PRODUCTION BOOK · CHARACTERS + 5-SECOND BEATS

POV: You Still Live With Your Parents at 30

— While Everyone Else Pays Someone Else's Mortgage

18	288	11	~25 min
CHARACTERS	BEATS	STAGES	RUNTIME

Interactive: tap any link to jump, tick the boxes, type notes. Use your PDF app's bookmarks panel to navigate.
Best in Adobe Acrobat Reader, Foxit, Xodo or a desktop browser so the boxes and notes save.

How to use this book

This book works in **two steps**. Every blue word is a link: tap it to jump. The dark bar at the top of every page has **Stage overview** and **Cast** buttons, and your PDF app's **bookmarks panel** lists every stage and character.

STEP 1 · Build your cast. Generate one reference image for each character using the character prompts. Save the images and tick **Reference made**. Attach these references when generating beats so faces stay consistent.

STEP 2 · Generate the beats. Work stage by stage from the stage overview. Each beat is one image on screen, about **5 seconds** of narration. Timecodes match the generated voiceover (voiceover/normal) exactly. Copy the image prompt, generate, and tick **Image**, **Animated** and **Placed** as you go. Use the notes box at the start of each stage for anything you want to remember.

In the edit: drop each image at its timecode, or import **beats_normal.srt** into CapCut or Premiere: each subtitle block is one beat, so you can line images up with it and get captions for free. Add a slow push-in or pan to every image.

Locked visual style

flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail.

Outfit and lighting by stage

STAGES	OUTFIT	LIGHTING
1 & 10 · Rooftop (age 30)	Black quarter-zip	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline
2–4 · Ages 22–24	Black hoodie, hood up, younger and thinner	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones
5–7 · Ages 25–27	Black crewneck sweater	soft clean daylight, neutral tones
8–9 · Ages 28–29	Black quarter-zip	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows
11 · Moving out	Black quarter-zip	warm natural light with amber accents
Bedroom at night	Any	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars

Recurring visual motifs

31 glow-in-the-dark plastic stars on the bedroom ceiling · the spare key on a faded blue high-school lanyard · the $800 envelopes · the circled “22 payments left” · the porch light · the heated rooftop pool · Theo and Jenna's red front door · Marcus's linen shirt and watch

STEP 1 OF 2

Build your cast

Generate these reference images before any beat.

18 characters
Tick each one when its reference is saved

CHARACTER	ROLE	APPEARS IN	
The Protagonist	Adult · ages 25–30 · main character	107 beats	☐ Reference made
The Protagonist (younger)	Age 22–24 · flashbacks and early years	36 beats	☐ Reference made
Marcus	Friend · flashy renter downtown	41 beats	☐ Reference made
Theo	Friend · homeowner with the red door	34 beats	☐ Reference made
Jenna	Friend · Theo's wife	31 beats	☐ Reference made
Priya	Friend · the one who notices	35 beats	☐ Reference made
Mother	His mother	26 beats	☐ Reference made
Father	His father	22 beats	☐ Reference made
Alana	The date	6 beats	☐ Reference made
Greg	His manager	6 beats	☐ Reference made
Aunt Denise	Thanksgiving relative	2 beats	☐ Reference made
Cousin Kyle	Thanksgiving relative	5 beats	☐ Reference made
The Uncle	Thanksgiving relative	1 beats	☐ Reference made
The Leasing Agent	Downtown loft	5 beats	☐ Reference made
The Mechanic	Repair shop	2 beats	☐ Reference made
The Loan Officer	The house purchase	4 beats	☐ Reference made
The Waiter	Rooftop party	2 beats	☐ Reference made
The Coworker	Market crash	2 beats	☐ Reference made

The Protagonist

ADULT · AGES 25–30 · MAIN CHARACTER

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT

Character reference sheet of the protagonist: a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan. Show him four times side by side, full body front view, same face and hair in every pose, deadpan expression: (1) black hoodie with the hood up, (2) black crewneck sweater, (3) black quarter-zip pullover, (4) dark tailored jacket over a black tee. Plain light-gray background, outfit labels under each pose. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head. He is always the darkest value in the frame.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)

1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 128, 129, 130, 134, 137, 138, 141 … +67 more

The Protagonist (younger)

AGE 22–24 · FLASHBACKS AND EARLY YEARS

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT

Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. The protagonist at age 22: a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, slightly thinner and more tired, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, worn jeans and old sneakers, holding a cardboard box. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)

28, 30, 33, 36, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 48, 49, 51, 52, 59, 63, 64, 65, 70, 71, 72, 75, 76, 77, 80, 81, 89, 90, 91, 92, 95, 96, 97, 100, 104, 105, 108

Marcus

FRIEND · FLASHY RENTER DOWNTOWN

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT

Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Marcus: a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut and a confident grin, wearing a cream linen shirt, slim chinos, loafers and a luxury wristwatch, holding a cocktail. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)

2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 50, 56, 60, 61, 63, 81, 87, 88, 121, 126, 142, 143, 153, 161, 162, 174, 186, 187, 188, 191, 193, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227 … +1 more

Theo

FRIEND · HOMEOWNER WITH THE RED DOOR

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT

Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Theo: a stocky bearded man in his late twenties with tired eyes and a friendly half-smile, wearing a flannel shirt, jeans and work boots. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)

6, 8, 9, 12, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 50, 60, 61, 62, 63, 81, 82, 88, 126, 142, 143, 153, 174, 175, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 193, 234, 251

Jenna

FRIEND · THEO'S WIFE

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT

Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Jenna: a warm woman in her late twenties with a long auburn ponytail and a kind smile, wearing a mustard cardigan over a white tee and jeans, house keys on a red ribbon in her hand. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)

6, 8, 9, 12, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 50, 60, 61, 63, 81, 82, 85, 88, 126, 142, 143, 153, 174, 175, 177, 178, 179, 193, 234, 251

Priya

FRIEND · THE ONE WHO NOTICES

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT

Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Priya: a calm, observant woman in her late twenties with dark wavy shoulder-length hair and small gold hoop earrings, wearing an olive jacket, black top and jeans, a thoughtful neutral expression. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)

6, 10, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 50, 60, 61, 63, 81, 88, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 142, 143, 174, 193, 234, 237, 252, 254, 259, 260, 262, 264, 265, 266, 267

Mother
HIS MOTHER

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. His mother: a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair and reading glasses on a beaded chain, wearing a faded maroon cardigan over a floral blouse, a gentle protective expression. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
34, 38, 44, 45, 46, 97, 137, 138, 140, 145, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 217, 218, 219, 248, 262, 263, 273, 278, 279, 280

Father
HIS FATHER

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. His father: a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a gruff but kind face, wearing a worn plaid shirt, khakis and reading glasses in his pocket. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
44, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 97, 132, 145, 146, 198, 200, 201, 204, 205, 248, 262, 273, 281, 282, 283, 284

Alana
THE DATE

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Alana: a lively woman in her mid-twenties with curly black hair and an expressive smile, wearing a rust-colored sweater and gold earrings. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96

Greg
HIS MANAGER

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Greg: a friendly balding middle-aged manager with a round face, wearing a tucked-in navy polo, khakis and a lanyard badge. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108

Aunt Denise
THANKSGIVING RELATIVE

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Aunt Denise: a heavyset woman in her sixties with teased hair and a sugary, nosy smile, wearing a bold red blouse and pearl necklace. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
65, 66

Cousin Kyle
THANKSGIVING RELATIVE

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. Cousin Kyle: a broad young man around twenty-four in a trucker cap and a team jersey, cocky grin, holding a car key fob. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
67, 68, 69, 72, 176

The Uncle
THANKSGIVING RELATIVE

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. His uncle: a loud gray-haired man in his sixties wearing a sweater vest over a collared shirt, a booming laugh. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
70

The Leasing Agent
DOWNTOWN LOFT

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. The leasing agent: a polished young woman in a fitted gray blazer with a sleek bun, holding a tablet and a silver pen, a practiced sales smile. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
115, 116, 117, 119, 120

The Mechanic
REPAIR SHOP

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. The mechanic: an older man in blue coveralls with grease-stained knuckles, a short gray beard and a shop rag in his back pocket. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
166, 167

The Loan Officer
THE HOUSE PURCHASE

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. The loan officer: a middle-aged man in a navy suit and striped tie, neatly combed hair, holding a thick file folder. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
271, 272, 274, 275

The Waiter
ROOFTOP PARTY

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. The waiter: a young man in a black apron and white shirt holding a payment tablet. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
14, 242

The Coworker
MARKET CRASH

☐ Reference made

CHARACTER PROMPT
Character reference sheet, full body, front view and three-quarter view side by side, neutral standing pose, plain light-gray background, consistent proportions. The coworker: a nervous young man in a wrinkled dress shirt with a loosened tie and messy hair. Flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, semi-chibi proportions with an oversized head.

APPEARS IN BEATS (tap to jump)
102, 149

STEP 2 OF 2

Generate the beats

Tap a stage to jump straight to it.

288 beats · ~5s each
00:00 – 25:16

STAGE	TITLE	BEATS	TIME	
1	**The Rooftop** Age 30 · The secret in his pocket	1–27 27 beats	00:00–02:24	☐ Stage done
2	**The Driveway and the Rule** Age 22 · Four boxes and one decision	28–55 28 beats	02:24–05:04	☐ Stage done
3	**"So When Are You Moving Out?"** Age 22–23 · The question that never stops	56–79 24 beats	05:04–07:24	☐ Stage done
4	**The Invisible Years** Age 23–24 · Everyone else's life, in pictures	80–109 30 beats	07:24–10:02	☐ Stage done
5	**The Loft and the Mortgage** Age 25 · The pen, the envelope, the $800	110–143 34 beats	10:02–12:59	☐ Stage done
6	**The Crash** Age 26 · When fear doesn't get a vote	144–173 30 beats	12:59–15:33	☐ Stage done
7	**The Reversal** Age 27 · Lives that have to be fed	174–194 21 beats	15:33–17:21	☐ Stage done
8	**The Nine Seconds** Age 28 · What the rent money really bought	195–214 20 beats	17:21–19:03	☐ Stage done
9	**The Cost of Silence** Age 29 · When the secret becomes a wall	215–240 26 beats	19:03–21:20	☐ Stage done
10	**Back on the Rooftop** Age 30 · Paid in full	241–268 28 beats	21:20–23:40	☐ Stage done
11	**Moving Out** After · The last star	269–288 20 beats	23:40–25:16	☐ Stage done

STAGE 1 OF 11

The Rooftop

Age 30 · The secret in his pocket

Beats 1–27 · 27 images
00:00 – 02:24

STAGE NOTES

001
BEAT

00:00
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It's 7:40 on a Saturday night and you're standing on a rooftop downtown,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
Wide view of a downtown rooftop party at night, the protagonist standing near the railing holding a cocktail glass, guests mingling, string lights overhead, a glowing heated pool behind. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide establishing shot, protagonist off-center left. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: stylish, quietly detached.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide establishing shot, protagonist off-center left	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	stylish, quietly detached	holding his drink, observing the party

002
BEAT

00:04
7.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"holding a drink you didn't pay for. It's Marcus's thirtieth birthday. His building. His roof."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist holding a fancy cocktail he didn't buy, a "Happy 30th Marcus" gold balloon banner strung behind him, Marcus laughing with guests in the background. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: celebratory, ironic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	celebratory, ironic	glancing at the banner

003
BEAT

00:12
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"His heated pool glowing blue behind everyone's heads. Your phone buzzes in your pocket."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
A sleek luxury apartment rooftop with a heated pool glowing turquoise, Marcus posing proudly beside it, guests' heads silhouetted against the blue glow. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: low-angle wide shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: showy, affluent.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
low-angle wide shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	showy, affluent	Marcus spreading his arms proudly

