your
hair. It doesn't have to be sexy,
but it's okay if it is. Just explore!

Nick touches himself, revealing an emotional nakedness and intimacy. Jay and Nick maintain eye contact at all times.

Jay lowers the camera and gazes at Nick. He removes his boxer shorts. Nick pulls off his boxer briefs. Jay raises the camera and takes more pictures.

JAY (CONT'D)

Do you trust me?

NICK

Yes.

Jay attaches the camera to a tripod and picks up a remote. He steps behind Nick. Slowly, Jay begins touching Nick's face, neck, and chest in a familiar manner while snapping photographs. Nick's breath catches and his body shudders.

NICK (CONT'D)

Omigod ... I had no idea I was so sensitive in those places.

JAY

Not "I was"—I am. Pleasure doesn't necessarily have to be sexual.

Jay moves his hands down to Nick's stomach.

NICK

Don't!

JAY

Why not?

NICK

I'm ... fat.

JAY

You're not fat; you're normal.

NICK

I don't want to be ...

JAY

Normal? Then how about authentic?

Jay takes Nick's hands and moves them down to Nick's slight paunch.

JAY (CONT'D)

In Medieval times, men weren't concerned with six packs; they wanted to be shown in a way that demonstrated their success and wealth—by appearing well-fed.

NICK
I'm definitely well-fed.

JAY
Close your eyes. Feel the softness of your skin and the tickle of your body hair. Notice the uniqueness of your navel because of the way the doctor cut the cord. You've got a strong core. Feel the muscle under the flesh.

Jay lets go and Nick explores his abdomen.

Jay kneels down and kisses Nick's stomach and looks up at Nick.

JAY (CONT'D)
This is you, Nick. It's real and nothing to be ashamed of.

Nick shuts his eyes tightly.

Jay stands behind Nick and whispers in his ear.

JAY (CONT'D)
Trust me ...

Taking Nick's hands in his own, Jay explores Nick's body, bringing all the separate parts of Nick into a unified celebration of sensation.

Gradually, Nick responds to the stimulus. He SIGHS and MOANS and gives permission to his body to arch its back and writhe against Jay's. Nick opens his eyes and stares into the camera as he reaches around and kisses Jay.

INSERT PHOTOGRAPHS

A new Nick reveals himself through the array of Jay's images: celebratory and confident.

JAY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
When you look at these, do they remind you of your comfort with Cody?

NICK (O.S.)
Yeah, but I was wrong. Comfortable isn't what I felt with Cody; it was freedom.

A nude Nick stares directly into Jay's camera with one hand on his paunch while running the other through his hair. He demonstrates newfound acceptance of himself and strength in his vulnerability.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - EVENING

The sun grows heavier in the sky and casts long shadows on the building.

NICK (O.S.)
I want you inside me.

JAY (O.S.)
We don't have much time.

INT. LIMBAUX PLACE - JAY'S APARTMENT

Nick leans over and removes the lube and the brown bottle from the drawer. He lubricates Jay's penis and his own ass. Nick takes a hit of poppers and sits down on Jay's erection. He winces and then relaxes.

JAY
You okay?

Nick nods, and Jay thrusts slowly.

Nick bites his lower lip and then nods.

Jay thrusts again and Nick responds. They find a rhythm.

Their passion builds as their climaxes approach.

Jay clutches his chest, in pain, but he continues to fuck Nick. Eventually, his eyes roll backwards and he stills.

Nick remains motionless on top of Jay as the light fades.

Nick leans over and wraps his arms around Jay.

NICK
Sweet dreams, Jay ...

LATER

Nick lies besides Jay's corpse, his head resting on Jay's chest.

MORNING

Nick lies against the headboard with Jay's body resting against him.

Jay INHALES and opens his eyes.

Nick leans over and touches his forehead to Jay's. They grin and kiss.

LATER IN BATHROOM

Nick and Jay LAUGH and SING as they wash each other in the shower. As they rinse, Nick wraps his arms around Jay and pulls him against his body. They close their eyes and enjoy the sensation of the hot water and the closeness of the other.

