

IN TRANSIT

An Original Screenplay by

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THE UNIVERSE

Infinite. Silent. Freezing. HYDROGEN and HELIUM in constant NUCLEAR FLUX, creating the STARS we're currently FLYING past.

PLANETS not in our solar system fly by at breakneck speed. Some barren, others we can just make out ILLUMINATED TRANSIT SYSTEMS dug into the core. INTELLIGENT LIFE.

THE MILKY WAY. Things are starting to look familiar. We coast through SATURN'S RINGS, past NEPTUNE, URANUS, MARS and finally settle on our spinning, little blue marble, EARTH.

NORTH AMERICA. We're settling somewhere over the EAST COAST of AMERICA moving fast. Bright. Vibrant. Alive. MANHATTAN.

EXT. MANHATTAN - NIGHT

We're over the city. We hear everything. Everyone at once:

"It's a beautiful baby girl."; "Gimme your money bitch!"; "Extra Mozzarella, you got it."; "If your parents can't accept you for who you are..."; Roku is input two, dumb ass."

We're closing in on 47th STREET just off TENTH AVENUE. Above a BODEGA on the first floor, a LIGHT comes on.

WINNIE (O.S.)

Wake up. Freddy, wake up!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

FREDDY DILEO (40) wakes with a start. His Beautiful wife, WINNIE, 30s, movie star looks, sits up next to him in bed.

FREDDY

What is it? What's the matter?

WINNIE

I had the most wonderful dream.

FREDDY

You had a *good* dream? That's why you're... because you had a *good* dream? You know that's the opposite of how this usually--

WINNIE

--I was on a beach. The world had ended. It was just me...

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Winnie is standing on a BEACH alone when a GAME SHOW HOST walks up. An APPLAUSE SIGN fashioned to a PALM TREE flashes.

WINNIE (V.O.)

And then a game show host appeared. He had one of those Bob Barker, skinny microphones and said if I answered correctly I'd have a brand new life. Youth, fame, money, who knows. He asked me, who was my first love, I said Adam Fuchs, my high school crush. And then, Adam appears in his prom tuxedo...

EXT. BEACH - DAY

ADAM FUCHS(17) walks out in his TUXEDO to wild APPLAUSE. Two GIRLS roll out a SAFE as the HOST talks to Winnie.

WINNIE (V.O.)

And they roll this safe out onto the beach and the host, he says if I can guess the combination, when I opened it, my brand new life would be inside. And my heart is racing so fast...

Winnie turns The COMBINATION LOCK, the SAFE starts to open.

INT. APARTMENT - SAME

WINNIE

And I guessed right! But just as the safe started opening I woke up.

She catches her breath, smiles and lies back on the bed.

FREDDY

Where was I in the dream?

WINNIE

You weren't in it.

FREDDY

I wasn't... in your new life? You know, I thought it was bad enough that you wake me up in the middle of the night because of a good dream, but now, er, you know...

Freddy gets up, annoyed, starts pacing. A little PAUNCH sticks out under his T-SHIRT.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

...Now, you're telling me that this wonderful dream was so wonderful because you were back together with your high school boyfriend? You know, maybe next time just let me sleep through to the divorce.

WINNIE

Oh, please. It was just a dream. And it wasn't even like that. He wasn't my boyfriend. He was with Hillary Zern. But that's not the point. It was the feeling of uncertainty. Whatever was in that safe. Whoever I was, was about to end. And whoever I was about to become was so totally out of my control. It was so... liberating.

FREDDY

You know, I remember when you used to wake me up to make love. And now it's... you know--

WINNIE

Oh please. The last time I did that you told me "Balzac never made love until he'd finished his work."

FREDDY

Well, that's true. And I was in the middle of a very crucial-- And that was one time. You hold that over my head like I've taken a vow of celibacy. A writer needs to put his thoughts on the page before he can enjoy any sort of, you know...

WINNIE

You work for the MTA.

FREDDY

Stop saying it like that, OK? I'm an artist. A writer. I mean, look at Salinger, he was a cruise director before he wrote 'The Catcher in the Rye' and Vonnegut, you know, worked at a Saab dealership. And Faulkner worked at the Post Office!

(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)

We're talking about the great American novelists here, Winnie!

WINNIE

You know who else works at Saab dealerships and Post Offices? Car Salesmen and Postal Workers! You live in a fantasy world, Freddy. You don't know who you are. You say you're a writer but you never finish anything. Why? Because to write you have to feel and you don't feel. And sometimes a girl just wants to get laid!

FREDDY

Listen to yourself. Would you just listen to yourself? You know what I'm going through right now. The repressed, you know... What I've been talking about with Dr. Levine.

WINNIE

Yeah, I don't want to sound insensitive, but this whole, "I think I might have been molested at summer camp" excuse is starting to wear a little thin!

FREDDY

You don't want to sound... Well I do hope you let me know when you *WANT* to sound insensitive so I can, you know, put on a bulletproof vest. You say I don't feel?

WINNIE

Let's just go to sleep. I shouldn't have woken you.

Freddy gets back under the covers and tugs at the sheets.

FREDDY

Try not to wake me again unless it's really important, like if you two need a ride home from the prom.

Winnie shakes her head and turns off the LIGHT.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Freddy walks to the SUBWAY as people shove past in that slow, commuter dance of cattle being herded into their pen.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - DAY

The PLATFORM is crowded with COMMUTERS. He watches a HALF NAKED COMMUTER in tight, RUNNING SHORTS and no shirt, talk to his FRIEND, while one TESTICLE hangs out of his SHORTS.

HALF NAKED COMMUTER

So Lauren tells me she got the letter yesterday. It was some computer glitch or something. I never actually passed calculus. Technically I'm three credits shy of graduating. Do you believe that? I graduate college fifteen years ago and now I have to take the final exam? Calculus. Who the hell remembers calculus?

Freddy watches the guy's TESTICLE pulsate every time he says the word "calculus".

PUERTO RICAN GUY (O.C)

Are you for real?

Freddy, taken aback, turns around to the Puerto Rican guy.

FREDDY

Excuse me?

PUERTO RICAN GUY

I said, are you for real? Stop staring at that guy's nut, bro.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Freddy's on the train. His nose is directly in the ARMPIT of a fat, STRAPHANGER who's in the middle of a conversation.

STRAPHANGER

I need to go back to the dentist. This is getting ridiculous.

STRAPHANGER'S FRIEND

Still?

The guy sticks his HAND in his MOUTH and pulls out a TOOTH.

FREDDY

Come on, guys. Look, I'm sorry to break up the fun here but, you know, there are other passengers?

STRAPHANGER

So what?

FREDDY

So what. Could you maybe try to
limit the number of teeth you pull
out of your mouth?

The two commuters look at him like *he's* the strange one and carry on their conversation.

INT. METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY, BACK OFFICES - DAY

Freddy sits in a CUBICLE in the back offices of the MTA. He stares off, lost in thought as his co-worker, GENE (40's) heavysset, African American, talks to him.

GENE

It's hard enough with two kids. You know how much it costs to have one in school in this city? Last night I fall asleep on the couch right? Wanna know how I woke up? I got HIT IN THE KNUCKLES WITH A BAT. THAT'S how I woke up. I look up and Lamar has a whiffle ball bat in his hand. Son of bitch tagged my knuckles! Three now? Come on man. Come on!

(beat)

Yo, Dileo. Hello? Earth to Freddy--

FREDDY

Sorry, Gene. I didn't get a lot of sleep last night. Congratulations though. Sounds like you're gonna have your hands full. Of bruises.

GENE

You OK? You been acting a little funny lately.

FREDDY

Yeah, I'm just... I dunno. Is this
(picks up stack of PAPERS)
All there is?

GENE

Well, I know there's a bunch of RTS's need stamping, but you can probably get to that after lunch?--

FREDDY

No, I mean *this*. Life. Yesterday I was sixteen, you know? The world was so... Unexplored. I was brave. Girls used to look back at me. I used to be in on the joke. Now, you know, I'm lucky if I make it out of the bathroom without a stain on my crotch. No matter how many times I jiggle now, it's--

GENE

--Come on man. You got a great looking wife. Way better looking than you. No kids. Black friends. You're living *my* dream. Hey, why don't you come out with Renatta and me tonight? Get a few drinks in you. Loosen you up a little. Shit.

FREDDY

I can't. Winnie's having her friends over for dinner. This nauseatingly pretentious couple that loves to come to our place because, you know, our decor really brings out their passive aggressiveness.

Freddy crumples a DOCUMENT, throws it at the GARBAGE. Misses. Gene looks at him with concern. Freddy shakes it off.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

I don't know. I just-- I guess I always thought I'd have a bigger role to play in this world.

EXT. MANHATTAN - DAY

A CITY BUS comes to a STOP. Freddy exits, CELLPHONE at his ear.

FREDDY

(on phone)

Well, would it kill the royal couple to drink beer?

(beat)

Because whenever I pick out the wine they have something to say about the grape or the quality. '*It's too earthy.*' I could tell them the vineyard was on Jupiter, it would still be too earthy.

Freddy's stops outside a BAR, THE LUCKY FOX. He looks in.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

(on phone)

OK fine. Nine o'clock. That should give me enough time to pick out the wrong merlot. I'm wearing clothes. What do you mean what am I--?

(beat)

Sure. That's fine. Whatever you want me to wear. Why don't you lay out Adam Fuchs' tuxedo.

(beat)

Hello?

INT. LUCKY FOX - NIGHT

Freddy walks into the mostly empty bar. LUCY, 20's, spiky hair, JOHNNY THUNDERS T-SHIRT, watches him sit down. The BARTENDER walks over.

BARTENDER

What can I get you?

FREDDY

I don't know. I don't usually do this kind of thing. Something that'll take the sting out of an extremely unpleasant evening.

He walks away to fix the drink. Freddy sees RAMSEY, 40's, tipsy, sitting a couple stools down.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

I usually don't do this type of thing. I'm not really an after work bar person, per se.

RAMSEY

So I hear. Well, you're doing fine so far. Dashiell Hammett said; *'If a man's got to be careful not to drink too much it's because he's not to be trusted when he does!'*

The bartender brings over the DRINK.

FREDDY

Ah yes. And I believe it was Bukowski who said...

Freddy takes a sip and BURPS. Ramsey laughs. Across the bar, Lucy shakes her head and takes a big GULP of her DRINK.

RAMSEY
That gets me every time.

FREDDY
(confused)
Every time?

RAMSEY
Hey Scotty, what time you got?

BARTENDER/SCOTTY
Four-thirty five.

RAMSEY
Well, Bukowski, you're gonna love
this. This is my favorite part.

Just then BRAD, 14, BRACES gleaming, walks in the bar.

FREDDY
Sorry? Favorite part?

RAMSEY
(whispers to Freddy)
Brad Spitzer. Used to bully the
shit out of me in High School.

Freddy looks at the young boy and back at Ramsey.

FREDDY
I don't... Are you a teacher?

Ramsey gets up from his stool. He towers over BRAD.

BRAD
Well, if it isn't pussy boy.

Freddy looks on confused as Ramsey and Brad square off.

FREDDY
Look, fellas, I don't know what's
going on here but I'm sure if we
just call this young man's mother--

Brad takes a SWING at Ramsey but he dodges and lands a good
RIGHT HOOK to Brad's CHIN.

BARTENDER
No fighting in here!

LUCY
I got twenty on the kid! Any
takers?

The other PATRONS look on with excitement as Brad deals him an UPPERCUT. Ramsey topples onto Freddy who drops his DRINK.

FREDDY

Hey! Is this what happens at these after work bars? I mean--

Just then a POLICE OFFICER walks in.

POLICE OFFICER

All right, who wants to get molested?

FREDDY

What!?

POLICE OFFICER

I said who wants to get arrested!

LUCY

Well, that's my cue, gents. Scotty, put this on my tab.

BARTENDER

What tab? Do I know you? Hey!

Lucy exits the bar as the officer pries Ramsey and Brad apart. Brad's ELBOW goes into Freddy's CHIN.

BRAD

What's your problem, asshole?

FREDDY

(Holding his chin)

Obviously my chin attacked your elbow. Hair trigger. I really should've shaved...

Brad throws an OVERHAND RIGHT. Freddy's out for the count.

OVER BLACK

RAMSEY (O.S.)

Wake up. Hey man, wake up.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Freddy opens his eyes and gets his bearings. He's lying on a BENCH in a JAIL CELL. Ramsey's sitting next to him.

FREDDY

Where am I?

RAMSEY

The clink.

FREDDY

Why am I here?

RAMSEY

Yeah... that's on me. I tried to tell the cops you didn't have anything to do with it but they never listen.

FREDDY

Do you... fight... children a lot?

RAMSEY

Every night.

Freddy puts a HAND to his PURPLE, BRUISED FOREHEAD.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)

He tagged you pretty good there.

Ramsey pulls out a BLOODY TOOTH and smiles.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)

Guess he got me too!

FREDDY

What is it with people pulling out their teeth today?

RAMSEY

Look, I owe you an apology. I wish I could've told you not to come into the bar, but I always forget.

FREDDY

What's that supposed to mean?

RAMSEY

Well, every day at that time, Brad Spitzer from freshman year comes in looking for a fight. And every day I forget that you're in there too, minding your own business and get tangled up in it.

FREDDY

I see. Look, I think you may have, you know, gotten hit a little harder than you thought. I've never been in that bar before.

(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)

And if you go to high school with that kid, I'm sorry but, you look VERY bad for your age.

Ramsey laughs.

RAMSEY

You're a funny guy, Freddy. But you still don't get it do you?

FREDDY

Get what?

RAMSEY

This is a dream.

FREDDY

This is-- Right. Well it's been... I'm just gonna go sit over there, in the, you know, part of the cell closest to Earth.

Freddy gets up and walks across the CELL. Ramsey takes out a NOTE PAD and starts writing while Freddy watches.

RAMSEY

Don't believe me, huh? In about one minute I know you're gonna be bailed out by your wife. And I know we're gonna see each other again...

FREDDY

Jesus, you know, my day started out relatively normal? I wish this were a dream so I could wake up and have you out of my life, no offense.

RAMSEY

No offense taken. Don't blame you at all, but it isn't your dream, Freddy. It's my dream.

An OFFICER walks down the hall. Ramsey grabs Freddy and sticks the NOTE in Freddy's JACKET.

FREDDY

Hey... What're you...

RAMSEY

Good luck, Bukowski!

OFFICER

Who's Frederick Dileo?

FREDDY
(sarcastic)
Well, I thought I was.

OFFICER
It's your lucky day. You made bail.

Freddy looks at Ramsey more than a little curious.

FREDDY
This is a dream. And it's *your*
dream. Not mine?

RAMSEY
That's right.

FREDDY
So, what then, I don't actually
exist?

RAMSEY
I don't know. Maybe you do,
somewhere.

FREDDY
Well that's just... I guess I can
cancel my gym membership--

OFFICER
--Hey buddy, let's go. Clock's
ticking.

