

Damaged

By

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FADE IN:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nice apartment but sparsely furnished. Nothing on the walls. Not much furniture and some unpacked boxes. NICK FLAHERTY (mid-30's) and ANGELA (mid-20's, hooker, black) are playing chess on a pullout couch. She is scantily clad and has a computer open.

NICK

Your turn.

ANGELA

I know, hang on. Let's see.

(She is staring at computer)

It says I gotta move my horse thing.

NICK

Knight.

ANGELA

(laughing)

Knight. I know, Just fucking with you. I gotta move my horsey knight here.

Angela looks around.

How come you don't unpack? Maybe get some furniture. I think this chess board is worth more than everything else here combined.

Nick quickly makes a move on the board.

At least a table so we can sit up. I mean if we aren't ever gonna...you know, fuck.

NICK

Your move.

ANGELA

I had some crazy ass john's in my day but you may be the weirdest. I get that some guys are lonely and just want to talk. But you don't say shit. Just play chess. And I pretend to play chess. Don't get me wrong, I like this part of my week, but mothafucka, you just weird.

Angela stands up and stretches.

(CONTINUED)

This cheap ass sofa is killing my back.

Angela picks up a picture. It is of a woman and 2 small kids, boy and a girl.

ANGELA  
This your family?

NICK  
You gonna play?

Nick gets up and gently takes the picture away.

ANGELA  
They are beautiful. I have a son. He is 5. That's why I do this. Trying to make a better life for him. When his daddy died I was left with nothing. Less than nothing really. I have been saving to get a place to live for my son and me. All the places I can afford right now are either shit holes or I gotta bus him an hour to get to school.

Nick finally looks at her.

ANGELA  
I am talking too much again.

Nick smiles.

Why don't you just play against the computer? On the internet? Or find some old folks home?

NICK  
You smell better.

Now it's Angela's turn to smile. Her cell phone alarm goes off.

Ok sugar. It has been....fun. As always. Same time next week?

NICK  
I will call you.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S CAR - NIGHT

Nick is in a bad part of town. He sees the man he is looking for.

DEALER

What you want? Uppers, downers, weed?

NICK

You got those pink ones that help you sleep?

DEALER

No, but I got something else. It's not for recreational use though. Strong ass shit right here. Do not operate heavy machinery or sign any legal documents and all that (laughing).

Nick takes the bottle.

DEALER

You want any party stuff? I got just about everything. I got this new stuff. Really a trip. Some guys can do this superhero shit. Strength of 10 men. Hey, maybe you need some shit that gets your dick hard?

NICK

I really just need to sleep for awhile.

DEALER

You know they sell stuff at the drug store. Ambien and shit.

NICK

They don't work anymore.

Nick hands the dealer some money and takes a couple of pills out of the bottle.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S CAR - NIGHT

Nick pulls over in a residential neighborhood. He is looking at a particular house. He can see a shadow of a woman in the living room window. A man enters and Nick can see the man and woman embrace. Nick takes a couple of pills and washes them down from a flask.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick is tossing and turning on the foldout bed. Wide awake. He goes to the bathroom and takes a handful of pills. He splashes water on his face and stares at himself in the mirror.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS DEPOT - DAY

DANI SCOTT (Very attractive, plainly dressed, late 20's) gets off a bus. She takes her bag and walks inside. She is wearing headphones and singing to herself.

She makes her way to the counter and takes one earbud out.

DANI

Is there a phone here that I can  
call a taxi?

A booming male voice.

VOICE (O.C.)

That won't be necessary.

Dani turns and instantly recognizes the voice. She takes out the other bud.

DANI

I should have known they would call  
you.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY

Nick is sitting alone in a cubicle. MS. WATERS the loan officer walks in holding a file.

MS. WATERS  
Thank you for waiting Mr. Flaherty.

NICK  
So what's the plan?

MS. WATERS  
Let's see, with the 2 new commissions you got, we should be ready to go.

NICK  
Should I start looking?

MS. WATERS  
When are those checks coming?

NICK  
Should be here anytime. This is the first time they have been late.

MS. WATERS  
We can't do the papers til the checks come, but why not start looking?

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick works in a large office building. His office is on the executive level. A group of receptionists in the middle and the managers offices are on the outside walls.

Nick's office has a desk, a table, several chairs. It is better furnished than his apartment. The name on the door is Nicholas Flaherty, Account Manager.

Nick is looking at a house on the internet.

Knock on the door, it open's without an answer. BRUCE (Nick's boss, About 50) enters.

Nick quickly closes the internet site.

(CONTINUED)

BRUCE

You shut that down pretty fast. You looking at teenage boys again.

NICK

Good morning.

BRUCE

Great job on the Coleman signing. How did you turn that around so fast?

NICK

Same as always, got him drunk.

BRUCE

Whatever works. Should be a good commission on this one for you.

NICK

Guess so.

BRUCE

Any plans for it? Go treat yourself man. I can't remember the last time you smiled around here. Take your kids somewhere.

NICK

Maybe.

(Beat)

I haven't even gotten my commissions from last quarter yet.

BRUCE

I will call accounting again.

NICK

I would like to know when they are coming.

BRUCE

Jesus man, lighten up. You are single, making great money, not bad looking. But you are fucking miserable.

NICK

Not bad looking?

BRUCE

(Laughing)

Yeah, after 3 or 4 drinks you might pass as do-able.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Thanks.

BRUCE

Hey, after work we are getting hammered. I got these two chicks lined up. They used to be strippers. Fake tits and desperation. Its gonna be epic!

NICK

You are 50 years old! Don't say epic.

(Beat)

Why are you still chasing it?

BRUCE

Hey if it isn't me some other fucker is gonna score with these chicks. They are practically giving it away. And a guy like me. I love it.

NICK

I have seen some of the girls you date. I will pass thanks.

BRUCE

I don't care what they look like. I mean really...pussy is pussy. Am I right? Of course I am.

NICK

It's 8:30 in the morning. I really don't want to be thinking about that. Plus hey man, may not mean anything to you, but these women are somebody's daughters or mothers.

BRUCE

A couple of em have been somebody's grandma's (laughing).

CUT TO:

INT. CANDY ASSES PUB - NIGHT

Nice place. Jukebox is rocking. Pool table and vlt's. A couple of the regulars having the usual arguments. Nick is sitting alone at the bar. Bruce is talking to his two blonds. 30-40 people. CANDACE, the owner of the bar, is working.

(CONTINUED)

CANDACE

Hey Nick, why aren't you over there being a good wing man?

NICK

He can handle himself.

CANDACE

If there ever is a guy who needs to get laid its you.

NICK

I am saving myself. For you.

CANDACE

Gross. Hey, do me a favor. I gotta run downstairs for a few minutes, watch the bar for me?

NICK

I got it.

Dani enters, and walks up to the bar. Jumpin Jack Flash starts on the jukebox.

DANI

I am looking for Candace.

NICK

She just had to run downstairs for something.

Dani nods to Nick and walks behind the bar and before Nick can say anything she grabs a beer and sits down. She starts moving to the music.

DANI

(Singing along with Jumpin Jack Flash)

I was raised by two lesbo hags.

Nick stares at her speechless.

DANI

But its alright now, if I gets the cash. Jumping Jack Flash gives you gas gas gas.

Dani notices Nick is staring at her.

DANI

I know, I am a horrible singer.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Well, at least you get the words wrong.

Dani frowns at Nick and is about to speak when Candace returns.

CANDACE

Hey kiddo, what a surprise. When did you get into town?

DANI

A couple of days ago. You know how they are. Took me awhile to escape.

Nick can't take his eyes off of Dani. Candace notices.

CANDACE

Dani, this is Nick. One of my regulars.

DANI

Hey Nick.

NICK

Hello.

Nick reaches up to shake Dani's hand but she doesn't see, leaving Nick with his hand out awkwardly.

CANDACE

How long you in town for?

DANI

I haven't decided yet. I don't have any plans. (looking around) Where is it?

CANDACE

Where is what?

DANI

You know. The machine.

CANDACE

Dani, no. Not in here. I got a perfectly good jukebox.

DANI

If you don't I will bring my own.

(CONTINUED)

CANDACE  
(laughing)  
I still got a couple hours here.  
You want to wait around or can we  
catch up tomorrow?

DANI  
Come out to the lake tomorrow.

CANDACE  
Alright. I will be out there before  
supper.

(Beat)  
Dani, you going straight home?

DANI  
Yes, Candy, I will be fine.

Dani leaves with Nick watching her all the way.

CANDACE  
What the hell was that?

NICK  
What?

CANDACE  
You were staring at her.

NICK  
No I wasn't. I looked.

CANDACE  
Bullshit you looked. That's my  
little cousin and you are not  
getting near her.

NICK  
You just finished telling me I need  
to get laid.

CANDACE  
Not her Nick.

NICK  
I just looked.

CUT TO:

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

A pick up game. Nick is on one team. His brother TOMMY FLAHERTY (about 30) is playing opposite him. They trash talk and play hard. Bumping, pushing, a few elbows.

After the game.

TOMMY

You gotta play more. You move like an old man out there.

NICK

I don't have the time I used to. Besides, I still kick your ass.

TOMMY

Mom asked me to make sure you bring the kids on Saturday.

NICK

For what?

TOMMY

You know why. It's Dad's birthday. Look, just show up, have some cake, we will sing the damn song. It will be over before you know it.

NICK

I will have to check with Jenn. She hates when I spring this shit on her.

TOMMY

I already called her. You are picking the kids up about 3.

NICK

You did what? You called my ex-wife?

TOMMY

I knew you wouldn't.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANI'S PARENTS POOL AREA - DAY

Dani and Candace are sunning by the pool.

CANDACE

So how was it this time?

DANI

I felt like a zombie most of the time. I know they help me but after a while I just have to get out of there.

CANDACE

I am happy to see you. How are they taking it (she nods towards the house)?

DANI

You know. They can't relax when I am around. Guess I can't blame them.

CANDACE

You will always be Daddy's little girl.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE A FIXER UPPER HOUSE - DAY

Nick is on the front sidewalk talking to a REALTOR (Red Jacket) standing next to a for sale sign.

REALTOR

This could be a great investment for you. Especially for someone who knows how to fix it up.

NICK

I think this is the one. I will call the bank in the morning.

REALTOR

How long til you get the financing?

NICK

Just waiting for a couple checks to clear and then cash in my company stock.

CUT TO:

INT. ALBERT AND GRACE FLAHERTY RESIDENCE - DAY

Family is sitting around the table. Birthday cake and the birthday song. Nick and his kids, ROBIN (13) and WYATT (9). Tommy. Nick's parents, GRACE and ALBERT (both about 65).

Grace brings a birthday cake that has two number 6 candles lit.

WYATT

Did you make a wish grandpa?

ALBERT

At my age I just wish to make it through the night without pissing the bed.

ROBIN

Ewww...Grandpa!

Cake is passed around. Nick doesn't join in on the party.

Later they are in the games room.

ALBERT

(To Tommy)

How is that new development in the east end?

TOMMY

Its a real good deal. Most of the lots are sold. I have contracts for the houses. But I always have the same problem. I don't have enough time to supervise the crews.

ALBERT

Too bad your brother doesn't do construction anymore.

TOMMY

My brother? Did he ever do construction?

NICK

I am right here.

ALBERT

Hard to tell sometimes.