JAY

Living with this curse is like taking a shower. It washes all the bullshit away. So what if you're a man. All that matters is this feels pure and real. Nothing else matters ...

EXT. ARMCHAIR TRAVELLER BOOKS - DAY

A tiny bookstore sits snug between two tall buildings.

JAY

Remember when you asked me how I coped with never leaving the island?

INT. ARMCHAIR TRAVELLER BOOKS - CONTINUOUS

Jay sits and spreads several photo books on the floor.

JAY

I read and look at pictures of all the places I want to visit. It helps me feel bigger than my situation.

NICK

Freedom?

JAY

(flipping pages)

I guess so. My imagination and memory are all I have left. Sometimes, I can't tell the difference between them. I can't remember what's true, so I quit trying.

NICK

Did you and Jordan travel much?

JAY

No, but she used to plan these potlucks with international themes. She'd invite our friends and neighbors, tell them to bring a dish, and she'd play world music cassettes. Scents of spices, conversation, laughter, and music would fill our apartment.

(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

We'd catch each other's eye from across the room, and I'd never felt closer to her except after everybody left, and we'd dance alone, hip to hip, the music passing from her body to mine and back again. We were in simpatico then, before ...

NICK

(picking up book)

Let's buy one, then.

JAY

I prefer to look at them here. I feel safest here in this room lined with shelves and hundreds of books.

NICK

You could start your own library--

JAY

You don't understand. I've never died here. I need a safe space ...

Jay stands and holds out his hand to Nick

JAY (CONT'D)

I like sharing things with you.

NICK

I like sharing things with you, too.

Nick takes Jay's hand, and Jay helps him to his feet.

As they walk toward the exit, they pass a mobile of the solar system and a package of glow-in-the dark stars.

JAY

I'd trade leaving this island for one chance to see the stars again. Those infinite points of light always made me believe anything is possible.

NICK

I've got an idea.

EXT. PLANETARIUM - DAY

Nick and Jay stand in front of the planetarium.

JAY

This is cheating.

NICK
Do you want rules or possibilities?

INT. PLANETARIUM - DAY

Nick and Jay sit by themselves and gaze up at endless stars.

Jay reaches for Nick's hand as he star gazes.

Nick smiles and squeezes Jay's hand.

Jay turns to Nick and mouths "Thank you."

EXT. HOME FURNISHINGS STORE - AFTERNOON

Nick guides Jay toward the front door.

JAY
What are we doing here?

NICK
After seeing the rest of the universe,
maybe we should start testing the
boundaries of your own.

Jay SIGHS and shakes his head. He follows Nick inside as
Wolf watches them from across the street.

INT. HOME FURNISHINGS STORE - CONTINUOUS

Nick leads Jay to the Mission-style chair.

Jay stares at it.

NICK
I know you want it, so what's stopping
you? If you don't have the money--

JAY
I have the money, Nick.

NICK
Then what are you afraid of?

Jay sits in the chair. He caresses the armrests.

JAY
Do you know how often I've made a
tiny change in my life to wake up
the next morning to find it gone?
The disappointment sits so heavy on
my chest it's hard to breathe. It's
easier to let things be.

NICK

Thirty-five years is a long time for things to stay the same. I thought you wanted possibilities.

Jay spies a framed vintage Life Magazine with the headline:
TO THE MOON AND BACK.

JAY

Go ask if they deliver.

Nick grins and wanders away to find a clerk.

Jay sits back in the chair and smiles, pleased with himself.

Turning around Jay rises and peers out the window. He shakes his head as if his eyes are playing tricks on him.

EXT. HOME FURNISHINGS STORE - AFTERNOON

Jay and Nick exit, carrying the chair. Walking backwards, Jay collides with a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN and knocks her down.

JAY

I'm so sorry.

Jay and Nick set the chair down.

JAY (CONT'D)

(helping her up)

Are you okay?

MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN

I'm fine. I should have been looking where I was going instead of my phone.

