

GRAVITY

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INT. BEN'S BEDROOM - DAY

BEN lies flat on his back, tossing a rubber ball into the air as a ceiling fan spins above him. He's 18, on the skinny side. While he's throwing the ball there are flashbacks from earlier in the day with shots of graduation and his grad party. He throws the ball higher and higher, the intensity increasing, until it hits the fan, launching it across the room.

QUICK CUTS:

- Walks at Graduation
- Back to him throwing the ball
- Receives Diploma
- Throws the ball again
- Congratulated by parents in cap and gown
- Different angle, the ball goes higher
- Is at his grad party
- The ball goes higher again
- QUINN and BEN talk excitedly
- We see the fan now, the ball getting closer
- QUINN leaves the party
- The ball nearly touches the fan
- BEN puts on a fake smile greeting those attending his party
- The ball hits the fan and launches across the room

END MONTAGE

BEN's phone buzzes and he picks it up to see that his friend QUINN texted him, asking if he was on his way to QUINN's grad party. BEN replies that he's about to leave and gets up and out of the room.

EXT. QUINN'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

Outside is the scene of QUINN's grad party, later in the evening. QUINN has a build similar to BEN and has more of a subdued sense of humor. Funny, not in the class clown sense. The party's outdoors in a suburban neighborhood, and it appears as though most people have left. QUINN and BEN are sitting by a fire roasting s'mores. Around them are discarded Hershey's chocolate wrappers and a half-eaten bag of marshmallows. BEN is putting his marshmallow onto the roasting stick.

QUINN
(staring at the fire)
I'd say I'm gonna miss the place,
but I'd be lying.

BEN
You wouldn't be the only one.

QUINN
Funny how people have this
reverence about high school, like
it's a place where amazing things
happen.

BEN
(putting his marshmallow near
the fire)
Right? People act like it's some
glorious rite of passage.

QUINN pulls his marshmallow from the fire, ready to make a
s'more, as BEN looks in discouragement at the fire.

QUINN
(putting together his s'more,
looking over at BEN)
At least we're done, man. That's
something to be excited about. On
to the next, right?

BEN
I don't know QUINN, I mean I guess
I just don't understand the hype.
I don't really know what's next on
my end. It's not like I've been
waiting to be done so I can
actually do something I want.

QUINN
Hey, look at the silver lining
man! At least you get a reset. Do
whatever, be whatever, you know?

BEN
(smirking)
Doesn't seem that simple.

BEN pulls out his marshmallow, perfectly toasted.

BEN (CONT'D)
But I swear, I feel like I'm going
to lose my mind. Twiddling my
thumbs until my time's up, you
know? Keep waiting for something
to make the wait worth it and at
this point I don't even know what
that would be.

BEN tosses the marshmallow into the fire, where it shrivels up.

BEN (CONT'D)
I don't know what it is.
(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)

I did what I wanted to do in high school. By your standards, yes, lame, but it's what I wanted. And I walked out of high school with the same looming feeling that I am never going to find... (BEN sighs) I don't know. Something's gotta give.

QUINN

Damn, BEN. Kinda freaking me out here.

BEN

Nah, I'm fine. It's just... I can't keep doing whatever this is, I guess.

QUINN

You know, you could do what fellow members of the stick up our asses club like yourself do freshman year of college when they face an existential crisis.

BEN

What's that?

QUINN

(conspiratorially)
Go. Fucking. Nuts.

BEN

(laughs)
That's not really my mojo, QUINN.

QUINN

(hands in the air)
Hey, you're the one who complains about being strait-laced. This could be your way out of that dreaded existence. I don't know how you've made it this far.

BEN

You know, maybe you're right. Where to start though, that's the question.

QUINN

Haven't you ever watched a movie? Party like crazy.

(MORE)

QUINN (CONT'D)

Don't treat dating like you're in a Rom Com trying to find that one and only. Let loose, you know? Do what whatever you want.

BEN

Yeah, I mean, there's definitely a bucket list of things I never really did over the past four years.

QUINN

Exactly. Do the list. Forget rules and expectations. A lesson one would hope you'd learn earlier, but better late than never, I guess.

BEN

Yeah, honestly sounds like fun. Better than any of my other options.

QUINN

See? Fun. (Gives a light punch to the shoulder) THAT'S what you're missing. Besides, your version of going crazy is taking a couple sips of beer and hitting on a girl.

BEN

Hey.

QUINN

You'll have to try pretty hard to stand out from the other newly independent teenagers with sudden access to copious amounts of alcohol.

BEN

True. Works for most people, I guess. I'll pick a date to quit, and if this doesn't work out, no harm done. If I like it, I keep it up.

QUINN

Exactly. See, completely normal. Crisis averted. You really had me worried there for a sec.

BEN

Sorry. Don't worry, I'll be fine.
(Pauses) Hey, you want to get this
thing going tonight?

QUINN

Really? Tonight? Like hit up a
party or something?

BEN

Nah, I think I wanna save that for
college. I don't know.

There's a brief pause as they both think of something to do.

QUINN

Tell you what, follow my lead.

QUINN gets up and BEN follows suit as they quietly leave the
party, hop in QUINN's car, and drive off, avoiding detection
from any of the remaining partygoers.

EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT

QUINN is driving a late 1970's 450-Class Mercedes convertible
as he and BEN leave the party.

BEN

Would you mind telling me what
we're doing, exactly?

QUINN

Don't worry, it's nothing crazy.
You'll see in a bit.

BEN

Whatever you say.

They continue to drive until they reach a back road with no
traffic in the middle of nowhere. The moon is out, lighting the
scenery. QUINN parks and stops the car in the middle of the
road.

BEN

When I said I wanted to go nuts, I
didn't mean like a serial killer.

QUINN

Relax. This will only take a
second. Whatever I say, just I
need you to repeat after me at the
top of your lungs.

BEN
Ok, but what's-

QUINN
What the hell.

BEN
What the hell, what?

QUINN
Repeat after me. Top of your
lungs. What the hell.

BEN
What the hell?

QUINN
You suck at this. WHAT THE HELL?

BEN
WHAT THE HELL?

QUINN
There you go. Now, DAMMIT!

BEN
DAMMIT!

QUINN
PEICE OF SHIT!

BEN
PEICE OF SHIT!

QUINN
FUCK YOU, MOTHERFUCKER!

BEN
FUCK YOU, MOTHERFUCKER!

QUINN
FUUUUUUCK!

BEN
FUUUUUUCK!

They both pause, smiling.

QUINN
See, that wasn't so bad. Felt
good, didn't it?

BEN
Yeah, I guess it did.

QUINN
Your first step in quitting the
golden child act is to drop the
"Dang"s and "Craps"s. Let it rip.
Fuck it.

BEN
Yeah, fuck it.

QUINN starts the car, makes a U turn.

QUINN
Good. We're heading back to my
place. For the rest of the summer,
I'm gonna to prepare you for
entering the world of college
life. Work our way up to partying.

BEN
Sounds like a fucking plan.

QUINN
(laughs)
A fucking plan it is. Don't know
how you've avoided picking up my
potty mouth so far.

QUINN shakes his head in disbelief, smiling.

QUINN (CONT'D)
So. You're good?

BEN
Yeah, I'm good. Don't worry about
me.

They continue driving back toward QUINN's grad party.

INT. BEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

BEN sits in a desk in his room later that night. He flips through a calendar and marks the date March 20. He proceeds to pull out a lined piece of paper, and with a pen begins writing a suicide note, and the audience sees, "If you're reading this, then it means I've done something you may never forgive me for." BEN pauses, looking at his phone, then continues to write.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

BEN and QUINN are walking with a group of students doing a tour of a large college campus, and fall is now approaching as the school year begins. They are accompanied by around thirty students and someone in front is walking backwards, giving a tour.

COLLEGE TOUR GUIDE

Now, here we're passing some different residence halls. You should know which one yours, 'cause if you don't, you're in real trouble. (He waits for laughter but none is forthcoming)
Uh, BUT, do you know the HISTORY behind each hall? Super interesting stuff here...

The scene focuses on BEN and QUINN's discreet conversation.

BEN

(under his breath to QUINN)
Why do people giving college campus tours always walk like that?

QUINN

(also under his breath)
Walk like what?

BEN

Backwards. I swear it happens every fucking time. Same thing when I toured U-Dub. It makes sense, walking backwards, but also...

A group of a few guys joins the conversation.

JERRY

There's like a fifty percent chance you eat shit.

ISAAC

Or bulldoze an unsuspecting bystander.

BEN

Exactly.

DERRICK
(still out of earshot of the
tour guide speaking in an
odd cadence)
Ten dollars says one of those
things will happen before the tour
is finished.

QUINN
No way, they wouldn't be doing
that if they kept watching that
shit go down with other tour
guides. I'll take you up on that.

DERRICK reaches out his hand, and QUINN shakes it.

DERRICK
Deal.

BEN
You guys know each other? (Motions
to ISAAC, JERRY, and DERRICK)

JERRY has a personality similar to QUINN's, of average height
and build. ISAAC is shorter and stockier, and is more of a
follower than a leader, a sort of yes-man. DERRICK is slim, and
the tallest of the three, with an interesting, more formal
diction and quiet demeanor.

ISAAC
Yep. I'm ISAAC.

JERRY
I'm JERRY.

DERRICK
And I am DERRICK.

ISAAC
We went to the same high school.

BEN
Gotcha.

JERRY
You guys roommates or something?

QUINN
Yeah, I've known this asshole
since kindergarten.
(MORE)

QUINN (CONT'D)

We were gonna have a couple more guys in our pod but they bailed last minute and I heard that because of low enrollment we may have the space to ourselves.

JERRY

Nice! Have any plans for the weekend?

QUINN

Plans? Not really.

ISAAC

Cool. Well I hear the first weekend of the school year here is crazy. People loose their fucking minds. Best of all, the amateurs end up super wasted and wake up with a new tattoo or in a dorm room covered in spaghetti sauce or some shit.

BEN

Sounds like fun. The spaghetti sauce thing seems specific.

JERRY

(laughs)

It is. Long story, though. Anyway, this week is usually pretty hectic with motherfuckers trying to build reputations. Already today there's this guy who broke into the Dean's car and stuck a bunch of shit in there.

BEN

What do you mean by shit?

JERRY

(grinning)

Like shit, shit. Feces. Manure, I think.

The group quietly chuckles at the thought.

QUINN

Gross. You guys have plans?

ISAAC

Yeah, actually. We do the Fillmore week.

BEN
Fillmore week?

JERRY
It goes like this. We don't have so much as a sip of alcohol this week. That is, until Friday night. Friday night the shit hits the fan. The frat houses get packed, and the RA's can't keep it out of the dorms.

ISAAC
Most people are smart enough to take it easy. Pace yourself, you know. But there are always a couple ones, usually amateurs, who get blackout drunk before everyone else.

DERRICK
Take my advice, do not be one of those people.

QUINN
Wasn't planning on it. You guys want to team up?

JERRY
Hell yeah. We were going to hit up Sigma Phi first. Pretty standard setup. As soon as the sun goes down, they're open for business.

BEN
Awesome. Sounds good.

As they are walking, the tour guide trips over a sidewalk and falls backwards.

QUINN
(turns to DERRICK)
I'm afraid I owe you ten bucks.

DERRICK
I am afraid you do.

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

A large group of college students are watching a professor who is listing the rules for student behavior and academic policy in an auditorium. BEN and QUINN are sitting next to a group of girls in front of them, close to the edge of a row of seats.

MRS. MARTIN

Now as far as make up policy, you will find most professors as far less lenient than your high school teachers. You will have plenty of time to finish whatever must be done. Now,

BEN

(whispering to a girl on the edge of the group)
Well this is pretty enthralling.

SANDRA

(also in a whisper, not quite facing BEN)
Mm-hmm. Super enthralling.

SANDRA is a fellow freshman and has a playful demeanor.

BEN

You know, I'd ask for your Snap, but if we ever hung out I don't know if I could match this level of excitement on my own.

SANDRA

(smiling, turning toward him)
It's a high bar for sure.

BEN

That being said, I was wondering if--

The guy sitting next to SANDRA, on the edge of the row, turns around, hearing BEN and cutting him off.

JAYDEN

(in a gruff whisper)
Hey! Is there a problem?

JAYDEN is a stereotypical jock-looking guy, seems callous and intimidating.

BEN

Not until recently.

JAYDEN

Back off. She's not on the table.

BEN

It's a free country.

JAYDEN
(a harsher tone, rises
slightly as though to get
up)
Hey, shut the fuck up.

BEN
(sarcastically)
Oh my, I'm so scared.

JAYDEN
(getting up)
Well, maybe you should be.

JAYDEN gets up from his seat

MRS. MARTIN
Young man, please sit--

BEN also gets up and they meet on the stairs lining the
classroom.

JAYDEN
If you beg for your life, I just
might let--

BEN proceeds to cut JAYDEN off by punching him in the face.

MRS. MARTIN
(to no avail)
Oh, my, boys, stop! Stop at once!
You must control yourself!

BEN and JAYDEN throw punches, and classmates begin to pull them
apart.

INT. DISCIPLINARY OFFICE - DAY

BEN sits in a waiting area outside of an office holding an ice
pack to his face. You can hear JAYDEN and the principle's
muffled voices as they are talking behind a closed door, and
another guy walks in, escorted by some sort of school guard.
ADAM sits down, and looks at BEN. ADAM's handsome, blonde, and
seems to have a constant smirk about him.

ADAM
What are you here for?

BEN
Got into a fight (gesturing with
his ice pack). Some asshole was
trying to be intimidating, so I
punched him in the face.

ADAM
Nice.

BEN
How about you?

ADAM
Well, let's just say it involved
the Dean's car.

BEN
YOU did that?

ADAM nods.

BEN (CONT'D)
Damn. Nice job. I'm BEN by the
way.

BEN reaches out to shakes ADAM's hand, who reciprocates.

ADAM
I'm ADAM. And you know, it really
did seem like the perfect crime. I
had noticed the Dean hardly ever
locked her car on a previous
stakeout from last year. Anyway, I
was thinking, 'How can I
capitalize on this car situation?'
My family's got a place in the
country with a ranch nearby. I
snuck onto it and put some shit in
a cooler the night before I left.
Unsurprisingly, there's not a
whole lot stopping you from
stealing a pile of shit. So I
brought it over, and that night
poured it all into the car. The
worst part is, it kind-of melted,
so I basically poured liquid shit
into a new beamer.

BEN
Thats... quite a plan.

ADAM
Why, thank you.

BEN
But wouldn't your car, you know...

ADAM
Smell like shit too? Of course,
but it's totally worth it.
(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

I tried to use spray air freshener in there, but I realized it's just going to need to air out at some point.

BEN

(Amused)

Damn. How'd you get caught?

ADAM

Oh, some son of a bitch snitched on me. Don't know who.

BEN

Rough. Hey, this is random, but I'm going to be heading to the Sigma Phi party this Friday. Doing the Fillmore week.

ADAM

The what?

BEN

(apprehensively)

The Fillmore week? Like holding off until the weekend... no?

ADAM

I don't know what you're talking about but whoever told you that probably hasn't been here long. And that tradition is more of a mutual understanding than anything else. And anyway, when it comes to Sigma Pi, I've been there once or twice. Could show you around if you want. I'm guessing you're a freshman.

BEN

Yeah, how'd you know I was a freshman?

ADAM

Fillmore week?

BEN

Oh, yeah. Thanks, I'd love to take you up on your offer.

ADAM

No problem.

