

REPOSSESSED

by

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Based on the Novel

By

A. M. Jenkins

BLACK SCREEN

KIRIEL (V.O.)
(male, twenties; we'll
never see him)
The first thing I did was, I stole
a body.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

SHAUN and BAILEY, 17-year-olds, slacker-styled, skateboard
through a neighbourhood. Shaun rides ahead of Bailey.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
I could have made one, but I wasn't
in an artistic frame of mind.

Shaun rides with intensity. He narrowly avoids smacking into
a car pulling out of its driveway. Before its DRIVER can
react, Shaun speeds ahead. Bailey snickers, following him.

CUT TO:

Another street. A CEMENT MIXER forges its way down a block,
speeding.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
The hardest part was picking which
body. I knew I wanted to slip into
a life that was carefree, insulated
from things like hunger and
responsibilities.

CUT TO:

Shaun and Bailey. They skate past a house with a PITBULL
tethered to the front yard. It barks wildly at them. Shaun
gives it the finger.

SHAUN
Fucking mutt.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
The life, I'd decided, of a middle-
class suburban American teenager. A
slacker, specifically. No
extraneous schedules or AP testing.

CUT TO:

The cement mixer. Turning a corner onto a different street.
Not interested in slowing down.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Fallen Angels could always use a
vacation. But me? I was fed up with
being a cog in a vast machine.

The truck's DRIVER, a squat man, sips absently at a large soda.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
I've done my job for millions of millennia without a single "Good job!" or "Hey, thanks!" I can't tell you how depressing that is.

He finishes it in one gulp and throws the cup out the window.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Maybe that's because my job's so pointless. Tormenting the damned? It practically does it itself.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

Two crossing residential streets. Down one, the speeding cement mixer. Down the other, Shaun and Bailey skating on the sidewalk. Both on their way to a meeting point.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
So I figured, hey, why not do it? Body-snatching's an offense amongst my kind, but what were they going to do? Send me to Hell?

Shaun propels himself forward, caught in a sudden rush.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
And it wasn't like the kid would be needing his anyway.

Shaun reaches the end of the sidewalk. A house on the corner block his view of the approaching vehicle. He hops off the curb and registers the growling motor.

Shaun turns his head. His eyes widen. Shit!

Collision seems inevitable. Until Shaun's knocked off his board like he's been hit in the chest by an invisible ball. He falls back onto the side of the street.

The skateboard continues on. The mixer never slows. The board rolls underneath the hulking machine and emerges from the other side, unharmed. SILENCE.

Dazed, Shaun sits up. Looks at his hands, flexes his fingers. Takes a deep breath. A breeze combs through his hair, rustles the leaves of a tree. Birdsong bleeds in, as well as-

BAILEY (O.S.)
Dude, are you okay?!

Shaun squints up at the sound: Bailey, unnerved.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Say something.

A pause. Shaun makes a low, whistling sound with his teeth that quickly becomes-

SHAUN
Something.

Relieved, Bailey shakes his head. Helps Shaun to his feet.

BAILEY
That fucking idiot could've hit you. I mean, you could've, like, died or something.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Well, technically, Shaun was dead. His spirit passed on. Did the whole light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel thing. This was just his body.

BAILEY
Imagine you dead right now.

SHAUN
Yeah. That would totally suck.

Shaun steps past him, a little wobbly on his feet. He takes in the sight of the neighbourhood and looks slightly amazed. Bailey's a touch concerned.

BAILEY
Are you sure you're okay?

Shaun turns and stares at Bailey for a moment-then nears him suddenly, peering into his face. Bailey balks.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Dude, what are you doing?

SHAUN
You have beautiful eyes.

BAILEY
What?

SHAUN
They're this wonderful bluish-grey.

BAILEY
(pause)
Did you hit your head on the pavement or something?

Shaun considers this. Nods his head slowly.

SHAUN
Yeah, I must have. I have this killer headache. I think I'll go home and lie down.

As he goes to retrieve his board from the street-

BAILEY
Do you want me to, like, go with you?

SHAUN
Nah, man, that won't be necessary.

BAILEY
Okay, well, I'll see you tomorrow
then.

SHAUN
Definitely.

Shaun comes back from the street. Bailey holds out a hand to do some kind of special, departing handshake with him. But Shaun keeps walking forward, leaving Bailey flummoxed.

EXT. SHAUN'S HOUSE - DAY

Shaun approaches a bungalow, skateboard in arm, registering the house with a dawning recognition.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
It occurred to me that I needed to
be alone to explore this bodily
existence.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/FRONT HALL - DAY

A key wrestles into the lock. The door clicks open and Shaun enters, putting his board aside and discovering-

PEANUT. A cat slinking out of the kitchen, now petrified by the sight of him. Shaun locks the door then nears the animal with a curious look.

SHAUN
A cat.
(pause)
Peanut the cat. You look so soft.

Shaun bends over, reaching out a hand.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
Here, kitty-kitty-kitty.

Peanut hisses and speeds out of the front hall. Shaun straightens, perplexed. Then he shrugs. Spots a plain crucifix hanging on the wall.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
(to crucifix)
Well, it's been interesting so far.

He looks down from the crucifix and finds a portrait of Shaun at 7 and JASON at 2, dressed-up and posed in a department store photography set-up. He hones in on Jason.

JASON (O.S.)
What the fuck!

Shaun startles at the voice. Follows it into-

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jason, 12, slightly overweight, is nestled into the cushions of a couch with a microphone headset. Rapt with the TV. His fingers work crazily at a video game console controller.

JASON

I told that douchebag not to go running into the fucking mine without us. Next time he does that, he's getting kicked, I don't give a shit.

Shaun appears in the doorway.

SHAUN

Uh, hello.
(pause)
Fuckface.

Jason furrows his brows.

JASON

(with acid)
Shut. Up.

Shaun grins and goes, pleased with the interaction. An explosion in the game leaves Jason devastated.

JASON (CONT'D)

Come on!

INT. SHAUN'S ROOM - DAY

Shaun enters. Clothes litter the floor. A few crumpled up snack bags and soda cans. The bed's a wreck.

SHAUN

You were certainly Slothful.

He grabs a few soda cans and finds they aren't empty. Sniffs. Recoils. That's not soda.

He bends and takes a shirt from the floor. Feels the cotton. Brings it to his face and wipes it on his cheeks. Runs the material across his lips. Licks its collar.

A CREAK. Shaun looks up-

Jason in the doorway. His face: what the fuck?

JASON

Were you just making out with your shirt?

On Shaun: affecting defence.

SHAUN

No?

JASON
You totally were.

SHAUN
Get out of my room!

JASON
I'm not in your room.

SHAUN
You're in the doorway. Fuckface.

Shaun closes the door on Jason, then turns and scans the messy room. Sighs.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Shaun would've tolerated it, but I couldn't. What was comforting about a wreckage?

CUT TO:

Armed with a garbage bag and laundry baskets, Shaun goes to work cleaning up.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
I realize the oddity. Wouldn't a demon enjoy such sin? Well, first: I've never thought of myself as a demon. I prefer 'Fallen Angel.' Really, I prefer my name. Kiriel.

He discovers a mashed-up fast food bag covered in grease stains. Empty water bottles. Crumbs on the bedsheets.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Second: my function in Hell was to mirror the sins of the damned. So I'd seen enough of Slothful behaviour.

INT. FRONT HALL - NIGHT

DAWN, forties, a worn office-look, lets herself in, sighing. She hangs up her coat, then sees movement down the hall:

Shaun, lugging trash bags and laundry away from his bedroom.

On Dawn: is he actually cleaning?

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The shower runs hot water. Naked, Shaun steps inside and stands at the end of the tub. He sees the vapours dancing all around him. The glass door begins to fog up.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
And this is something they do everyday?

(MORE)

KIRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Something so ostensibly
 pleasurable? All they need is a
 bucket and a sponge.

Shaun enters the water's stream. Very nice. He lets it run down his face and hair, then closes his eyes. A new feeling springs up-he looks down between his legs.

CUT TO:

Outside the shower. The glass door covered with condensation. There's blurry movement inside. Then a gasp-

SHAUN (O.S.)
 Wow.

Shaun's body falls against the door a little, leaving prints.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Plenty of animals masturbate, and quite frequently, at that. I can't see why humans don't do it more often. Or why they don't do it all day long.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dawn raps on the bathroom door, a bit concerned.

DAWN
 Shaun, is everything okay in there?
 Jason said you've been in the
 shower for three hours.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Blissful, Shaun stands before a foggy mirror, draped with a towel. He studies his puckered fingertips, then writes in Latin across the glass.

SHAUN
 (to Dawn)
 Everything's fine.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

DAWN
 (nodding)
 Okay. Well, dinner's waiting.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

SHAUN
 I'll be out in a second.

He goes to the medicine cabinet and rifles through it. Pulls out DEODORANT and smells it. Rolls it under his arms.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Jason and Dawn stare as Shaun eats ravenously. He looks up at their faces.

SHAUN
This is good. This is really good.
Eating.

DAWN
Well, you've always liked Chinese
takeout.

JASON
(to Shaun)
God, chew with your mouth closed.
No one wants to see your food,
asshole.

DAWN
Hey! No cursing in the house.
Shaun, be careful, you look like
you're going to choke.

JASON
Which would be wonderful.

Dawn shoots Jason a look.

DAWN
(to Shaun)
I noticed you were cleaning your
room earlier.

SHAUN
It was messy, wasn't it?

DAWN
Yeah. Now, you can see the floor.
And you have out all those clothes
I bought you.

JASON
(to Dawn)
He's probably doing all this so you
can give him pot money.

DAWN
(to Jason, stern)
Jason. Enough.

But she turns to Shaun, concerned.

DAWN (CONT'D)
You aren't doing this for money,
are you?

Shaun shakes his head, his mouth full.

DAWN (CONT'D)
 Because you said you weren't doing
 that anymore. You swore you haven't
 smoked in a month.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Which was a lie.

Shaun swallows his food, reaches to clasp Dawn's wrist.

SHAUN
 (earnest)
 I swear I'm not smoking pot
 anymore.

Dawn relaxes.

DAWN
 Good.

JASON
 (mutters)
 Liar.

INT. SHAUN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Now neat, his bed stands out like a holy relic. Shaun enters,
 an air of sluggishness to him.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 I knew I'd face the inevitability
 of sleep.

He removes his clothes, getting down to a T-shirt and boxers.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 And I knew sleep would most likely
 lead to my returning.

Shaun goes to his window and peeks out-

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - NIGHT

From his vantage point, we see HOUSES along the avenue. Some
 are completely dark. Some have their lights on, just now
 turning off. Blue TV light flickers in other windows.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 In a human body, you just couldn't
 escape it.

INT. SHAUN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lights out, Shaun lies on his bed. He stares at the ceiling.

SHAUN
 (pleading to the ceiling)
 I don't want to go. This wasn't
 even a taste.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 I hadn't done anything. Hadn't ate
 all the foods, hadn't jumped off
 any cliffs. I'd masturbated, but
 that only left me wanting actual
 sex. I'd made a mistake choosing
 some inexperienced teenager. I was
 limited.

Shaun furrows his brows. Then sits up with realization.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 But, if I did go back, that meant
 they would have finally noticed me.
 The Creator himself would have
 conceived the worst punishment just
for me. And I would own that
 punishment. He would have noticed
 me personally, beyond all others.