As the woman stands, Jay sees her face and freezes.

JAY

Jordan?

Nick looks up and watches them.

JORDAN

(smiling)

Yes, have we met before?

JAY

You don't remember me?

JORDAN

As I've gotten older, I'm afraid my ability to remember faces and names has waned. My husband teases me mercilessly about my Alzheimer's.

JAY
Husband?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN (O.S.)
Jordan!

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN rushes to Jordan's side and puts his arm around her.

Jay steps back.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

JORDAN
I'm fine. I wasn't paying attention
and bumped into these young men.
This one seems to know me.

The Middle-aged Man glowers at Jay.

JORDAN (CONT'D)
This is my husband, Jay. I don't
believe you reminded me of your name.

JAY
(offering his hand)
John.
(turning toward Nick)
And this is Nick.

They shake hands, the men eying each another.

JORDAN
And where exactly did we meet?

JAY
Oh, it was a party, a few years ago,
but I never forget a face.

Jay and the husband exchange a look.

JORDAN
Was it at the Morgans' Christmas
party? Or the Drummond's barbecue?

JAY
I can't recall. I only remember
lots of people, food, and music. I
believe we danced together and
laughed. Does that ring a bell?

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
We'd better be going, hon.

JORDAN
 (remembering something)
 Yes, we'd better. We're babysitting
 the grandkids tonight.

JAY
 You have children?

JORDAN
 Yes, a boy and a girl. We're very
 proud of them.

JAY
 You always wanted a boy and girl.

JORDAN
 You do seem vaguely familiar ...

MIDDLE-AGED MAN
 Jordan ...

JORDAN
 I know, I know—we need to be going.
 It was nice to see you again, John.
 It was a pleasure to meet you, Nick.

Jay and Nick watch Jordan walk away with her husband. Before they vanish around the corner, Jordan looks back at Jay as if she almost remembers him.

NICK
 Was that—

A truck HONKS its horn.

Jay and Nick pick up the chair and put it in the back of the truck. As Jay climbs into the passenger side of the truck, Nick notices Wolf turn and walk away.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - AFTERNOON

Thunder RUMBLES as the sky darkens and the light diminishes.

NICK
 That was your wife, wasn't it?

INT. LIMBAUX PLACE - JAY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jay sits in the Mission chair near the window and stares ahead.
 Jay takes a slug of whisky.

JAY
 Yes.

NICK
Why didn't she recognize you?

JAY
She's aged.

NICK
But you haven't. You look exactly
the same, don't you?

JAY
She has a boy and a girl ...

NICK
Her husband's name is Jay, too.
Doesn't that seem weird to you?

JAY
(looking at Nick)
I die every day at sunset. Nothing
seems weird to me.

Nick pulls his chair closer to Jay's.

NICK
I'm not going anywhere, Jay. No
matter what happens with the chair,
I guarantee I'll be here tomorrow.

JAY
Nick, you don't understand ...

NICK
I could feel you shut me out when
you saw Jordan. What's going on?

Jay sits back in the chair.

JAY
Jordan and I were happy together for
many years. We were expecting our
first child. Shortly before her due
date, the baby quit kicking. We
rushed to the emergency room, but
the doctor couldn't detect a
heartbeat. The baby was dead.

NICK
(taking Jay's hand)
I'm so sorry.

JAY
The Jordan I knew died at that moment.
(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

As I sat with her in her hospital room, only a shell remained. She eventually went into labor. We chose not to know the sex of the baby until it was born. It was a little girl. The nurse bathed her and brought her to us. We named her Gerta.

NICK

That's a pretty name.

JAY

Jordan wouldn't let me hold the baby; she clutched Gerta close to her breasts swollen with milk and rocked her endlessly. I ceased to exist.

NICK

That must have been painful.

JAY

I went home and fetched my camera. The nurse bathed Jordan and helped her dress. We put the baby into a christening gown that had been passed down in Jordan's family for generations. I took the most precious photograph of my life.

Jay reaches into his wallet and removes a snapshot. He gazes at it a moment, and then hands it to Nick.