The office door opens and JAYDEN is led out by a staff member.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
Ok, your turn, Mr. WILLARD.

ADAM
Good luck.

BEN nods and walks into the office, and we just get a glimpse of MRS. JOHANESSON, a woman who appears to be in her mid-forties.

EXT. GREEK ROW - DUSK

There are a group of college students walking around and into different frat houses on Greek Row. It's a vibrant scene of college students lining the streets streaming into various houses. Among them are JERRY, ISAAC, DERRICK, QUINN, BEN, with ADAM soon to join them.

BEN
You weren't shitting me when you said everyone did this.

JERRY
Hell no. These places are always packed, tonight more than ever. This isn't even it, most dorms have something going on, and off campus there are tons of hotspots.

ADAM cuts through a group of girls to join them.

ADAM
Hey.

BEN
Hi. Guys, this is ADAM. He's been doing this a couple years, so if we need anything, he's our man. He's actually the guy who loaded the Dean's car with shit.

JERRY
Hell yeah!

JERRY high-fives ADAM. DERRICK reaches over to shake his hand.

DERRICK
A pleasure to meet you. We should do business together sometime.

ADAM
I'm always accepting proposals.

QUINN
Especially shitty ones.

JERRY
(shaking his head in
disappointment)
Man you just gotta accept a sense
of humor just isn't in the cards
for you.

QUINN
Bro. It wasn't even that bad.

The group laughs as they walk up to the entrance of the Sigma Pi house.

ADAM
Alright, boys. Here we go.

INT. SIGMA PI - NIGHT

The group walks inside to see the scene of a typical frat party scene. Party music plays in the background, and the house is full of college age students drinking and chatting.

QUINN
This doesn't seem too intense.

ADAM
(laughs)
No shit. The whole thing kicks off
with a short speech by the host,
then all hell breaks loose. They
bring out the big guns. Whatever
you want, they have.

ISAAC
(in a wide-eyed manner)
This place is fucking amazing.

ADAM
Ok, looks like things are about to
get started.

In the living room area, there is a small speaker system set up with a DJ. An older college student takes the mike.

CHAD
Ok guys. It's time... to loose
your FUCKING MINDS!

This is greeted by wild applause and cheers by the group as he walks off the stage.

BEN
(sarcastically, eyebrows
raised)
Well that was eloquent.

QUINN
Very inspiring.

Cheers emerge as the volume begins to ramp up and the party kicks in. BEN walks up to the person pouring drinks in the kitchen.

BARTENDER
What do you want?

BEN
Uh... surprise me.

BARTENDER
(looking exasperated)
Whatever you say.

BARTENDER reaches past an assortment of beer cans and pulls out a jug, pouring the contents into a red plastic cup.

BEN
Thanks.

The BARTENDER gives a gruff nod and BEN walks over to where QUINN is standing.

BEN
Hey, I think tonight I'm going to
take it easy for the first time.
You know, warm up to this sort of
thing.

QUINN
Sure. But if you've never--

BEN takes a sip and the scene cuts a quick, flashing montage.

QUICK CUTS:

--BEN eagerly drinking out of the cup
--BEN surrounded by other partiers who are chanting "chug"
--BEN being cheered on by other members of the group/clapping
them on the back
--BEN opening the door to his dorm, beckoning a group in

END MONTAGE

INT. BEN AND QUINN'S DORM - MORNING

The sounds of a shower going are heard as the scene fades in. BEN wakes up slowly, obviously hungover. He rubs his head, and looks around in a panic. He sees he's in his dorm room, and transitions to relief. He notices the scattered state of the room with trash and remnants of a crazy party. He sees that the door to QUINN's room is open and hears the shower cut out. BEN waits, and hears the shower curtain move. After a few seconds someone gets out of the bathroom in a bathrobe. But instead of being QUINN, it's a girl from the night before.

BEN
Oh! Uh, ahh...

PARTY GIRL #1
(chuckling)
Remember me? (BEN doesn't say anything)

BEN
(lying)
Uh, yeah.

The girl shakes her head and chuckles, then walks into the room and gathers clothes BEN realizes were scattered around. BEN sheepishly looks around as she does so. As she walks into the bathroom BEN sees QUINN from the other room stumble to the door with a quizzical look on his face, raising an eyebrow very groggily. BEN raises his hands as looks as though to say, "I don't know". QUINN goes back into his room. The girl walks out of the bathroom again, fully clothed.

PARTY GIRL #1
See ya, kid.

BEN
(awkwardly)
Uh, bye.

She closes the door and QUINN emerges from the room. Their conversation continues in a very dazed manner.

QUINN
(groggy)
She was... wearing MY bathrobe.

BEN
(also groggy)
The hell you have a bathrobe for?

QUINN
Forget my bathrobe, why did she shower here? What the fuck happened last night?

BEN

I... Oh, shit. I think we brought people over here.

QUINN

Fuck. This place is a disaster. I saw a few pieces of clothing I know aren't mine in this room.

BEN

How the hell did we even fit anyone in here? I'm so confused.

QUINN

You're not the only one.

INT. OUTSIDE DORM - DAY - MOVING

After getting ready for the day, BEN and QUINN leave their dorm building very sensitive to bright lights or quick movement.

BEN

I just can't believe what happened last night.

QUINN

You don't even know what happened last night.

BEN

(smiling)
Too true.

QUINN

Hey, it was fun though, right?

BEN

Probably. Again, can't really remember too much.

BEN and QUINN exit their dorm and reach an outdoor parking space where BEN sees his car. A late 2000's Honda Accord, now spray-painted pink on a black base coat. They stand for a moment in speechless silence.

QUINN

Damn. BEN, I have to ask, what the hell were you thinking when you brought everyone here?

BEN

I obviously wasn't thinking.
(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)
And besides, how do we know it
wasn't you that started it?

QUINN
True.

They walk over, right up next to the car.

BEN
I can't even drive this thing.
There's paint all over the fucking
windows.

QUINN
Good luck getting it cleaned up.
What are you gonna do?

BEN
No fucking clue.

BEN and QUINN walk away from the hot pink mess and walk to the cafeteria for breakfast.

INT. BEN AND QUINN'S DORM - NIGHT

QUINN is sitting in front of the TV watching something while BEN is sitting in his room, working on the suicide note unbeknownst to QUINN. The episode finishes, and QUINN gets up to look into BEN's room where he writing.

QUINN
Oh, what's that?

BEN
Nothing, just a project for Lit
101. What's up?

QUINN
Hey, I just wanted to check in,
you know, with all of the chaotic
shit going down last night.

BEN
Yeah, it was fun man! I'm honestly
doing everything I never thought I
could, things I didn't know I even
wanted to do until I did them.

QUINN
(looking reassured)
Ok. Cool. Just wanted to make
sure.

BEN

Yeah, thanks. And honestly, it is a little weird. Like I have a second skin, (pauses) like something a shower can't rinse off, you know?

QUINN

Not that surprised man, you're like a totally different person now. Glad you don't feel like shit, though.

BEN

Yeah, no need to worry.

QUINN

Ok. Well, I heard ISAAC has this dumbass plan he wants to propose tomorrow so brace yourself for breakfast tomorrow.

EXT. ROADWAY - NIGHT

QUINN is driving a Subaru Hatchback down an isolated dirt road, DERRICK in the passenger seat and ISAAC, BEN, and JERRY all piled in the backseat.

JERRY

Just so we're all clear, me and BEN get out of the car to unscrew the sign, and DERRICK, you stay on lookout.

BEN

Yeah.

ISAAC

Wait, what about me? I thought I was gonna get out and help with the sign?

QUINN

Bro you need help replacing a lightbulb, you should stick with the mastermind role.

JERRY

It's true. Plus you planned our route so your work here is already finished.

ISAAC

I guess.

QUINN rounds a corner and slows down as he pulls the car over next to a deer crossing sign.

JERRY
Alright guys, it's go time.

BEN
Here we go.

BEN and JERRY hop out of the car as the rest of the crew waits. They get to the sign and begin unscrewing it.

JERRY
Shit looks a lot bigger up close.

BEN
That's what... never mind.

They continue working the sign until it's free from the post.

JERRY
Hell yeah! Easy as I thought it'd be.

BEN and JERRY race back into the car.

QUINN
(pulling back onto the road)
You guys got it?

BEN
Of course we did!

ISAAC
Fuck yeah!

DERRICK
Well done.

JERRY
I got dibs on this one.

QUINN
We're hitting the smaller twenty five next, right?

JERRY
Think so.

ISAAC
Cool, that one's gonna be mine.
Can I help get THAT one out at least?

JERRY
Sure, I guess you can get one of
the screws.

The crew keeps driving until they reach another sign, a small
white 25mph speed limit sign.

JERRY
Ok, let's do this again. Y'all
know the drill.

The guys get out of the car as QUINN turns off the lights. The
guys begin to work on unscrewing the sign with ISAAC starting
with the bottom screw.

ISAAC
Shit, this is stuck!

JERRY
(in hushed tones)
Bro be quiet! Hand over the
wrench.

QUINN begins working on the screw but struggles to get it free.
Amidst the relative silence of the desolate road, DERRICK rolls
his window down causing a loud squeaking noise.

BEN
(whispers harshly)
Bro, what the fuck?

DERRICK
(from inside the car,
gesturing his head behind
them)
I think we may have a problem.

BEN
Huh?

JERRY looks back and sees headlights in the distance.

JERRY
(whispering)
Back in the fucking car!

The guys pile back in, QUINN starts the car and they rush back
onto the road.

QUINN
Shit!

BEN
Think they saw us?

DERRICK
I don't know. (Pauses, looking in the rear view mirror) It looks like the vehicle has a guardrail and light rack on top.

ISAAC
(looking back)
You're fucking kidding me.

QUINN nervously speeds up.

QUINN
(also looking back)
Shit, you're right.

DERRICK
(turning to JERRY)
You have your ID, right?

QUINN
Fuck. I think I left my wallet in my dorm room.

BEN
Awesome.

QUINN starts driving more haphazardly, speeding and swerving.

QUINN
Kinda freaking out guys.

BEN
Bro chill out! We'll be fine! They haven't pulled us over yet.

The cop car gets closer to the Subaru.

BEN
QUINN we'll be fine! Just slow down!

QUINN
(slowing to well below the speed limit)
Do we have something to cover the sign? I think I have a blanket back there. Can't remember though. Shit. Guys we might be fucked.

BEN
Nobody's getting fucked on my watch.

ISSAC laughs nervously. The lights on the police car begin to light up yellow.

ISAAC

Shit.

QUINN

What do I do, pull over? They aren't red and blue flashing?

BEN

Yeah dude I guess just pull over.

QUINN slows the Subaru and begins to pull to the side, and the cop car rushes past. QUINN continues to sit in silence as they all wait for a few seconds.

JERRY

Fuck. That was close.

ISAAC

What are the odds? A cop car in the middle of nowhere?

BEN

Yeah that may be a sign to head back.

QUINN continues to sit in silence.

BEN

(scooting up from the back seat)

You good man?

QUINN

(as though shaking out of it)

Yep.

BEN

Sure?

QUINN

I'm fine.

QUINN pulls out from the side of the road, going where they came from.

DERRICK

Well done guys.

ISSAC

Hey, thanks for the heads up. Did your job well man.

JERRY
We down to wrap up now?

QUINN
Yeah, I'm not in the fucking mood
for a part two of that right now.

ISSAC
Geez man, calm down.

BEN
Guys, chill. Let's just head back.

ISSAC
I don't know, I guess I fail to
see the problem here. We got what
we came for, minus one sign.

BEN
ISSAC.

They drive back in silence.

INT. CAMPUS CAFETERIA - DAY

BEN and QUINN are sitting in the college cafeteria with JERRY,
ISAAC, and DERRICK eating breakfast.

ISAAC
I still can't believe it.

JERRY
I know man! I thought for sure we
were toast.

BEN
The craziest part though?
Technically signs are worth a ton
of cash, meaning we were
committing a grand larceny level
of theft.

JERRY
Damn. What would the cop even do
if they saw the signs?

QUINN
Not really trying to think about
that right now.

There's a pause.

ISSAC

I mean, kids do shit like that all the time. Do they just cuff everybody or what?

BEN

Most aren't stupid enough to get caught thought.

ISAAC

Or unlucky enough.

BEN rolls his eyes, and there is a brief pause. JAYDEN walks in, visibly depressed. BEN eyes him indiscreetly and ISAAC picks up on it.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Hey, I heard that he broke up with his girlfriend. They had been together for years, and she just dumped him. Out of the blue.

DERRICK

(sarcastically)

Why thank you for your valuable input. We all desperately wanted to know all about JAYDEN's love life.

ISAAC

Hey, they'd been dating since high school. They were the freshman power couple. You know, the quarterback and the cheerleader. That sort of thing.

BEN

No shit. I did realize he was the fucking quarterback.

JERRY

Red-shirt freshman.

BEN

Didn't know she was a cheerleader either.

DERRICK

Speak of the devil.

SANDRA walks in, a contrast to JAYDEN's gloomy mood, accompanied by a small posse of friends.

BEN
You know what? Fuck it. Wish me
luck.

BEN quickly gets up and walks toward SANDRA.

JERRY
What the hell is he up to?

QUINN shrugs his shoulders. BEN then stops in front of SANDRA. He strikes up a conversation out of earshot. BEN pulls out his phone as SANDRA talks to him, as seen from the cafeteria table and JAYDEN storms out of the room. BEN's friend group, with the exception of ISAAC, seems a little confused. BEN walks over back to the table, triumphant.

JERRY
(smiling)
What the fuck was that?

BEN
She finally dropped that asshole,
and I didn't wait to make a move.

QUINN
Damn man, you didn't give it ten
seconds to cool down.

BEN shrugs, giving QUINN a look that says, "So what?"

ISAAC
Well, I don't know why they aren't
cheering you on.

BEN
See? Thank you ISAAC.

ISAAC
Who knows? Maybe you guys could be
the next freshman power couple.

DERRICK
Ah, the intricate workings of the
college social hierarchy.

JERRY
(in a stiff voice, mimicking
DERRICK's tone)
You'll have to forgive DERRICK, he
must be feeling particularly
snobbish today.

DERRICK
Perhaps.

BEN

Ok, well I'm gonna go head out to the gym. (Looks to QUINN) Hey, wanna join me?

QUINN

Oh, nah. I would prefer not to spend the next two hours in agony.

BEN

That's what she said.

QUINN

Dude. Chill.

BEN

(flipping QUINN off, as though in jest)
Oh, fuck you.

QUINN

(smiling)
Fuck you too.

ISAAC

(grinning broadly, holding up two middle fingers)
Fuck us all.

DERRICK

(holding his hands up in exasperation)
I'd prefer you didn't do that.

BEN struts off scene as the group smiles, still sitting.

PARTY MONTAGE

Shots of him on campus reveal him to be popular as we walks to classes, giving people fist bumps and high-fives. Scenes of BEN drinking and smoking weed are shown, as well as BEN partying with ADAM, QUINN, DERRICK, ISAAC, and JERRY. BEN pulls various stunts to the approval of the crowd, including jumping on a beer pong table and breaking it to raucous applause, and he gets up pumping his fists into the air. It shows him successfully flirting, gaining popularity quickly. He tells stories to an eager crowd. And to finish the montage is BEN jumping off a roof wearing sunglasses in slo-mo into a pool wearing a giant rubber ducky inner tube, the camera flashing to black faster and faster with intermittent scenes of BEN landing in the pool until the montage cuts to black.