FREDDY
And in your dream, *I* get bailed out
and *you* stay in jail?

RAMSEY
My security team will be bailing me
out any minute now.

FREDDY
Your security team. His security--
That's... And just for
conversation's sake, what happens
to me when you wake up?

Ramsey shrugs his shoulders. Freddy shakes his head, angry.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Well as fun as this has been, I do
unfortunately have dinner plans.
(MORE)

FREDDY (CONT'D)

So good luck with the insanity plea, I'm sure you shouldn't have any trouble getting that one to stick, and hey, thanks for adding to the ole' existential crisis. It's been real.

RAMSEY

No it hasn't! See you tomorrow!

FREDDY

(inaudibly)

Drop dead.

Freddy walks out with the officer as the BARS clang shut.

OFFICER

Wife's a piece of ass. Looks like what's her name. How'd someone like you ever get someone like that? Way to go, pal.

FREDDY

And the award for backhanded compliment of the year goes to...

Freddy fishes out the NOTE and starts reading:

ON NOTE

"1. GYM MEMBERSHIP, 2. INSANITY PLEA, 3. EXISTENTIAL CRISIS, 4. DROP DEAD"

Freddy. Cannot. Believe. His. Eyes...

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Freddy, BROWN PAPER BAG of BELONGINGS, and Winnie, walk briskly out of the STATION. Freddy looks around suspiciously.

WINNIE

I do not believe this. I just simply do not. I left the oven on low you know. So we can still salvage this night. If you've made me overcook this lamb for Paul and Michelle, I'll never forgive you.

FREDDY

Thanks for asking. It hurts worse than it looks. But you're sweet.

WINNIE

I'm supposed to feel sorry for you?
I ask my husband to do one simple
thing, pick out a bottle of wine,
and he goes and gets arrested for
fighting in a bar?

FREDDY

I already told you, it was Brad
Spitzer. He started it!

WINNIE

And since when do you go to bars
after work anyway? We're Jewish!

FREDDY

I felt like a drink. It's not like
I was, you know, fixing their
plumbing.

Winnie tries to hail a cab. Freddy turns and sees Ramsey
being escorted out of the PRECINCT by a SECURITY TEAM. A
STRETCH LIMOUSINE waits as Ramsey waves to both of them.

WINNIE

Who's that?

FREDDY

Nobody. He's nobody.

WINNIE

Doesn't look like nobody.

Freddy stops short and looks at where A TREE just stood,
which is now GONE. A cab pulls up and Winnie gets in.

WINNIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Get in.

FREDDY

Wasn't there just... A tree there?

WINNIE

Freddy, I don't have time for this.

FREDDY

Winnie, I'm pretty sure there was A
large TREE standing across the
street that just disappeared. That
doesn't pique your curiosity?

WINNIE

Freddy, it's piquing my curiosity
why you won't get in this fucking
cab right now!

EXT. BUSHWICK - NIGHT

LUCY, from the bar earlier, now wearing HEADPHONES, bops down
the street. She passes a trans PROSTITUTE named ISIS.

ISIS

Lucy, goosy, my sister with the
transistor!

LUCY

Lookin' sharp, Isis.

ISIS

Thanks, doll. What's good?

LUCY

Fresh baked bread, blizzard n' a
sled, smell of a baby's head. You
workin' late, girl?

ISIS

Shoot I hope I work at all tonight.

LUCY

I hear that. Later, 'gator.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The place is small. Small windows, small kitchen and a
little door that opens up to a tiny bedroom. Lucy takes out a
BROWN PAPER BAG, walks to the BATHROOM.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

She takes out BOTTLE after BOTTLE of PILLS. She opens the
MIRROR, sees there are too many PILLS in there already. Puts
the rest under the SINK.

She pops a few pills in her MOUTH. Flexes her HANDS. There's
a KNOCK at the door.

LUCY

Who is it?

No answer. But a KNOCK again. Lucy shrugs and walks over. She
opens it to YUCKA, 40's, Middle Eastern and bald.

YUCKA

You're late again, Lucy. It's almost end of month and I don't want to no hear excuses this time!

LUCY

C'mon Yucka, you're a walking cliché! The landlord banging down the door for the rent? Hell's bells, you might as well be in your boxers and a wife beater.

YUCKA

Don't you put your clichés on me! You're the deadbeat tenant, cliché!

LUCY

Jesus, all right, calm down. I got a gig this week, OK? I get fifty percent of the door. Come!

YUCKA

Just have my rent. Don't make foolishness out of me!

He walks away, still mumbling. Lucy closes the door, goes to the STEREO and puts on FRANZ LISZT's LIEBESTRÄUME. She starts to respond to the music, dancing a haunting, sensual dance.

UNTIL THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR AGAIN...

LUCY

This is my time now, Yucka!

Another KNOCK. She turns off the STEREO and answers it.

EXT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - SAME

Nobody's there. She's about to close it again when she sees AMY, five years old, standing at the end of the HALLWAY. TEARS well in Lucy's eyes.

LUCY

Amy...?

She goes to her knees, scoops her up in a long embrace.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(whispered through tears)

I knew we'd see each other again.

She's still holding her when Isis walks down the hall.

ISIS
What you doing, girl?

Lucy looks at Isis, then back down. AMY'S GONE. Lucy has her arms around NOTHING. She's shocked but plays it off.

LUCY
Oh, I, uh, lost an earring.

INT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Freddy and Winnie sit at the KITCHEN TABLE across from PAUL, 30's, good looking, and MICHELLE, 30's, smartly dressed.

PAUL
So I guess the moral of the story is, if a monkey ever lands on your shoulder in Marrakesh, forget the monkey, watch your pockets!

Polite laughter from everyone, except Winnie who's GUFFAWING.

WINNIE
Oh, Paul, you're simply vivacious!

MICHELLE
The lamb was so amusing, Winnie. You're getting better.

WINNIE
Thank you, I used a little more cumin than... Did you say amazing or amusing?

PAUL
And the beer, Freddy... Inspired!

FREDDY
(drinking)
Sorry I didn't have time to pick up any wine, I was booked this afternoon.

PAUL
Beer was a great idea, so bohemian. Drinking beer with a brawling writer. I feel like we're dining with Hemingway, before he published anything.

Winnie laughs a little too hard again and smiles at Paul.

FREDDY

Well, you should have seen the other guy. He's you know, gonna be grounded for sure.

MICHELLE

Why won't you show Paul your work, Freddy? He's helped out a lot of wannabe writers, haven't you honey?

WINNIE

Please, Freddy doesn't show anyone his work until he's finished. And since he never finishes, it works out for everybody.

PAUL

Well, who can blame him? Year after year of trying and not succeeding. Rejection letters turning into rejection emails. Most people would've packed it in by now. I know I would've. Freddy I'd be delighted to look something over for you if you like.

FREDDY

Oh yeah, really, that's OK. It's just... jumbled thoughts, streams of... You know, I'm not...

Freddy fumbles with his GLASS and drops it, SHATTERING on the floor. Winnie sighs and starts gathering up the SHARDS.

WINNIE

Every time.

PAUL

"Don't tell me the moon is shining. Show me the glint of light on the broken glass!" Chekhov.

MICHELLE

Don't make fun. He's nervous in front of you, sweetie.

PAUL

It was writing advice!

MICHELLE

Well, not everyone can be a writer. If the world were full of writers who would punch our bus tickets?

WINNIE

Thank you, Michelle. That's what I've been trying to tell him but he won't listen. Do you hear that Freddy? He has this awful job that pays no money because the hours are flexible, should an idea strike him. Meanwhile, I'm forced to live in Ralph Kramden's apartment. Plus we have to live on the first floor because Freddy's afraid of heights!

Freddy sits, distracted, rubbing his BRUISE while they talk. He grabs the NOTE Ramsey wrote out of the BROWN PAPER BAG from the station, looks at it again, opens another BEER.

PAUL

You might want to have that bruise checked out by a doctor. You could be concussed.

WINNIE

Freddy, wake up. Someone's talking to you!

PAUL

What's that you're looking at?

FREDDY

Huh? Oh, it's nothing. The man I was arrested with today, handed me this note. It's silly, really.

PAUL

What does it say?

FREDDY

It's not... He said none of this was real. That he was dreaming and that I, or, I guess we all, are just people in his dream.

Winnie looks over at Michelle, embarrassed.

WINNIE

I'm sorry.

PAUL

Sounds like you've stumbled onto a solipsist.

WINNIE

Fascinating. And what is a...Sol?

PAUL

A solipsist is someone who subscribes to the philosophy that only one mind, his mind, is sure to exist.

FREDDY

I thought the term for that is "President".

MICHELLE

Can we not?

PAUL

There's actually a documentary I've been wanting to see at the Angelika that, among other things, delves into some of the aspects of solipsism. The metaphysical, the methodological, maybe we'll all go?

FREDDY

Is that the one where the fraternity moves in next door to Seth Rogan?

WINNIE

Stop it Freddy, we'd love to go!

MICHELLE

We'll have a *good* dinner at our house afterwards. *I'll* cook.

PAUL

I wouldn't dwell on this, Freddy. No man has the right to control another man's destiny.

FREDDY

Oh, this guy was crazier than Ezra Pound. But it's the funniest thing, I could've sworn he gave me this note *before* I said these things.

He hands the NOTE to Paul.

PAUL

(reading note)

Only adding to my suspicion that you're concussed. Life is very simple, Freddy, like a waltz. But we insist on making it an Adagio.

Paul looks around to see if anyone was impressed by his pretentious analogy. Winnie was. Freddy blows into the BROWN PAPER BAG.

FREDDY

I always thought of life more like a balloon. You know, you're born into this perfectly inflated balloon, but as soon as you take your first breath, the air starts to seep out and you just... You know, spend all your time trying to distract yourself from hearing the leak.

WINNIE

Well, I think you're drunk.

FREDDY

But then you get older and you start to live with the leak because, you know, at least it beats the alternative...

Freddy POPS the BROWN PAPER BAG. Everyone jumps back.

INT. METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY, BACK OFFICES - DAY

Freddy sits in his CUBICLE staring off into space.

GENE

Look alive, Fred. Boss lady comin'.

FREDDY

Can you not talk like we're on the Green Mile?

MELORA, 30's, walks over to their CUBICLES.

MELORA

Yo, Dileo, Doug called in sick. I need you to fill in at the booth.

FREDDY

Oh, yeah, no. No can-- You know I'm not good with all the people... It's, you know, in today's polarized climate of... unrest... I feel my services are better suited for back here.

MELORA

Freddy, you're trying to have a conversation with me. This isn't a conversation. Just go into your bottom drawer, grab your balls and use them for an hour, OK? You can put them back after lunch.

Freddy gets up from his desk, looks at Melora.

MELORA (CONT'D)

Is there something you'd like to say to me Freddy?

You bet your ass there's something he'd like to say, but...

FREDDY

No.

Freddy puts his head down and walks out.

GENE

Dead man walkin'!

INT. TICKET COUNTER - LATER

Freddy stands at the COUNTER looking at the endless line of COMMUTERS. A small, ASIAN WOMAN walks up with a huge BOX.

ASIAN WOMAN

I want to carry on!

FREDDY

Jesus, who's in there?

ASIAN WOMAN

Diseases from swimwear?

FREDDY

Who's-- It was a joke. We'll uh, need to measure and weigh it.

ASIAN WOMAN

I don't want to wait. I pay with credit card!

FREDDY

Weigh it. You know, I'm pretty sure this won't fit in the overhead.

ASIAN WOMAN

You take now! Now! Now!... NOW!

Freddy puts a hand to his bruise, feeling dizzy.

SKINNY GUY ON LINE
 Hey buddy, can we move this along?
 I'd like to get to Newark sometime
 this century?

Freddy hoists the BOX over the counter to measure it while
 the ROOM SPINS. Other PEOPLE on line get in on the yelling.

FREDDY
 Almost done here, sir. It'll just
 be the rest of my... Life...

And he FAINTS.

INT. DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Freddy sits, waiting to be called. Oddly, PORN is playing on
 the TELEVISION mounted on the WALL. It's muted.

A very popular SONG plays on the RADIO but the SINGER forgets
 the WORDS and tries to cover by HUMMING THE MELODY until he's
 back at the chorus. Freddy looks up. Did that just happen?

RECEPTIONIST
 Mr. Dildo?

FREDDY
 (Sees everyone staring)
 DILEO, yes. With an "E". "Dileo".

Freddy walks over to the RECEPTIONIST, 40's, who looks up and
 sees the porn on the TV.

RECEPTIONIST
 Sorry about the pornography.
 They're doing construction next
 door. It's messing with our cable.
 The Doctor will see you now.

FREDDY
 Oh, I, uh, didn't notice the TV.

RECEPTIONIST
 Sure you didn't, sicko.

INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY

Freddy sits on the TABLE in his PAPER ROBE when the DOCTOR
 walks in. The DOCTOR also happens to be the RECEPTIONIST. But
 now she speaks with a heavy BRITISH ACCENT.

DOCTOR

Well, Freddy. In looking at your scans I have to say I'm a little concerned about what I've seen.

FREDDY

Am I dying?

DOCTOR

Well, we're all dying. That's the good news...

Freddy swallows hard. The doctor takes out an X-RAY, puts it on the WHITE BOARD. Points to a BLACK SPOT.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Right. You see this black spot here? It looks like a tumor. I'm hoping benign but with the size and location, I'd like to err on the side of caution and start looking at treatment options immediately to try to *prevent* you from dying.

Freddy starts sweating. Feels woozy.

FREDDY

I can't -- You know, you have a horrible bedside manner for a receptionist.

DOCTOR

Don't be silly. That's my twin sister Mary. She's filling in while Mary is on vacation.

FREDDY

Why do you have an accent?

DOCTOR

Do I?

FREDDY

Ok, why doesn't *she* have a *British* accent!?

DOCTOR

Look Mr. Dildo, we can talk about the tragic, sociological experiment of twins accidentally separated at birth and raised in two separate countries, or we can talk about the tumor in your head. Which would you prefer?

FREDDY

Honestly? I'd prefer not to have to talk about either.

Freddy looks at the X-Ray. The big BLACK SPOT.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Oh God. So I AM dying. I'm really dying. It's all over? I knew it felt like more than a concussion!

DOCTOR

Well, we don't know everything yet. What I can tell you is that this mass is currently pushing against your brain and if it gets any bigger, benign or not, it could start cutting off circulation.

FREDDY

What does that mean?

DOCTOR

How have you been feeling lately? Any hallucinations, memory loss? Anything that would seem out of the ordinary in your day to day.

FREDDY

Well, just recently I *have* been entertaining the possibility that I might not actually exist.

DOCTOR

(beat)
Right...

The doctor writes in her PAD, goes to a DRAWER and pulls out PAMPHLETS with titles like "Coping with Cancer"...

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I'm going to schedule a follow up with Doctor Kevorkian to figure out the best way to handle this.

