

WHITE PICKET FENCE

An original screenplay by
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12th Revision

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FADE IN:

INT. A MOTEL BEDROOM - DAY

A black suit jacket lies on a bed, along with a tie. A hand reaches into frame and takes the tie.

That hand belongs to COLLIN TANNER. Collin is 22, handsome, but no Prince Charming. He wears a white shirt, dress shoes, and slacks. He stands before a mirror on the wall and puts on the tie.

EXT. A MOTEL - DAY

This modestly pricey motel lives on the outskirts of Salt Lake City, Utah. It is mid-summer. Grass is green, the sky is clear. A light wind ruffles the leaves on trees.

A Maroon-colored Honda Civic sits on the curb, engine running. At the wheel is GENE TANNER, 73, also in a suit.

Collin exits the motel putting on his suit jacket.

INT. CIVIC - CONTINUOUS

Collin gets in on the passenger side. Gene looks at Collin, their eyes meet. Pause.

Gene shifts the car into reverse and backs out.

EXT. SALT LAKE CEMETARY - DAY

A large procession of POLICE OFFICERS are gathered. This is a Police Officer's Funeral.

EXT. SALT LAKE CEMETARY - GRAVESITE - CONTINUOUS

The casket is draped in an American flag. Beside it is an easel. On the easel is a wreath and in the center is a picture of the officer, KENNETH TANNER, in uniform. Beneath the easel, a sign reading:

In Memoriam
Officer Kenneth Lloyd Tanner
February 12, 1960 - June 25, 2008
Served with Courage, Faith, and Honor

Collin and Gene stand at the front of the crowd as bagpipes play "Amazing Grace."

SAME - LATER

The pallbearers fold the American Flag and present it to Gene.

INT. AN UPSCALE HOUSE - DAY

The funeral reception. Police officers mill about and talk.

Gene and Collin stand together as policemen shake their hands and give their condolences.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Collin and Gene, flag in hand, open the door and enter the two-bedroom motel room.

Collin gets a glass of water from the bathroom. Gene sits on one of the beds, puts the flag down.

Pause.

COLLIN

Well...I guess that's it, huh?

Gene nods.

GENE

What are you gonna do? You gonna go back to New York?

COLLIN

I think so. There's a flight on Thursday morning.

Beat.

COLLIN

Are you gonna be okay?

No answer.

COLLIN

Grandpa?

GENE

Why don't you come stay with me for a while?

COLLIN
How long?

GENE
As long as you want.

COLLIN
...Sure. I'd like that.

Gene nods. Collin tries giving a comforting smile.

EXT. INTERSTATE 15 - DAY

Gene drives the Civic south on I-15, Collin in the passenger seat. Both back in street clothes. The backseat is full of luggage.

EXT. INTERSTATE 15 - DAY

The Civic drives along in the smooth-flowing traffic.

EXT. INTERSTATE 15 - DAY

The road is curves into a more rural side of the state. On both sides of the road are fields and farms. Cattle graze the fields.

The Civic drives on.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD: two weeks earlier

EXT. QUEENS, NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

Collin walks down the street with a GROUP OF FRIENDS. They laugh and talk, having a good time. Collin wears a New York Mets Cap.

COLLIN
I almost had that fly ball Delgato hit. Did you see that? I was right there.

One of his friends, JORDAN, 23, takes his cap from him. Jordan has a slight Midwest accent.

JORDAN
Yeah, it's too bad that *10 year old girl* is faster than you, or you would've had it.

Collin snatches his hat back, they laugh. Collin's cell phone rings. He answers.

COLLIN
Hello?

Gene's VOICE is on the phone.

GENE
(phone)
Collin?

COLLIN
Yeah. Who is this?

GENE
(phone)
It's your grandfather, Collin.

Collin slows and lets the group get ahead of him.

COLLIN
Um...hi, Grandpa.
(beat)
Why are you calling?

GENE
(phone)
Collin...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GENE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Gene, on the phone, stands at a SLIDING GLASS DOOR in a room we will later come to know. His back to us and silhouetted by the moonlight coming through the glass.

GENE
...something's happened...

ANGLE ON JORDAN

JORDAN
Hey, man, are you comin'?

Collin waves them to go ahead.

COLLIN
What? What is it?

GENE
There was a fire at your father's
house and...

Gene struggles to get the words out.

GENE
...your father is dead, Collin.

Collin stops completely, concern on his face.

GENE
(phone)
Collin?

Collin stares.

FADE TO BLACK.

OPENING CREDITS

EXT. NORTH HIGHWAY ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

The Civic speeds down North Highway Road. Surrounding the road are more farms. They pass by a large shed. Inside of it are stacks of bailed hay.

Along the bank of the road, men repair a barbed-wire fence.

In the east and west distance are mountains. Not the rocky, jagged kind. More like giant, grassy hills.

INT. CIVIC - CONTINUOUS

They drive past a small, green sign reading:

EPHRAIM

EXT. MAIN STREET - EPHRAIM - DUSK

The Civic drives along Main Street, passing some of the major recreational facilities in this tiny town. The Town Theater, Fat Jack's Pizza, the Malt Shop.

Collin looks out from the window as they drive.

EXT. THIRD EAST STREET - DUSK

Gene drives through an intersection to the end of Third East Street when it reaches it's destination, a large, two-story HOUSE.

EXT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Gene pulls into and parks in the long driveway. Collin and Gene step out. Collin walks around the car and looks at the house. He opens the back door and gets his luggage.

GENE
I'll get that one.

COLLIN
Thanks.

Collin hands him a bag and heads for the front door. Collin follows.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room we caught a glimpse of before. Gene and Collin enter. Collin steps into the center of the room and looks around. It's large, but cozy.

COLLIN
It's smaller than I remember it.

GENE
Can't imagine much has changed
since the last time you were here.

Collin goes to the sliding glass door at the back of the living room. It opens up onto a BACK PORCH with a couple of lawn chairs. Surrounding the porch is the backyard, covered in leaves from surrounding trees. Beyond the backyard are other houses, then nothing but plains and the mountains.

Collin stares out at the mountains a moment before he sees the remains of an old, chest-high, PICKET FENCE surrounding the backyard. The crooked wood is a rotten brown with bits of WHITE PAINT still hanging from it. In the middle is (was) a gate leading to a path.

COLLIN
I almost forgot about that.

GENE
Your room's upstairs.

Collin turns away and follows Gene up the stairs to the second floor.

INT. AN UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gene's hand pulls back the drapes of a window revealing it's view overlooking the backyard. The orange, dusk light floods the room.

Collin sets his luggage on the bed.

A night stand with a clock radio sits beside the bed. The walls are a dark, brown wood.

GENE
I'll make dinner.

Gene leaves. Collin sits down on the bed.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Gene sits at a dining room table eating spaghetti. There is an adjacent kitchen and a bay window that looks out over the backyard. Collin enters.

GENE
Get unpacked?

COLLIN
Almost.

Collin sits down.

GENE
You like spaghetti, don't you?

COLLIN
Are you kidding? I live in New York City.

Collin half-smiles and dishes spaghetti onto his plate.

Gene remembers something and gets up from the table. He goes to a window above the sink and grabs a bottle of PRESCRIPTION PILLS. He opens the bottle, takes out 2 pills, and brings them back to the table.

GENE
Damn pills.

Gene swallows the pills with water. They sit in silence. Gene forces a conversation.

GENE
How old are you now? 23, 24?

COLLIN
Close. 22.

GENE
So that makes, what, about 6 years since the last time you were here?

COLLIN
Around that, yeah.

GENE
How long are you planning on staying?

COLLIN
I don't know. I need to be back by September, though, for school.

Gene nods. They eat in silence.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Collin rinses his dirty dishes in the sink. Gene's pills sit on the window sill.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Gene sits in his chair watching the evening news on TV. The WEATHERMAN does his forecast.

WEATHERMAN
(TV)
As we move into tomorrow and Thursday, the temperature will continue to increase into the mid-70's...

INT. AN OLD BEDROOM - EVENING

The door slowly opens and Collin appears in the room. It is plain and empty, even the bed stripped of it's sheets.

Collin enters and looks around the room. He opens a closet.

Inside the closet hangs a letter jacket. Also in the closet are 2 Manti High School banners and a high school diploma.

Collin moves to a dresser. On top of it is the folded American flag. He opens a drawer. In the drawer is a bundle of PHOTOS.

They are of a man, Collin's FATHER. There are pictures of him as a kid and as an adult. In some pictures, he is in his policeman uniform.

Next to the pictures, Collin finds a BADGE and a PIECE OF PAPER. He looks at the badge for a moment before picking up the piece of paper to reveal that it is an ARTICLE cut out of the newspaper. In the corner is a picture of Collin's father in uniform.

The top of the article reads:

SALT LAKE POLICE OFFICER DIES IN HOUSE FIRE

Officer Kenneth Lloyd Tanner passed away last Wednesday evening, when an electrical fire struck his home...

Officer Tanner served 25 years with the SLPD...

He is survived by his son, Collin James Tanner, and his father, Eugene Tanner.

Collin stares at the article for a moment.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Collin passes by Gene's bedroom. The door is half open. Collin sees something...

Gene stands at a mirror, shirtless, getting ready for bed. The top of a SCAR reaches from Gene's shoulder, but we don't see the rest of it.

Collin notices the scar and stares at it.

Gene puts on an undershirt. He sees Collin in the mirror and turns.

COLLIN

Good night.

GENE

Good night.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Collin sits on the bed taking his shoes off. He goes to the window and looks down at the worn picket fence for a moment before closing the shades.

Collin get into bed. He flips the light switch off.

BLACK.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Collin opens a cabinet and looks around. Collin finds some ASPIRIN, takes a couple pills out of the case, and sets them on the counter. He gets himself a glass of water and swallows them.

He glances over at the window sill and sees that Gene's pills are gone.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Collin stands at the sliding glass door, drinking a cup of coffee and staring at the deteriorated picket fence in the morning sunlight.

From behind, Gene enters.

 GENE
How'd you sleep?

 COLLIN
Fine. You?

Gene nods and goes into the kitchen.

INT. DEN - LATER

Collin sits at a desk and computer. Gene approaches and pokes his head in.

 GENE
Collin, the backyard has to be
raked. I need you to do it.

A short pause.

 COLLIN
Sure.

GENE
Rake's in the garage.

Gene leaves. Collin goes back to the computer. He is playing Solitaire.