INSERT PHOTOGRAPH

Jay smiles through his grief with his arm around a younger, shellshocked Jordan, who clutches a tiny stillborn infant.

BACK TO SCENE

NICK

She's beautiful.

JAY

Jordan screamed when the staff took Gerta away. She keened like a dying animal. She pointed at me and shouted, "This is all your fault! You'll pay for this!" The staff gave her a sedative to help her sleep and sent me home. When I returned the next day, Jordan was gone. All she left was her wedding ring.

NICK

Jesus ...

JAY

I waited for her, refusing to plan the funeral without her. I never left the house. I didn't want to miss her if she came home. After a week, I had to get out and walk. I had lost my child and wife. I had lost my reason for living. And then I woke up in this room.

NICK

(embracing Jay)

It's not your fault.

JAY

(breaking into sobs)

Why do I feel guilty, then? How long before I've paid for whatever I've done? When am I forgiven?

Nick helps Jay to the bed. They lie down, Nick spooning Jay, holding him tightly while thirty-five years of grief stampede out of his shaking body.

NICK

Just let it out, Jay.

JAY

Given the choice, I'd choose Jordan over you. Would you choose Catherine over me?

Nick winces.

NICK

Let it go, Jay, just let it go ...

Thunder RUMBLES.

LATER

Jay wakes and sees Nick smiling at him. He strokes Jay's hair in the glow from the lamp in the darkened room.

JAY

(bolting up)

What time is it?

NICK

(easing Jay down)

It's still daytime; it's just raining.

JAY
(covering his eyes)
That was my last secret. You know
everything about me now. Have I
scared you away?

NICK
It'll take more than that, Jay.

JAY
For so long, I couldn't remember
anything, but since we met, I've
been having these flashbacks.

NICK
Of what?

JAY
(shaking his head)
They're just glimpses, but they feel
different. It's not my imagination.

NICK
If you want me to stay, I can call
Catherine and give her an excuse.

JAY
No, I'll be fine. You should go
home and see your kids.

They lean up and sit, side by side, on the edge of the bed.

JAY (CONT'D)
I felt abandoned and forgotten for
so long. I don't feel alone, anymore.

Nick puts his arm around Jay's shoulders.

NICK
You'll never be alone with me around.

Jay lays his head on Nick's shoulder.

JAY
I had a Cody, too—my cousin Sam. I
never knew how much I missed him
until I met you.

NICK
I figured you did.

JAY
Sam was older than me. He went off
to college and disappeared one night.
(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

They found his body later, beaten to a pulp under some trash in an alley. They had to identify him with his dental records. I learned I had to hide in myself or I might die.

NICK

Why didn't you tell me sooner?

JAY

Because if I kept it to myself, I thought I was still in control. You've taught me I'm not in control of anything--and I like it.

NICK

While you were sleeping, I thought about the last time I saw my dad. I was trying to fly a kite in the front yard when he came home from work. He set down his briefcase and helped me get it in the air. I remember the feeling of him standing behind me with his hand on my shoulder. My mom always made a point of telling me she loved me several times a day, but my dad never did. He spent time with me when my mom was busy. He never had to tell me because I saw it in his eyes when he looked at me.

Jay lifts his head and kisses Nick gently. He rests his forehead against Nick's for a moment.

NICK (CONT'D)

What if the world just let us be--no more hiding in ourselves?

JAY

It's getting late. I'll walk you to the train station.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DUSK

Nick and Jay approach the entrance to the station, Jay's arm around Nick's shoulders. They stop and face each other.

JAY

I envy you going home to your family.

NICK

(chuckling)

I envy your freedom and solitude.

JAY
The grass is always greener, right?

NICK
This weekend's changed me somehow.
I feel pure and real.

JAY
Me, too. Who knows? Maybe you'll
rescue me after all.

NICK
Well ... see you later, then.

Nick turns and walks away toward the crosswalk.

JAY
Nick!