FREDDY

(terrified)
Doctor Kevorkian?

DOCTOR

Yes. Doctor Amanda Kevorkian. The Oncologist. She'll be able to say go in and remove it or shrink it and keep it at bay with radiation.

(MORE)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 Those kinds of options. In the
 meantime, take these home and read
 them. And write down any questions
 you may have.

Freddy takes the pamphlets. Doesn't know what to think.

INT. SUBWAY- DAY

Freddy sits in silence on the crowded SUBWAY.

SUBWAY RIDER
 Things could always be worse.

Freddy looks up, thinking the person is talking to him.

SUBWAY RIDER'S FRIEND
 How?

SUBWAY RIDER
 I don't know. You could have a
 brain tumor or something.

Freddy looks down just as LUCY walks through the door, into
 his car, AND RIGHT OVER TO HIM.

LUCY
 I don't believe it. Hi, you!

She squeezes into the seat next to Freddy, takes off her
 JACKET and hides it under the SEAT.

LUCY (CONT'D)
 How have you been? You look like
 you lost weight!

FREDDY
 Do I know you?

LUCY
 It's so funny running into you like
 this. I was just talking about you!

FREDDY
 I uh, think you've got the wrong
 guy. Women don't talk about me.

Lucy looks at the DOOR as two POLICE OFFICERS walk in,
 looking around for someone.

LUCY
 My Gynecologist is up here. I live
 in Bushwick. I hate the City.

FREDDY

That's marvelous. I think we're having a problem communicating with each other. I don't--

LUCY

I've missed you! How's work?

She hugs Freddy tight, shielding herself from the POLICE OFFICERS as they walk by. When the coast is clear, she tries to let go, but Freddy is still HUGGING HER.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Ok. Good hug, Doug! Now let's, uh, let go, huh?

Freddy snaps out of it, lets go.

FREDDY

Sorry. I don't know what--

LUCY

--No problem, weirdo--

FREDDY

--Just been awhile.

Lucy grabs her JACKET and gets up. Prepares to exit.

LUCY

Anyway, it's been real...

She looks at the other CAR, OOPS! Sits RIGHT BACK DOWN.

LUCY (CONT'D)

...Really obvious that something's bothering you. Why so sad, Chad?

Freddy thinks about it. Who is this? What's the difference.

FREDDY

Well, it's been a trying few days.

She leans in VERY CLOSE as the COPS walk by again.

LUCY

Do tell...

FREDDY

I've uh, just come from the Doctor, where I've been told that I have a very large tumor that seems to be cutting off circulation to my brain.

Lucy clearly got more than she bargained for with this guy.
She takes her arm away.

LUCY

That's... I mean, dude...

But the dam broke. Freddy's talking a mile a minute now.

FREDDY

...And I meet this guy the other night, this crazy guy who told me that I wasn't real. That nobody's real. That he was in fact asleep. Dreaming. And I was just somebody in his dream. And he showed me this note and I know it's nuts but I started thinking about it and...

LUCY

Oh man, You are a crazy bastard, a real loon! I love the subway!

FREDDY

Anyway, ever since then, I've been noticing little things. Trees, People's conversations...

LUCY

Oh baby, now we're talkin' Chris Walken!

FREDDY

Well, it doesn't matter anyway.

LUCY

What do you mean, it doesn't matter?

FREDDY

I told you I just came from the doctor. This is all in my head.

LUCY

You don't know that! I mean, how could you really know for sure?

Freddy looks at her. Who's the loon now.

LUCY (CONT'D)

How amazing would it be if this were just a dream?

(MORE)

LUCY (CONT'D)

Just chillin' in some alternate universe like an extra in someone else's movie, while the real you is off who knows where? Writing alimony checks or working a double at the Drive In?

Lucy sees the COPS coming back towards their CAR.

CONDUCTOR (O.S.)

Next stop forty second street.

LUCY

(nervous)

You know, there's an easy way to know if this is true or not.

FREDDY

Oh, I agree.

LUCY

We get off right now and run to somewhere completely unplanned. If this guy's really dreaming right now, he'd never be able to dream up all the different shit he'd need to come up with in the time it takes for us to get there.

FREDDY

Right. Look-- uh, it's been swell getting to know you and everything--

The COPS have spotted her. They start pushing through the CROWD to get to her.

LUCY

Come on. Live a little...

She reaches out her HAND. What the hell. He takes it and she rushes him out of the SUBWAY, blocking herself from the COPS.

EXT. SUBWAY - SAME

The SUBWAY DOORS close on the now, very pissed off OFFICERS.

LUCY

Hang on, I forgot something...

Freddy watches her BANG on the WINDOW.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Not today, mothafuckas!

They both watch the ANGRY COPS as the TRAIN pulls away.
Freddy eyes Lucy suspiciously.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Well come on. I don't bite, Dwight!

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - DAY

Freddy and Lucy walk out onto the BUSIEST STREET IN THE WORLD. Thousands and thousands of PEOPLE hustle past, taking pictures of the flashing, neon SIGNS and walking STATUES.

LUCY
I gotta say, if this is a dream,
guy knows how to paint a picture.

FREDDY
So, where to?

LUCY
Yeah. Look, I totally forgot I'm
late for this stupid thing.

FREDDY
What thing?

LUCY
Oh, I don't care. You pick.

FREDDY
Oh.

Freddy looks down, disappointed. Lucy suddenly realizes...

LUCY
Wait a minute. Holy shit, I DO know
you. You were in the bar the other
night. The Lucky Fox. You got your
butt kicked by that little boy, who
was so much smaller than you.

FREDDY
He wasn't *that* much smaller...

LUCY
What are the chances? Of all the
gin joints! Anyway, nice seeing you
again, slim. And next time pick on
someone your own size!

Lucy smiles, starts walking away.

FREDDY

It's funny you were in the bar that night. That was where I met the guy. Where it all started.

(to himself)

When I started seeing things disappear right in front of my eyes...

Lucy's smile fades. She turns back around to face him.

INT. GULLIVER'S GATE MUSEUM - DAY

Freddy and Lucy walk like GIANTS through this immersive MUSEUM of perfect MINIATURES. NEW YORK, LONDON, ITALY, THE MIDDLE EAST, TOKYO, all perfectly modeled to scale.

LUCY

His name is Ramsey...

They walk past VENICE. Freddy is engrossed in Lucy's story.

LUCY (CONT'D)

He was doing these bar tricks for the regulars. Guessing their birthdays, jobs, wife's names. He even knew my sister's name. When someone asked how he did it, he said it wasn't a trick. He said we're all there every night. But I'm not. That was my first time.

FREDDY

Mine too. Why did you pick that place?

LUCY

I needed some cover.

FREDDY

Cover?

Lucy takes out her PHONE and cues up a VIDEO.

ON PHONE:

A HELMET CAM of Lucy's LEGS on top of a BUILDING.

LUCY (O.C. / ON VIDEO)

Look out below, Mofos!

She JUMPS. The CITY below getting BIGGER by the second.

INT. GULLIVER'S GATE MUSEUM - SAME

Freddy leans away from the phone, queasy.

FREDDY
Oh my God. I can't.

LUCY
You can't what?

FREDDY
I'm afraid of heights.

LUCY
Um, hello McFly. It's a video?

ON PHONE:

Lucy lands on the SIDEWALK and quickly removes her PARACHUTE while POLICE OFFICERS give chase. Her FEET run around the corner, into the LUCKY FOX, where the VIDEO ENDS.

INT. GULLIVER'S GATE MUSEUM - SAME

Freddy looks at Lucy like she's insane.

LUCY
Yeah, I'm kind of an adrenaline junkie.

FREDDY
I guess that would explain the cops on the subway?

LUCY
Actually no. I'm also a JUNKIE, junkie.

FREDDY
I see. Well, I think our little experiment may have run it's course. So, I'm just gonna, you know, hang a right at Jerusalem, and find the exit.

LUCY
That night, after I left the bar, I saw something that wasn't there too. I assumed it was the lithium, but now you got me thinking.

FREDDY
About what?

LUCY

What if this *is* all a dream. Would that be so bad?

FREDDY

I think it would be, yes. I think it would be the most horrible thing in the history of horrible things.

LUCY

I don't know. Take that guy by the London Bridge over there.

Freddy sees a tiny FIGURE under the LONDON BRIDGE.

LUCY (CONT'D)

No one's disappointed in him. No one expects anything from him. He's just living his life. He doesn't even realize there's a whole other world right in front of him.

FREDDY

Yeah, I uh, think your argument might be even *more* effective if, you know, you weren't talking about a fictional character made out of paper mache?

LUCY

Well, maybe we are too. Maybe we're all just standing under some bigger bridge, dreamt up by some sleeping giant. If that's the case, I'll tell you what bub, I'm gonna get my kicks before the whole shit house goes up in flames.

FREDDY

Well, just for argument's sake, because I'm in a miniature museum with a junkie, building jumper, what if you're not even you? What if you're nothing? What if this guy wakes up and, you know, you were just some girl he saw on a cereal box? What if you don't exist?

LUCY

Is your life really that great that you have to live it always being afraid you could lose it?

Freddy shakes his head, frustrated.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Look, I hate to say it, but you're fucked either way, Kemosabe. You either have a brain tumor or you're in someone else's dream. One way or another it's gonna be curtains. For all of us! So I say we get started.

FREDDY

Started on what?

LUCY

Living, baby.

EXT. ANGELIKA THEATER - NIGHT

Winnie waits outside the THEATER, shivering in a big COAT. (Has it always been WINTER?) Paul shows up. They kiss hello.

PAUL

Where's Freddy?

WINNIE

Oh, he always does this. If you don't remind him twenty times a day... Where's Michelle?

PAUL

She got paged as we were leaving. Patient went into labor early.

(beat)

...Well, we're here.

WINNIE

Yes we are.

PAUL

And I'm freezing. Shall we?

Paul extends an ELBOW. Winnie smiles and takes it.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Winnie and Paul sit in the half empty THEATER. They're eating POPCORN from the same TUB as ALEC BALDWIN narrates.

ALEC BALDWIN (V.O.)

What makes the solipsist different, at least in the epistemological sense, from say a Cartesian

(MORE)

ALEC BALDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*dualist, is the solipsist believes
 that reality is malleable and is
 nothing more than the collective
 vision of his experience in
 relation to it. He wields this
 knowledge to both create and
 destroy, to invade the minds of
 others, and to manipulate the
 dreams of those around him...*

Winnie and Paul's HANDS touch. Winnie smiles at him.

INT. RAMSEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A Manhattan MASTERPIECE. North facing views of CENTRAL PARK and beyond. A GRAND STAIRCASE separates the FORMAL DINING ROOM from the GREAT ROOM where a CHILD is playing the VIOLIN.

ALEC BALDWIN (V.O. CONT'D)
*...This knowledge of the world
 existing only within his own mind
 comes with a heavy price as the
 Solipsist must always guard his
 thoughts, lest he come into contact
 with an entity of the same mind-
 set, intent on stripping him of his
 powers...*

We come to Ramsey, standing at the WINDOW, looking out at the miniature CITY below, TUMBLER in hand. A SECURITY GUARD, VIRGIL, walks in holding a REPORT of some kind.

VIRGIL
 Sir, I have the paperwork you
 requested.

Ramsey turns around. Takes the REPORT, glances at it.

RAMSEY
 Cliffs notes version.

VIRGIL
 All of our reporting shows right
 now he's still in the dark.

RAMSEY
 That won't last.

VIRGIL
 How do you know?

RAMSEY
Because it never does, Virgil. It never does. Is that all?

VIRGIL
No.

Ramsey flips a few PAGES forward.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
There's a girl.

Ramsey looks surprised.

RAMSEY
A girl?

VIRGIL
Yes sir. She seems to be attempting to convince him otherwise.

Ramsey shakes his head.

RAMSEY
Well, I guess we'll have to step up our efforts then, won't we.

Ramsey gets up and walks back to the WINDOW. Looks out.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)
"Your worst enemy cannot harm you as much as your own unguarded thoughts."

VIRGIL
Sir?

Ramsey turns around.

RAMSEY
I said, me and my big mouth.

EXT. YANKEE STADIUM - NIGHT

Freddy and Lucy sit in the CHEAP SEATS, watching a KID catch a FOUL BALL. Freddy steadies himself after looking down.

LUCY
What about that guy?

She points to an OVERWEIGHT GUY with his SON a few rows down.

FREDDY

That guy? Used to work in finance. Mergers and Acquisitions. The market hit him pretty hard and now he's reinvented himself as a pharmaceutical salesman. He works out of his house.

LUCY

Impressive. Her?

She points to a WOMAN spilling MUSTARD on her shirt.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I say Paralegal, but she's taking law classes at night. She's hoping to take the bar in February.

FREDDY

Peggy? Na. She just moved from Indianapolis. Hates it here. Wants to go back but is giving herself one month to land a part, any part, in an on or off Broadway show.

LUCY

(laughs)

Huh. Never would've pegged Peggy for an actress.

FREDDY

Well, that's what I'm here for.

LUCY

How about your wife?

FREDDY

Winnie? What about her? What can I say? She's beautiful, tenacious, adventurous, and I think, you know, there might have even been a time when we knew each other.

A FOUL BALL comes flying their way. Freddy immediately hides behind Lucy, who jumps to get it. Just misses.

LUCY

Well, what's the problem? You two seem like a perfect match!

FREDDY

It's sarcasm because I'm a fat, coward, right?

LUCY

Well, I wouldn't say pathetic.

FREDDY

I didn't. And why did you bring me here anyway? I hate heights. And I really hate the Orioles.

Lucy points to the WAVE coming their way. They join in as it rides past.

LUCY

Pretty amazeballs, right? All these different people, different backgrounds, different stories, all coming together in unison, for that one moment? One moment that'll last forever. Because you know the wave ain't over, Freddy. It never ends.

Freddy looks at the thousands of FANS and notices a RIPPLE throughout the BALLPARK. As if the STADIUM itself is BREATHING through the PEOPLE. He tries to shake it off.

FREDDY

Well, you could have fooled me because I don't see one person still involved in that wave. But really what's more fascinating is that I'm at an event with someone who uses the word "amazeballs".

LUCY

Everyone's still here. Everyone's arms and hands are still attached. The wave? It just... transitioned. Into something else.

Freddy starts writing on a NAPKIN.

LUCY (CONT'D)

What's this?

FREDDY

Oh, I'm just checking "going to Yankee Game with spiky haired, Buddhist Monk" off my Bucket List.

LUCY

The universe is in flux, baby! We eat, sleep, dream, live and die in transition.

(MORE)

LUCY (CONT'D)

When a squirrel dies in the park,
its body decomposes, bringing
nutrients for other life to grow,
right? When a star explodes it
fertilizes the atmosphere for new
planets to take shape! There's no
beginning or end. Only transition.
You'd see it too if you just opened
your eyes. But you're too stubborn
or too scared, or whatever you are.