INT. GARAGE - LATER THAT DAY

Collin opens the garage door and flips on a light switch revealing that there are 2 cars in the garage. One is the Honda Civic, and the other is a PICKUP TRUCK.

Collin moves down a couple cement steps and goes to a closet. Inside are gardening tools. In the corner lies a rake. Collin grabs it.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

The rake scoops up a pile of leaves. Collin struggles a little to drag it back to a larger pile. He rakes along the picket fence.

Gene approaches from the sliding glass door, pulling out his wallet.

GENE
Collin.

Collin turns.

GENE
You'll have to drive down to the store and pick up some more trash bags to put those leaves in. You remember where the store is, don't you?

Collin nods. Gene hands him a ten dollar bill and heads back to the house.

COLLIN
I can pay for it.

GENE
That's alright.

Collin nods and continues to rake the leaves. Gene goes back in.

EXT. KENT'S MARKET - DAY

Collin parks the Civic.

INT. KENT'S MARKET - COUNTER - MINUTES LATER

Collin sets a box of garbage bags on the conveyor belt as another CUSTOMER is buying his items. The CASHIER bags them and the customer is off.

Collin steps up to the counter as the Cashier scans the garbage bags.

CASHIER
That will be \$4.50.

Collin gives the cashier the ten dollar bill. The Cashier gives him his change and wraps up the garbage bags.

CASHIER
Thank you. Have a nice day.

COLLIN
You too. Thanks.

Collin takes his purchase.

EXT. KENT'S MARKET PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Collin makes his way back to the car.

In the distance there is a GROUP OF FRIENDS, all between 19 and 21, walking by holding hamburgers and soft drinks. They are talking and laughing with each other. One of them is JAINIE METCALF, 21, a pretty girl wearing an apron with a name tag.

JAINIE
See ya, guys.

The group says goodbye and continues walking. Jainie notices Collin and recognizes him. She approaches.

Just as Collin is about to open the car door, two hands wrap around his eyes.

JAINIE
Guess who!

Jainie takes her hands off and Collin spins around to see her.

JAINIE

You...

Jainie's face flushes as she realizes that Collin is not who she expected.

JAINIE

...are not who I thought you were.
I'm so sorry. I...I thought you
were someone else.

COLLIN

That's okay. Don't worry about it.

Jainie is humiliated.

JAINIE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Jainie turns and awkwardly paces towards the store. Collin takes a glance at her then gets into the car and leaves.

EXT. BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

Collin has pulled a trash can out into the backyard. He loads the trash bags with leaves.

Gene, from inside the glass door, watches him.

INT. GENE'S BATHROOM - EVENING

Gene now has his pills in his bathroom. He pulls 2 out and swallows them.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Gene sits in his chair watching the news. Collin enters from the kitchen and sits on the couch. They watch.

Gene glances over at Collin.

GENE

You alright?

COLLIN

Yeah. Yeah, are you?

Gene nods. They watch.

EXT. BACKYARD - DUSK

Inside the glass door, Gene and Collin watch TV.

The picket fence looks decrepit as the orange light of the sunset swamps the backyard. There are still small patches of leaves that Collin missed.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. HOUSE - GARAGE - DAYS LATER

Collin exits the garage door, wearing his New York Mets cap, car keys in his hand.

He gets in the Honda and pulls out.

EXT. EPHRAIM PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Collin walks into the library.

INT. EPHRAIM PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Collin scans the fiction shelves.

In another part of the library is Jainie Metcalf. She is in the Poetry and Drama Section.

Through the shelves, Collin notices her, but can't tell who she is.

They both continue scanning the shelves. Jainie moves one section closer. Collin continues to look at her, trying to get a better glimpse.

Jainie moves a little closer. Collin sees and recognizes her.

Just then, Jainie looks through the shelves and sees him. Their eyes meet. She gives him a friendly smile.

JAINIE

Hi.

COLLIN

Hi.

Jainie looks away for a second and looks back.

JAINIE
I'm sorry. Do I know you?

COLLIN
I don't believe so.

JAINIE
I feel like I've seen you before.

She is confused. After a moment, she recognizes him from the street.

JAINIE
I know who you are. Are you the guy
I ran up to on the street a couple
days ago?

COLLIN
You caught me.

She laughs, a little embarrassed.

JAINIE
I'm really sorry about that.

COLLIN
It's okay. It took a couple of
hours for me to calm down from the
shock, but I think I'm alright now.

They smile.

JAINIE
Are you new here?

COLLIN
Sort of.

JAINIE
What do you mean?

COLLIN
I'm just living here. For a while.

JAINIE
Oh. Cool. I go to the college here.

She indicates her books, one is a collection of Shakespeare plays.

JAINIE
Drama girl.

COLLIN
"All the world's a stage", huh?

JAINIE
(chuckles)
That's right. I'm Jainie Metcalf.

Jainie reaches her hand through the book shelf. Collin shakes it.

COLLIN
Collin Tanner.

JAINIE
Nice to meet you.

Collin brings his hand back, knocking over a couple of books on the way. He picks them up.

COLLIN
Now we've both been clumsy. I guess we're even.

She smiles.

JAINIE
Well, I...I gotta go. Maybe I'll see you around.

COLLIN
Maybe.

Jainie goes to the check out desk. Collin watches her check out her books and go.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Collin and Gene eat macaroni and cheese for dinner.

GENE
Where did you go today?

COLLIN
Just over to the library. Didn't get anything, though.

Gene nods.

GENE
You wanna talk?

COLLIN
About what?

GENE
Anything.
(beat)
You haven't even mentioned your dad
since you came home.

Collin looks at him, uncomfortable.

GENE
I think you need to talk about him.

COLLIN
What do you want me to say?

GENE
Do you miss him?

No answer.

GENE
When was the last time you talked
to him?

COLLIN
It doesn't matter.

GENE
(angry)
Yes, Collin, it does.

Pause. Collin takes his bowl, goes to the sink and drops off his dishes, leaving without a word.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Gene watches the evening news, distracted. Collin walks through. He is almost out of the room when:

GENE
Collin?

COLLIN
What?

GENE
...I'm sorry.

Beat.

COLLIN
Don't worry about it.

Collin goes upstairs. After a moment, Gene looks out the sliding glass door at the decayed picket fence in the backyard.

GENE (V.O.)
Ken, this is enough. You're out of control.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK - EVENING

Gene and KEN TANNER, 35, are in the living room.

KEN
I'm not out of control, Dad. I just have a couple drinks now and then--

GENE
--Now and then isn't everyday and a couple drinks won't get you drunk.

A hard pause.

GENE
Jesus, think about what you're doing, son. You're a cop. You're an officer.

No answer.

GENE
And what about Collin? The boy is 7 years old. Do you want him to live with this?

KEN
I haven't hurt him.

GENE
You will.

Pause.

GENE
He's already lost one parent, Ken.

KEN
That wasn't my fault!
(quiet)
She left me, Dad, she left me.

GENE
--And why do you think she did?

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - PRESENT - LATE NIGHT

Collin lies awake in bed. It is 2:34 A.M. From downstairs comes the faint sound of CHOIR MUSIC.

After a pause, Collin gets out of bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK - EVENING

A younger Gene and his wife, BETTY, 40, stand while holding hands at the sliding glass door looking out at the picket fence which is brand new.

BETTY
Kenny did a good job.

Gene puts his arm around Betty and pulls her close.

GENE
He's a good boy.

They kiss.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - PRESENT - LATE NIGHT

Collin walks down the hall. The choir music continues.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Collin enters. Gene is asleep in his chair. The choir music comes from the TV. The channel has signed out. Collin turns the TV off.

EXT. BACK PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Collin stares out at the sliding glass door for a moment before opening it and stepping out onto the back porch.

Collin peers out at the backyard, the picket fence.

GENE (O.S.)
Did I ever tell you about that
fence?

Collin whips his head, a little startled, to find Gene awake and standing behind him.

COLLIN

I thought you were asleep.

Gene steps out onto the porch.

GENE

Your father and I built it when he was a kid. It was his idea. He was only 9 years old. Just walked up to me one day and asked me if we could build a picket fence around the backyard. I asked him why and he said, "Every good family has one." So we started building it. He was so excited. He wanted to do everything. Measure the wood, nail it, paint it, even cut it. We spent hours a day working on it. From the second he got home from school until dinner time we were out here. Then, finally, it was up, painted, everything. I had a hell of a time trying to keep him from trying to walk along the top. He'd pretend the pickets were bars and then throw me in jail. But it wasn't just some fence that decorated the house. It was something that brought us together. That's about when your Grandmother died. Kidney failure.

(beat)

And over the years...paint started chipping...and the wood started rotting. He was growing up and he just forgot about it. Both of us did. When he would bring you down for a visit, or holidays, we'd sometimes talk about rebuilding it. But never did.

Gene is engulfed in his memories.

GENE

I miss it all.

He looks at Collin.

GENE

I'm going to bed.

Gene goes inside. Collin stands and takes a closer look at the fence before disappearing into the house.

FADE TO:

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Collin talks on his cell phone while getting dressed.

COLLIN

No, it's where my Grandfather lives. I grew up in a different town. Well...he just...after the funeral he asked me to come back here and stay with him for a little while.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DORM ROOM - NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Jordan is on a cell phone.

JORDAN

When are you comin' back?

COLLIN

I don't know. I gotta be back by September, at least, but that's still like a month and a half away so...I'm not sure how long.

JORDAN

Well, you know if you need anything...

COLLIN

Yeah, I know. Thanks. I'm doing fine, though.

JORDAN

Good good. Hey, I gotta get going. Rydman and I are going to Flash Gordon at Sunshine Cinema. It's gonna be hilarious.

Collin chuckles.

COLLIN

Alright, buddy. I'll see ya.

He hangs up.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Collin crosses through, Mets cap on. He stops when he sees Gene standing at the glass door, looking out.

COLLIN
I'm going to the store. You need anything?

Gene shakes his head.

COLLIN
Okay.

Beat. Collin leaves.

INT. CIVIC - DAY

Collin drives, something on his mind.

INT. KENT'S MARKET - DAY

Collin loads his cart with food. Mostly junk. Cookies, popcorn, crackers, etc.

He approaches the registers and sees that Jainie is one of the cashiers.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gene sits in his chair, thinking. After a few moments, he stands and walks out of the room.

INT. REGISTER - DAY

Collin pushes the cart into Jainie's station and puts his food on the conveyor belt.

COLLIN
Hello again.

JAINIE
Hey. Collin, right?

