It’s Kind of a Funny Story

by

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Based on the novel by Ned Vizzini
EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - NIGHT

CRAIG GILNER (16, handsome, but awkward) glides on his bike toward the Brooklyn Bridge. He is the only one on the streets. A rhythmic beating heart is the only sound we hear.

BADOOM BADOOM BADOOM

The heartbeat increases in pace as Craig nears the bridge.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN PATH

We float behind Craig as he approaches the bridge’s first tower. Craig is still the only person there.

BADOOM BADOOM BADOOM

He arrives at the tower, steps off his bike, and looks out over the East River.

BADOOM BADOOM BADOOM

He climbs up onto a steel girder. Walks to the edge, over the speeding traffic below, then out over the water.

BADOOMBADOOMBADOOMBADOOM

SILENCE...

LYNN (O.S.)
Craig!?

Craig looks behind him to find his mother (LYNN, early 40s), father (GEORGE, mid 40s), and little sister (ALYSSA, 8) all standing by his bike.

LYNN
What were you planning to do with your bike, honey?!?

CRAIG
I don’t care about my bike! I’m killing myself!

GEORGE
But we spent a lot of money on that bike, Sport! We only ask that you take care of it!

ALYSSA
Think of me, Craig! I might want that bike when I grow up!
CRAIG
I’m sorry, I just didn’t think--

LYNN
That’s right, honey, you weren’t thinking of us when you decided to do this, were you?

GEORGE
Pretty selfish, I’d say. Have you thought about how this might affect your sister?

ALYSSA
I’ll be traumatized for life.

Craig stares at his family for a beat.

CRAIG
I’m sorry, I--

A CAR HORN BLARES and Craig flinches, blinded by the oncoming headlights. He loses his footing on the thin metal plank. He SLIPS AND FALLS as his family watches in horror.

CRAIG’S POV: hurling down toward the water below. At the moment before impact, the frame FREEZES a few feet above the water--

CRAIG (V.O.)
This is the moment where I usually wake up in a sweaty panic.

ANGLE ON CRAIG’S anguished face frozen in time.

CRAIG (V.O.)
But for some reason... this time was different--

The POV frame resumes action and Craig plunges into the water.

TITLE: “IT’S KIND OF A FUNNY STORY”

EXT. ARGENON HOSPITAL – DAWN

Craig locks his bike to a rack in front of an illuminated emergency room sign. He turns towards the hospital. Overhead the sky is illuminated by a pre-dawn glow.

SUPER: “SUNDAY: DAY 1”
INT. EMERGENCY ROOM

Craig wanders into the bright, fluorescent-lit room, approaches the NURSE at the registration desk.

    CRAIG
    Hi... I want to kill myself.

Unphased, the nurse hands him a clipboard.

    NURSE
    Fill this out, please.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM WAITING AREA - NOT MUCH LATER

Craig waits near an ear-infected KID, when his attention shifts to the sliding doors. A man, dressed in blue doctor’s scrubs, saunters in with a cup of coffee, takes a seat (unusually close) next to Craig. He is BOBBY (late 30s, semi-balding).

Craig does his best to ignore him, until...

    BOBBY
    Hey.

Craig turns to him. Upon closer inspection, he appears a bit too disheveled to be a doctor or nurse. He looks at Craig with an unhinged intensity.

    BOBBY
    You gotta cigarette?

    CRAIG
    Uh... no. Sorry.

    BOBBY
    What’s wrong with you?

    CRAIG
    I just don’t smoke.

    BOBBY
    No, I mean why are you in the E.R. at five o’clock on a Sunday morning?

    CRAIG
    (hesitant)
    Well, um, there’s been a lot going on in my head lately.

    BOBBY
    Go on.
CRAIG
Okay, well, um... I don’t really know how to describe it. Like there’s a girl...

BOBBY
Yes.

CRAIG
And, you know, this summer school application I’ve been nervous about.

BOBBY
Summer school.

CRAIG
Yeah, it’s like this super prestigious--

BOBBY
--Why would you want to spend your summer in school?

Craig stares at Bobby for a beat.

BOBBY
You should be at Coney Island bird dogging chicks on the beach.

CRAIG
Are you a doctor?

BOBBY
What do you think?

CRAIG
You don’t really seem like a doctor.

BOBBY
Ever heard of Doogie Howser?

Craig stares at Bobby, trying to make sense of the question.

BOBBY
(standing up)
I hope they fix whatever’s wrong with you.

CRAIG
Thanks.

Bobby stalks off, disappears around a corner.
INT. E.R. DOCTOR’S OFFICE - LATER

DR. ISAIAH MAHMOUD, an E.R. resident (Indian, early 30s) takes Craig’s blood pressure.

DR. MAHMOUD
How long have you been feeling suicidal?

CRAIG
I don’t know... I’ve been depressed for about a year now. Thought about it a few times, but never like this. Never so... real.

DR. MAHMOUD
Did anything specific happen today that might have triggered these feelings?

Slight PUSH IN on Craig...

CRAIG (V.O.)
Sometimes I wish I had an easy answer for why I’m depressed. My father beat me. Or I was sexually abused. But none of that stuff has ever happened to me... It was just a normal Saturday.

INT. AARON’S BEDROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

Craig and his friends lounge around the room, listening to Aaron’s record collection. There is: AARON (not particularly good-looking, but supremely self-confident), his girlfriend NIA (an ultra-hip, tightly-clad cutie), RONNY (a 1990s hip-hop throwback), and SCUGGS (jew-fro).

Ronny coughs, exhaling smoke, and passes a joint to Aaron, who cuddles next to Nia on the bed. Everyone talks animatedly, except for Craig, who stares at Nia, longingly.

RONNY
He practically had to strip search me to find it. It’s like, dude, you’re a security guard at a rock concert. Why are you taking your job so seriously?

NIA
He probably just wanted some free weed.

AARON
How much did they get?
RONNY
An eighth. But it was worth it. APW was the bomb.

AARON
It was pretty jokes... But oh-eight was off the hook.

CRAIG
I need to go.

AARON
What-- you’re leaving? I didn’t even play Saucerful of Secrets yet.

CRAIG
Yeah, I just...

SCUGGS
Don’t bug Craig. He’s in the Craig zone.

RONNY
Yeah, he’s Craig-ing out!

They all laugh. Craig forces a chuckle.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY
Craig rides his bike over the bridge, stops to answer his phone.

CRAIG
Hey...

INT. AARON’S BEDROOM - DAY
Nia playfully pushes Aaron off her.

NIA
Hey Craig. I forgot to ask you to cover for me tonight, in case my parents call or whatever.

CRAIG
Oh... You’re staying over Aaron’s?

NIA
I told them there was some school sleep over. They’re a little suspicious, so they might call.

CRAIG
No problem.
Craig hangs up, looks out over the East River.

INT. CRAIG’S DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Craig’s family sits around the table for dinner.

GEORGE
Hey there, Craigers. How’s the Franklin Gates application coming along?

Craig stares at his dad for a beat, then VOMITS on the table.

ALYSSA
Gross.

Craig’s parents look to him, concerned.

CRAIG
(to Lynn)
I’m sorry.

LYNN
(with Dr. Mahmoud’s voice)
Craig? Anything you can think of that may have set you off?

INT. ARGENON HOSPITAL – E.R. DOCTOR’S OFFICE – PRESENT

Dr. Mahmoud waits for an answer.

CRAIG
Um... no. Nothing unusual.

DR. MAHMOUD
Are you taking any medication?

CRAIG
Zoloft. But I stopped.

DR. MAHMOUD
Did your doctor take you off the medication?

CRAIG
No. I just stopped on my own.

DR. MAHMOUD
Oh... you shouldn’t do that.

CRAIG
Yeah, I know.
DR. MAHMOUD
Do your parents know where you are?

Craig shakes his head.

DR. MAHMOUD
Well, Craig, you don’t seem to be in immediate danger to yourself, so I think we should call your parents, tell them what happened, and refer you to one of our out-patient services.

CRAIG
But I need help now. The hotline said you’d help me.

DR. MAHMOUD
I understand you’re upset, but the people we admit to the hospital are very sick.

CRAIG
I am too. Can’t you, like, give me something...

DR. MAHMOUD
Not without parental consent. Look, this is serious business, Craig. We very rarely take in patients your age. I think it would be best if we tried to handle this without--

CRAIG
Okay, maybe I’m not explaining right... how serious. See, my school is really-- and not just my school-- it’s like I throw up sometimes because everything feels like it’s building up. And everyone else seems like they’re totally handling everything-- like my friends, right? Aaron and Nia-- They’re both so... But not me. I like sweat all the time. I’m sweating now, aren't I?

Craig wipes his forehead, catches his breath.

CRAIG
You know what I mean?

Dr. Mahmoud doesn’t move.
CRAIG
I’m scared, okay? I can’t go back out there... I don’t know what... I might do something... I just need some help. Please. I need you to help me.

Dr. Mahmoud stares at Craig, concerned. He thinks it over.

INSERT: Dr. Mahmoud signs the admittance form.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR – DAY

We follow NURSE SMITTY, a thin, bearded hippy-looking dude in blue jeans, as he leads Craig off the elevator. Craig notices a sign on the wall reading ADULT PSYCHIATRIC with an arrow pointing to the right.

Smitty leads Craig towards a set of heavy double doors labeled THREE NORTH. Smitty flashes his ID, and the Three North SECURITY GUARD buzzes them inside.

After they pass through the threshold, the doors shut, and the lock echoes through the corridors.

ON CRAIG, peering over his shoulder at the prison-like metal doors.

INT. THREE NORTH REGISTRATION OFFICE – MINUTES LATER

A cute, West-Indian Nurse, MONICA, sips coffee behind the desk. Nurse Smitty shuffles papers nearby.

MONICA
Welcome to Three North, Craig. Let’s go over some rules. First rule of Three North: we do NOT talk about Three North.

This grabs Craig’s attention. Smitty cracks up.

MONICA
Just kidding.

SMITTY
That gets me every time.

Craig forces a smile.

CRAIG
What exactly is Three North?

MONICA
Our adult psychiatric floor.
CRAIG
Oh, but I’m only sixteen.

MONICA
Our teen floor is undergoing renovations, so all teens are here with the adults.

CRAIG
Oh...

MONICA
And you’ll be expected to act like one while you’re with us.

Craig nods.

MONICA
So, starting tomorrow, you’ll be following the schedule and participating in the group activities.

She hands Craig a sheet of paper.

MONICA
Our floor has a point system, whereby patients get privileges for participating in activities and meals, and lose privileges for non-participation and/or acting out.

INSERT: A schedule outlining the hour-by-hour itinerary for the week. Includes things like: BREAKFAST, VITALS, THERAPY (GP. #1), ARTS & CRAFTS, BINGO, LUNCH.

MONICA
In the meantime, we’ll contact your family, and they can bring over a change of clothes, toothbrush, that kind of thing.

CRAIG
Um, well, I don’t think I’ll be here that long. I have school tomorrow, so...

Monica and Smitty exchange knowing glances.

MONICA
You’ll have to discuss that with Doctor Minerva. Now, very important... do you have any sharp objects on you? Pocket knife? Keys?
Craig hands her his keys.

MONICA
Good. We’ll need your cell phone and belt, too. And your shoe laces.

CRAIG
Shoe laces?

MONICA
We can’t take any chances.

Craig hands over his phone and watches as Monica seals it inside a plastic bag with his keys and shoelaces.

INT. THREE NORTH - EAST CORRIDOR

Smitty leads Craig (minus shoelaces) down the hall. They pass several other patients, including a tweaked-out man wearing an oversized Backstreet Boys t-shirt. He makes a zapping noise in Craig’s direction.

Smitty spots a woman in a professional skirt suit approaching. She is DR. EDEN MINERVA (late 40s), the staff psychiatrist.

SMITTY
Hey, Dr. Minerva...

DR. MINERVA
Hey Smitty.

SMITTY
This is our newest patient, Craig Gilner.

DR. MINERVA
Hi Craig. How are you?

CRAIG
Um... just, like... you know...

DR. MINERVA
You just get settled in. We’ll talk later, okay? Nice to meet you, Craig.

Smitty and Craig continue down the hall, where a patient, JIMMY, smiles to Craig. He has one tooth.

JIMMY
Don’t worry, it’ll come to ya.

SMITTY
Good morning, Jimmy.
Craig nervously steps past Jimmy.

CRAIG
What was that about?

SMITTY
Jimmy’s schizophrenic.

CRAIG
Is there a place here for people more like me?

SMITTY
We have all kinds of patients here.
(calling O.S.)
Bobby, my man!

Camera TRACKS IN on BOBBY— the same guy who sat next to Craig in the E.R. As he glides down the hall in SLOW-MO Craig gets a better look at him. No longer wearing doctors’ scrubs, Bobby sports a well-worn grey wool sweater. His deep-set eyes and rough edges betray a hard-lived past.

SMITTY
How ’bout a tour for our new friend, Craig, here?

BOBBY
Sure thing, babe.

SMITTY
Bobby’ll show you around while we fix up your room. See you guys in a jiff.

Smitty splits and Craig follows Bobby.

BOBBY
What’s a jiff?

CRAIG
A jiff?

BOBBY
This guy, Smitty, is always like, “Do this in a jiff, that in a jiff.”

CRAIG
I think it just means, like, a short period of time.

Bobby doesn’t seem to care about Craig’s answer.

CRAIG
So, is this like a mental ward?
BOBBY
Not a ward, a hospital...

They turn a corner out of sight.

INT. DINING ROOM/REC ROOM

Bobby leads Craig into a large multi-purpose room, where ten or so PATIENTS are scattered about.

BOBBY
We spend a lot of time in here. Right there you got your dining room situation; rec room area is over there. They got a record player, but everything’s scratched.

Craig notices a ping-pong table by the windows.

BOBBY
Folks play table tennis sometimes. Did they tell you about the points?

CRAIG
For ping-pong?

BOBBY
Some people call it ping-pong, but I think that trivializes the sport.

Craig nods.

BOBBY
But I’m talking about the other points. You need ’em for privileges, like hanging in the rec room, trips to the gift shop, shit like that.

Craig makes eye contact with a white-bearded guy, ROGER, who appears to stare straight through Craig into another dimension.

BOBBY
Hey, man, if you’re really interested, you can join them.

CRAIG
Join them? Uh, no, I’m cool, thanks.

BOBBY
Cool Craig. Copy that. Let’s move.
INT. HALLWAY- OUTSIDE THE SHOWER ROOM

Bobby points out a sliding latch on the door.

    BOBBY
    Okay, this is the shower. It doesn’t have a lock, see? So when you’re inside, you put this to occupied.

Bobby slides the latch back and forth, alternately revealing VACANT and OCCUPIED.

    CRAIG
    I get it.

    BOBBY
    Sure, babe, but nobody else does, so they’ll walk right in while you’re scrubbin’ your nuts.

Craig cracks a smile, follows Bobby down the hall.

INT. NORTH CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Bobby and Craig emerge around the corner.

