



Get Out By Jordan Peele

Universal Pictures Home Entertainment (2017). 104 Minutes, \$14.99 (Blu-Ray)

Reviewed by JQ Adams, Independent Scholar

Abstract

This review of Jordan Peele's 2017 film Get Out examines Peele's cutting satirical view of the USA where a form of white supremacy is still being practiced. Four facets of the film are explored here: its dystopian view of neo-slavery in the 21st century and several of the elements that complement and complicate this theme, including the black/white color contrast, the modus operandi of the femme fatale, and the song Run Rabbit Run. The film is multi-layered, blending elements of history with several genres: thriller, horror film, and science fiction.

Keywords: *Dystopia; Neo-Slavery; Wave Theory; Femme Fatale; White Supremacy; Double Consciousness.*

Get Out: A Dystopian View of Neo-Slavery in the Fifth Wave¹

Introduction

Jordan Peele and his 2017 film *Get Out* were nominated for Best Actor, Best Director, Best Movie, and Best Screenwriter and won the Oscar in the latter category. It was Peele's first feature film. The film is a complicated multi-layered thriller that can elicit horror in viewers on a personal level, much like that of good science fiction. In this review four facets of the film are examined: the dystopian view of neo-slavery in the Fifth Wave¹ and several of the elements that complement and complicate this theme, including the Black/White color contrast, Rose as a femme fatale, and the song "Run Rabbit Run."

After showing a very efficient nighttime kidnapping of Andre Hayworth, a young Black man walking in an affluent White neighborhood, *Get Out* follows Chris Washington, a successful Black photographer, during his first visit with his White girlfriend's family, the Armitages. Chris slowly becomes aware of the ultimate purpose of the visit: a transformation in which the brain of

1. Futurist Alvin Toffler originated the Wave Theory concept and discussed it in his 1984 book, *The 3rd Wave*, which describes how the Information Revolution superseded the Industrial Revolution which had superseded the Agricultural Revolution. (New York: Bantam Books, 1984). Daniel Pink, in *Whole New Mind: Why Right Brainers Rule the Future*, revised Toffler's three waves and expanded it to five: hunter-gatherer, agricultural, industrial, informational, and conceptual (New York: Riverhead Books, 2006).

an elderly White supremacist will be implanted in Chris's body and take over his life—replicating Andre Hayworth's reincarnation as Logan King. To save himself, Chris must resist the hypnosis used as part of the transformation and escape the Armitage estate.

Neo-slavery in the 5th Wave

Get Out is an exquisite satire full of astute mockery and warnings of what could become a reality in the 21st century. A treatise on contemporary race relations and White supremacy, Peele's film offers a powerful microscope through which to examine this new slavery in a high-tech scientific age. The traditional slave system needed millions of Black and Brown bodies to fuel the nation's 2nd Wave agricultural system and to fund the 3rd Wave industrial revolution. In the 5th Wave, as Peele depicts it in his dystopian future, neo-slavery demands fewer Black bodies to do what is needed to insure the comfort of the top ten percent of the population, a population that has no interest or regard for the rest of society. Still about exploiting the Black body, this neo-slavery focuses on control in the most intrusive and intimate way possible.

As part of the transformation Chris is subjected to, he is shown several videotapes that continue the hypnosis begun shortly after his arrival. Tapes are also used to explain the rationale for the process he is undergoing. Through them, Chris is officially introduced to this process by Roman Armitage, the patriarch of the Armitage family who has taken over the body of Walter, seen as grounds keeper on the Armitage estate. Roman indicates that it has taken a very long time to perfect the transformation process, which he identifies as the Coagula. Given his references to an Order, the subtle association of a knight's helmet with Jeremy, and the gathering at the Armitage estate of Roman's friends, Peele seems to be suggesting the existence of a secret society composed of powerful, wealthy mostly White members who benefit from the Coagula.

In the 5th Wave the exploitation of Black bodies is not prompted by their labor in harvesting the wealth gained from tobacco and cotton. The exploitation is the personal possession of these bodies for their physical attributes and beauty. The Black body, as a new kind of hostage, becomes the object of desire for Whites who have the wealth to trade and literally trade-in their bodies for Black ones. This new form of slavery inextricably links slave owner and enslaved in a diabolical iteration of domination/oppression. The Black body becomes a container, a vessel, controlled and animated by a foreign parasite.