COLLIN
Jainie.

JAINIE

Right.

She scans and bags his items.

COLLIN

I didn't know you worked here.

JAINIE

Gotta get through college somehow.

COLLIN

I know exactly what you mean. Are you in school right now? It's summer.

JAINIE

Yeah, I usually go through every summer. Make up for lost time.

COLLIN

Lost time?

JAINIE

I'm a 22 year old sophomore.

COLLIN

I'm 22 too.

She laughs.

COLLIN

How about after you graduate?

JAINIE

Going back home?

COLLIN

Where's home?

JAINIE

San Diego.

Collin laughs.

JAINIE

What?

COLLIN

San Diego? You left San Diego, California to come to Ephraim, Utah?

JAINIE

Yes. So?

COLLIN

Seems funny to me, that's all.
Trading in the smell of the beach
for the smell of grass and horse
manure. This place is sticksville.

JAINIE

How would you know? I thought you
were only living here for a while.

COLLIN

My family is from here.

JAINIE

But you're not?

COLLIN

No. I grew up in Salt Lake, but I
live in New York City now.

JAINIE

I'm guessing that's what the cap's
for then? You're a Mets fan?

COLLIN

Yes, ma'am.

Jainie smiles.

JAINIE

Then what brings you down here?

Beat.

COLLIN

Summer break. From college.

JAINIE

College where?

COLLIN

Columbia University.

JAINIE

Columbia. Wow. What are you
studying?

COLLIN

Sociology.

JAINIE
Sounds exciting. That's \$18.45.

Collin hands her his credit card. She scans it.

COLLIN
More exciting than Shakespeare.

JAINIE
I doubt that.

Beat. She shakes her head and smiles, then hands him his card back.

JAINIE
Receipt is in the bag.

COLLIN
Thanks.

He takes his bags.

COLLIN
Bye.

JAINIE
Bye.

Collin exits.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Collin pulls into the driveway to find Gene already there, standing in the bed of the pickup truck, off-loading LUMBER. Also in the bed is more equipment, post hole digger, a bag of gravel, etc.

Collin parks and gets out.

COLLIN
What is this?

Gene is upbeat.

GENE
We're gonna do it.

COLLIN
Do what?

GENE
We're gonna rebuild the fence. You
and me.

Beat.

GENE
I've been thinking about it. I
still have my old work table down
in the basement we can use.

COLLIN
Grandpa, why...?

GENE
It's either that or tear it down
forever.

Pause.

COLLIN
I don't know anything about
building a fence.

GENE
I'll show you around.

Collin doesn't answer.

EXT. BACK PORCH - DAY

Along the back porch is the equipment. Nails, tamping rod,
post hole digger, etc.

Collin flops down the bag of gravel onto the porch. Gene
hands Collin a pair of work gloves.

GENE
Put these on.

He does.

EXT. FENCE - MOMENTS LATER

Collin rips and clears out all the weeds surrounding the
fence. Gene, on his knees, does the same.

GENE
We gotta clear out all these weeds
then rip out the old boards.
(MORE)

GENE(cont'd)

We'll need to make new post holes
if we want this thing to last.

Gene uses a socket wrench to unbolt the gate from its hinges.
It finally comes down.

GENE

Go put that on the worktable in the
basement.

Collin takes it and carries the gate toward the house.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Collin turns on the light and carries the gate awkwardly down
the stairs.

He sets it on a WORKTABLE next to a table saw.

He goes back to the stairs and stops when something catches
his eye.

ANGLE ON WALL

The initials "ct" are etched into the cement of the wall.

COLLIN

Oh my god...

He touches the carving, enjoying this small detail from his
childhood, then heads back up the stairs.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATE AFTERNOON

Collin and Gene tear out all of the old rails, pickets, and
posts.

The old fence boards are almost gone around the backyard. A
pile of them sit in the middle of the grass.

Collin measures a strip of grass with measuring tape. He
stops at about 6 feet and drives in a stake. From another
stake, Gene stretches a string between the two of them and
measures it with a level.

The backyard is outlined with metal stakes.

Gene and Collin are ready to dig the holes. Collin holds the
post hole digger in his hands.

GENE

You need to make the hole about one third as deep as the post. And make it a little wider at the bottom.

COLLIN

Alright.

Collin digs into the ground.

Collin and Gene saw the posts giving them a slanted top.

Next to Collin and Gene is the bag of gravel. Collin digs a shovel into it and puts two shovels-full of gravel into the hole and grabs the post.

GENE

Did you put preservative on there?

COLLIN

What?

GENE

Preservative.

COLLIN

Oh. No.

Gene goes and grabs a can of wood preservative. He brushes it onto the bottom of the post.

Collin sends the post in the hole.

GENE

Make sure it's upright.

COLLIN

I got it.

Collin holds the post in the hole as Gene packs the base with dirt.

EXT. BACKYARD - DUSK

Collin and Gene continue to set the fence posts.

EXT. BACK PORCH - DUSK

Gene and Collin put the last of the equipment onto the porch. The posts are in and the corners are braced on both ends.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Collin and Gene sit at the table eating their dinners.

GENE
How's it feel to be back?

COLLIN
Um...it's nice.

GENE
You meeting anybody?

COLLIN
What do you mean?

GENE
Around town. Have you met anybody?

COLLIN
Not really except...I met this girl.

GENE
What's her name?

COLLIN
Jainie...Metcalf, I think.

GENE
That's good.

COLLIN
Yeah.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Collin brushes his teeth. A knock at the door and Gene pokes his head in.

GENE
Good night.

COLLIN
Good night.

Gene exits. Collin rinses.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Collin exits the bathroom. The door to his father's old bedroom is open.

Collin closes it.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Gene makes pancakes.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Collin sleeps. His eyes slowly open as he wakes. Sounds of the kitchen come from downstairs.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Collin enters, tired. Gene flips a couple pancakes onto a plate.

 GENE
 Just in time.

He hands the plate to Collin.

 COLLIN
 Oh. Thanks.

Collin sits at the dining table and eats. Gene joins him with his own plate.

 GENE
 (looking out the window)
 Looks good so far.

 COLLIN
 Yeah.

Beat.

 GENE
 Something wrong?

 COLLIN
 No.

 GENE
 You're being quiet.

COLLIN
It's 8 o'clock in the morning.

Gene smiles. His gaze moves back to the window.

GENE
They'll need a couple days to settle in there before we can do anything else. Those rails and pickets are in the garage. We'll need to measure and cut them. Did you have any plans today?

COLLIN
No. That's fine.

They eat.

GENE
This is a good thing we're doing.

A hushed pause.

INT. BASEMENT - LATER

Collin and Gene sand and measure rails and pickets at the work table.

Gene grabs the measuring tape and checks the picket. He marks where the picket needs to be cut with a pencil. He holds the pencil in his mouth as he takes the picket over to the table saw and cuts it down the line. He blows off the remaining saw dust and sets it against the wall with other finished pickets.

GENE
So who is this girl you met? This Jamie?

COLLIN
Jainie.

GENE
What?

COLLIN
Jainie.

GENE
Jainie, sorry. So who is she?

COLLIN

She's just this girl. She goes to Snow College.

(beat)

She's from San Diego.

GENE

San Diego? And she came *here*?

COLLIN

That's what I said.

They chuckle.

GENE

Where did you meet her?

COLLIN

At the store. She works there.

Gene nods. Pause.

GENE

I want to tell you something. I don't *think* I've told you this, but...I almost worked as a fireman once. When I was younger, before you were born.

Collin doesn't know what to say to this. He sees the top of Gene's scar through the collar of his shirt.

GENE

I went through the training, but I couldn't stick with it. I couldn't do it. I was too scared. So I went into construction.

(beat)

That's it.

COLLIN

Why are you telling me this?

GENE

I thought it was something you should know.

COLLIN

Is that how you got that scar?

Gene is caught off-guard, there is a trace of fear in his eyes as he notices the top of his shirt is open. He buttons it.

Collin turns away. They go back to work.

INT. CIVIC - DAY

Collin drives the Civic down Main Street.

ANGLE ON STREET

Jainie walks down the street, wearing her backpack and talking on her cell phone. Although we can't hear her, she's having a heated conversation.

Collin sees her and pulls over.

EXT. STREET/CIVIC - DAY

Collin rolls down the passenger window. Jainie hangs up her cell phone and walks by when:

COLLIN
Need a lift?

Jainie stops and walks back a few steps to find him.

JAINIE
Oh. Hi.

COLLIN
I'm not stalking you, I just saw you and thought you might want a ride.

JAINIE
Thanks.

She gets in.

INT. CIVIC - CONTINUOUS

Collin pulls out and drives.

COLLIN
Where are you going?

JAINIE
Um...to the college. For rehearsal.

COLLIN
Rehearsal? For what?

JAINIE
As You Like It.

COLLIN
Back to Shakespeare.

JAINIE
Yep.

She is flustered.

COLLIN
You alright?

JAINIE
Ugh.

COLLIN
What's the matter?

JAINIE
It's nothing. It's...it's nothing.
Just one of those days.

COLLIN
I know how you feel.

JAINIE
My car wouldn't start this morning
and I forgot to write a paper
that's due, and...ugh.

COLLIN
Well, now you can forget it all as
you get lost in the Forest of
Arden.

She looks at him, surprised.

COLLIN
Yes. I've read it. I am a *little*
bit cultured.

She smiles.

COLLIN
When do you open?

JAINIE
August 10th. 10th, 11th, 13th, and
14th. Why? Are you gonna come?

COLLIN
Well, first, that's what she
said...

Jainie laughs.

COLLIN
...and second, I might. If I have
nothing better to do.

JAINIE
Ouch.

Collin smiles.

INT./EXT. CIVIC/SNOW COLLEGE CAMPUS - ARTS BUILDING - DAY

Collin parks in front of the building. Jainie gets out and
grabs her backpack.

JAINIE
Thanks again.

COLLIN
No problem.

JAINIE
Okay. I'll see ya.

COLLIN
Bye-- Hey, Jainie?

JAINIE
Hmm?

COLLIN
I wanted to ask you if you wanted
to, maybe, do something with me
sometime. I mean, if you don't have
rehearsal, or anything.

Beat. She shuffles her feet.

JAINIE
Well, on Thursdays a bunch of us go
to the Malt Shop and then go
bowling. Kind of a tradition. If
you'd like to go, you're welcome
to.

COLLIN
Thursday *night*?

JAINIE

Yeah.