    BOBBY
    There’s one in the other hall too, but I wouldn’t use it. It bothers Solomon.

    CRAIG
    Who’s Solomon?

No answer. They approach a pay phone near a bench.

    BOBBY
    This is where you call people-- if you got people. Or they can call you too.

Bobby gestures to the TV room behind a glass window.

    BOBBY
    TV room is here.

INT. TV ROOM

Craig notices a teenage girl (16), wearing an Iggy Pop t-shirt, seated at a table in the corner. She is NOELLE. She glances up from her notebook, revealing several scars from cuts on her face. Craig stares at her for a beat too long.

    NOELLE
    (alarmed)
    Oh, my God! Are you okay?
Craig quickly checks himself, but can't find anything wrong. He looks back to Noelle, who shoots him a subtle grin and gets back to her notebook.

Bobby cracks up, leads Craig away.

**INT. NORTH CORRIDOR**

CRAIG
Who was that?

BOBBY
Noelle. One of the teens. Did they tell you about the renovations?

CRAIG
Yeah.

BOBBY
How old are you?

CRAIG
Sixteen.

BOBBY
Jesus, I thought you was older. You look too stressed for sixteen, man. You should try to relax, maybe get a girlfriend, or sump’em.

CRAIG
I’m working on it.

Bobby shoots Craig a crooked smile.

CRAIG
So what do you do here, exactly?

BOBBY
Same thing you do.

CRAIG
You’re a patient? What were you doing in the emergency room this morning?

BOBBY
The ER has the best coffee.

CRAIG
They just let you out?

Bobby smiles, puts his finger to his lips, makes a shushing sound.
CRAIG
What are you in for?

Bobby hesitates, and Craig senses the inappropriateness of
the question.

CRAIG
Uh... Sorry.

Bobby stares at Craig, sizes him up.

BOBBY
Bet your room’s ready. Let’s find
Smitty.

INT. THREE NORTH PATIENT’S ROOM - DAY

The light flicks on to reveal a man burrowed under bed covers
in the corner.

SMITTY
Muqtada, it’s almost lunch! Wake up,
you have a new roommate.

MUQTADA, a gray-bearded Egyptian man, doesn’t move.

CRAIG
Hey.

No response.

SMITTY
(quietly, to Craig)
Don’t take it personal. He doesn’t
talk much and he’s never left the
room... Okay, guys, lunch in five.

Smitty exits, and Craig sits at the edge of his bed.

CRAIG
What do they have for lunch?

Muqtada grumbles something incomprehensible.

CRAIG
I’m sorry?

Muqtada takes the blanket and puts it over his head. Craig
surveys the room. This isn’t quite what he had in mind when
he asked for help.

After an uncomfortable beat, he goes to the door.
MUQTADA
  Please, turn out light.

Craig obliges, leaves the room.

INT. THREE NORTH - EAST CORRIDOR

Craig accosts Dr. Minerva, who is now doing rounds with a staff of INTERNS.

CRAIG
  Dr. Minerva. Look, I’m, uh...
    (faking casual)
  I’m feeling much better now. I was feeling bad this morning, but I think I’m okay now. So, um, you know, I’d like to go home. If that’s cool.

Dr. Minerva leafs through papers on her clipboard, finds Craig’s form.

DR. MINERVA
  It says here you’re suicidal and asked to be admitted.

CRAIG
  I thought you guys would be able to do something quick. Like give me some medication to make me feel better. I didn’t think I’d be... committed. I really don’t think I belong here.

DR. MINERVA
  A lot of patients feel that way at first. Just give it a little time.

CRAIG
  How little?

DR. MINERVA
  Five days.

CRAIG
  Five days?

DR. MINERVA
  Definitely not more than thirty. We’ll have an evaluation to see if you’re ready to leave Thursday.

CRAIG
  But I can’t be here until Thursday! I’ll miss school. My friends will find out where I am!
DR. MINERVA
It’s nothing to be ashamed of, Craig. Depression is a medical illness. If you were diabetic would you be embarrassed by that?

CRAIG
Well, can I at least talk to my mom about this before--

DR. MINERVA
Of course, Craig. I just spoke with her myself, and she’s very anxious to see you.

Dr. Minerva nods and smiles to someone behind Craig, then drifts away.

LYNN (O.S.)
Craig!

Craig turns to find his mom running at him followed by George and Alyssa. She nearly tackles him with a hug, and we FREEZE--

CRAIG (V.O.)
Don’t blame my parents for how messed up I am. Okay, so my dad works too much...

ANGLE ON George, frozen in time, messaging on his Blackberry.

CRAIG (V.O.)
And my mom’s a little out of touch.

ANGLE ON Lynn, her face oddly contorted as she hugs Craig.

CRAIG (V.O.)
And my sister’s some kind of child genius.

ANGLE ON Alyssa staring straight ahead without emotion.

CRAIG (V.O.)
But it’s not like I was never hugged as a child or anything. In fact, they’ve been pretty supportive through all this. They’re always on the lookout for new ways to fix me.

The following sequence presents the various ways they’ve tried to fix him in the past. Craig maintains the same deadpan expression throughout...
INT. CRAIG’S BEDROOM – DAY

A CHINESE ACUPUNCTURIST applies needles to Craig’s back, while his mom looks on.

INT. CRAIG’S BEDROOM – ANOTHER DAY

Craig and his dad attempt to do sit-ups on some kind of enormous rubber work-out balls. Craig falls off.

INT. CRAIG’S BEDROOM – ANOTHER DAY

Craig practices bikram yoga with his mom in 105 degree heat. He’s drenched in sweat, but not quite feeling the vibe.

INT. CRAIG’S BEDROOM – ANOTHER DAY

On a ping-pong table that barely fits inside his small bedroom, Craig serves to his dad, who slams the ball back at him. Craig doesn’t move.

BACK TO THREE NORTH

CRAIG AND HIS FAMILY IN PRESENT TIME. The still frame resumes action.

LYNN
We knew you were going through a hard time, but we had no idea you were... that it was... I’m so proud of you, honey.

CRAIG
You are?

LYNN
This is the bravest thing you’ve ever done. You made the right decision coming here.

CRAIG
Oh, really? Because I was kind of having second thoughts...

LYNN
We talked to the doctor and they need to keep you here for a few days. For observation. I think it’s a good idea.

CRAIG
But I don’t think you understand. Some of the people here are seriously messed up. Like I don’t think my roommate’s left the room in weeks.
GEORGE
What did you expect? It is a mental ward.

LYNN
George.

CRAIG
It’s not a ward. It’s a hospital.

LYNN
It’s just five days, honey.

CRAIG
They told me AT LEAST five.

LYNN
Well, we thought it was best to leave it up to the doctor’s discretion. I mean, we’ve tried, but... These people are professionals. They know how to help you in ways, well, that maybe we can’t.

Craig watches Lynn as she takes a deep breath, trying hard to hold herself together.

LYNN
It seems like a nice place. Right, George?

GEORGE
Yeah, when can I join?

ALYSSA
Me too. Can I stay too?

LYNN
We can visit, honey.

CRAIG
They took my cell phone, so some people might try to call the house. Please don’t tell them where I am.

Lynn nods, hands Craig a small duffel bag.

LYNN
Here are some clothes and toiletries. Let us know if you need anything else.

GEORGE
And I brought this... in case you have some free time in here.
George hands Craig a stack of academic-looking forms. Craig tentatively takes them. Lynn shoots George a hard look.

LYNN
But don’t worry about that application stuff right now. Just get some rest. Try to eat something.

INT. DINING ROOM - LUNCHTIME

A serving of curry chicken is placed on Craig’s tray. Craig winces.

SERVER
Want broccoli?

CRAIG (V.O.)
Sometimes I have trouble eating.

INT. SLOOTERS RESTAURANT - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

SUPER: 1 YEAR AGO

Craig, George, Lynn, and Alyssa eat dinner at a corner booth.

CRAIG (V.O.)
The first time I experienced stress vomiting was at Slooters downtown.

GEORGE
Hey, Craig, how’s your Intro to Wall Street class?

Craig vomits on the table. His family stares in shock.

CRAIG
I think I’m depressed.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Ever since, my eating has kinda become a litmus test for how well I’m doing.

BACK TO CRAIG IN THE DINING ROOM

Tray in hand, Craig surveys the room, finds an empty section between a group of teenage girls and a table of grown men (Bobby among them).

Craig sits in the neutral territory, at the far end of the girls’ table. There are three: JENNIFER has black hair with a blue streak in it; she’s a pretty hot teen transvestite. BECCA is a big girl. Noelle is the third.
Craig stares at his food for a beat. He can’t help but overhear the girls playing some kind of game, listing off names.

JENNIFER
Hunter Thompson.

BECCA
Virginia Woolf.

NOELLE
Ian Curtis.

BECCA
Who?

NOELLE
Dude from Joy Division. Hung himself.

JENNIFER
Kurt Cobain.

BECCA
Freud.

JENNIFER
Cobain to Freud?

BECCA
Drug addicts.

JENNIFER
Nice. Okay, um... Ernest Hemmingway--
(off their blank looks)
Old man beards.

They laugh.

NOELLE
Salvador Allende.

JENNIFER
Jesus, girl, can you pick somebody we’ve heard of for once?

NOELLE
Chilean president. Shot himself rather than surrender to a fascist military coup.

BECCA
I don’t think that counts.
NOELLE
Of course, it counts.

JENNIFER
If he was going to die anyway, it doesn’t count.

NOELLE
(to Craig)
Hey, new guy.

CRAIG
Me?

NOELLE
No, the other new guy. What’s your name?

CRAIG
Ah, Craig.

NOELLE
Well, Ah Craig, what do you think? Does Salvador Allende count as a celebrity suicide?

Craig stares at her in disbelief.

NOELLE
Hello?

CRAIG
Um, I don’t...

BOBBY
Hey, kid... Don’t get caught up in the girls’ morbid mind games. Come eat with the men.

Craig looks back and forth between the two intimidating groups.

JENNIFER
Don’t worry, Craig. Who knows? Maybe one day you’ll make the list.

Craig stares at the giggling girls, then slides a few feet closer to Bobby’s table.

Bobby introduces Craig to the others.

BOBBY
Craig, meet my old pal Johnny.
Craig nods to JOHNNY (mid 30s with a 1950s rock-a-billy hairdo).

BOBBY
And this clown is Humble.

HUMBLE, a pudgy former Kojak stand-in, nods hello. He speaks with a mouth full of food.

HUMBLE
You gotta girlfriend?

BOBBY
He’s workin’ on it.

HUMBLE
They got some cute ones your age.

JOHNNY
I had a lotta women in my day, kid.

CRAIG
Yeah?

JOHNNY
You don’t have to act so surprised, but yes, yes I had a lotta women. And, no, I’m not the best looking cat on the street. But you wanta know the secret to keeping any woman under your spell?

Craig eagerly awaits the answer.

JOHNNY
I love you.

HUMBLE
That’s it?

JOHNNY
That’s it. But it don’t hurt if you can play guitar.

BOBBY
Don’t mess with the kid’s head; he’s already screwed up enough.

HUMBLE
Why you so screwed up, kid?

CRAIG
Um...
BOBBY
Mind your business, Humble.

HUMBLE
That’s cool. But you should know, Craig, if you don’t open up, you’re not going to heal.

Humble slides away. The others continue eating, but Craig hasn’t touched his plate.

BOBBY
What’s the pot up to?

JOHNNY
Eleven.

BOBBY
Eleven? Yesterday we had twelve.

JOHNNY
Humble ate a buck.

BOBBY
Humble ate a buck?

JOHNNY
The professor bet him a dollar he wouldn’t eat it... He won.

BOBBY
What is the world coming to? Bunch of freaks.

CRAIG
What’s the money for?

BOBBY
Pizza party. We’re sick of eating this crap. They say we can have one, but we gotta pay for it ourselves...

CRAIG
I have eight dollars.

BOBBY
Well don’t go bragging about it, Craig. People in here don’t have anything. Learn to show some humility.

CRAIG
Oh, I didn’t mean--
BOBBY
--Don’t worry about it. You’re young still.

Smitty strolls behind Craig, notices his uneaten food.

SMITTY
You get two points for eating, Craig.


CRAIG
Sorry.

INT. DR. MINERVA’S OFFICE – DAY

CLOSE ON Dr. Minerva’s breasts behind a rust red sweater. She’s looking at Craig’s file, off-screen.

Craig glances up from her breasts, noting how the shade of her lipstick matches her sweater to perfection.

DR. MINERVA
So Craig, how are you adjusting to Three North?

CRAIG
Uh... Okay, I guess.

DR. MINERVA
Dr. Mahmoud wrote that you were taking Zoloft, but went off it three weeks ago. Is that right?

CRAIG
Yeah.

DR. MINERVA
Do you see a therapist?

CRAIG
Dr. Yanof prescribed me the Zoloft. I see her every, you know... month or so.

DR. MINERVA
Why did you stop taking it?

CRAIG
I guess I felt better. Like I didn’t need it anymore.

DR. MINERVA
Maybe that’s because it was working.
Craig shrugs, smiles awkwardly, as Dr. Minerva scribbles something in the file.

DR. MINERVA
Can you describe for me how you were feeling right before coming here this morning?

Craig shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

CRAIG
I dunno. Depressed... anxious... stressed.

DR. MINERVA
Have you been experiencing more stress than usual lately?

Craig nods.

DR. MINERVA
Any reason in particular?

CRAIG
Well, there’s this Franklin Gates Summer Semester thing that my Dad-- Well, that I really want to get into. The application’s due in a week and I haven’t even looked at it yet.

DR. MINERVA
Why not?

CRAIG
It’s like, every time I think about it, my mind starts this cycling thing about not getting in.

DR. MINERVA
What would happen if you didn’t get in?

CAMERA PUSHES IN on Craig, who shoots us a subtle glance.

CRAIG (V.O.)
What would happen if I didn’t get in?

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY

CLOSE ON blank extracurricular section of application.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Then I wouldn’t be able to put it on my college applications. Which means...
INT. IVY LEAGUE CLASSROOM - DAY

TRACK past rows of college-age STUDENTS to 16 year-old Craig, eagerly raising his hand.

    PROFESSOR (O.S.)
    Mr. Gilner.

    CRAIG (V.O.)
    ...I wouldn’t get into a good college.

    COLLEGE CRAIG
    (answering his professor)
    But not even Adam Smith could have foreseen the inequities of modern capitalism.

INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - DAY

PUSH IN on Craig (still sixteen) behind the Presidential podium.

    CRAIG (V.O.)
    If I didn’t get into a good college, I wouldn’t have a good job.

    PRESIDENT CRAIG
    Well, I’m glad you asked that, Helen.
    Diffusing the situation in Iran through unilateral diplomacy is my top priority
    as Commander in Chief.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE - DAY

An MTV CRIBS episode exploring Craig’s presidential home. Craig, wearing a silk and fox fur bathrobe invites the video crew through his front door.