FREDDY

Look, I don't even know what-- The
only thing I see when I open my
eyes is Brett Gardner striking out.
But I guess that's OK, because
according to you, he's not out.
Because, you know, his limbs are
still attached.

LUCY

All I'm saying--

FREDDY

--No, that should really help with
his batting average.

Lucy shakes her head, watches the game.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

And you know, I wasn't always like
this. There was a time when I was
adventurous. And beautiful!

LUCY

So what happened?

FREDDY

I don't know. Life happened. You
don't understand yet. When you're
your age, you have, you know, the
audacity to think your dreams can
come true if you just humiliate
yourself enough. But by the time
you're my age, you realize how
tired you are of humiliating
yourself, year after year, for
something you should've been smart
enough to know probably wasn't
gonna happen in the first place.

Lucy shakes her head.

LUCY
I take it back.

FREDDY
Take what back?

LUCY
Pathetic.

Freddy turns away, sees two MEN IN BLACK SUITS, with EARPIECES scanning the CROWD, looking for someone.

FREDDY
Hey, I think I know those guys.

LUCY
You've been given a gift, Freddy. I know someone like you wouldn't see it that way, but you just got a new lease on life. And it might not even BE your life! Do you even realize the freedom in that? What the hell do you have to lose, man?

The MEN IN BLACK SUITS spot them, start moving towards them.

FREDDY
Uh, yeah, you're right. I think I'm gonna turn over a new leaf right now. Let's go.

Lucy sees the MEN coming towards them now too.

LUCY
Friends of yours?

FREDDY
Not really sure I wanna find out.

They start walking out when Lucy taps the OVERWEIGHT GUY with his SON on the shoulder. He turns around.

LUCY
Excuse me. Didn't we meet at that thingy? What's your profession?

OVERWEIGHT GUY
Pharmaceuticals? Did we meet at that Kaplan Foundation thing in Westchester?

LUCY
No, but could it have been your office in Midtown?

OVERWEIGHT GUY
I'm actually working out of my
house at the moment.

Lucy looks at Freddy. Freddy doesn't know what to think.

LUCY
Ah, I see. Well never mind. I was
just using you to convince my
friend that none of us exist.

OVERWEIGHT GUY
Gotcha. Happy to help!

The MEN IN SUITS frantically talk into their EARPIECES.

LUCY
Hey, break a leg, Peg!

The WOMAN who got MUSTARD on her shirt earlier turns around.

PEGGY
Thanks!

FREDDY
Let's go.

Freddy grabs her arm as they make their way out of the
STADIUM. The MEN IN BLACK SUITS lose them in the CROWD.

MAN IN BLACK SUIT
Damn it!

EXT. YANKEE STADIUM - NIGHT

They run outside. It's started raining. They take refuge
under the elevated subway tracks. They talk over the rain.

LUCY
So what do you call that?

FREDDY
Luck!

LUCY
A pharmaceutical salesman who works
out of his house? Come on, I was
just playing a game to calm you
down about how high up we were! But
you?--

FREDDY

Everyone in this town is either in finance or pharmaceuticals. I just hedged my bet.

LUCY

And Peggy the actress?

FREDDY

That wasn't confirmed!

LUCY

Come on, man! Something's going on here. I can feel it. I always knew. I always knew there was something. I just didn't know what until now.

FREDDY

Look, people guess people's jobs all the time. It doesn't mean, you know, that the universe is a dream! Go to any hotel lounge in Boca Raton. Ask for Enzo the Incredible. You'll see.

Lucy takes a FLYER and a PEN from her PURSE. Starts writing.

LUCY

Do me a favor, meet me here tomorrow, OK?

FREDDY

Oh, yeah. I don't think so.

LUCY

Just come. I promise it'll be worth your while. Two O'clock?

FREDDY

Two O'clock on a Wednesday? Do I look retired to you?

Lucy looks up at the tracks.

LUCY

Shit, that's my train. I gotta go. See you tomorrow!

Lucy starts up the STAIRS. Freddy puts the FLYER in his JACKET. Starts walking away.

LUCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hey Freddy! I had fun today. It's been awhile since I've said that.

She bolts up the rest of stairs in the rain. Freddy shakes his head and finally smiles, despite himself.

INT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Freddy is sound asleep in bed.

WINNIE (O.S.)
Freddy, you're still sleeping?

Freddy wakes up, sees Winnie in her bathrobe.

WINNIE (CONT'D)
Jesus, I thought you left while I was in the shower. You're gonna be late for work.

FREDDY
When did you get in last night?

WINNIE
Pretty late. I didn't want to wake you so I slept on the couch.

Freddy gets out of bed. Starts getting dressed.

WINNIE (CONT'D)
Oh, Friday night Michelle got us tickets to that Annual Charity Auction Ball at the Whitney.

FREDDY
Oh come on Winnie, it's Shark Week!

WINNIE
We're going and I don't want to hear another word about it. It'll do us both some good to have some culture in our lives.

Winnie walks to the BATHROOM, checking her PHONE.

WINNIE (CONT'D)
Oh, by the way, what did the doctor say yesterday?

FREDDY
Oh... concussion.

EXT. MANHATTAN - DAY

Freddy walks towards his subway stop. Sees the sad cattle being herded in. Thinks better of it. Turns and walks away.

EXT. MIDTOWN - DAY

Freddy walks up THIRD AVENUE, in what looks like the wrong way down a ONE WAY STREET. While Freddy walks NORTH, HORDES of PEOPLE walk SOUTH, ALL STARING AT HIM.

Freddy starts thinking. Suddenly he DASHES into...

INT. LUNCHEONETTE - DAY

Freddy RUNS to the KITCHEN at the back of the Luncheonette.

GUY BEHIND THE COUNTER
Hey man, where you going?

He BURSTS through the DOUBLE DOORS into...

INT. WHITE ROOM - DAY

Freddy is SHOCKED to find... NOTHING. Just WHITE. SO WHITE YOU CAN'T MAKE OUT WHERE THE FLOOR STARTS AND THE CEILING ENDS. It's not a room. It is the true essence of NOTHING.

FREDDY
What the hell?

He reaches out to try to find the WALL but he's not able to touch it. Suddenly the DOUBLE DOORS SMASH open again and the GUY BEHIND THE COUNTER runs in.

GUY BEHIND THE COUNTER
You're not supposed to be in here!

FREDDY
What is this place? Where am I?

GUY BEHIND THE COUNTER
In a kitchen, man!

Freddy looks back at the ROOM, which, is indeed now just a normal LUNCHEONETTE KITCHEN. The COOKS all stare at Freddy, who puts his HANDS on his HEAD.

FREDDY
I really don't appreciate what is happening to me!

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Lucy sits at a BENCH watching CHILDREN run around a JUNGLE GYM. She looks at her HAND. Shakes it out, opens and closes her FINGERS as if to wake them up. She pops a PILL.

RAMSEY (O.S.)
Which one's yours?

Lucy turns to find RAMSEY sitting next to her.

LUCY
You.

RAMSEY
Me... so, which one?

LUCY
No one. I just like to come here
and watch them.

RAMSEY
You know, there are restraining
orders for that.

LUCY
What are you doing here?

RAMSEY
I live in the neighborhood. I saw
you take medicine. Is it medicine?

LUCY
Flintstone vitamins.

RAMSEY
You were in the bar the night I was
arrested.

LUCY
Sure was, cuz.

RAMSEY
I guessed your sister's name.

LUCY
I remember.

RAMSEY
Amy.

Ramsey ever so slightly nods towards the JUNGLE GYM where Lucy turns her head and sees AMY RUNNING AROUND LAUGHING! Lucy's eyes go WIDE. She gets up.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)
Everything all right?

Lucy is about to run over when she sees, it wasn't Amy. Just a young GIRL who resembles her. She sits back down.

LUCY
Did you do that?

RAMSEY
Do what?

Lucy turns away. Not about to give him the satisfaction.

LUCY
Nothing.

RAMSEY
So, back to that night. I was arrested with another gentleman. Freddy. I believe you know him.

LUCY
How'd you know that?

RAMSEY
You'd be surprised how much I know.

LUCY
Not really. I've met you twice and so far you know everything.

RAMSEY
I also know some of the best doctors in Manhattan. Which of course, are some of the best doctors in the world.

LUCY
Cool. I know this crack head, Terry, who can blow into a beer bottle and play "Paradise City."

RAMSEY
What I'm getting at is, I can help you. If you want to be helped. We've come a long way medicinally, but from what I understand, Fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva is still pretty far from "treatable."

LUCY

All right, pally. Just who the hell are you?

RAMSEY

I think you know who I am. Let's just say, you wouldn't want me to trip and fall backward.

She backs away from him.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)

I also know the best private detectives in the world. Some of whom are already retained by my companies. You just say the word. All it would take is one call. You wouldn't believe what they could find. WHO they could find...

LUCY

And what do I have to do in return?

RAMSEY

You have to help me.

LUCY

How?

RAMSEY

Just leave Freddy alone. Sometimes I have one too many Brandy Alexanders and shoot my mouth off about who I am. It usually doesn't matter. In fact it's never mattered. Until now. But Freddy, you see, Freddy is special. And the information I so carelessly offered up to him the other night could wind up coming back to bite me. And if that happened, well, it could just be the end of the world.

Lucy swallows hard.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)

Don't worry. He's not aware of anything yet and if you don't encourage him, this should all work out fine and we can all go back to the normal order of things, OK? Good.

Ramsey pats Lucy on the KNEE, gets up and walks away.

LUCY

Hey.

He doesn't turn around.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I like him.

RAMSEY

Not anymore you don't.

LUCY

You don't scare me.

Now he turns around and smiles.

RAMSEY

I wonder where on earth I might
know you from.

He finally walks off.

INT. METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY, BACK OFFICES - DAY

Freddy's lost in thought again. Staring into space.

GENE

So, I told her my answer hasn't
changed. Suicide!

Freddy snaps out of it.

FREDDY

What?

(beat)

Could that've possibly been about?

GENE

Yo man, I don't wanna sound like a
whatever or anything, but I think
you could use a couple days off.
Get your head back on straight.

FREDDY

I was just thinking about my
parents. You ever think about what
it was like back when you lived
with your parents?

GENE

Man, my mother lives with us right
now! You know that. Why you got to
pour salt in it?

FREDDY

I mean when you were a kid. I don't really have any specific memories anymore. There's just this out of focus, collage. You know, blurry pictures of my mother, a brisket on a kitchen table, reading a comic book in bed. Really, it could be anybody's memories.

GENE

Any white person's. What's your point, man?

FREDDY

If I make it another forty years, am I just gonna look back at another blurry collage of briskets? An out of focus picture of my wife? Is that all I'll be left with?

GENE

If you're lucky, yeah. It's called life, hombre. And why you gotta be so deep lately, man? Damn!

Melora walks over to their cubicle.

MELORA

Freddy, I need you to cover the counter again today until four.

FREDDY

Oh, yeah, no.

MELORA

Excuse me?

FREDDY

I said no.

MELORA

Freddy, I don't have time to argue about this. I was gonna have Etsuko do it but her kid got in trouble at school--

FREDDY

--Melora, you're trying to have a conversation with me. This isn't a conversation.

Melora is speechless. Freddy starts gathering his things.

MELORA

Where do you think you're going?

FREDDY

I'm leaving. And, uh, what do you say we play tomorrow by ear.

Freddy walks out leaving a laughing Gene and stunned Melora.

GENE

Guess he forgot to put his balls back in the bottom drawer yesterday!

MELORA

I don't know why you're laughing. You're at the counter til' four.

GENE

Shit.

EXT. THE BRONX ZOO - DAY

Freddy waits by the GATE. He looks at the back of the FLYER Lucy gave him. Flips it over, notices the DATE and TIME of her performance FRIDAY. He walks to the TICKET BOOTH GUY.

FREDDY

It looks like I've been stood up.

TICKET GUY

(bored)

Sorry. It's a jungle out there. Also, in *there*. At the jungle exhibit.

FREDDY

Right. Well, I guess I won't be needing the tickets after all.

TICKET GUY

(by rote)

Sorry tiger, but I'd be *lion* if I said we do refunds.

FREDDY

Look, I didn't even want to come here in the first place. My friend--

TICKET GUY

(by rote)

--I've heard it all before.

(MORE)

TICKET GUY (CONT'D)

But if I monkey around with the rules for you, I'd be cheating everyone else who ever wanted a refund and--

FREDDY

--You're not a cheetah. I got it.

Freddy hands the guy his TICKET and walks in.

INT. BRONX ZOO - DAY

LIONS! TIGERS! BEARS! EMU! Freddy finally finds himself at the CONGO GORILLA FOREST EXHIBIT. Sees a family of GORILLAS. The MALE GORILLA WAVES to him.

It moves closer to Freddy, trying to communicate with him. PEOPLE start to look at Freddy curiously.

ZOO GUIDE

Wow, it looks like he's trying to connect with you.

FREDDY

We used to play in a band together.

The GORILLA gets right up to the GLASS and puts a FINGER to his HEAD. Then he points to Freddy's HEAD. The GORILLA then points to its CHEST, then to Freddy's CHEST.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

What's he saying?

ZOO GUIDE

He said "The only thing more powerful than the human mind, is the human heart".

FREDDY

Really?

ZOO GUIDE

Na, man I'm kidding. He's a gorilla. He don't speak English.

Some PEOPLE snicker at him. The GORILLA waves Freddy back to the GLASS. They stare at each other a long moment. Until...

GORILLA

Find her.

Freddy backs away, utterly astonished.

ZOO GUIDE

My bad. I guess he does speak English.

FREDDY

Find who?

It points to its HEART again and returns to its FAMILY.

EXT. WHITNEY MUSEUM - NIGHT

A glamorous affair. LIMOUSINES, well heeled MEN in TUXEDOS and WOMEN in FURS smile for CAMERAS as they make their way inside the MUSEUM. Winnie looks radiant. Freddy fidgets...

WINNIE

Stop fidgeting! You're embarrassing me. I told you to try on the tux BEFOREHAND so I could go and get the seams taken out if we had to.

FREDDY

Don't be silly. Fits like a glove.

WINNIE

Yeah. OJ's glove, maybe.

Paul and Michelle walk towards them.

MICHELLE

Winnie, darling!

They air kiss. Paul shakes hands with Freddy.

PAUL

You two look fabulous. Freddy, that tux really brings out your zaftig!

WINNIE

Oh, Paul. You do have a way with words.

FREDDY

You do. I've never been described as a voluptuous woman before, but if anybody's gonna do it...

WINNIE

Stop it, Freddy. It's a compliment!

MICHELLE

Shall we go? The bidding's already started!

PAUL

Remember darling, not a penny over
forty thousand. I don't care if the
Brillo box is signed!

MICHELLE

You say that now!

They all start up the STAIRCASE to enter the building.

FREDDY

Yes, uh, you too dear. No excessive
bidding. Remember we have exactly
nineteen dollars for a cab home.

WINNIE

(under her breath)
Don't remind me.