COLLIN

Sure. Sure, I'd like that. What time?

JAINIE

I'm not sure yet.

Brief, awkward pause.

COLLIN

Would you like to give me a call?

JAINIE

Yes. Yes.

She smiles and pulls out her phone.

JAINIE

Sorry. What's your number?

COLLIN

It's 646-555-2548.

JAINIE

646? Oh yeah. New York.

She punches the number in her phone.

JAINIE

Got it. So I will call you and let you know.

COLLIN

Sounds good.

JAINIE

Okay. See ya.

COLLIN

Bye.

Jainie smiles, closes the door and walks to the building.

INT. CIVIC - MOVING - DAY

Collin drives. He smiles, then turns on the radio and sings along to the music.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Gene sands and measures pickets. Collin enters with a plastic bag. Out of the bag, he pulls a small, orbital sander and hands it to Gene.

Gene looks at Collin and nods approvingly.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Collin sits on the couch. A Mets game on the TV. Mets vs. Cubs. His cell phone rings and he answers.

COLLIN
Hello? Hey, buddy. Yeah, I'm
watching it right now. Where are
you sitting?

Collin gets up to get a closer look at the TV.

COLLIN
It's not...I can't see you.

Gene enters.

COLLIN
Alright, if I see you, I'll call
you back. Okay. Later.

He hangs up and goes back to the couch. Gene sits in his chair.

COLLIN
My friend Jordan's at this game.

The Mets batter hits a triple.

COLLIN
Oh! Go! Come on!

The runner slides into third. Safe.

COLLIN
Alright.

Gene watches him. Collin notices.

COLLIN
Did you wanna watch something else?
I don't mind changing it.

Gene shakes his head.

COLLIN
Something wrong?

Beat.

GENE
No.

COLLIN
Okay.

Collin goes back to watching the game.

INT. BASEMENT - THE NEXT DAY

Collin and Gene sand and measure pickets.

GENE
How do you feel, Collin?

COLLIN
I'm fine.

He smiles.

GENE
You sure?

COLLIN
Yeah. Why? Don't I look alright?

GENE
I don't know.

COLLIN
What are you doing?

GENE
I want to talk.

COLLIN
Okay. Let's talk. What do you want
to talk about?

GENE
About you.

COLLIN
What do you want to know?

GENE

Tell me about New York.

COLLIN

Um...okay. Well, it's...it's a great city. I live on the Upper West Side and um...and even if you've lived there for 20 years, you can still look up on any given day and see something brand new.. You've never been there before?

GENE

Had a layover in La Guardia once, but didn't go into the city.

COLLIN

What else do you want to know?

GENE

Tell me about school, about your friends and what you do there.

COLLIN

Well, school is...school is school. My friends...we go to a lot of Mets games. My roommate Jordan and I sometimes see the craziest shit. Like this one time, we saw this guy jogging down the street wearing a red dress, a wig, and sneakers. But I only see that kind of stuff when I'm with Jordan. Never on my own, it's weird. And um...I don't know. I really like it there.

GENE

Are you gonna live there, after you graduate?

COLLIN

...I don't know. Maybe.

GENE

Why did you choose New York?

COLLIN

I just...you know, I got into Columbia. It's a great school, and they offered me a small scholarship, so I went.

Pause.

GENE

Your dad called me right after you left. He was driving home from the airport and...he said he was happy for you.

No answer.

GENE

I think he liked the bragging rights of saying his son goes to Columbia.

Gene smiles. Collin doesn't look at him.

GENE

Did he ever tell you about the time I took your dad up to the city when he was little?

COLLIN

No.

GENE

(laughs)

He was 7. Your grandmother and I took him up to the city. His first time there--

COLLIN

--Why are you telling me this?

GENE

It's a funny story.

COLLIN

I don't want to talk about dad.

GENE

I just want to tell you this story--

Collin bangs his hand on the table, silence, then goes back to work. Gene doesn't move.

Pause.

Gene puts down his things, and leaves. Collin continues to work.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Collin talks on his cell phone.

COLLIN

It's the last house at the end of Third East. Just before you head up the canyon road. That's it. Okay. 6 o'clock, then. Great. I will see you tonight. See ya.

He hangs up.

INT. GENE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Gene changes clothes. He sits on the bed. A framed picture of Betty sits on the night stand.

A small knock on the door and Collin enters.

COLLIN

I'm sorry.

Gene looks at him.

COLLIN

I just...I really don't like it when you just start talking about him.

(beat)

And I don't want to...not be there, but...

GENE

I know. It's hard.

COLLIN

...yeah.

Brief pause.

COLLIN

Listen, I'm going out tonight, so are you gonna be alright here?

GENE

Out? Doing what?

Collin is about to answer, but:

GENE

Wait. It's that girl.

COLLIN

That girl. Yes, it is. And some of her friends.

GENE
That's good.

COLLIN
Are you gonna be alright here?

GENE
Fine.

COLLIN
Alright.

Collin exits. Gene walks into the bathroom.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The doorbell rings. Collin walks through.

INT. FRONT DOOR - EVENING

Collin opens the front door to reveal Jainie.

COLLIN
Hi.

JAINIE
Hi.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

Collin and Jainie walk to a CAR in the driveway.

JAINIE
Quite a house. Yours?

COLLIN
Yeah, right. It's my grandfather's.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

There are 3 others in the car. REED, 22, at the wheel. DEVON, 23, in the passenger seat, and HALLIE, 21, in back.

Jainie opens the backseat door and they get in.

JAINIE
Collin, this is Devon and Hallie,
who's also my roommate, and that's
Reed. Guys, this is Collin.

They greet him.

COLLIN

Hey, guys.

JAINIE

Remember when I ran up to you at the store? This is who I thought you were.

She points to Reed. Reed has the same hair color as Collin, but is noticeably FATTER.

COLLIN

I see.

REED

Oh yeah, you told me about that.

DEVON

All right now, can we stop tea time and go, please?

They laugh. Reed starts the car and heads down the driveway.

INT. MALT SHOP - EVENING

The group enters. They approach the counter where a TEENAGE GIRL wearing a triangle cap waits to serve them. We can tell by the look on her face that she knows who they are.

TEENAGE GIRL

Can I take your order?

DEVON

Yes. I would like...you to go out with me.

TEENAGE GIRL

Give it up, Devon. I'm going out with someone.

DEVON

Who?

TEENAGE GIRL

Him.

She points to Collin, who is talking to Jainie. Devon laughs.

DEVON

What's his name?

TEENAGE GIRL

...Jason.

Devon makes a "wrong answer buzzer" noise with his mouth.

DEVON

Wrong answer. He just moved here.

The group laughs.

TEENAGE GIRL

What do you want?

DEVON

Fine. I'll take a root beer float.

Devon sits down at a booth disappointed, but still light-hearted. The rest of the group give their orders.

INT. MALT SHOP - MINUTES LATER

The whole group now sits at a booth, eating their food. Collin is on the end with Jainie and Devon. Reed and Hallie sit on the other end.

DEVON

Did I tell you guys what Cordray did yesterday?

HALLIE

Who's Cordray?

DEVON

Psych professor.

HALLIE

What did he do?

DEVON

(laughs)

We were in class and he was up there lecturing about something. I was in the back talking to Eric and Ryan. And Cordray, he...

(laughs again)

He sees us, gets up and says, "Devon, you and your *homies* need to pay attention."

The group laughs. Collin and Jainie look at each other.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Gene looks out to the backyard. He sits in his chair and turns on the TV.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

A bowling ball crashes into a set of pins, a strike. At the top of the lane is HALLIE.

DEVON

Ooh!

Hallie celebrates her strike as she sits down at a table occupied by the rest of the group. Devon marks Hallie's score on the score card. They are all eating from a bowl of cheese fries.

JAINIE

Nice shot, Hallie!

DEVON

You're up, Jainie.

Jainie stands, goes to the lane and grabs a ball. She rolls. The ball knocks down eight pins. Small cheers from the group.

Jainie steps up to the line for her second roll as Devon sneaks up behind her.

As Jainie's hand comes back for the roll, Devon grabs the ball causing her to roll nothing but air. The group laughs.

Jainie takes her ball back from a laughing Devon, steps up and rolls knocking one of the remaining pins down.

Devon comes back to write Jainie's score and Reed throws a cheese fry at him. Devon throws one back and looks at the score card. Jainie sits back down.

REED

So, Collin, do you go to Snow?

COLLIN

No, no, I don't live here. Just here for the summer.

REED

So where do you live? Are you in school?

COLLIN
I go to Columbia in New York City.

DEVON
Ooh. Richie Rich.

COLLIN
I wish. No, I got a scholarship.

DEVON
Oh. Smartie Smart.

COLLIN
I kind of had some leverage.

JAINIE
What do you mean?

COLLIN
...my father was a cop. They have
scholarships for students who are
children of police officers, or
firemen, or Red Cross Workers and
stuff.

He chuckles, a little embarrassed.

REED
Wow.

DEVON
Reed, you're up.

Reed stands to take his turn. Collin's cell phone rings.

COLLIN
Excuse me for a second.

Collin stands and walks to another area. He answers his
phone.

COLLIN
Hello?

JORDAN
(phone)
What's up, man?

BACK TO GROUP

DEVON
I'm gettin' a pitcher.

Devon stands and walks to a CONCESSIONS COUNTER.

BACK TO COLLIN

COLLIN

Hey, buddy. Could I call you back tomorrow? I'm doing something right now.

The sound of pins crashing off-screen.

JORDAN

(phone)

Sounds like it. Where are you?

COLLIN

At a bowling alley with this girl I met and some of her friends.

JORDAN

(phone)

Oh. I see...

COLLIN

It's not like that. I'll call you.

JORDAN

(phone)

Alright. Later.

Collin hangs up.

BACK TO GROUP

Collin sits back down.

JAINIE

You alright?

COLLIN

Yeah. It was just a friend of mine.

Devon comes back with a PITCHER OF BEER and GLASSES.

DEVON

The party officially begins.

Collin glances at the pitcher. Reed, Hallie, and Jainie pour themselves glasses.

HALLIE

You're up, Dev.

Devon grabs a ball and rolls. A strike. The group reacts.

DEVON
That is how it's done.

He laughs as he pours a glass of beer and takes a swig.
Collin rises and rolls a ball. Seven.

The group reacts.

DEVON
Hey, man. Take a swig of this and
you'll pick up that spare.

Reed and Hallie laugh. Devon offers Collin a glass.