    CRAIG (V.O.)
    Which means I wouldn’t be able to afford a good lifestyle.

INT. MARTINI BAR - NIGHT

A dapper Craig, sporting an Armani suit and sunglasses, toasts martini glasses with his glamorous girlfriends.

    CRAIG (V.O.)
    So I wouldn’t be able to find a girlfriend.
INT. CRAIG’S BEDROOM - DAY

Rain pours down, as a sad Craig stares at the clouds through the window.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Which means I’d probably get depressed.

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM- DAY

CLOSE ON Craig in bed, staring off.

CRAIG (V.O.)
So I wouldn’t be able to get out of bed.

We ZOOM OUT to reveal Craig curled in fetal position on Muqtada’s bed.

CRAIG (V.O.)
And I’d end up like Muqtada in a place like this for the rest of my life.

Craig turns to the camera.

CRAIG
So-- what would happen if I didn’t get in...?!

INT. DR. MINERVA’S OFFICE - DAY

Craig stares at Dr. Minerva. A bead of sweat drips down his forehead. He gives a shrug and awkward smile.

CRAIG
I dunno. It’s hard to explain.

She hands him a tissue to wipe his sweat. He does.

DR. MINERVA
Well, do you have anyone you can explain it to? Friends? Family?

CRAIG
Um... I have friends... and family. But it’s not always easy...

DR. MINERVA
It’s important to have a support system. People you can really talk to.

Craig nods, wipes his forehead again.
DR. MINERVA
Have you been experiencing any symptoms... other than sweating?

CRAIG
Eating. I have problems eating. I can’t, you know, keep it down.

Dr. Minerva takes more notes.

DR. MINERVA
So we’ll get you back on the Zoloft, and you’ll start group activities tomorrow. We’ll check in again on Tuesday. Do you have any questions?

CRAIG
If I’m, you know... feeling better, you think I can get out of here, like, tomorrow? I have school and this application, and--

DR. MINERVA
Five days, Craig. Minimum. This might feel like a strange place at first, but try to make the most of it. We’ll hold your evaluation on Thursday.

Craig nods, looks out the office window to the bustling Brooklyn street-life below.

TITLE OVER BLACK: “MONDAY: DAY TWO”

CRAIG (V.O.)
It’s Monday...

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM – DAY

Craig’s eyes pop open in bed. He looks over to Muqtada, snoring loudly in the bed next to him.

CRAIG (V.O.)
I shouldn’t be waking up next to some depressive middle-aged Egyptian dude.

INT. SHOWER ROOM – DAY

Craig awkwardly extends one arm, keeping the door shut, while the other lathers up his body.

CRAIG (V.O.)
I shouldn’t be showering on a co-ed floor in a stall without a lock.
Jennifer attempts to enter the room, wearing a shower cap, but Craig’s security arm forces the door shut.

**INT. MEDS STATION - DAY**

We TRACK along a line of adult patients, downing their meds in dixie cups. We STOP on little Craig at the end of the line.

CRAIG (V.O.)
I shouldn’t be lining up for meds behind schizophrenics and sociopaths.

**INT. DINING ROOM - DAY**

Craig stares at his breakfast burrito.

CRAIG (V.O.)
It’s Monday; I should be in school...
But I guess that’s what got me here in the first place.

**EXT. 1950S B & W STOCK FOOTAGE**

Boring white-bread High-Schoolers going to class.

CRAIG (V.O.)
When my parents went to school, they just went to the one closest to their house. Makes sense, right? A lot of places are still like this: Cleveland, probably Denver. But not New York.

**EXT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

CRAIG (V.O.)
You’ve got schools for science geeks like--

We TRACK along a complicated physics equation on the dry erase board, stopping on a SCIENCE GEEK who turns to camera--

SCIENCE GEEK
Bronx High School of Science.

**INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

CRAIG (V.O.)
Schools for thespians...

Two TEEN ACTORS rehearse on stage, while a young DIRECTOR addresses us from the balcony.
DIRECTOR
La Guardia High School for the Performing Arts.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT

CRAIG (V.O.)
Do-gooders.

Young activists walk the picket line holding signs, while their teen leader addresses us.

DO-GOODER
El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice.

EXT. EXECUTIVE PRE-PROFESSIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

CRAIG (V.O.)
But the most competitive of all New York City Public Schools is this one. Executive Pre-Professional. My school.

TRACK IN ON DIGNIFIED PORTRAIT OF GERARD LUTZ

CRAIG (V.O.)
This billionaire philanthropist named Gerard Lutz set it up in conjunction with the public school system.

INT. EPPHS HALLWAY - DAY

CAMERA FLOATS down the hall with KIDS passing in and out of frame on the way to class.

CRAIG (V.O.)
So it’s not some private school for elite upper-east-siders. You can be on welfare and food stamps or your parents can own an island in the South Pacific. It doesn’t matter.

Craig emerges from the group, staring into camera.

CRAIG
You’ll be accepted as long as you’re one of the 800 smartest, most accomplished students in the five boroughs.

INT. EPPHS LIBRARY - DAY

FLASH ON a YOUNG INDIAN GIRL seated at her desk. She glances up from her book, Noam Chomsky’s “Hegemony or Survival.”
SUPER: SAHARA PATEL - SAT: 2380  GRE: 1530 (5.5 Writing)
LSAT: 174  MCAT: 42 (S Writing)

FLASH ON a YOUNG AFRICAN-AMERICAN KID. He glances up from his book, Darwin’s “Origin of Species.”


FLASH ON a WHITE HIPSTER KID - Craig’s friend, Aaron, reading from Joe Sacco’s graphic novel, “Palestine.”

SUPER: AARON FITZCARRALDO - Winner of the inaugural Edison Young Inventors Cup (2006); 2 time winner of the F. Gates Young Genius Trophy (2002, 2004); Doubles badminton Olympic gold medalist (2008)

FLASH ON 14-year-old Craig. He reads from the book “Be More Chill.”

SUPER: CRAIG GILNER -

We hold for a beat, then...

CRAIG (V.O.)
There must have been a serious clerical error, because somehow... I got in.

INT. AARON’S APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Seated on the floor around an enormous scattered record collection, Aaron and Nia look off-screen at Craig.

AARON/NIA
(in unison)
Me too.

Aaron and Nia exchange surprised looks.

AARON/NIA
(again in unison)
You too?

They crack up laughing. Nia playfully punches Aaron’s arm and we FREEZE--

CRAIG (V.O.)
That’s my best friend, Aaron, getting flirt-punched by Nia for the first time. There were many more of those. Followed by hand-holding...
FLASH ON a still frame of Aaron and Nia strolling through the hall, smiling and holding hands as if in a Mentos commercial.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Kissing...

FLASH ON a still frame of Aaron and Nia smooching in the school stairwell.

CRAIG (V.O.)
...and eventually... sex.

FLASH ON a blank white screen.

CRAIG (V.O.)
I don’t like to picture that one.

BACK TO ORIGINAL FLIRT-PUNCH STILL.

CRAIG (V.O.)
What I would give to be flirt-punched by Nia just once.

The frame resumes action. Aaron and Nia stare at each other for an extended moment before Aaron goes in for the full flirt-tackle.

CRAIG (V.O.)
And so it began...

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Craig stares at his food, unsure. Next to him, Humble and Johnny eat as they flip through a motorcycle magazine.

JOHNNY
Look at those flames! I always wanted a Harley with big red flames.

Humble points out the girl on the bike.

HUMBLE
You can have the bike. I just want the beavers.

JOHNNY
Hey, Bobby, check out this bike.

BOBBY
I don’t get caught up on a bunch of stuff I can’t have.
JOHNNY
Relax, it’s just for fun, bro.

AARON (O.S.)
Yeah, what’s your prob, Bob?

We PAN over to Craig’s friend, Aaron, seated next to Bobby. Of course, he is only there in Craig’s imagination.

AARON
It’s just for fun. Life is fun. And easy. And you CAN have those things. Women, Harleys, perfect test scores. You just need the brains and the balls to go get’em.
(taking a bite of breakfast burrito)
Mmm, this is good.

We PAN back to Bobby.

BOBBY
It’s not fun; it’s propaganda. Telling me I need all that - nice clothes, cars, hot chicks...

CRAIG (V.O.)
...iphones, Jordans, skinny jeans, zit cream, self esteem, abs of steel, chicken soup for the soul...

BOBBY
But I could give a shit about all that.

Humble notices Craig’s untouched tray.

HUMBLE
You gonna eat your burrito, Craig?

CRAIG
Naw. I’m not hungry. You can have it.

Humble reaches over, grabs the burrito.

BOBBY
Put it back, Humble.

HUMBLE
He said I could have it.

BOBBY
Craig’s gotta eat too. Put it back.
HUMBLE
Take a hike, Bob, he’s not hungry.

Bobby charges across the table, grabs the burrito, and puts it back on Craig’s tray.

Craig stares at the torn and knuckled burrito.

CRAIG
Um, thanks, Bobby, but I’m really not--

PROFESSOR
I’ll eat it!

Waddling in from a nearby table, the Professor quickly grabs the burrito, puts it on her own tray.

HUMBLE
Hey, I called it first.

Humble lunges for the burrito, but the Professor tries to shield it with her body.

JOHNNY
Nice burrito block!

BOBBY
It don’t belong to either of you!

CRAIG
Really, guys, I don’t think...

Bobby intervenes, snatches the burrito, but not before the Professor sneaks a quick bite.

Smitty approaches.

SMITTY
People calm down.

Everyone quickly settles in their seats.

PROFESSOR
(with mouthful of burrito)
I didn’t do nothin’.

HUMBLE
It was my burrito.

Bobby hands what’s left of the mashed burrito to Craig.

CRAIG
It’s really okay. I don’t need it.
Bobby stares at Craig for a beat.

    BOBBY
    Fine...

Bobby drops the remains of the burrito on Humble’s tray.

    BOBBY
    ...what do I care?  Don’t eat.

Bobby takes his own tray, walks off. Craig exchanges awkward looks with the others.

    SMITTY
    You guys know we have like fifty burritos in the kitchen...

INT. REC ROOM – DAY

The patients sit in a loose circle around Dr. Minerva. Craig observes silently, sneaking occasional glances at Noelle, seated on the opposite side of the circle.

    DR. MINERVA
    I understand there was an incident this morning. Would anyone care to talk about it?  Something involving a breakfast burrito.  Johnny?

    JOHNNY
    It was between Bobby and Humble.  Ask them.

    DR. MINERVA
    I was just interested in hearing it from an impartial observer.

    JOHNNY
    Well, if you want my opinion, I think Bobby’s been on edge because of his interview and he’s lashing out because he’s nervous.

    DR. MINERVA
    Interesting observation, Johnny.

    BOBBY
    Yeah, Johnny, you know my hemorrhoids are flarin’ up again.  Make sure everyone knows about that, too.

    JIMMY
    Hemorrhoids!  It’ll come to ya!
Some laughter from the patients. Craig smiles, sneaks a peek at Noelle across the room. She’s not paying attention.

DR. MINERVA
Bobby, it’s okay if you want to keep your feelings private, but you should know it’s perfectly normal to be nervous about your interview tomorrow.

BOBBY
I’m not nervous about the interview.

HUMBLE
Then what is it, Bob?

PROFESSOR
Maybe he’s hungry.

HUMBLE
He doesn’t look hungry.

BECCA
He looks tired.

JOHNNY
Did you sleep last night?

PROFESSOR
He didn’t eat today.

HUMBLE
Yes, he did.

PROFESSOR
Did you see him eat?

HUMBLE
I’m pretty sure he ate.

JOHNNY
I didn’t see him eat.

BECCA
I get anxious when I’m tired.

BOBBY
Okay, listen!

Everybody turns to Bobby.

I’m not hungry. I’m not tired. It’s this damn sweater. My interview is tomorrow and it’s all I have to wear.
JOHNNY
(low to Minerva)
I told you it was the interview.

HUMBLE
It’s a nice sweater, Bob.

BOBBY
No. It isn’t. It smells like an old woman’s armpit in July.

JOHNNY
But it looks good on you.

BOBBY
Yeah, it looks about as good on me as your hair on you.

DR. MINERVA
Bobby, no insults, please.

Suddenly self-conscious, Johnny runs his hand over his head.

CRAIG
I can loan you a shirt.

Noelle and the group turn to Craig.

DR. MINERVA
What was that, Craig?

CRAIG
I’ll call my mom, have her bring one of my dad’s shirts. It’s no problem. I live like two blocks away.

BOBBY
No thanks.

JOHNNY
Bobby! Take the shirt.

HUMBLE
Yeah, he’s tryin’ to help, Bob.

DR. MINERVA
It’s a very nice offer, Craig. Bobby, why are you reluctant to accept it?

BOBBY
Look, I don’t need any handouts.
DR. MINERVA
It’s not exactly a handout, Bobby. He’d just be loaning it to you. There’s nothing wrong with accepting help from each other.

BOBBY
Okay, fine, will you leave me alone if I take the shirt?

DR. MINERVA
Do you want the shirt, Bobby?

BOBBY
Yeah, I want the shirt.

DR. MINERVA
Craig?

CRAIG
Do you mind if it has yellow armpit stains?

Bobby stares at Craig.

CRAIG
Sorry, dumb joke.

Noelle SNORTS out a laugh.

INT. THREE NORTH - NORTH CORRIDOR - LATER THAT DAY

Craig waits for the community phone, which Bobby is using.

BOBBY
(flustered)
Okay, but look, look, look. I want to see her. Yes, I’m her father, don’t you think I have... No? I have a place... I will have a place... Thursday... You don’t have to believe me, but it’s true... It is true. I’m not-- Look, just bring her. Please. I don’t ask you for anything. I just want to see my kid...

After watching Bobby for a beat, Craig feels something brush by him, turns to see Noelle disappear around the corner. He looks down to find a folded piece of paper at his feet.

INSERT OF NOTE: THAT WAS NICE OF YOU EARLIER. MEET ME TONIGHT 7:00 PM. BENCH OUTSIDE REC ROOM.
Craig glances up from the note. Bobby is now gone and the phone is free.

Craig enters his number into the voice mail system, wherein we SPLIT-SCREEN with Nia. She’s on her cell IN THE BATHTUB.

Nia
Hey, Craig, it’s me, um...

The image FREEZES--

Craig (V.O.)
Here’s the thing... she’s probably not in the tub right now, but whenever I talk to Nia, this is how I picture her. It’s kinda sick, I know.

The image resumes action.

Nia
You sounded kinda weird earlier, so I just wanted to make sure you were doing all right. Okay, that’s it. I’m with Aaron. He’s being a total dick. Bye.

Craig hits another button, wherein Craig’s science teacher, Mr. Reynolds replaces Nia. Wearing protective eye-goggles, he fills a smoking beaker with blue liquid.

Mr. Reynolds
Hello, Mr. Gilner, this is your science teacher, Mr. Reynolds. We really need to talk about your missing lab assignments. Five of them.