TOMMY

Really could use you right now Nick.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

What could you possibly need me for. Those places you build are awful.

TOMMY

Hey, we do good work!

NICK

You know what I mean. You drive down the block in these new subdivisions and all you see are garages. People live behind their garages. Every house is the same. Would lose my mind.

TOMMY

How is the insurance business treating you anyway? Nothing like a little creativity there hey.

NICK

Come on kids, we should get going.

WYATT

No, Uncle Tommy promised to play darts.

TOMMY

Yes I did, come on.

ALBERT

Come on Robin, lets kick their butts.

Tommy, Albert, and the kids leave to the next room.

Nick is left with his mother.

GRACE

Why don't you ask your father to play? It would mean a lot to him. And it is his birthday.

NICK

Mom, I don't play chess anymore.

GRACE

Why not? You were so good and you used to love it.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

He used to love it.

GRACE

I don't think you would have won as much as you did if you didn't love it.

CUT TO:

EXT. JENN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nick is dropping the kids off. Jenn is coming out the front door. Its a modest bungalow with a driveway on one side.

JENNIFER

Nick. Hey kids, go on in and start on your homework. I gotta talk to your dad.

NICK

Sorry, I gotta run. By kids, see you next week.

WYATT

Bye Dad, love you.

Robin waves without looking.

JENNIFER

It will just take a second.

(beat)

You are late with the child support again. The kids tuitions are overdue.

NICK

I know, its just a cash flow thing right now. I will drop off half Tuesday or Wednesday. The rest I can bring by here in a week or two.

JENNIFER

You don't have to drive all the way out here just to drop a check.

NICK

Just want to make sure you get it.

(Beat)

And then I get to see the kids more.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

Look, just call first. ok?

NICK

Sure sure. It looks like those eaves are getting full again. I can clean those out when I drop by again.

JENNIFER

This isn't your house anymore. We can handle it.

Nick is still looking at the house, pretending not to hear her.

NICK

And those shingles on the east corner need to be replaced.

Beat

JENNIFER

(Frustrated)

There is no easy way to break this to you. I am getting married.

Now Nick looks at her.

NICK

What? Jesus Christ Jenn. It's barely been a year.

JENNIFER

It's been over two Nick. I just wanted you to hear it from me and not the kids.

A few beats.

NICK

I will send the fucking checks.

Nick rushes to his car, slams the door and races off.

CUT TO:

INT. CANDY ASSES PUB - NIGHT

Place is packed. Nick is alone at the bar. Dani is part of a group singing karaoke in one corner. She sings very loud and very off key. She is currently butchering a song.

Candace notices Nick is drumming his fingers on the bar to the beat of the music.

CANDACE

(To Nick)

You are in a less grumpy mood than usual.

NICK

Am I usually grumpy?

CANDACE

Usually.

NICK

Today was a better than usual day.

CANDACE

Good, you tend to suck the atmosphere out of this place most nights.

NICK

Speaking of atmosphere, (nodding to Dani) Does she ever stop?

CANDACE

Unfortunately no.

NICK

Does she know how bad she is?

CANDACE

Yeah she does, but Dani has never been one to care about things like that.

Dani's song ends and she comes over to the bar and pours herself some water.

NICK

You look like you are having fun.

Dani just nods.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

We met the other day. I am Nick.

DANI

I remember, the music critic.

NICK

Sorry bout that. Hey, do you take requests?

Before she could answer Bruce comes over and slaps Nick on the back.

BRUCE

Nicholas! Lets go buddy. We are partying tonight.

NICK

Thanks but I am good right here.

BRUCE

Look man, I have 3 ex-wives. I know what you gotta do to get over them. Tonight we have one big blow-out and then we find you a real nice girl with great big titties and low self-esteem.

NICK

Hey, relax. I was just talking to...

Nick turns to introduce Dani but she has gone back to the karaoke.

BRUCE

She looks real interested in you.

NICK

We were having a nice conversation til you cock-blocked me.

BRUCE

Well there's your problem. Women don't want a conversation. They want you to grab their hair and tell them how it's gonna be.

NICK

This how you ended up with 3 ex-wives.

(CONTINUED)

BRUCE

Hey, I treated 2 of those broads like gold. Come on, I need you tonight. There are too many chicks and if one or 2 wander off then the whole heard goes with them.

NICK

Ok, I will come with you tonight but lay off the advice for me.

BRUCE

Epic! I mean....very good. Lets get out of here.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE CLUB - NIGHT

The group has grown. Bruce knows them all. Nick is waiting at the bar for a drink when he sees Angela (hooker) sitting alone.

NICK

Hello again.

ANGELA

Hey...Mr. Chessman. What are you doing out of your apartment.

NICK

Not sure really. You, um working?

ANGELA

No, believe it or not I do have a social life.

NICK

(embarrassed)

Oooops.

ANGELA

It's ok. I am hear with a couple of friends who seem to have ditched me. To tell you the truth I would much rather be at home with my boy.

A few beats.

ANGELA

Can I tell you something?

Nick looks at her.

(CONTINUED)

ANGELA  
I am thinking of quitting.

NICK  
Me too.

Bruce comes over to the bar.

BRUCE  
See, there you go. Find yourself a hottie.

(To Angela)  
Show my boy here a good time. He is feeling sorry for himself.

(To the bartender)  
Get these 2 lovebirds a couple of drinks on me.

Bruce leaves

NICK  
Sorry bout that.

ANGELA  
He a friend of yours?

NICK  
Friend? Not sure. He is my boss though.

ANGELA  
He is a freaky motherfucker.

Nick figures out what she means.

NICK  
He is a...a client?

ANGELA  
Was. One time. One time only.

NICK  
I can imagine why.

ANGELA  
First he wanted me to shave his back and then I had to hold him while he cried about his mother for an hour.

NICK  
Isn't there some sort of client-hooker confidentiality thing?

ANGELA

(laughing)

Don't worry baby, I don't tell anybody about your chess fetish. So why you feeling sorry for yourself?

Nick doesn't answer.

ANGELA

Ah, women. Judging from your apartment its been awhile and you are having trouble letting go.

NICK

I am gonna go. This isn't working for me.

ANGELA

I am sorry, I know its none of my business.

Bruce returns.

BRUCE

Hey Nick. I gotta interrupt.  
(To Angela)  
Do I know you?

NICK

I was just leaving.

BRUCE

Listen, buddy we gotta talk.

NICK

Monday.

BRUCE

Monday will be too late.

Nick is gone.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S CAR - NIGHT

Nick drives past his dealer's spot. He stops but does not get out of the car. Before his dealer spots him Nick drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. PIZZA PLACE - DAY

Nick is with his kids.

ROBIN

Can you please please ask Mom for me?

NICK

I am not even sure its a good idea.

ROBIN

Sarah's parents say its ok. Mom is just being a douche.

NICK

Hey....don't call your Mother a douche.

The WAITRESS comes with the bill and Nick hands her a card.

ROBIN

Heard you call her that.

Nick opens his mouth but no words come out.

WYATT

Are we going on a vacation this year?

NICK

(relieved)

I dunno, where would you like to go?

WYATT

Camping.

NICK

Camping?

ROBIN

No way.

The waitress is having trouble with the card and her portable debit machine.

NICK

You mean like in a tent? In the woods?

(CONTINUED)

WYATT

Yeah, we can take bikes and have a campfire.

WAITRESS

I am sorry sir, but this card is being declined.

NICK

That's my corporate card. Are you sure?

WAITRESS

I have tried 3 times.

Nick is confused but digs cash out of his wallet.

NICK

Camping hey?

EXT. OUTSIDE AT A DINER PATIO - DAY

Nick is enjoying a lunch by himself. He sees Dani across the street coming out of a high-end department store carrying several bags.

Nick jumps up and quickly drops a \$20 on the table and leaves his lunch half-eaten.

NICK

Hi again.

DANI

(Beat while she places him)  
Oh hi, didn't recognize you without a drink in your hand.

NICK

Ouch, guess I deserve that. I see you are doing a little shopping. High end tastes.

DANI

I packed a little too light. Looks like I will be staying longer so I picked up a few things.

NICK

Let me help you.

(CONTINUED)

DANI

Its ok I've-

The booming voice from before is there. An imposing older man.

VOICE

We are fine.

The man with the voice takes a couple of the bags and puts them in the back of his Mercedes. He looks at Nick with disdain.

VOICE

(To Dani)

Lets go, you have an appointment.

DANI

Guess I gotta go.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick enters the lobby of his office. A crowd of employees has gathered and all look shocked/upset. Nick finds his secretary.

NICK

What's going on?

SECRETARY

Oh Mr. Flaherty. You haven't heard?

NICK

Heard what?

SECRETARY

Bruce bankrupted the company. It looks like he stole everything.

NICK

You're joking.

SECRETARY

No, all of our paychecks bounced this weekend.

NICK

Where is Bruce?

(CONTINUED)

SECRETARY

They think he left the country.

NICK

What about our stocks?

SECRETARY

Worthless.

Nick is more than stunned. He hangs around a little until he is sure nothing can be done. He goes to his office and picks up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY

Nick is sitting in the same chair. Ms. Waters is at her desk.

MS. WATERS

I am so sorry Mr. Flaherty. I have never seen this happen before.

NICK

What do I do now? I gave them a deposit. It was all the cash I had.

MS. WATERS

Your deposit will hold the property for 5 more days. Is there anyone you can go to? Family? Friends?

NICK

Not with that kind of money.

MS. WATERS

I am so sorry.

CUT TO:

INT. CANDY ASSES PUB - NIGHT

Nick is sitting at the bar. Alone. Dani and her crew are singing karaoke in another corner.

Nick is chugging shots as fast as the bartender can pour.

Candace comes over and sits beside Nick.

(CONTINUED)

CANDACE

Think you have had enough. Can I call you a cab?

NICK

I am fine.

Nick motions to the bartender for another.

CANDACE

You can barely sit on that stool. Go home and sleep it off.

NICK

And then what? What the fuck do I do after I sleep?

CANDACE

Nick. I know this has been shitty, but you will be fine.

NICK

(Louder and agitated)

Fine! Fine! What the fuck anybody know about fine.

CANDACE

Please don't make this ugly.

NICK

Takes his half full glass and throws it across the room at the karaoke screen.

The room goes silent. Everyone stares at Nick.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick is alone with a bottle of whiskey in his hand. The picture of his family beside him. He drinks straight from the bottle.

Nick gets up from his chair and walks to the bathroom and opens the drawer with all the pills. He looks at the bottle, about 50 pills. He takes the pills and his bottle of whiskey to the living room. He finds a pen and a pad of paper and begins to write.

He folds the completed note and places it on the table beside the pills.

(CONTINUED)

Nick looks at the picture of his family and tears start to flow. He slowly begins alternating handfuls of pills and chugs of whiskey. He continues the process until the pills are gone.

He is getting groggy. Struggles to stand and picks up the note. He needs to hold on to furniture. Still holding the picture of his family. He finally makes it to the bathroom and rips the note and drops most of it in the toilet, some of it falls on the floor. He goes to flush, stumbles and falls, cracking his chin on the counter. Nick's unconscious and bleeding on the floor.

DREAM MONTAGE

Nick's in his old house with his family. One of the kid's birthday's. Its a dream and they don't know he is there. other hallucinations follow. Like they are unaware Nick is videotaping them.