Jay runs to Nick and opens his mouth to speak but loses his nerve. They peer into each other's eyes and smile.

A breeze blows in from nowhere and thunder RUMBLES. Nick and Jay embrace as the sky falls out in a sudden summer storm.

Nick maintains his grip on Jay as his arm slides through his fingers and their hands meet. Nick squeezes Jay's and lets their fingertips slip apart. Nick steps into the street.

FLASHBACK

-- A YOUNGER VERSION OF MIDDLE-AGED MAN turns and smiles at Jay in the Happy Hour Bar.

-- The Younger Version of Middle-Aged Man and Jay have sex in Jay's apartment.

-- Jay sits up in bed in the morning light, his eyes darting around the apartment.

BRAKES SQUEAL

BACK TO SCENE

Jay lunges into the street.

JAY (CONT'D)
Nick!

A speeding car loses control on the slick asphalt and skids, hitting Nick and knocking him in the air. He lands in a broken heap in the street as the car speeds away.

Jay drops to his knees and cradles Nick's head in his lap.

JAY (CONT'D)
Nick! Omigod, Nick ...

Nick opens his mouth. Blood oozes over his lips.

JAY (CONT'D)
No, no, no, no, no ...

Wolf steps up behind Jay.

WOLF
Your time is up, Jay. You're free now.

JAY
I don't want to be free! Save him!

WOLF
I can't. You know the rules.

JAY
(leaping to his feet)
You're lying, Wolf! You've kept me a prisoner for over three decades!

WOLF
No, you held the key all this time, but you couldn't leave the past behind. You had to keep punishing yourself, but you're free now.

JAY
No, not without Nick.

WOLF
The path you shared with Nick parts now. You both must travel alone.

JAY
But Nick's part of me now. I can't go on alone.

Wolf crouches and removes Nick's keys, iPhone, and wallet. He hands them to Jay.

WOLF
You're not alone, Jay. Go home to your new family.

JAY
They're not my family!

WOLF
Nick can't return to them. Do you think he'd want you to abandon them?

JAY
(shutting his eyes)
You're killing me.

WOLF
You envied Nick for having a family
and home to return to, and now Life
is offering it to you.

JAY
But ...

WOLF
You didn't believe another woman
would fall in love with you after
Jordan left. You thought you failed
her and weren't man enough. You put
up your guard and kept all the dames
at bay. But you never expected a
man to fall in love with you—or to
love him back. Pure and real ...

Wolf opens Jay's hand and places the keys, wallet, and iPhone
in Jay's palm, closing his fingers around it.

JAY
Will I ever see Nick again?

WOLF
You can't go back. There's nothing
left for you here now. Go home.

JAY
(kneeling)
I lied, Nick. I would choose you.

Jay closes Nick's eyes and hurries away.

EXT. RIVER BANK - NIGHT

Jay stops before the historic suspension bridge with its lights
blazing against the black sky. He turns his face up and gazes
at the stars. Tears run down his cheeks.

Tentatively, Jay crosses the bridge, gaining confidence with
each step. He notices the passing bicyclists and runners.

EXT. TRAIN STATION PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jay raises the key fob and clicks the button. The headlights
of a car flash. He maneuvers to his way to his car.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jay sits in the driver's seat and runs his hands over the steering wheel and dashboard. He notices the air freshener.

Shaken, he starts to light a cigarette, pauses, and then tosses the pack and lighter aside.

Jay rummages through Nick's wallet. He sees his face on the driver's license and himself in Nick's family snapshots.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Jay staggers in the front door. He scans his new home.

IN BILLY'S BEDROOM

Jay gazes down at Billy asleep in his bed. He tussles his hair and tentatively leans over and kisses the boy's head.

IN NURSERY

Jay peeks at Hunter in his crib and pulls the blanket up over the sleeping toddler.

IN BEDROOM

Jay stops in the doorway and studies an unconscious Catherine, with a book laying open beside her.

Jay takes the book and sets it on the nightstand.

CATHERINE

(waking up)

I'm sorry, I must have dozed off.