Craig hits the button again, wherein Aaron replaces Mr. Reynolds. He’s in the bathtub with Nia.

Aaron
Yo Craig, I’m staying at Nia’s tonight. I need you to cover for me if my dad calls. Holla back, son!

Craig hangs up, notices an old, academic-type lady waiting for the phone nearby. She is “THE PROFESSOR.” He quickly dials...

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The image resumes action.

Nia
You sounded kinda weird earlier, so I just wanted to make sure you were doing all right. Okay, that’s it. I’m with Aaron. He’s being a total dick. Bye.
NIA
Just finishing my Gates Summer app.
I'll freak if I don't get in.

CRAIG
Yeah...

NIA
What's up with you?

CRAIG
Uh, I've just been feeling kinda, you know...

NIA
Yeah, I've noticed... Is that why you weren't in school today?

CRAIG
Yeah... Like I've been feeling pretty shitty, so... I stayed home.

NIA
I get like that sometimes, too. Depressed or whatever. Do you take anything for it?

CRAIG
What do you mean?

NIA
You know...

CRAIG
Um...

NIA
Look, I've never told anybody this. Not even Aaron. So you have to promise not to tell him. But if it makes you feel any better... I'm on Prozac.

CRAIG
Really?

NIA
Yeah, for like over a year now.

CRAIG
I had no idea.

NIA
I know. It's a little embarrassing.
CRAIG
(summoning his courage)
I take Zoloft.

NIA
Shut up!

CRAIG
I do.

NIA
We are so screwed up!

CRAIG
Like partners in mental illness.

NIA
The illest.

As they both laugh, a Hasidic Jewish guy, SOLOMON, dashes down the hall toward Craig. His hospital pants are way too big for him, so he has to hold them up at all times.

SOLOMON
I’m Solomon.

Craig cups the receiver, tries to quietly shush Solomon.

SOLOMON
I would ask you to please keep it down.
I am trying to rest.

Solomon races away, struggling to hold up his pants.

NIA
Craig? Who was that?

CRAIG
Um...

The Professor approaches, taps Craig’s shoulder with her cane.

PROFESSOR
Excuse me, will you be much longer?

CRAIG
(whispering)
One second, please.

NIA
Is everything okay?

CRAIG
Yeah, I’m just...
NIA
Are you like in a crack den or something?

Jimmy strolls by, repeating...

JIMMY
It’ll come to ya! Don’t worry, it always come to ya!

NIA
Where are you?

CRAIG
I gotta go, Nia. Bye.

NIA
Craig?

Craig hangs up, turns to the Professor.

CRAIG
All yours.

He exits frame and the Professor eyes him suspiciously before picking up the receiver and examining it.

INT. THREE NORTH - WAITING AREA - DAY

Craig approaches little Alyssa and Lynn, who is holding his dad’s shirt. They hug.

CRAIG
Thanks, mom.

LYNN
Your dad’s at the office dealing with a client crisis, but he’ll be by tomorrow.

CRAIG
Client crisis?

ALYSSA
Have you made any friends yet?

CRAIG
Um, yeah, I guess.

ALYSSA
(looking past Craig)
Are you friends with the tranny?
CRAIG
Not really.

LYNN
Tranny?

Lynn cocks her head to see Jennifer checking out at the registration desk down the hall. She’s wearing a coat and carrying a small suitcase.

Jimmy, lingering nearby, calls out at full volume.

JIMMY
Transvestite!

Jennifer turns in their direction, yells down the hall.

JENNIFER
Schizo!

Alyssa and Lynn stare ahead, uncomfortable.

CRAIG
Did you talk to my school? I really don’t want them to know I’m in a place like this. It could really damage my future.

LYNN
We just told them you were in the hospital. Nothing specific.

CRAIG
Good. The last thing I need is for people to find out I’ve been institutionalized. I’m talking cataclysmic disaster the proportions of which have no limits.

LYNN
Okay, Craig. Got it.

INT. BOBBY’S ROOM

Craig leans into the room, looks around. Nobody there. He carefully lays out the shirt on Bobby’s bed, notices a photo of a young girl at his bedside. As he examines it closer...

BOBBY (O.S.)
Hey, what’s goin’ on, babe?

Bobby walks in from the hallway.
CRAIG
Oh, sorry. I was just bringing you the shirt.

BOBBY
(re: the photo)
She’s cute, right?

CRAIG
Yeah. Is she yours?

BOBBY
(nods)
Veronica. Like the Elvis Costello song.

Craig stares at Bobby, clearly not aware of the song.

CRAIG
How old is she?

BOBBY
Eight and three-quarters. That’s what she says.

Craig smiles.

CRAIG
Well, good luck on your interview. What’s it for, if you don’t mind me asking?

BOBBY
It’s for a group home. I basically need a place to live when they kick me outta here on Thursday.

CRAIG
Kick you out?

BOBBY
Insurance only covers a certain number of days here, so come Thursday, I’m gone. Whether I got a place to sleep or not.

CRAIG
Wow. I guess you’re under a lot of pressure, then.

BOBBY
I mean, it’s not like a summer school application, but yeah, I guess...
Craig smiles.

CRAIG
Let me know if you need somebody to practice with, or something.

BOBBY
What do you mean?

CRAIG
Like a practice interview. So you’re better prepared.

BOBBY
Yeah?

CRAIG
Yeah. Wanta try?

BOBBY
Yeah, okay. Now?

CRAIG
Yeah, sure.

(as interviewer)
Okay, um, have a seat.

BOBBY
Wait, hold on.

Bobby grabs the new shirt, turns his back to Craig, and buttons it up. He spins around, ready to go.

BOBBY
Okay, let’s do it.

They sit on opposite beds, facing each other.

CRAIG
Okay, let’s see... Why do you think you’re qualified to live in this group home?

BOBBY
Well... I guess because I’ll be homeless if you don’t accept me.

Craig stares at Bobby, not sure where to go from here.

CRAIG
Okay, good. I think you’re ready.

BOBBY
Really? I didn’t sound too desperate?
CRAIG
No, it was very sincere... But maybe you could try to focus on the positive things you would get from the experience rather than, you know...

BOBBY
The negative.

CRAIG
Exactly. Like what do you think you can bring to the home? Something special only you can offer.

Bobby thinks hard.

CRAIG
It can be anything. Maybe you have a great attitude?

BOBBY
(shakes his head)
No.

CRAIG
You always clean up after yourself?

BOBBY
Not really.

CRAIG
You know what? I think maybe sometimes in these situations it’s okay to bend the truth a little.

BOBBY
I wouldn’t want to raise anyone’s expectations and then disappoint them.

CRAIG
That’s it! You’re pragmatic! Right there. That’s what you tell them.

BOBBY
(smiles)
Yeah?

CRAIG
Yeah. I think you’ll do great.

BOBBY
Thanks, babe. You up for a match of table tennis?
CRAIG
Um, I’m actually pretty terrible at it.

BOBBY
Relax babe. It’s just for fun.

INT. REC ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Bobby holds the ball, addressing Craig on the opposite side.

BOBBY
We play a lot around here, but the problem is most people are too zonked out on their meds to compete.

Bobby serves to Craig’s partner, Roger, but the ball just bounces past him. After a beat, Roger swings for it. Craig can’t help but laugh.

INT. THREE NORTH - NORTH CORRIDOR - EVENING

Craig sits down on the hallway bench across from the rec room. Looks to the wall clock, which reads 6:58.

Nearby, Johnny talks on the telephone.

JOHNNY
No, but-- I never said those things. She’s a liar... Please, baby. Baby, baby, please, listen, listen....

Johnny notices Craig nearby, pauses for dramatic effect.

JOHNNY
...I love you. You know, I love you... That’s right. Sure. Don’t worry about it. Of course, I forgive you, baby.

Johnny gives Craig a thumbs up and a smile. Craig looks on, awed by his mastery of women, when...

...Noelle approaches. Craig plays it cool, as she takes a seat next to him.

NOELLE
You came.

CRAIG
Yeah. I mean, like, I had other plans, but I cancelled them.

NOELLE
Good. I thought I mighta scared you off yesterday.
CRAIG

Craig notices several old scars on Noelle’s forearm, peaking out of her bunched up sleeve. Seeing this, Noelle subtly pulls her sleeves over her palms.

NOELLE
Okay, check it out... We’re gonna play a different game now.

CRAIG
Okay.

NOELLE
I ask you a question and you ask me a question.

CRAIG
Do we answer them?

NOELLE
It’s up to you, but no matter what, you have to finish with a question. Here we go... You ready?

CRAIG
I think so.

NOELLE
I said finish with a question. Are you stupid?

CRAIG
Uh, no... Are you?

NOELLE
There you go. Do you think I’m gross looking?

Beat.

CRAIG
No, you look awesome.

NOELLE
What’s your question?

CRAIG
Why’d you invite me here?
NOELLE
I thought it was nice that you loaned Bobby your shirt. Don’t you think this is a good way to get to know someone?

CRAIG
Sure. Have you played this before?

NOELLE
Not in here. Are you a virgin?

CRAIG
So... How long have you been here?

NOELLE
Oooh, nice transition, Craig. Twenty-one days. Who brought you here?

CRAIG
I checked myself in, I guess. Kinda by accident. The suicide hotline said to come. Why are you here so long?

NOELLE
They think I might cut myself again. Why’d you call the suicide hotline?

CRAIG
I guess because I didn’t actually want to kill myself... even though I kind of did. Does that make sense?

Noelle nods.

NOELLE
So, why did you kind of want to kill yourself?

CRAIG
Depression... stress. Have you ever heard of the Franklin Gates University--

NOELLE
--Scholastic Summer Semester? Yes. So you messed up the application or something?

CRAIG
No, I mean, I haven’t even started yet.

NOELLE
Finish with a question. Isn’t it due on Friday?
CRAIG
Geez. Do you have to remind me?

NOELLE
Sorry. So are you some kind of brain or something?

CRAIG
I work hard, but I’m not that smart. I get Bs. How about you?

NOELLE
I don’t care too much about school. The teachers think I have a problem with authority. Where do you go?

CRAIG
Executive Pre-Professional. You?

NOELLE
Delfin. You’re not some kind of school uniform perv, are you?

CRAIG
You guys wear uniforms?

NOELLE
See, I knew it!
(flinching)
Is there a bug on my face?

Craig examines her face, finds a loose eyelash near her eye. He holds it up for her to see.

CRAIG
Make a wish.

Noelle thinks for a beat, blows it away.

CRAIG
Is the game over yet?

NOELLE
Sure.

Craig leans back, takes a deep breath.

CRAIG
What do we do now?

NOELLE
Are you still playing?
CRAIG
No... are you?

They both laugh. Noelle jumps to her feet.

NOELLE
I’ll race you to arts and crafts.

Noelle takes off down the hall at full speed. Craig watches her for a second, then gives chase. As they pass Smitty...

SMITTY
Hey, no running, please!

INT. REC ROOM – MINUTES LATER

JOANIE, the recreation director, addresses the class.

JOANIE
This is free period arts recreational therapy for you latecomers.

The room full of PATIENTS turn their heads toward Craig and Noelle, just now taking their seats in the back.

Bobby cranes his neck, whispers over his shoulder to Craig:

BOBBY
Cool Craig. Still workin’ on it?

CRAIG
It’s not what you think.

BOBBY
Call me crazy, but I think you guys were probably out there playing the question game.

CRAIG
Oh, then I guess it is what you think.

BOBBY
Thought so.

Joanie strolls up to Craig, introduces herself.

JOANIE
I’m Joanie, the recreation director.

CRAIG
Craig.

JOANIE
Materials are on the table, Craig.
CRAIG
Oh, that’s okay. I don’t really draw.

JOANIE
Sure you do. It doesn’t have to be representative. It can be abstract.

CRAIG
That’s okay, I’ll just--

Joanie turns to the class.

JOANIE
Everyone? Our new guest, Craig, has what we call an artistic block. He doesn’t know what to draw.

HUMBLE
How about beavers?

JOANIE
Humble, we do not draw the sort of beavers you’re talking about.

HUMBLE
Oh really?

Humble holds up his drawing of an actual beaver.

JOANIE
That’s a very nice drawing, Humble.

Roger, from Saturday’s ping-pong match, calls out in general:

ROGER
Rolling pin!

JOANIE
What was that, Roger? That’s very good. What did you say?

But Roger clams up, won’t repeat it.

CRAIG
(to Noelle)
This is weird.

NOELLE
She won’t get off your back until you draw something. Anything. I bet you have some crazy stuff in that messed up little mind of yours.
We ZOOM IN on Craig’s eyes, and enter his brain, which is an elaborate maze of winding rivers and roads. We travel through Craig’s animated mind village, until...

...we emerge out of a fireplace into...

**INT. CRAIG’S LIVING ROOM – FLASHBACK**

Craig’s Mom, LYNN, and Dad, GEORGE, watch Bill Clinton’s state-of-the-union address on TV. A living room tent/fort is illuminated by a flashlight behind them.

SUPER: BROOKLYN, 1999

INSIDE THE FORT. FIVE-YEAR-OLD Craig struggles to trace a map of Manhattan. Frustrated, he CRUMPLES the paper.

LITTLE CRAIG

Shit!

OUTSIDE THE FORT. Lynn and George exchange glances.

BACK INSIDE. Lynn peaks her head in to find 16-YEAR-OLD CRAIG, in too-small jammies, looking pissed off.

LYNN

Craig, honey, what’s the matter?

CRAIG

I can’t do it. Five years old and I’m already a failure.

LYNN

What can’t you do?

CRAIG

I can’t even trace Manhattan on tracing paper. Tracing paper! Are you kidding?

LYNN

Craig, you can’t just trace freehand and expect it to be perfect.

CRAIG

Why not?

LYNN

You’re five years old.

CRAIG

That’s no excuse. Mozart composed three major symphonies by the time he was five.
GEORGE (O.S.)
He’s right, ya know.

LYNN
Craig, listen, I have an idea. Instead of trying to trace maps of Manhattan, why don’t you make your own maps... of imaginary places?

FIVE-YEAR-OLD CRAIG is back. He looks up to his mom as we PUSH IN to CU. What a great idea!

CRAIG (V.O.)
That was the closest I’d ever come to an epiphany.

A60 The camera enters Craig’s drawing, swerving through streets and around corners in his imaginary city, until...

B60 ...we PULL OUT, above the drawing. Craig’s hand enters frame, putting the finishing touches on his new creation.

WE ARE BACK IN THREE NORTH AT PRESENT TIME.

JOANIE
Looks like somebody got unblocked.

PROFESSOR
That is extraordinary.

HUMBLE
What is it?

Several patients gather around Craig’s drawing.

BECCA
It’s so pretty.

BOBBY
Not bad. Looks like a brain.

CRAIG
Yeah... It’s a brain map.

Craig turns to Noelle, but she’s gone. However, she’s left an impressive drawing of an orchid with a short note: NICE MEETING YOU CRAIG. SEE YOU WEDNESDAY. SAME TIME, SAME PLACE.