Tired, he can't help falling back on his bed.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 If I went back, there would have
 been nothing but unimaginable
 horror.
 (beat)
 But terror and oblivion would have
 been worth it, just for His
 acknowledgment.

Shaun smiles as he closes his eyes.

CUT TO BLACK:

TITLE CARD:
...and the evening and the morning were the first day...

A slight GROANING.

FADE IN:

CLOSEUP of Shaun lying on a pillow. Asleep. SUNLIGHT blares
 in his face. Dried drool trails from his mouth. Groggy, his
 eyes slowly open.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/SHAUN'S ROOM - DAY

Shaun in bed. He gazes blearily at his surroundings.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Hell must've gotten renovated.

His lips break into a grin; an exultant breath. He sits up.
 Peanut rises, having been lying on the edge of his bed.

SHAUN
(hoarse)
Morning, Peanut.

The cat leaps off the edge and disappears underneath the bed.

CUT TO:

Lying on his stomach, Shaun pulls up the excess sheeting and looks within the darkness.

Peanut sits against the wall, staring back. Its eyes like two glowing circles in the dark.

Shaun's upside-down face, flushed red, bears a smile that borders on creepy. Something false in his appearance.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
You are a lovely creation.

He innocently reaches a hand in to pet.

In an instant, the cat hisses and strikes at his hand.

Shaun draws back with a yelp and Peanut dashes for the open bedroom door, disappearing.

Brows furrowed, Shaun observes his fingers: fresh scratches. Blood surfaces like two red orbs. He watches with a combination of pain and awe.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
That hurt.

A TINKLING SOUND beyond his bedroom door makes him look up.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jason, dressed for school, pours a bowl of cereal as he frantically fills in a homework sheet. Shaun enters in a Polo and khakis, a stark contrast to his earlier style.

SHAUN
(earnest)
Good morning.

JASON
(without looking up)
Fuck you.

Unperturbed, Shaun grabs the box of cereal and digs his hand in. He comes out with a handful and stuffs his mouth. Tries to catch sight of Jason's sheet.

SHAUN
What's that?

Jason covers it with a hand, looking at Shaun with heat.

JASON

Nothing.

Annoyed, Jason slides the sheet into a dingy red folder, grabs his bowl, and brings it into the living room.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

I knew it was neglected homework.
And I knew he was struggling with
it. But I wouldn't help him. I was
supposed to be having fun.

Shaun shrugs and shoves another handful of cereal in his mouth.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

It was my vacation.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Shaun stands at the front of the bus, looking out the TEENAGERS huddled together in their seats. Anxious.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

Which school shouldn't have had
anything to do with.

The BUS DRIVER, forties, irritated, looks at him.

BUS DRIVER

Are you going to sit down?

SHAUN

Oh. Yes.

Shaun walks down the aisle of seats and faces. Some kids flash him looks of disapproval or disgust.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

Teenagers banded into groups and
closed ranks. Any outsider was
treated as a virus.

Shaun finds an empty seat and slides into it.

He looks out the window as the bus drives away from his stop. Houses and cars pass by. Overtaken by the blur of colour and motion, Shaun leans up in his seat and pushes the windows' latches, sliding down the glass slat.

Wind rushes in. He lets it hit his face. Sticks out a hand. The surrounding teens observe this oddity.

The Bus Driver, her face reflected in the mirror above her seat, shoots him a glare.

BUS DRIVER

Hey! Get your hand back in the bus
and sit down!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL/ART CLASS - DAY

MRS. KEYES, thirties, dressed eccentrically in an artistic manner, makes her way down a row of STUDENTS. They mold small mounds of clay into sculptures.

MRS. KEYES
Don't be afraid to unleash your inner artistic spirit. Let it guide your hands into a search for the ultimate model of your dreams, your hopes, your fears, and passions.

She comes to a stop at Shaun. He mashes his hands into his mound, seemingly without reason. But he's enjoying the feel of the wet clay. Mrs. Keyes leans next to him.

MRS. KEYES (CONT'D)
Shaun, if you aren't taking this project seriously-

SHAUN
But I am, Mrs. Keyes. Tell me what you think of it.

MRS. KEYES
It's very-textural. But if you want me to consider it for a grade, tell me what it says to you.

SHAUN
(considering it)
I think it's an expression of sensation itself. Of physical feeling. Art shouldn't be seen as just a creative outlet, but also as an extension of your reality. And I think this reflects my physical existence. It says, "I was here. I've done this."

Mrs. Keyes is inwardly floored.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

STUDENTS eating and chatting, a droning sound. Bailey and Shaun stand in the lunch line, grabbing trays. Shaun sets his tray on the metal rail and slides it down. A LUNCH LADY catches him.

LUNCH LADY
Hey! None of that!

Bailey chuckles at Shaun.

BAILEY
Someone's high.

Shaun takes his tray and eyes the various food options: pizza, chicken wings, chips, oranges. He loads up on almost everything.

Once they reach the end, Bailey glances at the pile amassed. He smirks at Shaun.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
Someone's definitely high.

CUT TO:

Shaun and Bailey sit at a table, eating.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
I talked to Bobby last night and he said he could give us the usual amount for just twenty. Something about customer loyalty. It was fucking hilarious.

SHAUN
I'm not into that anymore.

BAILEY
(sarcastic)
Yeah, okay.

SHAUN
No really. I mean, I'm interested, but I have to keep my wits if I'm going to experience everything fully.

BAILEY
What?

SHAUN
Nothing.

A slight pause. Shaun indicates his own tray.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
What are these? Pears?

BAILEY
Potatoes, duh.

SHAUN
I like them a lot. The consistency is-

BAILEY
(not interested)
Good to hear, dude. Guess what?

SHAUN
Hm?

BAILEY
I got Tectonic Warriors 2 last
night.

Bailey expects a reaction, but Shaun looks unimpressed.

SHAUN
Okay.

BAILEY
You don't seem as fucking stocked
as I'd thought you'd be. I mean,
we've been waiting for this game
since the dawn of time.

SHAUN
I know. I used to play the original
every day. I failed a Chem test to
unlock the final achievement.

BAILEY
So come over! We got to try it out.

SHAUN
Okay.
(pause)
Do you think I could bring Jason
along?

BAILEY
Uh, yeah, sure. Are you, like,
babysitting or something?

SHAUN
No, I just think he'd really like
it. He loves Tectonic Warriors.

BAILEY
(shrugs)
Okay. Whatever.

SHAUN
(re: Bailey's tray)
Are you going to eat your potatoes?

BAILEY
They're all yours.

Shaun stabs Bailey's potatoes and brings them to his tray. Bailey rises with his tray, going to dispose the trash, but knocks into REED MCGOWAN, 17, a solid mass with a quick temper. He shoves Bailey away from him.

REED
Watch where you're fucking going!

Bailey is silent. He continues on with his tray. Shaun watches Reed as he takes court at his table of fellow KNUCKLEHEADS.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Reed McGowan. One of many sowers of pain. I'd seen thousands, millions of them. I'd spent depressing eons in their company, as they struggled with the guilt from the pain they caused others.

Reed casts an evil look around the cafeteria, as if at any moment someone might test him.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 So that was what they were like in person. Insecurity masked with anger. Blind to what would befall them when they died.

Shaun stands. As he walks to Reed's table-

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Maybe I was annoyed with knowing I'd have to put up with his guilt for eternity-

A KNUCKLEHEAD nods to the approaching Shaun. The whole table watches him near, contempt in their faces.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 -but for whatever reason, I ended up at his table.

Shaun stares at Reed, holding a philosophical peace. Reed stands and gets close up to him, imposing, drawing everyone in the cafeteria's eyes. Bailey winces at the sight.

SHAUN
 Reed, you'll do better in the long run if you start appreciating what you have.

REED
 (beat)
 What'd you just say?

SHAUN
 You'll be sorry later on.

REED
 Are you threatening me?

SHAUN
 This is simply a warning. This could, in fact, be a turning point. I just want to say, Reed, that there's no need to be afraid.

Reed almost laughs in disbelief.

REED
 What the fuck would I be afraid of? You?

SHAUN

No.
(in a low tone)
That you have a small penis.

Reed blanches.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

(low tone)
Five inches is considered common,
but you're only two below that.
There's no need to scour the
Internet for dangerous and futile
enlargement methods; for measuring
yourself everyday with a ruler. So
all this blustering-

Reed's fist hits his face with lightning speed. Shaun promptly falls backward. No dramatics.

INT. BOYS' BATHROOM - DAY

Shaun studies the beginnings of a swollen lip in the mirror. He winces as he pokes at it. Behind him, Bailey leans against a stall, incredulous.

BAILEY

Lucky he only hit you once.

SHAUN

Once was enough.

BAILEY

No shit. Staying down was a smart move.

SHAUN

It's not as if I did it consciously. It hurt. You know, emotional pain may comparatively be the worst because it lasts longer, but physical pain? Whoa, boy. It's like a split-second concentration of all that.

In the mirror, Shaun sees Bailey's confusion. He turns to face him, hiding his nervousness.

BAILEY

Dude, who are you?

SHAUN

What do you mean?
(an afterthought)
Dude?

BAILEY

It's like you're not yourself or something. And how'd you know all that shit about Reed in the first place?

SHAUN
I totally made it up.

BAILEY
Then why'd he look that?

The first bell RINGS. Shaun and Bailey caught in a tense silence.

SHAUN
Maybe I was somehow right. Anyway,
what are you even trying to say?
It's me. It's Shaun. Who else would
it be?

Bailey shakes his head, grabs his backpack.

BAILEY
I don't know. I'll see you later, I
guess.

SHAUN
Yeah. See you.

Bailey goes. Shaun turns back to the mirror and looks at himself deeply. After a moment, he sighs. Shakes his head and grabs his backpack.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
I'm an idiot.

INT. HISTORY CLASSROOM - DAY

A TEACHER drones in the background. Shaun sits among the class, reflecting. He looks nervous.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
I was being ignorant. I was there
purely for the purpose of
experience, not life counselling.
Who cared about Reed's small penis?
Shaun wouldn't have even known
about it.

The teacher's voice cuts in.

TEACHER (O.S.)
Shaun, since you seem so interested
in the lesson, you wouldn't mind
naming the newspaper William
Randolph Hearst-?

SHAUN
(disaffected)
The New York Journal.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Nor would he have known that.

SHAUN
I mean-the Huffington Post.

TEACHER (O.S.)
 (perplexed)
 Uh, no. It was the Journal. And you
 should remember that for tomorrow's
 quiz. Hearst established-

The teacher's voice fades. Shaun fiddles with a pencil.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Huh. Tomorrow. I could've been
 dragged out of this body by then,
 and Shaun would've been truly dead.
 (pause)
 Humans take so much for granted.

He senses something. Turns: a girl is staring at him. LANE
 HENNEBERGER, 17. As soon as he's caught her, she returns her
 attention to the board, blushing.

INT. HALLWAY LOCKERS - DAY

Lane puts books away in her locker. Shaun watches from across
 the river of students.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Lane Henneberger. She'd had a crush
 on Shaun since third grade when he
 accidentally kissed her cheek. If
 there was anyone willing to have
 sex with Shaun, it had to have been
 her.