To support this neo-slavery, different means of abduction are used. Rose relies on seduction, while her brother Jeremy prefers more physically violent methods, demonstrated by the sleeper hold that renders Andre unconscious when Jeremy kidnaps him and locks him in the trunk of his car. Rose's methods take longer. It appears that she and Chris have been in a relationship for five months before she takes him home. In the tapes used to prepare Chris for the takeover of his body, Jim Hudson, the person who buys Chris's body, remarks that Rose's methods were much kinder than Jeremy's wrangler style. No whips, chains or branding; no withholding of food or drink. The seduction is in some ways similar to that used by the slave hunters in *12 Years a Slave*. Solomon is not forcibly captured but is enticed to accompany his captors with false promises.

The Armitage's victims, while not physically harmed are, however, hypnotized and subjected to a psychologically violent form of torture when they are shown the tapes that explain the process they are going through to prepare their bodies to host affluent, infirm, White seniors. Dean Armitage introduces these older White people at a neo-slavery auction that Missy describes as a gathering of their grandparents' old friends. As the guests file out of their Black limousines and

SUVs, Walter welcomes them with hugs, which seems inconsistent with his role as grounds keeper, but it is consistent with his identity as Roman, the head of the Armitage family.

At this neo-slavery auction, Chris does not have to stand and literally disrobe but he is quickly questioned and inspected by each of the guests competing for his body. The Greene couple is very interested in Chris's athleticism, Mr. Greene being a former professional golfer; Lisa, whose husband Nelson is using a breathing apparatus, is taken by Chris's good looks and makes it clear she is interested in him as a sexual partner when she asks Rose, "Is it true? Is it better?" Another couple likes Chris's dark skin, since darker skin is in vogue, and gallery owner Jim Hudson is interested in Chris's eyes since he knows Chris's work as a photographer and wants to possess Chris's talent.

The auction takes the form of Bingo, a cover for the bidding for Chris's body that is taking place. Rose takes Chris away from the gathering during the bidding, but as Dean directs it, he stands next to a large portrait of Chris holding his camera. Hudson wins the game, i.e. the bid, for what appears to be \$10 million, the apparent cost of an exceptional Black body in the 21st century's 5th Wave.

After the sale the narrative action escalates. Chris's unease increases as do clues to the nature of the Armitage's intentions, most specifically the identification of Andre Hayworth as Logan, a Black partner of one of the Armitage's elderly friends and the discovery of a cache of photos in Rose's closet that shows her as the girlfriend of eight or nine other Black men, including Walter, as well as a photo of a woman who Chris recognizes is Georgina, the housekeeper. Chris, like Solomon in *12 Years a Slave*, recognizes the danger he is in, and turns all of his attention, his intelligence, persistence, and strength, to escape.

The Black/White Contrast

The Black/White contrast, prominent throughout the film, begins with the selection of Daniel Kaluuya to play the protagonist Chris Washington. Kaluuya's dark skin contrasts sharply with that of the central female protagonist, Rose Armitage, whose White skin is lit and shot in a way that underscores her Whiteness. Peele appears to use this juxtaposition not only to define the characters and further the plot but also as a symbol of the dualities he explores in a narrative about good and evil as well as positive and negative social values.

In the film's opening scene, a Black male character searches for an address while on his cell phone expressing his discomfort about walking in a White suburban neighborhood at night. As he walks he is being profiled by somebody in a White 1983 Porsche 944. The Whiteness of the car stands out in contrast to the nighttime setting and, given the mood of foreboding the scene creates this Whiteness suggests malevolence. Almost immediately, a masked individual emerges from the darkness, assaults, and kidnaps Andre Hayworth (aka later as Logan King), locking him in the trunk of the White Porsche. The allusion here to the historical capture of Blacks and how they were forced into the slave trade becomes obvious as the narrative unfolds.

Another Black/White contrast is apparent in the set of Black and White photos Peele uses to establish Chris's profession and to show a bit of his cultural background and interests. The next scene shows Chris looking at his reflection in a bathroom mirror while shaving. The Whiteness of the shaving cream and the darkness of his skin differ markedly. The cut to Rose, though not quite so stark, underscores the contrast.

As the film continues numerous examples of these Black/White contrasts become evident, especially when Rose, the femme fatale, or her mother Missy, a psychiatrist, is present. They are

frequently dressed in White tops and prefigure a sinister action at Chris's expense, as when Missy hypnotizes Chris and when Rose pretends she cannot find the keys to her SUV, thus preventing his escape. Frequently, White suggests not just negativity but straightforward, unmitigated evil in this narrative.