INT. WHITNEY MUSEUM - NIGHT

CHAMPAGNE FLUTES, H'ORDERVES and the CHITTER CHATTER of the
DOWNTOWN ELITE. The BALLROOM is set up as an AUCTION HOUSE
with the BIDDING already underway.

AUCTIONEER

One ten, do I hear one ten? One
hundred twenty. One hundred tw--
right over there...

Freddy watches the auction. PICASSO'S "LE REVE" rests at the
foot of the STAGE. Picasso's mistress, asleep in her chair,
not aware of how many millions of dollars she's worth.

PAUL

(pointing)
You know, they say Picasso painted
his erect penis right there, hidden
in the upturned face of Marie-
Thérèse Walter.

WINNIE

Fascinating.

FREDDY

Well, now it's a party.

AUCTIONEER

Do I hear one hundred thirty five.
One hundred thirty five? One
thirty. One hundred thirty million,
going once, going twice, sold!

APPLAUSE and handshaking. Freddy takes a closer look at RAMSEY BEING CONGRATULATED by the PEOPLE he outbid. Ramsey looks at Freddy out of the corner of his eye.

WINNIE

Imagine having a hundred thirty million dollars to buy a painting?

PAUL

That's Ramsey Harper, the publishing magnate. That money is tip money to him. My agent just reached out to his house to have some of my shorts published.

Ramsey makes his way over. Freddy is fidgeting again.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Looks like they may have come to their senses. Don't worry, Freddy. I'll put in a good word for you.

RAMSEY

Good evening.

PAUL

Mr. Harper. Congratulations on your painting. Truly magnificent.

RAMSEY

Thank you. Ramsey Harper.

He shakes hands with Winnie and Michelle.

MICHELLE

Charmed.

RAMSEY

Freddy. It's lovely to see you again.

Winnie, Paul and Michelle share a questioning look.

FREDDY

We were cell mates not too long ago. How's Vinnie the Pimp?

WINNIE

I thought I recognized you!

RAMSEY

I'm afraid I had some fun with Freddy that night. I hope you didn't take me too seriously.

FREDDY

No, of course not. The talking gorilla on the other hand--

WINNIE

--Freddy please not tonight.

PAUL

Mr. Harper, I'm Paul Kilmartin. Perhaps you've read my work?

RAMSEY

Forgive me, I'm sure it's excellent. Freddy, on the other hand, a little birdie sent me an unfinished manuscript?

Freddy starts sweating. Looks at Winnie.

WINNIE

Don't look at me.

Paul and Michelle also exchange quizzical looks.

RAMSEY

From what I've read so far, it's very powerful. Can I buy you a drink? I'd love to discuss it more.

Paul looks at Freddy with icy disdain.

WINNIE

Did you hear that, Freddy? He wants to talk about your book!

FREDDY

I think I need some air. Is it hot in here? It's hot in here. Is it?

WINNIE

My God, you're a sweaty mess!

FREDDY

I just need a minute. Just a quick pop out. For some air--

RAMSEY

Don't be long now.

Freddy leaves them and heads outside.

WINNIE

He gets nervous when it comes to these things.

(MORE)

WINNIE (CONT'D)

His therapist says it's a fear of success. Is it really good? His book?

RAMSEY

From what I've read, very powerful.

PAUL

(mouthful of spite)

Wow. How excellent for him.

MICHELLE

I'm going back to the bar. Drinks?

EXT. WHITNEY MUSEUM - NIGHT

Freddy catches his breath. Looks back at the PARTY. He takes out the FLYER still in his COAT POCKET. Looks at it. He runs to the bottom of the stairs.

FREDDY

Taxi!

INT. THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

Freddy walks up to the TATTOOED, infinitely PIERCED, CASHIER at the TICKET BOOTH.

CASHIER

Twelve bucks.

FREDDY

I'm here for Lucy Darim's show?
This is the place right? Has she performed yet?

CASHIER

The performance never stops. You're performing right now and you don't even know it. Or do you?

FREDDY

This is the place.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Freddy walks into the half empty THEATER, made up of young MEN and WOMEN who look like the cashier. He looks at the STAGE where Lucy is DANCING to FRANZ LISZT'S LIEBESTRÄUME.

She is completely uninhibited. Free. She moves across the stage with a mix of sadness and joy. Freddy is RIVETED.

PUNK ROCK DUDE
Down in front, dad.

Freddy is too moved to sit. He backs up and stops near the rear of the theater taking it all in. He looks at the AUDIENCE who mostly talk through it, laugh and drink.

As the piece crescendos, Lucy disrobes and stands NAKED in front of the audience.

AUDIENCE MEMBER
Ok, now THAT'S worth twelve bucks!

The piece coming to a close, Lucy sits on stage and slowly wraps herself into the FETAL POSITION. The LIGHTS GO OUT. The CROWD half CLAPS and half TAUNTS.

Freddy weeps.

INT. THEATER - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Lucy, bag in hand, leaves the DRESSING ROOM. Freddy waits for her outside.

FREDDY
That was incredible.

LUCY
Freddy? What are you doing here?

FREDDY
I don't think I've ever been so moved. And this kind of stuff, you know, really isn't-- I've never even been to this neighborhood but-- And don't worry about the audience. They wouldn't know art if, you know, Picasso drew hidden penises on all their heads.

LUCY
I don't do it for the audience. How did you even know about this?

Freddy takes out the FLYER and shows it to her.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Oh, right. Listen, sorry about the zoo, something came up.

FREDDY

Listen, we need to talk. There's been some-- things that've happened since we last saw each other--

A few punk rock looking FRIENDS come down the CORRIDOR.

FRIEND

Loose, are we going or what?

LUCY

Look, now's not really a good time, Freddy.

FREDDY

Is everything, OK?

LUCY

Yeah, I'm fine. I just have a life.

FREDDY

Oh, OK. Well, where are we headed?

LUCY

I don't think so.

FRIEND #2

Hey Lucy, tell your uncle you can talk at Saint Vitus. Let's go. Cannibal Corpse is playing, bra!

LUCY

Look, I gotta go, OK?

Lucy looks distraught as she leaves Freddy standing alone.

INT. WHITNEY MUSEUM - NIGHT

Ramsey is huddled with Virgil and some other MEN. He doesn't look happy.

RAMSEY

What do you mean disappeared?

VIRGIL

He went out for some air and by the time I got outside he was gone.

RAMSEY

Gone where?

VIRGIL

I don't know, sir.

RAMSEY

Well find out. I don't have to tell
you what could happen if--

VIRGIL

--I understand sir.

Ramsey looks at an ATTRACTIVE MAN standing in wait.

RAMSEY

Who's he?

VIRGIL

He's for you, sir.

Ramsey nods his approval.

RAMSEY

Have him wait for me at the
apartment. And find out where the
girl is. I was under the impression
she'd cooperate.

VIRGIL

Yes sir.

Virgil takes some MEN with him and walk briskly out.

Across the room, Winnie, Paul and a drunk Michelle are
huddled around the BAR.

WINNIE

This is so like him. Someone
finally takes an interest in his
work and he runs away and hides
under the bed.

MICHELLE

(slurring)

Forget him, Winnie! He's *whurever*
he is, on his loser couch in his
loser undies, eating Cheetos or
whatever, and we're here, livin' it
up, La Vida Loca style! Who wants
to dance!

PAUL

I think you've had a little too
much to drink, dear.

MICHELLE

I didn't ask for a drink. I asked
for *to DANCE!*

PAUL

Maybe it's time we call it a night.

MICHELLE

Suit yourself, hub. Don't wait up!

Michelle dances herself into the middle of the DANCE FLOOR.

PAUL

Sorry. She gets a little carried away. I for one don't think your couch is a loser.

Winnie smiles.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Don't worry about Freddy. He is who he is. Some people just aren't cut out for success. They can't handle the pressure. But he'll be fine.

WINNIE

I know he'll be fine. Michelle is right. He's probably on the couch watching Shark Week. But what about me? Will I be fine?

PAUL

You are a treasure, Winnie. And if Freddy's too blind to see it, let him stay on that couch watching Shark Week.

INT. SAINT VITUS - NIGHT

The best DEATH METAL club in Brooklyn. PEOPLE are MOSHING, STAGE DIVING and THRASHING to the BAND on STAGE. Freddy is at the BAR, scanning the crowd. The BARTENDER comes over.

BARTENDER

Whiskey and coke. Eleven bucks.

Freddy hands over the money.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

No offense, but you don't seem like the Cannibal Corpse type.

FREDDY

Well, I like their early stuff.

LUCY (O.S.)

Freddy?

Freddy turns around.

FREDDY
Hey, you come here too?

Lucy grabs his ARM, walks to the back of the club.

LUCY
What do you want, dude? You really shouldn't be here.

FREDDY
Why are you being this way? The other night, you know, it was baseball games and museums. You wouldn't leave me alone!

Lucy shakes out her LEG. Looks a little pained.

LUCY
That was then, OK? I'm sorry. I was bored and I was messing with you. This isn't a dream, Freddy. Just because I wish this wasn't my life, doesn't mean I'm not stuck with it.

Freddy is taken aback. Lucy starts shaking out her HAND.

FREDDY
Well, I guess we're done here then.

LUCY
It's been real, Neal.

FREDDY
I guess it has.

Freddy starts walking away. Lucy can't hold it in anymore and SHRIEKS IN PAIN. Freddy runs back.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
What's the matter?

LUCY
(through gritted teeth)
Nothing, I'm fine.

SHE DOUBLES OVER.

LUCY (CONT'D)
I have an ulcer, OK? It's under control, ARGH!

FREDDY

We need to get you out of here.

LUCY

I don't need anything from you.

FREDDY PICKS HER UP, STARTS CARRYING HER OUT OF THE CLUB.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Let me go, Freddy!

Freddy doesn't listen. He carries her all the way out.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Freddy watches a DOCTOR leave Lucy's ROOM. He walks over.

INT. LUCY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Lucy is lying in the BED, looking out the WINDOW. She turns and sees Freddy.

FREDDY

I just wanted to make sure you were, OK. I should go, my wife is probably remarried already.

She musters a smile.

LUCY

Sit down.

Freddy sits on the BED. Lucy takes a deep breath.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Fibrodysplasia ossificans
progressiva...

FREDDY

Ah, yes. "Let the buyer beware."--

LUCY

What? No. That's what I have. My condition.

FREDDY

Sorry. Condition?

LUCY

It's so rare they don't even have a catchy name for it yet.

FREDDY

What are you saying. Are you sick?

LUCY

Yes. I'm turning into a statue.

FREDDY

Well, I have to tell you that's, you know, not the first time someone's said that while I was talking.

LUCY

(smiles)

It's a connective tissue disease. Whenever a ligament or a tendon or joint is disturbed, the skin and muscle around it begin to ossify. It's only a matter of time until I'm frozen in place. With a hard shell over my body. Like a statue.

FREDDY

(softly)

Is there a cure?

LUCY

No. And I don't have much time. But he said he'd help me.

FREDDY

Who?

LUCY

Ramsey. He said he'd help me if I helped him. Help me with a lot of things actually.

FREDDY

What does he want you to do?

LUCY

Leave you alone.

Freddy gathers up his things and starts walking out the door.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

FREDDY

I'm leaving you alone.

LUCY

He says you're special, Freddy.

FREDDY

Me? Why?

LUCY

I don't know. But I know I didn't like leaving you alone tonight.

Freddy smiles.

FREDDY

I didn't like it much either.

LUCY

He knows everything. He's everywhere. It's only a matter of time before he knows you're here.

FREDDY

The other day I did what you said. When I was heading to work, I switched up my routine and walked instead of riding the subway. And while I was walking, this is, you know, gonna sound nuts but, I ran into this luncheonette, straight to the back kitchen with no warning. And when I got there, it wasn't a room at all.

LUCY

What was it?

FREDDY

I don't know. It was nothing. It was whiteness. No floor, no ceiling. It was just... nothing.

Lucy smiles wide.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

What's that look?

LUCY

Glad to see you finally came around.

FREDDY

(smiling himself)
Can you walk?

LUCY

Nothing they can do for me here. Doc said I can leave whenever I felt up to it.

FREDDY
Let's get out of here.

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Winnie and Paul are in the backseat. Michelle is up front, still drunk, singing along to NICKI MINAJ on the RADIO.

PAUL
It's funny how two people so different would be paired up as college roommates.

WININE
I know. Michelle is successful.

MICHELLE
(rapping)
You can't be Pablo if your work ain't sellin' What the fuck is this bitch inhalin'?

PAUL
That's not what I meant. You have grace, Winnie.

Winnie smiles. The cab pulls up outside her apartment.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I'll walk you in.

EXT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Winnie and Paul get out of the cab and walk up the STAIRS.

MICHELLE
Yo, "cabba", got any ABBA? Or weed?

INT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

They get to the DOOR. Winnie puts the KEY in.

WINNIE
Thanks for tonight. I could get used to that life.

PAUL
Anytime you need to talk we're always here for you.

They look into each other's eyes. Winnie opens the door.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I'm here for you.

Winnie turns on the LIGHTS.

WINNIE
...Oh my God.

The apartment is a MESS. PAPERS everywhere. COUCH CUSHIONS overturned. TV gone. Even THE REFRIGERATOR is open and empty.

PAUL
You've been robbed.

WINNIE
Oh my God. What do I do?

Paul gets on the his CELLPHONE.

PAUL
(into phone)
Yes, police? I'd like to report a robbery. 428 West 47th Street. Please come right away.

He hangs up. Winnie's a mess. Paul puts an ARM around her.

WINNIE
I've never been robbed before. I feel so violated! My God!

PAUL
You're staying with us tonight. We'll figure all this out in the morning. Thank God no one was hurt.

WINNIE
Where is Freddy? Where the hell is my husband?

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Freddy helps Lucy in the door.

LUCY
I told you, I'm fine. The pain comes and goes. It's gone.

FREDDY
I'll get you some water.

LUCY

Great, could you put some vodka in it? And hold the water?

Lucy goes into the other ROOM. Freddy pours the WATER. Lucy comes back out with a BOOK.

LUCY (CONT'D)

So I've been thinking about how you could be special.

FREDDY

Yeah, I've, you know, been trying to figure that out for years.

Freddy walks over, sits on the COUCH next to Lucy. Puts the WATER down. Takes a gander at the BOOK.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

What's this?

She holds up the BOOK titled: "*The American Journal of Psychoanalysis*", walks to the KITCHEN, puts on the KETTLE.

LUCY

And then it hits me. If this is a dream, and it's Ramsey's dream, he created this entire universe. Every flower, every planet, every ocean, every rain drop, Everything. So why would someone so powerful be so afraid of you?

FREDDY

Well, there was the time the Chinese food guy forgot my orange chicken, and I was very, you know, forceful on the phone. So, you know, they knew I meant business. The guy had to come back--

LUCY

What do you know about dream transference?

FREDDY

Probably a lot less than you'd like.