Shaun braces himself and walks up behind her. But he's
 transfixed with her hair, just staring at it. Takes a strand
 and feels it like fabric. Alarmed, Lane wheels on him.

LANE
 Oh, Shaun. Hello.

SHAUN
 Hello.

LANE
 What were you just doing?

SHAUN
 Nothing. I love your hair.

Lane's stunned. Half-cautious, half-complimented.

LANE
 Um-thank you.

SHAUN
 The colour's like a mix of toffee
 and honey. I might even call it
 gold.

LANE
 Well, that's-that's nice of you
 notice.

(MORE)

LANE (CONT'D)
I think the box said something
about toffee. I don't remember.

SHAUN
And it smells great.
(pause)
You smell great.

Lane just stares at him. Then hastily zips up her bag.

LANE
I have to go. My grandma's waiting
for me outside and she's, like,
crazy about punctuality, so-

SHAUN
Maybe we can do something. Later, I
mean.

LANE
(pause)
Like, go out?

SHAUN
If you'd want to.

Lane considers this. But starts to leave.

LANE
I'll think about it. I really have
to go.

SHAUN
Okay. I'll be waiting. Not like a
stalker, I mean.

Too late-she's out of earshot. Shaun nods his head solemnly.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Every victory began with baby
steps. Rome wasn't built in a day.
Or whatever humans say to justify
their initial floundering.

But Lane reappears, quickly walking back to him. Shaun's
surprised-his face brightens up.

LANE
I just want to say that you seem
different. I mean, besides the
whole talking to me thing, which
you've hardly ever done before. But
yeah, you're different.

SHAUN
How so?

LANE
For one thing, you're smiling. You
never really smile.

Shaun lets his grin widen.

SHAUN
I'm smiling because I'm happy. It might sound a little crazy, but I'm feeling things that I've never felt before. And it makes me happy.

LANE
It doesn't sound crazy at all.
(pause)
And you're really cute when you smile.

They share a small, sweet silence.

LANE (CONT'D)
My grandma's going to skin me. But, yeah, I'd love to go out sometime.

SHAUN
Great.

Lane joins the flood of departing students. Shaun left in his glow.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
(softened)
I look forward to it.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Shaun has his temple pressed against the window, caught up in the vast blueness of the sky. Big, fluffy clouds are scattered over buildings. They turn onto residential streets:

In a front yard, two KIDS evade their FATHER's gushing hose, screaming with laughter.

In another, an OLDER WOMAN busies herself with incredibly colourful flowers.

In a driveway, a MOTHER observes as a van lets down her SON in a wheelchair. She makes to remove him from the contraption. Shaun tries to watch this unfold, but the bus never lingers.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jason absorbed in his video game. A pack of chips lies next to him, unopened. A key turns in a lock and Shaun enters the house, coming into the room. He points at the chips.

SHAUN
Can I have one?

JASON
No. You eat one chip and then it's just air in a bag.

SHAUN
Well, I'm sorry, but-

Shaun swipes the bag. He opens it before Jason can react, pausing his game.

JASON
Dickhead!

Shaun takes out a chip and pops it in his mouth. He chews, wincing. Jason glowers at him. Then:

JASON (CONT'D)
What happened to your lip?

Shaun shoves out his lip, looking down at it. It's become very noticeably swollen. He shrugs, setting the bag on the table.

SHAUN
Reed McGowan hit me.

JASON
Reed McGowan? The guy who punches brick walls for fun?

SHAUN
That's the one.

JASON
Stupid.

SHAUN
Me or Reed?

JASON
You, obviously. Only a complete moron would try to fight him. You must've wanted to kill yourself.

SHAUN
I didn't try to fight him. I just said he didn't have to be afraid of his small penis.

Jason's mouth practically hangs open.

JASON
You told Reed McGowan he had a tiny dick?

SHAUN
A small penis.

JASON
A razor up the wrist would've probably hurt less. Are you sure you're not a ghost?

KIRIEL (V.O.)
I don't know what I am. A kind of living corpse?

Jason gets up, stretches, makes for the bathroom.

SHAUN
Hey, you want to come with me to
Bailey's later?

Jason continues down the hall.

JASON
(laughs darkly)
So you two can dissect me?

SHAUN
No. He got Tectonic Warriors 2, and
I thought you would want to play
it.

Jason slows in his tracks. But disappears into the bathroom.

Alone, Shaun grabs another chip from the bag. The tattered red folder from earlier, marked ENGLISH, sits beneath a GAME MANUAL. Curious, Shaun opens it.

He finds incomplete worksheets and tests with poor grades, all with the name JASON SIMMONS. A teacher's note in red pen reads DID YOU EVEN READ THE BOOK??

A flush from inside the bathroom. Shaun closes the folder. Jason walks back into the living room, contemplative.

JASON
I guess I might go with you to
Bailey's.

EXT. BAILEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Shaun and Jason walk up to another bungalow. Shaun knocks on the door, then nudges Jason's shoulder.

SHAUN
Are you nervous?

JASON
(defensive)
No.

SHAUN
We're just playing video games.

JASON
I'm not nervous, oh my god!

The door opens on MRS. DARNELL, forties.

MRS. DARNELL
(apprehensive)
Oh, hello, Shaun.

SHAUN
Good evening, Mrs. Darnell. You
look nice today.

Mrs. Darnell's taken aback.

MRS. DARNELL
 Thank you. You do, too. I don't
 think I've seen you in actual
 colours.

SHAUN
 I figured it was time for a change.

She's warming up to him.

MRS. DARNELL
 Bailey's upstairs.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE/BAILEY'S ROOM - DAY

Throw-around clothes and a plethora of taped-up band posters.
 A TV loads up the logo for Tectonic Warriors 2, triumphant
 music fading up.

Bailey sits on his bed, taking in the sight of Shaun and
 Jason in the doorway. He's wary.

BAILEY
 (re: Jason)
 You actually brought him?

SHAUN
 I wasn't kidding. Jason plays the
 original game everyday like it's
 some religious obligation.

Jason elbows Shaun in the side. Bailey laughs and hands Jason
 a controller.

BAILEY
 (to Jason)
 If that's the case, then you should
 know how much of a bitch it is
 trying to load up your stamina.

JASON
 It's the worst. I was hoping they'd
 fix it in an update, but they
 probably saved it for the sequel.
 Which is a dick move.

Jason takes off his hoodie and joins Bailey on the bed.

BAILEY
 It's all about money. But we'll
 find out, won't we?

Bailey points to an extra controller.

BAILEY (CONT'D)
 (to Shaun)
 You aren't playing?

SHAUN
 I think I'm more of an observer.

Shaun spots a stack of manga books.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 Actually, I want to look at these.

BAILEY
 I thought you hated manga. Oh wait,
 nevermind, this is the new Shaun
 Simmons.

SHAUN
 Shut up. I'll join you guys later.

Shaun takes a book from Bailey's stack and peruses it. His eyes take in the smooth and jittery lines, the explosive colours, the dramatic proportions and expressions.

BAILEY (O.S.)
 (impressed)
 Dude.

Shaun looks over: Bailey and Jason are bowled over as the game's music blares and graphics appear.

JASON
 This is so much better already.

Shaun smiles at them, then moves to Bailey's open closet. He tilts out a jacket and smells it.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 I wondered if you could identify a
 person by a smell. Lane Henneberger
 smelled of citrus. Bailey smelled
 faintly of pot.

Shaun looks behind the jacket at a small box in the closet's corner.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 Probably because he kept his stash
 near his clothes. Not a good idea.

He moves to Bailey's dresser. Taped to its mirror is a strip of mall snapshots: Bailey and Shaun, middle school-aged, striking crazy poses.

Shaun chuckles, then his laughter vanishes.

He looks back at Bailey and Jason. They're deep into playing.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 I didn't want to feel guilt for
 Shaun. I didn't want to feel grief
 for him either. I'd done him a
 favour, taking away that moment of
 utter agony.

Shaun goes and sits cross-legged on the floor in front of them. An explosion sounds: Jason snickers.

BAILEY
 (re: Jason)
 Holy shit. You're no joke.

The game washes all three of them in garish colours. Bailey and Jason look like zombies, working their thumbs like mad. Shaun simply sits in the middle, distant.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
But what I'd left everyone else
with is empty space.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Shaun, Jason, and Dawn sit at a table with dinner laid out. Shaun devours his meal. Between Dawn and Jason, a tension.

DAWN
(to Jason)
You could've told me where you
were. I was thinking the worst.
Maybe that was foolish of me.

SHAUN
Everything was fine.

DAWN
(to Shaun)
Well, I knew you were at Bailey's.
(to Jason)
Where were you?

JASON
I was with Shaun.

DAWN
What?

SHAUN
Jason came with me to Bailey's. I
invited him over because Bailey had
gotten the new Tectonic Warriors
and it seemed obvious to bring
Jason along.

Dawn takes this in.

DAWN
You guys were together? In the same
place? Without winding up dead?

JASON
Crazy, isn't it?

SHAUN
(mouth full)
Everything was fine.

CUT TO:

Post-dinner. Jason's left. Shaun collects the dishes and Dawn can't believe it.

DAWN
Who is this angel that's suddenly
replaced my son?

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Lady, you have no idea.

DAWN
I actually have to sit down from
this shock.

She takes a seat at the table.

DAWN (CONT'D)
Really, it's the office. They have
me running around all day, taking
care of other people's messes.

She lights a cigarette, stressed. Shaun wrinkles his nose at
the smell.

DAWN (CONT'D)
I know. I keep saying I'll quit,
but everyday, there's another
hurdle and-and you just need
something to fall back on. I'll
start looking into late-night yoga
classes.

Shaun goes into the kitchen with the plates. The SOUND of the
dishwasher starting up. He returns.

SHAUN
I love the sound that thing makes.
The dishwasher.

DAWN
You never use it, so it must be a
new thing.

A silence. Shaun yawns and jerks a thumb at his bedroom.

SHAUN
I think I'll head off for sleep
now. School in the morning.

DAWN
Hey, wait.

He does. Dawn stubs out her cigarette in an ashtray.

DAWN (CONT'D)
That was really nice of you, Shaun.
Taking Jason with you. Especially
with how hard it is for him to make
friends.
(sighs)
I mean, we've had our little fights
here and there, you and I.
Especially with the pot situation.
And God knows you could do better
in school.

(MORE)

DAWN (CONT'D)

And you can at least apply for a job sometime, in the near future-

Dawn senses herself getting off-track.

DAWN (CONT'D)

But really, you're a good kid. And that's all that I really ask of you. To be good.

Shaun looks both heartened and dismayed.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

I wanted so badly to tell her that I wasn't Shaun. That he was dead. But I couldn't ruin it. You have to understand that.

He lays a hand on her shoulder. Dawn smiles at the touch, and after a moment, lays her hand over his, gripping his fingers.

SHAUN

I love you, mom.

DAWN

I love you, too, baby.

INT. SHAUN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Shaun lies on his bed, stricken. His mobile phone buzzes and the screen goes bright with a message from Bailey.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

Instant messaging. I always thought it was a pitiful substitute for talking in person. But it was part of Shaun's existence. And in that moment, it kind of felt like necessary escapism.

A little at ease, Shaun grabs the device and taps in his password, opening the message.