COLLIN
No, thanks.

DEVON
Come on. You'll get the spare, I
promise.

COLLIN
I don't drink.

He picks up another ball and rolls. Knocks two pins down.

DEVON
I told you, man.

COLLIN
I guess you were right.

Collin sits. Devon offers him the glass again.

COLLIN
No. Thanks.

DEVON
Come on. What, are you Mormon?

Collin smiles.

COLLIN
No. I just don't drink.

DEVON
Just one swig. Lighten up, man.

COLLIN
What are you doing? I don't want
the damn drink.

JAINIE
Devon...

DEVON
What?

REED
He doesn't want it.

DEVON
It's taaastyyy...

Devon dangles the glass in Collin's face. Some beer spills on him. Collin immediately knocks the beer out of his hand and SHOVES Devon up against the wall. The glass falls and SHATTERS.

COLLIN
I said I didn't want the fucking
drink.

Devon is silent. Collin lets him go. He throws a look to the group...

COLLIN
Sorry.

...and walks out.

REED
Jesus, Devon.

DEVON
What did I do?

Jainie follows Collin.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Collin is walking down the street. Jainie exits the bowling alley and sees him.

JAINIE
Collin.

Collin turns around to see that it's Jainie. He turns around and she approaches.

COLLIN
I'm sorry. I...I didn't mean to
ruin the party.

JAINIE
No. No, don't be sorry. Devon's a
real dick sometimes.

COLLIN
(smiles)
I can tell.

JAINIE
No one's ever hit him like that,
though.

She smiles.

COLLIN
My father was an alcoholic. That's
why I...

JAINIE
Was?

COLLIN
He got...he passed away in a fire
at his house last month.

JAINIE
Oh. I'm--I'm sorry. What happened?

COLLIN
It was an electrical fire. A fuse
blew, or something. I wasn't there,
obviously, but...I guess it was out
of control and they couldn't get to
where my dad was, he was upstairs
in his bedroom. And then the...the
roof collapsed so he...yeah...

JAINIE
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to...

COLLIN
No, it's okay. I actually haven't
talked about it until now.

JAINIE
Were you close?

COLLIN
...no. No, he was an asshole. My
mom left when I was a kid. I don't
even know what she looks like. We
were never close.

JAINIE
So you're living with your grandpa?

COLLIN
After the funeral, he asked me to
come back, stay with him for a
while so here I am.

He looks at her, smiles. She gives a consoling smile.

COLLIN
I guess I won't be joining you next
Thursday.

They laugh.

COLLIN
I'll just walk home.

JAINIE
Collin.

He looks at her.

JAINIE
I don't want to step over any
lines, but if you ever feel like
you need to talk to someone...

COLLIN
...thanks. I'll see ya.

JAINIE
See ya.

Collin turns and walks down the street. Jainie goes back to
the bowling alley.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Collin lies on his bed, above the covers, watching the
ceiling.

EXT. BACKYARD - THE NEXT DAY

Collin and Gene at the fence. The rails and pickets laid out
on the grass.

GENE

This is simple stuff. We need to attach the rails to the posts and then we can start putting on the pickets.

EXT. FENCE - DAY

Gene nails a rail to a post with a lap joint. Collin follows Gene's moves.

The two of them continue putting up rails.

Collin finishes up the last rails. Gene has moved on to the pickets. He spaces them using a loose picket.

Collin now joins Gene in nailing on the pickets.

COLLIN

So what was that story?

GENE

Story?

COLLIN

Yeah, that story you wanted to tell me.

GENE

You want to hear it?

COLLIN

Sure.

GENE

When your dad was a kid, your grandmother and I took him up to the city. He must have been about 5 or 6. It was his first time there. And while we were there he saw this dwarf. And when he saw him he pointed at him and yelled, "Look, daddy! He's little!" The dwarf overheard and just ignored it. I told him, "Kenny, stop it. Don't say that." But he just kept yelling. "He's little! He's little!" And I kept telling him to stop.

(MORE)

GENE(cont'd)

Then at the end of the day we're in the car ready to go home and that same dwarf is walking through a crosswalk in front of the car. Well, he sees me and he flips me off. So as he was walking away I rolled down my window, yelled "You're little!" And drove off.

Gene chuckles, Collin can't help but laugh also. They continue to work.

GENE

I must've told that story 100 times and it never gets old to me.

COLLIN

It's funny.

Gene looks at him, then goes back to work.

GENE

So this Jainie girl...

COLLIN

Yes?

GENE

Are you two...?

COLLIN

She's a friend, Grandpa.

GENE

Okay. You gonna see her again?

Beat.

COLLIN

I don't know.

GENE

You like her.

COLLIN

I told you, she's just a friend.

GENE

I believe you. But you like her.

No answer. They go back to the pickets.

COLLIN

I don't want to date her. I'm not even gonna be here come September.

GENE

Okay.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Collin and Gene eat dinner.

GENE

It's coming along. Couple more days on the pickets, then we'll have to fix up the gate. After that, start painting.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Collin enters. He puts his phone on the night stand while he undresses for bed. His phone gives a short RING. He has a TEXT MESSAGE. Collin looks at his phone:

Text message from: Jainie

Collin opens his phone and reads the text.

Hey! How r u?

Collin writes back.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JAINIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jainie lies on her bed, tired.

JAINIE

(to herself)

Not bad. How are you?

She writes back.

COLLIN

(to himself)

Just got back from rehearsal.

Collin starts writing back, but stops. He dials and calls her.

Jainie's phone rings, she answers.

JAINIE

Hey.

COLLIN

My fingers are too sore for
texting.

She laughs.

JAINIE

I hear ya.

COLLIN

So...the show's coming along?

JAINIE

It's getting there.

COLLIN

Cool. When do you open again?

JAINIE

Two weeks from Friday.

COLLIN

I'll be there.

Collin wants to say something, but can't think.

JAINIE

Well, I'll let you go. I just
wanted to say Hi.

COLLIN

Well, listen, before you go,
um...there's this thing going on
at the movie theater...

JAINIE

Yeah, the Charlie Chaplin festival.
They're running all his old movies.

COLLIN

Yeah.

JAINIE

Yeah.

COLLIN

Yeah...would you wanna, you know,
go to it with me?

Beat.

JAINIE
Sure. I'd like that.

COLLIN
Great. When's a good day for you? I don't know what your rehearsal schedule is, or anything.

JAINIE
Wednesdays are usually good.

COLLIN
Wednesdays. Great. How about this Wednesday?

JAINIE
Works for me.

COLLIN
Sweet. I will see you on Wednesday then.

JAINIE
Okay.

COLLIN
Good night.

JAINIE
Night.

Collin waits for Jainie to hang up. She does and Collin closes his phone.

EXT. KENT'S MARKET - THE NEXT DAY

Collin exits with his hands full of groceries.

EXT. FENCE - DAY

Gene and Collin continue nailing on pickets.

GENE
You lied.

COLLIN
What?

GENE
You do like her.

COLLIN
What are you talking about?

GENE
I heard you on the phone last night. Those walls are paper thin. You asked her out.

COLLIN
Alright. Yes, you caught me. I asked her out. But it's just once. One date. Just for fun.

GENE
In my day, we didn't ask a girl out "just for fun."

COLLIN
In your day? Well, listen here, Jed Clampett...

Gene laughs.

COLLIN
This isn't "your day" anymore. We're now in my day.

They laugh.

GENE
If you say so.

EXT. BACKYARD - WIDE - DAY

Collin and Gene nail pickets on.

LATER

More pickets are on now.

EXT. FENCE - CONTINUOUS

The sun begins to set as they finish up the last of the pickets.

GENE
You asked me to tell the story. About your dad.

COLLIN
Um...yeah. Yeah, I did.

GENE
Why did you do that? What changed
your mind?

COLLIN
I...I felt bad about snapping at
you so...I don't know.

Beat.

COLLIN
I told Jainie. When we went out the
other night. I told her about how
dad died. That mom left us when I
was a kid. I don't know why. I
didn't have to.

GENE
...well...you talked to someone.

Collin nods.

INT. BASEMENT - THE NEXT DAY

The gate is there on a pair of sawhorses.

Collin and Gene drill on new pickets to the gate.

They remove the diagonal board.

INT. BASEMENT - LATER

Collin has climbed under the gate and is drilling on the new
diagonal board. He strips a screw and gets too close to his
hand.

COLLIN
Ah! Shit!

He looks at his finger, it has a small CUT. He sucks on it.

GENE
What? What happened?

COLLIN
Just stripped a screw.

EXT. FENCE - AFTERNOON

Collin and Gene bolt the fixed gate into it's hinges. A Band-Aid now on Collin's finger.

GENE

Some of the pickets are sticking up above the posts. We'll have to fix that before we start painting.

FADE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - TOWNE CINEMA - EVENING

Collin and Jainie stand next in line for the box office. Collin pays for the tickets.

The marquee reads "Charlie Chaplin in 'City Lights'".

INT. THEATER - CONTINUOUS

Jainie and Collin enter. They hold popcorn and sodas and look for a seat.

The theater is practically empty.

COLLIN

Good thing we got here early, huh?

JAINIE

Yeah.

They sit.

COLLIN

I haven't been here since I was a little kid. 101 Dalmations, I think it was.

Jainie smiles.

COLLIN

There's a movie theater in New York. The Ziegfeld Theater. I went to it a couple times. It used to be a Broadway theater and then they turned it into a movie house, and it is gigantic. I couldn't believe it the first time I walked in there.

JAINIE

Wow. I hope I can get there
someday.

COLLIN

I think you'd like it.

JAINIE

What's your favorite place there?

COLLIN

Well...actually, it's the pier at
Riverside Park. I go watch sunsets
there sometimes.

JAINIE

(slight teasing)

That's cute.

COLLIN

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JAINIE

No, I'm serious. It is.

She notices the Band-Aid.

JAINIE

What happened?

COLLIN

Oh. Um, my grandpa and I are
building this fence in his,
rebuilding actually, in his
backyard and I caught myself with a
drill.

JAINIE

Ouch.

COLLIN

It's nothing. Just a scratch.

JAINIE

What did you mean "rebuilding" it?

COLLIN

It was his idea. My dad built it
with him when he was a kid. My
grandpa thought that it would be a
good idea if we rebuilt it.

JAINIE

I see.

COLLIN

How's rehearsals going?

JAINIE

Oy.

COLLIN

Bad?