Lucy pours the TEA while she reads from the JOURNAL...

LUCY

(reading)

The unconscious redirection of power from one person to another is extremely rare but not unheard of. There are two documented cases on record. Dimitri Heinreich in 1889 and Alexander Duchovny in 1939. In both cases, the subject and volunteer slept in a controlled setting with the volunteer falling asleep first. Once he was in REM sleep, the subject then went to sleep. Once awake, In both instances, the volunteer and subject described their separate dreams as being identical. Once the subject took over for the volunteer, it wasn't long before the volunteer woke up.

Lucy puts the TEA down. Freddy takes a sip.

FREDDY

Why did the volunteer wake up?

LUCY

Because it wasn't his dream anymore...

FREDDY

So, what are you saying? You want me to... go into Ramsey's head and take over his dream? Because, you know, I couldn't take over the ticket booth for Doug at work the other day.

LUCY

You could be a lucid dreamer.

FREDDY

What does that mean, lucid dreamer?

LUCY

It means you can control your dreams. And if you can control your dreams it's not impossible to imagine that you could control someone else's.

FREDDY

Why would I want to control someone else's dream? That seems awfully... forward.

LUCY

Because it's the only way we can flip the script on this joker! Take control of our own destinies. Why should we accept whatever shitty hand this guy's dealt us? He doesn't even know us!

Freddy thinks it over. Takes another sip of TEA.

FREDDY

And how am I even supposed to get into the room while he's sleeping? And go to sleep *next* to him? The guy has a security team.

LUCY

You can't. We're gonna... just have to have you go to sleep now and hope for the best.

FREDDY

What if he's not even sleeping?

LUCY

Then we'll try again tomorrow.

Freddy takes another sip of TEA, picks up the JOURNAL.

FREDDY

And if Ramsey is the creator of everything, that means he created this journal. That means he knows what's in it. And he could be prepared for our little, you know, hostile takeover.

LUCY

I know. I've thought about that too. But it's the best chance we've got. The only chance.

FREDDY

I gotta tell you, this isn't, you know, like an airtight plan. I don't, exactly feel like I'm talking to Danny Ocean right now--

LUCY

--We have to try. You have to try.

FREDDY

I don't know, Lucy. I think maybe Ramsey has the wrong Freddy. If you knew me, you'd know I'm not the guy for this kind of--

LUCY

--I've risked everything just being here with you right now! And I'm betting on you, Freddy, because I believe you are the guy for this. Don't let me down.

Freddy finishes his TEA, puts it down, notices a PICTURE of AMY on the MANTLE.

FREDDY

So what, I'm just supposed to fall asleep now? I'm not even tired.

LUCY

I wouldn't worry about that. I crushed three Xanax into your tea.

FREDDY

You... Drugged me? That's-- I gotta tell you, that makes me very anxious!

She grabs a BLANKET and puts it over Freddy's LEGS.

LUCY

Just relax, OK? We'll talk about it in the morning.

Freddy's getting a little foggy. His eyes start glossing over. Lucy is coming in and out of focus.

FREDDY

It's one thing to drug me, but now you're... making me be a contestant on... "Let's Make a Deal?..."

Lucy smiles. Freddy's talking in his sleep.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY

Freddy is in fact a CONTESTANT on LET'S MAKE A DEAL. He's dressed in a CHICKEN COSTUME. The HOST, WAYNE BRADY stands next to him holding an ENVELOPE in his HAND.

WAYNE BRADY

Now Freddy, you can keep your hundred dollars or trade it in to see what's in the envelope. What would you like to do?

FREDDY

I'm gonna keep the money, Wayne!

Wayne Brady is confused.

WAYNE BRADY

You wanna-- Keep the money? It's a hundred bucks, Freddy.

FREDDY

Hey, it's a hundred bucks that I didn't have before I came here!

WAYNE BRADY

I get the feeling you're not much of a risk taker, Freddy. But lucky for you this isn't Let's Take a Risk" it's "Let's Make a Deal"! So I'll tell you what. I'm gonna let you keep the hundred bucks.

The audience APPLAUDS wildly. Freddy claps too.

WAYNE BRADY (CONT'D)

Now, you can take the envelope where there could be *five* hundred bucks in there, maybe even the combination to a safe, or it could be a Zonk. Or... You can see what's behind door number one.

FREDDY

Safe combination?

WAYNE BRADY

So you want the envelope?

FREDDY

If there's a combination to a safe in it, yes.

WAYNE BRADY

Well, I can't give that away, Freddy, but I *can* show you THIS!

The Game show MODEL wheels a SAFE out onto the STAGE.

ANNOUNCER

A brand new safe! And in that brand
new safe could be a brand new life!

The AUDIENCE goes WILD.

FREDDY

And I can keep the hundred dollars
no matter what?

WAYNE BRADY

Jesus, Freddy. Yes, the hundred
dollars is yours.

FREDDY

Ok, I'll take the envelope.

Wayne Brady hands Freddy the ENVELOPE.

WAYNE BRADY

OK, he's taking the envelope. Let's
see what was behind door number
one. Tiffany?

The model waves her arms as a STATUE OF LUCY is revealed when
the CURTAIN opens.

WAYNE BRADY (CONT'D)

It was a statue of Lucy!

ZONK MUSIC plays. Freddy looks horrified. He looks around the
STUDIO. Everyone is cheering him on.

WAYNE BRADY (CONT'D)

Now let's take a look and see
what's in that envelope...

Freddy opens it. It's a TICKET.

FREDDY

It's a bus transfer.

WAYNE BRADY

It looks like Freddy's going on a
trip! Where are you headed, Freddy?

FREDDY

There's no destination.

WAYNE BRADY

Well, I guess you're gonna have to
open the safe to find out where
you're going.

FREDDY
How do I open it?

WAYNE BRADY
What is it you want most in the
world? If you know the answer to
that, you'll know the combination.

Freddy walks to the safe. Thinks about it. He starts twisting
the COMBINATION LOCK. Tries the LEVER. It doesn't budge.

WAYNE BRADY (CONT'D)
Ooh, sorry Freddy.

The audience, AWWWWSSSS. Freddy seems more determined. He
tries again, nothing.

WAYNE BRADY (CONT'D)
Ok, Freddy. I'm afraid that's all
the time we have.

Freddy pulls on the LEVER with all his might. The SAFE
finally BURSTS OPEN and RAMSEY IS INSIDE!

RAMSEY
*The Queen of Hearts, she made some
tarts, All on a summer day: The
Knave of Hearts, he stole those
tarts, And took them quite away!*

WAYNE BRADY
Thanks for playing, Freddy!

Tiffany the MODEL waves her ARM at the open STUDIO DOOR. An
extremely confused Freddy walks out.

EXT. BROOKLYN - DAY

Lucy walks fast trying to keep pace with Freddy.

LUCY
Let's Make a Deal? With Monty Hall?

FREDDY
No, the new guy.

LUCY
Blair Underwood?

FREDDY
No, but I can see why-- How do you
know who--

LUCY

--So what happened? Was Ramsey there?

FREDDY

Yeah, he was there.

LUCY

Well, did it work?

FREDDY

I don't know. I don't feel any different. Do you?

LUCY

I don't know. Maybe you should wish for something or something.

FREDDY

Wish for something?

LUCY

Yeah, if it's your dream now, maybe you can wish for something and it'll come true.

FREDDY

What am I supposed to wish for?

LUCY

I don't know, Freddy. What do you want?

FREDDY

What do I want. I wanna get home and not have my wife kill me for staying out all night. I mean, have all taxis been outlawed in Bushwick or-- I wish for a cab! How's that?

LUCY

Jesus, Freddy. It's not that hard. What do you want?

FREDDY

Look out!

A PIECE OF A BUILDING FALLS ONTO THE SIDEWALK RIGHT IN FRONT OF THEM. They jump out of the way just in time.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Jesus. Bushwick. This is, you know, unless there's an EMERGENCY, I'm never coming back here!

LUCY

--What do you want Freddy?!

FREDDY

I don't know, OK? What does anybody want? What do *you* want, Lucy?

LUCY

I want love! I want to be in love so deeply that every time I look at him I want to throw up. And I want to *be* loved so much he'd rather spend two more seconds with me than the rest of his life without me.

FREDDY

Oh, is that all?

LUCY

Yeah. That's all.

A TAXI comes driving down the street. She hails it for him.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(sarcastic)

Hey, your wish came true.

The Taxi pulls up. Lucy starts walking away.

FREDDY

To matter.

She turns around.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

I want to matter. I just-- I want to be able to look back at my life and know that I mattered.

Freddy hops in. Lucy taps on the window. He rolls it down.

LUCY

That wasn't so hard was it?

FREDDY

Hell, right now I'd settle for knowing that I actually *am* matter.

They smile at each other as the CAB drives away.

EXT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Freddy puts the KEY in the LOCK. He takes a deep breath.

INT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT - SAME

He walks in, finds Winnie at the KITCHEN TABLE with NOAH GEIGER (40's). The place is still a MESS from the break in.

FREDDY

What the hell is all this?

Winnie turns and sees him, gets up from her chair and runs at him. Freddy braces for a knuckle sandwich, but she throws her arms around him instead.

WINNIE

Oh, Freddy. Thank God. I was so worried. Where have you been?

FREDDY

What happened?

WINNIE

We were robbed. I thought you might've been...

FREDDY

No, I'm OK. I'm fine.

(to Noah)

Thank you. I think I can take it from here, detective.

WINNIE

Oh, he's not a detective, sweetie. He's an agent!

FREDDY

Why would they send the FBI to investigate a robbery?

WINNIE

No, a literary agent! He wants to sign you to his company or agency or... Well, you tell him, Noah!

NOAH

(shaking his hand)

Noah Geiger. I read your manuscript, Freddy. I have to say it's gonna make one hell of a book.

Winnie is all smiles. She looks more excited than Freddy.

WINNIE

Do you believe it?!

FREDDY
It isn't finished.

NOAH
Oh, you're being modest. It's fine!
Besides, is any art ever really
finished?

FREDDY
Uh, books usually are, yeah.

NOAH
Look, I've already been on the
phone with Harper, Pendent,
Penguin, Simon, they're all
interested. Finish it if you want,
or just slap a "The End" at the
bottom. It doesn't really matter. I
think we're about to make some real
money together, Freddy. I think
you're about to be famous.

FREDDY
What'd they take?

NOAH
Oh, standard twenty percent. No
one's pulling a fast one here!

FREDDY
No, the burglars. What did they
make off with?

WINNIE
I don't know. The TV, some of the
jewelry my mother gave me for our
wedding...

Freddy runs into the other ROOM. Noah and Winnie look at each other, listening to the sound of DRAWERS opening and closing. Freddy comes back out.

FREDDY
That son of a... They took my
manuscript.

NOAH
Oh, no worries, Freddy. There are
copies circulating. How do you
think I'm here?

FREDDY
I have to go.

WINNIE

Where are you going? You're not going anywhere until you sign the contract this man was kind enough to bring to the house!

Noah hands him the CONTRACT. Freddy, distracted, signs it.

WINNIE (CONT'D)

Be back for dinner! I'm getting steaks from Citarella to celebrate. Your favorite!

Freddy leaves. Winnie and Noah smile at each other.

NOAH

Think he has any idea?

WINNIE

None.

INT. LUCKY FOX- DAY

Freddy walks in, sees Scotty behind the bar and some of the LOCALS from the other day.

SCOTTY

What can I get ya?

FREDDY

Scotty, I'm looking for Ramsey. Have you seen him?

SCOTTY

Who are you?

FREDDY

I was... Really? I was arrested with Ramsey? For beating up a child? Like a week ago?

SCOTTY

Sorry.

FREDDY

You don't... remember *me* or the incident?

SCOTTY

Buddy, I got a lot of customers. It's a bar. There are fights sometimes.

Freddy looks around the bar incredulous.

FREDDY

Well, thanks anyway. You've been ridiculous. If you see him just tell him Freddy's looking for him.

SCOTTY

Who's Freddy?

FREDDY

I don't-- It's like talking to a deaf goldfish.

A LOCAL drains his drink and sits upright.

LOCAL

I know where he lives. Buy me the next round and I'll tell ya.

FREDDY

Sure, yes of course. Anything but a mind eraser. Because I think, you know, Scotty makes those a little too strong.

Freddy signals to Scotty to pour the drink and sits down.

LOCAL

He lives on the Upper West side. The famous building. The one where John Lennon got shot.

FREDDY

The Dakota?

LOCAL

Bingo. The penthouse. You see him, you tell him he owes Jerry forty bucks for the Jets.

FREDDY

You got it, Jerry. And thanks.

LOCAL

Oh, I'm not Jerry.

FREDDY

Of course you're not.

EXT. THE DAKOTA - DAY

Freddy walks into the LOBBY.

INT. DAKOTA LOBBY - DAY

He walks to the CONCIERGE.

FREDDY

Hi, I'm here to see Ramsey, er. I
can't think of his last--

CONCIERGE

--Are you Freddy?

FREDDY

Yeah?

CONCIERGE

Go on up. He's expecting you.

FREDDY

He is? I mean, yes. Very good.

CONCIERGE

Take the private elevator.

Freddy walks to the already open ELEVATOR. Steps inside.

INT. ELEVATOR - SAME

The ELEVATOR looks like a cross between Willy Wonka's
"Wonkavator" and a psychedelic kaleidoscope of STAINED GLASS.
It starts moving. A MUZAK version of "White Rabbit" plays.

FREDDY

(the song)

That's... a little on the nose.

INT. RAMSEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The ELEVATOR door opens, Freddy walks out to the FOYER where
BRIAN MAY, the guitarist from QUEEN is sitting, reading a
MAGAZINE with his GUITAR next to him. Freddy sits down.

FREDDY

Excuse me, aren't you Brian May?

BRIAN MAY

Yeah.

FREDDY

But aren't you-- Sorry, I mean, I
thought you were... Dead.

BRIAN MAY
(shrugs his shoulders)
Guess not.

FREDDY
What are you doing here?

BRIAN MAY
Guitar lesson. I'm Ramsey's
teacher.

FREDDY
Wow.

BRIAN MAY
Are you Freddy?

FREDDY
Yeah.

BRIAN MAY
I'm the appointment after you. You
go ahead.

FREDDY
Oh, OK. Thanks.

Freddy walks to the DOOR to the main ENTRANCE.

INT. RAMSEY'S APARTMENT - SAME

Freddy opens the door to APPLAUSE. He looks around, sees
Winnie, Paul, Michelle, Noah, even Gene from work, along with
Ramsey and a roomful of ADMIRERS. Freddy is stunned.

WINNIE
Surprise!

FREDDY
What is this?

Winnie runs over and locks arms with him.

RAMSEY
It's a signing party.

NOAH
I was gonna tell you back at your
house but Winnie thought this would
be more fun!

RAMSEY

H.R. Publishing is fast tracking your book for an October release.

FREDDY

October? That's three weeks away.