Bailey: *hows ur face?*

Shaun types back: *still sore. but fine.*

Bailey responds: *cool. whatre u doing?*

Shaun types: *thinking.* But before he can send it-

An ALERT pops up over their conversation. New message. Confused, Shaun taps it and is taken to a different screen. A single text awaits him. The number: 000-0000.

000-0000: *Kiriell, you are trespassing in direct contravention of the Creator's wishes. This is a warning: Return to your duties or you will be punished.*

Shaun stops breathing. He types: *who is this?* Sends it.

Little bubbles inform him a response is coming.

000-0000: *You must return to your duties immediately.*

Shaun: *Is this the Creator Himself?*

Shaun waits anxiously for an answer. He tries again.

Shaun: *With whom am I speaking?*

No little bubbles. A mix of fear and anxiety in his face.

SHAUN
(muttering)
Come on, come on.

His message is left on READ. Shaun sighs. A text from Bailey appears: *r u still there?*

Shaun goes back to their conversation. He types: *gtg.*

CUT TO:

Later in the night. The moon casts light on Shaun's face. He lies in his bedsheets, ruminating.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
They'd have to drag me out of
there, I thought.
(pause)
But then I realized they would do
it anyway.

Desperate, Shaun rises, standing in a T-shirt and boxers. He runs his hands all over his arms, his legs, his face. Wanting to cling to every inch of himself.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
It wasn't my body. But it felt like
it was.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

In the shadows, Shaun moves down a row of pictures: him and Jason at younger ages.

They're in Disneyland or in the backyard, building a snowman. They're at birthday parties, shoving cake in each other's faces. They're on their first days of school, looking sullen.

Dawn is with them, smiling as they blow out candles; as they all sled down a snowy hill. In one, she kisses a newborn Shaun, lying wearily in a hospital bed.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
It wasn't my life.
(pause)
But I felt like I could truly slip
into it.
(MORE)

KIRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 I mean, yes, it was Shaun's life,
 but, if I'm allowed to judge, it
 wasn't like he was doing a good job
 with it.
 (pause)
 I felt that I could do better. I
 could be Shaun, I thought.

Shaun comes to the last picture. It's an old photo of him and Jason sitting on the shoulders of a fatherly MAN. Shaun stares at it with intensity.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 But I would always be distant from
 everything.

He takes the picture and peers closely at the man.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 I would know the shape of things,
 but I would never be able to fill
 them in.

Slowly, he puts the picture back in its place.

FADE TO BLACK:

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 And so I realized I could never be
 Shaun.

TITLE CARD:
...and the evening and the morning were the second day...

BLACK SCREEN

Eyes blink open. We see sunlight filtering through the curtains of Shaun's room.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/SHAUN'S ROOM - DAY

Shaun sits up with a start, wiping sleep from his eyes. Dried drool runs from his mouth to his chin. He touches his face, relief bubbling under the surface.

SHAUN
 I'm still here.

Peanut's perched on a dresser, locking eyes with him.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 (to Peanut)
I'm still here. Maybe they didn't
 find out. Maybe they'll never find
 out. I mean, this isn't a
 possession, per se.

Peanut makes a low, hissing noise.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 But you already know that. You're a sharp cat.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dawn, dressed for work, fixes herself a cup of coffee. Shaun enters with a smile, taking in the light of morning. She turns around with her cup and sees him-STARTLES.

DAWN
 Oh, God, Shaun-you scared me!
 You're never up this early.

SHAUN
 (transfixed)
 Mornings are so golden.

DAWN
 (chuckles)
 I knew you'd forgotten what sunrise looks like.

She checks her mobile phone, getting ready to depart.

DAWN (CONT'D)
 Did you have a bad dream? I thought I heard you calling you out in your sleep.

SHAUN
 Really? What was I saying?

DAWN
 Something like "No, don't take me!"

SHAUN
 Uh, no. No bad dreams. I slept very well actually.

DAWN
 That's good. Listen, I won't be back until six so make sure Jason takes his meds.

SHAUN
 Sure thing.

DAWN
 Wow. No groaning.

She kisses Shaun on the forehead.

DAWN (CONT'D)
 Someone's growing up. Have a good day, all right?

SHAUN
 You too.

Dawn leaves. Shaun contemplates.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
She wouldn't be home until six.

A slight smirk.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Enough time for sexual intercourse.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Shaun looks out a window, charged with erotic thought.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Lane Henneberger didn't know what was coming. Full knowledge of the Kama Sutra was at my disposal. Not only would she be fulfilling my desires-I'd be fulfilling hers.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL/ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

An air of tediousness. MR. COLLINS, 50s, bone-dry, lectures his sleepy class, THE CRUCIBLE scrawled on the board. Shaun taps his foot repeatedly, frowning.

CUT TO:

Students exiting the class. Before Shaun leaves-

MR. COLLINS (O.S.)
Shaun Simmons?

Annoyed, Shaun joins Mr. Collins at his desk.

SHAUN
Mr. Collins, I really have to-

MR. COLLINS
I wanted to talk to you about yesterday's quiz.

He whips out a sheet with the name SHAUN SIMMONS. Written on the top in red pen: 100?

MR. COLLINS (CONT'D)
Care to explain?

SHAUN
(pause)
Is that cause for concern?

MR. COLLINS
I think so. When you've barely been managing a D average this whole year.

SHAUN
A change of studying habits?

MR. COLLINS
More like cheating. I'm moving you away from Mindy Parsons. Shaun, cheating doesn't help anyone in the long run.

SHAUN
Fine. Do whatever you deem fit. I just really need to go now.

Shaun rushes out of the classroom. Mr. Collins looks after him, disapproving.

INT. HALLWAY LOCKERS - DAY

Lane stands outside her locker, waiting, but it seems hopeless. Then Shaun appears, almost running. They regard each other with a kind of awkward cheerfulness.

SHAUN
(breathing hard)
Hi.

Lane looks entertained.

LANE
Hi.

SHAUN
I, uh, wanted to resume that whole asking out thing.

LANE
You're pretty direct.

SHAUN
Well, let's say I like to live in the moment. You just don't know how long you've got, you know?

LANE
I guess that's true. So where do you want to take me out?

SHAUN
Oh, um. It's kind of changed into a taking in.

She's mildly confused.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
You see, I'd love to take you out. But I'm currently failing Chemistry, and if I don't pass this test this coming Wednesday, they're probably putting me in summer school. And since you're so good at it-

LANE
You want me to tutor you.

SHAUN
If you can. I could really use the help. You can come over to my house after school today.

LANE
Sure. Are your parents going to be there?

SHAUN
Well, my dad doesn't live with us. And my mom won't be back from work until six. So it'll just be you and me. Together. Alone. I mean, my brother'll be there, but he'll be too preoccupied with his game, so-

Lane looks unsure.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
(off her look)
Is that a problem?

LANE
I mean, I'd love to help you study. But my grandma's super-strict about there being an adult in the house when I'm at anyone's place.

SHAUN
(deflated)
Oh.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
A damn oversight.

LANE
She's like monstrously strict. Maybe you can come over to my place?

KIRIEL (V.O.)
But how we would sex with your monstrous grandmother there?

SHAUN
Or-maybe-we can go over to Bailey's.

LANE
(perplexed)
Bailey Darnell?

SHAUN
Yeah. He'd totally be down with it. He's bad in Chem, too, so it'd be like a hospice. And his mom would be there.

LANE
And would she be okay with it?

SHAUN
She lets me over all the time. What difference is another person? And she'd love that you'd be helping us out. I could come get you at 3:30 and we'll walk over.

LANE
(considers)
Okay. I'll have to check. And as long as Bailey's cool with it.

BAILEY (PRELAP)
Lane Henneberger?

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Bailey and Shaun sitting opposite each other with their lunches. Bailey struggles to process.

BAILEY
You invited her to my house?

SHAUN
Yeah.

BAILEY
Without asking me? Why would you do that?

SHAUN
She thinks she's coming over to tutor us in Chem, but-

BAILEY
But what?

SHAUN
I'm going to have sex with her.

Bailey nearly chokes on his chocolate milk.

BAILEY
You're having sex with Lane Henneberger?
(pause)
At my house? Where do you think you're going to do it? In my fucking bed?

SHAUN
Well, if you'd be so accommodating.

BAILEY
I said it before, but-who the fuck are you? I mean, Lane Henneberger?
(MORE)

BAILEY (CONT'D)
You said she smells like old
people.

SHAUN
Lane is actually quite attractive.
And nice. She volunteers. She works
with animals. And she's had a crush
on Shaun-I mean, me for years.

BAILEY
I know. You called her obsessed.

Shaun tries to another tactic.

SHAUN
And who better to lose your
virginity to? I want to know what
it's like. I want to know how it
feels when my penis enters a vagina-

BAILEY
Fuck, dude!

SHAUN
-and all I'm asking is for the
space, the privacy.

BAILEY
Then do it at your own place!

SHAUN
My mom won't be there.

BAILEY
Perfect. You guys can screw each
other's brains out.

SHAUN
She said her grandma's strict about
there being an adult. And my mom
won't be home until it's too late.
Besides, I already told her it was
happening at your place.

BAILEY
Which was really fucked up of you.
I mean, my mom's going be there.

SHAUN
She'll be too busy watching soaps.
And you can keep playing your video
games. We'll just be in your older
sister's room. She doesn't need it
if she's in college. Come on, it's
the perfect set-up.

Bailey turns his head away. Possibly considering.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
Bailey, please. I'm asking as a
friend.

(MORE)

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 We've been comrades since
 kindergarten. And your help is kind
 of imperative.

BAILEY
 (pause)
 Ok, New Shaun. Your first time'll
 be with a girl who smells like a
 retirement home.

SHAUN
 Great. We set it up for 3:30.

A distant CLATTER of trays catches their attention. Shaun and
 Bailey look over their shoulders at-

Reed McGowan, incensed, punching a STUDENT without cease. The
 whole cafeteria is enthralled. A couple of MALE TEACHERS rush
 to pull them apart. Hatred flashes in Reed's eyes.

REED
 Fuck you! Fuck you!

They're both led away, albeit with difficulty. Reed's
 opponent drips blood from his face.

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Shaun enters, goes to the SECRETARY's desk.

SHAUN
 Hi, is Mrs. Snow available?

SECRETARY
 Not at the moment, but you can wait
 for her over there.

She points OFFSCREEN. Shaun follows her direction to-

A kind of makeshift waiting area with magazines and
 pamphlets. In the row of chairs sits Reed, staring ahead with
 a simmering anger. Shaun takes the seat next to him.

SHAUN
 (tentatively friendly)
 Boxing as a hobby must really come
 in handy.

No response.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 With my swollen lip and that kid's
 probably broken nose, you can
 really do some damage when
 necessary. It's that right hook.
 Like a snake.

No response.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 I want to apologize for what I said
 yesterday about your penis. It was
 a personal thing, and I shouldn't
 have brought it up.

Reed fixes him with a death stare.

REED
 You really want me to end your
 life, don't you?

SHAUN
 (lightly chuckles)
 I'm kind of past that, I think.

Reed holds his look.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 Now, Reed, I don't mean to seem all
 Disney or anything, but you can do
 a lot more than being angry at
 everything. I was exactly in the
 same place as you-bored,
 frustrated, constantly feeling
 inept.