004
BEAT

00:18
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You don't need to look. You already know what it says. One line."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist's calm face in profile, eyes half-lidded, a faint glowing outline of a phone notification reflected in his glasses. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: tight close-up. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: knowing, private.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
tight close-up	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	knowing, private	not reaching for the phone

005
BEAT

00:22
7.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A balance. Two words after it. Paid in full. You keep it in your pocket."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A ghostly overlay of a phone notification floating beside the protagonist reading "Paid in full", blurred so the details stay hidden. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up with overlay. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: mysterious.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up with overlay	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	mysterious	the notification hovering faintly

006
BEAT

00:29
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"There are five of you up here. The same five since sophomore year."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Marcus · Theo · Jenna · Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Five friends standing together at the rooftop railing: the protagonist, Marcus, Theo, Jenna and Priya, the city skyline behind them. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt; Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan; Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide group shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: familiar, nostalgic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide group shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	familiar, nostalgic	the friends clinking glasses

007
BEAT

00:34
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Marcus in a linen shirt with the tags still on the inside collar."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus in a crisp linen shirt with a visible price tag still peeking out of the inside collar, holding a cocktail and grinning. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium close-up on Marcus. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: flashy, careless.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium close-up on Marcus	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	flashy, careless	adjusting his collar without noticing the tag

008
BEAT

00:38
4.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Theo and Jenna holding hands, a little tired, a little proud,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo · Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and Jenna holding hands at the party, both looking tired but proud, house keys on a ribbon clipped to Jenna's bag. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: settled, weary pride.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	settled, weary pride	leaning into each other

009
BEAT

00:42
3.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"the way people look when they own a house. And Priya,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and Jenna standing together like a classic homeowner couple, a tiny thought bubble above them showing a small house with a red door. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: proud, slightly strained.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	proud, slightly strained	smiling politely

010
BEAT

00:45
6.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"who notices everything and says almost none of it. Marcus taps a spoon against his glass."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya standing a little apart from the group, watching everyone quietly with a drink, her eyes landing on the protagonist. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot, protagonist soft in foreground. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: observant, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot, protagonist soft in foreground	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	observant, quiet	watching silently

011
BEAT

00:52
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He gives a speech about thirty. About building something. About how everyone up here made it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus giving a toast with one hand raised, speech-bubble icons of a house, a building and a trophy around him, guests cheering. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot from the crowd. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: triumphant, showy.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot from the crowd	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	triumphant, showy	gesturing grandly

012
BEAT

00:58
6.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He raises his drink toward Theo and Jenna's house, toward his own building, toward the city."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus raising his glass toward Theo and Jenna and then toward the luxury building behind him, the crowd's glasses lifting. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt; Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: celebratory, self-congratulatory.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	celebratory, self-congratulatory	sweeping his glass across the room

013
BEAT

01:04
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"When his glass swings past you, it slows down for half a second."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus's glass sweeping past the protagonist and slowing for a beat, Marcus's smile flickering awkwardly, the protagonist deadpan. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: awkward, subtle exclusion.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	awkward, subtle exclusion	the glass pausing near him

014
BEAT

01:08
5.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then it keeps going. The waiter comes by with a tablet. Marcus waves him off."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus The Waiter

IMAGE PROMPT
A young waiter in a black apron offering a payment tablet, Marcus waving him away with a flick of his hand. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt; the waiter is a young man in a black apron. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: generous, showy.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	generous, showy	Marcus waving off the bill

015
BEAT

01:14
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Tonight's on me, he says. Then he turns to you, grinning, warm, a little loud."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus turning toward the protagonist with a big, warm, loud grin, one arm around his shoulder. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: teasing, friendly.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	teasing, friendly	throwing an arm around him

016
BEAT

01:20
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And you're still at your mom's, right? Still in the room with the stars on the ceiling?"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A thought bubble above the group showing a childhood bedroom ceiling covered in glowing plastic stars, the protagonist below it. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot with thought bubble. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: embarrassing, nostalgic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot with thought bubble	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	embarrassing, nostalgic	everyone imagining the bedroom

017
BEAT

01:25
7.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Everybody laughs. Not mean. Just familiar. You laugh too. Jenna touches your arm."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The friend group bursting into laughter, the protagonist laughing along with a flat, half-hearted smile. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide group shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: light teasing, hidden sting.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide group shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	light teasing, hidden sting	everyone laughing

018
BEAT

01:32
3.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"If you ever need a place, she says, we have the spare room now."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Jenna touching the protagonist's arm kindly with a sympathetic expression. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: kind, pitying.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	kind, pitying	Jenna resting her hand on his arm

019
BEAT

01:36
7.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Seriously. No rush. You say thanks. You mean it. You're thirty."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist nodding to Jenna with a small sincere look, his drink held low. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on the protagonist. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: grateful, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on the protagonist	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	grateful, quiet	nodding thanks

020
BEAT

01:43
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You still sleep in the bedroom you slept in at nine. And sitting on that rooftop,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
Split frame: the protagonist on the rooftop at thirty, and a small inset of the same bedroom with a twin bed and a nine-year-old version of him sleeping. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: split-screen medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: ironic, intimate.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
split-screen medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	ironic, intimate	standing still at the railing

021
BEAT

01:48
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"you have more money than anyone holding a glass. Not more income. More money."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Marcus · Theo · Jenna · Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist at the railing with faint gold numbers floating behind him like a ghostly bank balance, friends' glasses glinting beside him. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: secret wealth, quiet power.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	secret wealth, quiet power	gazing at the city

022
BEAT

01:54
7.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The kind that stays. None of them know. Not Marcus. Not Theo. Not Jenna."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Marcus · Theo · Jenna · Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The four friends laughing in a row, each with a small question-mark icon over their heads, the protagonist watching them. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: secret, ironic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	secret, ironic	friends laughing unaware

023
BEAT

02:01
6.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Not even Priya. Here's what nobody tells you about the years everyone pities you."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist alone in a spotlight on a dark stage, a faint crowd of pitying faces around the edges. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide stylized shot. Lighting: dramatic single spotlight in darkness. Mood: introspective, revealing.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide stylized shot	dramatic single spotlight in darkness	introspective, revealing	standing still in the spotlight

024
BEAT

02:07
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"They don't feel like a plan. They feel like an apology you keep making at every dinner."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
A montage of dinner tables with the protagonist apologizing with a raised hand at each one, friends' faces skeptical. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: three-panel montage. Lighting: warm dining light. Mood: weary, repetitive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
three-panel montage	warm dining light	weary, repetitive	raising his hand apologetically

025
BEAT

02:13
3.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"This is how the friend everyone assumed was stuck turned out"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist sitting slumped on a tiny stool labeled "STUCK" while the friends stand on taller pedestals. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide stylized shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: misjudged.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide stylized shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	misjudged	sitting calmly on the stool

026
BEAT

02:17
3.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"to be the only one not paying for someone else's house."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
A row of houses with tiny strings attached to the friends' hands like puppets, and the protagonist standing free with no strings. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide metaphorical shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: revealing, ironic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide metaphorical shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	revealing, ironic	the protagonist standing apart

027
BEAT

02:20
4.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“And why saying it out loud kept getting harder.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT

The protagonist's mouth zipped with a small cartoon zipper, the party blurred behind him. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: secretive, heavy.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	secretive, heavy	staying silent

STAGE 2 OF 11

The Driveway and the Rule

Age 22 · Four boxes and one decision

Beats 28–55 · 28 images
02:24 – 05:04

STAGE NOTES

028
BEAT

02:24
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Eight years earlier, you're twenty-two, standing in your parents' driveway"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
A desaturated flashback of a suburban driveway, the younger protagonist standing beside an old sedan at age twenty-two. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot, desaturated. Lighting: flat cool overcast light, desaturated. Mood: tired beginnings.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot, desaturated	flat cool overcast light, desaturated	tired beginnings	standing in the driveway

029
BEAT

02:29
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"with everything you own in four cardboard boxes and a laundry basket."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Four cardboard boxes and a plastic laundry basket stacked on the driveway, labeled in marker "BOOKS", "CLOTHES", "KITCHEN", "MISC". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool overcast light. Mood: sparse, humble.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool overcast light	sparse, humble	boxes sitting on the concrete

030
BEAT

02:34
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You have a degree. A job offer. $41,000 a year."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist holding a diploma and an offer letter reading "Salary: $41,000", the house behind him. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: flat cool overcast light. Mood: modest achievement.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	flat cool overcast light	modest achievement	holding up the papers

031
BEAT

02:39
6.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You also have $19,000 in student loans and $2,500 in a checking account."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of a laptop showing "Student Loans: $19,000" and "Checking: $2,500" on a cluttered desk. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: heavy, sobering.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	heavy, sobering	the numbers glowing on screen

032
BEAT

02:46
5.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your net worth sits around negative sixteen thousand. You tell everyone the same thing."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A simple bar chart on a phone screen dipping below zero with the label "Net worth: -$16,500". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: bleak.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	bleak	the bar sitting below the line

033
BEAT

02:52
4.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Just for a few months. Just until I get settled."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist on the phone in the driveway, holding up one finger, a speech bubble reading "Just a few months". The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: flat cool overcast light. Mood: reassuring, unconvincing.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	flat cool overcast light	reassuring, unconvincing	talking on the phone

034
BEAT

02:56
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your mother has cleared out the closet. She's washed the old comforter."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
A modest childhood bedroom with an emptied closet and a freshly washed blue comforter folded on a twin bed, his mother smoothing it. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot of the bedroom. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: caring, nostalgic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot of the bedroom	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	caring, nostalgic	his mother smoothing the comforter

035
BEAT

03:00
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“She hasn't touched the ceiling. Thirty-one glow-in-the-dark stars, stuck up there when you were nine.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of thirty-one yellowed glow-in-the-dark plastic stars stuck to a white ceiling in a childish pattern. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: nostalgic, small.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	nostalgic, small	the stars on the ceiling

036
BEAT

03:06
3.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“They still light up faintly when you turn the lamp off.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The bedroom in darkness, the plastic stars glowing faintly green above the younger protagonist lying on the twin bed. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: quiet, nostalgic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	quiet, nostalgic	the lamp clicking off

037
BEAT

03:10
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“The spare key is on the hook by the door. Same faded blue lanyard from high school.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A hallway by the front door with a wall hook holding a single brass key on a faded blue lanyard. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: homey, symbolic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	homey, symbolic	the key hanging on the hook

038
BEAT

03:15
5.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“Your mother hands it to you like it's a formality. Like you never gave it back.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother handing the younger protagonist the key on the blue lanyard in the hallway, smiling softly. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: warm, matter-of-fact.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	warm, matter-of-fact	placing the key in his hand

039
BEAT

03:20
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“The first night, you lie under the stars and open a rental app.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist lying in bed under the glowing stars, his face lit by a phone showing a rental listing app. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot from above. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: curious, wistful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot from above	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	curious, wistful	scrolling the app

040
BEAT

03:25
9.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“A one-bedroom across town. $1,450 a month. Plus utilities. Plus parking. Call it $1,700.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen showing an apartment listing "1BR Across Town $1,450/mo" with small icons for utilities and parking. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: tempting.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	tempting	the listing on screen

041
BEAT

03:34
6.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"That's what being a grown-up costs in this city. That's the number everyone your age is paying."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone calculator showing "$1,700" with a small grown-up figure in a suit icon beside it. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: sobering.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	sobering	the total glowing

042
BEAT

03:41
7.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And then you make a decision so small it feels like nothing. You'll pay it anyway."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist lying still under the stars, a tiny lightbulb icon appearing faintly over his head. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium close-up. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: quiet decision.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium close-up	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	quiet decision	his eyes narrowing in thought