The Black/White motif is evident when Chris is under hypnosis and he senses he is in danger. A close-up of his face shows his eyes literally bulging out of his face, a reminder of the old 1930's and 1940's films when similarly bulging eyes of the few Black actors who were cast in major films were used to show the fear, the naivete and simple-mindedness of Black characters. Stereotypically, their eyes would nearly pop out of their sockets, usually to comic effect. A popular cinematic device in the early 20th century, Peele uses it purposefully, much like Spike Lee did in *Bamboozled*, suggesting the racism so apparent in the earlier films is still in play.

A further juxtaposition of the White/Black and good/evil duality takes place when Missy hypnotizes Chris and she takes him into a dark place, which she refers to as "the sunken place" and verbally commands Chris "to sink through the floor." The command paralyzes him in a place of darkness, where the only light he can see is the face of Missy. Given the clear references to slavery throughout the film one could liken this to the bottom of a slave ship, with the only light coming through one of the crew's hatch ways to the outside, a light that is impossible to reach. The scene contributes to some of the confusion between what is good and what is evil since Missy appears to be concerned and helpful while in reality she is weakening Chris's control.

One of the most dramatic devices in the film related to the Black/White contrast, though with a completely different significance and use, is the camera flash. It represents "good White light" in its ability to bring the dominated, submissive, oppressed victims of the Armitage family back to conscious agency. We see clear examples of this phenomenon when the Logan King and Walter characters are exposed to this light. For a brief moment their Black consciousnesses gain volition over their White intruders.

Logan King experiences this at the social gathering/slave auction of the Order when Chris takes his picture and the camera flash temporarily releases Andre Hayworth's consciousness; he immediately tries to warn Chris by moving quickly toward him and repeatedly yelling "Get Out." In a later scene, having learned from the incident with Logan, Chris uses his cell phone's camera flash to awaken the dominated Black consciousness in Walter's body. Walter regains his agency, protects Chris by shooting Rose, and then takes his own life to avoid a return to slavery.

The Femme Fatale

Rose Armitage, an effective, cold, and cunning femme fatale does not literally kill her victims, though she is ready to if necessary, as we see at the film's final sequence when she shoots at Chris. Rose's usual modus operandi is to lure her prey to their virtual deaths, the state in which their bodies function but their minds/brains have been replaced by those of the White men and women who buy them. Her method is precise: she carefully identifies her victims, makes contact, thoroughly seduces them, and then successfully lures them to the family home for the brainwashing, auction, and the Coagula, the transformation process that will destroy most of their consciousness.

Viewers first encounter Rose as the five-month seduction phase of her relationship with Chris is ending. She is ready to take him home to meet her family. At Chris's apartment we see how effective her skills as a seductress are through the empathy, conversation, and sexuality she adopts to manipulate and control him without any hint that is what she is doing.

On the way to the Armitage estate Rose strikes and kills a deer, an event that leads to an encounter with the police. In this scene her cunning is again evident when she takes advantage of the policeman's request to see Chris's driver's license. She quickly intervenes, questioning the officer's motives and challenging his authority. After he gets over his initial fear as a Black man in the presence of the police, Rose's forwardness seems to deepen Chris's affection for her, and she reinforces this by saying to him, "Nobody fucks with my man." However, in retrospect, it becomes clear that Rose is not being an ally or protecting Chris from racial profiling as much as she is protecting herself and her family. She is keeping Chris's identity out of the police report of the accident and preventing a paper trail that could connect the Armitages to Chris's disappearance when he comes up missing later.

Rose gives us other examples of her faux-protection skills after several disturbing family interactions. Upstairs in their bedroom she feigns her disappointment at her father's "My Man" comments and her brother's desire to subdue Chris physically. Through these continuous inducements and loyalty strategies she maintains her control over Chris.

In the scene when Chris discovers the box of photos, we understand more fully the extent of Rose's skills and contributions to the family and the Order. Chris is definitely not Rose's first conquest. Even before Chris is in the process of transformation, she is searching the internet for her next conquest. She is a practiced seductress, a femme fatale serving her family and the Order. Even after he discovers the photos, Chris tries to hold onto his relationship with Rose, asking her to leave with him when he tries to escape the house. Her duplicity does not become clear to him until he realizes she is stalling for time as she acts as though she can't find her car keys. Chris's stunned expression when he finally realizes Rose's complicity in the horror of the Armitage enterprise shows just how completely Rose has ensnared him.