(becoming personal)
 Having no one acknowledge your
 years and years of effort. Not one
 slightest token of gratitude. Just
 years of complete obscurity. And it
 makes you angry. It makes you
 fucking mental. You want to destroy
 everything-because only then would
 they notice you. But you can't be
 angry, I think. You can't be.
 There's so much here. There's so
 much right here in front of us. And
 we have to enjoy it while we can.

Reed just stares at him-then leans back in his seat.

REED
 You're a fucking freak.

SHAUN
 (pause)
 You're very right.

He pats Reed's shoulder, standing to go.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 You're so very right.

Reed shrugs off his hand. Shaun passes the Receptionist.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 (to Receptionist)
 I don't need her anymore.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/FRONT HALL - DAY

Shaun coming in. Looks at the crucifix.

SHAUN
 (to crucifix,
 confessional)
 I know I don't belong here. I know
 what I'm doing is wrong. But you've
 wrung me through the absolute
 worst, you know? I've seen such
 awful things. Very, very spooky
 shit. Hell is no fun place. And I
 deserve to be there.
 (slight pause)
 I mean, I'd say that's subjective.
 But nonetheless, I disobeyed you.

He sighs, exasperated. Tears well in his eyes.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 I just wanted a break. I've seen
 flesh flayed since the dawn of man.
 I've heard their screams. It's like
 drills in the ears all the fucking
 time. And I only it's like that
 because I've been here. I'm finally
 able to convey what it physically
 feels like.

He gestures to his setting.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
 You've done so much. I just hope
 you aren't mad with me.

JASON (O.S.)
 Shaun?

Shaun wipes his face and walks down the hallway.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - DAY

A pre-teen boy wasteland: wrestling posters, video games,
 action figures. Shaun stands in threshold. Jason regards him,
 impassive. But there's a kind of eagerness within him.

JASON
 Who were you talking to?

SHAUN
 Ah-no one.

JASON
 Was it Bailey?

SHAUN
 No.

JASON
You're going over his house later,
right?

On Shaun: a fuse is lit.

SHAUN
Oh, yeah.

JASON
Is he going to play Tectonic
Warriors 2?

SHAUN
Probably. I have to get ready-

JASON
Wait.

SHAUN
What?

JASON
Can I-can I come with?

Shaun closes his eyes, sighing.

SHAUN
Not today. I have something
important to do.

Jason is covertly wounded. Still, a sliver of hope.

JASON
Maybe tomorrow?

SHAUN
(exasperated)
Truthfully, there might not be a
tomorrow. Or a next day. I hate to
say it, but I don't want to lie you
either, Jason. And anyway, you're
failing English. Maybe you should
start reading books instead of
yelling into headsets. Seems more
productive than living a fantasy.

Jason strides up and slams his door in Shaun's face. A heavy
silence.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
(mutters)
Living a fantasy.

As he walks up the hall-

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Irony. It leaves a little sting.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Shaun observes himself in the mirror. Takes a comb and rakes it through his hair. Pops the collars of his shirt. Checks himself for dots of lint. He fixes his sleeves—and notices his wristwatch. 3:54.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Shaun skateboards in a hurry. Certainly not the expert anymore.

EXT. LANE'S HOUSE - DAY

A small, cosy two-storey. Shaun races up the steps and nearly bangs on the screen door, his heart racing. A silence settles. Anxious, he checks his watch. 4:21.

He knocks firmly again. The door unlocks and the face of LANE'S GRANDMOTHER, late-sixties, emerges in the screen.

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER

(stern)
Yes?

SHAUN

Um, hi, my name is Shaun. Shaun Simmons. I was supposed to come pick your up granddaughter Lane at 3:30 so she could help me study for Chemistry.
(an afterthought)
Under parental supervision.

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER

Lane left nearly an hour again with a different boy.

SHAUN

What boy?

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER

Well, she said she was waiting for a Shaun. I assume that's you. When it was getting on four, she got picked up by a boy and his mother. I guess he needed tutoring, too.

Shaun connects the pieces in his head. He grins at her.

SHAUN

Okay, okay. Thank you.

As he leaves her doorstep-

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER

Punctuality, young man. Remember that. Tardiness is one of the seven deadly sins.

SHAUN
 (to himself)
 No, it fucking isn't.

EXT. BAILEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Shaun knocks on the front door, a bit sweaty. Mrs. Darnell answers.

MRS. DARNELL
 Shaun.

SHAUN
 Is Bailey here?

MRS. DARNELL
 Of course. He's upstairs. Are you okay? You look flustered.

SHAUN
 I'm fine. Is he with a girl?

MRS. DARNELL
 Uh, yes. They're both upstairs. She's helping Bailey with Chem-

But Shaun moves past her before she can finish.

INT. BAILEY'S HOUSE/BAILEY'S ROOM - DAY

The door opens on: Bailey and Lane playing Tectonic Warriors 2.

BAILEY
 You totally kicked that troll's ass.

LANE
 You have to collect the rocks. What I notice about you boys is that you never take the time to explore the whole map. Kind of like how you are with women.

Shaun waits in the doorway, unnoticed. An explosion in the game; Lane and Bailey let out a cry of anguish.

BAILEY
 Fuck, we woke the dragon.

LANE
 Remember you got that pan flute.

Finally, Shaun coughs. They look at him, gently surprised. Bailey pauses the game.

LANE (CONT'D)
 There you are.

BAILEY
Dude, I almost thought you wouldn't show up.

SHAUN
(gestures to them)
How did this, uh-how did this happen?

LANE
I met up with Bailey after school to confirm things. My grandma needed their number. When you didn't show up, I called and they came and got me.

BAILEY
You look like you ran around a track seven times.

Shaun crosses to Bailey's mirror and fixes himself up. Then faces them again.

SHAUN
(to Lane)
I'm sorry I was late. I got caught up in a few things.

BAILEY
It's fine, really. Lane freaked when she saw TW2 and she really wanted to play.

SHAUN
(to Bailey, a bit sharp)
I was talking to Lane.

LANE
Well, yeah, my grandma hates video games. She thinks they're one of the seven deadly sins or something. Though at her rate, there has to be, like, five hundred of them.

SHAUN
No kidding. Well, I'm here now. Are we-are we studying or-?

LANE
Oh, yeah, yeah. Do you mind if Bailey and I just try to get this dragon first?

BAILEY
They're vicious fuckers.

SHAUN
(not really)
That's totally fine.

BAILEY
Sweet.

Bailey un-pauses the game, and he and Lane get right back into the action. Shaun goes to sit on the floor in the middle of them. Like before with Bailey and Jason, he looks distant.

LANE
Wait, no! Why'd you run there?

BAILEY
Oh, you'll see.

A moment of silence. Then-EXPLOSION. The dying SOUNDS of a vanquished dragon. A deep-voiced GAME NARRATOR intones-

GAME NARRATOR (V.O.)
Level completed.

Lane looks at Bailey, stunned.

LANE
Wow.

INT. BAILEY'S SISTER'S BEDROOM - DAY

A sparse room with the few clues of a gone teenage girl. Lane sets a notepad and a Chemistry textbook on a desk-then hears the click of the door closing. Turns. Sees Shaun has done it.

SHAUN
It's more quiet. Helps me concentrate better.

As he moves to the desk-

SHAUN (CONT'D)
I think that's the main reason I'm so bad at Chem. The whole classroom setting. I can't figure out the periodic table, and I especially can't figure it out when two guys are making farting noises. Real and not.

Lane giggles. Shaun smiles-a small victory.

LANE
(nodding)
I definitely get what you mean. Kyle Finchley keeps interrupting our Sociology class with his views. Like, sure, there's a space to share your opinions, but we can't go five minutes without him complaining about minorities and feminism.

SHAUN
That sounds terrible. But enough about school. We spend five days a week there.

Lane taps the textbook.

LANE
But we, Shaun Simmons, are studying
Chem. Now, what lesson are you guys
on?

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Hadn't thought about it.

SHAUN
Free-radical polymerization.

LANE
What?

SHAUN
I meant template-directed
synthesis.

LANE
I don't even know what means. Are
you in AP or something?

SHAUN
No. I'm sorry, my head's all
jumbled. No wonder I'm failing.

LANE
Oh my gosh, it's okay. I'm here to
help you.

SHAUN
We're doing covalent bonding.

LANE
Oh, okay. You know about electron
pairs?

SHAUN
Yeah.

Lane sketches it out on the notepad.

LANE
Well, a covalent bond happens when
pairs of electrons share atoms. The
overall goal of the atoms is to
gain stability, so they'll
covalently bond with other atoms.
Then they'll form a full electron
shell.

She looks up from her drawing and finds Shaun staring blankly
at her.

LANE (CONT'D)
I'm not much a teaching type, so
please tell if I'm, like, going
over your head or something.

SHAUN
No, it's just-

He moves a fallen strand of Lane's hair from her face and tucks it behind an ear. Lane blushes.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
-your hair.
(pause)
I still love that colour.

LANE
Thank you.

She taps her eraser on the notepad.

LANE (CONT'D)
But, you know. Covalent bonds.

SHAUN
Sorry. You see? Easily distracted
by pretty things. Another reason
for my incompetence.

LANE
Pretty.

SHAUN
Hm?

LANE
You said pretty.

SHAUN
Oh. I'm sorry.
(pause)
I should have added "very."

They stare at each other. A tender silence. Interrupted by a muffled video game EXPLOSION and-

BAILEY (O.S.)
(muffled)
Fuck!

Lane breaks into laughter.

LANE
Bailey should really be in here. I
thought he needed help, too.

Shaun's face spoils.

SHAUN
Yeah, well, Bailey doesn't care
about this, really.

LANE
But you're his friend. You should
at least try to get him to care.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Were Bailey and I friends?

LANE
I mean, you've guys been together since forever. It seems you two'll be the kind of friends who wind up in the same retirement home.

She chuckles. Shaun doesn't. Lane deflates. Suddenly-

LANE (CONT'D)
Shoot, what time is it?

Shaun checks his watch.

SHAUN
(dismayed)
5:20.

LANE
My grandma wants me back before six. Maybe we can pick up later during a study hall or something.

SHAUN
Sure.
(pause)
Do you mind if I walk you home?

LANE
Are you sure about that? I mean, Bailey's mom can probably drive me-

SHAUN
I want to. We'll make it if we leave now.
(slight pause)
And walk quickly.

Lane considers.

LANE
Ok.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Blue evening light. KIDS racing past on their bicycles. A WOMAN brings her dog into a house. Shaun and Lane walk along the sidewalk.

LANE
It kind of irks me how little we got done.

SHAUN
Yeah, but, at least I got to see you. More intimately. I mean, outside of the school setting.

LANE
Yeah. That was nice. And Bailey let me borrow some of his manga books. I love the Dead Man Rising series.

SHAUN
(a flash of jealousy)
He did, didn't he?
(pause)
Do you think we can do it again? Not the studying thing, but an actual outing? Just you and me? Tomorrow, possibly?

LANE
Tomorrow? God.

SHAUN
What?

LANE
I don't know. It feels like we're moving like there's not even going to be a tomorrow.

SHAUN
There may not be.

LANE
That's just pessimism talking.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Or realism. But that was still up in the air, really.

SHAUN
I just really like seeing you. And I have absolutely nothing to do tomorrow.

LANE
Shaun-

She stops and faces him.

LANE (CONT'D)
There's nothing wrong with waiting.

SHAUN
(doleful)
You're right.