JAINIE

No, it's just, we're getting close to opening and it's in this weird period where we don't know if it's gonna come together or not.

She chuckles.

COLLIN

Well, I'm sure it'll come together.

The lights dim and the movie begins to roll. The opening credits come up.

JAINIE

Eventually.

(whispers)

Now, no more talking. It's a *silent* movie.

Collin smiles and pops some popcorn into his mouth.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Gene drinks a glass of milk at the table, deep in thought.

INT. THEATER - LATER

Collin and Jainie are engaged in the movie, laughing occasionally.

Collin steals a thoughtful look at Jainie, who doesn't notice him.

EXT. MAIN STREET - TOWNE CINEMA - NIGHT

Collin and Jainie emerge from the theater.

JAINIE

The best part was the scene where he tried to save the guy from drowning himself and they kept falling into the water over and over.

Jainie spurts into more laughter. They reach Collin's car. Collin opens Jainie's door for her.

JAINIE

Thank you.

Collin gets in on the driver's side and takes off.

EXT. JAINIE'S DORM/FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Collin walks Jainie to the front door.

JAINIE

This was a lot of fun. Thank you.

COLLIN

You're welcome.

They stand for a moment, not knowing how to end the night.

JAINIE

Well, thanks again and I'll see you around?

COLLIN

Course.

JAINIE

Good night.

COLLIN

Good night.

Jainie hugs him. Collin sighs.

COLLIN

Well, this sucks.

JAINIE

Sorry?

COLLIN

Cuz now I like you. And I want to see you again, but I can't. I can't get involved with you.

JAINIE
Actually, Collin, I'm kind of
relieved. I...I'm not ready to be
in a relationship either.

COLLIN
Looks like we're on the same page
then.

Jainie nods.

JAINIE
We can be friends.

COLLIN
Yeah. Yeah, I'll come to the show.

JAINIE
Good. Good night.

COLLIN
Night.

Jainie goes inside. Collin walks back to his car.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Gene examines the pickets outside. Collin enters the living room and sees him through the glass door. Gene sees Collin and goes back. He opens the door.

COLLIN
What are you doing up?

GENE
How was it?

COLLIN
It was fine. I'm going to bed.

Collin exits.

EXT. FENCE - DAY

The sky is overcast.

Gene and Collin fix pickets that are sticking up over the posts. Gene holds a hammer to pry out nails.

GENE
Have fun last night?

COLLIN
Yeah, we had a good time.

GENE
What did you guys do?

COLLIN
We saw "City Lights" at the movie
theater. It was like a Charlie
Chaplin festival thing.

GENE
That's good.

Pause.

GENE
There something on your mind?

COLLIN
No.

Silence. Gene goes back to work.

GENE
You're lying to me again.

COLLIN
Excuse me?

GENE
I'm getting really sick of seeing
you pretending like there's nothing
wrong.

COLLIN
What are you talking about?

GENE
Your father was proud of you.

Collin stops working.

GENE
No, he wasn't a great father, I
admit. Neither was I. But he was
proud of you. He did love you--

COLLIN
Shut up. He did not love me. He did
not love me. What the hell do you
want me to do?

(MORE)

COLLIN(cont'd)

You think that now he's dead, suddenly I've found some new perspective on my childhood? On him? The guy was a dick, okay? And he didn't give a rat shit about me. Why the hell do you think I went to a school on the other side of the country?

Their eyes lock. A harsh pause.

GENE

Then why are you doing this?

COLLIN

I don't know.

Collin drops his things and leaves. Gene is left alone.

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Gene sits at the table, eating dinner. Collin enters, goes to the fridge and grabs a soda.

GENE

You didn't know him like I knew him, Collin. He was my son. He had problems, he made bad choices, but I never stopped loving him. I thought about him everyday, hoping he would get better, go back to who he used to be. And the fact that he died before he could pisses me off.

Gene gets up, clears his plate.

COLLIN

Why did you ask me to come back?

GENE

Because I'm the only family you got.

COLLIN

No. *I'm* the only family you got.

He turns to leave.

GENE

I see him in you.

Collin stops.

GENE

You're quiet, subdued, with one hell of a temper. That's him. That's me.

Collin almost says something, but doesn't. He leaves the room.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - LATER

Collin stands at his bed. He packs a suitcase. Gene appears at the door.

GENE

What the hell are you doing?

COLLIN

I'm getting out of here.

GENE

Stop packing.

COLLIN

Leave me alone.

GENE

Stop packing.

Collin disobeys and continues. Pause. Gene approaches and viciously throws the suitcase off the bed. He grabs Collin by the collar.

COLLIN

Get off of me--!

GENE

--Shut up. I won't put up with your pouty little girl bullshit.

Collin sees the top of Gene's scar.

COLLIN

How'd you get the scar?

Gene looks at him hard. He doesn't want to answer.

COLLIN

How'd you get the fucking scar?!

Gene lets go of Collin. He takes off his shirt, revealing the ENTIRE SCAR. It reaches from his shoulder all the way across his torso to his waist.

Collin is taken aback at it.

GENE

5th Battalion, 16th Artillery,
United States Army. A shell
exploded 10 feet away from me in
Viet Nam. I was left for dead. When
I woke up, it was 2 days later and
I was in the infirmary, all
stitched up. Another soldier had
found me and pulled me there. I
asked the doctor where he was, but
he was long gone. Later found out
that same soldier's regiment was
demolished at the Siege of Khe
Sanh. I never got to thank him for
saving my life. They sent me home.

He puts his shirt back on.

GENE

I thought I had been saved for a
reason. Not so I could watch my
wife die a year later, not so I
could watch my only son become an
alcoholic. And I sure as hell was
not saved so I could someday raise
a little shit like you.

(beat)

If you wanna give up, you wanna run
away again, go ahead. You can hate
your father, you can hate me. But
we paid our dues and we did our
time. And what are you?

Collin stands still. Pause.

GENE

Everything this family used to be,
is gone. You don't know what it is
that I lost.

Gene exits.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Gene sits at the table, in the dark. He begins to cry, but
catches himself and stops.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Collin stands by the window. He picks up his cell phone and scrolls through his contact list until he comes to Jainie's name.

Collin presses "dial", but after the first ring, he hangs up. The room echoes with the sound of rain tapping on the window.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAWN

The sun rises over the mountains.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Gene stands and drinks a cup of coffee. From off-screen comes the sound of the garage door opening.

Alarmed, Gene puts down his coffee and exits.

INT. GARAGE - MORNING

Gene enters from the door. Collin in the Civic has pulled out and drives down the driveway.

Gene goes back inside.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - MORNING

Gene anxiously enters.

Collin's suitcases are on the floor.

Gene bends down and opens one. It is empty. Gene is relieved.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Collin enters from the kitchen, a plastic bag in hand. He stops when he sees Gene sitting in his chair.

COLLIN
I needed some shampoo.

An awkward silence.

GENE

We gonna finish it or not?

COLLIN

I never talked to him. I could've asked him about...everything. About you, about our family. Maybe he wouldn't have told me anything, but I could've at least asked. I didn't know that about you. I don't know anything about my own family.

Gene stands.

COLLIN

I don't want to be like him.

GENE

You won't.

COLLIN

(re: the fence)

What is it that we're trying to keep alive?

GENE

I don't know, Collin. But it's not about your dad, it's about us.

Pause.

GENE

So you decide. I'm not doing this alone.

Gene exits into the kitchen.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - DAY

The room is empty. PAN to the window

Collin and Gene are down at the fence, staining it.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER THAT DAY

Gene sets 2 buckets of white paint on the lawn. He opens the buckets as Collin opens the sliding glass door and steps out onto the grass.

They begin painting the wood.

The fence is now about halfway painted. Gene and Collin continue working.

EXT. BACK PORCH - LATER

Collin and Gene stare out at the completed, brand new, picket fence.

GENE

Good boy.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATE AFTERNOON

As the sun sets, Collin cleans up paint. He carries two buckets of it onto the porch.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Collin enters and washes his hands in the sink. Gene drinks a cup of coffee.

GENE

Thanks for cleaning up.

COLLIN

Sure.

Gene rises and puts his coffee in the sink.

GENE

Good night.

COLLIN

Good night.

Their eyes meet for a beat and Gene exits.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Collin enters with a laundry basket of clothes. He sees something on his bed, a shoebox. He puts down the basket and opens the shoebox.

Inside are two things. Ken's badge, and Gene's PURPLE HEART. Collin picks up the Purple Heart and looks at it.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gene's door is closed as Collin approaches it, the Purple Heart in hand. He stands outside the door for a moment, then walks back to his room.

EXT. SNOW COLLEGE - ARTS BUILDING - EVENING

Establishing shot. A few people enter the building.

INT. ARTS BUILDING - THEATER - EVENING

This is a small, black box theater. A crowd flows in and takes their seats.

Collin appears at the door holding a program. He finds a seat near the back and sits.

He flips through the program and reads Jainie's bio. The lights dim as the show is about to begin.

"ORLANDO" and "ADAM" enter on stage.

"ORLANDO"

As I remember, Adam, it was upon
this fashion bequeath'd me by will
but poor a thousand crowns, and, as
thou say'st, charged my brother, on
his blessing, to breed me well: and
there begins my sadness. My brother
Jaques he keeps at school...

Act 1, Scene 2. Jainie as "Rosalind" and Hallie as "Celia" on stage.

HALLIE

I pray thee, Rosalind, sweet my
coz, be merry.

JAINIE

Dear Celia, I show more mirth than
I am mistress of; and would you yet
I were merrier? Unless you could
teach me to forget a banisht
father, you must not learn me how
to remember any extraordinary
pleasure.

Collin watches Jainie.

JAINIE
 Let me see; what think you of
 falling in love?

HALLIE
 Marry, I prithee, do, to make sport
 withal: but love no man in good
 earnest.

The audience laughs.

"JAQUES" now on stage with "DUKE SENIOR".

"JAQUES"
 All the world's a stage, and all
 the men and women merely players:
 They have their exits and their
 entrances; And one man in his time
 plays many parts...

FADE TO:

INT. THEATER - LATER

Act 3, Scene 2. Jainie on stage, dressed as a man, with
 "Orlando."

JAINIE
 Do you hear, forester?

"ORLANDO"
 Very well: what would you?

JAINIE
 I pray you, what is't o'clock?

"ORLANDO"
 You should ask me, what time o'
 day: there's no clock in the
 forest.