In and out of consciousness. Unaware of where he is, can't see. Bleeding from a cut on his chin.

Nick hears voices, male female, but he can't make out what they are saying. He can't open his eyes. He senses a bright light. Tommy?

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Nick opens his eyes but has no idea where he is. A NURSE is checking on a machine beside him.

NURSE

Hey, you're awake. How you feel?

Nick tries to answer but words don't come.

Tommy appears within his vision.

TOMMY

You goddamned stupid-

Nick is sleeping again.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICAL OFFICES - DAY

A very expensive sedan pulls up to the front of the building. Dani gets out of the passenger side. The passenger window rolls down.

VOICE

I will be waiting here for you.

Dani walks into the building and we follow her. She goes to the elevators but doesn't push a button. She turns and sees the car drive away and Dani heads out the back doors.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Nick is awake and watching tv. Tommy comes in.

TOMMY

I oughta kick your ass.

NICK

What?

TOMMY

You going to pretend nothing happened?

NICK

I had trouble sleeping and took a few too many pills. Maybe drank too much.

TOMMY

A mistake? Fuck you mistake. Jesus Fucking Christ Nick! You got kids.

NICK

Leave me alone.

TOMMY

I can't do that. Your ass is mine now.

NICK

What the fuck are you talking about?

TOMMY

I got a judge to declare you incompetent.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

What?

TOMMY

It was easy, I found your note.

NICK

What note?

Tommy brings a plastic bag out of his pocket with the ripped up bits of paper.

TOMMY

Your suicide note.

(a few beats. Oh, that note.)

Here is the deal. You have no job,  
and no money. You work for me now.

NICK

I don't want-

TOMMY

Doesn't matter what you want. And  
while you are working for me, you  
will see someone about the bullshit  
in your head that made you do this.

NICK

Fuck that!

TOMMY

No, fuck you. And if you either  
fail to show up at work, or you  
fail to see a shrink, I have the  
power to have your ass thrown in  
the psych ward.

NICK

Bullshit.

Tommy pulls another piece of paper out of his jacket and  
smiles.

FADE TO:

EXT. JOB SITE - DAY

Nick is at work, going over blueprints with a couple of  
staff. Tommy drives up in his work truck (Flaherty  
Construction on the door).

(CONTINUED)

NICK

What kind of a shit show you got going on here?

TOMMY

What?

NICK

You got the wrong shingles over there and the plumber you hired doesn't know anything about plumbing. I feel like I am on candid fucking camera out here.

TOMMY

Glad to have you dealing with this instead of me (laughing). Get in.

NICK

Where we going?

TOMMY

You have an appointment.

NICK

No, I should stick around.

TOMMY

Get in the fucking truck.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICAL OFFICES - DAY

The same office building where we saw Dani earlier.

Tommy pulls up to the front, but instead of stopping he finds a parking spot and gets out with Nick.

NICK

Where the fuck are you going?

TOMMY

I ain't stupid. I am making sure you go.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick and Tommy enter the outer office. There is a very pretty, and very well built RECEPTIONIST seated out front. Both men notice

TOMMY  
Holy shit!

NICK  
Easy big boy.

Nick takes a seat against a wall. Tommy decides to check Nick in.

TOMMY  
Nick Flaherty to see Dr. Levine.

RECEPTIONIST  
Ok, Mr. Flaherty. Since this is your first time here I am going to need you to fill out this questionnaire.

TOMMY  
Oh, I am not Nick. That's Nick over there. He is the one with the...you know.

Tommy makes a circle motion outside his ear (crazy).

The receptionist gives him a look of annoyance.

TOMMY  
My name is Tommy. I um didn't get your name.

RECEPTIONIST  
No, you didn't. She stands up and walks back to the filing area.

Tommy walks over to where Nick is sitting. He is smiling to himself.

NICK  
Didn't I teach you anything?

About 10 minutes later.

Nick and Tommy are sitting in the reception area. Tommy is looking at a magazine.

(CONTINUED)

TOMMY

Who would you rather do? Angelina  
or Jennifer?

Nick just stares at his little brother.

TOMMY

Maybe you prefer Brad?

The door to the office opens and DR. WAYNE LEVINE appears.

DR. LEVINE

Nicholas Flaherty?

Nick stands up and Tommy begins to follow him in.

NICK

Call me Nick.

DR. LEVINE

(to Tommy)

I am sorry, the patient comes in  
alone in these sessions.

TOMMY

Don't let him bullshit you Doc. He  
has issues. He used to jerk off to  
Angela Landsbury when we were kids.

DR. LEVINE

Yes, well some might consider Ms.  
Landsbury attractive.

Nick shakes his head at Tommy who laughs. Nick and the  
doctor enter the office.

DR. LEVINE

Have a seat Nick, I am Dr. Wayne  
Levine, please call me Wayne. I  
find things are easier with less  
formalities.

NICK

Kind of a crappy office for a  
doctor.

DR. LEVINE

Have you seen a lot of shrinks  
offices?

NICK

Just on tv. Shrink? Isn't that kind  
of a negative?

(CONTINUED)

DR. LEVINE

I don't take myself too seriously.  
So what brings you in to see me?

NICK

My brother. I got myself a little  
overextended and took some pills,  
just to sleep you know. He is  
making a bigger deal than it is.

DR. LEVINE

Overextended? How do you mean?

NICK

Just had got a divorce. Work wasn't  
going well. Stress. Just needed to  
sleep.

DR. LEVINE

What kind of pills?

NICK

Just some stuff to help me sleep.

DR. LEVINE

Were these prescribed for you?

NICK

I guess I just took too many for  
too long. They just didn't seem to  
be working and I just took more.  
Til one day I guess they finally  
worked.

DR. LEVINE

Worked? You mean they made you  
sleep?

NICK

Yeah, for a week (laughing).

DR. LEVINE

You think that's funny?

NICK

It is. I mean it would be funnier  
if it was someone else.

DR. LEVINE

What do you do for a living Nick?

(CONTINUED)

NICK

I am currently in a career change I guess. Going back to construction.

DR. LEVINE

What did you do before?

NICK

Insurance. Really never thought of myself as a desk jockey you know. But one day I was married with kids and wearing a fucking tie everyday.

DR. LEVINE

Why the change?

Several beats of silence.

DR. LEVINE

Ok, you mentioned kids. Do you see them?

NICK

Not enough. They got their own shit to do.

DR. LEVINE

How is your relationship with them?

NICK

You know how kids are. Who really knows what they are thinking?

DR. LEVINE

Do you consider yourself close to your kids?

NICK

What do you mean?

DR. LEVINE

Do you talk to them? Do you know what's going on in their lives? Do they know about yours?

NICK

They are kids. What's to know? Give em money and make sure they aren't assholes.

DR. LEVINE

Is that how your parents were?

(CONTINUED)

NICK

We been here 5 minutes and your  
already asking about my mother?

DR. LEVINE

No, I am asking about you.

NICK

I never told my parents shit.

DR. LEVINE

Did they ask?

NICK

Mom did, but she was too busy  
trying working and trying to keep  
the house together to really bother  
with me.....You going to write that  
down?

DR. LEVINE

No, I don't like to write stuff  
down during the session.

NICK

So what's wrong with me?

DR. LEVINE

(Looks at watch)

It's been 6 minutes. Little too  
early to know. What do you think?

NICK

I just needed to sleep and got  
carried away.

DR. LEVINE

That's one possibility.

Nick stands up. He checks out the book shelf but nothing  
interests him.

NICK

I am sure there are dozens of  
things you could pull out of these  
books that all have these made up  
words with a dozen syllables, all  
to justify you charging a couple  
hundred an hour.

DR. LEVINE

Have you ever been in therapy  
before?

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
No fucking way.

DR. LEVINE  
What do you want to get out of  
this?

NICK  
I want my brother off my back.

Nick spies a chess set with a game underway. He studies the board briefly and reaches out and instinctively makes a move.

DR. LEVINE  
Do you play?

NICK  
Used to.

DR. LEVINE  
Do you sleep at night now?

NICK  
Can you prescribe anything for me?

DR. LEVINE  
I could but I won't. You don't need  
pills. When did you start not  
sleeping?

NICK  
I always had trouble in hotels,  
strange rooms. Took some over the  
counter stuff. Then when my  
marriage went for shit and work  
went with it. Bills piled up.

DR. LEVINE  
So you started to rely on pills.

NICK  
I didn't rely on them. Could have  
stopped if I wanted.

DR. LEVINE  
But you didn't.

NICK  
No.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY'S TRUCK - DAY

Nick gets into the passenger seat and as Tommy pulls away Nick sees Dani walking into the medical building.

TOMMY  
So, wanna share?

NICK  
Waste of my time. Glad you're paying.

TOMMY  
You will have to put some effort into it.

NICK  
I will work with you but I don't need to see this guy anymore.

TOMMY  
You know the deal. Either put some effort in to it or I sign your ass into a rubber room.

NICK  
All we are going to figure out is that mom and dad fucked me up.

TOMMY  
I grew up in the same house and I am not fucked up.

NICK  
Not yet anyway.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - DAY

Its a chess tournament. Rows of tables with matches going on. Dr. Levine is in a group of people admiring the trophies. He leans in for a closer look. Across the championship trophy, 3 years in a row. Champion, Nicholas Flaherty.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick and Tommy enter the reception area, Nick approaches the RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST

Hi, Mr. Flaherty, go on in. The doctor is waiting.

Nick opens the inner-office door and Dr. Levine is sitting at his chess board and motions for Nick to sit opposite him.

DR. LEVINE

I am really working at my game. I am up to 1200. I have regionals next month.

Dr. Levine picks up a piece and makes a move, but hesitates, moves the piece back, but he makes the move after all. He sits back, satisfied.

Nick, quickly and authoritatively makes an opposing move that leaves the doctor open-mouthed.

NICK

So it's been a month. How soon til I am all fixed?

DR. LEVINE

(regaining his composure)  
Did you think you were broken?

NICK

I don't think anything was wrong.

DR. LEVINE

Most people don't take an excessive amount of pills that lead to hospitalization.

Nick doesn't say anything.

DR. LEVINE

Look, maybe we can help each other out here. I know your brother forces you to come, and that isn't really the best way for therapy to work. Why don't you just come in each week and play chess. I need the practice. Be our little secret.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick is in the shower. He looks at his hands. Calluses. Nick gets out of the shower and starts to dry off.

Nick looks at himself in the mirror.

Later, Nick is sound asleep in bed.

EXT. JOB SITE - DAY

Nick and Tommy are working outside the house. Tommy looks at his watch.

TOMMY

Time to go.

NICK

Are you serious?

NICK

How long you gonna keep dragging me there.

TOMMY

As long as it takes.

NICK

You know all I do in there is bitch about what a cocksucker you are.

TOMMY

Well it should take you a year to work that out.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick and the doctor are studying the board.

DR. LEVINE

Are you sleeping now?

NICK

I am not used to working construction. I am sleeping pretty much anytime I am not at work. Was behind a desk for too long.

Dr. Levine holds up his hands.

(CONTINUED)

DR. LEVINE  
Jesus, I have been behind a desk  
for 40 years. I wouldn't last an  
hour out in the sun.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDICAL OFFICES - DAY

Nick and Tommy exit the building. Nick sees Dani heading out  
towards them.

NICK  
I think I am going to walk.