JAY

It's okay. You must be exhausted after your drive.

Jay begins to undress.

Catherine watches him.

CATHERINE

Have you lost weight?

JAY

Not that I'm aware of.

CATHERINE

You look different somehow.

Jay removes his underwear and remains motionless, so Catherine can look at his body. He reaches over and turns off the lamp.

Jay climbs on top of Catherine. They kiss, gently, and then more passionately. They begin to make love.

CATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
God, I've missed you so much ...

IN THE MORNING

Billy runs to the bed and pulls Jay's eyelids open.

BILLY
Are you in there, Daddy?

Jay starts, but then CHUCKLES.

JAY
No daddies here--just tickle monsters!

Jay GROWLS and grabs Billy, pulling the boy on top of him and tickling him. Billy GIGGLES.

IN KITCHEN

Jay enters with Billy and sets him in a chair at the table.

Catherine smiles at Jay. He leans in for a lingering kiss.

CATHERINE
I made your favorite for breakfast.

JAY
Oh?

Jay and Catherine sit at the table. She serves pancakes to every one. Jay trades smiles with Billy and Catherine. He notices Hunter staring at him as if he were a stranger.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

Jay exits, dressed in a button-down shirt and khakis.

The black cat darts into the bushes.

Jay kneels and offers his hand. Cautiously, the black cat emerges from the bushes and sniffs it and rubs against Jay's hand. Jay scratches it behind the ear as it PURRS.

Glancing up, Jay sees the skyline of the city in the distance.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Jay walks toward the station from the parking lot, but then sees the suspension bridge. He walks onto the bridge.

IN PARK - MORNING

Jay pauses at the spot where he and Nick stood together the week before. He scans around him, waiting. After a few moments, Jay SIGHS and walks on.

Jay pauses at the display window of a travel agency. He studies the posters for various destinations. He looks back in the direction of the park, and then goes inside.

INT. LIMBAUX PLACE - JAY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Nick sits up in bed and GASPS. He grabs his chest as his eyes dart around the bedroom. As his breathing returns to normal, he realizes he and Jay have switched lives.

Nick climbs out of bed and sits in the Mission chair. He runs his hands across the armrest and scans the room.

NICK
(whispering)
Careful what you wish for ...

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Jay walks through the maze of cubicles and returns his coworkers' greetings.

IN NICK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jay leans back in his chair and survey's his desk.

Mike and Myrtle enter and begin speaking to him.

EXT. LIMBAUX PLACE - EVENING

Nick WHISTLES as he leaves, hands in his pockets. He takes a right at the corner and then a left at the next intersection.

EXT. CITY STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Jay turns onto the street Nick just left behind. Jay searches street numbers and names and passes by the Happy Hour Bar without recognizing it. When Jay finds himself in front of the Utopian Building again, he SIGHS, and enters the subway.

EXT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - EVENING

WOLF (O.S.)
Jack and Coke, right?

INT. HAPPY HOUR BAR - CONTINUOUS

Wolf sets the rocks glass on the bar in front of Nick.

NICK
I guess we'll be spending a lot of
time together, Wolf.

WOLF
(drying glass)
That all depends on you, Nick.

EXT. TRAIN STATION PARKING LOT - EVENING

Jay turns back and peers across the river at the park.

EXT. RIVER BANK - EVENING

Nick starts to cross the bridge, but the increasing pain he
feels with each steps forces him to return to the river bank.

Looking across the river in the direction of the house he
shared with Catherine and the boys, Nick senses Jay's presence.
He SIGHS and turns to leave.

Passing a HANDSOME MAN walking with his arm around a BEAUTIFUL
WOMAN, Nick catches the man checking him out. The man grins
unapologetically, and Nick CHUCKLES.

Noticing the sun setting behind the skyline, Nick glances at
his watch and disappears into the heart of the city.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Jay kneels and rubs the black cat's head. Glancing toward
the city, he sees a shooting star and stands.

JAY
Sweet dreams, Nick ...

Jay opens the front door and steps back into his new life.