SMITTY (O.S.)
Craig, you have a phone call.
INT. THREE NORTH – NORTH CORRIDOR COMMUNITY PHONE – MINUTES LATER

Craig picks it up.

CRAIG

Hello?

INT. AARON’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Aaron screams into the phone...

AARON

Is this the loony bin!?

Aaron cracks up, and we FREEZE on his mangled expression.

CRAIG (V.O.)

Okay, I’ve been putting this off, but I guess you should know more about my best friend, Aaron. He’s the kind of guy that life just comes easy to.

INT. EPPHS CLASSROOM – DAY

TRACK down a row of students receiving their graded tests – 94, 97, 96, 98... Craig gets an 82%, and Aaron scores a 103%.

CRAIG (V.O.)

He’s got a 4.6 GPA! I don’t even see how that’s possible. And he’ll probably get into the Gates Summer Program, and claim something like...

EXT. EPPHS COURTYARD – DAY

Aaron is juggling apples in front of his many friends, but turns to address the camera while keeping the apples revolving in only his left hand:

AARON

I didn’t even apply to that thing. They totally recruited me. Whatever, it’ll look good on my college apps.

He gets back to juggling two-handed for his friends.

CRAIG (V.O.)

Not that he’d need it... His extracurriculars are out of control. I mean Aaron does everything.

A64 FLASH ON AARON sliding into home during a baseball game. Craig is among the fans in the bleachers.
CRAIG
He plays sports.

B64 FLASH ON a dark screening room, where Aaron is watching an old film noir from the 1930s, however...

...ON THE SCREEN, in classic trenchcoat-noir regalia, Craig emerges from a dark shadow, turns to us in the audience...

CRAIG
He started a film society.

C64 FLASH ON Aaron connecting a shiny, futuristic cable from his record player to a laptop computer. Craig appears in a Quicktime window in the corner of the screen.

CRAIG
(addressing us from the computer)
He invented that adapter thing that converts vinyl albums to mp3s.

Nia enters the room, starts making out with Aaron. Mid-smooch, Aaron reaches for his computer mouse, closes the Quicktime window with a CLICK.

CRAIG (V.O.)
I just couldn’t compete...

INT. NORTH CORRIDOR COMMUNITY PHONE - PRESENT

A65 Craig speaks into the phone. We INTERCUT between the hospital and Aaron’s apartment.

CRAIG
How’d you get this number?

AARON
My girl gave it to me. What’s it like in there, dude?

CRAIG
How do you know where I am?

AARON
C’mon Craig, we go to the same school. I did a reverse number search.

CRAIG
Is there a class for that?

AARON
Seriously, how’d you end up in Adult Psych? Do they serve beer in there?
Craig hears laughter, and then Ronny, jumps on the line.

RONNY
Dude, can you get me any Vicodin?

More laughter, but Nia protests.

NIA
Guys, leave him alone!

Aaron muscles the phone away from Ronny.

AARON
Seriously, Craig, what happened?

CRAIG
I don’t know. I had a bad night.

AARON
What do you mean, a bad night?

CRAIG
I’m just, you know, feeling...

AARON
Dude, you just need to chill more. Your problem is you never chill. I’m gonna be chilling tonight; where you gonna be?

CRAIG
Here. I’m gonna be here.

AARON
Don’t be a girl. You know if I was in a mental ward, you’d call me up and give me shit.

CRAIG
It’s not a ward; it’s a hospital.

AARON
What’s the difference?

CRAIG
You seriously don’t know? They’re, like, two completely different--

AARON
--Ohmigod, Craig, there is so nothing wrong with you!
CRAIG
Yes, there is. I’m depressed. I take pills for it... ask Nia.

AARON
Ask Nia what?

NIA
Craig!

CRAIG
Forget it. Maybe if you weren’t such a dick, people would talk to you more and you’d know this kind of stuff.

AARON
Dude, is this some kind of pity play for my girlfriend?

CRAIG
Yo, Aaron.

What?

Pause.

CRAIG
Fuck you.

Craig SLAMS down the phone, crushing his finger in the process. He grimaces in pain, as Solomon approaches.

CRAIG
I know, keep it down, I’m sorry.

His point made, Solomon retreats back down the hall.

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM – NIGHT

Craig stumbles in, falls into bed. Muqtada stirs.

CRAIG
I don’t have any friends.

A beat.

MUQTADA
This is very tough thing to learn.

Craig looks to Muqtada, surprised to hear him respond. After a beat, Muqtada rolls over in the other direction.
INT. EPHHS CLASSROOM - DAY

We slowly TRACK IN on a TEACHER at her desk, as students turn in their FRANKLIN GATES SUMMER SCHOOL applications. The teacher thumbs through them all, then addresses the class...

TEACHER
Huh... seems here someone neglected to turn in their Gates Summer application. Who is it that doesn’t want to study at Franklin Gates this Summer? Or eventually get into a good college? Get a good job? Have a good lifestyle? Get laid? I don’t understand why anyone would want to end up depressed, alone and homeless... in a psych ward... sleeping next to some asocial reject named Muqtada!?

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM

Craig’s eyes snap open in bed.

TITLE OVER BLACK: “TUESDAY: DAY 3”

INT. THREE NORTH - NORTH CORRIDOR - DAY

Craig lumbers slowly down the hall, when he hears a woman yelling with increasing volume.

As he approaches the TV room, he peers inside...

INT. TV ROOM

A WOMAN SCREAMS at Bobby. His daughter, VERONICA, who we recognize from the photo, watches in silence, while Roger observes nearby. Johnny lingers just outside the room.

WOMAN
What’s the matter with you?!

BOBBY
Please lower your voice.

WOMAN
How can you let your child see you like this? What kind of father are you?

Bobby stares at his daughter across the table. She can’t look him in the eyes.
WOMAN
I swear it’d be better for her if you were dead. But you can’t even get that right.

Smitty hurries into the room with Solomon following after.

SMITTY
Excuse me, Miss, you’re going to have to leave now.

WOMAN
Waste of my time.

The woman grabs the girl by the hand and leads her out.

SMITTY
You okay, Bobby?

Bobby nods, forces a smile.

BOBBY
Yeah... sorry about the noise, Sol.

As Bobby exits the room, Craig tries to avoid eye contact, but Bobby puts on another smile.

BOBBY
(to Craig)
My accountant... Check a wrong box and the bitch goes nuts.

Craig chuckles, awkward. As Bobby continues down the hall, Craig approaches Johnny.

CRAIG
What was that about?

JOHNNY
His ex. They make each other a little crazy. You know how it is with women.

CRAIG
Yeah, sure... women.

INT. THREE NORTH TV ROOM - DAY

George and Lynn visit with Craig. Jimmy stares out the window in the background.

GEORGE
I talked to the admissions guy at Gates and he agreed to give you an extension.
LYNN
But you should focus on getting well, honey. Try not to stress about it.

Craig looks off.

GEORGE
Um, yeah, that’s right. Don’t stress about it.

CRAIG
There’s a guy in here. Bobby. He’s the one who borrowed your shirt. He has an interview today. For a place to live. He has a kid and if he doesn’t get in, they could be homeless.

George and Lynn exchange uneasy looks.

CRAIG
Makes the Gates application seem pretty insignificant...

GEORGE
Well, I’m sure you won’t be homeless if you don’t get in, but that doesn’t mean it’s not important.

LYNN
George.

CRAIG
Don’t you have a client in crisis somewhere?

Beat. George stares at Craig.

JIMMY
It’ll come to ya!

LYNN
Yes, it will. Thank you.

They all sit in tense silence.

INT. REC ROOM – DAY

CLOSE ON a piece of paper labelled “FRANKLIN GATES PERSONAL ESSAY.” It is blank, except for a series of impressive doodles in the margins.

Craig scribbles on the sheet as he sits alone in the rec room.
His attention drifts to the door when Bobby enters, wearing the borrowed shirt on his head like a turban. He looks totally dejected.

Craig watches as Bobby tumbles onto the couch and SCREAMS into a pillow at full volume. He thrashes around on the couch like a child having a temper tantrum.

After a few beats of this, Bobby rolls over onto his back, makes eye contact with Craig. Hold, as Bobby’s breathing steadies. Nobody moves.

   BOBBY
   I blew it.

   CRAIG
   What happened?

Once again, Bobby screams at full volume, but this time he isn’t muffled by the pillow. Craig looks on, perplexed.

Smitty and two MALE ATTENDANTS rush in, struggle to restrain Bobby and usher him out of the room.

INT. DR. MINERVA’S OFFICE - DAY

Craig sits across from Dr. Minerva.

   DR. MINERVA
   How did it make you feel? Seeing Bobby like that.

   CRAIG
   I was scared... Not that he was going to hurt me or anything. Just seeing someone lose it like that. It reminded me of how I feel sometimes.

   DR. MINERVA
   How’s that?

   CRAIG
   Like I’m on the verge of just blowing up. All the stress, pressure, anxiety bubbling up inside of me. But I’ve never been able to, you know, let it out like that. I just keep it inside.

   DR. MINERVA
   Have you always felt that way?

   CRAIG
   Well, not when I was a kid.
DR. MINERVA
Tell me about it.

CRAIG
What do you mean?

DR. MINERVA
Tell me about being a kid-- about a
time you remember just being happy...
Carefree.

Craig thinks back...

CRAIG
There was one day back in eighth
grade...

EXT. CONEY ISLAND - WINTER FLASHBACK - DAY

Craig and Aaron, both a couple years younger, ride their
bikes along the deserted boardwalk, laughing, having a ball.

CRAIG (V.O.)
It wasn’t that long ago, but time felt
different back then, like there was
more of it. We spent the morning at
Coney Island.

EXT. SANDY BEACH

Craig and Aaron run through a gaggle of seagulls, causing
them to take flight.

EXT. BOARDED-UP CARNIVAL GAMES

They race each other down the empty alleyways.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Afterwards, we rode our bikes through
Bay Ridge....

A76 FLASH ON Craig and Aaron cruising by a Pizza joint in Bay Ridge.

CRAIG (V.O.)
...Sunset Park...

B76 FLASH ON the duo eating tamales from a TAMALE VENDOR.

CRAIG (V.O.)
...Park Slope...
FLASH ON them flying by a gang of YUPPY MOTHERS, pushing strollers. One of the moms yells at them to slow down.

CRAIG (V.O.)
...Downtown Brooklyn...

FLASH ON Craig and Aaron buying a bootleg Lil Wayne CD off a local STREET VENDOR.

CRAIG (V.O.)
...Brooklyn Heights...

FLASH ON them rolling along the Brooklyn Heights Promenade.

CRAIG (V.O.)
...all the way to the Brooklyn Bridge.

FLASH ON the two of them rolling over the Brooklyn Bridge.

They pull over to the edge, lean over, and simultaneously spit on the taxis below. They crack up like two kids without a care in the world, until Aaron gets distracted by something over Craig’s shoulder.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Then everything changed.

Following Aaron’s gaze, Craig turns around, sees...

...a teenage girl eyeing Aaron from a few feet away. Aaron smiles at her.

BACK TO DR. MINERVA’S OFFICE.

CRAIG
Girls, grades, parents, two wars, impending environmental catastrophe, a fucked up economy... all these things seemed to come out of nowhere, like on the same day.

Dr. Minerva smiles.

DR. MINERVA
Craig, there’s a saying that goes something like, “Lord, grant me the strength to change the things I can, the courage to accept the things I can’t, and the wisdom to know the difference.”
CRAIG

So...

DR. MINERVA

So, let’s talk about your parents.

CRAIG

You think I can change my parents?

DR. MINERVA

No, but I’m a psychiatrist. I have to ask you about them at some point.

Craig smiles.

CRAIG

They’re good people. They do their best, but... Okay, take my dad. I just saw him today. And, like, he knows I’m in here cause I’m stressed out, but he still brings up the Gates application. It’s, like, get a clue, Dad. There’s something bigger going on here.

DR. MINERVA

And what’s that?

Craig thinks for a beat.

CRAIG

I’m not sure yet. But it feels big.

INT. THREE NORTH - NORTH CORRIDOR COMMUNITY PHONE - NIGHT

A78 Craig listens to his voice messages. First up, A78

SPLIT-SCREEN of Nia, again in the tub.

NIA

Hey, Craig, I’m sorry Aaron was being such a dick. He’s so arrogant and insensitive. We might totally break up over this. Call me. Bye.

B78 Craig hits a button, and his goggled science teacher, B78

Mr. Reynolds, replaces Nia. He’s dissecting a cow heart.

MR. REYNOLDS

Hey there, Mr. Gilner. Look, buddy, I heard about what’s going on, you know, where you are... and I want you to know we can postpone the labs until whenever you feel ready. Just hang in there.
Craig hits a button, and Aaron replaces Mr. Reynolds. He talks on the phone as a harem of HOT GIRLS look through his massive record collection in the background.

AARON
Hey Craig... Hope you’re not still mad about yesterday. It’s been a rough day for me. Nia and I broke up. Anyway, hope you’re feeling better. I’m out.

Craig hits a button, and this girl, JENNA, takes over the split screen. She’s in the tub with Nia.

JENNA
Hey, Craig, I’m Jenna, one of Nia’s friends, and like... okay, this is really embarrassing, but I heard about all this stuff you went through, and I kind of go through that stuff too. We met each other a couple times, but I always thought you were just weird. I didn’t realize you were, like, depressed. Anyway, I just think we should hang out, or whatever.

Craig hangs up, shakes his head in disbelief, as Bobby approaches. He drapes the borrowed shirt over Craig’s head.

BOBBY
Thanks.

Craig removes the shirt, but Bobby continues down the hall. He’s licking an ice cream cone. Craig rushes up to his side. As they walk, other patients trickle out of their rooms and migrate with them towards the dining room.

CRAIG
Sorry you didn’t get into the home.

BOBBY
No sweat, babe. I actually don’t find out for a few days... But I think I screwed the pooch.

CRAIG
That sucks.

BOBBY
I’m over it...

CRAIG
Really?
BOBBY
Not really, but I’m zonked on Atavan so...

CRAIG
Where’d you get the ice cream?

BOBBY
Mr. Softee truck across the street.

They pass by Smitty.

SMITTY
Bobby--

Other migrating patients chime in.

BECCA
I want ice cream.

JOHNNY
Can I have a lick, Bob?

SMITTY
Two points off, Bobby.

BOBBY
It’s worth it.

Noelle steps up.

NOELLE
What’s with these points, anyway?

CRAIG
Yeah, I know, what’s with these points?

NOELLE
Nobody could possibly be keeping track of them...

SMITTY (O.S.)
That’s three points off for doubting the system.

Craig smiles, whispers to Noelle.

CRAIG
Screw the system. You can have my points if you want.

Noelle smiles at Craig before floating ahead of them into the dining hall.
Humble steps up next to Bobby, hands him a crumpled dollar bill.

    BOBBY
    What’s this?

    HUMBLE
    Dollar. For the pizza party.

    BOBBY
    Where’d you get this?