TOMMY  
What? It's like 3 miles.

Dani approaches.

NICK  
Hi Dani.

DANI  
Oh. What's your name again?

NICK  
Me, Nick.

TOMMY  
This is going well.

Nick ignores him.

NICK  
What brings you downtown?

DANI  
I had an appointment but decided to  
cancel. You?

NICK  
Ah, you know. My brother has a  
yeast infection. I am here for  
moral support.

TOMMY  
Fuck you.

Tommy walks away.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
Mind if I walk with you?

DANI  
Not sure that's a good idea.

NICK  
I probably haven't made a great first impression on you.

DANI  
Try first 3 impressions.

NICK  
Yeah, I um, made some changes I guess. Was in a rut you know.

DANI  
Are your changes working?

NICK  
I think so. New career, getting to know my kids again.

DANI  
Learning to love yourself?

NICK  
Jesus, you sound like a shrink.

Dani is upset by the comment but doesn't respond.

DANI  
What do you do Nick?

NICK  
I just got back into construction.

DANI  
That's sexy. What do you build?

NICK  
Houses, helping my brother out with the family business.

DANI  
You like that?

NICK  
Um, I like building sure. But these places are all cookie cutter you know. I always liked the older places. The ones we build just

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICK (cont'd)  
don't have any soul. Does that make sense?

DANI  
Absolutely. Why don't you put more soul into these places you build?

NICK  
Ah, its all subdivisions and condo boards now. There are no trees, no character. All anyone wants is a jacuzzi and \$3000 fridge that makes ice and tells you the weather. What I want to do is find old fixer uppers in a good location.

DANI  
That does sound nice. So do it.

NICK  
It's not that easy. Maybe in a couple years. Once I get back on my feet I guess.

DANI  
It's good to have something to look forward to in life.

NICK  
What about you? What do you do?

DANI  
I have done a little bit of everything I guess. My parents are loaded so I never had to do much.

NICK  
Spoiled little rich girl hey?

Dani gives Nick a playful punch.

DANI  
I guess I never worried about money. But other than that it was the same bullshit everyone goes through in life.

FADE TO:

EXT. DANI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Dani and Nick arrive at a fancy apartment building. It has a large brass doors and a red carpet leading to where the rich tenants get dropped off. There is a very large (6'6") DOORMAN guarding the door.

NICK

You have a doorman? I have never known someone with a doorman before.

DANI

Does that bother you?

NICK

Bother me? No, I don't think so. I mean, I am about on the same pay scale as him.

DANI

Oh I doubt it. Marcus probably makes more in tips than most teachers make in a year.

NICK

Ok, maybe it does bother me a little.

DANI

Does that mean you don't want to see me again?

NICK

I...Sure I want to see you. Just wonder why you would want to see me.

DANI

You are kind of sexy. In a puppy dog kind of way. If you grow a spine and get over the fact that I have a doorman....oh, and a maid.

NICK

A maid?

(Beat)

So when can we get together?

The doorman opens the door for Dani. She pauses just before walking in.

(CONTINUED)

DANI  
I will find you.

She turns and enters the building. Nick is left alone with the doorman. Nick smiles at the doorman who looks at Nick with contempt.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nick has bought a tv and new furniture. Robin and Wyatt are over playing a video game. Nick enters living room and shuts the tv off.

ROBIN  
What the hell?

NICK  
Come on, enough with the aliens.  
Supper is ready.

They move to the table.

WYATT  
Since when do you have a kitchen table?

ROBIN  
When was the last time you cooked anything?

NICK  
You guys don't remember but I used to be a pretty good cook. That's how I used to get girls.

ROBIN  
You can't say stuff like that and expect me to eat.

NICK  
(To Wyatt)  
Don't listen to her. All women love a man who can cook.

WYATT  
I don't remember you ever cooking.  
Or building.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
Yeah, I kind of forgot for awhile.

WYATT  
Is that why you and Mom aren't  
together?

NICK  
That's part of the reason. Yeah.  
But it's -

ROBIN  
Mom says you forgot how to be a  
man.

NICK  
What? She said that?

ROBIN  
I heard her tell Aunt Karen.

NICK  
Maybe. Maybe I did.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOB SITE - DAY

Nick is supervising his crew. Dani drives up in her convertible. Tommy is the first one to see her.

TOMMY  
(Mockingly)  
Oh Nick, you have a visitor.

Laughter from the crew.

Dani walks up to them.

DANI  
Tommy right? Your Nick's brother?

Tommy takes his hat off and tries to fix his hair a little.

TOMMY  
That's me.

DANI  
How is that vaginal discharge  
problem you were at the doctors  
for?

The crew, except for Tommy, is laughing as Nick shows up.

(CONTINUED)

TOMMY  
(To Nick)  
Asshole.

The crew leaves Nick and Dani alone.

NICK  
This is a pleasant surprise.

DANI  
Bad time?

NICK  
No, not really.

DANI  
I thought we could go for a late  
lunch.

Nick looks at his watch.

NICK  
Sure, let me just put some stuff  
away.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Dani pulls into a parking lot next to a park.

Nick is confused.

NICK  
Thought we were going for lunch.

DANI  
We are, I brought it with us.

They get out of the car. Dani opens the trunk and pulls out  
a picnic basket and a blanket.

NICK  
You are prepared. What if I said  
no?

DANI  
I was pretty sure you wouldn't.  
But, if you did, I wore my really  
sexy jeans so I wouldn't have much  
trouble getting some random  
stranger to come with me.

(CONTINUED)

Nick sneaks a look.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

They are on a blanket and have finished eating.

NICK  
Thank you for doing this.

DANI  
You're welcome. I enjoy days like today.

NICK  
Did you make the lunch or did you have the maid do it?

Dani (laughing) throws a couple of grapes at Nick.

DANI  
(Now serious)  
Can I ask you something?

NICK  
Guess I owe you now. Sure.

DANI  
Why were you at the doctors that day? I mean, aside from the burning and itching in your brothers vag.

NICK  
I screwed up.

DANI  
I will need a little more than that.

NICK  
(sighing)  
I kind of over-extended myself. I was going through a bad time with my ex, and then financially things went in the shitter.  
(beat)

Nick looks to Dani, she is still looking at him with compassion.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

I didn't mean for it to happen like it did. I was drunk, and I just wanted to sleep. Now Tommy won't let it go. Every Thursday at 3 he hauls me off to Dr. Levine.

DANI

Levine?

NICK

You know him?

But she is up and running towards the beach. Nick follows after. They wade through the water for awhile.

Later as they pack everything back into the car.

NICK

You think any less of me? Of why I am seeing the doctor?

DANI

No, I don't. When it comes right down to it, we are all a little damaged.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

The two men are at the chess board.

DR. LEVINE

What's new?

NICK

Life is good I guess.

DR. LEVINE

You guess?

NICK

It's good. I mean I am back making things you know. I was thinking about my life.

(He pauses for a few beats.)

I convinced myself that I needed to make money for the family. Well fuck you know, my wife....my ex-wife convinced me. So I went to work.

(CONTINUED)

(angrily)  
Hated that fucking job.  
(beat)  
I really hated that fucking job.  
But she kept telling me to climb  
that ladder you know. So I worked  
and worked and worked. 10 fucking  
years.  
(beat)  
Then she said I was never home.

DR. LEVINE  
So you didn't want to work in  
insurance?

NICK  
No, it really was her idea.

DR. LEVINE  
Did she force you to work there?  
Threaten to leave you if you didn't  
sell insurance?

NICK  
Well, no. But construction was  
slow. And she, we wanted things.

DR. LEVINE  
Is construction a family business?

NICK  
Yeah, my Dad started....  
(beat)  
I may have met someone.

DR. LEVINE  
You think you are ready for that?

NICK  
Who is ever ready? I like her, we  
have fun. She is different from  
anyone I ever met.

Dr. Levine makes his move on the chess board.

DR. LEVINE  
How so?

NICK  
She just seems to be so full of  
life. Very energetic you know. She  
sings all the time. Very creative,  
and when she puts her mind to  
something she just goes off.

(CONTINUED)

Nick makes his move, Dr. Levine is stumped.

NICK  
Stays up 2 or 3 days it seems like.  
And I am like, Dani, just relax-

DR. LEVINE  
Dani?

NICK  
Yeah that's her name. Sometimes I  
wish she could just sit, but hey, I  
do like the feeling I have around  
her. Feel young again.

DR. LEVINE  
Is this the right time to be  
dating?

NICK  
Don't worry doc, I am fine.

Dr. Levine looks very worried.

CUT TO:

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Same group of guys playing pick-up. Dani is the lone spectator. Nick makes a particularly good play and checks to make sure Dani sees it.

After a few minutes Nick subs out and sits on the bench. He looks for Dani but she isn't where she was sitting. He looks around and sees her standing by the men's locker room. She nods and waves for him to come over. Nick unsure. She insists.

NICK  
Be right back guys. Gotta get  
something.

Nick enters the locker room. Dani locks the door behind them.

She grabs Nick's face and the two kiss.

NICK  
I am all sweaty and-

Dani puts a finger to his lips. She leads him to the showers and turns it on. The two undress and make love in the shower.

(CONTINUED)

The water is still running and Nick and Dani are on the floor in an embrace.

Loud knocking on the door. Now POUNDING.

VOICES

What the fuck?

Dani giggles and quickly throws on Nick's jersey. She picks up her clothes and unlocks the door. She smiles at the other players who are in awe, incredulous at what they are seeing.

Nick smiles to himself.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOB SITE - DAY

Nick is in front of the house looking at blueprints. Jennifer pulls up in her car and her and the kids get out.

NICK

Hey kids. Who is ready to go to work?

WYATT

Can I use the air gun again?

JENNIFER

Air gun?

WYATT

It's so cool. Dad is teaching me how to do floors.

JENNIFER

Is that a good idea?

NICK

Yeah yeah, he is a good listener and I am always there.

Nick gives Robin a hug.

ROBIN

Gross Dad, when was the last time you showered?

NICK

Get used to it kiddo. That's what you are going to smell like in an hour or so. You guys go find those

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICK (cont'd)  
tool belts we got you. I will be  
there shortly.

The kids go to the back of the house.

JENNIFER  
I can't believe how excited they  
are for manual labor.

NICK  
Me too.

JENNIFER  
I am glad you are building again  
Nick. It's what always made you  
happy.

NICK  
Did you get the check? I should be  
caught up next week.

JENNIFER  
Yes, thank you. I have a favor.  
(beat)  
Jason has a conference in Miami at  
the end of the month. Its just for  
the weekend. I was going to send  
the kids to my mothers but they  
insisted they wanted to go to your  
place. Do you mind?

NICK  
Mind? No. I was actually looking  
for a time to take them camping.

JENNIFER  
Does your daughter want to go  
camping?

NICK  
Want is a strong word.

JENNIFER  
(laughing)  
Speaking of wanting, We booked the  
arcade for Wyatt's birthday. You  
coming?

NICK  
Of course, so what does our boy  
want this year.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

Ah, the usual. Something simple.  
There is some video game he talks  
about. I have it written down. I'll  
send you the name, so we don't get  
the same thing.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nick and Dani are painting the room. A pile of boxes in the  
middle of the floor, bedroom furniture waiting to be  
unpacked and put together.

A stereo plays in the background and Dani is singing along,  
getting the words wrong.