043
BEAT

03:48
6.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Every month, $1,700 leaves your paycheck, just like it would if you had your own place."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
A split image: the younger protagonist paying into a jar labeled "RENT" in his childhood bedroom, and a stranger paying a landlord. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the landlord is a smug middle-aged man in an expensive suit. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: split-screen medium shot. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: parallel, deliberate.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
split-screen medium shot	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	parallel, deliberate	dropping money into the jar

044
BEAT

03:54
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"$500 goes to your parents. They try to refuse it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Mother Father

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist placing an envelope marked "$500" on the kitchen table, his parents shaking their heads with hands raised. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his parents are a small graying woman in a faded maroon cardigan and a heavyset gray-mustached man in a plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium three-shot in a modest kitchen. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: warm, stubborn.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium three-shot in a modest kitchen	warm overhead kitchen light	warm, stubborn	his parents refusing

045
BEAT

03:59
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your mother pushes the first envelope back across the kitchen table. You push it back harder."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother pushing the envelope back across a worn kitchen table with two fingers. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on the table. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: loving resistance.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on the table	warm overhead kitchen light	loving resistance	sliding the envelope back

046
BEAT

04:04
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She takes it the way people take something they plan to argue about later."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother slowly picking up the envelope with a skeptical, pursed-lip expression. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on his mother. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: reluctant, unfinished.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on his mother	warm overhead kitchen light	reluctant, unfinished	lifting the envelope

047
BEAT

04:09
8.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The other $1,200 disappears the morning the paycheck lands. Automatic. Gone before you can miss it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone notification at dawn reading "Auto-transfer: $1,200 → Investment Account" on a nightstand beside a buzzing alarm clock. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: cool early-morning light. Mood: automatic, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	cool early-morning light	automatic, quiet	the notification lighting up

048
BEAT

04:17
6.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"One rule. Made once. So you'd never have to decide again. You tell no one."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
A single sticky note on the bedroom mirror reading "One rule.", the younger protagonist's reflection behind it. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium close-up through the mirror. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: simple, firm.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium close-up through the mirror	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	simple, firm	looking at the note

049
BEAT

04:24
5.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"There's no way to say it that doesn't sound like an excuse. I live with my parents,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist with an empty speech bubble struggling to fill it, crossed-out words scribbled inside. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium close-up. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: awkward, unexplainable.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium close-up	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	awkward, unexplainable	trying to find words

050
BEAT

04:29
6.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“but it's on purpose isn't a sentence anyone believes at twenty-two. The next morning,”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of a speech bubble reading "...on purpose" with friends' skeptical eye-rolls around it. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: dismissive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	dismissive	the bubble shrinking

051
BEAT

04:35
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“your father is at the kitchen table with his coffee and the newspaper he still pays for.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Father

IMAGE PROMPT
Morning kitchen, his father at the table with coffee, the younger protagonist in the background. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot of the kitchen. Lighting: soft cool morning light. Mood: ordinary, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot of the kitchen	soft cool morning light	ordinary, quiet	his father sipping coffee

052
BEAT

04:41
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“He watches you pack a lunch in a reused takeout container. You sure about this?”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Father

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist packing leftovers into a reused takeout container at the counter, his father watching over the newspaper. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft cool morning light. Mood: frugal, observed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft cool morning light	frugal, observed	snapping the lid shut

053
BEAT

04:46
5.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“he asks. Not the living here. The other thing. He saw the envelope.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father lowering the newspaper and asking a question with a raised eyebrow. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium close-up on his father. Lighting: soft cool morning light. Mood: curious, protective.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium close-up on his father	soft cool morning light	curious, protective	lowering the paper

054
BEAT

04:51
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“He doesn't know what the rest of the money is doing. He just knows you're doing something.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father squinting thoughtfully, a thought bubble with a question mark and a dollar sign. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on his father. Lighting: soft cool morning light. Mood: puzzled.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on his father	soft cool morning light	puzzled	thinking

055
BEAT

04:56
8.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“You say you're sure. You aren't. He nods and turns the page. He never asks again.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father going back to his newspaper, turning the page calmly. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft cool morning light. Mood: trusting, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft cool morning light	trusting, quiet	turning the page

STAGE 3 OF 11

"So When Are You Moving Out?"

Age 22–23 · The question that never stops

Beats 56–79 · 24 images
05:04 – 07:24

STAGE NOTES

056
BEAT

05:04
5.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"That first summer, Marcus throws a party at his new apartment. Exposed brick."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
A lively apartment party with exposed brick walls, Marcus hosting with a drink in hand. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: trendy, social.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	warm party lighting	trendy, social	Marcus welcoming guests

057
BEAT

05:10
6.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A balcony. A dog-friendly building with no dog. Someone asks where everyone's living now,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A small balcony with string lights, and a framed "Pet Friendly" sign beside an empty dog bed. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: ironic, stylish.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm party lighting	ironic, stylish	guests stepping onto the balcony

058
BEAT

05:16
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"and the answers go around the circle like a toast. Downtown. Midtown."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Speech bubbles going around the circle reading "Downtown", "Midtown", each friend raising a glass. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: proud, competitive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm party lighting	proud, competitive	glasses raising

059
BEAT

05:22
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"That place by the river. Then they get to you. You say,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
A final bubble "By the river", then everyone turning to look at the younger protagonist. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: expectant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm party lighting	expectant	heads turning

060
BEAT

05:26
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"I'm at my parents' for a bit. And a small silence opens up. Not cruel."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The circle of friends frozen mid-sip with polite, uncomfortable smiles. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: awkward, careful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm party lighting	awkward, careful	everyone going still

061
BEAT

05:32
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Just careful. The kind of silence people make around something they don't want to step on."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Friends tiptoeing carefully around the crack in the floor, avoiding eye contact. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: careful, avoidant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm party lighting	careful, avoidant	tiptoeing

062
BEAT

05:38
7.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then Theo asks the question. Not unkindly. Just curious. So when are you moving out?"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo leaning forward on the couch with a curious, friendly expression. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium close-up on Theo. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: innocent curiosity.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium close-up on Theo	warm party lighting	innocent curiosity	asking the question

063
BEAT

05:46
8.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You say soon. Everyone nods. The conversation rolls on. You'll hear that question for eight years."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist answering, friends nodding and turning back to each other. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium group shot. Lighting: warm party lighting. Mood: brushed off.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium group shot	warm party lighting	brushed off	the conversation moving on

064
BEAT

05:54
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Thanksgiving that year, it gets asked by people who don't love you as gently."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
Relatives at the table leaning toward the younger protagonist with nosy, judgmental expressions. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the relatives are a mix of middle-aged and older family members in festive sweaters. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: judgmental.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm golden dining light	judgmental	relatives leaning in

065
BEAT

06:00
3.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your aunt Denise sets down a dish of sweet potatoes and asks,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Aunt Denise

IMAGE PROMPT
Aunt Denise setting down a dish of sweet potatoes and turning to the younger protagonist with a fake sweet smile. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Aunt Denise is a heavyset woman in her sixties with teased hair and a bold red blouse. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: nosy, sugary.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden dining light	nosy, sugary	setting down the dish

066
BEAT

06:03
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"so where are you living now, honey? Before you can answer, your mother says,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Aunt Denise

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of Aunt Denise's raised eyebrows and a speech bubble with a small house icon and a question mark. Character notes: Aunt Denise is a heavyset woman in her sixties with teased hair and a bold red blouse. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: prying.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	warm golden dining light	prying	asking

067
BEAT

06:08
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"he's home with us, and something in the room adjusts. Your cousin Kyle is twenty-four."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Cousin Kyle

IMAGE PROMPT
The relatives exchanging glances while Cousin Kyle sits up proudly across the table. Character notes: Cousin Kyle is a broad young man in a trucker cap and a team jersey; the relatives are a mix of middle-aged and older family members in festive sweaters. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: shifting, judgmental.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm golden dining light	shifting, judgmental	glances traded

068
BEAT

06:14
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He just bought a truck. $640 a month for seventy-two months."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Cousin Kyle

IMAGE PROMPT
Cousin Kyle holding up a phone photo of a shiny new pickup truck with a "$640/mo × 72" overlay. Character notes: Cousin Kyle is a broad young man in a trucker cap and a team jersey. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: showy, financed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm golden dining light	showy, financed	showing the photo

069
BEAT

06:20
5.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He announces the payment like it's a trophy. Your uncle claps him on the back."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Cousin Kyle

IMAGE PROMPT
Cousin Kyle beaming and holding a car key fob up like a trophy, relatives clapping. Character notes: Cousin Kyle is a broad young man in a trucker cap and a team jersey; the relatives are a mix of middle-aged and older family members in festive sweaters. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: boastful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden dining light	boastful	raising the key fob

070
BEAT

06:25
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then he looks at you, and the hand doesn't come. He just says, well, no rush,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) The Uncle

IMAGE PROMPT
His uncle turning toward the younger protagonist, his hand hovering and then dropping to his side. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his uncle is a loud gray-haired man in a sweater vest. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: withheld approval.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden dining light	withheld approval	the hand not coming

071
BEAT

06:29
7.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"buddy. Everybody's on their own timeline. It's kind. It's also a verdict. You pass the rolls."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist passing a basket of dinner rolls down the table, everyone else ignoring him. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: dismissed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden dining light	dismissed	passing the rolls

072
BEAT

06:36
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You notice nobody asks you a single follow-up question for the rest of the night."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Cousin Kyle

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist eating quietly at the end of the table while relatives chat animatedly with Kyle. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Cousin Kyle is a broad young man in a trucker cap and a team jersey; the relatives are a mix of middle-aged and older family members in festive sweaters. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm golden dining light. Mood: ignored.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm golden dining light	ignored	eating silently

073
BEAT

06:42
5.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The first fourteen months, the $1,200 doesn't build anything. It erases."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A bank app screen showing a "$1,200" payment hitting a student loan, the loan bar shrinking. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: focused, erasing.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	focused, erasing	the bar shrinking

074
BEAT

06:48
10.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Loan statements shrink. $19,000. Then $13,000. Then $6,400. You make the last payment"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Three loan statements side by side on a desk showing $19,000, $13,000 and $6,400. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: steady progress.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	steady progress	statements laid out

075
BEAT

06:58
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"from your car in a grocery store parking lot on a Tuesday. The screen says balance zero."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen reading "Loan Balance: $0.00" with the younger protagonist's still face reflected above it. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool overcast light. Mood: quiet triumph.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool overcast light	quiet triumph	the engine off

076
BEAT

07:04
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You sit there with the engine off. Nobody to tell. You drive home"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen reading "Loan Balance: $0.00" with the younger protagonist's still face reflected above it. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool overcast light. Mood: quiet triumph.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool overcast light	quiet triumph	the engine off

077
BEAT

07:09
5.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"and eat leftovers at the same kitchen table you ate cereal at in fourth grade."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist eating leftovers alone at a worn kitchen table at night. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: humble, ordinary.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm overhead kitchen light	humble, ordinary	eating quietly

078
BEAT

07:14
5.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The next month, the $1,200 finds a new home. An index fund."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen showing "Auto-transfer: $1,200 → Index Fund" with a small seedling icon. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: new beginning.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	new beginning	the transfer going through

079
BEAT

07:20
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The first deposit buys a few shares of something you'll never see."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Tiny share icons dropping into a dark, opaque box labeled "Index Fund". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up metaphor. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: invisible growth.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up metaphor	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	invisible growth	shares dropping in

STAGE 4 OF 11

The Invisible Years

Age 23–24 · Everyone else's life, in pictures

Beats 80–109 · 30 images
07:24 – 10:02

STAGE NOTES

080
BEAT

07:24
3.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then come the years where it looks like you made a mistake."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist standing still on a busy sidewalk while everyone else walks quickly past him in a blur. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: soft neutral daylight. Mood: stuck, doubtful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	soft neutral daylight	stuck, doubtful	standing still