    HUMBLE
    Don’t worry about it.

Humble drifts away. Bobby smells the buck.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Craig sits with Bobby. He looks at his battered fish sticks, takes a tentative bite.

Across the room, the Professor collides with Solomon and both their trays spill to the floor. An argument ensues.

    BOBBY
    (smiling)
    Know why she’s here?

Craig shakes his head. Bobby leans in, conspiratorial.

    BOBBY
    Used to be a radical academic up at Columbia, but after they passed the Patriot Act, she got crazy paranoid.

INT. PROFESSOR’S OFFICE - DAY

It looks like a tornado just blew through: papers on the floor, desk disassembled, holes in the walls. The Professor slouches on the floor, dismantling a telephone.

A CUSTODIAN peeks in as he passes by the office. He stops in his tracks, concerned.

BACK TO THE DINING ROOM

Craig stares at Bobby in disbelief.

    BOBBY
    Pretty loco, no? And Solomon? That guy’s nuts too.
EXT. WILLIAMSBURG STREET - NIGHT

Solomon and a gang of other Hasids glide through the streets on roller-blades.

BOBBY (V.O.)
Solomon was part of this cult of Hasidic acid-heads in Williamsburg.

As he blades, Solomon sees buildings and cars melting everywhere. He lies down on his back, stares up at the stars. His BUDDIES approach on their blades, hover over him.

ACIDHEAD
(in Yiddish with subtitles)
I think Solomon did too much.

BACK TO THE DINING ROOM

Bobby finishes the story.

BOBBY
Did 100 tabs of acid in one night.
Hasn’t been the same since.

CRAIG
Wow.

BOBBY
Crazy, right?

CRAIG
Yeah... What about you?

Bobby turns back to his food, uncomfortable.

BOBBY
What about me?

Craig backs off, shifts direction.

CRAIG
Um... Your daughter. Veronica. When do you see her again?

Bobby takes a bite. Chews and thinks.

BOBBY
I don’t know. I think maybe she’s better off without me.

CRAIG
C’mon, man...
BOBBY
For real. I mean, I’m not exactly a role model in here. She’s better off.

Bobby nods, trying hard to convince himself.

CRAIG
Okay, so I know it’s none of my business and you can tell me to get lost if you want, but--

BOBBY
Get lost.

Craig stares at Bobby for a tense beat, then looks down at his plate. Bobby shakes his head, frustrated with himself, then...

BOBBY
Sorry. Guess the Atavan wore off.

Bobby gets up with his tray, pats Craig on the shoulder as he passes.

INT. REC ROOM – NIGHT

A visiting musician, NEIL (20s, goatee-sporting stoner), plugs his bass into an electric amp, gets SHRIEKING feedback.

NEIL
Sorry, gang.

Patients file in, scurrying to find their favorite instruments: a full drum set, keyboard, maracas, washboard, claves, etc.

Johnny sets himself up on guitar, while Bobby commands the keyboard. Becca grabs the maracas with Noelle on tambourine. Everybody has something, except Craig.

NEIL
Welcome back to musical exploration. Who doesn’t have an instrument?

Noelle points to Craig.

NEIL
No worries, bro. Let’s get you up here on vocals.

CRAIG
Oh, no, I can’t sing.
PROFESSOR
Just like he can’t draw.

BOBBY
C’mon... what’re you afraid of?

Bobby nudges Craig, and he reluctantly heads up to the microphone, where Neil hands him a lyric sheet.

NEIL
You know this one?

CRAIG
(looking it over)
Um... I’ve heard it.

NEIL
Good enough. Bobby and the ladies will help you out.

CRAIG
Ladies?

Neil SNAPS his fingers and right on cue, Nurse Monica leads 4 other cute WEST INDIAN NURSES “on stage” to join Neil and Craig.

NEIL
Okay, people, just like we practiced last week, here we go...

Neil launches into the wicked bass-line from the classic David Bowie & Freddy Mercury rock anthem “Under Pressure”.

Craig stares at the lyric sheet, not sure when to jump in.

BOBBY
C’mon, cool Craig. Let’s rock, babe.

A84 Craig lowers his head, and at this moment the scene shifts to PURE FANTASY, as the lights fade low and everybody appears in outrageous glam-rock costumes.

The spotlight finds Craig. He’s a total rock star, dressed in a sparkling, skin-tight nylon jumpsuit with flaming bell-bottoms.

CRAIG
(as Freddy Mercury)
Mm ba ba de... Um bum ba de...

The fabulous nurses sway in unison behind him. A smoky mist fills the air.
CRAIG
Pressure pushing down on me...
Pressing down on you no man ask for...
Under Pressure - that burns a building
down, Splits a family in two, Puts
people on streets... Um ba ba be...
De Day da... Ee day da...

Bobby, also glammed up with eye-shadow and spiky wig, flies
out of the darkness onto the stage. He grabs the mic in
Bowie mode.

BOBBY
It’s the terror of knowing what this
world is about... Watching some good
friends scream...

CRAIG
Let me out! Pray tomorrow – gets me
higher...

BOBBY
Pressure on people, People on the
streets...

Jimmy chimes in from out of nowhere.

JIMMY
Day day de... Da da da ba ba...

Noelle steps up, shares the mic with Craig.

NOELLE
Chippin’ around – kick my brains around
the floor... These are the days it
never rains, but it pours...

NOELLE/BOBBY
People on the streets...

CRAIG
Ee da de da de...

NOELLE/BOBBY
People on the streets...

BOBBY
It’s the terror of knowing what this
world is about... Watching some good
friends scream...

EVERYBODY
Let me out!!
CRAIG
Pray tomorrow - gets me higher high!

BOBBY/NOELLE
Pressure on people - People on the streets.

The song quiets down, and the Nurses snap their fingers in unison, as...

BECCA
Turned away from it all like a blind man... Sat on a fence but it don’t work...

BOBBY
Keep coming up with love, but it’s so slashed and torn...

CRAIG
Why? Whyyyy? Whyyyyyyy?

Humble pounds on the drums, and music builds to a towering crescendo, climaxing, as...

CRAIG/NOELLE
Can’t we give ourselves one more chance? Why can’t we give love that one more chance? Why can’t we give love give love give love give love...

Johnny wails on the guitar like he’s been touring for years, as sparks shoot out of a pyrotechnic device behind him.

EVERYBODY
This is our last dance! This is our last dance! This is ourselves...

JIMMY
Under pressure...

And the music fades, leaving only the sound of the nurses snapping their fingers, until...

BACK TO REALITY

Craig puts his mic back on the stand, looks out over the other patients. Everybody’s on their feet and sweating buckets.

After a brief silence, the room erupts in joyous applause, as the patients and staff celebrate their awesome musical presentation, even if it didn’t exactly happen the way we saw it. Craig and Noelle hug.
NOELLE
That rocked!

INT. NIA’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nia paints her toenails, on the phone with Craig.

NIA
Ohmigod, you’re like a total rock star.

A86 We INTERCUT with Craig on the community phone.

CRAIG
What do you mean?

NIA
You’re all anybody talks about anymore. Like the whole school is obsessed with you. But you may want to consider getting a new look when you get out. Like your cell phone is so Y2K.

CRAIG
Oh yeah, it’s kinda--

NIA
--Don’t worry, we’ll find you something cool, Craig.

CRAIG
(smiling)
Cool Craig.

What?

NIA
Oh, somebody here calls me that. “Cool Craig.”

CRAIG
Is that somebody a girl?

Oh, no.

NIA
Well, are there any cute girls there?

Craig thinks about how to respond.
CRAIG
Not really. Like a mental hospital probably isn’t the best spot to hook up.

NIA
Speak for yourself. I’m dying to see this place. Can I come visit?

CRAIG
Sure, you can visit... If you don’t mind the groupies hanging all over me.

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM – NIGHT

Craig returns to his room, falls back onto his bed, exhales.

CRAIG
You’ve really gotta get out of the room more, Muqtada. There’s a whole world out there.

Muqtada turns over, looks at Craig for a beat. Craig closes his eyes and we FADE OUT.

TITLE OVER BLACK: “WEDNESDAY: DAY FOUR”

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM – DAY

Craig wakes up to find a man in doctor’s scrubs and surgeon’s mask, sitting on his bed. Craig snaps upright.

BOBBY
(removing the mask)
Relax, babe. It’s me. Let’s go for a walk. Put this on.

He hands Craig another set of scrubs.

INT. EAST CORRIDOR – DAY

Bobby and Craig, disguised as doctors, stroll past the nurses’ station, then slip through a door marked “Emergency Exit.”

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR – MINUTES LATER

Bobby and Craig continue down the hall, passing other doctors and patients in another wing of the hospital.

BOBBY
Sometimes it’s good to get out of there.
CRAIG
If you know how to get out, why don't you just leave?

BOBBY
Because it's crazier out there than it is in here.

CRAIG
I know what you mean.

Bobby smiles.

BOBBY
You play basketball?

CRAIG
Not really.

BOBBY
Me neither.

INT. GYMNASIUM ENTRANCE

Craig follows Bobby through a doorway, where they are greeted by an old CUSTODIAN.

BOBBY
Hey Charlie Boy.

Bobby drops several small white pills into Charlie's hand. Charlie nods.

CHARLIE
Okay Bob. You got thirty minutes.

BOBBY
Thanks.

INT. GYM BASKETBALL COURT - MINUTES LATER

Bobby and Craig shoot baskets in the hospital's atrium gym. They are both terrible, only rarely making shots.

BOBBY
What's up with you and Noelle?

CRAIG
What do you mean?

BOBBY
Don't play dumb. The energy is like...
Bobby makes a series of strange explosion sounds. Craig smiles.

BOBBY
...like fireworks, baby. You should ask her out.

CRAIG
Ask her out?

BOBBY
Yeah, you know. Out.

CRAIG
I like her, but I think I’d be too nervous to ask her out.

BOBBY
What’re you nervous about?

CRAIG
Rejection.

BOBBY
You can’t live in fear, babe. You’ll end up like Muqtada. Or worse, like me.

Craig stares at Bobby, sympathetic.

BOBBY
This is the part where you say, “No, Bobby, you’re life isn’t that bad.”

CRAIG
Oh, sorry, I--

BOBBY
Relax, babe.

CRAIG
I just--

BOBBY
Point is you can’t worry about rejection. C’mon, you can practice on me.

CRAIG
Practice what?

BOBBY
Asking Noelle out.
CRAIG
Oh, no, that’s okay.

BOBBY
C’mon, I’ll be Noelle.
(as Noelle)
Hey, Craig. What’s up?

CRAIG
Hi Noelle. Um... How’s it going?

BOBBY
Good. I get out of here soon. Do you like music, Craig?

CRAIG
Yeah, sure.

BOBBY
I like live music.

CRAIG
Oh.

Pause.

BOBBY
But I don’t like to go to concerts by myself.

Pause.

CRAIG
Oh. Okay. Well... maybe we could go together?

BOBBY
You don’t seem so sure about it.

CRAIG
No. I’m sure. Let’s go together. We’ll go to a concert together.

BOBBY
Great. Who are we going to see?

CRAIG
Oh, um... U2.

Bobby shakes his head, disappointed.

CRAIG
Vampire Weekend?
BOBBY (as himself again)
Jesus, man, no.

CRAIG
What then?

BOBBY
Don't be one of those douchebags that takes his date to some band she doesn’t want to see. This is very important. Are you listening?

Craig nods.

BOBBY
You ask her what SHE likes...

CRAIG
Right.

BOBBY
But that was great! See! Easy, right? Now you're ready.

Craig shoots, scores.

BOBBY
Good shot. It’s your lucky day, babe.

Bobby passes the ball back to Craig. He holds it.

CRAIG
How’d you end up here?

BOBBY
You don’t give up, do you? I’m here on vacation.

CRAIG
Seriously.

BOBBY
I am serious. Some people go to the Hamptons. I come here. People serve me food. I get to rest, sleep, even get a little high sometimes.

CRAIG
That’s not what I heard about you.

BOBBY
What’d you hear?
CRAIG
You thought aliens stole your testicles.

BOBBY
What? Who told you that?

CRAIG
Relax, babe...

BOBBY
(catching on)
Funny guy.

CRAIG
Actually, I heard your accountant say you tried to kill yourself.

BOBBY
This may come as a shock to you, Cool Craig, but that wasn’t my accountant.

CRAIG
Gee, really?

BOBBY
And I’ve tried to kill myself six times.

The mood shifts. They stare at each other for a tense beat.

CRAIG
I thought about doing that, but couldn’t make it to the bridge; just came straight here.

BOBBY
What stopped you?

CRAIG
My parents, I think. And my sister. Knowing how bad it would mess them up.

BOBBY
I don’t get you, Craig. Young. Smart. Talented. A family loves you. I don’t get it. What I wouldn’t give to be you. Just for a day. I would do so much. Just to feel like... you know... there was a future worth living for. Like out there was actually a better life than in here. I would do so much. Just live. Like it meant something...
Bobby shoots, misses.

    BOBBY
    Screw it. Let’s get outta here.

Bobby heads for the exit. Craig watches him for a beat, then follows.

INT. THREE NORTH - NURSES STATION - LATER

Dressed in their normal attire, Craig and Bobby stroll down the hall towards the nurse’s station. Bobby hands Smitty the folded doctors’ scrubs.

    BOBBY
    Hey, Smitty, I found these somewhere.

Bobby keeps walking, while Smitty examines the scrubs in confusion. He looks to Craig for an explanation, but Craig shrugs, continues on.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Craig eats his lunch with the other patients. He seems to be enjoying his meal for the first time in Three North.

Noelle strolls by Craig, drops a note next to his tray. He smiles, reads...

INSERT: “See you in one hour. Don’t forget.”

He looks around for her, but she’s gone. He folds the note and continues eating.

INT. EAST CORRIDOR - DAY

After lunch, Craig approaches his room, but stops upon seeing Becca and the Professor staring inside from the hall.

    CRAIG
    What’s going on?

    PROFESSOR
    Look.

She gestures into the room, where Muqtada is out of bed, and slowly approaching the door.

    CRAIG
    Hey, Muqtada, coming out for a walk?

Muqtada stops.
BECCA
Shhh. You’re disturbing his progress.

MUQTADA
(still inside the room)
What is there to do?

CRAIG
Um, lots of stuff. You like to draw?

Muqtada shakes his head.

CRAIG
Ping-pong?

MUQTADA
Ping... What?

BECCA
How about music?

MUQTADA
Yes.

CRAIG
Great, okay--

--Only Egypt music.

Solomon flops up to them in his sandals and too-big pants.

SOLOMON
Excuse me if you please I am trying to rest.

CRAIG
Hey, Sol, have you met Muqtada?

Solomon reaches across the door threshold and shakes hands with Muqtada.

SOLOMON
If you could please keep it down.

Solomon stalks off down the hall.

PROFESSOR
He has sensitive hearing.

MUQTADA
This I think is enough for one day.