INT. ALPHA PHI - NIGHT

BEN walks with SANDRA into a typical college party scene. BEN greets DERRICK, ISAAC, JERRY and QUINN, and ADAM walks into the living room where they are standing.

ADAM
(slyly)
Why hello, lovebirds.

BEN
Dude, chill. SANDRA, this is ADAM.

SANDRA
(somewhat awkwardly)
Oh, hi.

BEN
(gesturing toward QUINN)
And this is QUINN.

QUINN
Nice to meet you.

SANDRA nods to QUINN.

ADAM
(to BEN)
Hey, I heard JAYDEN's here. I think he's looking for you.

SANDRA looks visibly uncomfortable at this news, but BEN doesn't seem to notice her reaction and tenses up a little.

BEN
Fine, yeah, I'm happy to have a little chat. Where's he at?

JAYDEN
(walking from another part of the house)
Hello, asshole.

BEN
Charmed, as always.

SANDRA looks away, now completely uncomfortable.

JAYDEN
You think you're the shit. But you're getting lucky and out of your fucking league. You bluff enough and someone is gonna call it.

The party begins to quiet as the tension builds between BEN and JAYDEN.

BEN
(holding his chest as though
it was pierced by an arrow,
speaking sarcastically)
You really got me there. I guess
getting lucky is one way of
putting it.

SANDRA's eyes dart to and from BEN this comment.

JAYDEN
Your sarcasm only gets your skinny
ass so far.

A crowd has developed as people quiet to hear BEN and JAYDEN.

BEN
Insulting my ass? I don't know
that I can take that.

JAYDEN
Oh, very funny. But your comedy
doesn't help much in a fistfight.

SANDRA
(Cutting in)
BEN, you don't have to--

BEN
No, no, he's right. Comedy doesn't
help in a fight. Good thing I'm a
jack of all trades. I'm happy to
fight you, JAYDEN, no problemo.

QUINN
(quietly to BEN)
Hey, BEN, I don't think--

BEN
(more loudly, so others can
hear)
Oh, don't worry. This son of a
bitch has it coming. He has to
learn a little lesson.

JAYDEN
Learn what it feels like to kick
your ass, maybe.

ADAM
(mockingly)
Oh, clever line. (Turns to BEN)
Do me a favor and kick HIS ass,
won't you?

BEN
Sure thing.

ISAAC walks into the center of the room, as though an announcer, between JAYDEN and BEN.

ISAAC
Alrighty, folks, we're about to
begin. Now boys, no dirty moves.
I'm talking a fair fight. What
exactly that means, I have no
fucking clue.

BEN
(motioning to his shirt)
Hold up, I wanna make sure I keep
this clean. Your blood wouldn't
really match the color scheme
well.

JAYDEN
(rolling his eyes)
Right.

BEN theatrically takes his shirt off to reveal a six-pack and chiseled frame. Whispers and general excitement from the audience ensues. He flexes, grinning. QUINN puts his head in his hand.

ISAAC
Well, fuck. Everyone, this is
going to be good. Ok, boys, time
to fight!

ISAAC walks out from the center, and BEN and JAYDEN circle each other. JAYDEN throws a punch that doesn't land, and BEN quickly ducks and punches JAYDEN in the stomach, knowing the air out of him. Reeling slightly, JAYDEN stumbles back to compose himself. BEN backs off, feigning a yawn, then motioning for JAYDEN to give another swing. JAYDEN aims a blow at BEN again, but BEN pulls and uppercut and hits JAYDEN in the jaw. BEN jumps back and punches JAYDEN in the nose, which is quickly bloodied. JAYDEN stumbles again, and with a look of fury lands a punch on BEN's face. BEN steps back, startled, sneering with a bloody mouth.

BEN
Ok, motherfucker, here we go.

BEN launches a barrage of punches JAYDEN is unable to deflect or dodge, and the crowd cheers. Then JAYDEN seems to wobble, and BEN launches a knockout punch. The crowd goes wild, including ISAAC and JERRY, though DERRICK and QUINN bear expressions that are closer to relief. SANDRA just looks uncomfortable.

ADAM
(clapping BEN on the back)
Congratulations, you son of a
bitch. You just kicked the star
quarterback's ass.

BEN seems to soak up his surroundings as the drunken revelry envelopes him, cheering him on.

EXT. ALPHA PHI - NIGHT

QUINN and BEN are sitting outside the frat house by the sidewalk. Inside the party is still going strong. Their noises are muffled, and there are relatively quiet surroundings as BEN and QUINN are sitting. BEN is holding an ice pack up to his face where JAYDEN landed the punch, and his face is bruised.

BEN
Hey, sorry if it got out of hand
today. I was just so pissed.

QUINN
You're good. Did a little out of
hand, though.

BEN
Maybe.

QUINN
Where'd you even learn to fight
like that?

BEN
I've been doing boxing as cardio.
Football players may be strong,
but that only goes so far in a
fight.

QUINN
That looked more like MMA shit to
me. But hey, where's SANDRA? She
seemed a little freaked out.

BEN
(motions to the house)
She's still in there.
(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)
I think her friends are keeping
her company.

QUINN looks uncomfortable but doesn't say anything. There is noise of glass smashing in the house, a brief pause, and then continued shouts and cheers from the party.

QUINN
Damn. Wonder what that was.

BEN
Yeah, these parties are fun and
all, but can get weird as hell.

QUINN
Says the guy who once jumped off a
roof in a rubber ducky inflatable
for no apparent reason. Man, I
don't know about this plan. You
went a little crazy in there with
JAYDEN.

BEN
(defensively)
Dude, he's the asshole who
challenged me to the fight!

QUINN
Yeah, but can you blame him? What
I'm trying to say is that you're
different than you were before.

BEN looks angry at this, and makes as though to speak, but
QUINN cuts him off.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Hey, nothing wrong with that. I'm
just saying it's weird to see you
like that. I'm not used to it.

BEN looks as though he's going to yell, angry, but then droops
and becomes visibly tired.

BEN
Yeah, to be honest it's a little
weird for me too.

QUINN
You ok?

BEN
Yep. I'm fine. Just... I'm still
tired. Like I'm keeping up an act.
But it feels good, I guess.

QUINN
Hey, maybe you should call this
shit off.

BEN
No, I'm going to do everything as
scheduled. I'm not giving up now.

QUINN
Maybe. But, I mean, just for
tonight? Head back now. It
wouldn't look out of place,
considering what just happened.

BEN contemplates this idea for a few seconds.

BEN
Nah, I'm gonna just head back in
there. Might as well.

QUINN
You sure?

BEN
Sure. Yeah. I am. Let's head back
in.

BEN and QUINN get up and walk to the entrance.

BEN
(as they walk into the house)
It's go time.

INT. SPANISH I CLASSROOM - DAY

BEN sneaks into a Spanish classroom about ten minutes into
class, sitting in the back corner of the room. It's a smaller
class, about thirty students in the group. The professor is a
lady in her mid fifties, frizzy hair and eccentric personality,
and mid lecture about pronouns.

SEÑORA JACKSON
(noticing his entrance)
And how generous of you to grace
us with your presence, Señor BEN.

BEN
I'm flattered you even remember my
name, SEÑORA JACKSON.

SEÑORA JACKSON
Well your self introduction antics
left quite an impression.
(MORE)

SEÑORA JACKSON (CONT'D)
Anyway, it's time for us to begin practicing those conversations on page 23, just turn to whoever's next to you. Remember to use the right gender when referring to classmates!

BEN turns to the girl next to him, and they shared eye contact. She's a fairly normal looking college student, no distinctive clothing or physical characteristics.

ARIA
Great. This what I get for sitting in the back of class.

BEN
(amused)
What?

ARIA
Oh, forgive me for not wanting our resident class clown as a partner again.

BEN
Hey, I never claimed that title.

ARIA
Oh please. You crave attention more than Charles.

BEN
Huh?

ARIA
My pet cat. Back home.

BEN
Don't act like there's any reasonable expectation I'd understand that reference. And I can't say I'm all that excited about being paired with the cat lady either.

ARIA
Poor you.

BEN
Well, should we get started with pronouns?

ARIA
Sure. Surprised you wanna actually
work on Spanish.

BEN
Oh trust me, I'm more just trying
to avoid any other conversation
that would ensure otherwise.

ARIA
Ensue. But hey, that's actually a
smart move.

BEN
(Flipping through the book)
I guess the first question is
asking about roommates. Who's
yours?

ARIA
In Spanish or English?

BEN
Spanish I guess.

ARIA
Ok... Ella es SANDRA.

BEN
NO WAY.

ARIA
What?

BEN
YOU'RE ARIA?

ARIA
How'd you know my name?

BEN
SANDRA'S roommate?

ARIA
Oh no. You must be BEN.

BEN
In the flesh.

ARIA
I had really hoped she'd have
higher standards.

BEN

Hey, ease up on the compliments. I can only take so much flattery. Besides, how have I never seen you around before?

ARIA

I'm not really the party type, if that's what you mean. We have talked in class before, you know.

BEN

Oh, right.

ARIA

Apparently that didn't count for much, considering we didn't get to each others names.

BEN

Fair.

SEÑORA JACKSON

Alright class, time to take this thing to the front of the room.

ARIA

Thank goodness.

BEN

Couldn't have said it better myself.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

BEN and QUINN meet up after class, converging on a path on the college campus, heading toward their dorm. It's winter now, and they are dressed accordingly.

QUINN

How was the gym?

BEN

Great. There I was, minding my own business, when some chick asks to work in with me using the leg press machine. A few minutes later and bam, (pulls out phone) number acquired.

QUINN

Oh, damn. Didn't realize you even broke up with SANDRA man.

BEN
(awkwardly)
Yeah that's the thing, still
working on establishing the end of
that.

QUINN
Seriously?

BEN
Hey, I haven't done anything yet!
No overlap.

QUINN
I thought you really liked her
though.

BEN
Nah, I mean, it was fun and
everything for a month or so, but
I realized it just wasn't a long
term kinda thing.

QUINN
Ok. It's your love life, I guess.

BEN
What?

QUINN
(partially in jest)
I mean, do you really want to be a
hoe?

BEN
(laughs)
A hoe? It's not like I cheated,
and it lasted a little while. And
you act like being a player would
be a BAD thing and like one night
stands are some crazy scandalous
sin.

QUINN
You literally had one girlfriend
in high school.

BEN
You act like THAT'S a good thing.

QUINN
I'm just saying. With everything
going on it seems a bit like
playing with fire.

BEN

Yeah, but play with fire enough
and you become fireproof. I'm
already there.

QUINN

Yeah, as poetic as it sounds I
don't know if that's a good thing.
Or even true.

BEN

Well, I'm fine. You don't need to
worry.

QUINN

I guess.

BEN

Hey, I'm going out tonight. Want
to come with?

QUINN

Uh.. sure. Wait, fuck. I've got a
class at eight tomorrow, and
there's a final worth like fifty
percent of our grade.

BEN

Are you serious? You're going to
turn down a party to go bed early?
I have a class at ten tomorrow I
haven't shown up for in like two
weeks.

QUINN

Shit. It's way too late to drop
it.

BEN

Yeah, but I'm a new man now. F's
don't scare me.

QUINN

Bro, that's not a flex. You good?

BEN

It's all good man. Please don't
stress about my fucking report
card.

QUINN

Yeah yeah yeah, I don't want to be
your babysitter or anything.

BEN
(pausing)
But, I mean, you kinda act like
it.

QUINN
What the hell is that supposed to
mean?

BEN
You're always checking in on me,
you're telling me what I should
and shouldn't do--

QUINN
Hey, I'm just trying to be a good
friend.

BEN
Yeah, it's nice but also getting
on my nerves. And it's only one
way. It's not like I'm always
giving YOU advice. Just leave me
be with that shit. I can work it
out.

QUINN
Fine, fine, I'll stop.

BEN
Ok. I know you mean well.

QUINN
So we're good?

BEN
Yeah. We're good.

They keep walking in silence.

INT. PI DELTA PSI - NIGHT

ADAM and BEN are talking surrounded by scenes typical of a college party. They are both accompanied by two different women. One looks less than excited about being there with ADAM.

ADAM
So I sold him his own mother
fucking lawnmower for two-hundred
dollars! That stupid son of a
bitch didn't mind!

BEN
Damn. That's crazy.

ADAM

I know. He had it coming, though.
I heard he's a peeping tom. Cleans
the girl's locker room at just the
right moments.

BEN

Shit. How is he still employed
here?

ADAM

I don't know. I just heard about
it from one of my friends. The guy
looks like it too. Ratail. Fat
motherfucker. Always wears socks
and sandals at the same time like
an idiot. You might have seen the
janitor before.

BEN

Yeah, I think I've seen him
around. Looks like a total creep.
Hey, LISA, can you get me a
refill? Pretty please?

LISA

(looking eager)
Oh, yeah, totally!

SELENA

(eager for an excuse to leave
ADAM and his stories)
I'll go with you.

LISA

Ok!

LISA and SELENA head off toward another part of the party, and
BEN and ADAM continue their conversation.

ADAM

(discretely)
Hey, I got my hands on some fun
pills.

BEN

What kind of pills?

ADAM

So basically if you want to hook up with someone but don't want to go through the hassle of spending the whole night convincing them, you give their drink a little... boost. With this stuff they'll be putty in your hands.

ADAM pulls out a white plastic baggy with a couple of white pills inside. ADAM pulls one out.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Want it?

BEN

(uncomfortably)

Nah, I don't know, man. That's Bill Cosby level shit.

ADAM

C'mon, don't be a pussy. Besides, it's just sex. They wake up like nothing happened. No harm no foul.

BEN

Still, I don't need pills to hook up with someone.

ADAM

Nah, just a pussy. It's ok tho.

BEN

You know what? Fine. Fuck it.

ADAM hands him the pill. LISA and SELENA walk over, with red solo cups in tow.

ADAM

Hey, girls, I just had an idea. We get a good drink swap going. I feel bad making y'all grab all our drinks.

LISA

I mean, why not?

ADAM

Cool.

ADAM gulps, and as he lowers the cup BEN notices him discreetly putting the pill in the rest, dissolving immediately.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Here you go, SELENA.

SELENA looks a little suspicious, and you get the impression she knows what's going on but is resigned to her fate. She takes it and drinks.

ADAM
You gonna share yours, BEN?

BEN
Uh... yeah.

BEN drinks from his cup but doesn't add anything, hesitating as he looks at ADAM.

BEN
(handing the cup to LISA)
Here you go.

Lisa looks over as ADAM interrupts.

ADAM
Hold on, I'm curious if there's a
difference between our drinks.

ADAM smirks as he takes a sip, then slips another pill, handing the cup to LISA, who gives him a curious look.

LISA
What are we doing?

BEN looks uncomfortable and doesn't speak.

ADAM
BEN's sharing his drink.

LISA
(still confused)
Why?

ADAM
(smiling)
He just wants to let you know he
appreciates you grabbing one for
him.

LISA shrugs and takes a deep sip, emerging from her cup and smiling. ADAM looks over at BEN and gives him a subtle thumbs up.

SELENA
Why are you doing that?

ADAM
Because I can't believe I got you
to go out with me.

SELENA
(smirking)
Weird, man.

About ten minutes later, the scene has deteriorated as both SELENA and LISA are making much less sense.

SELENA
(slurring slightly)
NO WAY. THAT'S CRAZY.

ADAM
I know right! Hey, I was just thinking, you wanna explore upstairs with me? I just had idea for something pretty fun to do.