081
BEAT

07:28
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Because everyone else's life starts happening on schedule. In public."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
A group chat on a phone screen filling with photos of friends' new homes, cars and vacations, the younger protagonist's thumb scrolling. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: envious, public.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	envious, public	scrolling the feed

082
BEAT

07:33
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"With pictures. Theo and Jenna buy a house at twenty-five."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and Jenna standing proudly in front of a small house with a "SOLD" sign in the yard. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight. Mood: proud, milestone.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	soft warm daylight	proud, milestone	holding up the sign

083
BEAT

07:37
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A small one with a red door and a backyard that floods when it rains."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A backyard with a large muddy puddle spreading across the grass in the rain. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: cool rainy light. Mood: foreshadowing.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	cool rainy light	foreshadowing	rain pooling in the yard

084
BEAT

07:42
3.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The group chat fills with paint swatches. Then a puppy."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A phone group chat filled with paint swatch photos and then a photo of a fluffy puppy. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: cheerful, domestic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	cheerful, domestic	new photos popping in

085
BEAT

07:46
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then a photo of keys in Jenna's hand, a ribbon tied around them."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up photo on a phone of a house key in Jenna's hand tied with a red ribbon. Character notes: Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: celebratory.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	celebratory	the key photo appearing

086
BEAT

07:50
6.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Someone writes, adults. Thirty hearts follow. Marcus moves again. A higher floor."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A group chat message reading "adults" followed by a cascade of thirty heart reactions. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: validating, social.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	validating, social	hearts piling up

087
BEAT

07:57
6.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A gym in the basement. A doorman who learns his name. His rent climbs to $2,100."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
A uniformed doorman greeting Marcus by name in a marble lobby, a rent notice in Marcus's hand reading "$2,100". Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt; the doorman is an older man in a burgundy uniform and cap. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: status, expensive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	status, expensive	the doorman tipping his hat

088
BEAT

08:04
6.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He mentions it the way people mention the price of a watch. Your updates get smaller."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus casually showing off a luxury wristwatch while mentioning his rent, friends nodding. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: braggy.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	braggy	tapping his watch

089
BEAT

08:10
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then they stop. What are you going to post? A photo of your mother's meatloaf?"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist's phone showing his own social profile with an empty feed and a blinking cursor. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: invisible.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	invisible	the cursor blinking

090
BEAT

08:16
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The ceiling? You go on a date. Her name is Alana."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Alana

IMAGE PROMPT
A casual restaurant date, the younger protagonist seated across from Alana at a small table with candles. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Alana is a lively woman with curly black hair and a rust-colored sweater. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm candle light. Mood: hopeful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm candle light	hopeful	both smiling over menus

091
BEAT

08:20
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She's funny and quick, and she likes the same terrible movie you do."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Alana

IMAGE PROMPT
Alana laughing at a joke, the younger protagonist almost smiling, a movie poster on the restaurant wall. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Alana is a lively woman with curly black hair and a rust-colored sweater. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm candle light. Mood: easy chemistry.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm candle light	easy chemistry	laughing together

092
BEAT

08:25
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Halfway through dinner she asks where you live. You tell her the truth."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Alana

IMAGE PROMPT
Alana leaning in with a curious question, the younger protagonist answering honestly. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Alana is a lively woman with curly black hair and a rust-colored sweater. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm candle light. Mood: honest, risky.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm candle light	honest, risky	talking over dinner

093
BEAT

08:29
6.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“She says, oh. Just that. Oh. Her face doesn't change much. It just closes, gently,”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Alana

IMAGE PROMPT
Alana's polite smile freezing, a tiny speech bubble reading "Oh.". Character notes: Alana is a lively woman with curly black hair and a rust-colored sweater. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on Alana. Lighting: warm candle light. Mood: cooling.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on Alana	warm candle light	cooling	her smile stiffening

094
BEAT

08:36
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“like a door being shut so it won't wake anyone. When the check comes,”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A visual metaphor of a door being gently closed in a dark hallway. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: dim hallway light. Mood: soft finality.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	dim hallway light	soft finality	the door clicking shut

095
BEAT

08:41
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“she reaches for her half before you can reach for all of it. Not rude.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Alana

IMAGE PROMPT
Alana quickly sliding her card into the check folder before the younger protagonist can reach for it. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Alana is a lively woman with curly black hair and a rust-colored sweater. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on hands. Lighting: warm candle light. Mood: efficient, distant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on hands	warm candle light	efficient, distant	her card going in first

096
BEAT

08:46
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Efficient. You're being placed in a category, and the category doesn't get a second date."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Alana

IMAGE PROMPT
Alana waving a polite goodbye on the sidewalk while walking away, the younger protagonist standing alone. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Alana is a lively woman with curly black hair and a rust-colored sweater. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: cool night streetlight. Mood: final, lonely.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	cool night streetlight	final, lonely	Alana walking away

097
BEAT

08:52
3.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You drive home and park in the same spot in the driveway."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Mother Father

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist's old sedan pulling into his parents' driveway at night, parking in the same spot. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his parents are a small graying woman in a faded maroon cardigan and a heavyset gray-mustached man in a plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: cool night light. Mood: routine, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	cool night light	routine, quiet	the car pulling in

098
BEAT

08:55
6.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your father's left the porch light on. He always does. The rule runs the entire time."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A warm porch light glowing above the front door of the modest family house at night. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm porch light against cool night. Mood: welcoming, steady.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm porch light against cool night	welcoming, steady	the porch light shining

099
BEAT

09:02
11.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Every raise, half disappears into the account. $1,200 becomes $1,400. Then $1,650. You never feel richer."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Three monthly transfer amounts stacking on screen: "$1,200", "$1,400", "$1,650". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: growing quietly.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	growing quietly	the numbers rising

100
BEAT

09:13
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You change a number in an app and go back to work. At work,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger)

IMAGE PROMPT
The younger protagonist at an office desk changing a number in a banking app, then turning back to his monitor. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: flat cool office fluorescent light. Mood: routine, unremarkable.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	flat cool office fluorescent light	routine, unremarkable	tapping and returning to work

101
BEAT

09:17
6.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"the team goes to lunch on Fridays. Everyone talks about rent the way people talk about weather."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Coworkers chatting animatedly about rent with weather-style icons (sun, clouds, rain) floating above them. Character notes: the coworkers are young office workers in business-casual clothes. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: everyday, comparative.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	soft clean daylight	everyday, comparative	coworkers talking

102
BEAT

09:24
9.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Somebody's landlord raised it $150. Somebody else found a place with in-unit laundry for only $1,900."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Coworker

IMAGE PROMPT
Another coworker excitedly showing an apartment listing "In-unit laundry $1,900". Character notes: the coworker is a nervous young man in a wrinkled dress shirt and loosened tie. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: excited.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	excited	holding up the listing

103
BEAT

09:33
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your manager, Greg, a nice man with three kids and a boat he never uses,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Greg

IMAGE PROMPT
A small thought bubble above Greg showing three kids and an unused boat under a tarp. Character notes: Greg is a friendly balding middle-aged manager in a tucked-in navy polo. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot with thought bubble. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: wholesome, suburban.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot with thought bubble	soft clean daylight	wholesome, suburban	Greg chuckling

104
BEAT

09:38
3.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"turns to you. And where are you these days?"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Greg

IMAGE PROMPT
Greg turning toward the younger protagonist with a friendly question. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Greg is a friendly balding middle-aged manager in a tucked-in navy polo. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: curious.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	curious	leaning toward him

105
BEAT

09:41
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You say you're at home for now. He nods slowly. At your review,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Greg

IMAGE PROMPT
Greg nodding slowly with a sympathetic look while the younger protagonist answers. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Greg is a friendly balding middle-aged manager in a tucked-in navy polo. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: polite pity.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	polite pity	nodding

106
BEAT

09:45
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"he gives you the biggest raise on the team. He says it's for your work."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Greg

IMAGE PROMPT
A performance review meeting in a glass office, Greg handing over a document reading "Raise: Top of team". Character notes: Greg is a friendly balding middle-aged manager in a tucked-in navy polo. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: flat cool office fluorescent light. Mood: rewarding.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	flat cool office fluorescent light	rewarding	handing the paper

107
BEAT

09:50
4.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then he adds, quietly, maybe this helps you get your own place."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Greg

IMAGE PROMPT
Greg leaning in and speaking quietly with a hopeful expression, a thought bubble showing a little apartment. Character notes: Greg is a friendly balding middle-aged manager in a tucked-in navy polo. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: flat cool office fluorescent light. Mood: kind, assuming.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	flat cool office fluorescent light	kind, assuming	leaning in

108
BEAT

09:54
3.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He means well. He thinks he's paying for your escape."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist (younger) Greg

IMAGE PROMPT
Greg patting the younger protagonist's shoulder with a warm, hopeful smile. The younger protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a plain black hoodie with the hood up, thinner and more tired, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Greg is a friendly balding middle-aged manager in a tucked-in navy polo. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: flat cool office fluorescent light. Mood: well-meaning.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	flat cool office fluorescent light	well-meaning	the shoulder pat

109
BEAT

09:58
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He doesn't know half of it will be in the account by Monday."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen on Monday morning showing half the raise transferring to "Investment Account". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones. Mood: quiet, secret.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool lamp light, washed-out blue-gray tones	quiet, secret	the transfer completing

STAGE 5 OF 11

The Loft and the Mortgage

Age 25 · The pen, the envelope, the $800

Beats 110–143 · 34 images
10:02 – 12:59

STAGE NOTES

110
BEAT

10:02
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Two things happen in those years that you won't understand until later."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist sitting on his childhood bed looking up at the plastic stars, two small question-mark icons above him. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: foreshadowing.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	foreshadowing	looking up

111
BEAT

10:07
6.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The first is an apartment. You're twenty-five and you're tired of explaining yourself."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist walking alone down a downtown sidewalk with a tired, worn-out expression. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium tracking-style shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: weary.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium tracking-style shot	soft clean daylight	weary	walking toward the building

112
BEAT

10:13
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“So you go look at a loft downtown. Brick walls. Tall windows.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A sunlit downtown loft with exposed brick walls and tall factory windows, the protagonist standing in the middle. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide one-point-perspective shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: aspirational.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide one-point-perspective shot	soft clean daylight	aspirational	looking around

113
BEAT

10:18
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“A kitchen with a gas stove and a little shelf for spices you don't own.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
An empty wooden spice shelf on the loft kitchen wall beside a sign reading "$1,650/mo". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: tempting, hollow.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft clean daylight	tempting, hollow	the empty shelf

114
BEAT

10:23
6.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“$1,650 a month. You can afford it. That's the problem. It isn't reckless.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist holding a paycheck stub next to the "$1,650" listing, both balanced on a scale. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: conflicted.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	conflicted	weighing the papers

115
BEAT

10:29
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It's just more. The leasing agent is about your age."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist The Leasing Agent

IMAGE PROMPT
A leasing office with a glass desk, the leasing agent smiling across from the protagonist. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the leasing agent is a polished young woman in a fitted gray blazer. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: professional, persuasive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	professional, persuasive	the agent greeting him

116
BEAT

10:34
3.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She's wearing a blazer and she's very good at her job."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Leasing Agent

IMAGE PROMPT
The leasing agent confidently presenting a glossy brochure. Character notes: the leasing agent is a polished young woman in a fitted gray blazer. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot on the leasing agent. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: polished, persuasive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot on the leasing agent	soft clean daylight	polished, persuasive	presenting the brochure

117
BEAT

10:38
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She slides the lease across a glass desk and sets a pen on top of it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Leasing Agent