Nick watches her and smiles to himself.

NICK

I almost forgot. I have to cancel  
on you this weekend.

Dani points her paintbrush at Nick.

DANI

Who is the bitch?

A beat before she laughs.

NICK

(laughing)

I am going to take the kids  
camping. Up at Wilson Lake.

DANI

Oh, I will miss you.

NICK

Pretty sure I will miss you too.

DANI

Do you smell that?

NICK

Paint?

DANI

No, its something else. Its like  
a....mold maybe.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
I don't smell anything.

Dani realizes something to herself and is concerned. She changes the subject.

DANI  
My folks have a summer place, we could take the kids there.

NICK  
Thanks, but Wyatt really wants the whole tenting experience. Hiking, and roasting marshmallows. Maybe a scary story.

DANI  
Awww, ok. But my offer stands if you change your mind.

Nick takes a step back and looks at his work.

NICK  
There, we can let the first coat dry and finish this up in the morning.

DANI  
Lets finish now.

Nick grabs in his arms and kisses her.

NICK  
I got something else in mind for right now.

Series of shots.

Nick and Dani in the shower.

Nick and Dani eating straight out of the fridge.

Nick and Dani in bed.

Nick is sleeping and Dani is awake in his arms.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Nick wakes and is alone in bed. He gets up and finds Dani looking very fresh making a complicated breakfast in the kitchen. Dani is singing a song, Nick watches for a chorus and a verse before she notices him.

DANI  
Good morning sleepy.

She pours Nick a coffee.

NICK  
Think you wore me out last night.

DANI  
Maybe your brother is right. You are too old to keep up.

NICK  
I will show you who's old. Ah, a good breakfast and then I will tackle the second coat. Maybe after lunch we can get that furniture put together.

DANI  
All done.

NICK  
What's all done.

DANI  
The bedroom, the furniture. Done.

NICK  
What are you talking about?

DANI  
Go see.

Nick walks down the hall and sure enough. The bedroom is done. Painted, pictures hung, kids bunkbeds assembled.

Nick looks at Dani incredulously.

NICK  
How did you do this?

DANI  
I couldn't sleep.

Dani looks at Nick for any sign of concern, but he is oblivious.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
Holy shit.

Dani smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick and the Doc playing chess.

NICK  
How did regionals go?

DR. LEVINE  
I would rather not talk about it.

NICK  
(laughing)  
You gotta be kidding me.

DR. LEVINE  
Sometimes I hate this game.

NICK  
It can piss you off.

DR. LEVINE  
Some people just seem to have a natural gift for chess. Like a Picasso, a Shakespeare, or Mozart. And then there are people like me. We work at it, and work at it, and work at it. Its a real shame when we see someone with a gift like that who doesn't use it.

Dr. Levine studies Nick.

DR. LEVINE  
How come you don't play anymore?

NICK  
Huh?

DR. LEVINE  
I saw your name on a couple trophy's. People there still know who you are.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

I never really liked all those tournaments. My Dad wanted me to go.

DR. LEVINE

Does your Dad play?

NICK

Yes. I guess he still does.

DR. LEVINE

Do you play with him?

Nick stands up.

NICK

Is this where we find out why I am so fucked up?

DR. LEVINE

No. But that was an interesting reaction.

NICK

He wasn't a drunk. He didn't cheat on my mother. He didn't beat me or my brother.

DR. LEVINE

That's good.

NICK

He worked way too hard for his own good and never had time for us. He never came to my basketball or baseball games. Never came to anything. Never knew my friends. When he did even acknowledge me it was to come play chess. He never beat me, never yelled, never did anything. There.

Nick storms out of the office.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S CAR - NIGHT

Nick and Dani are driving. Nick slows down in front of the house he attempted to buy before Bruce took the money. (no for sale sign)

NICK  
That's the one.

DANI  
The one what?

NICK  
I almost bought that one. It was going to start my new business.

DANI  
So buy it.

NICK  
It sold a few months ago.

Nick drives away.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT.

Nick and Dani are at a nice restaurant. They have their meals.

DANI  
All set for your big trip tomorrow?

NICK  
I think so. My son has put himself in charge of supplies.

DANI  
Awww, that's cute.  
(beat)  
When do I get to meet your kids?

NICK  
You want to meet my kids?

DANI  
Of course I do! They are apart of your life so I want to meet them.

NICK  
Ok, we will do that. Wyatt's birthday is coming up.

(CONTINUED)

DANI  
I love birthday's.

Out of the corner of her eye Dani sees the man with the voice enter with a group. She quickly stands.

DANI  
Let's go.

NICK  
What, I haven't finished my-

DANI  
Pay the bill. I am horny.

NICK  
Pardon me.

He looks around to see if anyone heard her. A few did.

DANI  
Lets go, either you come with me  
now or I find a dishwasher out  
back.

Nick decides to go with it. He throws some cash on the table. Dani grabs his arm and pulls him towards the kitchen.

Nick resists.

NICK  
Where are you going? We are parked  
this way.

DANI  
This way is more fun!

Dani pushes Nick through the swinging door. Before she goes through she turns back to the man with the voice. He sees her. She follows Nick.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT.

Nick and the kids are sitting around a fire roasting marshmallows.

WYATT  
This has been a good day. Once you  
finally figured out how to set up  
the tent Dad.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

That was messed up. Did you see those instructions? They were in Chinese!

ROBIN

Hope your houses stand up better than that tent.

All 3 laugh, Nick throws a marshmallow at Robin.

WYATT

What are we doing tomorrow?

NICK

How about we go for a hike in the morning? Then we can make breakfast before we go to the beach.

ROBIN

Can we rent one of those boats?

NICK

Yeah, lets do that.

WYATT

You know any good camp stories Dad?

NICK

Um, well. That was never my strong suit.

Nick attempts a lame story that quickly bores the kids.

WYATT

Thanks for trying Dad.

NICK

Sorry.

ROBIN

I am gonna try to forget that ever happened.

CUT TO:

INT. DANI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dani is alone, she is pacing. She sits, she stands, she paces.

(CONTINUED)

She sees something in the tv. It's not on. Then she sees a light in one of the air ducts. She finds tools, and rips the duct out. Nothing there.

Then she takes another one apart. And another. She takes her lamps apart. Clock radio. She destroys her apartment.

In a panic she dresses quickly and grabs her keys and leaves the apartment.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPGROUND - DAY

Nick and the kids are coming back from their hike. They are happy. About 30 feet from their site they can hear a strange sound.

They stop, confused. It kind of sounds like what singing should sound like.

As they come closer it dawns on Nick what the sound is.

Parked in their campsite is a Hummer.

Dani is standing over the campstove with her headphones on. She has been cooking breakfast. Very large piles of bacon, eggs, and pancakes are spread out.

NICK

Dani?

ROBIN

Who the hell is Dani?

NICK

She is a friend of mine.

WYATT

Nice work Dad!

Dani sees them.

DANI

Oh hi! I couldn't stand someone else having all the fun so I thought I would come join you.

NICK

Um.

He looks to the kids for their reactions.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
Sure, the more the merrier.

DANI  
Hi kids.

She kisses Nick on the cheek.

NICK  
Kids, this is Dani, Dani, this is Robin, and Wyatt.

DANI  
I am so excited to meet you. I have heard all about both of you.

ROBIN  
We haven't heard a thing about you.

DANI  
Well, what do you say we change that? Lets get to know each other. I made breakfast.

NICK  
When did you get the Hummer?

DANI  
Yesterday, I didn't know what the roads would be like.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Nick and Dani are sitting in the sand, the kids are splashing in the water.

ROBIN  
Come on in.

NICK  
You two enjoy. We will come join you in a minute.

WYATT  
Did you see about the boats?

NICK  
They are all out for a couple hours.

(CONTINUED)

WYATT

That sucks.

NICK

You will survive. We can go out later.

DANI

Boats?

NICK

They rent boats at the marina, but you have to book ahead. We can go out later.

Dani stands up.

DANI

You want anything from the canteen? I need a drink.

NICK

No thanks. Here.

Nick reaches for his wallet out of his backpack.

DANI

Its ok, I got money.

Nick looks at her in her bikini.

NICK

Where could you possibly have money in that?

A half-hour later and Nick has joined the kids in the water. Dani has not returned and Nick keeps looking for her along the beach.

From the water he hears her voice.

DANI

You guys want to go for a ride?

Dani is on a large jet-ski just beyond the swimming area.

NICK

Where did you get that?

DANI

I borrowed it from a friend of mine down the lake. Come on, I got jackets here for the 2 of you.

(CONTINUED)

Dani and the kids spend the afternoon on the jet-ski. Nick mostly watches from the beach. He enjoys watching his kids and his girlfriend having so much fun.

Later in the afternoon when its time to go. Dani drags the jet-ski onto the beach.

NICK  
Shouldn't we return it to your friend?

DANI  
No, he said just to leave it here. He will come get it.

NICK  
That doesn't seem right-

DANI  
Come on kids, race you to the campsite. Last one there does dishes.

And Dani and the kids are gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT.

Everyone is gathered around the campsite laughing.

Dani tells a really wild camp story that the kids love.

Nick sits quietly and loves this.

When the story ends.

DANI  
Ok, now its my turn. Sing-along.

Both kids initially protest, but soon the trio is singing and dancing. Nick is busy cleaning up but is laughing while he does.

Quick cuts.

Laughing, singing, dancing.

The kids get tired.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Alright you two. Bed time.

DANI

Hey before you guys do, does anyone have any paper? A notebook maybe?

ROBIN

I brought my homework. You can use the paper in my binder.

DANI

Thank you sweetie.

ROBIN

Maybe you can finish my math?

Dani gives both kids a hug and a kiss on the cheek.

DANI

It was so wonderful to meet you. Sweet dreams.

NICK

You staying up for awhile?

DANI

Yeah, I got an idea for something and I want to work it out.

NICK

Ok, don't stay up too long.

He kisses her.

NICK

Thank you for coming. It was a great day.

DANI

(Whispers to Nick)

Will you be naked when I come to bed?

NICK

(laughing)

Not with my kids 2 feet away.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

An OLDER MAN and a PARK RANGER are walking down the beach towards the water with a flashlight.

PARK RANGER  
This your jet-ski?

OLDER MAN  
Yep, damn kids and their joy rides.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPGROUND - DAY

Nick and the kids come out of the tent. Dani has been busy.

Breakfast has been cooked and set out for everyone. She hauled and stacked a large pile of wood.

NICK  
What the hell?

DANI  
I couldn't sleep.

Nick stretches and gives Dani a kiss. He pours himself a coffee.

NICK  
Before we eat I am going to take a shower.

Nick leaves. Robin is flipping through her binder. Every page is full, very little white space on the page.

ROBIN  
You wrote all this?

DANI  
I am sorry. I used all your paper. Umm...Can you not tell your Dad I did that?

ROBIN  
Did you do my math?

DANI  
I did a couple chapters actually.

Robin likes this.

(CONTINUED)

ROBIN

Deal.

Nick returns from his shower a few minutes later.

NICK

After breakfast we should pack up and head back. You guys have school tomorrow.

DANI

Its along drive and I could use some company. Robin, you want to ride with me. We can maybe have some girl time and do some shopping at that outlet mall outside of town.

ROBIN

Can I Dad?

NICK

You really should get home.

DANI

I promise to have her at your house before supper.