PAUL

Congratulations, Freddy. Michelle and I are very happy for you.

It's very clear that Paul is NOT very happy for him.

GENE

So it looks like I shouldn't be expecting you at work tomorrow!

FREDDY

I guess not.

GENE

You lucky S.O.B. Don't forget us when you're famous. We have the power to revoke your metro card.

FREDDY

Who are all these people?

RAMSEY

They're all here for you, Freddy. Authors, critics, socialites...

WININE

Tiffany Trump is here!

RAMSEY

You've just moved up to the majors. Get ready, because your life is about to change.

Ramsey hands him a glass of CHAMPAGNE. They CLINK FLUTES.

INT. RAMSEY'S APARTMENT - LATER

The party is in full swing. PHOTOGRAPHERS snap pictures of FAMOUS PEOPLE. As we move through the PARTY we catch little snippets of conversations.

RICH WOMAN

Ever since Marcel left Cafe Boulud it just hasn't been the same. He should be charged with treason!

AUTHOR

When they're six months old, you can't wait for them to be old enough to sit through an entire movie with a plot instead of those infernal YouTube videos. But now that they're two, if I have to watch 'Nim's Island' one more time I swear I'm going to strangle myself. And I wrote it!

A well to do COUPLE fawns over Freddy.

WELL TO DO WOMAN

Fabulous. Just fabulous!

WELL TO DO MAN

Ramsey gave us an advanced copy.

WELL TO DO WOMAN

After we put a gun to his head! But the questions you pose, "Who am I?" "Why am I here?" Of course they've been asked before, but never with such a raw yearning. Almost primal.

WELL TO DO MAN

And the ending. Such an inspired choice. The metaphor for life. No one can answer how it ends. So why even try? So brave.

FREDDY

Uh, yes. That part didn't even take me that long--

HANGER ON

--Excuse me, Mr. Dileo? Would you mind signing this for me?

Freddy is handed a NAPKIN and a PEN.

FREDDY

You want my autograph?

Freddy signs the NAPKIN. Ramsey walks over to him.

RAMSEY

Enjoying yourself?

FREDDY

And to think, just last night I was being drugged in Bushwick.

RAMSEY

All these people, they're all looking at you and thinking, "this guy here, he's living the dream."

Freddy and Ramsey look at each other.

FREDDY

And what are you thinking?

RAMSEY

I'm thinking you've gone and taken a dream and turned it into your reality. I'm thinking, in my experience, there's usually a price to pay for that. So really Freddy, what I'm thinking is, Good luck...

INT. FREDDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Freddy brings in a BOX and opens it. He takes out his PUBLISHED BOOK, titled: "*An Infinite Solitude*." He smiles.

INT. SMALL BOOK STORE - NIGHT

A few PEOPLE are seated in the SMALL BOOK STORE while Freddy reads from his BOOK.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Freddy stands in the crowded SUBWAY CAR and sees a WOMAN finishing his BOOK. She closes it, furrows her brow and finally nods her head in approval.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY

Freddy's on a MORNING SHOW. The HOST has a copy of the BOOK.

HOST

Now, the ending has been receiving quite a bit of controversy. If I could read the final sentence... "*Which brings us to another inarguable truth that...*" What did you mean by that ending?

FREDDY

Well, er, what does it mean to you?

INT. DOWNTOWN BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Freddy is reading from his BOOK in front of a CROWD of PEOPLE. He finishes the passage to rapturous APPLAUSE. Noah gives him a THUMBS UP.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Freddy stands, now watching MANY PEOPLE in the crowded CAR, reading his BOOK.

INT. CIPRIANI - NIGHT

Freddy is at a lavish PARTY being interviewed by a JOURNALIST who has a small MICROPHONE in his face. Freddy's rambling, drunk on success. And CHAMPAGNE.

FREDDY

I just think, you know, intellectualism has become a four letter word in the literary community. People aren't as interested in exploring the human condition in the same ways anymore. Because, you know, spoiler alert, the condition is fragile. But the, the critics want to bring back, you know, barbarianism. Life may be the great absurdity but that doesn't mean it shouldn't be scrutinized.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

(walking by)

I loved your book.

FREDDY

(smiles)

Thank you.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Freddy sits on the TABLE in that same PAPER ROBE. DR. KEVORKIAN (50s) comes out with a CLIPBOARD.

DR. KEVORKIAN

All good news, Mr. Dileo. We were able to remove the tumor completely with no chance of any tissue regeneration because as I expected, the mass was benign to begin with.

FREDDY

I'm going to, you know, go out on a limb and say this could be the best outcome any patient has ever had with someone named Dr. Kevorkian.

She laughs.

DR. KEVORKIAN

I read your book by the way. Just marvelous. I have it with me. Would you mind signing it?

INT. SPACIOUS APARTMENT - DAY

Freddy and Winnie order MOVERS around, carrying BOXES into different ROOMS. SUNLIGHT pours through the floor to ceiling WINDOWS. Freddy looks concerned.

FREDDY

Are you sure it isn't too big?

WININE

You just don't like how high up we are.

FREDDY

Well, yeah. I have acrophobia.

WININE

Oh, it's perfect!

EXT. BARNES AND NOBLE - NIGHT

Freddy leaves out the BACK DOOR with Noah heading towards their black TOWN CAR. The driver, BRETT, waits outside. Freddy signs a few AUTOGRAPHS on the way out.

NOAH

You killed in there. Literally, killed. I think I saw two EMT guys bringing in a stretcher.

FREDDY

Yeah, I think when we go upstate I'm gonna lead off with the hopelessness stuff first and work my way backward. That part really seems to hook 'em every time.

NOAH

Brett, Waverly Inn, on the hop!

BRETT

We have to take the West Side Highway because of that building collapse on fourteenth street.

FREDDY

Oh, OK. Sure.

LUCY (O.S.)

Freddy.

Freddy turns and sees Lucy. She's walking with a CANE.

FREDDY

Lucy, hi.

LUCY

Haven't seen you around in awhile.

FREDDY

Hey, Noah can you give me a sec?

NOAH

You got it. But make it snappy, boss! We're meeting everyone at ten sharp.

Noah hops in the TOWN CAR.

LUCY

Busy guy these days, huh?

FREDDY

(the cane)

Are you... Is everything OK?

LUCY

Oh, yeah, fine. Just a little stiff today. This helps.

FREDDY

Ok, well, you know, no jumping off buildings or anything until you're back up to speed, all right?

They smile and stand in silence for an awkward moment. Freddy checks his PHONE.

LUCY

I, uh, read your book.

FREDDY

Oh yeah? What did you think?

LUCY

Not bad. Be even better if it had
an ending.

FREDDY

You would think, right?

Freddy answers a TEXT. Lucy sees she's already lost him. She
tries anyway.

LUCY

Hey, I was thinking maybe we could--

FREDDY

--Hang on a sec.

(answers his phone)

Pierre! Yeah, we're leaving now.

Went very well. Too well. My
signing hand hurts.

(laughs)

Yeah, you'd love that wouldn't you!

LUCY

(whispers)

I'm gonna let you go.

FREDDY

(into phone)

Hold on, let me call you back in
two, OK? OK.

He hangs up.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

Yeah, I'm sorry. These vultures
have me running around like a
chicken with my head cut off. But
you're OK? Everything's going well?

LUCY

Yeah.

FREDDY

Good.

LUCY

(beat)

Well, it was nice seeing you,
Freddy.

FREDDY

You too, Lucy.

He smiles and gets in the car. Lucy watches him drive off as she hobbles away.

INT. BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Freddy, dressed in a well fitting TUXEDO, talks to group of PEOPLE. Winnie by his side.

FREDDY

I was just happy to be nominated. I know people always say that, but for me, I think it might even be a little bit of a relief that I lost. The pressure's off a bit. My Agent can stop calling me every day now, you know, "Where's the next one!"

The AWARD ATTENDEES are scanning the room.

AWARD ATTENDEE

Well, there's always next year.

FREDDY

Of course. And, you know, this has really been quite a whirlwind to begin with, and to tell you the truth--

AWARD ATTENDEE

--Oh, that's Sheldon Gold. I must say hello.

AWARD ATTENDEE #2

His novel on the Sudan was absolutely harrowing. Brilliant.

The Award Attendees all scamper off, leaving Freddy and Winnie. The JOURNALIST from Cipriani walks by.

FREDDY

Hey there.

JOURNALIST

Hello.

And he keeps on walking.

INT. FREDDY'S NEW APARTMENT - NIGHT

Winnie's in the MASTER BATHROOM taking off her JEWELRY. Freddy is pacing around the BEDROOM. He checks his PHONE.

FREDDY

Great. Ramsey wants to meet at his place tomorrow morning now. Probably wants to drop me. Jerk. They're all jerks. Winnie, if I ever decide to write a book again, do me a favor, and just, you know, hit me over the head with mallet.

WINNIE

Oh stop. You're just grumpy because you lost tonight.

FREDDY

It's not that. It's just... I don't know what it is. These PEOPLE we're surrounding ourselves with. This life. Is this all there is?

WINNIE

People dream of this life, Freddy. YOU dreamt of it. And now you have it. People hanging on your every word. You're important. You matter to people. Try to enjoy it.

FREDDY

I don't matter to these people. They're just biding their time with me until someone else comes along who, you know, has been to the Sudan. And then they'll bide their time with him until the next one comes along. They're sycophants!

WINNIE

Paul warned me about this you know.

FREDDY

Oh, really. And what did Paul say?

WINNIE

He said you wouldn't be able to handle success. He said you're not cut out for it. And you know what, I'm starting to agree with him.

FREDDY

Well, he would know about success. Because, you know, they published that short story of his in the Carve Magazine online edition. He printed it out and framed it like it was a Pulitzer.

WINNIE

Don't take this out on Paul,
Freddy. Look, it's been a long
night. Why don't we just go to bed.

FREDDY

Do I even matter to you?

WINNIE

Oh, can we PLEASE not do this
tonight?

FREDDY

I mean, now I do, right? Finally,
now that we have a nice apartment
and, you know, Netflix. But before?
When I was a transit worker? There
were nights I looked at you, and
you looked pained just to have to
be in the same room with me.

Winnie sits down on the bed. Takes a breath.

WINNIE

This is about Paul, isn't it.

FREDDY

Oh, forget Paul already.

WINNIE

(beat)

Don't pretend you haven't known
about us.

FREDDY

You and Paul?

WINNIE

Yes me and Paul. And you wanna know
why, Freddy?

Winnie gets up from the bed, angry.

WINNIE (CONT'D)

Because he makes me feel like I
matter! Not like you, who looks at
me like a patient looks at a doctor
who's about to deliver bad news,
every time I walk in the room.

FREDDY

Well, a lot of the time you do.
Take right now for example!

WINNIE

Come on Freddy. Let's be real.
Marriage is a two way street. Can
you honestly sit there and tell me
you're happy to be with me?

Freddy doesn't answer. He talks to himself more than Winnie.

FREDDY

All my choices were wrong. All my
big ideas. Everything that I
thought was important, ended up
just being... window dressing.

WINNIE

Oh, here we go with the idioms now!

FREDDY

And the people who matter most, the
person that I mattered most to...

Freddy gets up. Quickly starts getting dressed.

WINNIE

Where are you going?

FREDDY

I'm sorry it's taken so long for me
to see it. No, that's not true. I'm
sorry it's taken so long for me to
say it. But Winnie, you are just a
truly terrible person.

WINNIE

And you're just perfect, Freddy.

FREDDY

I'm not perfect. Far from it. But
I'm also not cruel, or incurious,
or status obsessed. Or unfaithful.

Winnie stares at him, speechless.

FREDDY (CONT'D)

And I guess I'm also not staying in
this marriage anymore.

WINNIE

Oh really? Well, divorce is gonna
cost you, sweetie. Big time!

FREDDY

Take it all. I'm sure then you'll
finally be happy.

He gives her a sarcastic look and walks out of the room.
Winnie FUMES. She gets up and starts getting dressed too.

EXT. MANHATTAN - NIGHT

Freddy runs down the sidewalk. He sees a COP forcing PEOPLE
across the street.

COP
Please walk in an orderly fashion.
This building's about to come down!

Freddy looks up just in time to see a BUILDING COLLAPSE. It
crashes onto the SIDEWALK in a blur of CONCRETE and STEEL. He
keeps running. He puts his ARM out when he sees a...

FREDDY
...Taxi!

EXT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The TAXI pulls up. Freddy gets out.

FREDDY
Look, just keep it running, OK? I
haven't seen this person in awhile.
I'm not even sure she's home.

INT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A KNOCK at the DOOR.

FREDDY
Lucy? It's Freddy. You in there?

He KNOCKS again. The DOOR cracks open. Freddy enters.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Lucy? Hello?

The place is it's usual mess, but all the LIGHTS are on.
There's a PLATE of food on the TABLE and the TV's on.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Lucy?

He walks by the BATHROOM.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Oh my God.

INT. BATHROOM - SAME

Freddy runs in and sees LUCY lying on the floor. Her ARMS and LEGS have formed a GREY SHELL around them along with her NECK and some of her FACE. Her eyes are closed. Freddy shakes her.

FREDDY
Lucy. Lucy, wake up!

He shakes her again. Nothing.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Lucy, don't do this to me. Please.
Wake up!

Lucy's EYES OPEN.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Oh, thank God.

LUCY
Freddy?

FREDDY
Hi.

LUCY
(musters a smile)
Glad to see you finally came
around.

FREDDY
(beat)
I come all the way out to Bushwick
to see you, and look at you. You're
a statue.

LUCY
(smiles)
Almost.

FREDDY
Come on, let's get you out of here,
huh? Can you walk?

LUCY
Do I look like I can fucking walk?

Freddy picks her up and carries her out of the apartment.

EXT. LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Freddy carries her into the CAB.

FREDDY
We need to go to the closest
hospital.

INT. TAXI - SAME

Lucy lifts her head up and looks at Freddy, determined.

LUCY
No. No more hospitals.

FREDDY
Where then?

Lucy turns to the TAXI DRIVER.

LUCY
Manhattan, eighty third and fifth.

INT. PAUL AND MICHELLE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Paul is in a chair, sipping a glass of WINE, reading some
pretentious BOOK with a FIRE GOING, when the DOORBELL rings.

EXT. PAUL AND MICHELLE'S APARTMENT - SAME

Paul opens the door to Winnie. He looks surprised.

PAUL
Winnie?

WINNIE
Michelle's working, right?

PAUL
Uh, yeah...

INT. PAUL AND MICHELLE'S APARTMENT - SAME

Winnie walks in, takes off her COAT.

WINNIE
Well, I did it. I broke it off with
Freddy. He was devastated but I
told him you and I are in love and
that's the end of it!

She throws her arms around him.

PAUL
Wow. That's...
(beat)
Why did you tell him we're in love?

WINNIE
Because we are.

PAUL
In love?

WINNIE
Oh stop it Paul. Just because we haven't consummated it doesn't mean it isn't real. Which brings me to the other reason why I'm here...