IMAGE PROMPT
The leasing agent sliding a lease contract across a glass desk. Character notes: the leasing agent is a polished young woman in a fitted gray blazer. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on the desk. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: decisive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on the desk	soft clean daylight	decisive	the lease sliding forward

118
BEAT

10:42
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Everything about the room says, you belong here. You pick up the pen."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist picking up the pen in the stylish office, motivational wall art reading "Welcome Home" behind him. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: tempted.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	tempted	lifting the pen

119
BEAT

10:47
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And you stand there long enough that she starts to smile less. You put the pen down."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist The Leasing Agent

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist frozen with the pen hovering over the signature line, the leasing agent's smile slowly fading. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the leasing agent is a polished young woman in a fitted gray blazer. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: tense, hesitant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	tense, hesitant	hovering the pen

120
BEAT

10:53
6.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You say you need to think. She says the unit won't last. You say you understand."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist The Leasing Agent

IMAGE PROMPT
The leasing agent warning with a raised finger while the protagonist nods calmly and stands to leave. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the leasing agent is a polished young woman in a fitted gray blazer. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: pressure resisted.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	pressure resisted	standing up

121
BEAT

10:59
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"That night the group chat lights up. Marcus on his balcony. City behind him."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
A phone screen at night showing a group chat photo of Marcus posing on his balcony. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: envious.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	envious	the photo appearing

122
BEAT

11:04
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A caption with three fire emojis. And you lie under thirty-one plastic stars,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist lying on his childhood bed staring up at thirty-one glowing plastic stars. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: high-angle shot. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: lonely, reflective.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
high-angle shot	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	lonely, reflective	lying still

123
BEAT

11:10
6.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"wondering if you're building something or just getting very good at hiding from your own life."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist curled under the blanket while faint shadows of a life passing by move across the ceiling. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: avoidant, uncertain.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	avoidant, uncertain	pulling the blanket up

124
BEAT

11:16
6.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You don't feel disciplined. You feel behind. Priya is the only one who ever gets close."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya standing in a doorway looking toward the protagonist with a gentle, perceptive expression. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm bar lighting. Mood: observant, caring.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm bar lighting	observant, caring	watching quietly

125
BEAT

11:23
3.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"At a bar that year, she watches you order water with lime"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
A busy bar, the protagonist ordering water with lime from a bartender, Priya beside him noticing. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket; the bartender is a tattooed young woman in a black tee. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm bar lighting. Mood: frugal, noticed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm bar lighting	frugal, noticed	holding the water glass

126
BEAT

11:26
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"while everyone else orders the second round. She doesn't make a joke about it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Friends ordering a second round of colorful cocktails while the protagonist sips water. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm bar lighting. Mood: contrast.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm bar lighting	contrast	glasses being refilled

127
BEAT

11:31
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She just slides her fries toward the middle of the table, where you can reach them."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya sliding a basket of fries toward the center of the table. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on the table. Lighting: warm bar lighting. Mood: quiet kindness.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on the table	warm bar lighting	quiet kindness	sliding the fries

128
BEAT

11:36
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“Later, in the parking lot, she asks if you're okay for money. Not pity.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
A dark parking lot outside the bar, Priya asking a quiet question beside the protagonist's car. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: cool night streetlight. Mood: concerned.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	cool night streetlight	concerned	leaning against the car

129
BEAT

11:41
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“Just a question. You tell her you're fine. She looks at your car,”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist replying with a small shrug, Priya listening without judgment. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: cool night streetlight. Mood: honest concern.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	cool night streetlight	honest concern	shrugging

130
BEAT

11:45
3.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“then at you, and says, okay. She doesn't believe you.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya glancing at the protagonist's old dented sedan and then back at him. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: cool night streetlight. Mood: skeptical, kind.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	cool night streetlight	skeptical, kind	looking at the car

131
BEAT

11:49
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She just decides not to push. You'll think about that parking lot for years."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
The empty parking lot under a single streetlight after everyone has left. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: cool night streetlight. Mood: memorable, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	cool night streetlight	memorable, quiet	the lot sitting empty

132
BEAT

11:54
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The second thing, you almost miss. Your father's hours get cut. Not fired."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father in a worn work jacket staring at a work schedule with hours crossed out. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: flat cool light. Mood: worried pride.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	flat cool light	worried pride	staring at the schedule

133
BEAT

12:00
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Just cut. Thirty hours a week instead of forty. Your parents don't tell you."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A weekly schedule sheet with forty hours crossed out and "30 HRS" written in red. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: flat cool light. Mood: financial strain.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	flat cool light	financial strain	the red marks

134
BEAT

12:06
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You find out from the envelope on the counter with the bank's logo,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
An envelope with a bank logo lying on a kitchen counter, the protagonist picking it up. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: discovery.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm overhead kitchen light	discovery	lifting the envelope

135
BEAT

12:10
9.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"opened and refolded too many times. The mortgage. $1,180 a month. Eleven years left. You don't ask."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A mortgage statement creased from being folded many times, showing "$1,180/month". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: heavy.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm overhead kitchen light	heavy	the creases visible

136
BEAT

12:20
7.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You just change one number. Starting that month, $800 goes to your parents instead of $500."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A banking app screen changing a transfer from "$500" to "$800" labeled "Parents". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: generous, silent.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	generous, silent	the number changing

137
BEAT

12:28
3.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You tell your mother it's because you eat more than you used to."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist handing his mother a thicker envelope, smiling awkwardly, a plate of food in his other hand. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: playful excuse.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm overhead kitchen light	playful excuse	handing the envelope

138
BEAT

12:31
4.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She looks at you a long time. She doesn't argue."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother looking at the protagonist for a long silent moment, her eyes softening. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on his mother. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: understanding.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on his mother	warm overhead kitchen light	understanding	accepting the envelope

139
BEAT

12:35
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You don't know it yet, but that $800 isn't going to groceries."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A grocery bag sitting empty on the counter while the "$800" envelope slides past it. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: redirected.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm overhead kitchen light	redirected	the envelope bypassing the groceries

140
BEAT

12:40
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your mother is sending every dollar of it straight to the principal on the house."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother at the kitchen table at night filling out a mortgage payment slip with the "$800" envelope beside it. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: secret devotion.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	dim warm lamp light	secret devotion	writing on the slip

141
BEAT

12:45
4.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And for almost four years, the plan doesn't make you feel smart."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist at his desk looking at a calendar with four years crossed out, his expression flat. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: unsatisfied.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	unsatisfied	staring at the calendar

142
BEAT

12:49
4.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It makes everyone else look like they started living years before you did."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Marcus · Theo · Jenna · Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Split frame: friends traveling and celebrating on one side, the protagonist in his childhood bedroom on the other. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: split-screen medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: left behind.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
split-screen medium shot	soft clean daylight	left behind	scrolling his phone

143
BEAT

12:53
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You have no way of knowing the distance between you is already turning around."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Marcus · Theo · Jenna · Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
A scale slowly tipping toward the protagonist's side while friends' side rises, unnoticed by everyone. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: turning tide.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft clean daylight	turning tide	the scale beginning to shift

STAGE 6 OF 11

The Crash

Age 26 · When fear doesn't get a vote

Beats 144–173 · 30 images
12:59 – 15:33

STAGE NOTES

144
BEAT

12:59
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You're twenty-six when the market falls apart. Not a dip. A real one."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A red market crash graph plunging on a TV screen in a family living room. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: cool TV glow in a dim living room. Mood: alarming.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	cool TV glow in a dim living room	alarming	the line falling

145
BEAT

13:05
3.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The kind that leads the evening news in your parents' living room"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His parents' living room with the evening news showing a "MARKET CRASH" headline. Character notes: his parents are a small graying woman in a faded maroon cardigan and a heavyset gray-mustached man in a plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: cool TV glow in a dim living room. Mood: anxious.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	cool TV glow in a dim living room	anxious	the news playing

146
BEAT

13:08
4.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"while your father shakes his head at the screen. Over four bad months,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father in an armchair shaking his head at the television while the protagonist watches from the doorway. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: cool TV glow in a dim living room. Mood: grim.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	cool TV glow in a dim living room	grim	shaking his head

147
BEAT

13:13
6.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“your account loses twenty-two percent. At work, people say, did you see what the market did?”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Coworkers gathered around a monitor with shocked faces looking at falling stock charts. Character notes: the coworkers are young office workers in business-casual clothes. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: flat cool office fluorescent light. Mood: panicked.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	flat cool office fluorescent light	panicked	pointing at the screen

148
BEAT

13:19
3.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“in the voice you'd use for a car accident.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Coworkers speaking in hushed, grim tones as if discussing a car accident. Character notes: the coworkers are young office workers in business-casual clothes. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: flat cool office fluorescent light. Mood: grave.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	flat cool office fluorescent light	grave	whispering

149
BEAT

13:22
5.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“A guy two desks over sells everything on a Thursday afternoon and goes home early.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Coworker

IMAGE PROMPT
The same coworker grabbing his coat and leaving early, a calendar showing Thursday. Character notes: the coworker is a nervous young man in a wrinkled dress shirt and loosened tie. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: flat cool office fluorescent light. Mood: defeated.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	flat cool office fluorescent light	defeated	walking out

150
BEAT

13:28
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“He tells you he's done gambling. You nod. You open the app at work”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of a phone screen showing a balance dropping from "$31,000" to "$24,000". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: painful, stark.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	painful, stark	the number falling

151
BEAT

13:32
9.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"and watch $31,000 turn into $24,000. That year, you put in more than $19,000."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of a phone screen showing a balance dropping from "$31,000" to "$24,000". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: painful, stark.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	painful, stark	the number falling

152
BEAT

13:41
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And in December the balance is lower than it was in January."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A balance chart comparing December lower than January with a red arrow pointing down. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: frustrating.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	frustrating	the chart ending lower

153
BEAT

13:46
6.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Theo's house is still standing. Marcus's view is still there. Their choices didn't evaporate."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and Jenna's red-door house standing firm, and Marcus's skyline view through a window. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt; Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: split-screen wide shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: stable for others.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
split-screen wide shot	soft clean daylight	stable for others	both scenes calm

154
BEAT

13:52
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Yours look like they did. You want to stop. You don't."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist's finger hovering over a "STOP TRANSFERS" button on his phone. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up over his hand. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: tempted.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up over his hand	soft clean daylight	tempted	hovering

155
BEAT

13:57
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Not because you're brave. Because the transfer was set up years ago,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
An old automatic transfer setting dated years ago on a dusty screen. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: automated discipline.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	automated discipline	the setting locked in

156
BEAT

14:01
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"back before fear had a vote. It keeps buying while everything is on sale."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A store window with a giant "SALE" banner and small share icons being bought up in a cart. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: opportunity.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft clean daylight	opportunity	shares going into the cart

157
BEAT

14:06
3.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You just can't feel that yet. It only feels like losing."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist staring at his phone with a downcast expression. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: discouraged.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	soft clean daylight	discouraged	staring blankly

158
BEAT

14:10
6.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"That night you lie under the ceiling and count the stars. Thirty-one. Same as always."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist in bed counting the glowing plastic stars on the ceiling with a slow finger. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: high-angle shot. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: steady, lonely.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
high-angle shot	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	steady, lonely	pointing at each star

159
BEAT

14:16
5.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"They're the only thing in your life that hasn't moved. Somewhere in that stretch,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of the unchanged ceiling stars in the same pattern, glowing softly. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: constant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	constant	the stars glowing

160
BEAT

14:22
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Marcus gets drinks with you and looks at the blue lanyard hanging out of your jacket pocket."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of the faded blue lanyard dangling out of the protagonist's jacket pocket. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm bar lighting. Mood: nostalgic, noticed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm bar lighting	nostalgic, noticed	the lanyard hanging out