SELENA nods and they both go upstairs, SELENA stumbling, and LISA is left with BEN.

LISA
Has anyone ever told you, you're like, so sexy?

BEN
Uh... Nope. Not really. Listen, maybe-

LISA goes in for a kiss, but BEN moves back.

BEN
(scratching his head)
Uh, you know, I'm getting kinda tired, I'm gonna head back to my place.

LISA
Ok, I'll come too.

BEN
You know, I don't think my dorm mate would appreciate that very much.

LISA
(slurring even more)
Fuck your dorm mate.

BEN
Now that's not very nice.

LISA
(pausing)
No, it wasn't.

Then LISA looks around and sees another guy, making a beeline stumbling a little for them.

LISA (CONT'D)
Hey, has anyone every told you
you're super duper hot?

BEN looks uneasy as he leaves the party, looking over his shoulder. The guy looks delighted to have the girl in his company as BEN leaves.

INT. CAMPUS CAFETERIA - DAY

BEN's friend group (QUINN, DERRICK, JERRY, and ISAAC) and him are eating in the food court.

JERRY
So, how was your guys' break?

ISAAC
DERRICK ate shit skiing during the trip, so that was pretty much the highlight for me. Everything else just couldn't compare to that moment.

DERRICK
It was not even that bad.

ISAAC
Oh, it was. It was BAD.

JERRY
Anyway, I know what these two assholes were up to for most of it, I was there with 'em. What about you, QUINN?

QUINN
Pretty typical Christmas. Headed home. Ate a shit-ton of food. Came back here.

DERRICK
Productive trip, I see.

QUINN
Extremely.

JERRY
BEN? Anything to say on the subject?

BEN
You guys know, I just stayed here.

DERRICK
I still don't understand how your parents did not attempt to kill or kind-nap you? Because if not, your parents are remarkably strange.

BEN
I just told them I was really behind on school work. Which was true. Ended up on a ayahuasca retreat though, which was fun.

QUINN
You're shitting us, right?

BEN
What? I like to think I'm spiritually in tune enough to handle something like that.

JERRY
Sure that wasn't just code for getting high all break?

BEN
Now that would just be plain deceptive.

JAYDEN walks into the room, looking untidy and visibly irritated.

QUINN
What the hell happened to JAYDEN?

Members of the group turn to take a look at JAYDEN.

JERRY
No fucking clue. (Turns to BEN)
You didn't kick his ass again, did you?

BEN
I wish. But no.

JAYDEN, after seeming unsure and getting up from an empty table, approaches where BEN is sitting.

JAYDEN

(loudly, so that others in
the food court can hear)

BEN, I'm fed up with your
bullshit. SANDRA didn't deserve
what you did to her and frankly
I'm not too happy with you either.

BEN

(more quietly)

The fuck is this?

JAYDEN

(in the same tone)

Meet up at this party I'll send
you the address to. We'll have a
drink-off. Last man standing
resumes status as a party god.

BEN

(rolls eyes, annoyed)

Oh, you think my flaw is low
alcohol tolerance.

JAYDEN

No, I think you're a pussy.

BEN

Well for starters I would look
quite a bit different if I really
was one. (No reaction from JAYDEN
or his friend group; the joke
didn't land) Ah, fuck. (Then,
resigned) Yeah, I'll prove I'm
better than you once again.

JAYDEN

Ok, glad to hear you aren't
completely chicken after all.
We'll meet up at a party. This
one's not on greek row, I'll get
you the address later. Let's do it
Friday night. Invite your friends;
you're going to need to throw a
pity party after I wipe the floor
with your ass.

BEN

Ok, first of all, that's not how
that expression works. And
secondly, it's going to be your
ass passed out on the floor while
I'm still partying mine off.

JAYDEN

I guess we'll find out Friday.

JAYDEN walks out of the food court, and the normal hustle and bustle that dimmed slightly as the conversation's volume increased goes back to normal. BEN resumes eating as though nothing has happened, but everyone at the table is looking at him.

QUINN

This is a bad idea.

BEN

What?

QUINN

You know what I'm talking about.

BEN

Listen, this shit's totally normal. JAYDEN's pissed that I'm above him on the social ladder and can't take it. He's desperate.

DERRICK

Yes, I do agree he seems desperate.

JERRY

And that's why you shouldn't do this. Hardly anyone ever uses a drinking contest to settle something like this. Maybe two friends want an excuse to get blackout drunk or something, but you've got to admit something's off.

BEN

You guys, it's JAYDEN that's off. He's the one who's lost his fucking mind. Trust me, everything's fine.

QUINN

But BEN, this could be potentially unsafe. I mean, JAYDEN definitely looked off. You had to of seen that, and I'm beginning to suspect that he's on something.

BEN

You mean on crack or something?

QUINN
I don't know man. Something.

BEN
So?

QUINN
So that means if a fight breaks out or something happens he won't be making logical decisions.

BEN
He never does anyway. What's the problem?

QUINN
I mean this could be a trap, and you could get seriously hurt. You've got to see this.

BEN and the group pause as the conversation reaches an impasse.

BEN
Okay. I get it. I know what's going on here.

QUINN
So that do you think he's up to, then?

BEN
No. Not him. You.

The group bursts into expressions of surprise and a level of tension builds.

BEN (CONT'D)
You guys can't take it anymore. I'm leaving you behind. You're stuck with your status and I'm the most popular guy on campus.

QUINN
The fuck?

BEN (CONT'D)
And I see now that you don't want me to climb any higher, to outpace you even more. You're just jealous!

JERRY
Hey man, don't be a dick.

BEN
But it's true, right?!

QUINN
No! It's total bullshit!

The space around them quiets slightly as it did when JAYDEN and BEN had their tense interaction. QUINN seems to realize this and talks quietly and the conversation continues in hushed tones.

QUINN (CONT'D)
I know you've gone through some
shit before. So I'm not going to
say what I want to say right now.
But-

BEN
(interrupting)
Say what?

QUINN pauses.

QUINN
You're losing your shit.

BEN
Excuse me?

QUINN
This whole frat boy act isn't
working. I can see you're
miserable!

JERRY, DERRICK, and ISAAC look uncomfortable as the conflict between BEN and QUINN takes over.

BEN
Oh, really? Open your eyes, QUINN!
I'm on top of the world!

QUINN
Are you, though?

BEN continues, unflinching.

BEN
Yes. Look at me! I can hook up
with whoever I want to. I can get
into any group you can think of.
My rival's going down in flames
and I'm doing great. I know you're
only jealous, so fuck off!

BEN storms off from the table, leaving a frazzled JERRY, DERRICK, and ISAAC, with QUINN who seems hurt more than anything else.

EXT. OUTSIDE DORM - DAY

BEN is walking to the dorm from the food court when ADAM comes up, seemingly waiting for him by the residence hall.

ADAM

Hey, I heard about what you're planning with JAYDEN.

BEN

Already?

ADAM

I was nearby and heard enough to know what's going on. Should be fun. You're coming, right?

BEN

Of course. My chicken shit friends don't like it though. They think something's up.

ADAM

(smirking)

You realize they're pissed you're leaving them in the dust, right?

BEN

Yeah, that's what I said.

ADAM

Maybe it's time for you to get some better friends. Anyway, I had a great plan. I've got buddies who are taking things to the next level, and I'm sure they'd love to come.

BEN

(looking a little confused)

What does that mean?

ADAM

You know. College parties have their weed and booze. Meanwhile the adults are on better shit the kids don't get to play with.

BEN

You mean coke and stuff?

ADAM

Sure. Other, harder shit too. Same concept though.

BEN

Oh, nah, I don't think that's necessary.

ADAM

C'mon, don't be a pussy. You'll be fine. This sort of thing happens all the time and no one gets hurt.

BEN

No, man, hard drugs can fuck you up. I don't want to mess with that shit.

ADAM

Oh, payed attention in middle school when they tell you all about the dangers (uses a baby voice) of the big bad drugs? You already get drunk and smoke weed, when it comes down to it there's really no difference. You know it's bullshit, right?

BEN

It's not that. I just don't want things taken too far. Besides, what if--

ADAM

Oh, get your shit together. Either you're in or you're out. There is no line to walk here.

BEN

Fine. You want to know the real reason? I don't trust you. At all.

ADAM

(sarcastically)

Oh, I'm SO offended. You don't trust me. Nobody trusts anyone around here! Get in, get out, have a good time before the real world catches up to you! Just relax. I'll tell my buddies to meet up as soon as you send me the location.

BEN

No. I'm done. I'm out.

ADAM

Fine by me.

ADAM pauses as he and BEN wait for a second, as though neither is finished talking but doesn't know what to say.

ADAM (CONT'D)

But all the status, all the popularity you find so great now, be ready to watch it fade away. If you don't want to play ball, you shouldn't have got in the game.

BEN

This isn't what I signed up for.

ADAM

Whatever. But say bye-bye to hooking up with cheerleaders and partying with the social elites. Your time is up.

BEN

Bullshit. Even they know not to get into this stuff. Just leave me alone.

ADAM pauses again thinking, and BEN makes as though to leave.

ADAM

(as though he has transformed)

Wait! Sorry. That was out of hand. You don't need all that shit anyway, I just wanted you to have a grand entrance.

BEN

But, you said--

ADAM

BEN, just stop. Life here is fucked up sometimes, and you can't fix that. Freshmen like you don't see it at first, but this is a twisted paradise. I already admitted it got out of hand.

BEN

Oh. Ok. Yeah, I probably got a little out of hand today too.

ADAM

Cool. Well, anyway, I'll be there.

BEN
Great. Glad we could work things
out.

ADAM nods, and they go their separate ways as BEN enters his dorm building, though he doesn't seem completely confident about his decision.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

BEN pulls up in his spray-painted pink Honda Accord, with a new front windshield and windows (though the actual body of the car is still untouched). BEN checks his phone, and then gets out of the car and into the house, which is blaring loud music. He walks into a typical party scene, and is greeted by a few people. He recognizes someone who he's seen at other parties and walks over to him.

BEN
Hey, RYDER, have you seen ADAM
around?

RYDER
Nope. Don't think I've seen CRU in
awhile.

BEN
Huh? What do you mean?

RYDER
CRU File. ADAM. ADAM ANTAS?
Thought you would have heard his
nickname by now.

BEN
Nah, why do you call him CRU?

RYDER
Oh, you don't know? I thought you
guys knew each other pretty well.

BEN
I mean, sort of. What's that
nickname about?

RYDER
You've been missing out. It's a
cool story. So CRU is a Christian
club on campus. Anyway, one of
ADAM's first pranks happened at
one of their parties, where he
spiked the punch there.

(MORE)

RYDER (CONT'D)

Well, you know, it was a Christian party so normally it's supposed to be sober and shit. Nobody caught on to the fact that people were getting wasted until dozens of people drank the punch. Apparently, some of the stuff ADAM put in there was to make the night a bit more interesting. He snuck a few girls out, meanwhile the CRU president was making out with randos. I'll just say the next day there were a few complaints filed. CRU demanded that the culprit would be caught and expelled. ADAM got away with it despite a pretty intense investigation. They still have a file on the incident, and it was ADAM's first big stunt that earned him the rep as a prankster.

BEN

Damn.

RYDER

Yeah. I can't believe he didn't tell you. It's his first claim to fame.

BEN

Yeah, I don't know. But anyway, do you know where he's at?

RYDER

Oh, no, I have no idea.

BEN

Ok. Where's JAYDEN?

RYDER

Who?

BEN

Sorry, there's this asshole who challenged me to a drinking contest and said to meet up here tonight.

RYDER

Well, if this JAYDEN's coming I haven't heard about it. He sure didn't tell anyone else here.

BEN

What do you mean? I thought it would be this, well, you know... big event or something.

RYDER

(chuckling)

Dude, it doesn't work like that. And my guess would be that he said that to fuck with you.

BEN

Fuck.

RYDER

Hey, it's not all bad. We've got some of the stronger shit upstairs if you want to improve your night.

BEN

Nah. (Pauses) Well, you know, maybe.

RYDER

Great, well, be my--

In the distance, police sirens can be heard, getting louder as they approach the house.

RYDER (CONT'D)

Guest. Fuck me.

BEN

Oh, shit. How often does-

RYDER ditches BEN as chaos ensues in the house as partiers realize the cops are coming. The music is quickly turned off, highlighting the panicked shouts of people in various levels of drunkenness. Cops pull up to the house. People are streaming out of the house but apparently the cops have caught on, racing around. A cop grabs a megaphone and shouts instructions to the crowd.

FRANK STILLMAN

(via megaphone)

Stay inside the house! DO NOT run!
It'll just be worse if you do!

BEN looks around inside the house; he's one of the only ones left just standing around, and decides to try and sneak out the back. As he leaves through a backdoor he sees that the backyard is essentially a trap, cordoned off from an exit, and a huddle of people are waiting, surrounded by police.

BEN

Fuck.

BEN turns to go back in the house, but a cop is pounding on the door, which was apparently locked. BEN runs upstairs, and to his horror sees a scattering of needles and people who seem to have absolutely no clue what chaos is going on beneath them. The room is dingy and there is a dull light illuminating the place. With sluggish expressions they look up at BEN, who terrified goes back down the stairs.

FRANK STILLMAN (O.S.)

Open up! We will break down the door!

BEN

Wait! Wait! I'm in here! Just a second!

BEN looks at the door and then unlocks the handle. Cops immediately bust in, swarming the place as handcuffs are placed on BEN.

FRANK STILLMAN

Hey, thanks for your cooperation. Smart move, kid.

BEN

I swear I had no idea about what was going on here!

FRANK STILLMAN

We'll see. If by some miracle you don't have anything in your system, and because you didn't evade us, you should be okay. Your friends, on the other hand, are in deep shit.

BEN

Friends are a strong word.

FRANK STILLMAN

(chuckles)

Ok. Well, we're still going to take you in like everyone else.

With the continued blaring of sirens, the camera reveals the cops taking the parties into custody and going upstairs to see the assortment of various, very illegal substances. People who appear to be ghost-like and in their twenties are put in handcuffs, but just look mildly surprised, some more just scared.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT - MOVING

BEN is sitting in a jail cell with the other party-goers. Leaned over, sitting with his hands over his eyes, a murmur surrounds as his cellmates audibly wonder what will happen next. MRS. CARTER is a woman in her mid to late thirties.

MRS. CARTER
Alright, BEN WILLARD?

BEN
Yeah, that's me.

MRS. CARTER
Come with me.

The cell doors open, and others inside look longingly at BEN as he leaves the cell. He and Mrs. CARTER walk toward the entrance of the precinct.

MRS. CARTER (CONT'D)
Talking to FRANK it seems like you feel it was a mix up with you being at that party.

BEN
Yeah, so you talked with him?

MRS. CARTER
When putting together what happened tonight he mentioned that detail. I don't know if you realize it, but what you saw was probably the tip of a dangerous iceberg.

BEN
No, when I went upstairs... (he paused, as though realizing this was a potentially embarrassing detail) Uh, when the cops showed up and, well, honestly I looked for where to go and I went up there, I saw everything.

MRS. CARTER
Hate to break it to you, kid, but that WAS the tip of the iceberg. How drugs get from producers to kids like you is a dirty process. The users play a small role.

BEN
Damn.

They reach a waiting area near the entrance.

MRS. CARTER

Well, as you asked we contacted Mr. WYAT and he should be on his way to pick you up.

BEN

Great! Anything I need to do?