In a remarkable contrast to Rose's femme fatale persona, while Chris is being prepared for the Coagula, Rose is shown relaxing in her bedroom listening to music. The scene opens with a close-up of a glass of milk and a bowl of Fruit Loops. Rose, dressed in a White blouse, sips the White milk through a Black straw, and eats the dry Fruit Loops while surfing the internet looking at the photos and profiles of NCAA Division One Black athletes. Juxtaposing milk and Fruit Loops, often identified as snacks children enjoy, with her search for another Black man to seduce is chillingly, painfully ironic. The scene clearly marks the end of Rose's need for or interest in Chris.

Later, when Rod, Chris' best friend, calls because he is concerned about Chris's absence, she feigns her innocence and acts surprised that Chris is missing, but then she quickly and expertly puts Ron on the defensive by turning the call into a sexual dalliance by suggesting that Rod's true interest is to have an affair with her. Her cool, calculating, detached manner underscores how unattached she is from the enormity of the horror she participates in.

Foreshadowing Motifs

Jordan Peele uses several interesting motifs, not only to foreshadow how his narrative is going to unfold, but also to increase the film's cohesiveness and deepen its meaning. These include the *Run, Rabbit, Run* song heard in multiple interpretations on the soundtrack as well as the related and recurring hit-and-run theme. *Run, Rabbit, Run* is introduced in the opening scene when the character, Andre Hayworth, is being kidnapped, while the hit-and-run theme first appears obliquely when Rose hits and kills a doe when she and Chris drive to her parents' house.

In the first scene of the film, the lyrics coming from Jeremy's car radio don't seem to fit the driver of a luxury sports car like a Porsche 944. The original song was written by Noel Gay and Ralph Butler for the 1939 British radio program the "The Little Dog Laughed." The humorous little ditty is aptly called "Run Rabbit, Run." The lyrics merit consideration in light of *Get Out*'s trajectory. They are:

On the farm, every Friday,
 On the farm, it's rabbit pie day.
 So, every Friday that ever comes along,
 I get up early and sing this little song
 Run rabbit, run rabbit run! run! run!
 Run rabbit, run rabbit, run! run! run!
 Bang! bang! bang! bang!
 Goes the farmer's gun.
 Run rabbit, run rabbit, run, run
 rabbit run rabbit, run, run, run
 Don't give the farmer his fun! fun! fun!
 He'll get by
 Without his rabbit pie
 So run rabbit, run rabbit run! run! run!²

This simple little song is very appropriate given that the song's subject is about a hunter wanting his rabbit meat pie, wanting to satisfy his taste for a certain dish, while in the film the Armitages want another Black body to host another member of their Order. The rabbit needs to run to escape the farmer and both Andre and Chris need to run to escape the Coagula. The lyric in the song, "Bang! bang! bang! bang! Goes the farmer's gun," foreshadows Rose firing at Chris as he tries to escape at the end of the film.

The song is heard in several other scenes. For example, while Walter is chopping wood, and in every other scene he is in, he is humming the song, subtly connecting him to Andre and Chris and warning the audience of the danger Chris is in. After the auction we hear Jeremy playing the ukulele on the porch; he is picking out parts of the "Run, Rabbit, Run" melody in a very abstract manner that fits his strange and malevolent character, links him again to Andre's kidnapping, and foreshadows his role in the attempt to subdue Chris.

The last time the song is used is during the climactic ending of the film as Chris is making his escape after thwarting Dean's, Missy's, and Jeremy's attempts to kill him. He takes Jeremy's Porsche and as soon as he turns on the engine he hears "Run, Rabbit, Run." Now the lyrics are literally telling Chris what he needs to do: run, run, run away from the insanity that defines the Armitage family. Peele has skillfully used the lyrics to link characters, foreshadow danger, and prime the audience for the action needed if Chris is to save himself.

Another recurring motif that provides narrative cohesion is the hit-and-run story of Chris's Mother's death, a death that haunts him and for which he feels guilty though he was a child at the time. He chose to continue watching television rather than look for his Mother even when he realized his Mother should have been home hours before. Chris tells the story the first night he is with

2. Retro Radio. <https://youtu.be/LoLchtG8vTk>.

the Armitages, Missy brings it up later that night when she hypnotizes Chris, and he talks to Rose about it later.

The initial variation on the hit-and-run motif occurs when Rose hits and kills a doe with her SUV when she and Chris are on the way to her parents' house. Chris's reaction to the suffering cries of the doe can be tied in retrospect to how his Mother died alone on the side of the road after being fatally injured by a hit-and-run driver. The final connection takes place when Georgina tries to stop Chris and he runs into her; instead of continuing his escape, the feelings of guilt associated with his Mother's death surface and force him to stop and help her.