JAINIE
 Then there is no true lover in the
 forest; else sighing every minute,
 and groaning every hour, would
 detect the lazy foot of Time as
 well as a clock.

Audience laughs. Collin too.

"ORLANDO"

And why not the swift foot of Time?
Had not that been as proper?

JAINIE

By no means, sir. Time travels in
divers paces with divers persons:
I'll tell you who Time ambles
withal, who Time trots withal, who
Time gallops withal, and who he
stands still withal.

Collin watches Jainie.

FADE TO:

INT. THEATER - LATER

Act 3, Scene 5. Jainie, dressed as a man, and "PHEBE" on stage.

"PHEBE"

Sweet youth, I pray you, chide a
year together: I had rather hear
you chide than this man woo.

JAINIE

(aside)

He's fall'n in love with her
foulness, and she'll fall in love
with my anger:- If it be so, as
fast as she answers thee with
frowning looks, I'll sauce her with
bitter words.

(to "Phebe")

Why look you so upon me?

"PHEBE"

For no ill will I bear you.

JAINIE

I pray you, do not fall in love
with me, For I am falser than vows
made in wine: Besides, I like you
not...

Collin glances down for a beat, then back to the play.

INT. GENE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gene enters from his bathroom. He sits on the bed and picks up the picture of Betty from the night stand.

He tenderly kisses the picture and puts in back. Pause.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Jainie on stage, alone. The Epilogue of the play.

JAINIE

If I were a woman, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions that liked me, and breaths that I defied not: and, I am sure, as many as have good beards, or good faces, or sweet breaths, will, for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell.

The lights fade down. Audience applauds.

After a moment, the lights fade back up. The cast bows for curtain call.

INT. ARTS BUILDING - HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

The audience flows out, talking about the play. Collin enters. He waits in the hall.

Hallie and "Jaques" are out, chattering with friends.

Collin looks around for Jainie and finds her...

At the end of the hall, back in street clothes, talking on her cell phone. She is upset. She hangs up and walks down the hall. Her and Collin eye each other.

JAINIE

Hey.

COLLIN

Hi.

JAINIE

How you doing?

COLLIN

Good. I'm good. You were great.

JAINIE

Thank you.

COLLIN

You didn't tell me you were the lead.

JAINIE

Well...

She smiles. "Orlando" walks up behind Jainie.

"ORLANDO"

Good show, babe.

"Orlando" hugs her.

JAINIE

Thanks. You too.

"Orlando" moves over to a crowd.

JAINIE

So how's everything else going?

COLLIN

Good. You know.

JAINIE

How's that, um...didn't you say you were building a fence?

COLLIN

Yeah, yeah, we finished it, actually. Few days ago.

JAINIE

Cool. How's it look?

COLLIN

Pretty good, I guess, as far as wooden fences go.

She smiles. Some of the cast begin to leave, waving to Jainie to come with them.

JAINIE

Well, I think we're all gonna go out as a cast and get something to eat so...

COLLIN

Cool. Alright. I need to go too,
but I really need some more
groceries so maybe I'll see you at
the check out counter.

She walks to the cast.

JAINIE

Maybe. I'll see ya. Thanks for
coming.

COLLIN

See ya.

Collin turns and walks the opposite way.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Collin enters, takes off his shoes and pants, and climbs into
bed. He sighs, frustrated.

COLLIN

Shit.

He turns out the light.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Collin drives down Main Street, taking a bite from a
hamburger.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gene pulls out a vacuum cleaner from a closet.

EXT. A GAS STATION - DAY

Collin stands outside the car as he fills it up.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Collin enters and sets the keys on the counter. From the
living room comes the sound of the vacuum cleaner. Collin
goes to it and...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...enters to find the vacuum lying on the floor, turned on. He reaches down and turns it off.

Something around the corner catches his eye and he goes to it.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

That something Collin sees is Gene, collapsed on the stairs.

COLLIN
Oh my God.

Collin goes to him, checks his pulse and tries to shake him awake.

COLLIN
Grandpa. Grandpa.

Gene doesn't wake up. Collin pulls out his cell and dials 911.

OPERATOR
(phone)
911. What's your emergency?

BLACK.

The sound of SIRENS.

EXT. A HOUSE - NIGHT

This is not the house we know. It is Collin's childhood home, on FIRE.

The sound of the sirens slowly fades out.

COLLIN'S EYES

Open. He looks around and it's revealed we are at

INT. SANPETE VALLEY HOSPITAL - INTENSIVE CARE UNIT - NIGHT

Collin is sitting in a hallway chair. He gets up and walks to the Reception Desk to look at the clock. It is 3:15 AM.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Collin enters the room. DOCTOR SIKES, 50s, is in the room with 2 NURSES. He is giving them instructions. The nurse leaves.

COLLIN
What happened?

DOCTOR SIKES
He's just sleeping. Come with me.

They both head out of the room.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Doctor Sikes exits the room, they walk down the hall.

DOCTOR SIKES
Your grandfather suffers from a condition called Bradycardia. Has he told you about this?

Collin shakes his head, "no."

DOCTOR SIKES
It's a heart condition which causes abnormally slow heart beating. What happened to him today was called an arrhythmia. It's a very common thing for patients with heart problems. And, normally, these are not life-threatening, but because of the duration of the illness it could have been fatal. His pulse was only beating at 36 beats per minute when the ambulance arrived.

COLLIN
So, what? What's gonna happen? He'll just stay here of couple days and go home?

DOCTOR SIKES
That's hard to say. We'll keep him under close observation. Run some tests and things. It's a little unpredictable right now.

COLLIN
All right. Thank you, doctor.

DOCTOR SIKES

If you have any questions, just ask.

Collin goes into the room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Collin enters the room and sits down in a chair beside Gene's bed. He sniffs.

Gene's eyes gently open.

GENE

You better not be crying over me.

Collin is not crying.

COLLIN

Course not.

GENE

What the hell happened?

COLLIN

You had an Arrythmia. The doctor just told me the whole story.

GENE

So you know what those pills are for now.

COLLIN

You're just full of surprises. Why didn't you tell me?

GENE

You didn't need to know.

COLLIN

How long have you had this?

GENE

Nine years. Never had anything like this before. Hospitals are a pain in my ass.

COLLIN

What's gonna happen?

GENE

Don't ask me.

A long pause. There's a TAPPING sound on the window.

GENE
It's raining.

COLLIN
Yeah.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAWN

The sun rises.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Gene lies in the bed. Collin sits in the chair, awake and cold. He thinks Gene is asleep.

Collin gets up and puts on his jacket.

GENE
(eyes closed)
Where's that girl?

COLLIN
What?

GENE
(eyes closed)
Are you seeing her?

COLLIN
No. I told you, it was just one date. We're just friends.

GENE
But you don't *want* to be friends, do you?

COLLIN
What do you mean?

GENE
Don't play stupid.

Collin smiles.

COLLIN
I do want to see her again, but there's no point.

GENE
No point?

COLLIN
Yeah. You know, I'm going back to school next month and I'm not gonna be here, so why get into anything?

GENE
You never know.

Beat.

GENE
Get home.

Collin looks at him.

GENE
You didn't get any sleep. You look terrible. Go home. Sleep in your bed.

COLLIN
Okay.

Collin stands...

COLLIN
I'll come back tonight.

GENE
Alright.

and exits.

EXT. NORTH HIGHWAY ROAD - MORNING

A disquieted Collin drives back to Ephraim.

EXT. SNOW COLLEGE CAMPUS - DORM BUILDING - MORNING

Collin drives by the dorm building.

EXT. JAINIE'S DORM/FRONT DOOR - MORNING

Collin knocks on the door. After a few moments, the door opens. It's Hallie, she is tired.

COLLIN
Hi. Sorry, um, is Jainie here?

HALLIE
Just a second.

Hallie goes back in. Jainie comes to the door.

JAINIE
Hey.

COLLIN
Hey. Sorry I woke you up.

JAINIE
Oh, no. I was up.
(beat)
What's going on?

COLLIN
There's no one else I could talk
to.

Jainie steps out and closes the door.

JAINIE
What's wrong?

COLLIN
My grandpa had an arrythmia. He's
in the hospital.

JAINIE
Oh, I'm sorry.

COLLIN
I don't know what's going to
happen. He's already got this
condition, and...

JAINIE
Are you okay?

COLLIN
Yeah, I'm fine. I just...I'm kind
of worried.

JAINIE
Is there anything I can do?

COLLIN
Not really. There's nothing anybody
can do.

JAINIE
I'm sorry...I have a class at 10:30
that I need to head out for, but I
will give you a call a little
later?

Collin nods. Jainie hugs him. A tender moment between them.
Jainie lets go.

JAINIE
I'll call you.

COLLIN
Okay.

Jainie goes back inside.

INT. CIVIC - DAY

Collin shuts the door and sits for a moment.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - DAY

Collin lies on his bed.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The fence stands, paint gleams in the sunlight.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - DAY

The doorbell RINGS.

Collin wakes up. He looks at the clock, 1:45.

INT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

Collin opens the door to reveal Jainie at the door.

JAINIE
Hey.

COLLIN
Hi.

JAINIE
I called earlier, but you didn't
answer so I figured I might as well
come over.

COLLIN
Oh. Yeah, sorry, I fell
asleep...come in.

Jainie enters. Collin closes the front door.

JAINIE
How you doing?

They move into

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

COLLIN
I'm heading back up to the hospital
in a little while.

Jainie glances out the back door.

JAINIE
Is that the fence?

COLLIN
Yeah. That's it.

JAINIE
It looks beautiful.

Jainie turns back and their eyes meet. Collin moves in, tries
to kiss her, but she stops him.

JAINIE
Collin.

He stops.

JAINIE
This is really confusing.

COLLIN
I'm sorry. I don't know what it is.
I know I can't be with you, but I
still...want to be with you.
(beat)
I mean...do you feel that way too?

JAINIE
I can't.

COLLIN
I really like you.

JAINIE
Don't.

COLLIN
Do you like me?

JAINIE
I'm not ready to do this.

COLLIN
Do what?

JAINIE
Like someone.

Collin approaches her, touches her arm. She fights tears.

JAINIE
Collin, please.

COLLIN
What are you scared of?

No answer.

COLLIN
I know what it feels like to be
lonely. Really painfully,
desperately lonely.

She pulls away. Pause.

JAINIE
So do I. That's why I can't.

COLLIN
What happened?

She looks at him.

JAINIE
No.

COLLIN
Alright.

JAINIE
I need to go to work.