161
BEAT

14:27
3.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You still carry that thing? he says. It's from high school."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus pointing and laughing at the lanyard. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium close-up on Marcus. Lighting: warm bar lighting. Mood: teasing.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium close-up on Marcus	warm bar lighting	teasing	laughing

162
BEAT

14:31
4.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Let me buy you a key ring at least. You tell him it's lucky."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus holding up a sleek leather key ring offer. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm bar lighting. Mood: flashy, condescending.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm bar lighting	flashy, condescending	offering the key ring

163
BEAT

14:35
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He lets it go. Then your car's transmission dies on the highway."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist's car stalled on a highway shoulder with hazard lights blinking and smoke rising. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: cool overcast daylight. Mood: stressful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	cool overcast daylight	stressful	smoke rising from the hood

164
BEAT

14:40
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"$2,300. The kind of bill that would have flattened you at twenty-two."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A repair estimate reading "Transmission: $2,300" held in the protagonist's hand. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: cool overcast daylight. Mood: daunting.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	cool overcast daylight	daunting	holding the estimate

165
BEAT

14:45
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You pay it from your checking account standing at the counter of the repair shop. The mechanic,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A gritty auto repair shop counter with tools on the wall, the protagonist paying calmly. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm shop lighting. Mood: steady.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm shop lighting	steady	standing at the counter

166
BEAT

14:51
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"an older man with grease in the creases of his knuckles, waits for you to flinch."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Mechanic

IMAGE PROMPT
An older mechanic with grease-stained knuckles behind the counter, watching closely. Character notes: the mechanic is an older man in blue coveralls with grease-stained knuckles. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot on the mechanic. Lighting: warm shop lighting. Mood: curious.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot on the mechanic	warm shop lighting	curious	wiping his hands

167
BEAT

14:56
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Most people do. You don't. He looks at you a second longer than usual."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist The Mechanic

IMAGE PROMPT
The mechanic raising an eyebrow, impressed, as the protagonist pockets his card. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the mechanic is an older man in blue coveralls with grease-stained knuckles. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on the mechanic. Lighting: warm shop lighting. Mood: respectful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on the mechanic	warm shop lighting	respectful	raising an eyebrow

168
BEAT

15:02
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You're three steps into the parking lot before you realize you weren't afraid."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist walking across the repair shop parking lot, pausing mid-step with a dawning realization. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: surprised calm.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	surprised calm	stopping mid-step

169
BEAT

15:06
3.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The fear just wasn't there. Somewhere in the boring years,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist standing relaxed with no sweat drops or worry lines, a broken chain lying at his feet. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: freed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft clean daylight	freed	standing still

170
BEAT

15:10
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"without a date you could circle, it left. By twenty-seven, the market turns."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A pale ghost of fear drifting away from the protagonist over a montage of ordinary workdays. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: quiet transformation.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft clean daylight	quiet transformation	the ghost fading

171
BEAT

15:16
3.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The shares you bought in the fire start doing what shares do."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Tiny share icons sprouting into small green plants inside a glass box. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up metaphor. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: growth.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up metaphor	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	growth	plants sprouting

172
BEAT

15:19
6.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The account doesn't just recover. It passes everything it was before. $80,000."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
An investment balance on a phone reading "$80,000" with a green recovery graph. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: rewarding.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	rewarding	the number climbing

173
BEAT

15:26
7.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then $100,000 on an ordinary Wednesday. You notice it the way you'd notice the weather."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT

The protagonist glancing at his phone and then looking out a window at the weather with the same flat expression. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: nonchalant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	nonchalant	glancing outside

STAGE 7 OF 11

The Reversal

Age 27 · Lives that have to be fed

Beats 174–194 · 21 images
15:33 – 17:21

STAGE NOTES

174
BEAT

15:33
6.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And around that time, the reversal starts. Quiet. Invisible. Real."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Marcus · Theo · Jenna · Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
A seesaw slowly tipping in the protagonist's favor while friends' side sinks. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: turning point.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft clean daylight	turning point	the seesaw tipping

175
BEAT

15:40
6.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Theo and Jenna's interest rate resets. Their payment jumps $640 a month."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo · Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and Jenna at their kitchen table staring at a letter reading "New payment: +$640/mo". Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: stressed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	stressed	holding the letter

176
BEAT

15:46
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The same number as Kyle's truck. You notice it. You don't say it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Cousin Kyle

IMAGE PROMPT
Split frame: the "+$640" mortgage letter beside Cousin Kyle's "$640/mo" truck photo. Character notes: Cousin Kyle is a broad young man in a trucker cap and a team jersey. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: split-screen close-up. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: ironic parallel.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
split-screen close-up	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	ironic parallel	both numbers matching

177
BEAT

15:51
6.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then the basement floods, the one that always flooded, and this time it's $9,000."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and Jenna's basement flooding, water rising over boxes and a washing machine. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: cool dim basement light. Mood: disaster.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	cool dim basement light	disaster	water rising

178
BEAT

15:57
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Jenna mentions it at dinner like it's a joke. Theo doesn't laugh."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Jenna laughing nervously at a dinner table while Theo stares down at his plate, unsmiling. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm dining light. Mood: strained.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm dining light	strained	Jenna forcing a laugh

179
BEAT

16:02
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"They've been paying for five years and the bank still owns most of the red door."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
The red front door of Theo and Jenna's house with a large bank logo shadow cast over most of it. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: ironic ownership.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft clean daylight	ironic ownership	the shadow covering the door

180
BEAT

16:07
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"At their Fourth of July barbecue, Theo stands at the grill a little too long"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo standing alone at the grill with a spatula, staring blankly at the smoke. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot on Theo. Lighting: bright summer daylight. Mood: preoccupied.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot on Theo	bright summer daylight	preoccupied	staring at the grill

181
BEAT

16:12
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"after the burgers are done. He tells you they refinanced."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Theo

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo confiding in the protagonist beside the grill, finished burgers piled on a plate. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: bright summer daylight. Mood: confessional.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	bright summer daylight	confessional	Theo lowering his voice

182
BEAT

16:16
3.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Stretched it back out to thirty years to make the payment work."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of refinance paperwork reading "Term: 30 years" on a patio table. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: bright summer daylight. Mood: resigned.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	bright summer daylight	resigned	the paper flapping in the breeze

183
BEAT

16:20
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"We'll own it when we're sixty-two, he says, and flips a burger that doesn't need flipping."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo forcing a grin with a thought bubble showing an old man with a cane standing by the red door. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot with thought bubble. Lighting: bright summer daylight. Mood: wry, sad.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot with thought bubble	bright summer daylight	wry, sad	grinning

184
BEAT

16:25
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He laughs. You laugh. Neither of you means it. Behind him,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Theo

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and the protagonist both going quiet, their smiles fading. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: bright summer daylight. Mood: heavy, unspoken.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	bright summer daylight	heavy, unspoken	staring at the grill

185
BEAT

16:30
7.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"the backyard is still soft from the last flood. Marcus's rent goes to $2,900."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo

IMAGE PROMPT
The soggy, muddy backyard behind Theo with lawn chairs sinking into the soft ground. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: bright summer daylight. Mood: lingering damage.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	bright summer daylight	lingering damage	chairs sinking slightly

186
BEAT

16:37
3.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He gets a letter slid under his door about the renewal."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
An envelope slid under a sleek apartment door, Marcus picking it up. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: uneasy.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	uneasy	bending to pick it up

187
BEAT

16:40
3.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He shows it to you on his phone and says, it's fine, it's fine,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus showing the protagonist the notice on his phone at a café table. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: forced calm.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	soft clean daylight	forced calm	holding out the phone

188
BEAT

16:44
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"the way people say it when it isn't. Four years in that building."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus waving it off with an uneasy grin, a small sweat drop on his forehead. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on Marcus. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: denial.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on Marcus	soft clean daylight	denial	waving his hand

189
BEAT

16:49
6.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You do the math in your head without meaning to. More than $110,000 in rent."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist staring into the distance with small mental math figures floating around his head. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black crewneck sweater, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: calculating.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	soft clean daylight	calculating	doing math silently

190
BEAT

16:55
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Every dollar of it paying down a stranger's mortgage. He owns the linen shirts."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Rent checks flowing into a stranger landlord's mortgage chute. Character notes: the landlord is a smug middle-aged man in an expensive suit. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical wide shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: ironic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical wide shot	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	ironic	money flowing away

191
BEAT

17:00
3.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He owns the watch. He doesn't own a single brick."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
A brick wall with a "NOT YOURS" sign hanging on it beside Marcus. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: hollow.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft clean daylight	hollow	Marcus leaning on the wall

192
BEAT

17:04
6.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And the landlord he's never met just bought a second building. Nobody failed."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A smiling landlord in a suit shaking hands over a "SOLD" sign on a second apartment building. Character notes: the landlord is a smug middle-aged man in an expensive suit. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: ironic success.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft clean daylight	ironic success	shaking hands

193
BEAT

17:10
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"That's the part that matters. They just built lives that have to be fed."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Houses, cars and apartments drawn as hungry creatures with open mouths beside the friends. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical medium shot. Lighting: soft clean daylight. Mood: draining.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical medium shot	soft clean daylight	draining	the creatures waiting to be fed

194
BEAT

17:15
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And the feeding never stops. Yours, quietly, started feeding you."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Bills feeding endlessly into a hungry slot machine. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up metaphor. Lighting: soft clean daylight, neutral tones. Mood: endless.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up metaphor	soft clean daylight, neutral tones	endless	bills flowing in

STAGE 8 OF 11

The Nine Seconds

Age 28 · What the rent money really bought

Beats 195–214 · 20 images
17:21 – 19:03

STAGE NOTES

195
BEAT

17:21
3.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You're twenty-eight when you read a line on a statement twice."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PRMPT
The protagonist reading a paper statement twice at the kitchen table, eyebrows slightly raised. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: surprised.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	surprised	reading closely

196
BEAT

17:24
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Before a single new deposit, your account grew $14,000 that year on its own."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PRMPT
A statement line reading "Growth this year: +$14,000" glowing on the page. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: passive reward.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	passive reward	the number glowing

197
BEAT

17:31
3.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"While you worked. While you slept under the stars."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PRMPT
A statement line reading "Growth this year: +$14,000" glowing on the page. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: passive reward.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	passive reward	the number glowing

198
BEAT

17:34
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"While you sat at the kitchen table listening to your father complain about the neighbor's leaf blower."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father complaining while pointing out the window at a neighbor with a loud leaf blower. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: humorous, domestic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm overhead kitchen light	humorous, domestic	pointing outside

199
BEAT

17:40
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Your salary is still the bigger number. But it isn't the only one working anymore."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A second income stream drawn as a flowing river joining the main river. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical wide shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: compounding.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical wide shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	compounding	the rivers merging

200
BEAT

17:45
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"That same winter, your father slips on the back steps carrying groceries."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father slipping on icy back steps while carrying grocery bags, groceries flying. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: cold winter daylight. Mood: sudden, painful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	cold winter daylight	sudden, painful	falling backward

201
BEAT

17:50
6.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A broken hip. Surgery. Eight weeks of recovery. Your mother can't lift him alone."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
A hospital bed with his father in a hip brace, a surgery schedule on the wall. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: cool hospital light. Mood: serious.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	cool hospital light	serious	lying in bed

202
BEAT

17:57
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And you're there. Not because you rearranged your life. Because you never left it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist appearing at the bottom of the stairs, ready to help. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: present, dependable.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	present, dependable	stepping forward

203
BEAT

18:02
5.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You hear him fall from upstairs. You're at the bottom of the steps in nine seconds."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist rushing down the stairs, a stopwatch overlay reading "0:09". The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium tracking-style shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: urgent.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium tracking-style shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	urgent	running down the stairs

204
BEAT

18:07
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You drive him to the hospital in your repaired car. Every morning for eight weeks,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Father