MRS. CARTER

No, we have all the statements we need to put together what happened. And it corroborates with you just being a bystander. Now, listen, I know how this will sound but you should at least hear it. (She looks more sternly at him) Parties like this might look different to you, but all too often they lead there. Just stay out of that shit.

BEN

Yeah, I'm starting to see that.

MRS. CARTER

You're free to go whenever your ride is here. Have a good rest of your night!

BEN

Yeah, you too ma'am!

BEN looks around at the waiting area and takes a seat. The entrance leads to a front desk where someone in uniform is sitting, talking to another cop who is in the open area behind the desk. One is a young woman, and the other is a middle-aged man. As BEN settles in, the door opens and to his shock he sees what seems to be the janitor at his school, an overweight man with a rattail.

MRS. JOHNSON

(entering the precinct and leading JACK)

Ok, JACK, you know the drill.

JACK nods with discouragement and follows the cop as they turn to the left of the front desk, though visibly avoiding eye contact with a man at the desk. OFFICER ANTAS, the cop at the desk, is a middle aged woman with an unremarkable appearance.

OFFICER ANTAS

Damn.

OFFICER EVENSON

What?

OFFICER ANTAS

That's the second time this month he's been in here. I'd bet my life it's for the same offense.

OFFICER EVENSON

What? I would have thought you'd see plenty of regulars here.

OFFICER ANTAS

Oh, you do. And you get used to it fast. People who you think can turn it around never do. But this guy's different.

OFFICER EVENSON

(mockingly)

Oh, a real sob story?

OFFICER ANTAS

(stern, distastefully)

Yeah. A sob story. His parents died when he was just a kid, and his wealthy grandparents let him go through the foster system. He came out living on the streets and addicted to any substance you can name. It's a wonder he's survived. Well, when the grandparents died and the rest of their kids found out what happened, they felt bad so they hired him at the university (the grandparents were descendants of the guy who founded the place and had some leeway there). Anyway, he had seemed to get on the right track, maybe with a few rough patches. He even got married. But then the divorce came, and everything went downhill. He keeps trying to get sober but can't pull it off. And the school board keeps complaining about it, says that if the guy has one more incident and can't get clean than they're gonna have to fire him. Well, looks like tonight there was an incident.

OFFICER EVENSON.

Damn.

OFFICER ANTAS

To make it worse for the past decade rumors have been circulating around the kids at the college he's some kind of pedophile, a peeping tom, which isn't true at all. Kids just want an excuse to hate someone who looks like that. People make reports about the rumors, but they've all been impossible or nonsensical accusations. Partially because the guy is a grounds maintenance worker and some kid says they saw him cleaning the bathrooms in the girl's locker room. Shit like that is the cherry on top for guys like him.

OFFICER EVENSON

(contemplatively, after a brief pause)

Kids can be assholes.

OFFICER ANTAS

Kids CAN be assholes.

OFFICER EVENSON.

Hey, how do you know all this?

OFFICER ANTAS

(smiles wearily)

I'm his sister.

OFFICER EVENSON.

Shit! You're serious?

OFFICER ANTAS

Yeah.

OFFICER EVENSON

(awkwardly)

Well, sorry.

OFFICER ANTAS

It's alright. I just have a feeling it's going to be a long night here for JACK.

The two cops share a moment of discouraged silence, and the doors to the precinct open to show QUINN wearing warm winter clothes. BEN looks a little awkwardly up at QUINN, then gets up and approaches the front desk.

BEN
This is my ride.

OFFICER ANTAS
Ok then. Have a good rest of your
night, and stay out of trouble!

BEN
Sure thing, ma'am.

QUINN and BEN walk silently out to QUINN's car, and they get
in. There's a moment of silence as they sit there.

QUINN
You ok?

BEN
Yeah. I'm fine.

QUINN
Shit, what were you thinking?

BEN
I know. I'm sorry.

QUINN
What the fuck happened? All they
told me was that you seemed to
have been caught up in a party and
told me to come and pick you up.

BEN
I went to go, you know, face off
with JAYDEN but it turns out he
wasn't there. Hard drugs were
instead, and a bust was on the
verge, so I kinda got caught up in
everything.

QUINN
But you're underage. Didn't you at
least have a drink?

BEN
I was going to. Lucky for me I
didn't get the chance.

QUINN
Fuck, BEN. This is not how I
wanted to spend my Friday night.

BEN
I'm sorry. You were right.
(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)
I got... pretty fucked up with everything going on. I was a total dick.

QUINN
Too true. (Pauses) But I'm kinda glad this shit went down.

BEN
You know? Me too. It was a colossal fuck-up, but it might have been worth it.

QUINN
Seems like you've been needing a wake up call. Guess this was it.

QUINN starts the car and they pull out of the parking lot.

INT. BEN AND QUINN'S DORM - NIGHT

BEN and QUINN are back in their dorm after QUINN picks BEN up from jail. They remove their jackets and QUINN plops himself down in front of the TV, turning it on.

BEN
Hey, are we good?

QUINN
(in an exhausted tone)
Are we good? BEN, we've been through enough shit to make it through this. Yeah, I'm a little pissed, and I probably will be for awhile. But yeah, we're good.

BEN
Cool. Hey, we're still on for that workout thing after school, right?

QUINN
(chuckles)
Yeah, I think so.

BEN
Ok.

BEN walks over into his room, and gets out his suicide note, which continues to grow longer and longer.

INT. SCHOOL GYM - DAY

BEN is working out with QUINN, JERRY, ISAAC, and DERRICK. They are at the bench press station, and QUINN and BEN are both being spotted by the other three. They finish their reps.

QUINN
(wincing somewhat, getting up
from the bench seat)
I still don't know how the hell
you got me to do this.

BEN
(sitting up)
C'mon, it's fun.

QUINN
Bullshit. Not even you could
possibly enjoy this.

JERRY
Hey, I've been wondering, is there
something I'm missing with the
whole workout obsession thing?

BEN
I don't think obsession is the
right--

QUINN
It's the right word for it.

DERRICK
The perfect word.

DERRICK, JERRY, and QUINN are looking at BEN with exasperation.

ISAAC
(defensively)
Well, BEN, I think that it's cool.

JERRY
Hey, we're not saying it's a bad
thing. I just don't understand why
the hell it's such a big deal.

QUINN
Yeah, I mean, since last summer
you've talked about how you were
going to get ripped. (QUINN ribs
BEN) Well, you got your wish. I
still don't know why.

BEN

I don't really know either. I guess it's just, well, this year I wanted to do everything I had dreamed of doing. I party hard. I break my fair share of rules. I get girls. And I got a six-pack. It was a package deal, I guess.

DERRICK

Makes sense.

JERRY

I mean, I still don't really get it. But to each their own.

BEN

Well, I've made my defense. Not much more to say. You know, this rest period is way too long.

QUINN

It worked!

The group smiles.

JERRY

Well, boss, what's next? What new body part is going to be dead tomorrow.

DERRICK

Please don't answer that question.

BEN

(amused)

Uh, well, we could do skull crushers. They really work the long head of the...

BEN trails off as JAYDEN walks in the gym. He seems to be in a good mood, a smirk on his face as he strides up to BEN.

JAYDEN

Hey, BEN you son of a bitch!

BEN

It's YOU.

JAYDEN

Damn straight. What happened last night? You fell for my little plot.

BEN
That's what you call it?

JAYDEN
(loudly, announcing to the
anyone near)
This motherfucker went to the
wrong party and spent a long night
in jail. This loser believed my
bullshit. What charges did they
slap on you? Hopefully something
good.

QUINN
JAYDEN, back the fuck off.

JAYDEN
Oh, is the poor baby sad because I
took him off of his little high
horse?

BEN pauses, then launches into an abusive fury.

BEN
Oh, like I'm somehow the loser in
this situation? Coming from the
guy who had his ass handed to him
time and time again?

Staff faulty at the gym notice this increase in volume and head
towards BEN

BEN (CONT'D)
You can't handle losing again and
again to me, so you try and pull
some stunt to land me in jail!
(BEN pushes JAYDEN aggressively)
Well, hate to disappoint but I'm
not facing any charges! You lose
again!

MRS. WILLIAMS
Hey! Young man, you're--

BEN (CONT'D)
Give up! I'll just kick your ass
again! You're a piece of shit,
arrogant as fuck, and now you're
the one exposed as a fraud!

MRS. WILLIAMS
If you don't stop now you're going
to--

BEN (CONT'D)
(to the crowd)
This loser just keeps crawling
back for more. Give up!

MRS. WILLIAMS
Disciplinary visit it is. If one
more word comes out of your mouth
it'll be worse.

BEN's rage seems to subside as JAYDEN walks away with a shocked look.

QUINN
Shit, BEN.

BEN
I'm done with him.

MRS. WILLIAMS
That being said, you're coming
with me.

BEN is escorted out of the gym by MRS. WILLIAMS. As he leaves the building, he looks back with regret over his shoulder.

INT. DISCIPLINARY OFFICE - DAY

BEN is sitting outside the same office from when he got into a quick tussle with JAYDEN, this time alone. The door opens and MRS. WILLIAMS leaves the room.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
(from inside the office)
Ok, MR. WILLARD, come on in.

BEN gets up and walks into the room of a typical school administration office. Portraits line the desk of what is presumably MRS. JOHANESSEN's family, and various certificates are placed on the walls.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
So, it seems you've had quite an
intense past 24 hours.

BEN
Yeah, I guess so.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
First a brief trip to the local
precinct, and now this. Is there
anything I need to know about?

BEN

Uh... no, I don't think so. Wait, how did you know about the whole, you know, uh, jail thing?

MRS. JOHANESSEN

(amused)

It shouldn't surprise you that when any of our students take a trip there we are notified, even if there are minor charges. I was contacted with a brief explanation of what seems to have transpired last night.

BEN

Oh. Ok. So you know I was innocent?

MRS. JOHANESSEN

Innocent? You still showed up at the party. BEN, nobody really wants to press charges and you don't really need to defend yourself, so you can cut the bullshit. I'm not some wide-eyed, naive person. I know very well what you guys get up to here, and honestly if I tried to stop it all, my efforts would be futile anyway. I'm not going to punish you if I find out you do what most other students here get up to. So what's going on?

BEN

Ok. So there's some guy whose been on my nerves for awhile. We kinda developed a rivalry this year. Anyway, he, well, he--

MRS. JOHANESSEN

Yes?

BEN

He said he wanted to have a drinking contest.

BEN pauses, as though waiting for MRS. JOHANESSEN's reaction.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

As I hope you can see, I am remarkably un-fazed. Confused, maybe, but nonetheless. Continue.

BEN

Well, he told me to go to this one location to meet up, but didn't show up. When I got there, and realized he wasn't there, well, I was on my way out when a bunch of cops showed up and all that shit went down.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

Ok. Well, then, that explains the outburst today I was just briefed on. I assume it was him?

BEN nods.

MRS. JOHANESSEN (CONT'D)

Ok, so I pulled up your file and got a bit of a review. And, if I was reading it correctly, there was an incident with you getting in a tussle earlier this year with another freshman. We had to have a quick chat to determine what to do with you both. Same guy?

BEN

Yep.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

I'll be frank with you, BEN, I have other matters I'd like to attend to. I didn't take this job so I could have little sit-down chats with teenage boys who have problems with authority or insecurity or whatever else. While necessary for making a threat, I can't say I especially appreciate MRS. WILLIAMS bringing you to me. Your time is valuable to you, so I don't want to waste yours, either. If there is something serious going on I need to know about then just tell me; I won't be coaxing it out of you. If not I trust you'll be able to handle your own problems.

BEN

Ok. Yeah, that's really it.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

Alright then. You're excused.

BEN
Ok, thanks!

BEN gets up and is about to leave when MRS. JOHANESSEN makes another comment.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
Oh, and BEN, I may not be a counselor, but we do have these here if you want help. Their job IS to help you manage your problems. However, if you want one piece of advice from me, it would be to know what you're aiming for. These parties and rivalries don't seem to be such a great target. And if you live life not knowing what you're aiming for, you're screwed.

BEN
(contemplatively)
Oh. Ok. Thanks for the advice.

BEN makes as though to leave, and then leans back in for one last question.

BEN (CONT'D)
If you don't mind, what thing are you, you know, aiming for?

MRS. JOHANESSEN
(smiling)
A someone rather than a something. But like I said, maybe this is a better conversation to have with a counselor.

BEN
Huh.

BEN nods and makes his exit from the office.

LONELY MONTAGE

There are scenes of bleak surroundings as BEN gives up partying and working out, staying in his room not doing anything or working on his suicide note. BEN rejects offers to party or to hang out with his friends. QUINN checks in on BEN, who is just lying in bed, not doing anything.

INT. BEN AND QUINN'S DORM - DAY

BEN is lying in his bed with the door open, QUINN peers in, and thinks that BEN is asleep. However, as soon as he leaves, BEN opens his eyes, remaining still. Outside QUINN calls JERRY.

QUINN (O.S.)

Hey, JERRY. (brief pause) Yeah, I'm doing good. BEN's really off though. Something has him fucked up. (brief pause) Yeah, it's honestly a little creepy. After he dropped partying I wasn't too disappointed, but then he quit going to the gym and everything else he got up to. All he does is go to classes and head back here. Even then he misses most of them. Hardly eats either. I was wondering if you could come over and hang out for a bit. It might cheer him up. (brief pause) Yeah, tomorrow at three would work. Bring ISAAC and DERRICK. And remember, don't mentioned what happened with JAYDEN. He seems, well, fragile enough as it is. (brief pause) Ok, well, see you then.

QUINN hangs up, and BEN gets up and out of bed.

QUINN

(surprised and nervous)
Oh! Hey BEN. Didn't realize you were awake.

BEN

Firstly, I'm not fragile. Second, what happened with JAYDEN?

QUINN

Uh, you're right, you aren't. Fragile was the wrong word. Well, tonight I was thinking we could-

BEN

What the fuck happened with JAYDEN?

QUINN sighs.

QUINN
Ok, well, I guess you'll probably
find out anyway. A few weeks ago
JAYDEN attempted suicide.

BEN
Oh shit.

QUINN
He's okay now though, I think.
I've seen him back in class and
stuff.

BEN
A few weeks ago? As in after I
cussed him out and told him to
give up?

QUINN
Damn, BEN. Don't blame yourself
for this.

BEN
Who said I was blaming myself?

QUINN takes an awkward pause.

BEN (CONT'D)
Shit. Killed himself.

QUINN
Tried to. He's fine now, like I
said.

BEN
It all comes down to the same
thing. Fuck. You know, there's
someone I need to talk to.

QUINN
Hey, BEN, I don't know if talking
to JAYDEN is a great-

BEN
I wasn't talking about JAYDEN.

BEN grabs his jacket and shoes, then sits down and pulls out
his phone.

QUINN
Who are you going to talk to,
then?

BEN looks up at him.

EXT. CHAPEL BUILDING - DAY

ADAM is waiting outside by a chapel building when BEN strolls up to meet him. There is a gloomy scene, with a cloudy sky, contrasting with ADAM's upbeat mood.

BEN

ADAM, I know you're not the religious type, so why the hell did you want to meet me HERE?

ADAM

This is where I earned my nickname, CRU File. I've got a story to tell.

BEN

Wait, hold up, this isn't what I came here to do.

ADAM

I know. But we need to have a little chat.

BEN

I already know what you did here.

ADAM

(surprised)

Oh? Someone tell you about me spiking the punch?

BEN

Yeah.

ADAM

Tell you what I did to EVERETT?

BEN

No, who the hell is EVERETT?