LANE
(pause)
Luckily, though, the retirement home is moving its entertainment night to Saturday. I mean, that's unlucky for them. They love their Elvis. But I'll be free.

SHAUN
Awesome.

Shaun points to the small, cosy two-storey ahead.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
We're here.

LANE
Ah, yes. My little prison.

SHAUN
Well, it's senior year. After school, I'm sure you'll go off and do great things.

Lane smiles, then kisses him on the cheek.

LANE
I'll see you tomorrow. Be here at 4:00 sharp. Don't be late.

SHAUN
I'll get it tattooed on my eyelids.

She runs up the steps and closes the doors. Shaun rubs where she kissed him. Another victory. He turns the other way, glowing, and CRUNCH. Looks beneath his shoes.

A bug lies crushed and splattered on his sole. Shaun regards it solemnly.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/SHAUN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Shaun walks into the threshold and sees Dawn on his bed. She fixes him with a look.

SHAUN
What happened?

DAWN
You forgot to remind Jason about his meds. And, well-

Dawn looks at a wall in Shaun's room. Shaun follows her gaze: EAT SHIT is scrawled on it in large, blocky letters.

DAWN (CONT'D)
I told him to write an apology, but he's been in his room all day. Wouldn't even come out for dinner. Where were you?

SHAUN
Bailey's.

DAWN
Shaun, I may be asking a lot of you, with your cool teenage life and all, but you know how your brother is. He's so alone.

Dawn gets up, makes to leave.

DAWN (CONT'D)
 Yesterday, he was so happy you invited him. He didn't make it obvious, but there was this light behind his eyes. Just help me make it sure it's there.

SHAUN
 What is he doing know?

DAWN
 This may be surprising, but he's actually reading.

As she walks down the hall-

DAWN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (a little laugh)
 I don't what's happening here. It's like I've gone into the Twilight Zone.

INT. JASON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jason sits in a chair, reading, though he seems to hate it immensely. Shaun knocks on his half-open door.

JASON
 Get. Away.

Shaun almost walks away.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 He wasn't my sibling. It wasn't my problem to solve.

But he enters the room, guilty.

JASON
 I said go away.

SHAUN
 I'm sorry.

JASON
 Why are you apologizing to me?

SHAUN
 Because-

JASON
 You never cared about what I did. And you definitely never cared about how I'm feeling. And now all of a sudden you want to be Mother Theresa.

SHAUN
 I realize I've been different-

JASON
We're supposed to hate each other.

SHAUN
I don't hate you. I don't hate you,
Jason.

Jason takes this in. Shaun nods at his book.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
Is that Animal Farm?

JASON
Yeah.

SHAUN
Do you like it?

JASON
That's like asking Hitler if he
wanted to die.

SHAUN
That's a little strong.

Shaun settles himself next to Jason.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
You understand it's an allegory.

JASON
It's just a bunch of animals
talking.

SHAUN
On the surface. Orwell intended for
the animals to represent real-life
figures. The whole thing is a
reflection of a real-life conflict
about Communism. Old Major's the
one who started it-who in real-life
was Karl Marx.

JASON
Oh, wait. He wrote The Communist
something.

SHAUN
Manifesto. Exactly.

A phone down the hall RINGS. Jason looks at Shaun as if with
shared dread.

JASON
Dad.

INT. SHAUN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Shaun looks timid as he brings a home phone to his ear.

SHAUN
Hello?

The voice of Shaun's father, FRANK, forties, is heard.

FRANK (V.O.)
Hey, bud.

SHAUN
Hey-um, Dad.

FRANK (V.O.)
How's it going over there?

SHAUN
(beat)
It's been interesting.

FRANK (V.O.)
Yeah, really? How so?

SHAUN
I can't explain it. Um, how's
Cindy? And the baby?

FRANK (V.O.)
We're doing fine. Cindy says hi.
(beat)
I just-I'm sorry about last
weekend. Something came up.

Silence.

FRANK (V.O.)
You there?

SHAUN
Yes.

FRANK (V.O.)
You're not talking much. Your mom
and Jason both said you've been
acting different. You're not
smoking pot again, right? I thought
we all talked about that.

SHAUN
I'm not.

FRANK (V.O.)
Then what's wrong? Tired?

SHAUN
Yes, that's probably it.

FRANK (V.O.)
All those long nights staying up,
huh? Everything you do catches up
to you.

Shaun takes that personally.

FRANK (V.O.)
Well, let's not make this another
one. I'll come get you and Jason on
Friday around five. I promise.

SHAUN
Okay.

FRANK (V.O.)
Okay. I love you.

SHAUN
I love you too. Dad.

FRANK
Get some sleep, bud.

Shaun hangs up, then looks at his bed.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Dreaded sleep. They'd certainly get
me that night.

CUT TO:

Very late.

In darkness, Shaun sits against a corner, fighting to keep
his eyes open. His head drifts down his chest but he JERKS
up. Shakes off the fatigue.

From somewhere in the room, a VOICE speaks.

VOICE (O.S.)
(low and peevish)
You do not belong here.

Shaun JUMPS. He finds a FIGURE standing in front of the
closed door, large and imposing. The shadows black it out,
but it's shaped like a person.

SHAUN
I know.

FIGURE
You cannot leave your duties
behind. You cannot take off
whenever you feel like it.

Shaun seems to recognize the voice.

SHAUN
Anus?

The Figure sighs.

FIGURE
I told you to stop calling me that.
It's Anius. An-nye-us.

Shaun snickers and goes to turn on the light. The figure is ANIUS, thirties, snooty and dressed in dark clothes.

SHAUN
So they send middle management?

ANIUS
I'm not talking to you until you say it right.

SHAUN
An-nye-us. Happy? What are doing here?

ANIUS
No, the question is: what are you doing here?

SHAUN
I was just going to go to sleep, actually.

ANIUS
Sleep? You don't need sleep. You shouldn't be sleeping at all!

SHAUN
God, with your temper, you should really try it sometime. And I do need sleep. My eyes are killing me. I thought they'd send one of the Big Boys, but since it's just you-

Shaun begins dressing down for bed.

ANIUS
Kiriel, you have to understand the immense seriousness of this situation. Your consequences are unlimited.

Shaun gets into the covers.

SHAUN
I'm sure I can handle whatever they throw at me. I've literally tormented souls.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
My job was to reflect sorrow and guilt. Anus's was to reflect fear and worry. But that was probably very evident.

ANIUS
You're breaking millions of rules. You're supposed to oversee souls.

SHAUN
That's not a rule. That's a custom. Just because I've always done it doesn't mean it was an obligation.

ANIUS
The Creator set us to tasks. Mine
is to oversee the overseers. And
you aren't letting me fulfil my
function.

Anius rears up at him in his bed.

ANIUS (CONT'D)
(pettish)
Which is making me look bad.

Shaun yawns in his face, pointing at his mouth as if bragging
about this action. Anius glares.

SHAUN
What do you mean, the Creator set
us to tasks? He didn't give me one.
I've never even met Him.

ANIUS
Blasphemy.

SHAUN
Blasphemy? Making a plain state of
fact? I've never seen Him, and He's
never spoken to me, so-

ANIUS
You're going to be in so much
trouble.

SHAUN
With who?

ANIUS
The Boss.

SHAUN
It can't be that bad if he sent
you.

ANIUS
Nobody sent me. I came of my
accord.

Shaun registers this.

SHAUN
You mean they haven't even noticed?

ANIUS
This is a warning, Kiriel.

SHAUN
So you were the one texting me.

ANIUS
Listen. They may not have noticed
yet, but they will. And when they
do-

SHAUN
Good night, Anus.

Shaun burrows himself into his bed, shutting his eyes. Anius lets out a sigh of frustration.

ANIUS
Just remember I tried getting you back. That I was actually doing my duty. That I was actually trying to help you.

SHAUN
Turn out the lights before you go, would you? I'm trying to sleep. I have school in the morning.

Anius leaves his bedside, irritated. The lights snap off. Then Shaun opens his eyes, finding himself alone in the room. He stares up at the ceiling.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
The Creator hadn't even noticed I was gone. He hadn't felt compelled to protect my place in Hell, my identity.
(pause)
At least Shaun Simmons would've been missed.

Shaun turns over in bed and stares at the night sky in the window.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Maybe my job was superfluous. Maybe I wasn't even supposed to be there. Maybe the Creator didn't care about transgressions and rebellions.

FADE TO BLACK:

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Or maybe He just didn't care about me.

TITLE CARD:
...and the evening and the morning were the last day...

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

A peaceful quiet enfolds the neighbourhood. The sun rises over treetops and cable dishes.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/SHAUN'S ROOM - DAY

CLOSEUP of Shaun's face. He's been awake all night.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dressed for school, Shaun and Jason sit on the couch, eating cereal together as they watch CARTOONS on TV.

JASON
So Napoleon is Stalin, right?

SHAUN
Yes.

JASON
And Mr. Jones is Tsar Nicholas.

SHAUN
The second.

JASON
Shit.

SHAUN
It's okay. Mrs. Williams gives a word bank for the final because she's too lazy to come up with a new format. So it should be obvious.

An exaggerated SCREAM from the cartoon. Both of them crack up. Milk runs from Shaun's nose and Jason notices.

JASON
Dude!

They laugh some more, then settle down.

JASON (CONT'D)
Dad told you he's picking us up on Friday?

SHAUN
Yeah.

JASON
How do you feel about it?

SHAUN
I don't know. How do you feel about it?

JASON
I don't know, either. At least he hasn't completely forgotten us, I guess. It'll be really awkward, though, having us there. Especially with Cindy and the baby. We'll be like total strangers.

He looks to Shaun.

JASON (CONT'D)
 But you and me'll be together. So
 it won't suck that much.

Shaun takes this in. Eats his cereal quietly.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL/ART CLASS - DAY

Mrs. Keyes and STUDENTS act as audience for Shaun as he stands in front of a large white canvas. A single, thick black line leads across it horizontally, but as it reaches the right side, the line becomes jagged and wispy.

SHAUN
 Where my clay sculpture was an
 expression of experience itself,
 this, I think, shows the
 uncertainty of it. We go through
 things with the feeling that maybe,
 just maybe, it might go on forever.
 But something always throws it off.

A bell RINGS and the students disperse. Mrs. Keyes nears Shaun.

MRS. KEYES
 Shaun, this is tremendous
 improvement for someone who used to
 draw breasts in Microsoft Paint. I
 might even enter it in the college
 art show.

SHAUN
 I would appreciate that. But I
 don't think it's something to
 display.

MRS. KEYES
 Why not?

SHAUN
 It's just a line.

He grabs his bag and goes, leaving her with that.

INT. BOYS' LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Bailey and Shaun change out of gym clothes.

BAILEY
 Sorry you didn't score. But, if I'm
 being honest, I kind of knew it
 wouldn't work out all along.

SHAUN
 How would you know that?

BAILEY
 Lane just doesn't seem like the
 kind of girl who'll do it-
 (snaps his fingers)
 -like that.

SHAUN
 The two of us are going out later
 today, so we'll see for sure. And I
 know a lot about her. She's been
 thinking about it for years.

BAILEY
 That's kind of wicked, though,
 isn't it? Putting her through all
 this just to, you know, fuck.

SHAUN
 Why do you care about it?

BAILEY
 What do you mean?