She takes his HAND, starts leading him to the BEDROOM.

PAUL
Winnie, stop. I think you've gotten the wrong idea. It's probably my fault, but I'm not in love with you. I'm a happily married man. Sure, Michelle and I have our problems, but all couples do.

WINNIE
But... the way you look at me. How we touched hands at the movies. You told me I have grace...

PAUL
And I meant it. But I said those things, I did those things because you... seemed so sad. I just wanted to make you feel better. Because I care about you. We both do.

WINNIE
You don't have feelings for me?

PAUL
Not in that way. I'm so sorry.

WINNIE
Well... Why the fuck not?

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

Freddy carries Lucy over to the same BENCH she sat at earlier with Ramsey, by the Jungle Gym. Abandoned now at night.

FREDDY

Why are we here, Lucy? Besides to encourage muggers.

LUCY

Because this is where it should end. This is where I lost her. Amy.

FREDDY

What happened, Lucy?

Lucy winces in PAIN.

LUCY

Well... Let's just say I didn't win best baby-sitter, 2002.

She tries to smile. Freddy sees the TEARS in her eyes. He puts his arm around her. She puts her head on his shoulder.

LUCY (CONT'D)

I'm pretty tired. Do you mind if I close my eyes for a minute?

EXT. MANHATTAN - NIGHT

Winnie walks along the sidewalk, confused and furious. COUPLES walk past HAND in HAND, while the sound of a BUILDING COLLAPSING and CAR ALARMS going off, permeates the air.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - MORNING

JOGGERS trot past Freddy and Lucy. Both their eyes are closed. Freddy wakes up. Looks around. Then down at Lucy.

FREDDY

Looks like we both fell asleep.

(beat)

Lucy?

He shakes her. No movement. He doesn't try again. Doesn't have to. He kisses her SHELLED FOREHEAD. TEARS well in his EYES. Tears of anger. He looks across the park at the DAKOTA.

INT. RAMSEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ramsey's in his OFFICE, packing away what he can. DOCUMENTS, PHOTOS, and other VALUABLES are hastily thrown into a BRIEFCASE, while a TV on the WALL shows a FRENCH REPORTER standing in front of a collapsed EIFFEL TOWER. Virgil enters.

VIRGIL
Sir, he's here.

RAMSEY
Thank you Virgil. Have him wait in
the great room. I'll be right out.

VIRGIL
Yes, sir.

RAMSEY
And Virgil... thank you for your
services. I will miss our time
together. You proved yourself
worthy every single day.

VIRGIL
Thank you for saying so, sir. That
means everything coming from you.

INT. GREAT ROOM - DAY

Freddy is kneeling on the floor over Lucy. PICASSO'S "LE
REVE", hung proudly on the WALL behind them. Ramsey walks in.

FREDDY
You have to help her, Ramsey.

RAMSEY
I'm sorry, Freddy but I can't.

Freddy gets up, angry.

FREDDY
Who are you to say who lives and
who doesn't? She deserves another
chance!

RAMSEY
Freddy, I would help you if I
could, really. But believe it or
not, I don't make the rules.

FREDDY
Well, if anyone can, you can. Just
tell me what I have to do!

Just then, WINNIE bursts in the room.

WINNIE
Freddy!

FREDDY
Winnie? What are you doing here?

WINNIE
I've been walking all night. We
have to talk. I'm afraid I've made
a terrible mistake. I want to get
back together!

FREDDY
Winnie, this isn't really, you
know, the best time right now!

Winnie looks around the room. Notices Lucy.

WINNIE
Who's she?

FREDDY
(to Ramsey)
I'll take her place if that's what
it takes.

RAMSEY
That's very noble and as it
happens, totally arbitrary, but I'm
afraid my hands are tied.

FREDDY
Why, damn it!?

RAMSEY
Because you stripped me of my power
when you went on Goddamn *Let's Make
a Deal* and pried open my safe!

Freddy is stunned. He suspected, but now he truly knows...

FREDDY
This IS a dream.

RAMSEY
Of course this is a dream, Freddy!
People don't turn into statues.
Your wife is Scarlett Johansson for
Christ sakes.

Winnie is in fact, and has always been, SCARLETT JOHANSSON.

WINNIE
What is he talking about?

FREDDY
I have no idea.

RAMSEY

And publishers don't publish books that don't have endings. I stole your manuscript and made it a best seller so you'd stop interfering! I gave you the life you always dreamed of and still it wasn't enough! Only you would dream of LOSING an award and getting dropped by your publisher! Well, it's your world now, Freddy. And I'm just a character in it. So, as I said at the party, good luck!

A BUILDING COLLAPSES right next door. The apartment SHAKES.

FREDDY

Why is this happening?

RAMSEY

Because my world is ending. I'll be waking up soon.

FREDDY

Well, if it's my world now, can't I save her?

Lucy lies still on the floor as the chaos swirls around her.

RAMSEY

You can. You can will it to happen. You're a lucid dreamer, Freddy. It's a very rare thing. And you can make anything happen in this world if you want it badly enough. But I have to warn you, once you start willing things to be, even for a lucid dreamer, that's the beginning of the end. Because once you know you're dreaming, it's never long before you wake up...

Freddy kneels before Lucy. He looks at the people surrounding him and glances down. He shakes his head.

FREDDY

What is-- Come on-- Who am I, Prince Phillip?

RAMSEY

Just concentrate. Free yourself of the burden of your surroundings. It's easier when you know they don't exist in the first place...

Freddy leans in, closes his EYES and KISSES LUCY. He slowly opens them again and sees Lucy still lying motionless.

FREDDY

Well, thanks for that, *Morpheus*--

RAMSEY

These things take time, Freddy.
Unfortunately a luxury you don't
have...

Freddy takes a deep breath. Then another. Finally...

FREDDY

(to himself)

This is my world. And in this world
I can make anything happen if I
want it badly enough.

WINNIE

(whispers to Virgil)

Mmmmkay... What did I miss here?

Freddy takes Lucy into his ARMS. The order is whispered. But it's forceful.

FREDDY

Lucy. Wake up. Now.

Lucy's EYE'S flutter! She opens them. Sees Freddy. Freddy smiles, looks at Ramsey.

RAMSEY

Not bad.

LUCY

Freddy Dileo, did you come to my
rescue again?

FREDDY

Well, I was in the neighborhood.
Let's get you up.

LUCY

Um, my legs are a little...
statuesque at the moment.

FREDDY

I wouldn't worry about that.

Freddy brushes off the SHELL CASING around her ARMS, LEGS and FACE like he's brushing off snow. Lucy stands up. Everyone is staring at her.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Let's give her some air.

He walks her to the TERRACE and opens the FRENCH DOORS.

WINNIE
Who the hell is that girl?

RAMSEY
(smiling)
She is thee Lucy Darim...

EXT. RAMSEY'S TERRACE - DAY

They walk out and see the BUILDINGS COLLAPSING around them.

LUCY
What's happening, Freddy? Is this
the end?

FREDDY
Nah, there is no end. Only
Transition...

He moves a lock of HAIR away from her FACE. They stare into
each other's EYES.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
Hey, I uh, have something for you.
Wait here.

INT. RAMSEY'S APARTMENT - SAME

Freddy walks past Winnie who's in a chair, smoking a
CIGARETTE, looking out the WINDOW.

WINNIE
So you're leaving me for Sleeping
Beauty out there, huh?

FREDDY
Well, if it helps, you and I have
probably only known each other for
like four minutes.

WINNIE
(takes a drag)
Freddy Dileo, with you it felt like
an eternity.

They share a warm smile.

FREDDY
Are you gonna be OK?

WINNIE
Me? Are you kidding? Maybe in the next one I'll be a chef or something. I always loved to cook.

FREDDY
Goodbye Winnie.

WINNIE
Bye Freddy.

EXT. RAMSEY'S TERRACE - DAY

Lucy is looking at the collapsing WORLD around her when...

AMY (O.S.)
Lucy?

Lucy turns and sees Freddy standing next to AMY, still five years old, at the DOOR.

LUCY
Amy!

Lucy runs to Amy. They hug. A long, satisfying, hug.

LUCY (CONT'D)
I've missed you.

AMY
(laughing)
You're choking me!

Lucy smiles and lets go.

AMY (CONT'D)
Can we go home now?

LUCY
Yes we can go home. Why don't you go in and have Freddy conjure up some chocolate milk with his sorcery and I'll be right in. I just need to talk to him for a sec.

AMY
Ok!

Amy runs back inside. Freddy walks over to her.

LUCY

Thank you. I know it's not real.
But thank you.

FREDDY

No, Lucy. Thank you.

Just then, THE TERRACE COLLAPSES FROM UNDER LUCY'S FEET!
Freddy grabs her just in time but he's falling over himself!

FREDDY (CONT'D)

I've got you. Just hold on.

LUCY

Freddy, you're falling too!

Just as Freddy is about to fall, RAMSEY grabs HIS HAND!

RAMSEY

I'm losing my footing. I can't hold
you both!

FREDDY

Why can't I stop this?!

RAMSEY

Because, as I said, this is still
my world. It's ending, but at the
moment it still belongs to me!

FREDDY

Then you make it stop!

RAMSEY

I can't. I told you I'm powerless
here now!

A little more of the TERRACE comes loose, making it even
harder for Ramsey to hold on.

LUCY

Freddy, let me go.

FREDDY

You're not going anywhere, Lucy.

LUCY

It's OK. This isn't real, Freddy.
We'll find each other again.

FREDDY

Lucy, whatever this is. Wherever we
are right now, this...

He looks deep into her EYES. Into her SOUL.

FREDDY (CONT'D)
 ...This is real.

Lucy smiles wide.

LUCY
 You know, every time I look at you,
 I want to throw up.

FREDDY
 (sincere)
 That's the sweetest thing anybody's
 ever said to me.

LUCY
 I'm ready, Freddy. Come find me.

Lucy lets her HAND GO. She slips out of his grasp!

FREDDY
 No!

Ramsey is still struggling to hold Freddy! Buildings are
 still collapsing everywhere!

RAMSEY
 Give me your other hand, Freddy. I
 can't hold you!

Freddy looks up at Ramsey. Then down at Lucy. It's a long way
 down. Especially for an acrophobic.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)
 We can ride this out. You can live
 here in safety. You can still have
 everything you ever wanted!

FREDDY
 I already have it.

Freddy PULLS his HAND away from RAMSEY, sending RAMSEY
 FALLING BACKWARDS!

EXT. THE DAKOTA - SAME

THE ENTIRE CITY IS COLLAPSING AS FREDDY RACES TOWARDS LUCY.

EXT. RAMSEY'S TERRACE - SAME

Ramsey continues to fall backwards in SLOW MOTION.

EXT. THE DAKOTA - SAME

FREDDY CATCHES UP TO LUCY IN MID AIR. HE TAKES HIS ARMS AND TURNS HER BODY AROUND TO HIS. THEY EMBRACE, WHILE HURTLING TOWARDS THE GROUND AT A HUNDRED FORTY MILES PER HOUR...

EXT. RAMSEY'S TERRACE - SAME

RAMSEY FALLS ONTO HIS BACK.

EXT. THE DAKOTA - SAME

FREDDY AND LUCY HOLD EACH OTHER AS THEIR LAST TWO SECONDS ARE ALMOST UP, THE GROUND RACING TOWARDS THEM, THE BUILDINGS BREAKING CLOSER, AND JUST BEFORE THEY HIT...

...A BRIGHT WHITE LIGHT ENVELOPES EVERYTHING...

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

An ALARM goes off. An EYE OPENS. A HAND presses SNOOZE...

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

A FIGURE, silhouetted in the SUNLIGHT, goes into the BATHROOM and washes up.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The FIGURE walks past the LIVING ROOM, snatches KEYS and heads out the DOOR.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

The BARISTAS are hard at work at this busy, trendy, midtown COFFEE SHOP, serving the MORNING COMMUTERS their cups o' wake up juice. One of the BARISTAS pulls an APRON over his HEAD.

GENE

You're late.

RAMSEY

Yeah, late night.

GENE

Well, we're slammed. Get in the game, brother.

Ramsey walks to the COUNTER as FREDDY WALKS IN.

RAMSEY
Large Corsica, milk, no sugar...

FREDDY
I'm that predictable huh?

RAMSEY
To go, right?

FREDDY
Actually, since I don't need to be
anywhere 'til ten, and just to
prove you wrong, I think I'll stay.

RAMSEY
We got a two top outside that's
free. Nothing inside.

Freddy nods. Ramsey looks over Freddy's shoulder.

RAMSEY (CONT'D)
Medium Savoia, light and sweet?

LUCY
You got my number.

RAMSEY
Stay or go?

Freddy looks over at LUCY, dressed in a smart looking BLAZER
and WHITE, SUIT PANTS, while Lucy looks at her PHONE.

LUCY
Well, since I just officially got
stood up by my nine thirty, I think
I'll stop and smell the coffee.

RAMSEY
Be about a fifteen minute wait.

LUCY
You grinders are busy today huh?

RAMSEY
(nods)
Unless you two wanna share...

Freddy looks at Lucy. She shrugs her SHOULDERS.

LUCY
Well? I don't bite, Dwight...

Ramsey hands them their COFFEES. Freddy opens the DOOR for Lucy and waves his ARM.

LUCY (CONT'D)
A gentleman. Almost forgot what you guys looked like.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Freddy and Lucy sit down at the table. Lucy's PHONE rings.

FREDDY
Julian by the way.

LUCY
Delia. Nice to meet you.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Sorry, I have to take this.
(into phone)
Hi Sweetie. No, I didn't forget.
It's in the top drawer. Tell Leslie you can have it AFTER lunch.
Because I'll know!

Freddy smiles and drinks his COFFEE.

LUCY (CONT'D)
(hanging up)
Ok, sweets. I love you too. Bye.

FREDDY
Your boss?

Lucy smiles. Shows him her SCREEN SAVER of AMY.

LUCY
Love of my life. Her father, not so much.

FREDDY
Oh, yes. I had me one of those too.

LUCY
So... what do you do, Julian?

FREDDY
I'm in Pharmaceuticals...

And as JULIAN and DELIA continue to get to know each other, we PAN UP OVER THE CITY, where we can hear everything. Everyone at once:

"Give me four Powerball and two Mega."; "Oh my God, this is so random! How are you?"; "Well, always better to beg forgiveness than ask permission."; "I'm here. Where are you?"

WE'RE MOVING FASTER NOW, UNTIL WE CAN SEE THE ENTIRE EAST COAST, AND THEN ALL OF NORTH AMERICA...

Then our spinning, little blue marble, EARTH, and past MARS, URANUS, NEPTUNE, THROUGH THE RINGS OF SATURN and all the way out past the MILKY WAY into the uncharted territories of...

THE UNIVERSE

Infinite. Silent. Freezing. HYDROGEN and HELIUM in constant NUCLEAR FLUX, creating the STARS we're seeing as we fly past.

THE END