Peele's focus on deer, their suffering and the prominence of shots of the head of a trophy stag in the basement room where Chris is held prompt further speculation. When Chris and Rose share the deer incident with Rose's parents, Dean, Rose's father, sounds off with great emotion about how deer are ruining the world, particularly the United States. He goes on to exclaim that when he sees a dead deer on the side of the road he almost cheers, saying "One less deer!" Given Dean's role in the enslavement of Blacks, one can easily make the connection between deer and the Black people whose lives he so easily destroys. The harangue makes Chris's use of the trophy as a weapon against Dean later appears to be poetic justice.

Get Out: Conclusion

Get Out is an unusually dense film with many more motifs and historical allusions than analyzed above. The film rewards repeated viewings and discussions with deeper insights and a greater appreciation of Peele's remarkable achievement in fashioning a cohesive critique through satire and history.

Peele has crafted an American dystopian work that captures the still pervasive and evil presence of White supremacy within the U.S. More than a cautionary tale it foreshadows the dangers of a high-tech society in which science serves the needs of aging aristocrats by turning Black people into hosts for their racist consciousnesses. The process creates within the Black body a far greater nightmarish double consciousness than W. E. B. Dubois imagined. This film narrative is also a warning about who one can trust in this new era. Through Rod and Rose, Peele challenges us with the Black/White, good/evil dichotomy that has been so difficult for oppressed people to navigate since the onset of colonialism and the resulting domination societies we still live in.

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GET OUT

Written by

Jordan Peele

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. -Romans 12:1-2

EXT. THE SHAW'S HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - NIGHT

A perfect suburban house with bay windows and a front lawn. The SHAW family. Caucasian and warm - RICHARD, 34; NANCY, 30; JOSHUA, 6; and MAY, 4 - eat dinner inside. Richard reads something on his tablet illuminating his face.

JOSHUA

Which one are we going to?

RICHARD

The one in Orlando.

NANCY

Disney World.

JOSHUA

Tony said that Mickey is not really Mickey; it's someone else in there.

RICHARD

Mickey's Mickey.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

ANDRE, 29, an African-American man runs down the sidewalk in sweats. He listens to jazz on his phone. The music stops. He stops running and checks his phone.

ANDRE

Damn.

He's right in front of the Shaw's house. He glances inside. The Shaw's seem normal and content. Andre smiles.

A motion detecting security light floods the lawn.

INT. THE SHAW'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Richard looks up from his table to see Andre standing there. The rest of the family doesn't notice. Nancy tends to May, who SQUIRMS in her chair. Richard watches Andre protectively.

JOSHUA

Also, Tony said he saw a chef
Mickey and a normal Mickey.

NANCY

He must have changed his clothes
for work.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Andre walks on. It's getting dark. He is suddenly very alone.

A vintage creme-colored Porsche Boxter with tinted windows and
a roof CREEPS up on the street behind Andre. It's following
him.

INT. SPORTS CAR - CONTINUOUS

Driver's POV watching Andre. His BREATH ECHOES deep and tinny
as if it were into a coffee can. Through the car's system we
hear an English to French language tutorial recording.

TUTORIAL

Pardon me. Where is the nearest
restaurant? Pardonnez-moi. Ou est
le restaurant le plus proche?

The driver doesn't repeat.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Andre, feeling followed, stops to tie his shoe. The car also
stops. Andre waves at the unseen DRIVER. There is no response.
The ENGINE PURRS.

Andre begins walking again. The car begins slowly too. Andre
stops again. The car does too. Andre peers through the
windshield but can't see through the tint.

ANDRE

Can I help you...?

No response.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

I'm new to the area. I just moved
here... Down on Evergreen...

Nothing. Did I do something wrong? 'Cause--

INT. SPORTS CAR - CONTINUOUS

Driver's POV. Andre continues to talk, but isn't heard.

TUTORIAL

Can you show me the nearest
bathroom? Pouvez-vous me montrer
la salle de bain la plus prouche?

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Andre hears nothing from inside.

ANDRE

(under his breath)

This is some shit right here.

Andre begins walking. The car creeps alongside him. After a few steps, Andre stops again. The car stops. Andre laughs.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. I know you? You
messing with me right?..Come on.

No response. He realizes it's not a friend.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

You know this could be considered
stalking and harassment. Plus,
you're sitting in a deadly weapon
so that's some felony-type shit
right there.

No response.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

What?!? Say something then.