SHAUN
 Yesterday, you couldn't believe I
 wanted to have sex with her. And
 now you care about what happens to
 her.

BAILEY
 All we did was play a video game.

SHAUN
 And you let her borrow some books.

BAILEY
 Yeah. I had no idea she liked Dead
 Man Rising. Anyway, what are you
 trying to say?

SHAUN
 (re: gym clothes)
 I hate basketball shorts. They feel
 so flimsy.

BAILEY
 You think I'm trying to steal her
 or something?

SHAUN
 No. I just think your interference
 is another obstacle in what's
 already a trying mission.

BAILEY
 (scoffs)
 Mission. You know Lane is a person,
 right? That she has actual feelings
 and shit?

SHAUN
 Obviously.

BAILEY
Then how do you think she'll feel
when she finds out you just wanted
to get in her pants?

Shaun considers it.

SHAUN
That her dreams have to life.

BAILEY
Shaun, we've done some pretty
fucked up shit together. But you're
an asshole.

SHAUN
Well, I want to have sex with her.
But it's not just that. She has
pretty hair. It's definitely like
toffee. And she smells like citrus.
And she has this sweet, lilting
voice. And she likes me. She's
liked me all these years and I've
never noticed.

BAILEY
What are you talking about?

SHAUN
Lane and I are going to make love.

Bailey raises a brow. Searches to say something. But he
closes his gym locker and leaves. Shaun doesn't notice,
though: he looks internally conflicted.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
All of a sudden, Lane Henneberger
had taken on a new meaning. I could
fill in the shape of sexual
experience with passion, with lust-

He slams his locker shut.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
-with love.

SHAUN
(to himself)
Fuck.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The final bell RINGS. Scores of STUDENTS leave. Shaun comes
out and spots Bailey slapping his skateboard on the pavement
and starting to ride off.

SHAUN
Bailey!

He pushes the throng and runs to catch up.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

Bailey!

Bailey swerves around.

BAILEY

What do you want?

SHAUN

Thank you so much for helping me.
For being there. I mean, you've
been there since day one. So to
speak.

BAILEY

Okay?

SHAUN

And I just really value our
friendship.

BAILEY

But that's the thing.

(beat)

I don't want to be friends anymore.
I truly don't know you, Shaun
Simmons.

SHAUN

You're just saying that because
you're angry.

BAILEY

Yeah. I am fucking angry. Ever
since senior year started,
everyone's changed. I don't know
anyone anymore. At least I thought
I had you, man, but now that's
gone, too.

He rides off on his board.

SHAUN

(calling)

Bailey!

BAILEY

Have fun with whatever the fuck
you're doing.

SHAUN

Bailey!

BAILEY

I don't know you!

Bailey is a distant figure receding. Shaun watches him with something like missing in his eyes. Until he registers the grind of wheels: YELLOW SCHOOL BUSES pulling away from the school. His eyes widen.

SHAUN

Shit!

Shaun starts sprinting for the buses, but they never slow, going off on their routes. His run dissolves into dejected walking.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Shaun walks home, his hands in his pockets. A CLATTERING BELL brings his attention to: a SMALL CHURCH. Its magisterial shape looms over him.

After a moment of deliberation, he crosses the street, heading for its open doors.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Dark and unexpectedly cavernous. Its walls extend into an elaborately arched ceiling. Light wells in its stained-glass windows: they twinkle like crystals. The building is silent—a resonating silence—and empty.

Except for Shaun. He stands in the doorway, silhouetted, waiting like a diver on the edge of a board. Then he takes a step inside.

His shoes echo as he walks down the aisle, observing the religious images, the architecture.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

Was it a sanctuary? Was it a holy place?

Shaun sits in a pew.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

Yes and no. This was not the Creator's dwelling. But its air was leaden with the hopes, prayers, loves, and despairs of generations.

He takes a HOLY BIBLE from the seat pocket.

KIRIEL (V.O.)

And that almost gave it the immensity of the Creator Himself.

(beat)

It felt comfortable.

He flips through the Bible, smirking at some of the writings. Until he lands on a specific page. Affected.

SHAUN

(reading)

"One day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them.

(MORE)

SHAUN (CONT'D)

The Lord said to Satan, 'Where have you come from?' Satan answered the Lord, 'From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it.'

KIRIEL (V.O.)

I couldn't understand how that conversation split them into Good and Evil.

Shaun sees a crucifix in the front of the room, much fancier than the one in the Simmons house. He puts the Bible aside, stands, and advances upon it.

SHAUN

Am I joke? A mistake? A failure of free will?

(pause)

For years, I've reflected the sorrow of others, to the point where my own has been blunted, deadened.

(pause)

I only feel it when I remember you'll never turn your face to me, Creator.

He holds his arms up.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

Well, I'm here now. If you want to speak to me personally, one on one, this is where I am.

(pause, a plea)

Speak to me.

Deafening silence. Shaun's arms fall to his sides.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

I just thought I'd try.

He exits.

INT. SHAUN'S HOUSE/FRONT HALL - DAY

Shaun comes in, avoiding sight of the crucifix. The EXPLOSIONS of Tectonic Warriors 2 sounds, followed by the triumphant cries of TWO BOYS. Shaun peers around the corner-

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Seen from Shaun's vantage point, JASON and another BOY, 12, are absorbed with the video game. A comradeship between them.

JASON

You fucking owned that Dune Man.

BOY
Yeah, but you saved the rubies.
Those helped us keep up stamina.

JASON
They finally made that easier.

BOY
Right?

INT. SHAUN'S ROOM - DAY

Shaun enters and finds Peanut curled on his bed. At the sight of Shaun, the cat rises in alarm. They hold a look, in a kind of stand-off.

Then Shaun reaches out a hand. Walks to the bed. Peanut stiffens with his every step.

Close enough, Shaun's fingers are an inch from Peanut's face. The cat sniffs his fingertips. Then curls its head into his palm, nudging against his skin.

Shaun is taken aback. He scratches behind Peanut's ear and the cat purrs.

SHAUN
You are as soft as you look.

His wristwatch BEEPS and he checks the time.

3:25.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Changed into a different shirt, Shaun combs his hair and studies himself meticulously. Grabs his cologne and sprays it all over himself. Then a sharp nod: good to go.

EXT. LANE'S HOUSE - DAY

Shaun walks up to the cosy two-storey and knocks politely at the screen door. The door behind it opens on Lane's Grandmother. She's faintly disapproving.

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER
Yes?

SHAUN
I'm here for Lane.

Lane's Grandmother checks a wall inside.

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER
Oh, yes, you're the boy. Didn't think it was you, since it's exactly four o'clock on the dot.

SHAUN
I took in what you said about
punctuality. I'm as scared as
hellfire as anyone else.

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER
That's very sensible of you.

Lane appears behind her, rushing up, embarrassed. She opens
the screen door and Shaun takes her in: makeup, hair styled,
a sundress. In his eyes, she glows.

LANE
Okay, Grandma, I'll be back before
seven.

LANE'S GRANDMOTHER
I'll know because that's when
Jeopardy comes on.

Lane closes the door and looks at Shaun, shaking her head.

LANE
She's asleep by the time Jeopardy
comes on.

They stand before each other on the steps.

SHAUN
You look great.

LANE
Thank you. Haven't worn a dress in
forever. Feels weird having wind on
your legs.

SHAUN
Wind feels good, though.

LANE
Yeah, wind is nice. In fact, wind
is telling me you put on a ton of
cologne.

She laughs as she bursts into a SNEEZE. Shaun watches this.

SHAUN
You sneezed.

LANE
Yeah. I have a sensitive nose.

SHAUN
It was a bursting sound with all
these little particles flying out.

Lane chuckles.

LANE
Yeah, that's what a sneeze is.

SHAUN
 It's interesting.
 (catches himself)
 Sorry. What do you want to do?

LANE
 I have no idea. I've never been on
 an actual date before-
 (catches herself)
 If that's what this is. A date.

SHAUN
 I want it to be.

She blushes.

LANE
 Well, since, this is an official
 date, there's always the
 traditional fare.

SHAUN
 What's that?

LANE
 Oh, you know.

SHAUN
 I really don't. Enlighten me. I've
 never been on a date.

LANE
 The movies, silly.

SHAUN
 The movies. Okay. Movies. Yeah,
 that sounds perfect.

LANE
 Cool. There's this place within
 walking distance. But I don't think
 you'd be down for it.

SHAUN
 Why?

LANE
 They only show silent movies.

SHAUN
 Cool. I've never seen a silent
 movie.

LANE
 But would you want to?

SHAUN
 Why not?

LANE
 I don't know. A lot of people think
 they're boring.

SHAUN
Well, it might sound smug and
obnoxious of me, but I am earnestly
not like other people.

INT. SILENT MOVIE THEATRE - DAY

Shaun and Lane sit before the huge silver screen, the lights dark. The theatre's sparsely populated. Black-and-white images flicker over them as a PIANIST provides live musical accompaniment.

Lane flashes a look at Shaun. He's utterly transfixed by the film. He chuckles at moments of slapstick. He gasps at the slight suspense.

Endeared by his reaction, Lane smiles to herself.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Shaun and Lane walking. Lane presses against his side.

LANE
I didn't think people liked walking
anymore.

SHAUN
That's how they did it in the olden
days.

LANE
Exactly. It's not the olden days,
but you can still discover things
if you just slowed down and looked.

SHAUN
Like this-

Shaun plucks a yellow dandelion from the sidewalk.

LANE
(re: dandelion)
Like that.

She lets him stick it in her hair.

LANE (CONT'D)
How do I look?

SHAUN
Beautiful. Just with a yellow
flower in your hair.

LANE
Okay, Hugh Grant.

SHAUN
Who's that?

LANE
No one. Just an actor.

SHAUN
Was he from the movie we watched?

LANE
I was making a joke, Shaun.

SHAUN
Oh!

They laugh. Lane's face twitches.

LANE
Did you feel that?

They stop walking. Shaun's face twitches as well.

SHAUN
Yeah. What is it?

LANE
Rain.

Drops of rain gradually freckle their faces. Growing in number. Lane looks worriedly at the sky.

LANE (CONT'D)
I knew it would rain. You want to go?

SHAUN
But I like this.

Lane smiles.

LANE
I like this, too.

Shaun's entranced by the rain. It's turning from a sprinkle to a downpour. He spins around with his arms wide, a la Andy Dufresne or Gene Kelly. Lane observes, almost enchanted herself. Then Shaun grabs her arm.

SHAUN
Come on!

They run through the streets together, giggling, close to slipping and sliding. The far-off crackle of thunder.

INT. LANE'S HOUSE/LANE'S ROOM - DAY

Shaun and Lane enter, coming off their high, drenched. Rain drums against the windows. An air of warmth and intimacy.

LANE
You want to listen to some music?

SHAUN

Sure.

Lane flips through an extensive record collection. She pulls out a case with Sam Cooke on the cover.

LANE

How's this?

Shaun looks at it and laughs. Lane quickly shushes him.

LANE (CONT'D)

My grandma's sleeping. That's literally the only reason you're up here.

He suppresses his laughter into chuckles.

LANE (CONT'D)

As you can tell, I'm a bit of an oldies chick.

SHAUN

Well, you can say I know all about the oldies.

LANE

That so?

SHAUN

Every single detail.

LANE

So you can clear up what happened that night in the motel?