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist driving the repaired sedan with his father in the passenger seat wincing. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot inside the car. Lighting: cold winter daylight. Mood: urgent, caring.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot inside the car	cold winter daylight	urgent, caring	gripping the wheel

205
BEAT

18:12
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"you help him from the bed to the chair before work. Every night, you help him back."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Father

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist helping his father from a bed into an armchair in the early morning. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: cool early-morning light. Mood: caring, steady.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	cool early-morning light	caring, steady	lifting under his arm

206
BEAT

18:18
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The money you didn't spend on rent bought something you didn't know you were buying."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist holding a gift box labeled "PRESENCE" instead of keys to a loft. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium metaphorical shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: unexpected value.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium metaphorical shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	unexpected value	holding the gift

207
BEAT

18:23
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Being in the house when it mattered. That's the first time the whole strange arrangement feels"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist at the window of his childhood bedroom, a soft smile almost appearing. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: quiet realization.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	quiet realization	looking outside

208
BEAT

18:28
6.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“like it was worth it. Not the balance. The nine seconds. One night during his recovery,”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A scale with a bank balance on one side and a stopwatch reading "0:09" on the other, the stopwatch side heavier. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up metaphor. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: meaningful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up metaphor	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	meaningful	the stopwatch side tipping down

209
BEAT

18:35
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“your mother sits across from you at the kitchen table with a pencil and the mortgage statement.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother sitting down across from the protagonist at the kitchen table. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: intimate.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	dim warm lamp light	intimate	sitting down

210
BEAT

18:41
3.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“She doesn't hide it this time. She slides it over. Look,”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother laying a pencil and the mortgage statement openly on the table. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: open, trusting.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm lamp light	open, trusting	placing them down

211
BEAT

18:44
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“she says. And she taps a number she's circled. Twenty-two payments left.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of his mother's finger tapping a circled number reading "22 payments left". Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: extreme close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: emotional, proud.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
extreme close-up insert	dim warm lamp light	emotional, proud	tapping the circle

212
BEAT

18:50
5.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It was supposed to be eight more years. She doesn't say thank you. She doesn't have to."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother looking down at the statement, eyes glistening, saying nothing. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on his mother. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: grateful, unspoken.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on his mother	dim warm lamp light	grateful, unspoken	eyes lowered

213
BEAT

18:55
4.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She just keeps her finger on the number a little longer than she needs to,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother's finger resting firmly on the circled number. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: extreme close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: tender.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
extreme close-up insert	dim warm lamp light	tender	finger pressing down

214
BEAT

18:59
3.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"like it might move if she lets go."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother's finger guarding the number as if holding it in place. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: extreme close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: fragile hope.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
extreme close-up insert	dim warm lamp light	fragile hope	not letting go

STAGE 9 OF 11

The Cost of Silence

Age 29 · When the secret becomes a wall

Beats 215–240 · 26 images
19:03 – 21:20

STAGE NOTES

215
BEAT

19:03
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"But something else starts happening too. Something you don't like. Your mother's friends"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT **The Protagonist**

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist frowning slightly as a gray storm cloud forms faintly above the house. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight. Mood: unease.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft warm daylight	unease	frowning

216
BEAT

19:08
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"from church ask her about you. You can hear her through the kitchen wall one Sunday."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT **The Protagonist**

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist in the hallway with his ear near the kitchen wall, listening. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight. Mood: eavesdropping.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft warm daylight	eavesdropping	listening

217
BEAT

19:13
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He's figuring it out, she says. He's a late bloomer. He'll be fine."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT **Mother**

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother on the phone in the kitchen, smiling bravely while speaking. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: defensive, loving.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm overhead kitchen light	defensive, loving	talking on the phone

218
BEAT

19:18
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Her voice is the one she uses to defend things. And she's defending you."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of his mother's determined face mid-sentence. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: tight close-up. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: protective.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
tight close-up	warm overhead kitchen light	protective	speaking firmly

219
BEAT

19:23
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Because she doesn't know about the account. Nobody does. You could walk in and end it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother standing like a shield in front of a small silhouette of the protagonist. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical medium shot. Lighting: warm overhead kitchen light. Mood: loyal, unaware.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical medium shot	warm overhead kitchen light	loyal, unaware	holding up a shield

220
BEAT

19:29
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"One sentence. You stand in the hallway with your hand on the wall."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist standing frozen in the hallway, one hand pressed flat against the wall. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: torn.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	torn	standing still

221
BEAT

19:34
4.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then you go back upstairs. You never chose to lie."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist walking back up the stairs to his bedroom. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: retreating.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	retreating	climbing the stairs

222
BEAT

19:38
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You just never corrected anyone. And at some point those became the same thing."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Two road signs reading "LYING" and "SILENCE" merging into a single sign. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical close-up. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: uncomfortable truth.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical close-up	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	uncomfortable truth	the signs merging

223
BEAT

19:44
6.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then it gets uglier. Marcus calls one night. He's moving out. Somewhere cheaper."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist on a phone call in his bedroom, Marcus shown in a split panel packing boxes in his apartment. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: split-screen medium shots. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: humbling.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
split-screen medium shots	dim evening light	humbling	Marcus taping a box

224
BEAT

19:50
3.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He's embarrassed about it, so he makes it about you. Hey, he says,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus pacing in his half-packed apartment with an embarrassed grin. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot on Marcus. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: embarrassed.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot on Marcus	dim evening light	embarrassed	pacing

225
BEAT

19:54
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"why don't we get a two-bedroom together? I can cover the deposit."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus on the phone gesturing enthusiastically, a thought bubble showing a two-bedroom apartment. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot with thought bubble. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: eager.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot with thought bubble	dim evening light	eager	gesturing

226
BEAT

19:59
6.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It'd be good for you. Get you out of there. He's being generous. He's being kind."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus with a warm, kind smile on the phone. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on Marcus. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: sincere.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on Marcus	dim evening light	sincere	smiling

227
BEAT

20:05
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And he's offering to rescue you with money he doesn't have. You could tell him the truth."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Marcus

IMAGE PROMPT
Marcus offering a life ring made of crumpled bills, a hole in the ring. Character notes: Marcus is a tall, stylish man in his late twenties with a neat fade haircut, a confident grin and a cream linen shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: ironic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical medium shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	ironic	tossing the ring

228
BEAT

20:11
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You could pay the whole year's rent on a two-bedroom without blinking."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A thought bubble above the protagonist showing him casually paying a full year's rent. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot with thought bubble. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: hidden capability.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot with thought bubble	dim evening light	hidden capability	imagining paying

229
BEAT

20:16
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Instead you say, let me think about it. And you let him feel generous."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist on the phone with a neutral expression, saying he'll think about it. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: evasive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	dim evening light	evasive	speaking calmly

230
BEAT

20:20
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And when you hang up, you notice you're smiling. That's the part that scares you."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist lowering the phone, a small unsettling smile on his face. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: disturbing self-awareness.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	dim evening light	disturbing self-awareness	smiling faintly

231
BEAT

20:26
6.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You've started to enjoy it. Being underestimated. The private math at every table."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist catching his own smiling reflection in a dark window and freezing. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: unsettling.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	dim evening light	unsettling	staring at his reflection

232
BEAT

20:32
6.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Knowing what nobody knows. You catch yourself guarding the secret, not because you need to anymore,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist guarding a small locked chest at the foot of his bed. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: dim evening light. Mood: possessive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	dim evening light	possessive	resting a hand on the chest

233
BEAT

20:38
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"but because you like who you get to be inside it. And it lands on you,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist sitting inside a small glowing secret room, comfortable and alone. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: seductive isolation.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical medium shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	seductive isolation	sitting comfortably

234
BEAT

20:43
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"lying under the stars. If you need everyone to think you're stuck,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Marcus Theo Jenna Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Marionette strings attached to the protagonist from above, held by shadowy friends' hands. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the friends are Marcus (tall, fade haircut, linen shirt), Theo (stocky, bearded, flannel), Jenna (auburn ponytail, mustard cardigan) and Priya (dark wavy hair, olive jacket). Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical medium shot. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: controlled.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical medium shot	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	controlled	strings tugging

235
BEAT

20:47
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"their opinion is still running your life. You just flipped the direction."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
The marionette strings flipping upside down while still attached. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical medium shot. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: ironic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical medium shot	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	ironic	strings reversing

236
BEAT

20:52
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"For years, you refused to perform success. And somewhere along the way,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist rejecting a flashy costume labeled "SUCCESS" on a rack. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: soft warm daylight, gentle shadows. Mood: principled.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	soft warm daylight, gentle shadows	principled	pushing it away

237
BEAT

20:56
7.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"you started performing failure just as hard. Priya texts you the next morning. Out of nowhere."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist's phone lighting up with a text from Priya on his nightstand at sunrise. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: cool early-morning light. Mood: caring.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	cool early-morning light	caring	the phone lighting up

238
BEAT

21:03
6.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You okay? You've seemed far away lately. You start typing the truth. The rule."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist typing a long reply on his phone in bed. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up over his hand. Lighting: cool early-morning light. Mood: vulnerable.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up over his hand	cool early-morning light	vulnerable	typing quickly

239
BEAT

21:10
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The number. Eight years of it. You look at it for a long time."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist staring at the long unsent message on his screen. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: cool early-morning light. Mood: hesitant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	cool early-morning light	hesitant	staring

240
BEAT

21:15
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then you delete it and send a photo of your mother's meatloaf."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist deleting the message and sending a photo of meatloaf instead. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: cool early-morning light. Mood: deflecting.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	cool early-morning light	deflecting	tapping send

STAGE 10 OF 11

Back on the Rooftop

Age 30 · Paid in full

Beats 241–268 · 28 images
21:20 – 23:40

STAGE NOTES

241
BEAT

21:20
5.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Which brings you back to the rooftop. Marcus's thirtieth. The heated pool."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT **The Protagonist**

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist back on the rooftop at night, standing at the railing. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: return to present.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	return to present	standing at the railing

242
BEAT

21:25
4.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The tablet the waiter never got to hand you. Your phone in your pocket,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT **The Waiter**

IMAGE PROMPT
The waiter walking away with the unused payment tablet. Character notes: the waiter is a young man in a black apron. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: unseen.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	unseen	the waiter walking off

243
BEAT

21:30
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"heavy with one line you haven't shown anyone. Here's what it says."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of the protagonist's hand resting over his jacket pocket with a faintly glowing phone outline. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: heavy secret.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	heavy secret	his hand resting

244
BEAT

21:35
7.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A loan servicing notice. Your parents' mortgage. Final payment received. Balance: $0.00."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen reading "Final payment received. Balance: $0.00. PAID IN FULL" with a green check mark. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: extreme close-up insert. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: triumphant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
extreme close-up insert	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	triumphant	the check mark glowing

245
BEAT

21:42
6.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Paid in full. Eight years of $800 envelopes on the kitchen table."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen reading "Final payment received. Balance: $0.00. PAID IN FULL" with a green check mark. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: extreme close-up insert. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: triumphant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
extreme close-up insert	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	triumphant	the check mark glowing

246
BEAT

21:49
4.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Every one of them sent to the principal. Eleven years of payments finished in eight."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Envelopes flying into a mortgage document labeled "Principal". Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical close-up. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: purposeful.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical close-up	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	purposeful	envelopes landing

247
BEAT

21:54
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The house you've been laughed at for living in doesn't belong to the bank anymore."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
The modest family house at dusk with laughter speech bubbles floating around it. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: warm dusk light. Mood: vindicated.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	warm dusk light	vindicated	the house standing

248
BEAT

21:59
4.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It belongs to the two people who left the porch light on."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother and father on the porch under the warm porch light, smiling softly. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan; his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm porch light against cool dusk. Mood: deserved peace.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm porch light against cool dusk	deserved peace	sitting together