No response. Andre can't hide his anger anymore. He starts walking the other direction. The car backs up, following Andre in reverse.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Calm down, Andre. Don't do it.
Don't let him get to you.

After a few more steps...

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Fuck.

Andre, fed up, stops. He approaches the passenger's side window and bangs on it.

ANDRE (CONT'D)
I'm from Brooklyn, man. If you
wanna do something, then let's do
something. I'm ready..! Hey, I'm
talkin' to you!!!

INT. SPORTS CAR - CONTINUOUS

Driver's POV. Andre bangs on the window.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Andre bangs harder on the window three times. The car's passenger-side window rolls down.

TUTORIAL
Can you help me find a hotel?
Pouvez-vous m'aider a trouver mon
hotel?

Andre's expression goes from anger to terror. The driver wears a tubular metal medieval knight's helmet with slanted rectangular eye holes.

ANDRE
Shit.

The driver raises a gun with a silencer on it. Andre turns to run but is shot in the back. Stunned, Andre stumbles towards the Shaw's house. The driver exits the car and follows him.

TUTORIAL
(From inside the car)
Can you please call the police?
Pouvez-vous s'il vous plait
appelez la police?

EXT. THE SHAW'S HOUSE - FRONT LAWN - CONTINUOUS

Andre falls in front of the Shaw's lawn. A dart sticks out of his back. He reaches towards the Shaw family. The masked driver approaches calmly Andre drags himself toward the house as everything blurs around him.

ANDRE
(weakly)
Help

Andre passes out as the security light floods the lawn again.

INT. THE SHAW'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Shaw family eats while Andre lays on their front lawn. This time Richard, buried in his tablet, doesn't notice. the driver lift Andre's limp body and carries him to his car.

JOSHUA

Tony said Mickey's face doesn't move.

RICHARD

That's right. Mickey's always happy.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

The driver carries Andre to the car.

JOSHUA (O.S.)

Why?

RICHARD (O.S.)

Because he hasn't aged in 100 years.

The driver plops Andre in the padded trunk. He gets in his car and drives off.

TITLE CARD:

"Get Out"

EXT. BROOKLYN PARK SLOPE - DAWN

The sun rises over the city. Autumn. Beautiful.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

We move slowly through the small but clean apartment. The walls are decorated with fascinating urban photography.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT - BATHROOM - MORNING

CHRIS WASHINGTON, 26, a handsome African-American man shuts the medicine cabinet. He's shirtless and naturally athletic. He scrutinizes his reflection with a touch of vanity.

INT. STARBUCKS COUNTER - MORNING

ROSE ARMITAGE, 28 - Caucasian, brunette with freckles - cool and beautiful like an old Summer Camp crush. Rose looks at pastries through the glass. She can't help but smile.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Chris spreads shaving cream onto his face and shaves. He postures a little then nicks himself on the neck. He smirks; deserved that.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Chris, clothed, looks out his window through a professional camera. He flips through some striking urban images on the digital display much like the ones framed around his apartment. He is a very talented photographer.

Sid, a small black dog, watches him. The BUZZER RINGS.

INT. BROOKLYN BUILDING - HALLWAY. MORNING

Chris opens the door. Rose stands outside the apartment with her hands full. She has two coffees and two bags of pastries. Chris smirks.

ROSE

I couldn't decide...

He takes the coffee tray and pulls her inside. They kiss.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Rose and Chris have coffee and sweets by the window. The small mound of pastries sits on the coffee table. SID lays on her lap. She strokes him. It's a perfect morning.

ROSE

Poor thing. Do you even pet him?

CHRIS

Are you kidding me? When you're not here that dog gets the best fuckin' pets of his life.

ROSE

So, how come whenever I come over,
he acts like he's been totally
neglected.

CHRIS

'Cause he know he's got you
wrapped around his little paw.

ROSE

oh, really?

CHRIS

Yeah.

Chris picks up her foot sweetly and massages it. She melts.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT - CHRIS' BEDROOM - DAY

Chris packs a small bag of luggage. Rose lays on the bed.

ROSE

Toothbrush... Deodorant...

CHRIS

Check... Check....

Chris puts a cigarette in his mouth. Rose pops up and grabs
the cigarette from his mouth and breaks it. Chris tries to
feign incredulousness but is amused.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I'm not gonna have one the whole
weekend.

ROSE

You quit, remember?

CHRIS

I'm nervous.

ROSE

Why? They're going to love you.

CHRIS

Yeah? How do you know?

ROSE

Let's see, you're smart, sweet,
handsome, creative... You're you.