Craig watches Muqtada go back to bed, climb under the covers.
INT. TV ROOM - DAY

Craig draws a series of brain maps, while his Gates application remains untouched at the edge of the table. He appears focused, at peace.

After a few moments, Craig hears a familiar voice.

NIA (O.S.)
Hey Craig.

Craig’s attention jerks to the door, where Nia strolls in. His mood suddenly shifts from peaceful to anxious. He self-consciously covers his art.

CRAIG
Hey... this is a surprise.

NIA
Aaron and I broke up.

CRAIG
Oh... I’m sorry.

Nia sits down next to him. She’s wearing a little beige camouflage skirt, and Craig is suddenly hypnotized by her thighs, which we slowly ZOOM IN on.

NIA
Are you okay?

Craig shifts uncomfortably in his seat, trying to conceal his boner.

CRAIG
Oh, yeah... Um, sorry.

NIA
You must be really loaded.

CRAIG
Yeah. I’m a little zonked.

She puts her hand on his knee. He looks down at his lap.

NIA
You know, I’ve been thinking non-stop about you since we talked Monday.

CRAIG
Oh, I’ve been thinking about you, too.

Jimmy walks by, shoots Craig a big smile.
JIMMY
I woke up and my bed was on fire!

Nia looks at him, makes a face.

NIA
What’s wrong with that guy?

CRAIG
He’s schizophrenic.

NIA
Weird... Anyway...
(laying on the flirt)
It’s like you told me all this stuff about you and you’re really... I don’t know... mature. Not like everyone else with their stupid little problems. You’re like, really screwed up.

CRAIG
I’m a mess.

NIA
But in a good way. In the way that gives you experience.

CRAIG
So you and Aaron broke up?

Nia nods, biting her lip, and we FREEZE on her irresistible expression.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Okay, so I know I should be thinking about Noelle and how I’m supposed to be meeting her in twenty minutes...

ECUs ON various parts of Nia’s face: eyes, ears, lips...

CRAIG (V.O.)
But when you’ve got a really gorgeous girl in front of you, and you’ve been obsessing over her for two years, and she’s biting her lip and talking low- and you’re hard- what are you gonna do?

Back to Craig as the frame resumes action.

CRAIG
You wanta see my room?
INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM

Craig leads Nia into his room, where by some miracle, Muqtada seems to be gone. He places his artwork on the nightstand, covers it with the blank Gates application.

NIA
You haven’t finished that yet?

CRAIG
What? Oh...

But before he can respond, Nia advances toward him. A brief pause. They look each other over and then go at it like teenagers, falling back onto Muqtada’s bed. Nia straddles over Craig.

As they kiss, Craig reaches up Nia’s shirt. She moans. Craig awkwardly moves his hand from one breast to the other.

NIA
Me and Aaron never did anything like this.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Don’t mention Aaron... Lalalalalalala.

NIA
This was totally on my checklist.

Aaron suddenly appears, lying in bed next to Craig and Nia, swirling a snifter of Cognac. He wears a smoking jacket.

AARON
Are you seriously squeezing my girlfriend’s tit? Go easy, bro.

CRAIG
(closing his eyes)
Lalalalalalalala.....

NIA
What are you doing?

A toilet FLUSHES off-screen.

NIA
Is there someone in here?

CRAIG
I’m gonna be sick.

MUQTADA (O.S.)
Sex!
Craig and Nia jerk their heads toward the front door, where Muqtada is standing by the bathroom.

    MUQTADA
    Sex in my bed!

BLAH! Craig vomits on the floor.

    NIA
    That is disgusting.

Nia pops out of bed, buttoning her shirt.

    CRAIG
    Sorry.

    MUQTADA
    Children make sex in my bed!

    NIA
    Craig, who is this?

    MUQTADA
    You terrible girl corrupt my friend!

    CRAIG
    This is my roommate, Muqtada.

    MUQTADA
    Don’t talk to her! She try and make sex in my bed!

    NIA
    Easy, Mookie, nobody was having sex.

Craig breathes and sweats heavily.

    MUQTADA
    Woman is temptress! I know. Get out!

    NIA
    What’s wrong with you?

    CRAIG
    He’s going through a hard time.

    NIA
    No, YOU! What’s wrong with you?

    CRAIG
    I’m also going through a hard time.
NIA
Get some sleep, Craig. I’ll call you tomorrow.

CRAIG
Nia wait!

Craig tries to stop Nia, but gets tangled up with Muqtada.

CRAIG
Nia!

INT. THREE NORTH – EAST CORRIDOR

Craig rushes out of the room, sees Nia at the opposite end.

CRAIG
Wait, Nia!
(desperate)
I love you!

Nia looks back to Craig.

NIA
Just get better, Craig.

At this point, Craig notices Noelle standing nearby, a pencil sketch in her hand. His words echo in his head as he sees how upset she looks.

CRAIG
No, I mean--

Nia continues down the hall as Noelle crumples her sketch, flings it at Craig, then takes off in the opposite direction.

CRAIG
Wait...

But they both keep going. Craig slumps to the floor, back against the wall. After a beat, he grabs Noelle’s discarded sketch, unfolds it.

INSERT: A beautifully detailed self-portrait of Noelle in front of a mirror, titled “Under Pressure”.

Hold on Craig, moved by the sketch.

INT. HALL– OUTSIDE NOELLE’S ROOM – MINUTES LATER

Craig KNOCKS. And KNOCKS.
CRAIG
Noelle... Noelle, please... I love your portrait. It’s amazing. I’m sorry if I messed up. I wish you’d open the door... You okay in there?

A piece of paper slides out from under the door. Craig picks it up.

INSERT: a drawing of a penis-man with Craig’s name on it.

CRAIG
Oh... this is pretty cool too... So, our meeting tonight... Is it fair to assume that’s not happening?

No answer.

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Muqtada greets Craig.

MUQTADA
Sorry, Craig. Are you okay?

Craig hands Muqtada the penis drawing.

MUQTADA
Oh...

Craig falls back on his bed, totally dejected.

CRAIG
You’ve had it figured out all along, Muqtada... never get out of the bed.

TITLE OVER BLACK: “THURSDAY: DAY FIVE”

INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM - DAY

BOBBY (O.S.)
I got in.

Craig emerges from under the covers to find Bobby hovering above him.

CRAIG
In what?

BOBBY
In your mother.

CRAIG
Oh...
BOBBY
In the home. I have a home.

CRAIG
But, I thought...

BOBBY
I was wrong. It’s not the first time.

CRAIG
(without emotion)
That’s great.

A beat, as Bobby looks Craig over.

BOBBY
We missed you at breakfast, babe. Smitty said your evaluation’s at six. You ready?

CRAIG
What do you think?

Craig rolls over, moans.

BOBBY
Is this about the whole Nia/Noelle fiasco?

CRAIG
How do you know about that?

BOBBY
Solomon. He has very sensitive hearing. And FYI, don’t ever listen to Johnny’s girl advice. No sophisticated woman would ever fall for that crap.

CRAIG
It’s not just women. I can’t do anything right... My life’s a mess.

BOBBY
No, my life is a mess... Muqtada’s life is a mess. No offense, babe.

MUQTADA
All good, papa.

BOBBY
Ordinarily I wouldn’t be in here playing big brother Bob with you, but I happen to like you, Craig. You remind me of myself your age.

(MORE)
BOBBY (cont'd)
I was much better looking, of course. 
And I never had problems with women--

MUQTADA
Get back on track, man.

BOBBY
The point is, you’re sixteen years old. 
Someday you won’t be. And in twenty years, if you’re celebrating your daughter’s eighth birthday in a place like this, I swear to god Muqtada and I are going to kick your ass... He not busy bein’ born, is busy dyin’, babe... Believe this.

Bobby heads for exit, but stops at the door.

BOBBY
Oh, and by the way-- I came in here to tell you I’m not gonna be homeless tomorrow. Just sayin’...

Craig stares at the door for a beat after Bobby leaves, still processing it all.

MUQTADA
This Bobby, I think, is very wise man.

Craig looks at Muqtada as he rolls back towards the window, pulling the blanket over his head. Hold.

FADE OUT.

INT. MEDICATION LINE - DAY
A nurse hands Craig his medication, and he downs it.

INT. THREE NORTH - EAST CORRIDOR
Craig mopes down the hall when he notices Bobby at the opposite end of the corridor, talking on the phone. 

Bobby smiles big as he talks to his daughter.

BOBBY
And it’s next door to the Y, so we can go swimming in the pool or maybe they got table tennis. Yeah, sure, ping-pong. Same thing... Don’t worry, I’ll teach you... So you’re mom’ll bring you on Saturday and we’ll cook a feast... Absolutely-- mint chocolate chip. Anything for you, babe.
Craig looks on, touched by Bobby’s optimism.

**INT. CRAIG’S THREE NORTH BEDROOM**

A freshly showered Craig sits in bed, drawing on a large sheet of white paper. He looks at peace, totally immersed in his artwork.

**INT. NOELLE’S ROOM – DAY**

The newest of Craig’s brain maps slides under the door: a stunning image of two brain-cities connected by a bridge.

Noelle picks it up, reads the note on the other side: I WANT TO EXPLAIN. NO EXCUSES. USUAL PLACE, 4PM. I’M AN IDIOT.

**INT. BOBBY’S ROOM – DAY**

Bobby stands in proud warrior position, when Craig pokes his head in.

CRAIG
Oh, sorry... What’re you doing?

BOBBY
Yoga. What’re you doing?

CRAIG
Apologizing for acting like a jerk earlier. Congratulations on your home.

BOBBY
Thanks.

CRAIG
I’ve been thinking about what you said, and, I think I’m ready to start being born...

Bobby stares at Craig.

CRAIG
I mean, you know...

Bobby smiles.

**INT. THREE NORTH – NORTH CORRIDOR – DAY**

Craig paces, glances at the clock, which reads 4:15. He’s about to give up, when he sees Noelle coming towards him. She wears an “I HATE BOYS” t-shirt. Craig smiles tentatively, but Noelle remains stone-faced.
CRAIG
Thanks for coming.

No response.

CRAIG
So, I just wanted to say, I’m really sorry about yesterday. That girl you saw me with... she was my best friend’s girlfriend. I’ve been obsessed with her forever--

NOELLE
--And you’re in love with her?

CRAIG
No.

NOELLE
Of course not. But you think she’s hot, so you told her what you thought she’d wanta hear.

CRAIG
Um, I don’t think--

NOELLE
--and now you’re going to do the same thing to me.

CRAIG
No, I wasn’t.

NOELLE
You weren’t?

Noelle stares at him, waiting for what’s next. Craig thinks it over.

After a confused beat, Noelle turns to go, but Craig grabs her arm.

CRAIG
Okay, it’s true that I think you’re hot. And I do want to say the right thing, but only because I really like you. I like that you don’t hide your problems like everyone else. That you wear them right there on your face... And I feel like I don’t have to hide mine when I’m with you.

Noelle manages a subtle smile. Encouraged, Craig continues.
CRAIG
I’ve been thinking a lot, and I
realized, you know, that, well... if
you’re not busy being born, then you’re
busy dying... and I think we could both
benefit from being born... again. Not
born again, but, you know?

NOELLE
Gee, thanks for the wisdom, Bob.

CRAIG
What? He told you that one too?

NOELLE
Who?

CRAIG
Bobby.

NOELLE
Yeah, and about a billion other people.
It’s alright, Ma.

CRAIG
What?

NOELLE
Bob Dylan. It’s the song you just
quoted.

CRAIG
What? No.

NOELLE
Yes.

CRAIG
Oh.

Noelle laughs. Craig smiles too.

CRAIG
Anyway, my point is... I wanna play
doctor with you.

She cocks her head, intrigued. Craig SNAPS his fingers,
smiles.

NOELLE
What are you doing?

He SNAPS again, looks down the hall.
CRAIG

Where is he?

After a beat, a commotion erupts from the opposite end of the hall, as Bobby streaks naked through the corridor, howling like a mad man. The nurses leave their station to help contain him.

Noelle cracks up, as Craig ducks into the utility closet, snatches a pair of scrubs. They run off, sneaking through the emergency exit.

Bobby notices Craig and Noelle escape, then stops running. He smiles, as the nurses lead him away.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - ANOTHER FLOOR

Craig and Noelle (disguised as doctors) emerge from the stairwell, blending into the crowd of doctors and patients.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM

Craig and Noelle stroll past EMERGENCY PATIENTS. When they see a SECURITY GUARD approaching from the opposite direction, they quickly attend to the nearest patient, an old CHINESE MAN. Craig rubs his head.

CRAIG

Does this hurt?

Noelle massages his feet.

NOELLE

How about this?

The guard passes without suspicion, so Craig and Noelle take off, leaving the Chinese man very confused.

INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Craig and Noelle jog down the hall, turn a corner to find...

...Dr. Minerva and her posse of interns coming towards them. Craig and Noelle put on the brakes and scramble in the other direction.

INT. INNER STAIRWELL

They race up the stairs, find an exit door, and emerge out onto...
EXT. HOSPITAL ROOFTOP

...where the setting sun casts a fiery red glow on the Brooklyn rooftops. They take a beat to admire the Manhattan skyline and Brooklyn Bridge below.

NOELLE
This is amazing.

Craig looks at Noelle, reaches out, and touches her face. She doesn’t move.

NOELLE
You’re not a cut fetishist, are you?

Craig removes his hand.

CRAIG
What? No.

NOELLE
Good. Those guys are so creepy.

Craig smiles and they look out in silence.

NOELLE
How come you never asked me why?

CRAIG
Why what?

NOELLE
Why I did it.

CRAIG
I guess I figured you’d tell me when you wanted me to know.

Noelle smiles, nods.

NOELLE
Thanks.

After a beat, Craig summons his courage.

CRAIG
Um... do you like music?

NOELLE
Um, yeah. Do you like breathing?

CRAIG
Oh, right. Dumb question.
Sensing his discomfort, Noelle lightens up.

NOELLE
I like Radiohead, Pixies, T Rex... What else...

Craig nods. They sit in awkward silence, until...

CRAIG
Have you seen them live?

NOELLE
I’ve seen Radiohead and the Pixies.

CRAIG
Cool... So... Um...

NOELLE
Vampire Weekend’s playing a show at the end of the month.

Noelle pauses, giving him another chance. Craig just nods.

NOELLE
You wanna go?

Craig smiles, an enormous weight has been lifted.

CRAIG
Yes! I would. With you?

NOELLE
No, with Smitty. Yes with me.

They both continue to smile and look out over the sunset, until Noelle leans over, kisses Craig on the cheek, and we FREEZE mid-kiss--

CRAIG (V.O.)
Sorry guys... This is about to get pretty sappy, so I’m just gonna give you the highlights.

As Craig speaks in VO, we see various postcard-like stills presented as a slide-show presentation.

CRAIG (V.O.)
This is me sharing the realization that I don’t actually want to be a CEO, lawyer, or President.

CLICK to the next slide of Noelle, mid-cackle.
CRAIG (V.O.)
This is Noelle, laughing at the idea that I once wanted to be President.