ADAM

Some dipshit. My freshman dorm-mate. He always got on my nerves, bragging about his golden boy lifestyle and trying to drag me to church. Fine at first, then it started to get on my nerves. He's the one who invited me to the party here.

BEN

Why the fuck does that matter?

ADAM

I was pissed. He had just told me about the perfect girl, some high-school sweetheart he intended to marry. He wouldn't stop talking, and I couldn't... I didn't like that very much. Well, I showed up to the party, and you know the rest.

BEN

I do.

ADAM

Well, except you don't. One of the girls I ran off with? Well, you can guess who.

BEN

Guess who? Oh, shit. You're demented. The girlfriend?

ADAM

Oh, that's not all. I made sure to double dose EVERETT's cup. It takes the effect to the next level, especially for guys. He woke up in a prison cell, doomed to at least a few years in jail to pay for his crimes.

BEN

What the hell happened?

ADAM

C'mon, you can guess. Those pills? Next level?

BEN

Fuck.

ADAM

(grinning)
Exactly.

BEN

(disturbed)
We're... we're done here.

BEN determinedly turns and walks away from ADAM.

ADAM
(calling out to BEN)
Oh, BEN, wasn't there a reason you
came out to visit me here?

BEN pauses, and turns back.

BEN
(hesitantly)
Yeah. What happened with the whole
drinking competition situation?
Where were you?

ADAM smiles.

ADAM
Again, can't you guess?

BEN
I want to know.

ADAM
Fine. JAYDEN offered me a hundred
bucks to plant dope on you as you
walked in. I did my best. I wasn't
able to pull that off, but either
way, I convinced you to go to the
party, so in a way I did have
success. Once I knew you had
entered the building, I tipped off
the cops that there was some
seriously illegal shit in that
house, which of course there was.
Meanwhile, JAYDEN called in a
complaint about a loud party in
case the cops ignored me.

BEN
Fuck you.

ADAM
Oh, BEN, don't be so pissed. I got
JAYDEN back. After your little
outburst in the gym--

BEN
How did you know about that?

ADAM
Never mind.
(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

After the outburst I told JAYDEN he was a piece of shit human being, that he didn't deserve to waste anymore oxygen, and that he should just do us all a favor and jump off a tall building. Said he should spare us all and off himself.

BEN

Fuck! ADAM, you're... you're...

ADAM

(smiling)

Oh, he didn't jump off a bridge though. I believe it was a mix of potent pills.

BEN

I'm calling the cops.

ADAM

Tell them what? They won't believe you, and you have no proof. What would they even charge me with?

BEN

Fine. I'll get EVERETT out of jail. And I'll tell them about your fucking pills.

ADAM

(smiling)

Oh, you have no evidence. And if you try I'll be sure to get you back later. Don't fuck with me BEN, you should know now you'll just regret it. Thought you could become my protege, carry my legacy. I'm not the first. But you don't seem to have the balls.

BEN

Leave me alone.

BEN walks away quickly, disturbed.

ADAM

(standing still by the chapel)

Hey! BEN! Wait up! Don't you want to hear more stories? I have them.

(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)
You'd be surprised what I can get
up to in three years.

INT. DISCIPLINARY OFFICE - DAY

BEN bursts into the room where he once waited with ADAM, having gone straight there from talking outside the church with ADAM. He barges into MRS. JOHANESSEN's office.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
(sarcastically)
Please, come in.

BEN
I need to tell you about
something.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
What's going on?

BEN
I didn't know who to tell, so I
came here. There's a guy here,
ADAM. He convinced a someone to
attempt suicide. He framed someone
else for rape. Well, not framed
exactly. Somehow worse. But
there's more too.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
Holy hell. That's a serious
accusation. You're sure?

BEN
He just bragged to me about it.
Yeah, I'm sure.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
Who is it?

BEN.
ADAM. ADAM ANTAS.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
Oh shit.

BEN.
What?

MRS. JOHANESSEN
ADAM ANTAS's dad all but owns this
place.

(MORE)

MRS. JOHANESSEN (CONT'D)
He's the director of the school board, and probably has more power than the president. ADAM's great-grandparents were directly related to the founder of this institution and he's a major donor now. Damn, BEN, I hope you have enough proof. If I bring up those sorts of charges without conclusive evidence I'm going to be fired. Hell, we had nearly conclusive video evidence and eyewitnesses saying he was guilty with the Dean's car prank. But somehow his dad got him out of that one too.

BEN looks appalled.

MRS. JOHANESSEN (CONT'D)
But this is different. Please tell me you have some sort of proof.

BEN
No. He just told me it all.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
Damn. But you're sure?

BEN
I know it.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
Well, I'll look into it. But without proof it's a lost cause. Do you have any leads? Anything that could link him to his... crimes?

BEN
(desperately)
No. Wait. There was an incident back a few years where someone spiked the punch at a CRU church party or something.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
How do you - oh.

BEN
Yeah. It was ADAM. Knowing it's him maybe it can help narrow down the case.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

No one has touched that file in years, BEN. (pauses) To be honest there's a good chance ADAM will get away with everything, and if it's just that it won't be taken too seriously. I don't see how I can catch him at it. But hell, you said he convinced someone to commit suicide?

BEN

Kind of, he told him to kill himself. Survived though. This guy named JAYDEN.

MRS. JOHANESSEN looks surprised opens a file on her computer and searches something, pulling up a file on her computer.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

Your JAYDEN, I'm guessing. That's the kid who reported on ADAM with the car prank earlier this year.

BEN

Shit. That probably explains it.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

Listen, I need you not to tell another soul what you know. If ADAM finds out you're up to something I'm worried he can do real damage without any concern for consequences.

BEN

You're saying give up?

MRS. JOHANESSEN

I'm saying there's no point in you throwing your life down the drain. Which is what you'll be doing if you try and spread the word about ADAM. I told you, his parents are loaded and, to be honest, complete assholes. ADAM's dad doesn't get along with the Dean well, but he can afford to because of the funding they provide for the school. They're used to being able to push people around.

BEN

Damn. So ADAM gets away with it?

MRS. JOHANESSEN

I mean, like I said, I can do some under-the-radar looking into it. But I doubt it will go anywhere.

BEN

Fuck.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

I know it sucks, but you have to realize this is no new phenomenon. There are people, who until the day they die, will get away with all of their misdeeds. Some people, and I would count ADAM and his father in this group, only look out for themselves. And they aren't always held accountable. It doesn't help that ADAM's got a charismatic flow that convinces everyone he's just an innocent prankster.

BEN

And that's supposed to make me feel better?

MRS. JOHANESSEN

It means it's not your job to stop ADAM. In theory, it's mine. And even I can't.

BEN

But MRS. JOHANESSEN, he's drugging girls and sleeping with them. That's seriously twisted, not to mention illegal, and he isn't going to stop.

MRS. JOHANESSEN

(sighs)

You act so surprised. I wish it was as uncommon as you seem to think it is. College guys have this mentality that girls are only good for sleeping with. And guys like ADAM, they take that to the next level. They don't even care about consent, much less recognizing them as anything more than a sex object.

BEN

Well... what do I do, then?

MRS. JOHANESSEN
About ADAM? Nothing. For
everyone's sake. I know it's hard,
but it will be worse if you sound
the alarm.

BEN
I can't forget it. I won't be able
to forget about it.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
And I'm sorry you can't. Sometimes
the only way to get past it is to
find something else to take your
mind off it. Do something else.

BEN
Damn. Okay. Well, I'll try.

MRS. JOHANESSEN
It's noble that you're so
determined to see justice here.
But I'm afraid it's a lost cause.

BEN leaves the office deeply discouraged, and slams the door
angrily on his way out.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY - MOVING

BEN is visibly disturbed after his interaction with MRS. JOHANESSEN. He walks over to his dorm building, but after a pause, he continues to walk as cloudy weather continues. He continues to walk even after leaving campus, processing everything that he just experienced. His surroundings become a blur, as internally the tempo of his thoughts spiral out of control. He enters almost a panicked state, until he snaps out of it in front of a large cathedral. He stands outside the building, appreciating its imposing figure and pondering if he should enter. He seems to shake out of it and continues walking.

INT. BEN AND QUINN'S DORM - DAY

BEN is sitting in his room, writing a now novel-length suicide note. QUINN is in the living area, sitting on the couch and scrolling through social media on his phone.

QUINN
Hey, Ben.

BEN (O.S.)
Yeah?

QUINN

What do you think about hitting the gym? We haven't done it in awhile.

BEN

(amused, as he gets up from writing, putting the note in a desk drawer)

I never thought in a million years that you would be the one trying to drag me to go working out.

QUINN

Hey, I'm not tryin' to drag you anywhere. But it's weird that you just quit. And I don't just mean that about working out. What's going on, man?

BEN

I... I don't know. I guess it was fun partying, but that one thing kinda freaked me out. I saw some seriously fucked up shit upstairs where I was arrested. I mean, damn, I don't want to end up like that.

QUINN

Don't blame you.

BEN

I know I had this whole plan to live out everything I thought I wanted, but to be honest it was in a weird way the same as being super uptight. Still felt like I was missing something. I know I achieved what I set out to, but I'm ready to throw in the towel. I already gave up partying like hell and trying to perfect my physique.

QUINN

Well, you tried. On to the next strategy. (seeks BEN's hopeless mood) Dude, you're only eighteen. You've got time to figure this shit out.

BEN

Totally, yeah.
(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)
I guess I'll just try the next
thing, and if that doesn't work,
then the thing after that.

QUINN
There you go.

BEN
Back to square one, I guess.

QUINN
Nah, don't say that. You've
learned a lot so far.

BEN
I guess.

BEN heads back into his room, and pulls out the note again.
QUINN walks in to follow up, and sees the note.

QUINN
Shit. What's that? A novel?

BEN
Oh, uh, no, I've been gone awhile
for my intro to lit class, and
professor said I could make it up
if I did this crazy long
assignment. Some life story shit.
But I'm almost done, I think.

INT. BEN'S DORM BEDROOM - NIGHT

BEN is sleeplessly lying on his back, looking up at the ceiling, pondering everything that happened with ADAM and MRS. JOHANESSEN. He gets up, not groggy at all, and walks over to QUINN's bedroom. He makes as though to knock on the door, but then stops and sighs. He turns back and goes back into his bed.

INT. BEN'S DORM BEDROOM - DAY

QUINN enters the room after finishing classes in the afternoon, and checks in on BEN to see he's still in bed, presumably having been there for the entirety of the day, on his phone scrolling through social media.

QUINN
Hey.

BEN
(not looking up from his
phone)
Hey.

QUINN
You been in that same spot all
day?

BEN
Yeah, guess so.

QUINN
I mean, you're paying for tuition
here, you might as well go to
class.

BEN
(looking up)
Damn, that was out of nowhere.

QUINN
Sorry, that came out a little
aggressively. Point is, you're
freaking me out. You don't do
anything anymore. I'm getting
worried.

BEN
Dude, I get it, but I've just been
super tired recently. Not much to
it.

QUINN
I don't know. I'm at the point
where I might bring it up to
someone else, someone who might be
able to help.

BEN
(startled)
Holy hell, QUINN, it's not like
I'm gonna kill myself.

QUINN
Bro, nobody said that. And still.

BEN
Tell you what, if I go to class
today, will you quit with the
worrying?

QUINN
Fine. For now.
(MORE)

QUINN (CONT'D)
Go to your last class of the day
and I'll stop bugging you about
it.

BEN
Deal.

BEN rolls out of bed, sweatpants and sweatshirt on, puts a
baseball cap on his head, grabs his backpack and starts putting
on his shoes.

QUINN
Wow, that was almost impressive.

BEN
Thank you.

BEN walks out of his dorm door on his way to class.

INT. SPANISH I CLASSROOM - DAY

BEN walks into his Spanish classroom and groggily sets his
backpack down at a desk.

SPANISH PROF
Ok class, as we all know by now,
the best means of understanding
Spanish is to let it happen
organically. We've begun
progressing into a wider verb
vocabulary, as well as irregular
conjugations, so to begin the
class I need you to find a partner
and conduct a casual conversation,
but replace all verbs and nouns
you can with its Spanish
counterpart. We will reconvene as
a class once there's a lull, at
which time we'll resume the
lecture on Mayan civilization.

BEN rolls his eyes and looks at ARIA.

BEN
Welp. Time to pretend I know some
Spanish for two minutes, I guess.

ARIA
(sarcastically)
That's an optimistic way of
putting it.

BEN

Hey, I'm just being realistic.
We're about to watch a
presentation entirely in English
about the Mayan civilization so
that we have "a better
understanding of the language". I
officially regret showing up
today.

ARIA

Yeah, looks like you really spent
a lot of time getting ready for
the day. What a sacrifice.

BEN

Wow, ARIA, today you've only
spoken in sarcasm. You should try
and keep the streak going.

ARIA

Well today's the first day in
about a month you've showed up to
the class. I feel like that's the
most remarkable thing about this
conversation.

BEN

(pretending to be flattered)
Oh my, you've noticed my absence.
I knew you were head over heels in
love with me.

ARIA

(joining in with a dramatic
tone)
Oh no, I've exposed myself, how
could I have let it slip so
easily.

BEN

Don't worry, I'm used to it. It
always comes down to this one time
or another.

ARIA

(Chuckles wryly)
Yeah, I'm sure you could list all
your female friends at this place
on one hand.

BEN

Wrong, I wouldn't even need one.

ARIA

Oh, you're even worse than I thought. Have you become even more of an asshole during hibernation? I would have hoped it'd be a healing retreat or something. You talked about ayahwasca once, right?

BEN

Ok, that was my bad. And fine, I'll count you as one friend. There you go. One finger. (BEN flips her off)

ARIA

Mature. But seriously, you see it that way?

BEN

I mean, when a straight guy gets to know a straight girl there's inherently the question of whether it's romantic or not. The closer they get, the more odds shrink that it's purely friendship. By the end of it you're either the villain or the victim. Either a guy won't be able to commit because he's gonna be attracted to other girls, or she just wants attention.

ARIA

Firstly, that speech was as corny as the rich kid asshole existence you exhibit. Secondly, that's pessimistic, even for me. So you think a guy and girl can get never get close to one another without it turning into something more?

BEN

Maybe there are exceptions, and they prove the rule. None of my close friends are girls because it just makes things complicated. Sure, if they're fifty years old that's something else. But otherwise, it's either a date or nothing at all.

ARIA

Damn.

(MORE)

ARIA (CONT'D)
So you're saying that friendship
with the opposite sex only leads
to pain and suffering?

BEN
Deep friendship. That's the only
qualifier.

ARIA
You really think that everyone's
intentions are that messed up?

BEN
(in an airy tone)
Listen, I was once young and naive
like you were--

ARIA
You're a year younger than me.

BEN
Shhhh. The point is, I've tried
what you're talking about. I gave
up on your idea BECAUSE I've tried
it. So going to college I didn't
make the same mistakes.

ARIA
Oh, poor you, did you get your
heartbroken?

BEN
(chuckles)
When you put it like that...

ARIA
(rolling her eyes)
Good grief.

BEN
(amused)
Hey. Don't make fun of my pain.

ARIA
Honestly I'm surprised. I mean
yeah, I know you've objectified
women since the start of this
class...

BEN
Hey.

ARIA (CONT'D)

But I'm surprised at how cynical
you are. You seemed more like a
fun-loving frat boy than a
wrinkled, sexist, bitter
philosopher.

BEN

That's actually my rapper name.

ARIA

Oh yeah?

BEN

You should check out my SoundCloud
sometime.