CHRIS

Good answer.

Chris packs in silence for a moment.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Do they know I'm black?

Rose is taken aback by the question.

ROSE
I don't think so. Why? Should they?

CHRIS
Seems like you might give them a heads up.

ROSE
Really? Like "Mom, Dad, my black boyfriend is coming up for the weekend"?

CHRIS
You said, I'm the first black guy you'd ever dated.

ROSE
Yeah...?

CHRIS
So this is uncharted territory for them.

Rose embraces him.

ROSE
Baby, it's fine. My dad would legit vote for Obama a third time he could. Yes, he will want to talk to you about it, and that will be embarrassing, but they're gonna love you. I promise.

Chris nods. She kisses his neck and pulls him to the bed.

INT. BROOKLYN LOFT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Chris turns on the TV for Sid. He and Rose stand by the front door about to leave.

CHRIS
Bye.

ROSE
See you soon.

Rose blows Sid a kiss and they leave.

EXT. BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY

Chris puts his luggage in the trunk and enters the passenger's side of a shiny white BMW X5.

INT. BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - PARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Rose sits in the driver's seat. Chris gets in the passenger seat. Her car is a mess.

CHRIS
How do they even let you in a hospital?

ROSE
Shut up. I'm very sanitary at work.

She moves some fast food wrappers to the back seat.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You ready?

CHRIS
Yeah. You?

ROSE
Oh, wait.

She raises her phone and takes a selfie of the two of them.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Ready.

Chris puts his hand on her leg, and they drive off.

EXT. NEW YORK - CITY - CONTINUOUS

The car leaves the city.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - BIRD'S-EYE VIEW - DAY

We soar over the car as it drives through the beautiful countryside; a road flanked by woods.

INT. ROSE'S CAR - DAY

Rose hums. Chris, in the passengers seat, looks through his camera at the passing trees. He snaps a test shot.

CHRIS
How long has it been?

ROSE
10 months, so a year basically;
longest I've ever been away.

Chris takes out another cigarette. Rose promptly grabs it and opens the window.

CHRIS
Whoa... whoa!! Come on! I'm a
grown man. If a man says he wants
a cigarette, a man should be able
too- -

She throws it out the window.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Okay, so that's like a dollar. You
basically just throwin' dollars
out the window.

ROSE
You shouldn't have bought them.

CHRIS
I didn't buy them. Rod... Shit.

ROSE
What?

CHRIS
I almost forgot Rod.

EXT. LAGUARDIA AIRPORT - OUTSIDE THE TERMINAL - DAY

ROD WILLIAMS, 26, African American, a stocky TSA agent smokes a cigarette. His cell phone rings.

ROD
'Sup?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ROSE'S CAR - DAY

Chris sits in the passenger seat and talks on the cell phone.

CHRIS

Hey. You at work?

ROD

Yeah. How I'm gonna get in trouble
for following standard procedure?
Fuckin' Gary out here thinkin'
just because a bitch old, she
can't hijack an airplane.

Chris laughs.

ROD (CONT'D)

Like you can't hide a bomb in a
wheelchair? Watch, Chris, the next
9/11 is gonna be on some geriatric
shit.

CHRIS

Look, man, real quick. You good to
watch Sid this weekend right?

ROD

What? You think I forgot? Damn
'C', give your boy a little
credit. I don't forget shit; you
do.

CHRIS

You're right. My bad.

ROD

Apology accepted. How's 'Lil Miss
Rosie?

CHRIS

She's good.--

Rose takes the phone.

ROSE

Hi, Rod.

ROD

Whattup babygirl? You better bring
my boy back in one piece.

ROSE

I don't even know what that means
but yes I promise.

ROD

You know you picked the wrong guy
though right?

ROSE

It's not too late for us is it?

Chris takes the phone back.

CHRIS

Okay, get your own girl.

ROD

Damn, I never seen you like this.
Meeting the family and everything?
What does she do lick your ass?

CHRIS

No! What the fuck is wrong with
you?

ROD

That's it! First girl licks your
ass and you done. Just...

Rod makes a WHIPPING SOUND.

CHRIS

You need help.

ROD

Yeah I do. I need your girl to
introduce me to one of her freaky
deaky boarding school friends.

CHRIS

(laughing)

I'll see what I can do. Oh, and
I'll kick you some cash for
watching Sid.

ROD

Come on, son! I don't need your
money. I got you!

CHRIS

Thanks, man.

ROD

You better not come back all
bogie on me tho--

Chris hangs up. He gives Rose a look.