ROBIN

Please Dad.

Nick is defeated.

CUT TO:

INT. MEDICAL OFFICES - DAY

Tommy and Nick are in the lobby waiting for an elevator. Tommy is checking his hair in the mirrored doors of the elevator. He straightens his shirt. Nick is watching this.

In the elevator Tommy takes a breath spray.

NICK

You gotta be fucking kidding me.

TOMMY

What?

As the elevator doors open, Tommy and Nick exit the elevator and head to the doctor's office.

(CONTINUED)

TOMMY

I will wait for you. Take your time.

NICK

Yeah, right.

Nick and Tommy walk into the doctor's outer office. Tommy's smile is immediately gone. The knockout receptionist isn't there. There is an elderly lady sitting in the receptionists chair. Dr. Levine is waiting for Nick.

DR. LEVINE

Hi Nick, come on in.

As Nick and Dr. Levine go in to the office, Tommy turns to the elderly receptionist.

TOMMY

Will the regular receptionist be back next week?

The elderly lady nods.

TOMMY

Tell Charlie Manson in there to take a cab. I am getting drunk.

He walks out of the office.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

The two men hunched over the chess board.

DR. LEVINE

How was the camping trip?

NICK

Was good. You know, campfire, junk food, out on the water. I even introduced the kids to my girlfriend.

DR. LEVINE

Girlfriend?

NICK

Yeah, I guess. We haven't labeled it. But girlfriend sounds right.

(CONTINUED)

DR. LEVINE  
Isn't that a little risky,  
introducing your girlfriend to your  
kids so soon after -

NICK  
I didn't plan for it to go that  
way.

DR. LEVINE  
It wasn't your idea?

NICK  
No, she missed me so she drove up  
to surprise us.

Several beats.

NICK  
So how long do I have to keep  
coming to these sessions?

DR. LEVINE  
I don't know. Do you feel you are  
getting anything out of them?

NICK  
No, I mean all we do here is play  
chess. It's been a couple of  
months and I feel like you know  
nothing about me. The only reason  
I still have to come is my juvenile  
brother is trying to get laid.

DR. LEVINE  
Excuse me?

NICK  
You know. Out there.

Nick makes the shape of a very curvy girl with a large  
bosom. Dr. Levine doesn't react to that.

DR. LEVINE  
You don't think we talk? I don't  
know anything about you?

NICK  
No, I don't.

Dr. Levine sits back in his chair and looks at Nick like he  
is analyzing him.

(CONTINUED)

DR. LEVINE

Your father was away a lot and didn't know how to communicate with you and your brother. Your mother felt she had to overcompensate and was probably a little too involved in your lives. Maybe a little too strict. You being the older sibling you tended to take on both of these qualities. You have trouble communicating. You married a woman you may or may not have wanted to. And took a job you didn't want. You have unresolved resentment of your father which manifests itself by your leaving the family business, and your giving up the game of chess, which you happen to love, because you want to deprive your father of any little piece of enjoyment you can. When your marriage started to go down the toilet, instead of taking steps to fix it, you worked harder and were away more. Kind of like your father was when you were a kid.

He stops to catch his breathe.

NICK

Holy shit.

DR. LEVINE

Its classic passive aggressive behavior. Very common, especially in oldest siblings. We do things to upset those closest to us, without actually confronting the real issues.

NICK

It's common?

DR. LEVINE

Sure, see it all the time. In fact, let you in a little secret.  
(Lowers his voice and leans in. Points to his outer office.)  
I hired Tits Magee out there just to piss my wife off.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Nick and Dani are strolling through the mall.

DANI

What was the name of that game  
Wyatt wants?

NICK

I can't remember, some shooting  
thing.

DANI

We have been over this whole place.  
I don't see anything, you know,  
special.

NICK

Well let's sit down and have a  
coffee, maybe something will come  
to us.

DANI

Ok, I got hit the girls room, can  
you get me one of those ice coffee  
things?

Nick is standing in line when he sees Angela with a young  
boy, must be her son.

NICK

Hello again. Almost didn't  
recognize you with those glasses  
on.

ANGELA

Hey Chessman. What's it been? 3 or  
4 months.

NICK

About that. This your son?

ANGELA

Um, yeah.

NICK

You still....?

ANGELA

No. I couldn't do it anymore. Not  
with little man here growing up.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
Did you find a house?

ANGELA  
No, not yet anyway. I got a job as  
a cashier over at the Supersaver.

NICK  
You are a good mom.

ANGELA  
Thanks.

Dani approaches.

NICK  
Well, take care of yourself.

ANGELA  
Thanks, you too.

Angela walks away with her son.

DANI  
Who's that?

ANGELA  
She used to work for me.

DANI  
You didn't want to introduce me?

NICK  
Nope.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Nick and Dani resume their shopping in a high-end electronic store.

NICK  
This used to be so much easier. I  
just used to let Jenn-

Dani just looks at him and Nick lets the sentence go without end.

DANI  
You talk about her a lot.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

No I don't. I don't think I have hardly mentioned her.

DANI

I don't think you hear yourself talk about her.

NICK

Look, I am sorry. Its just that she is their mother. From time to time she will come up in conversation.

DANI

I know, its just. I don't know. Never met her and I am jealous.

NICK

You have no reason to be jealous. That was a long time ago.

Nick kisses her and gives her a big hug.

DANI

There are some video games at the back, lets go look.

After a few minutes of walking around they turn to leave the store. As they exit the theft alarm goes off. Nick is confused.

A CLERK from the store rushes over to them.

CLERK

Oh these things are so touchy. Here, just back up and try again.

Nick backs up and goes through, no alarm.

When Dani backs up the alarm goes off.

CLERK

Did you buy something at another store that maybe they didn't take the sensors off.

NICK

No, we have just been walking.

CLERK

Ma'am can I try your bag to see if it sets off the alarm.

(CONTINUED)

Dani hands the bag to the clerk.

NICK  
(To the clerk)  
What the hell are you doing?

The clerk swings the bag through the alarm zone and it goes off again.

The clerk yells to a fellow employee.

CLERK  
Call security.

Dani remains expressionless.

CUT TO:

INT. SECURITY ROOM OF MALL - DAY

Nick, Dani, and two SECURITY GUARDS are seated in a room.

NICK  
Look, there has to be some kind of mistake. This lady has money. More fucking money than either of you will make in your lifetimes. Why would she steal a child's toy?

SECURITY #1  
The facts are the facts. An unpaid item was placed in the ladies bag. Video shows Ms. Scott put the item in the bag.

Dani still hasn't changed her expression.

NICK  
She must have forgot.

CUT TO:

INT. DANI'S HUMMER - DAY

Nick is driving. Neither are speaking. Dani reaches over to turn the radio on. Nick glares at her and shuts it off.

NICK  
Not now.

(CONTINUED)

DANI  
You're in a mood.

NICK  
What the fuck Dani?  
Shoplifting? What the fuck were  
you thinking?

DANI  
I don't know.

NICK  
You don't know? People don't just  
steal something and say "I don't  
know".

She starts to cry.

He holds her hand and they continue on in silence.

CUT TO:

INT. CARNIVAL/ARCADE HOUSE - DAY

Large place full of arcade games and large play structures  
10 and 11 year old boys like.

All of the relatives are there. Its full of kids running  
through the attractions. Parents are gathered at the tables.  
Nick is talking to Tommy privately.

TOMMY  
Stealing?

NICK  
Yeah man, I don't get it. She is  
loaded.

TOMMY  
What were you guys doing?

NICK  
Just shopping and talking. I  
thought we were having a good time.

TOMMY  
Think man, what were you doing in  
that store?

NICK  
(Realizes)  
She was pissed about Jenn.

(CONTINUED)

TOMMY

What about Jenn?

NICK

We were just talking about a gift for Wyatt when she went off a little about Jenn. It wasn't even a big thing.

TOMMY

And less than 5 minutes later she gets arrested for shoplifting.

Nick thinks about that.

A few minutes later Nick is playing with some kids when Dani arrives. Nick looks at Tommy who seeing the situation, is very amused.

NICK

Hi, I didn't think you were coming.

DANI

Why would you think that? I wouldn't miss it for the world.

Dani puts her hands over her ears.

DANI

Its way too loud in here.

NICK

Too loud? You are the last person I would think would want it quiet.

DANI

This is just way too loud for me.

Wyatt sees Dani and rushes over. He gives her a hug and takes her hand off to a ball-pit.

After cake its time for gifts. Wyatt opens the usual assortment of videos and water guns. Then it looks like they have all been opened. Wyatt is satisfied.

DANI

Oh wait. Wyatt there is one more gift. I couldn't really wrap it, so what I did was wrap a picture of it for you. We can go pick it up later.

Wyatt quickly opens the present/picture and is extremely excited. Its a brochure.

(CONTINUED)

WYATT

Oh My God!

ROBIN

What is it, show us.

WYATT

It's a jet ski! Thank you Dani,  
that's the best present ever!

Wyatt jumps up and gives Dani a great big hug.

All the kids are excited. The adults are confused. Jennifer is staring daggers at Nick. Nick is looking at Dani who is very pleased with herself. Tommy is laughing.

ROBIN

He gets a jet ski?

DANI

Awww. Well it is his birthday you  
know.

(Beat)

You can see the disappointment in Robin's face.

DANI

But I got you one too.

Robin is excited and hugs Dani.

Jennifer takes Nick by the arm out the front door.

JENNIFER

Jet skis? What the fuck Nick?

NICK

I swear I didn't know anything  
about this.

JENNIFER

He is 11 years old for Christ's  
sake!

NICK

We will take them back.

JENNIFER

I mean who the fuck does she think  
she is? And you want to know what  
else? Robin skipped school this  
week because your friend there told  
her its ok to break the rules every  
once in awhile.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

I am sorry, I will handle it.

JENNIFER

You better fucking handle it.

Jennifer storms back into the party. Nick stands alone in the parking lot.

A few beats while Nick is alone in the parking lot thinking.

Nick walks back into the party. He looks around but can't see Dani. He asks Tommy.

NICK

Have you seen Dani?

TOMMY

She said it was too loud in here and left. Asked me to give you this note.

Nick opens the note. We briefly see the words 'Meet me at 6 pm.' and then an address.

Nick is deep in thought.

NICK

(To himself)

Fuck me.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIXER UPPER HOUSE - DAY

Nick pulls up to the curb behind Dani's Hummer. Its the house he had tried to buy. Dani's on the front step.

Nick sits in the car for a few beats before he gets out.

DANI

Hey baby, I didn't want you to think I didn't get you anything.

Nick says nothing but is shaking his head as he comes up the sidewalk.

DANI

What's the matter with you?

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
This is wrong.

DANI  
I thought you wanted the house.

Nick looks at her with concern.

NICK  
We need to talk.

DANI  
I don't want to talk right now  
baby. Lets go break in your new  
house.

NICK  
Damnit Dani! This is serious.

DANI  
Fine, what is so serious?

NICK  
You can't do stuff like this?

DANI  
Like what?

NICK  
Houses and Jet ski's?

DANI  
What's the problem? I can afford  
them.

NICK  
That's not the point. You don't  
just buy people....gifts. People  
don't get houses as gifts.

DANI  
Fine. Ok.

NICK  
Ok? What the fuck? OK!

DANI  
What do you want from me?

A few beats.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
What about the shoplifting?