ARIA

Wow, great way to segway out of
the conversation.

BEN

I felt like it was leading our
friendship to an unhealthy depth.

ARIA

Uh oh. I knew you'd fall for me
soon.

BEN

How the turn tables...

ARIA

I think we should stop talking.

BEN

Good idea.

SPANISH PROF

I sense a lull. Now, I believe it
is time to resume our lecture on
Mayan culture, particularly the
significance of child sacrifice in
ancient cultures...

BEN and ARIA share an amused glance as the lecture continues.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - NIGHT

DERRICK, ISAAC, JERRY, QUINN, and BEN are walking back after
seeing a movie in theaters.

ISAAC

So this is how people spend their time when they don't get wasted on Friday nights? Go to the movie theater?

DERRICK

Well there is also homework, enjoying hobbies, board games-

ISAAC

I'm gonna stop you right there with the board games. Normal people don't play board games. Fucked up people play board games.

QUINN

Why the hostility man? Even I'm fine with some occasionally.

ISAAC

You're saying you're not fucked up?

QUINN

(amused)

Yeah, you got me there.

BEN

He really does.

ISAAC

Damn, BEN, I mean without partying you must have a whole hell of a lot of free time on your hands.

BEN

I guess, yeah. Oh, hey, speaking of free time spring break's coming up and I was thinking about going on a solo camping trip.

JERRY

Yeah, that IS coming up, isn't it?

BEN

Yep. I was looking forward to some time outside in the woods, even though I really have no idea what I'm doing.

ISAAC

Oh, I can help you out. I used to go camping all the time.

BEN

Perfect. The idea of going out by myself is kinda scary as hell, but it could also be super fun. I really have no idea what to expect as far as safety precautions and stuff.

ISAAC

Oh, you should be fine. I haven't had any problems there.

BEN

Ok. Well, even so, I was just thinking it might be good to make sure I can protect myself from predators. You know, in case a bear or a wolf gets hungry or, uh, something.

DERRICK

That doesn't seem like a very likely scenario.

BEN

Maybe, but I was wondering if any of you have some sort of easy-to-operate weapon I could use for self defense or something.

DERRICK

(surprised)

I have a pocket knife you could use, although I doubt it would do you much good. Bear spray is probably-

BEN

(cutting DERRICK off)

Well, that would be fine, but I was talking something more... intense.

QUINN

Like what?

BEN

Well, I meant more like a gun or something.

The group has a surprised reaction, with the exception of ISAAC.

ISAAC

You're in luck. I inherited a super dope old pistol from my grandpa. Old fashioned revolver. Still works though, I think.

QUINN

(to BEN)

Hold up. You sure? That shit's heavy duty.

BEN

I don't plan on using it or anything. And ISAAC, that pistol sounds perfect. I don't want a super loaded rifle or anything.

ISAAC

Ok. You know how to shoot a gun?

BEN

Oh, no, I haven't ever shot one.

ISAAC

Well, you're target's got to be pretty close then if you want a hope at hitting anything. But yeah, I don't think you'll need to use it. Should be fine.

BEN

Sounds good then.

JERRY

Damn. You sure want to pack heat? Honestly it might be more dangerous to do that than to just leave it alone.

BEN

Nah. Mostly I'm just looking for peace of mind.

ISAAC

Whatever you say. I've got it in my dorm. Let me know before you leave, and I'll pass it off to you.

JERRY

There's a gun in our dorm, ISAAC? Holy shit.

ISAAC
What? I've never used it or anything.

DERRICK
Objectively speaking that seems to be a very bad idea.

ISAAC
Whatever. I've been fine so far.

JERRY
ISAAC, you really need to tell us about that kind of shit.

ISAAC
(defensively)
Sorry, DAD. Want to know where I keep the weed, too?

JERRY
You've got weed our dorm?

ISAAC
Damn. I thought I told you.
Besides, it's not much. You can't even smell it.

DERRICK sighs and puts his face in his hand, stopping.

JERRY
ISAAC, get rid of that shit. Smoke it or something. If we get busted with that, we're fucked. How long has it been there?

ISAAC
It doesn't matter. I'll make it disappear tomorrow.

DERRICK
Thank you for the heads up.

QUINN
Ok, we should probably head to our dorm. See you guys later.

JERRY
Bye!

DERRICK and ISAAC wave, as BEN and QUINN walk toward their dorm.

INT. BEN'S DORM BEDROOM - NIGHT

BEN and QUINN are watching a movie in their dorm, as BEN is texting ARIA on his phone, her contact being ARIA with a thumbs down emoji.

QUINN
Dude, you're missing the climax.

BEN
(detached)
That's what she said.

QUINN
Damn. (Looks over to BEN's phone)
Dude, why are you texting SANDRA's
roommate? And why is there a
thumbs down emoji next to her
name?

BEN
Huh?

QUINN
ARIA, right? Wasn't that her?

BEN
Yeah, guess they were roommates.

QUINN
Huh. Well that can't go badly.

BEN
I don't even know what you're
talking about.

BEN smirks as the movie continues.

INT. JERRY AND ISAAC'S DORM - DAY

BEN and QUINN are playing video games with ISAAC and JERRY in their dorm. They are sitting on a couch, all holding Xbox controllers. A couple weeks have passed, it is now near spring break.

QUINN
Damn! You guys win again!

JERRY
I warned you not to challenge us
to try and play group FPS games.

BEN

That's essentially asking us to play group PFS games. Besides, you guys have way more experience here. You totally have the upper hand.

ISAAC

Hey, no one said this was a fair fight. You guys were screwed from the beginning.

QUINN

Too true. Hey, what are you guys doing for spring break? It's right around the corner.

JERRY

Oh, me, ISAAC, and DERRICK are taking a trip to Miami. It's a bachelor's trip, since none of use have landed a babe yet. It's gonna be dope.

BEN

Speaking of which, where's DERRICK now? I thought you guys shared a dorm or something.

ISAAC

Nah, he agreed to get his own dorm. His grandparents are loaded, so it wasn't a problem for him.

QUINN

DERRICK's a funny character.

JERRY

Well that guy's been through some crazy shit. His parents pretty much abandoned him and left him with his grandparents when he was like ten. Really fucked him up.

BEN

Shit.

ISAAC

Yeah. I can't believe you guys haven't heard about it until now.

QUINN

We never really asked about it. Wish I did sooner.

BEN

Me too. Hey, ISAAC, you still have that old revolver?

ISAAC

Oh, shit. I totally forgot about it. But of course, it's in the drawer next to my bed.

JERRY

Why did you even bring that here?

ISAAC

(while getting up and going to his bedroom)

I don't know. Safety, maybe? Just thought it might be a good idea.

JERRY

Or maybe a really bad idea.

ISAAC

Whatever. It came in handy, now, didn't it?

ISAAC walks out of the bedroom, and hands the gun over to BEN, who takes it in his hands. The revolver is old fashioned, as though something out of a western.

BEN

Cool.

QUINN

You sure you want to be carrying it around?

JERRY

Packing heat is serious. Especially without a permit. Not to mention you could be kicked out of this place.

BEN

I know. I'll just take it to my dorm and then bring it on the trip.

BEN takes the gun, and tries to figure out where to put it. He motions around trying to find a good spot when he settles on just holding it.

BEN (CONT'D)

This this has a safety mode, right?

ISAAC

Think so. Not sure. Probably don't want that point that your junk though.

BEN nods and looks uneasily at the gun.

QUINN

So, BEN, I know you've been planning to do this alone, but I was wondering if you wanted any company. I still don't have any other plans.

BEN

Thanks, but I think I will go it alone. I need to work on some shit.

JERRY

You good?

BEN

Yeah.

ISAAC

To be honest we've noticed you seem to kinda have been through a dark patch. (Looks hesitant) Sure you can handle bringing a gun?

BEN

Man, don't worry. It's nothing like that.

ISAAC

Ok. Well, I don't want to sound like some pussy who's super sensitive and shit but I hope you get feeling better.

JERRY

And I feel the same.

QUINN

(smiling)

You know, I been meaning to talk to you, ISAAC, about toxic masculinity.

ISAAC

(in a mix of humor and honest annoyance)

Hey, fuck off.

QUINN laughs.

BEN

Well, either way, I appreciate it. Maybe later we can have a chat or something.

JERRY

Sure. Well, anyway, I've got to head out. You know, BEN, I'm starting to understand why you got into working out so hard. I swear I'm gonna have abs in like a week.

BEN

(smiling)

Good luck with that. Well, me and QUINN should probably head back.

ISAAC

Alright. You bring that back in one piece, BEN. Also bring back you in one piece.

BEN

Sure thing.

JERRY

Good luck not blowing off your junk!

BEN

How moving. See ya.

BEN and QUINN leave the dorm. As they walk, BEN starts to slow his pace.

BEN

Hey, I'll meet you at our room in a bit, ok?

QUINN

Yeah, you goin' somewhere?

BEN

Nowhere special, just gonna hangout with a friend before we part ways during the break.

QUINN

Gotcha, who is it?

BEN

Uh... just someone I know from class, don't think you'd know them.

QUINN

Whatever you say man, I'll see you later then.

BEN

Later!

They continue walking, having gone separate ways.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL

BEN and ARIA sit on a bench overlooking a sunset at the end of a short trail. The sun is just about to touch the horizon.

BEN

Yeah no way. I would never.

ARIA

(amused)

Why not?

BEN

I don't know. The Bachelor... it's a show to laugh at, you know?

ARIA

Right right, cheesy as hell and everything, but you don't think it'd be fun?

BEN

The last thing I need is televised evidence of my dating life.

ARIA

Yeah it'd probably run way longer than anyone'd care to watch, huh?

BEN

(A little taken aback)

Hey.

ARIA

(wincing)

Sorry. Just meant it as a joke.

BEN

Yeah, you're good.

There's a bit of an awkward pause.

ARIA
I'm proud of you, though.

BEN
(laughs)
Huh?

ARIA
Well in like the month since you
reappeared in Spanish class you've
become much less of a douchebag.

BEN
(smiling)
Wow, my esteem is just really
getting a big ol' boost from this
conversation.

ARIA
Hey, you're welcome. Just glad to
know I could prove you wrong.

BEN
Ok what's that about? You mean the
Bachelor?

ARIA
(laughs)
No, earlier this year. You were
saying you could only be friends
with dudes. Congrats.

BEN
(rolls eyes)
Yeah. Right. I definitely don't
look back on anything I said in
that class is cliché, cheesy, or
just annoying as fuck.

ARIA
(shrugs)
What can I say? Growth.

There's a lull in conversation.

BEN
I don't know, though.

ARIA
What do you mean?

BEN

I act nicer, I think. But at the end of the day, I might have the same problem.

ARIA

And what's that?

BEN

You don't feel weird at all? Like no question, all this is, just friendship.

ARIA

I mean, right now, yeah.

BEN

But what about in one year, after we keep talking like this and hanging out and all that? That's still all it's gonna be?

ARIA

Honestly, I don't know. I never thought I'd spare a second thinking about you outside of class, and here we are. But do you honestly know what you want?

BEN

I... I do. I really like being around you.

ARIA

And you having been talking to, DMing other girls or anything?

BEN

Hold on, we aren't even dating. Totally unfair standard.

ARIA

Case in point. This is a good option. It's not what you want.

BEN pauses, unsure how to respond.

BEN

Listen. I'm sorry. It's just that-

ARIA

(not in aggressive tone)
Just cut the bullshit, BEN. I get it.

(MORE)

ARIA (CONT'D)

You aren't choosing between this or nothing, it's between waiting for this to come through or just getting something else you want. I get that it's not worth the risk to you. You need something now, and I just don't want to be that for you.

BEN

That's not fair.

ARIA

True though?

BEN

No, I... I'm sorry ok. Sorry I brought it up.

ARIA

Hey, I played an equal role in that. I'll take the blame as necessary.

BEN

(smiling)

Appreciate it.

The sunset has now just settled below the horizon.

BEN (CONT'D)

What's next then?

ARIA

Dunno. Maybe time to figure it out. Come back later and re-asses?

BEN

Right. More time.

ARIA

(smiling)

Hey, if you can wait the whole break I'll give you credit for it. Even if you are on some solo camping trip.

BEN

(smiles back with a weary expression)

Sounds like a plan.

ARIA
Well, not much left here to see,
time to head back?

BEN
Sure.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS

BEN and QUINN walk up to JERRY, DERRICK, and ISAAC later that day. Around them is the hustle and bustle of college students preparing to head out for spring break. DERRICK is loading his car, a black BMW, with a few bags, putting them in the trunk.

QUINN
Damn, DERRICK, nice whip.

DERRICK
Thank you.

JERRY
Looking forward to a trip in it.

ISAAC
(wearing a large cowboy hat
and throwing a backpack in
the backseat)
Road trip time!

QUINN
Totally. Well, you guys have fun.
I'm going to have my fair share of
fun too, you know.

JERRY
Yeah? What are you up to?

QUINN
I'm planning on heading out to the
west coast. Got a cousin there.
Should be fun.

ISAAC
Nice. Guess we're all heading to
the beach. Except for you, BEN.
Good luck on your camping trip.

BEN
Thanks. Maybe not as exciting, but
I'm looking forward to some peace
and quiet.

JERRY
(under his breath)
Heads up. There's JAYDEN.

JAYDEN is putting bags into his car next to SANDRA, and the two of them are talking. Around him seem to be a couple of new friends. BEN looks a little troubled, then walks over determinedly over to JAYDEN.

QUINN
BEN! That's not-

BEN
(turning back)
I need to do this.

BEN reaches JAYDEN, and they share a brief, cold look.

BEN
JAYDEN, I just need you to know
I'm so sorry about all that shit I
pulled this year. It was fucked
up.

JAYDEN nods.

JAYDEN
Me too.

BEN nods, and walks back over to his friend group, who are surprised and visibly relieved. DERRICK nods to BEN, who smiles.

JERRY
Someone please translate. I don't
speak fluent nodding your head.

QUINN
I think it's code for "we're good
here." Right?

BEN
Pretty much.

As they're talking, ARIA passes by, and waves from a distance. BEN waves back.

QUINN
You two still talking?

BEN
I think? Not sure.

ISSAC
Huh?

BEN
Never mind.

DERRICK
JERRY, ISAAC, we need to leave soon.

JERRY
Gotcha. Ok, well, bye!

BEN
See you.

QUINN
Yeah, later, guys!

ISAAC, JERRY, and DERRICK get into the car and pull out of their parking spot. As this happens ADAM is visible talking with a group of girls in a different parking lot, dramatically telling some sort of story.

QUINN
(looking over at ADAM)
Hey, whatever happened with you and ADAM?

BEN
Oh, fuck, I thought I told you. Found out he's a total douchebag. He's done a shit ton of horrible things I didn't know about so I told him never to contact me again.

QUINN
Oh, damn. That sounds intense.

BEN
Yeah, it kinda was. But I've moved past that.

QUINN
That's good.

They both look around at the departing college students preparing for spring break, a somewhat awkward pause.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Well, guess this is goodbye.

BEN
Yep.

They share a hug.

QUINN
See you after spring break, man.

BEN
Yeah.

QUINN
(giving BEN an intense look,
putting his hand on BEN's
shoulder)
You going to be okay? You seem
kinda off today.

BEN
I'll be fine. Don't worry.

QUINN
If you say so. I'm gonna go pack
up.

BEN
Ok. My shit's already in the car.

QUINN
Sounds good. See you!

BEN
(walking toward his Honda
Accord)
Bye!