SHAUN

Sure can. But I'd rather leave that up to debate. Hearing all the discrepancies is pretty entertaining.

Lane chuckles, slipping the record out of its sleeve. She lays it on. Before setting the needle, she looks at Shaun.

LANE

You want to dance or something?

SHAUN

I don't know how to.

LANE

We'll learn together. I have to play it low, though.

She drops the needle. (WHAT A) WONDERFUL WORLD begins. Lane takes Shaun hand and they dance to the song. Awkwardly at first, then finding some kind of coherency in their awkwardness. They laugh, keeping their voices down.

Before it ends, the song becomes disjointed. Lane breaks away and takes off the needle.

LANE (CONT'D)
 Sorry. I always forget it scratches
 on that part.

SHAUN
 No, I liked that a lot. Dancing
 with you.

Lane absorbs this. She goes to the window, crossing her arms.

LANE
 Can I ask you a question?

SHAUN
 Sure.

LANE
 Why now?

Shaun senses a shift in the air.

SHAUN
 (pause)
 What do you mean?

LANE
 I mean, what's so different about
 me that we're suddenly doing this?
 I don't know if I'm being
 melodramatic or something, but I
 can't help remembering when you and
 Bailey Darnell poured wood shavings
 down my shirt in fourth grade.
 (pause)
 And, in eighth grade, when I asked
 you to help raise money for that
 theatre we just went to, you just
 laughed in my face.

She turns to face him.

LANE (CONT'D)
 Why now? Is this some kind of joke
 or something? It doesn't feel like
 it.

SHAUN
 Because if I don't do this now,
 then I'll never be able to do it.

LANE
 Do what?

Shaun shakes his head.

SHAUN
 I sound crazy.

LANE
 Not to be rude, but yeah, you do
 sound crazy. What would you never
 be able to do?

(MORE)

LANE (CONT'D)
I mean, we're seventeen. We
literally have our whole lives
ahead of us.

SHAUN
I don't.

Lane nears him.

LANE
What? Are you, like, dying or
something?

SHAUN
No, no.

LANE
Then what is it?

Shaun shakes his head. He can't say it. Lane balances between concern and confusion. Then she goes back to the record player and puts on a different album.

LANE (CONT'D)
Maybe I should play another song.
Would you like that?

Shaun doesn't answer. BUILD ME UP, BUTTERCUP begins. She takes Shaun's hand but practically has to pull him up to join her. They dance without any interest.

Then, mid-way through the song, he steps away from her.

SHAUN
(bluntly)
I just wanted to have sex with you.

Lane's stunned silent. She goes to turn off the music.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
(with the same bluntness)
That's why I first talked to you.
Because I wanted to lose my
virginity and I knew you'd be the
easiest target. That's the only
reason.

Lane stares at him.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
And I know you want to have sex
with me. You send me Valentine's
Day telegrams. And you ink hearts
around my name in your diary-

LANE
(defensive)
How do you know that?

SHAUN
 That's irrelevant. All I'm saying
 is, that while it may seem
 improbable, I might never have sex.
 So let's just do it. Right now.
 Your grandmother's still sleeping.

Lane shakes her head.

LANE
 You know, when people go out on
 dates, they usually do it because
 they want to be in a relationship
 with that person. Not just so they
 can get fucking laid. What, because
 I liked you, you made me some
 fucking conquest?

SHAUN
 It's not like you to swear.

LANE
 You don't know anything about me.

SHAUN
 I know that you've had dreams about
 this moment—I mean, I'm assuming.

Lane almost laughs in incredulity.

LANE
 God. It was incredibly, incredibly
 stupid of me. To think that you'd
 somehow, deep down, be any
 different then what you are.
 (pause)
 And you know what, Shaun? For the
 briefest moment, I actually thought
 you were.

Painful silence.

LANE (CONT'D)
 Please leave.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

The rain has stopped. Shaun walks briskly down a sidewalk,
 forlorn. He spots a yellow dandelion and plucks it, twirling
 it in his fingertips.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
 The funny thing was that I thought
 it'd be possible, too. Dating. If
 only for the briefest moment.

He kisses the dandelion. Tosses it aside.

CUT TO:

Shaun walking. He turns a corner and looks up. Stops cold.

Down the street, too far to make out, is a FIGURE facing him. It's completely still. Shaun stares at it, then turns down a different street, keeping his head down.

After a while, he looks behind him. Nothing. Then in front-

The same FIGURE is down this street too. A bit closer now.

Shaun turns around and starts running up the street. Something like panic in his eyes. He runs until his lungs gives. Stops and bends over. Tries to catch his breath.

A moment passes. Then a shadow falls over him. The shadow of a person.

Shaun looks up, still breathing heavily, sweating. He looks resigned. Puts his hands up in surrender.

SHAUN

Okay.

CUT TO:

Shaun walks down the leafy residential streets with HANAEL, 30s, a man with angelic features and an otherworldly serenity.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

What, you didn't bring handcuffs?

Hanael doesn't answer. He keeps his eyes ahead. Shaun studies his face.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

Where'd you get that body?

HANAEL

(deep and musical)
It is of my own making.

SHAUN

I should've figured that out. You look like a model who got a flat. Don't you know humans have physical flaws?

HANAEL

I am no human. And no matter the time you've spent in their company, masquerading as one of them, neither are you, Kiriel.

SHAUN

Well, you should know that for all the time you've spent making that perfect facade, everyone I've seen here-you know, actual humans-look better than you.

(pause)

Which one are you anyway?

HANAEL

I am Hanael.

SHAUN
 Ah. You all act the same, it's just
 hard for me to tell. And why aren't
 you even looking at me?

HANAEL
 I'm taking pleasure in physical
 sight.

Shaun chuckles sadly, raising his brows.

SHAUN
 I know how that is.

CUT TO:

A different street. Shaun and Hanael walking.

HANAEL
 You know your time here is done.
 You must return to your proper
 sphere.

SHAUN
 Well, you aren't here for nothing.
 (beat)
 But can we partake in this moment?

They stop. Hanael looks around the neighbourhood, the sky
 impossibly blue, the clouds fluffy.

KIDS ride past on their bikes, laughing their heads off as
 they disappear down the road. Shaun looks after them,
 yearning.

HANAEL
 It sure is a glorious creation.

SHAUN
 Beautiful. I enjoyed it here. For
 the most part.

Hanael looks at his arms.

HANAEL
 And what is this lovely feeling
 upon the skin? Is it the wind?

SHAUN
 Yes. It's called a breeze.
 (beat)
 The Creator isn't angry with me, is
 He?

Hanael finally looks at Shaun.

HANAEL
 I am not an intermediary between
 you and the Creator.

SHAUN
 I was just asking a question.

HANAEL

My function does not involve me answering questions.

SHAUN

And that's my punishment, I guess. The Fallen don't get what they want the most: answers. But you, Hanael, have all the answers. Even for the questions you never asked or wanted.

(pause)

It's just not right.

HANAEL

All is right with the Creator.

SHAUN

Of course you think so. You're His pet. I'm the guy in the corner with the dunce cap.

They continue walking, passing the house with the pitbull tethered to the front yard. Instead of barking, it holds a respectful silence.

HANAEL

Kiriel, you took part of a life that wasn't yours.

SHAUN

I took the part that would've been filled with pain. How isn't that mercy?

HANAEL

Nevertheless, they were Shaun's. Not yours.

SHAUN

And what are you going to do about it? Shaun's already passed on.

HANAEL

Shaun will regain possession of his body. He will get that moment of his life back. You interrupted the trajectory of his existence.

SHAUN

(angry)

The kid gets his life back only to die a split-second later? Oh, yeah, you don't give answers.

HANAEL

The man who was supposed to hit Shaun didn't, so his trajectory has to be remade. In a little while, a truck will come down the same intersection. You will step into its path.

(MORE)

HANAEL (CONT'D)

In the exact moment you stole his
body, his soul will be put back-

SHAUN

-just to leave him again-

HANAEL

-and he will end up in a coma.

Shaun freezes as this lands. Hanael takes in his surprise.

HANAEL (CONT'D)

He was not supposed to die from the
accident. When he wakes, he will
have no memory of anything that's
happened over the course of his
possession.

SHAUN

(guilty pause)

I just hope he gets full use of his
body back. I mean, it's really
awful you're going to bust it up. I
didn't even harm it. Or I didn't
try to. Just a punch on the mouth.
And a few messed up relationships.
But what's that to getting iced by
a fucking truck?

Hanael looks at him, amused.

SHAUN (CONT'D)

I get it. No answers.

HANAEL

No. I just like looking at you,
Kiriel. You're a very intriguing
creature. You have surprising
depth.

SHAUN

Don't make this about me.

(pause)

Just don't be too hard on the kid.
That's all I'm asking. Don't be too
hard on Shaun. Please.

HANAEL

Are you praying, Kiriel?

SHAUN

Maybe. If that's what asking for
mercy is.

Hanael checks a wristwatch.

HANAEL

It's almost time. We have to go.

Immediately he begins to walk ahead. Shaun stays behind.

SHAUN
Wait. Can you just let me do one
thing?

CUT TO:

Close on a tree in the neighbourhood. Carved into the bark:
KIRIEL WAS HERE.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY

The same meeting of residential streets from earlier. Hanael and Shaun stand near the curb, waiting. Shaun seems jittery, as if trying to gird himself.

SHAUN
This is going to hurt.

HANAEL
Yes.

SHAUN
This is going to hurt bad.

HANAEL
Yes.

They share a pause, regarding the street. Shaun shrugs.

SHAUN
I guess I can't complain. Pain is a
part of human existence.

HANAEL
Yes.

Down the other street, a PICK-UP TRUCK veers around a corner, coming into view. It's going much faster than it should be. Shaun watches it approach-then turns to Hanael.

SHAUN
Hey, uh-
(beat)
Did the Big Guy spend you?

HANAEL
It was part of my function to be
here.

SHAUN
Yes, I know that. But did he
Himself personally tell you to come
deal with me?

HANAEL
It is part of my function to be
here. And so here I am.

Shaun waves him off, rolling his eyes.

SHAUN
Yeah, yeah, whatever.

The truck getting closer, he steps up to the curb.

SHAUN (CONT'D)
They should really put a stop sign
around here.

Shaun takes a deep breath-then notices his hands are shaking. In fact, his whole body is shaking. His chest tightens, his hands clench into fists, his lips press tight.

Every sound around him heightens: leaves whispering in a breeze, a dog's distant barking, birds chirping a melody. The truck's growling motor.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
Fear. It's probably the worst
feeling you can have. But when it's
the last one you'll ever have, it's
delicious.

Shaun looks down at his body.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
There was a knot in my stomach, my
chest was tightening-

Tears fall from his eyes as he marvels.

KIRIEL (V.O.)
-a pressure behind my eyes was
releasing itself as water. I mean,
humans can produce water. From
their eyes. And it's so natural to
them-so common-that they aren't
even astonished by it.
(beat)
But I wanted to smile because of
it.

Another deep breath-and Shaun cracks a smile. A sense of acceptance or fulfilment; a calmness all around him. The sound of the truck is very close.

Shaun steps off the curb and turns to Hanael, smiling.

SHAUN
Well. Catch you on the other side,
dude.

Shaun salutes him. The exact nanosecond before the truck hits him-

SMASH TO BLACK

THE END