DANI  
Where is this coming from?

NICK  
From me, Dani. Jesus Christ.  
Showing up unannounced 200 miles  
away when I am with my kids.

Suddenly Dani is enraged.

DANI  
Its that fucking bitch isn't it?

NICK  
Dani.

DANI  
You can't even see what she does to  
you. I saw how she looked at me.  
Fucking old hag. Just because the  
kids like me more than her.

NICK  
Knock that off.

DANI  
You gonna defend her? You gonna  
take her side now?

NICK  
I am not taking anyone's side. I am  
just concerned about you.

Nick climbs the front stairs, closer to Dani. Nick tries to  
calm her down. Reaches out to put a hand on her shoulder.

Dani slaps his hand away then pushes Nick down the stairs.  
He falls to the ground.

DANI  
Me? Me? Why do people always think  
something is going on with me?

Nick stands again and begins walk back towards Dani.

NICK  
What people?

DANI

All of you. Everyone. My parents,  
my friends, the doctors. That  
fucking Levine is the worst.

Nick is stunned, he stops moving.

NICK

You know Dr. Levine?  
(Beat, then to himself)  
That's why I saw you outside the  
office that day.

DANI

Weren't you the one who felt sorry  
for yourself? Weren't you the one  
who took all those pills? And you  
couldn't even do that right. You  
are pathetic. You are the one who  
decided to OD. What gives you the  
right to be concerned about me?

NICK

Calm down.

DANI

(hysterical)  
Don't you get it. Doesn't anyone  
get it. I don't want to be calm. I  
fucking hate calm!

Dani storms to her hummer and screeches off.

Nick is helpless as he watches her go.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Nick walks towards the door. The doorman sees him coming  
and steps in front, cutting off his route.

NICK

Out of my way.

DOORMAN

I am afraid I can't do that sir.

NICK

I want to see Dani Scott.

(CONTINUED)

DOORMAN  
No one is allowed up.

NICK  
God damn it, move.

Nick tries to push the doorman out of the way, but can't budge him. As Nick stumbles he regains his balance against the side of the door. As he does he sees the man with the voice staring at him.

Nick gives up, he looks back at the doorman but doesn't say anything. As he walks away.

DOORMAN  
(In a loud whisper)  
You might want to go see her cousin  
at Candy Asses pub.

INT. CANDY ASSES PUB - DAY

Nick comes into the bar. Candace is there by herself.

CANDACE  
(without looking)  
We are closed.

Nick sits down.

NICK  
What's wrong with her?

Candace looks at Nick for a few beats. Then she pours two big whiskeys and hands one to Nick.

CANDACE  
So it was you.

NICK  
Me what?

CANDACE  
We knew she was with somebody. Just  
didn't know who.

NICK  
What's wrong?

CANDACE  
(after a big gulp)  
Its called Bi Polar disorder. But  
in her case its actually worse.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

How.

CANDACE

She has a manic-depression disorder too.

Nick takes a drink, waiting for more information.

CANDACE

She has been in hospitals most of her life. Her medications have to be controlled. 50 years ago they would have given her shock therapy. Now they control it with drugs. That's fine, but after awhile she gets fed up, quits her meds, and takes off.

NICK

She wasn't like this when I met her.

CANDACE

There is no pattern. Doesn't seem to be a reason for anything she does. But to her, in that moment, it makes perfect sense. Dani is what they call a rapid-cycler. She can go from super high to super low several times a week. At first she can hide it pretty well, then things go crazy.

NICK

Where is she now? I went to her apartment.

CANDACE

They took her back 2 days ago.

NICK

So that's it? She has a couple bad days and they ship her off to some psych ward so they can forget about her?

CANDACE

No one sent her.

NICK

What?

(CONTINUED)

CANDACE

It was her choice. Its always her choice.

A few beats as Nick absorbs this.

NICK

Can I see her?

CANDACE

You shouldn't.

NICK

I am in love with her.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK APARTMENT - DAY

Nick is at his kitchen table with his laptop open. We see over his shoulder he is reading psychiatric websites and taking notes on a pad of paper.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Nick is at a table with several books, some open. He is making more notes.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S CAR - DAY

Nick is driving. He punches a number on his phone and the handsfree device kicks in. On the second ring.

TOMMY (PHONE)

Where the hell are you?

NICK

I am not coming in today. Maybe tomorrow.

TOMMY

Maybe? We got a deadline

NICK

You will have to manage without me.

(CONTINUED)

TOMMY  
This is bulls -

Nick hangs up.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

Very high end hospital. Nick is in a waiting area. He is fidgety and uncomfortable. A large MALE NURSE comes into the room.

MALE NURSE  
Nick Flaherty.

Nick stands and follows the nurse down the hall. When they get to the room the nurse motions for Nick to go on in.

CUT TO:

It has a flat screen tv, dvd's, several books on a shelf. A laptop is open on a small table desk in one corner. A single bed is on the middle of one wall.

Dani is in sweatpants and a sweatshirt. She has a wristband on. She looks pale and very unhappy. No makeup and her hair is not done. She doesn't get up to greet Nick. Nick walks over and sits on the bench beside her. He tries to give her a hug but it is not returned.

NICK  
I was so worried about you.

DANI  
Why are you here?

NICK  
Of course I am here. Why wouldn't I be?

Dani just shakes her head.

NICK  
The kids say hello. They really did get attached to you.

Dani looks at Nick after that.

NICK  
This is a nice place. Better than my apartment.

(CONTINUED)

Nick is walking around the room. He turns on the stereo, he awkwardly starts to dance. Dani stands up and turns the stereo off.

NICK  
Lets go for a walk.

CUT TO:

EXT. PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

Nick and Dani are walking on the grass in the rear of the hospital. Trees, flowers, and grass everywhere. A few other patients and assorted visitors are spread out.

NICK  
So I had Wyatt stay over the other day. He gets up in the morning and wants to make breakfast. He starts bugging me. Dad he says, I have tried to make these eggos 4 times but they are still frozen. So I go to the kitchen to see if my toaster is broken, and here my boy genius was trying to toast frozen chicken burgers.

He laughs but gets no reaction from Dani.

NICK  
So what's the program here? Counseling? Medication? I would like to be apart of it if I can.

DANI  
What do you think this is?

NICK  
This is about us.

DANI  
There is no us. It was fun -

NICK  
You don't mean that.

Dani doesn't answer.

NICK  
I have done a lot of research. There are new treatments  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICK (cont'd)  
and new medications. I want to  
help -

DANI  
(Angrily)  
Don't you get it? You can't save  
me! You feel sorry for the poor  
little rich girl who lost her mind?  
It wasn't that long ago and you  
were the one who gave up. Now you  
want to play the hero?

NICK  
That's not it at all. Dani, we can  
do this, together.

Dani stops.

DANI  
I want you to go.

NICK  
Dani....no.

DANI  
Please go Nick.

Nick tries to hug her but doesn't get a response.

NICK  
Ok. I will come back in a couple of  
days.

Nick turns to walk away. He makes it all the way to the  
front of the hospital to the car. Dani runs up behind him  
and grabs him for an embrace.

DANI  
I love you Nick.

NICK  
I love you too.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick and Dr. Levine are at the chess board.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

What else can you tell me?

DR. LEVINE

Manic behaviors can manifest in many ways.

NICK

Like?

DR. LEVINE

Without discussing any case in particular.

A few beats.

Some patients can go days without sleep, they have this burning obsession to finish huge tasks, their senses trick them, smell, hearing, they can have uncontrollable spending obsessions, lack of inhibitions -

NICK

Sex?

DR. LEVINE

Yes, outrageous, even dangerous sexual behavior is common. There is no one set of characteristics. Each patient is different and may show different symptoms during different episodes. Rare cases can be extremely hard to diagnose and treat, especially if the patient is aware of the diagnosis and is able to hide any problematic behaviors.

Dr. Levine makes a move.

NICK

I never saw it coming. I mean, I have done some of the things she did. Should I be on medication?

DR. LEVINE

No, you, you need to talk. You grew up in a house where the father was never there, the mother had to take charge, and you were the oldest child. Pretty common really.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

That your professional opinion?

Nick makes a move. Dr. Levine studies the board for a few beats, then lays down his king in defeat.

DR. LEVINE

Sounds better than me just saying  
your an asshole.

CUT TO:

EXT. JOB SITE - DAY

Nick is on the roof helping a couple of his employees. Candace drives up and gets out. She finds Tommy. We don't hear the conversation but Tommy rushes over closer to the house.

TOMMY

Nick! Hey Nick.

One of the employees hears Tommy and motions for Nick to look over.

NICK

What?

Nick sees Candace and immediately knows why she is there.

Nick sits down and puts his hands over his face.

CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Nick is alone. He walks to the kitchen and pulls out a whiskey bottle and a glass. He moves to the living room and sits down.

Nick opens the bottle and is about to pour. He reconsiders, puts the bottle down and puts the lid back on.

The doorbell rings. Nick doesn't move. The bell rings a couple more times, followed by some pounding.

TOMMY (O.C.)

Hey fucknuts. Open the door.

Nick reluctantly moves down the hall to open the door and lets Tommy in.

(CONTINUED)

TOMMY  
Holy shit, when did you get  
furniture?

NICK  
What do you want?

TOMMY  
Just to make sure I don't find you  
lying on the floor in a pool of  
your own blood and shit again.

NICK  
I didn't shit myself.  
(Beat)  
Did I?

TOMMY  
No, but while I was practicing my  
lines on my way over I thought it  
sounded better. More gritty.

NICK  
It worked.

Tommy sees the whiskey bottle.

TOMMY  
You drinking already?

NICK  
Not yet, but thought had crossed my  
mind.

Tommy opens the bottle, pours a big drink, tosses it back.  
He pours another and sits down with the glass in his hand.

Nick sits beside him. They put their feet up on the table.

TOMMY  
I am sorry bro. I really liked  
her.

NICK  
Thanks, look I know it's Thursday  
but I really don't feel like going  
to see Levine today so if that's  
why you -

TOMMY  
Nah. Not today. But I didn't want  
you being alone either. You don't  
have to talk or say shit. But you  
aren't being alone either.

(CONTINUED)

Tommy hands Nick the bottle. Nick takes a big drink.

NICK  
Thanks man.

TOMMY  
Hey, wanna know something?

NICK  
What?

TOMMY  
That whole court order thing, you know after you....you know.

NICK  
Yeah?

TOMMY  
Bullshit. I made it up.

Nick pauses for a few beats.

NICK  
Asshole.

A few hours pass and the two men are laughing and still drinking. A second bottle has been opened. Tommy is flipping through the channels on the tv.

TOMMY  
Where the tittie channels?

NICK  
You know, when I got divorced I felt sorry for myself. But, I knew for awhile it was coming. Maybe because this was such a shock to me, I am, well I am angry actually. I am mad at her for doing this, for giving up.

TOMMY  
(Drunk)  
Listen brother. I will come over and keep you company. I will drink with you. Laugh at your stupid jokes. But, you don't get to be angry.

NICK  
What?

TOMMY

Have you stopped to think, for one minute? That 6 months ago I had to bust in here and save your ass. You were barely breathing, laying in your own blood and shit -

NICK

You said I didn't shit.

TOMMY

I am talking here. One or two more pills and I am sitting here, mad at you. Your kids would be without a father and spend the rest of their lives wondering why.