COLLIN
You should go then.

JAINIE
What do you want me to say?

COLLIN
I want you to say how you feel!
Just tell me what you really feel.

Collin opens the sliding glass door and steps out onto the porch.

Silence.

Jainie turns and leaves through the front door.

Collin looks back and sees she's gone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Gene in bed. Collin sits against the wall on the other side of the room.

GENE
What is it?

COLLIN
I'm pathetic.

GENE
What makes you think that?

COLLIN
I tried to kiss her. Jainie. I saw her today and I tried to kiss her.

GENE
Uh oh.

COLLIN
I told her that I liked her and asked if she liked me and it...I think I lost her.

GENE
You're not pathetic. You're just a guy.

Collin half-smiles.

GENE

The funny thing is, I had a similar problem with your grandmother. I met her when I was 17, but she was practically engaged to another guy. I was just another person she knew.

COLLIN

What did you do?

GENE

Nothing.

COLLIN

What?

GENE

Nothing. I just kept living my life and I didn't worry about it because...well, because, I always believed that I loved her. And if I loved her, then something, someday, would happen. And it did.

Beat. A small chest pain hits Gene.

COLLIN

You okay?

GENE

Just a little one. They've been coming all day. Get home, get some rest.

Collin grabs and puts on his jacket.

COLLIN

Alright. I am tired. Night.

GENE

Bye. Collin.

COLLIN

Hm?

Gene's about to say something, but what comes out is:

GENE

Drive safe.

Collin nods and is gone. Gene lies in bed.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Collin sits on the couch, the TV displays a Sportscenter-esque show.

Collin glances at Gene's chair, waits a moment, then gets up and sits in Gene's chair.

The picket fence stands outside in the moonlight.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - THE NEXT DAY

Collin approaches Gene's room.

A WOMAN'S LAUGHTER comes from within the room. Collin opens the door...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...and enters. A NURSE, 40s, is changing Gene's IV, laughing.

GENE
Sandra, this is my grandson.

NURSE
Oh. Nice to meet you, Collin.

They shake hands.

COLLIN
Hi.

The Nurse finishes with the IV and leaves.

NURSE
Goodbye, Gene.

GENE
Goodbye.
(to Collin)
I told her the dwarf story.

COLLIN
Do you always flirt with the nurses?

GENE
Just trying to get some action.

Collin sits next to the bed.

COLLIN
How do you feel?

GENE
I feel like going home and sitting
in my chair. This bed is a son of a
bitch.

Collin smiles.

COLLIN
So, it's been a few days. Any word
on if you're coming home?

GENE
No. Damn doctors don't know
anything. But I think I'll be good
to go in a couple more days.

COLLIN
Well, I haven't trashed the place
too much.

GENE
Had one of those wild house parties
again?

COLLIN
Always.

They smiles.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Collin eats lunch. Gene has his on a lap tray.

COLLIN
So the fly ball is coming right for
me, but I didn't bring a glove and
I sure as hell wasn't going to try
and catch it with my bare hand, so
it hits the scoreboard and falls a
few feet away from me on the grass.
I reach over to pick it up and I
see another hand grab it. I look up
and there's this 10-year-old, red
haired little girl in pigtails
walking away with the ball. My
ball.

Gene laughs.

GENE
You ever see any big shot
celebrities?

COLLIN
Sometimes. I saw Robin Williams
once.

GENE
Really?

COLLIN
Yeah, I was going to dinner Jordan,
my roommate, and he walked right by
us on the street.

GENE
Wow.

COLLIN
I almost went up and said something
to him, but I chickened out.

Pause.

GENE
I never thanked you for coming back
with me.

COLLIN
Sure. You're welcome.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Collin walks through the parking lot.

INT. CIVIC - MAIN STREET - MOVING - NIGHT

Collin drives back into Ephraim. He glances at the Town
Theater as he passes by.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Collin walks through the living room. Turns off the lights
and goes upstairs.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Gene sleeps.

INT. HOSPITAL - NURSE'S DESK - NIGHT

A NURSE sits at the desk, reading US WEEKLY. A BEEPING sound comes from Gene's room around the corner.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Nurse enters Gene's room, sees him. His heart monitor is beeping rapidly.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Collin undresses and climbs into bed.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY/GENE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A TEAM OF DOCTORS AND NURSES enter Gene's room with a defibrillator.

DOCTOR

He's going into arrest.

One Nurse has Gene's chart in her hand. She flips through it, sees something, and stops a Doctor from zapping Gene with the defibrillator.

The Doctor looks at the chart, it reads:

DNR: Do Not Resuscitate. By Patient's Request.

The Doctor stops the procedure and stares at the unconscious Gene. The sound of the heart monitor beeping floods the room.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAWN

The sun rises behind the mountains.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Collin steps through the living room when the house phone, hanging on the wall, rings. He answers.

COLLIN

Hello?

EXT. NORTH HIGHWAY ROAD - HIGH ANGLE - DAY

The Civic drives down the road.

GENE (V.O.)

Did I ever tell you about that fence? Your father and I built it when he was a kid. It was his idea.

FADE TO WHITE:

GENE (V.O.)

I asked him why and he said, "Every good family has one..."

Sound of GUNSHOTS, a 21 gun salute.

EXT. EPHRAIM CEMETARY - HIGH ANGLE - DAYS LATER

A military funeral. The casket draped with an American Flag.

A CROWD is gathered, along with MILITARY PERSONNEL. A BISHOP has just finished a eulogy.

BISHOP

Amen.

CROWD

Amen.

SAME - LATER

An ARMY SERGEANT presents Collin with the folded American Flag.

EXT. CEMETARY - CONTINUOUS

The crowd slowly dissipates from the site, until there is one final onlooker.

EXT. CEMETARY - CONTINUOUS

The final onlooker is Collin, staring at the casket and holding the flag.

Collin takes a deep breath and walks back to his car.

EXT. CIVIC - CONTINUOUS

Collin takes out his car keys.

JAINIE (O.S.)

Collin.

Collin stops and looks back to find Jainie.

JAINIE

I'm sorry.

COLLIN

Thanks.

JAINIE

What are you gonna do?

COLLIN

I'm leaving. Flying back to New York tomorrow.

JAINIE

That soon?

COLLIN

I have no reason to stay.

Brief pause.

JAINIE

I want to be your friend.

COLLIN

Okay. We'll be friends. Alright?
I'll give you a call sometime.

Collin turns to get in the car.

JAINIE

I don't like you like that, Collin--

COLLIN

--I know. You don't like me like that. You're still in love with whoever it was that broke your heart.

JAINIE

You don't know that.

COLLIN
No. I don't.

JAINIE
You don't know anything about me.

COLLIN
Which is exactly how you want it.

JAINIE
You're blowing this so out of proportion.

COLLIN
Then go! Why are you here?! Why the hell do you care?! Just leave!

Pause.

JAINIE
Alright.

She leaves, fighting back tears. Collin stands at the car, looks up at the grave site.

GENE (V.O.)
I never thanked you for coming back with me.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAYS EARLIER - NIGHT

Back to our prior scene.

COLLIN
Sure. You're welcome.

Silence. Collin is unscrambling thoughts in his head.

GENE
(looking at the clock)
It's already 9:00. You better start heading--

COLLIN
Why did you ask me to come back?

No answer.

COLLIN
You knew this was gonna happen. You didn't want to be alone.

Gene is silent. For the first time in his life, afraid to speak because he knows Collin is right.

COLLIN

It's okay. It's okay. But it is late.

Collin stands.

GENE

I love you, son.

COLLIN

I love you too.

INT. HOUSE/FRONT DOOR - PRESENT - DAY

Collin walks in the front door.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Collin passes Gene's bedroom door. It's halfway open.

INT. GENE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Collin stands in the room. He opens Gene's bathroom door and looks inside.

He notices something, then bends down into a small trash can on the floor and pulls out Gene's bottle of prescription pills. It is still about half-way full.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Collin grabs the doorknob and slowly shuts the door.

Collin's hand trembles as he breaks down crying.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Collin stands in the living room, staring at Gene's chair, then looks out the glass door to the fence.

INT. OLD BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

On the dresser, Collin sets Gene's Purple Heart on top of his folded flag. Next to that is Ken's badge on top of his folded flag.

Collin looks at the two flags.

COLLIN
I'm sorry, Dad.

INT. COLLIN'S ROOM - DAY

Collin's luggage lies on the bed. Collin's hands reach into frame and take it.

INT. BACKYARD - DAY

Collin on his cell phone. It's ringing. Jainie's Voice Mail answers. BEEP.

COLLIN
Jainie...It's Collin. Look, I'm sure there's nothing I can say to...I didn't mean what I said...I was upset. I'm really sorry and I don't want to lose you, as a friend. So, if by some miracle, you feel like talking to me, please give me a call. If not, then I guess this is goodbye. Okay. Goodbye.

Collin hangs up, stands at the fence. He touches it softly with his hand.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

An airport SHUTTLE waits in the driveway. Collin exits the front door and locks it. He loads up his luggage in the trunk, and gets in.

EXT. SNOW COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

Jainie walks out of a class. She looks at her phone. It says:
1 NEW VOICE MAIL.

INT. SHUTTLE - CONTINUOUS

Collin's eyes stay on the house as the shuttle pulls out.

COLLIN
Bye, Grandpa.

EXT. SNOW COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

Jainie finishes listening to Collin's message. She hangs up.

INT. SHUTTLE - DAY

Collin in deep thought.

EXT. KENT'S MARKET - PAST - MOS - DAY

Jainie and Collin's first meeting. She runs up to him and puts her hands around his eyes.

FADE TO BLACK.

The sound of an AIRPLANE LANDING.

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Collin walks through campus, wearing a backpack and his Mets cap.

EXT. A PIZZERIA - DAY

Collin, Jordan, and some other FRIENDS are at the pizzeria hanging out, having fun.

Jordan looks at Collin and pats him on the back.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - DAY

Collin walks through Riverside Park.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - PIER - LATER

Collin walks along the pier.

He stands against the rail and looks out over the Hudson River into New Jersey. He starts to leave and his cell phone RINGS. He pulls it out and sees the caller ID.

It reads: Jainie

Collin stares at the phone, a tiny smile starts to form on his face.

BLACK.

GENE (V.O.)
I always believed that I loved her.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The fence stands brilliantly in the sunlight.

GENE (V.O.)
And if I loved her, then something,
someday, would happen.

FADE TO BLACK.

(MORE)