EXT. CAMPING GROUNDS - DAY

BEN drives the Accord that still has the pink spray paint for a few hours until he reaches a sparsely inhabited camping site. There isn't anyone else there who is camped out there or any park rangers visible, though there is a cabin on one side of the campgrounds. There is a lake that can be seen from the main entrance, though not right next to the entrance or cabin. He parks by a site and gets out, looking at the tent, but opts instead to take out the note and revolver. He sits on a log by the fire pit, writing on the back of a textbook. BEN is continuing to write and reaches a point to which he stops. He looks back at his note, then signs it. He checks his watch, revealing that it is late afternoon. BEN has the gun out, fiddling with the old fashioned revolver, sitting on the same log by the fire. He accidentally messes with the gun to expose the chamber, and he can see there is only one bullet left, which he takes note of. He sets the gun down on the ground, below the log, thinking. A few moments pass.

ALAN
(from a distance)
Excuse me!

BEN jumps, startled by the sudden noise.

BEN
Uh, yeah?

ALAN is a park ranger, a bearded man who appears to be in his mid sixties, who is approaching from the distance.

ALAN
You alright?

BEN
What do you mean?

BEN kicks the pistol further from the ranger's view as ALAN approaches.

ALAN
I mean, this place is closed.

BEN
Huh?

ALAN
I guess I could do a better job of making it obvious. I don't really have any signs for that and I had to open up the gates as a friend of mine recently drove through to check in.

BEN
What do you mean?

ALAN
Like I said, the park's closed, son.

BEN
Oh, sorry, my maps app said it was open.

ALAN
Gotcha, well, I hate to break it to you but this site isn't very safe at the moment. There was a bear attack here a couple weeks ago, made national news and everything. Camper went for a hike and didn't come back. It's been a problem ever since.

BEN
Damn, that's intense.

ALAN

I'm having trouble cutting through the red tape at the moment but we're working on figuring out a solution. Point is, you're best off finding another place to stay tonight.

BEN

Really? I mean, wow. Didn't realize animal attacks were really a serious threat.

ALAN

Yeah, in normal circumstances you're right. No idea why the grizzly has an affinity for this area, but there are plenty of sites within a couple hours of here that have had no issues. Better safe than sorry, you know.

BEN

I guess.

ALAN

Sorry to interrupt your trip, looks like you were just getting settled. (ALAN sees the papers lying around) You've been busy?

BEN

Yeah, you know, I just really like being able to write out here where it's remote.

ALAN

Great way to spend a weekend like this. Well, like I said, I'd recommend packing up.

BEN

Ok, well, thanks for the heads up.

ALAN

Of course, it's my pleasure. Let me know if you need anything, I'll just be back at my cabin.

BEN

Ok, sounds good. Thanks!

BEN nods as ALAN walks away, heading back up to his cabin. He then begins to pack up his supplies.

BEN continues to pack up, putting everything away until only the papers are left. He takes them and puts them in the car, then closes the trunk and gets into the drivers seat. But when he turns the key, the car shudders and won't start.

BEN
Seriously?

BEN makes multiple attempts without success.

BEN
You've got to be kidding me. Fuck.

BEN walks out of the car, slamming the door and walking in the direction of the man's cabin. It's beginning to get dark as BEN knocks on the door of ALAN's cabin, which is an unremarkable box that one might expect a low-budget campground to have.

ALAN
(as he opens the door)
Hello there. Something wrong?

BEN
Yeah, my car won't start.

ALAN
(surprised)
Oh. That is a problem.

BEN
Hey, I know it's asking a lot, but could you like drive me to a nearby hotel or something?

ALAN
Ah, see, I would be up for that if only I had a car.

BEN
Shit.

ALAN
But hey, you can call a friend or something. Hopefully you've got one nearby.

BEN
I do have, wait, fuck.

ALAN
What's up?

BEN

Oh, sorry, I've got friends but they're on vacation, at least like ten hours away.

ALAN

Well in that case, I guess you're stranded.

BEN

Damn.

ALAN

Like I said earlier, you don't really want to be staying out in a tent if you don't have to. I can make room in here if you can bring some of your stuff in assuming you don't have any other options besides staying the night.

BEN

Oh, thanks. I appreciate it.

BEN walks over to his car, noticing clouds above.

INT. ALAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

BEN and ALAN are sitting in ALAN's cabin, which from the outside is a nondescript outpost, but from the inside is full of life despite the compact space. BEN reclines in a comfortable chair while ALAN sits in a recliner, both equidistant from a fire but not pointed directly at it. It's a space that emanates warm tones, a contrast to the darkness outside. There are a few potted plants, a tea kettle and pot steaming with the contents of a fresh batch of tea. There's also a record player with a set of different albums and a Bible on a shelf, including Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On*?

BEN

(sipping tea from a small cup)

That's a sick record player.

ALAN

I appreciate that, it actually used to belong to my mom. It's a miracle it works at all anymore.

BEN

(Motioning over with his cup)

You have a favorite album?

ALAN

Oh, that's a good question. As much as I love everything on that shelf, Marvin Gaye's What's Going On may have to take the cake. Ever heard it before?

BEN

No, can't say I have.

ALAN

Can't blame you, I guess you could say it was a little before your time. You have a favorite record?

BEN

Oh, I don't know. I guess to me most sound the same, every album has a few songs I really like but most of the time the rest of it just seems like filler.

ALAN

Yeah, that's the thing about one of these. (He says gesturing toward the record player) Can't really skip very easily. I guess that's part of the beauty of it though.

BEN

What do you mean?

ALAN

Well, what I love most about putting a record on is listening to the story, front to back. Something about soaking it in, just hits the spot sometimes.

BEN

Everything on there tells a story?

ALAN

One way or another, yeah. Some are a little more veiled than others.

BEN

That's why you like the Marvin Gaye one?

ALAN

That certainly plays a role, I think.

BEN

Yeah, sometimes I wish I could appreciate more stuff like that. Haven't really learned to yet though.

ALAN

Well the key with music, or anything, is learning how to receive it as much as anything. If you have something specific you're looking for, you risk not finding it. And if you aren't looking for anything at all, why bother, you know?

BEN

(smirking)

Quite the profound advice.

ALAN

(smiling)

Hey can you blame me? Out here there's not a lot to do but think and learn to appreciate things.

BEN

I don't know. I've tried to find a lot of things trying to what will finally click like that. Felt good sometimes, but I haven't really found that thing yet.

ALAN

How so?

BEN

Well, I don't know. To be honest, I feel like my default setting is more... a lower place mentally, I guess. And over time I find things that kinda get me over that feeling. But it's like I build a tolerance to whatever that is, if it works at all, you know?

ALAN

That can't be easy.

BEN

Oh, it's ok. Like I said, you just found your thing and I haven't found mine.

ALAN

Well for the record, these stories aren't the thing that saved me, not in itself at least. And the way out, at least for me, wasn't finding something that made me feel good longer. That's just something that keeps your head above even more before going back under.

BEN

What's the secret then?

ALAN

(laughing)

I wish it was as simple as a conversation. Healing took different avenues, sometimes medicine, sometimes music, sometimes both. God at the root though. Hearing other people's stories helped place my own, figure out what I'm doing here.

BEN

So it was more of a religious thing for you?

ALAN

Oh, everyone's religious. Everything has something that matters most to them, something they'll offer up sacrifices for. You and me, we just have been in a place where nothing really seemed up to that standard.

BEN

I wouldn't put it that way, but I see what you mean. I think.

ALAN

Here, I'm only so good at this. Lots of practice thinking, not so much talking. Can I just play you one of these?

BEN

(shrugs)

I mean, there's not exactly a whole lot else to do.

INT. ALAN'S CABIN - NIGHT

It's a few hours later after listening to a couple albums and going through explanations of both of them. It's pitch black outside as ALAN and BEN continue their conversation.

BEN

It's so interesting, I totally would have thought Tell Him was just another love song without actually looking at it!

ALAN

I told you, that song has been more formative spiritually than almost anything else in my life.

BEN

Damn, I never really looked at stuff like this as a place to tell stories. Not like this.

ALAN

My favorite part is how other people's stories can help place our own.

BEN

What do you mean?

ALAN

Well, don't you see yourself at all in these stories?

BEN

I guess.

ALAN

Well, now your story is at least informed by them. And you can choose how you want yours to be shaped by them, if you want.

BEN

You know, it's interesting you mention that. I've been working on this project that I feel like really tells the story of who I am.

ALAN

That's the stack of papers I saw earlier? I assumed it was some sort of book you were writing.

BEN

Kinda yeah, it's like what these other people have been doing through music.

ALAN

And what's your story about?

There's a slight pause.

BEN

I don't know. The story's kinda about how I don't know. Like you said, trying to find a way out of that headspace and not really finding anything.

ALAN

Do you have plans to publish it one day?

BEN

Oh, I don't know. I think I hope other people read it sometime. I don't know if I'll publish it.

ALAN

Would you want me to read it?

BEN

(laughs)

In one night? I don't know, it's a long one. And I haven't really finished it, I guess.

ALAN

Glad to hear it's still in progress.

Another slight pause.

BEN

The thing is, stories only go so far. Life happens, you know? Things you can't erase from the past, and things we can't change right now. The silver lining is nice but sometimes putting it in a good light isn't enough to change things.

ALAN

Oh, it's not about escapism.

(MORE)

ALAN (CONT'D)

That's no different than what you've been talking about, finding what keeps your head just above water. That's what these are all about, finding where to put the pain. We can let it defeat us, we can try and channel it to be productive, we can let it shape us so we hate the world.

BEN

(smirking)

Now don't go all preacher mode on me.

ALAN

(chuckles)

My apologies. I don't mean to. I just... if what I found could help you out I'd hate to look back and think I didn't say anything.

BEN

Well if you had to sum it up, no fear of preachiness or whatever, what would you say?

ALAN pauses.

ALAN

I had to find a way out of somewhere, someone I didn't want to be. That part had to die, somehow, but what next, if anything, right? Lo and behold, I found something worth sticking around for after that part of me was gone. Started over, this time ready to roll with the highs and lows because I had something to ground me. Keep me steady. Find that, and you're golden.

BEN

Ok, I can't help but feel like you're still beating around the bush, but I'll take it.

ALAN

(chuckles)

Sorry, I do my best. Like I said, for me, it was God.

(MORE)

ALAN (CONT'D)

If I was any good at preaching
maybe I wouldn't have ended up a
park ranger.

BEN

Well, at any rate, thanks for
sharing, it's really interesting
to talk to someone about this.

ALAN

Anytime. If for whatever reason
you end up back here I'd love a
part two to this conversation. In
the meantime though I think I'm
ready to call it a night.

BEN

Yeah, I guess you're right, I
didn't realize how late it was.

The cabin sits in momentary silence as the ripples from the
conversation reverberate around the now quiet room.

INT. ALAN'S CABIN - MORNING

BEN wakes up as morning light cuts through the windows of
ALAN's cabin. He gets up, a little groggy, and walks around to
see ALAN had left a note on the record player. It reads as
such, "Hi BEN! So sorry to do this, but something came up at
another park and I went to go help a friend of mine with an
emergency. Help yourself to anything you need while I'm gone;
hopefully your friend will arrive soon, as you mentioned. If we
don't see each other again, I hope you know what I immensely
appreciated our conversation and hope you find what you're
looking for. Here's a list of other stories I'd encourage you
to check out: Swimming and Circles, both by Mac Miller. To Live
in the Mercy of God, by Denise Levertov. Also the book of
Ecclesiastes. You might find it interesting. Last but not
least, if you're interested in finding God like I have, check
out the song Sing About Me, I'm Dying of Thirst, by Kendrick
Lamar. Particularly at the minute mark 10:55. Best of luck,
ALAN," BEN looks up, smiling from the note.

EXT. ALAN'S CABIN - DAY

About an hour has passed, and BEN has been checking his phone
outside ALAN's cabin, seeing QUINN's progress getting closer to
his location. BEN's things are packed and outside. A honk
signals the approach of QUINN and his car bustling down the
dirt road. BEN looks up with a smile, walking over to the car.
QUINN turns it off and walks over.

QUINN
What a dumbass!

BEN
Good to see you too!

The two embrace in a hug.

QUINN
Dude what happened? I get this text saying you're out in the middle of nowhere stranded out of the blue, something about your car breaking down.

BEN
I know, it's been a crazy 24 hours.

QUINN
I mean, no offense, but why didn't you call a tow truck or something?

BEN
I guess I didn't really know who to call. This park ranger suggested I call a friend to pick me up, so I called you.

QUINN
Damn, man. Did you at least get any good stories from your little trip?

BEN
It's funny you mention that, I feel like I got a few.

QUINN
That's an ominous answer. Anyway, how about we throw your stuff in my car?

BEN
Ok, sounds good.

QUINN
(as he picks up BEN's sleeping bag)
Oh, did you hear about ADAM?

BEN

(perking up as he throws the
rest of his stuff in the
trunk)

No, what happened?

QUINN

Well, after you left a couple cops
pulled up on campus and arrested
him. It was this whole show.

BEN

No way, you're bullshitting me!

QUINN

Deadass man, it was insane. Don't
know what the charges were, but
ADAM was NOT happy. Think it was
pretty embarrassing too, it being
on campus and everything.

BEN

Hell yeah. That's awesome.

QUINN

He must have done some pretty
messed up shit for you to be this
happy about it.

BEN

Yeah, I'll tell you about it on
the drive back.

QUINN

You know where we're going? Like
do you want to go home or
something? And what about your
car?

BEN

No idea. I can figure out the car
thing when I get out of here. For
now I guess I have my bags packed
and no plans. We can go where you
want.

QUINN

I don't know man, I mean you could
always tag along with me at the
Oregon coast.

BEN

Well, let's start there.

(MORE)

BEN (CONT'D)
Once I'm there I can just find a
towing service or something.

QUINN
Whatever you want to do, let's go
then.

They both get in the car. QUINN starts the car.

BEN
(from inside the car)
Oh, dude, I just realized, ISSAC
is gonna be super pissed.

QUINN
(putting the car in reverse)
What's up?

BEN
I lost his gun.

QUINN
(looking over)
Huh?

BEN
I don't know how, I thought I
brought it but after putting
everything in and out of my car I
can't find it.

QUINN
(pulling onto the dirt road
again)
That's bizarre. Think someone
stole it or something?

BEN
No, I don't think that's it.

The camera pans to the car bustling along the dirt road as the
cabin sits behind it in the relative distance.

INT. ALAN'S CABIN

Inside the cabin are both the suicide note and the pistol left
behind on the record player.

EXT. CAMPGROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

To end the movie there is a montage of BEN taking a camping trip out to the same campgrounds. With him is QUINN and QUINN's new girlfriend, as well as JAYDEN. This is part is CRUCIALLY specific: the song "Life In Color" by OneRepublic plays. There are shots of them driving to the campgrounds, a sign that says, "OPEN", setting up camp, playing on the beach, (BEN has a less chiseled frame though still healthy) building a campfire, and talking, dancing, and laughing by the fire. BEN, QUINN and JAYDEN say goodnight and head to their own tent. Later in the night BEN gets out of the tent and sets his sleeping bag out under the stars, sleeping under an evergreen tree and as the music ends the screen fades to black.

EXT. CAMPGROUNDS - MORNING

Finally we see BEN's face getting hit with water dropping from the evergreen tree as he lies in his sleeping bag in the grass. He wakes up, his face twitching as the water hits it, until he opens his eyes groggily. Then, fully awake his face bursts into a grin. Cut to black.

THE END