Tommy stands up, he wobbles a little but balances on the table.

TOMMY

Have you stopped for one fucking second and thought about what you almost did? To your kids? To me?

Several beats of silence.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR LEVINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick walks in to the outer office. The receptionist sees Nick walk in, her eyes follow to see if Tommy is with him. A little disappointment when she realizes he isn't.

RECEPTIONIST

Hi Mr. Flaherty, do you have an appointment?

NICK

No, I just wanted to say -

Dr. Levine opens his office door.

DR. LEVINE

Hi Nick, please come in.

The two men enter the office. Dr. Levine moves towards the chessboard.

(CONTINUED)

DR. LEVINE  
Should we start a new game?

Nick sits in the chairs by the desk.

NICK  
No, no chess today.

DR. LEVINE  
Alright.

Dr. Levine moves to his desk chair.

NICK  
You heard?

DR. LEVINE  
Yes, I am so sorry Nick.

NICK  
Thank you. You knew her? I mean she  
was a patient?

DR. LEVINE  
Sorry Nick, I can't discuss -

NICK  
It's ok. I talked to her  
cousin. Did some searches on the  
internet.

DR. LEVINE  
How are you doing?

NICK  
I don't know. I keep thinking if I  
had known. I could have got her  
help. I wonder if I am the reason  
she.....

Several beats.

DR. LEVINE  
This is going to sound so cliché  
but you can't blame yourself. For  
any of this. You didn't cause her  
to be ill. Dani didn't cause it.  
And the very nature of it  
sometimes means patients refuse or  
avoid treatment.

NICK

I know. I know that...now. Doesn't make it easier though.

DR. LEVINE

Not right now. But you will work through it.

Nick stands. He reaches out to shake the doctors hand.

NICK

Thank you for everything doc.

DR. LEVINE

You are the one doing all the work. I hope you continue.

As Nick passes the receptionist he pauses.

NICK

Are you still billing my brother for these sessions?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes.

NICK

Add a couple of extra sessions on and buy yourself something nice.

CUT TO:

EXT. JENN'S HOUSE - DAY

Nick pulls up into the drive way. The kids come out followed by Jenn. The kids are dressed in bright t-shirts, board shorts, and flip flops. Nick has similar attire on.

JENNIFER

Hi, I am really sorry for your loss. How are you doing?

NICK

Still numb, gonna take awhile. 5 stages of grief and all that psycho-babble.

JENNIFER

Well, be strong. You have come along way.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
Thanks, I will. I will try.

JENNIFER  
Are you sure the kids are dressed  
ok?

NICK  
That's what it said. So, I  
guess. How bad can it be?

CUT TO:

EXT. SCOTT FAMILY HOUSE FRONT DRIVE - DAY

Nick and the kids pull up to a very big and expensive house.

ROBIN  
Are you kidding me?

WYATT  
That's a castle.

NICK  
She told me her parents were  
loaded, but....

They get out of the car and walk to the front door. Nick  
rings the bell. The door opens and Candace appears.

CANDACE  
So glad you came Nick.

NICK  
(Looking around)  
Holy shit!

CANDACE  
I know right. Come on in.

NICK  
Candace, these are my two kids.  
Robin and Wyatt.

CANDACE  
Hi kids. Come on thru to the back.  
There is lots to do.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCOTT FAMILY HOUSE REAR - DAY

As Candace leads Nick and the kids to the back we see there is a mini-carnival happening. People in the pool, a large inflatable play structure with kids all over. A dj is blaring music by a small portable dance floor. Someone is working the grill.

NICK  
What the hell kind of funeral is this?

CANDACE  
(laughing)  
You didn't expect anything normal for Dani did you? I know this is bizarre, but try to enjoy it for the day. We will all go back to dealing with her being gone tomorrow.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCOTT FAMILY HOUSE REAR - DAY

Nick is talking to a group of people listening to some stories about Dani. Candace comes over and taps Nick on the shoulder. He turns and sees it is the man with the voice. Dani's father, BENJAMIN SCOTT. Benjamin is dressed in a flowery shirt and khaki shorts. He is wearing a straw hat.

CANDACE  
Nick, this is my uncle, and Dani's father, Ben.

NICK  
I have heard a lot about you.

Nick puts his hand out to shake it, but it's ignored. Benjamin takes his hat off and appears to be studying it.

BENJAMIN  
(Very serious)  
Can I have a few minutes of your time?

Several beats.

NICK  
I um, really....I should watch the kids to make sure they stay out of trouble.

(CONTINUED)

BENJAMIN

You and I need to talk.

Nick looks to Candace for help. None is coming.

CANDACE

Come on kids. Lets get you something to eat.

(To Nick, with a mischievous grin.)

Good luck.

CUT TO:

INT. SCOTT FAMILY HOUSE DEN - DAY

Benjamin and Nick walk into the office. It is filled with expensive dark wood, a large antique desk, leather bound books, and surrounded by windows. It overlooks the backyard with the party going on in background.

Benjamin motions for Nick to sit in one of the leather side chairs opposite the desk. He walks over to one of the windows.

Several beats.

BENJAMIN

Do you love your kids Mr. Flaherty?

NICK

Yes I do, very much. Please. It's Nick.

BENJAMIN

It never seems to be enough, is it...Nick?

NICK

Sir?

Before answering Benjamin pours two whiskeys and hands one to Nick.

BENJAMIN

You can love your kids as much as humanly possible. Provide them with all the love, all the tools, the skills, the opportunities...

He stretches out his hands in a gesture indicating the house and the yard.

(CONTINUED)

BENJAMIN

You can give them everything. But they still have to struggle on their own.

NICK

I see what you mean.

BENJAMIN

Danielle was my pride and joy. She was so happy and precocious. Smart and funny. Life was perfect for a long time. But then...

Benjamin finishes his drink and pours another one. He gestures to Nick as if to ask if he wants more. Nick hasn't touched his drink, shakes his head no.

BENJAMIN

It was devastating once we found out. Do you know much about my daughter's diagnosis?

NICK

I have been learning.

BENJAMIN

It started as little things, excessive shopping, tantrums, staying up all night. But it progressed. School wasn't an option. The highs and the lows just got worse and worse.

Nick finishes his drink and Benjamin brings the bottle over and sits beside Nick.

BENJAMIN

People took advantage of her. So called friends, she was a rich girl with no ability to stop spending. Boys, men....

The two men look at each other.

Several beats.

BENJAMIN

We had to find a hospital because she started hurting herself.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Why did she do this sir? It's...I don't understand. She wasn't alone. I wanted to....

BENJAMIN

She probably made up her mind before she met you. She would leave the hospital and quit her meds, just to feel something. Even if it ended badly.

NICK

But the medication, I read about it. It is supposed to help.

BENJAMIN

The medication did control the impulses, yes. Dani would always say that the meds helped her function, but it wasn't living.

NICK

Why this time? Is it because of me she....

BENJAMIN

Yes, and no.

Nick is devastated.

BENJAMIN

Dani's highs weren't really good for her. She would be creative, and explosive, but eventually she would be destructive. As Dani got older the high's she experienced got higher and higher. The lows that followed were getting more and more devastating. She could go weeks, months without being able to get out of bed. Then she would hurt herself. I think this time, for once.

(Benjamin is wiping tears from his eyes.)

During one of her highs, she met you. And for a brief time, I don't know how long, she is genuinely happy. Maybe the first time in her adult life.

(Beat)

She felt the low coming, and it wasn't going to be good. She would

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BENJAMIN (cont'd)  
have been lost to all of us. She  
didn't want you to go through  
that. That high, that moment of  
happiness, might never have come  
back again.

Both men are silent for several beats. Benjamin is wiping  
tears.

Benjamin stands up.

BENJAMIN  
I hear you are a carpenter.

NICK  
Yeah, my family runs a construction  
company.

Benjamin walks to his desk and pulls out a file folder full  
of documents. He grabs one and hands it to Nick.

BENJAMIN  
She wanted you to have a house?

NICK  
What? I don't understand. I can't  
take that.

BENJAMIN  
She was pretty explicit. She left  
you the house and some cash to get  
a business started.

NICK  
She wrote a will?

BENJAMIN  
It was more of a note.

He manages a chuckle and pulled out a stack of foolscap.  
Each page is filled with writing, margins, everywhere.

BENJAMIN  
Actually, more of a novel than a  
note. She was the one who wanted  
this party today. I think she had  
enough pain, enough blackness in  
her life, she just wanted people to  
smile and remember her good days.

He finds the particular sheets he was looking for. He hands  
them to Nick.

(CONTINUED)

BENJAMIN

This section is for you.

Benjamin walks over to the window and looks out over the yard. Giving Nick at least the semblance of privacy.

Nick begins to read. There is so much ink on these few pages it takes a couple of minutes.

We close up on his face as he reads. It is very silent in the room.

Nick has a few smiles on page one. He even laughs out loud on page 2. But on page 3 he becomes very still. Tears flow as he reads Dani's final words to him.

When he is done he puts the pages carefully on the desk. Benjamin walks over to him and puts his hand on Nick's shoulder.

BENJAMIN

Please take the house son. She wanted you to have it. Start a new life with it. Do something good.

Nick nods.

NICK

I want you to know that I do love her.

BENJAMIN

That makes me very happy. To know that my daughter knew what love was.

Both men are wiping tears.

BENJAMIN

Now please. Come with me and help me celebrate my daughters life.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCOTT FAMILY HOUSE REAR - DAY

Everyone from the party is gathered around. Benjamin and his wife HELEN are standing by the dj area. Benjamin has a microphone.

(CONTINUED)

## BENJAMIN

First of all I want to thank you all for coming, and all of you for getting in to the spirit of the occasion. This means the world to Helen and me. You may or may not be aware, but everything happening here today are at the request of Danielle. Dani.

He pauses, Helen rubs his shoulder and he finds the strength to go on.

## BENJAMIN

One of the biggest joys of Dani's life was music. When Dani had music going we knew it was going to be a good day. We knew she was happy.

(Beat)

So, one of the things she wanted at this party is karaoke.

Some people cheer, some groan.

## BENJAMIN

Everyone is encouraged to sing, maybe find a song that makes you happy, and you can sing it for the rest of us. Now, I am not much of a vocalist, but Helen and I are gonna start it off. Now when the microphone gets passed to you, just do a line, a verse, a chorus. And no matter how shy or nervous you are, do it for Dani.

Benjamin points to the DJ.

The song comes through the speakers. Benjamin and Helen pass the microphone around and everyone takes turns.

As the party goes on, people start to take turns individually. We see brief bits from each.

Nick does a song.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIXER UPPER HOUSE - DAY

Nick is working on the house.

Quick cuts of various projects.

At various times Tommy, Robin, Wyatt and even Albert help Nick with the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIXER UPPER HOUSE - DAY

2 months later.

We look down from above. The house is fixed up and beautiful. Nick is standing on the front sidewalk.

A car pulls up to the curb. Angela gets out of her car with her son.

Nick hands her the keys to the house.

Angela is very excited.

CUT TO:

INT. ALBERT AND GRACE FLAHERTY RESIDENCE - DAY

Nick is in the kitchen, he finishes the dishes. He walks downstairs to the games room.

Robin and Wyatt are on either side of a chess board. Albert is sitting behind Wyatt helping him make moves. Nick slides in beside Robin and they continue their game.

FADE OUT.