CLICK to Noelle giving the world the finger.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Here, Noelle suggests I “screw” the Gates Summer application if it makes me so unhappy.

CLICK to next slide of Craig, smiling.

CRAIG (V.O.)
This is me liking that idea.

CLICK to Craig, no longer smiling.

CRAIG (V.O.)
This is me thinking about how to tell my dad.

CLICK to Noelle, blushing.

CRAIG (V.O.)
This is after I tell Noelle how wonderful and beautiful she is.

CLICK to Craig and Noelle kissing.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Oops. How’d that get in there?

CLICK to Noelle’s head on Craig’s shoulder, as they both look out over the sunset. Postcard text appears on screen:
GREETINGS FROM ARGENON HOSPITAL.

INT. DR. MINERVA’S OFFICE

Back in normal attire, Craig sits across from Dr. Minerva.

DR. MINERVA
How are you feeling?

CRAIG
I was having kind of a bad day. I missed dinner and breakfast.

DR. MINERVA
Why?

CRAIG
I think I was probably just feeling scared about leaving.
DR. MINERVA
What scares you about leaving?

CRAIG
There are a lot more things to stress about on the outside.

DR. MINERVA
Are you still having suicidal thoughts?

Craig shakes his head, no.

CRAIG
It’s like... there are so many people, not just in this hospital, but in the whole world, ya know, who are struggling so hard to live. And it seems like, self-indulgent, for me not to appreciate what I have.

DR. MINERVA
Like what?

CRAIG
Well, there’s my family, my home... and my friends... This girl. You know Noelle?

Dr. Minerva raises her eyebrows.

DR. MINERVA
Noelle? She’s the spunky one.

Craig blushes slightly. Did she just call his girlfriend “spunky”?

CRAIG
Oh, and this...

Craig reaches into his pocket, unfolds one of his brain maps.

CRAIG
I always thought art was just bourgeois decadence, but...

He hands the drawing to Dr. Minerva who looks it over.

DR. MINERVA
It’s really wonderful, Craig.

CRAIG
Thanks. I did about twenty of them. It’s something I really enjoy.
DR. MINERVA
What do you enjoy about it?

CRAIG
It’s fun. And it takes my mind off the stuff that stresses me out.

DR. MINERVA
Is this something you plan to continue when you leave?

CRAIG
Yeah, maybe, but my Dad might freak.

DR. MINERVA
Have you told him how you feel?

CRAIG
Not yet.

DR. MINERVA
But you will.

Craig nods.

DR. MINERVA
When?

CRAIG
I don’t know. As soon as I see him, I guess.

DR. MINERVA
And if he freaks?

Craig thinks it over, smiles.

CRAIG
Better him than me.

Dr. Minerva laughs.

DR. MINERVA
That’s going to be the challenge... You ready?

Craig nods.

CRAIG
I think so. How am I doing? With the evaluation.
DR. MINERVA
Oh. Well, Craig... We’ve only just begun. The evaluation consists of three parts. There’s still the multiple choice section and a personal essay explaining why we should let you go...

Craig stares at Dr. Minerva in shock.

DR. MINERVA
What? Doctors can’t make jokes too?

Craig exhaled in relief.

DR. MINERVA
You can leave first thing in the morning...

CRAIG
Thank you.

DR. MINERVA
You should stop by and say hi sometime. You know, we have a volunteer program with the local high schools. You could help others who are going through the same thing.

Craig thinks it over, smiles and nods.

INT. NURSES’ STATION – NIGHT

Craig approaches Smitty, carrying the doctors’ scrubs.

CRAIG
Tonight’s my last night, Smitty.

SMITTY
Congratulations. We’ll miss you, Craig.

CRAIG
And Bobby’s too. You think we can have a pizza party?

SMITTY
Sure, if you can get the money.

CRAIG
How many pizzas do you think we need?
SMITTY
Well, we’ve got thirty patients and five staff, but that’s including Muqtada and the anorexics, so... seven pies should do.

CRAIG
(handing over the scrubs)
Cool. Oh, I found these down over there somewhere.

Smitty examines the scrubs, watches Craig go.

INT. NORTH CORRIDOR COMMUNITY PHONE
Craig speaks into it.

CRAIG
Yeah, seven large pies. All kinds... Just tell them to send the delivery guy to the third floor, Three North. Thanks, Dad. I’ll see you and mom tomorrow.

Craig hangs up, looks down the hall, where...

...Muqtada is peeking out their bedroom door. Craig waves, but Muqtada just disappears back inside.

Craig thinks for a beat, then picks up the phone again.

CRAIG
Hey, man... I could really use a favor.

INT. THREE NORTH - WAITING AREA - NIGHT
With a completed stack of art beside him, Craig puts the finishing touches on a new brain map.

Craig looks up as the security guard buzzes open the Three North entrance doors, and George enters with six large pizzas.

CRAIG
Hey dad, I wasn’t expecting you in person.

GEORGE
I left work early. Thought it was more important to be here.

Craig nods.
SMITTY
(approaching)
Mr. Gilner, thank you so much! Three
North loves you tonight...
(to Craig)
See ya back there in a jiff?

Smitty takes the pizzas from George, heads toward the dining hall.

GEORGE
(re: brain maps)
Whatcha got there?

Craig hands George the stack of brain maps. George looks through them. After a beat, he smiles.

GEORGE
You did these? Very nice.

CRAIG
Thanks. I’ve been doing a lot of art in here, and it’s, um, actually... it’s something I’d like to continue.

GEORGE
Oh. That’s good.

CRAIG
Like, maybe, take a class this summer.

GEORGE
What about the Gates program?

CRAIG
It’s not for me.

Solomon runs by them, holding up his pants.

SOLOMON
Craig! Have you heard about the pizza tonight?

CRAIG
Yeah, I’ll be there in a minute, Sol.

George takes a deep breath.

GEORGE
Art’s a wonderful hobby, but why don’t you hold off on any big decisions until you’ve gotten home, had some time to clear your head?
CRAIG
What do you think I’ve been doing here all week? I’ve thought a lot about it--

GEORGE
I’m just saying, let’s not close off your options. This could be very important for your future.

Craig looks at George for a beat, disappointed.

CRAIG
What about now? I’m sixteen years old. Can’t I start worrying like an adult when I become one?

GEORGE
When I was your age--

CRAIG
Dad! I know you’re just trying to help, but you really stress me out sometimes. And that’s part of the reason I’m here.

George takes this in. After a beat...

CRAIG
But after I leave tomorrow, I don’t ever want to have to come back.

George nods, understanding the weight of this.

GEORGE
(after a beat)
Thanks for getting here and getting help.

CRAIG
Do you wanna come grab a slice with me? Meet some people?

INT. REC ROOM – MINUTES LATER

Craig and George step into the room, where the patients chow down on pizza. Craig spots Noelle, leads George to her.

CRAIG
Noelle, this is my dad. George.

NOELLE
Hi George. So what are you in for?
GEORGE
I, um...

CRAIG
She’s kidding, dad.

George smiles and they shake hands, as Johnny steps by.

CRAIG
Hey, Johnny, meet my Dad.

JOHNNY
Yo, thanks for the pies, Mr. G.

GEORGE
No problem... Johnny.

CRAIG
(to Johnny)
Hey, have you seen Bobby?

JOHNNY
Not since lunch.

GEORGE
(looking off-screen)
Oh, is that...

Johnny and Craig follow George’s eyeline to the ping-pong table across the room.

INT. REC ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Craig and Johnny play doubles ping-pong vs. George and Noelle. His sleeves rolled, George plays like he’s known everybody for years.

SMITTY
Hey Craig, you have another visitor.

INT. THREE NORTH - WAITING AREA

Craig comes out to find Aaron texting on his phone. When he sees Craig, he hands him a flat brown paper bag.

AARON
I found it. I must have lent out the first two volumes. But here’s the third.

CRAIG
I so appreciate this.
AARON
No problem... Look, man, I’m sorry I was a bitch to you.

CRAIG
I’m sorry I tried to make out with your girlfriend.

Aaron and Craig nod at each other for an awkward beat.

CRAIG
How are things with Nia?

AARON
We’re gonna try to work through it.

CRAIG
Good.

AARON
You know, I might hide it pretty well, but I get that depression stuff too, sometimes.

CRAIG
Yeah?

Aaron nods.

AARON
Don’t kill yourself, okay?

CRAIG
I won’t.

AARON
Seriously.

CRAIG
Thanks.

Craig holds out his hand for Aaron to slap, but Aaron turns it into a hug.

Aaron heads for the exit, but pauses one last time.

AARON
Did you really try to make out with Nia?

Craig smiles and shrugs.
AARON
(with a smile)
Dick.

Aaron exits and Craig heads back toward the party, but stops when--

NURES MONICA
Craig... You left your drawings here earlier.

Monica hands the stack to Craig, who looks closely at the one on top: a custom drawn brain map that says “Bobby” at the bottom.

CRAIG
Thanks Monica.

INT. BOBBY’S ROOM

Craig peeks inside the room to find Bobby staring at the floor in the corner.

CRAIG
Pizza’s getting cold. What’s up?

BOBBY
Feeling pretty tired, think I’m gonna skip the pizza tonight. Just packing up.

CRAIG
So, vacation’s over...

BOBBY
Yup. Back to work.

CRAIG
You got a job?

BOBBY
Nope.

Beat. Craig shifts.

CRAIG
You know, I used your Dylan line on Noelle.

BOBBY
How’d it go?
CRAIG
Good. We’re gonna hang out soon. See some music.

Bobby smiles. Craig steps in, hands him a brain map.

CRAIG
Here. It’s you.

BOBBY
Yikes. It’s a mess in there.

CRAIG
It’s not such a mess. It’s just undergoing renovations.

Bobby smiles.

CRAIG
I wrote my number on the back... let’s get together sometime... play some table tennis.

Bobby thinks for a long beat, knowing this won’t happen.

BOBBY
Sure.

CRAIG
Cool... So I’ll see you at breakfast tomorrow.

Bobby nods. Craig starts to leave when...

BOBBY
Good luck, Craig. Not that you’ll need it.

CRAIG
Thanks. You too, babe.

They both smile and Craig exits.

INT. REC ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Craig enters to find everyone chowing down on pizzas and rocking out to Smitty’s funk records.

He smiles to himself, noticing George, now teamed-up with the Professor, continuing to dominate other patients at the ping-pong table.

Craig approaches Smitty and hands him the paper bag that Aaron brought.
Smitty removes an album from the bag: **EGYPTIAN MASTERS: VOLUME 3.** Smitty glances to Craig, and shakes his head.

**CRAIG**

Trust me.

Smitty makes a face, but goes to the record player anyway.

The music cuts out mid-song, and some of the patients begin to grumble.

**CRAIG**

Just wait...

The Egyptian Masters album soars into play.

**JOHNNY**

Is this a joke?

**HUMBLE**

Hey, I like this. Yeah!

Humble moves to the music.

**BECCA**

Look!

Becca points to the rec room entrance, where...

...Muqtada is swaying to the rhythm, and tapping his feet.

**CRAIG**

Hey, Muqtada, join the party!

Everyone gets down, and dances to the Egyptian Masters with Muqtada at the helm.

Near the rec room entrance, Bobby emerges in the doorway, observes for a quiet beat. He watches as...

...Craig heads over to Noelle in the corner. She smiles to Craig, wiggles her hips to the unusual music. They laugh, and Craig joins her in a little dance.

Bobby smiles to himself and slowly backs out of the room.

**TITLE OVER BLACK: “FRIDAY”**

**INT. THREE NORTH - EAST CORRIDOR - DAY**

From the opposite end, Craig advances through the corridor with his duffel bag and a stack of brain maps. He passes...
JOHNNY
Good luck, buddy.

HUMBLE
You should really stay longer; you might lose it on the outside.

CRAIG
I’ll take my chances.

Jimmy strolls by in the other direction.

JIMMY
It’ll come to ya!

Craig continues, passing patients and staff, saying his goodbyes.

CRAIG (V.O.)
Okay, I know you’re thinking, “What is this? Kid spends a few days in the hospital and all his problems are cured?” But I’m not. I know I’m not. I feel how easily I could fall back into it, lie down and not eat, look at my homework and freak out, look at Nia and be jealous...

Smitty approaches, gives Craig his cell phone, keys, and shoelaces.

CRAIG
Thanks, Smitty. Have you seen Bobby?

SMITTY
He already left. Early this morning.

At first disappointed, Craig forms a slight smile.

CRAIG (V.O.)
But the difference between today and last Saturday is that giving up just isn’t an option anymore.

Craig sees Noelle, his face brightens.

NOELLE
How do you feel?

CRAIG
I feel like I can handle it.

LYNN (O.S.)
Craig?
They turn toward Lynn and George in the waiting area.

CRAIG
Wanta meet my mom?

NOELLE
You really move fast, don’t you?

Craig’s parents approach.

CRAIG
Hey mom, this is Noelle.

LYNN
A pleasure to meet you.

NOELLE
You too.

GEORGE
Hey Noelle.

NOELLE
Hey George. Did you have fun last night?

GEORGE
I haven’t partied like that since 1999.

Craig rolls his eyes. Noelle smiles.

NOELLE
Well, I’ll let you go. Nice to meet you all.

CRAIG
See you next week.

Noelle smiles and struts off.

LYNN
(to George)
What exactly went on here last night?

GEORGE
Sorry, honey, what happens in Three North stays in Three North.

Lynn elbows George.

CRAIG
Guys, can you go home without me and I’ll meet you back there in a few minutes?
LYNN
Why?  Are you okay?

CRAIG
I’m fine.  I just want to ride my bike home.

GEORGE
Sure.  We’ll take your stuff.  But hurry up; Alyssa baked you cookies.

Lynn kisses Craig on the forehead.

CRAIG
See you in a few minutes.

Lynn and George walk towards the elevator.  Craig watches them for a beat, then glances back for one last look at Three North, sees...

...Muqtada, out of his room again, chatting with Solomon.

EXT. ARGENON HOSPITAL - DAY

Craig steps out into the brisk spring air with the other PEDESTRIANS, COMMUTERS, and HOSPITAL LOITERERS.  He goes to the bike rack, bends down and swirls the number rings to his combination.

CRAIG (V.O.)
I know something’s changing in me.  It might not be dramatic, but it’s real.  And for the first time in a while, I can look forward to things I want to do in my life...

Craig smiles into the camera.

The following rapid-fire sequence takes us through wildly stylized images that correspond with Craig’s stream-of-consciousness voice over...

CRAIG (V.O.)

(MORE)
CRAIG (V.O.) (cont'd)
Draw a naked person.  Draw Noelle naked.
Run.  Travel.  Swim.  Skip.  I know it’s
lame, but, whatever, skip anyway...

BACK TO CRAIG ON THE STREET

He’s biking full speed.  We TRACK with him for several beats, but he’s just too fast.  He flies out of frame, and we...

CUT TO BLACK.