249
BEAT

22:03
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You've been paying a mortgage this whole time. Just not someone else's."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist at the rooftop railing with a calm, quiet smile. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: vindicated.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	vindicated	looking out at the city

250
BEAT

22:08
4.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The party thins out after midnight. Theo and Jenna leave first,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
The rooftop party thinning out after midnight, empty glasses on tables. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: winding down.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	winding down	guests leaving

251
BEAT

22:12
6.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"because their dog has been alone since six. Marcus disappears into a group of coworkers."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Theo Jenna

IMAGE PROMPT
Theo and Jenna waving goodbye as they head for the elevator. Character notes: Theo is a stocky bearded man with tired eyes in a flannel shirt; Jenna is a warm woman with a long auburn ponytail and a mustard cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: tired, warm.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	tired, warm	waving

252
BEAT

22:18
2.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And then it's just you and Priya at the railing,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist and Priya standing alone at the rooftop railing. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: intimate.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	intimate	leaning on the railing

253
BEAT

22:21
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"the city spread out below like a circuit board. She doesn't look at you."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
The city below glowing like a circuit board of lights. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: vast, quiet.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	vast, quiet	the lights glittering

254
BEAT

22:26
5.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She just says it. So when are you actually moving out? The same question."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of Priya's speech bubble reading "So when are you actually moving out?". Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: recurring question.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	recurring question	the bubble appearing

255
BEAT

22:32
6.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Eight years later. On a different roof. For eight years, this is where you've said soon."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A stack of speech bubbles reading "soon" piled up beside the protagonist. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: metaphorical medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: habitual.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
metaphorical medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	habitual	the bubbles stacked

256
BEAT

22:39
5.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"This time you take out your phone. You open the account. Not the mortgage."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist taking out his phone and opening an investment app. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: decisive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	decisive	opening the app

257
BEAT

22:44
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The other one. And you set it face up on the railing between you."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist placing his phone face up on the rooftop railing between them. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on the railing. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: vulnerable.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on the railing	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	vulnerable	setting the phone down

258
BEAT

22:49
7.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"$214,000. Priya looks at it for a long time. She doesn't say wow."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
Phone screen showing "$214,000" in large digits on the rooftop railing. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: extreme close-up insert. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: stunning reveal.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
extreme close-up insert	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	stunning reveal	the number glowing

259
BEAT

22:56
3.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“She doesn't ask how. She just goes quiet, the way you do”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya going quiet and still, absorbing it. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: reflective.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	reflective	standing still

260
BEAT

22:59
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“when a story you thought you knew turns out to be a different story.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist and Priya silhouetted at the railing against the glittering city. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: reframing.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	reframing	silent together

261
BEAT

23:04
6.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“How long? she finally asks. Since the driveway, you say. Since the four boxes.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
A faded flashback inset of the driveway and four cardboard boxes beside the protagonist. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot with flashback overlay. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: origin.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot with flashback overlay	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	origin	remembering

262
BEAT

23:10
4.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She asks if your parents know. You tell her about the mortgage."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist · Priya · Mother · Father

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya asking about his parents while the protagonist shows the mortgage notice. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket; his parents are a small graying woman in a faded maroon cardigan and a heavyset gray-mustached man in a plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: deepening.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	deepening	showing the notice

263
BEAT

23:14
3.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"About the envelopes. About your mother's finger on the number."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
A montage of the envelopes and his mother's finger on the circled number. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: two-panel montage. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: emotional.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
two-panel montage	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	emotional	the memories appearing

264
BEAT

23:18
4.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Priya turns back to the city and doesn't say anything for a while."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya turning back toward the city, quiet, the night wind lifting her hair. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: moved.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	moved	looking out

265
BEAT

23:23
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then she says, that's the most grown-up thing anyone on this roof has done."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya looking at the protagonist with deep respect. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: admiring.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	admiring	speaking softly

266
BEAT

23:28
3.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She laughs once, softly, not at you. We all thought you were stuck,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
Priya laughing softly with warmth, not mockery. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: tender.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	tender	laughing

267
BEAT

23:32
4.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"she says. And you give her the only true thing you have left."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Priya

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist looking at Priya with a vulnerable, open expression. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: Priya is a calm, observant woman with dark wavy shoulder-length hair, small gold hoop earrings and an olive jacket. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: honest.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	honest	meeting her eyes

268
BEAT

23:36
3.6s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“For a while, you say. I was.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT

The protagonist answering with a faint, real smile at the railing. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up. Lighting: warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline. Mood: humble truth.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up	warm golden string lights and the blue glow of a heated pool against a cool night city skyline	humble truth	speaking quietly

STAGE 11 OF 11

Moving Out

After · The last star

Beats 269–288 · 20 images
23:40 – 25:16

STAGE NOTES

269
BEAT

23:40
4.0s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Three weeks later, you sign for a small house on the east side."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A cozy brick two-family house on a tree-lined street with a "SOLD" sign. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: wide shot. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: accomplished.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
wide shot	warm natural light with amber accents	accomplished	the sign in the yard

270
BEAT

23:44
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"A two-family. You'll live in one half. The other half pays for itself."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
Split view of the two-family house, the protagonist on one side and a tenant family moving in on the other. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: cutaway medium shot. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: smart, stable.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
cutaway medium shot	warm natural light with amber accents	smart, stable	both halves lived in

271
BEAT

23:49
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"You put down forty percent. The loan officer reads your file twice,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist The Loan Officer

IMAGE PROMPT
A loan office with a middle-aged loan officer reading a thick file across a desk from the protagonist. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the loan officer is a middle-aged man in a navy suit and striped tie. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: professional.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm natural light with amber accents	professional	reading the file

272
BEAT

23:53
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"then looks up at you with a different face than the one he walked in with."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Loan Officer

IMAGE PROMPT
The loan officer's expression shifting to respect, eyebrows raised. Character notes: the loan officer is a middle-aged man in a navy suit and striped tie. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up on the loan officer. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: newfound respect.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up on the loan officer	warm natural light with amber accents	newfound respect	adjusting his tie

273
BEAT

23:58
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He'd seen the address on your application. Your parents' address. He'd assumed."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother Father

IMAGE PROMPT
Close-up of the loan application with the parents' home address highlighted. Character notes: his parents are a small graying woman in a faded maroon cardigan and a heavyset gray-mustached man in a plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: assumption.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm natural light with amber accents	assumption	the address highlighted

274
BEAT

24:04
4.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Now he asks if you'd like coffee. He walks you to the elevator himself."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist The Loan Officer

IMAGE PROMPT
The loan officer offering the protagonist a cup of coffee with a broad smile. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: the loan officer is a middle-aged man in a navy suit and striped tie. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: deferential.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm natural light with amber accents	deferential	holding out the coffee

275
BEAT

24:08
5.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"He tells you to call his cell, not the office line. Your last night at home,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Loan Officer

IMAGE PROMPT
The loan officer handing over a business card with a handwritten cell number. Character notes: the loan officer is a middle-aged man in a navy suit and striped tie. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: exclusive.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm natural light with amber accents	exclusive	handing the card

276
BEAT

24:13
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"you stand on your old bed and peel the stars off the ceiling. One by one."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A handful of peeled stars in his palm, one remaining stuck on the ceiling. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: tender.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	tender	the last star clinging

277
BEAT

24:19
6.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Thirty of them come off clean. One won't let go. You leave it there. Downstairs,"*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A handful of peeled stars in his palm, one remaining stuck on the ceiling. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: tender.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	tender	the last star clinging

278
BEAT

24:25
5.7s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"your mother is at the kitchen table, holding the spare key on the faded blue lanyard."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother holding the spare key on the faded blue lanyard in her hands. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: nostalgic.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	dim warm lamp light	nostalgic	holding the key

279
BEAT

24:31
4.4s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"She tries to give it back to you. You close her hand around it."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
His mother holding the key out toward the protagonist. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: letting go.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	dim warm lamp light	letting go	offering the key

280
BEAT

24:35
3.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“Keep it, you tell her. I'll need it. On the porch,”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Mother

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist smiling softly at his mother across the kitchen table. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his mother is a small woman in her late fifties with short graying hair, reading glasses on a beaded chain and a faded maroon cardigan. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: dim warm lamp light. Mood: loving.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	dim warm lamp light	loving	speaking gently

281
BEAT

24:39
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“your father is sitting in the chair he couldn't get out of on his own a year ago.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
A faded inset of his father struggling to stand during his hip recovery. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: split medium shot. Lighting: warm porch light against cool night. Mood: contrast.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
split medium shot	warm porch light against cool night	contrast	struggling to rise

282
BEAT

24:44
5.5s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *“He stands up without help. He shakes your hand like you're someone he just met and likes.”*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist Father

IMAGE PROMPT
His father shaking the protagonist's hand warmly on the porch. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium two-shot. Lighting: warm porch light against cool night. Mood: respect.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium two-shot	warm porch light against cool night	respect	shaking hands

283
BEAT

24:50
6.1s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"Then the porch light comes on behind him. Same as every night. Nobody touched the switch."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
The porch light clicking on above his father's head. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: low-angle medium shot. Lighting: warm porch light against cool night. Mood: constant.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
low-angle medium shot	warm porch light against cool night	constant	the light coming on

284
BEAT

24:56
4.3s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It's on a timer now. He set it the week you moved home."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT Father

IMAGE PROMPT
A faded flashback inset of his father installing the timer eight years ago. Character notes: his father is a heavyset man in his sixties with a gray mustache and a worn plaid shirt. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot with flashback overlay. Lighting: warm porch light against cool night. Mood: loving.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot with flashback overlay	warm porch light against cool night	loving	his father screwing in the timer

285
BEAT

25:00
5.2s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"It started with a number on a rental app. $1,700 a month."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A phone rental app screen showing "$1,700/mo" fading into the night sky. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: close-up insert. Lighting: warm natural light with amber accents. Mood: origin.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
close-up insert	warm natural light with amber accents	origin	the number fading

286
BEAT

25:05
2.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The money changed what you were free to choose."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist walking toward his new two-family house with a box under his arm. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium-wide shot. Lighting: warm dusk light. Mood: freedom.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium-wide shot	warm dusk light	freedom	walking up the path

287
BEAT

25:08
2.9s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"The silence changed what you were willing to say."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT The Protagonist

IMAGE PROMPT
The protagonist standing quietly on the new porch, mouth closed, keys in hand. The protagonist is a young man with an oversized head, messy curly jet-black hair, thick black rectangular glasses, heavy half-lidded tired eyes with faint dark under-eye lines, thick slightly furrowed black eyebrows, pale off-white skin and a small flat frowning mouth, always deadpan, wearing a black quarter-zip pullover, and is the darkest value in the frame. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: medium shot. Lighting: warm dusk light. Mood: reserved.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
medium shot	warm dusk light	reserved	standing still

288
BEAT

25:11
4.8s

- [ ] Image
- [ ] Animated
- [ ] Placed

> *"And the house you were laughed at for living in was never someone else's."*

CHARACTERS IN THIS BEAT No characters (environment or insert shot)

IMAGE PROMPT
A final close-up of the single plastic star still glowing on the empty bedroom ceiling. Style: flat 2D cartoon webcomic illustration, bold clean black outlines, flat cel shading, desaturated slate-blue and gray palette with muted olive, rust, mustard and maroon accents, detailed lived-in background, semi-chibi characters with oversized heads, layered foreground, mid-ground and background, 16:9 frame with the bottom 15% kept clear of important detail. Camera: extreme close-up. Lighting: dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars. Mood: final, tender.

CAMERA	LIGHTING	MOOD	ACTION
extreme close-up	dim warm bedside lamp light with the faint green glow of plastic ceiling stars	final, tender	the star glowing