ROSE
What...? Settle down. You know I'm
yours.

After a beat he puts another cigarette in his mouth.

ROSE (CONT'D)
No!

CHRIS
Last one!

She goes for it. He dodges playfully and tickles her causing her to cackle.

A shadow darts across the road in front of the hood of the car. It's hind legs SMACK the hood of the car with a loud THWAT-THWAT. It's propelled into the woods at an awkward angle. The CAR SCREECHES to a halt.

Chris and Rose breathe hard for a few moments of shock.

ROSE
Fuck!

CHRIS
You okay?

ROSE
Yeah. You?

CHRIS
Yeah. That scared the shit out of
me.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Rose gets out of her car and inspects the damage. Chris gets out as well. There's a small bloody dent in the hood.

ROSE
Fuck!!!

Chris looks back in the direction of the collision.

CHRIS
Stay here.

ROSE
What are you doing?

CHRIS

I don't know... See if it's okay?

Chris walks a few more steps then stops. He rethinks.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Maybe it's gone--

A guttural, almost human, MOAN OF PAIN comes from in the woods behind them. They watch the woods in horror.

Chris walks back towards the haunting wail. It stops.

ROSE

Chris...?

Chris motions for Rose to stay. He keeps walking towards the thicket about 60 ft behind the car.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Be careful!

Chris gathers his courage and takes a step toward the thicket. The Moan starts again, but much louder and closer than Chris realized. He's startled.

Chris peers through the bushes. The deer lays there gasping for breaths and watching him with a black wet eye. Chris is transfixed.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Do you see it?

Chris snaps to. He nods and takes out his phone.

EXT. UPSTATE NEW YORK ROAD - DAY

A cop car is now pulled up to where the deer was hit. OFFICER FROSTIE - Caucasian - 33 stands near the deer. Another officer, OFFICER CROW - 40 - Caucasian with a patronizing smirk, stands by the driver's side window of Rose's car which Rose and Chris are both back in.

INT. ROSE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

OFFICER CROWE

So in the future the number to call is Animal Control Services.

Rose doesn't like the way he's looking at them.

CHRIS
Right. That makes sense.

OFFICER CROWE
You two coming up from the city?

CHRIS
Yeah.

OFFICER CROWE
And what brings you up--

ROSE
I'm from here. The Lake Pontaco
area? We're going home.

OFFICER CROWE
(to Chris)
You got a driver's license?

CHRIS
Oh... yeah.

Chris gives Rose a "see?" Look as he gets his license.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
I mean, I don't have a driver's
license, I have a state I.D.

ROSE
I was driving.

OFFICER CROWE
I didn't ask who was driving. I
asked him for his I.D.

ROSE
My boyfriend shouldn't have to
show you his I.D. because he
hasn't done anything wrong.

OFFICER CROWE
Ma'am, any time there is an
incident--

ROSE
No, fuck that!

CHRIS
Baby. It's okay--

ROSE
(to Crowe)
It's bullshit, and you know it.

There is a tense silence. Officer Crowe's walkie chimes in.

OFFICER FROST (O.C.)
Everything alright up there
Crowsie?

Officer Crowe stares Rose down. After a moment he presses his walkie button.

OFFICER CROWE
Yeah, I'm all good.

He hands Chris his I.D.

OFFICER CROWE (CONT'D)
You guys be careful.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

The car winds through a thickly wooded road.

INT. ROSE'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Chris sits in the passenger's seat deep in thought. He watches Rose with a new awe. Rose notices. She shrugs.

ROSE
What? I'm not gonna let anyone
fuck with my man.

CHRIS
That was some ride or die shit,
baby. I like that.

Rose smiles at him.

ROSE
We're here.

EXT. ARMITAGE ESTATE - AFTERNOON

The woods give way to an huge front lawn. A large mansion sits in the middle. Thick forest surrounds the estate except for one side which is the edge of a lake. The property feels expensive and isolated; no other houses in sight.

As they drive through the large front lawn, Chris sees WALTER, African American 35 in the distance facing away. Walter wears a gardening hat and trims hedges. He works slowly and methodically.

ROSE
(to Chris)
That's the grounds-keeper... I
think his name is Walter.

Rose parks in front of the house, and. He has a pleasant smile. Rose gets out of the car and waves.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Hi!

Walter turns and waves back. Chris gets out and waves too.

CHRIS
(To Walter)
Hey! What's up?

Walter waves silently. Odd.

As Chris gets the luggage from the trunk, Rose runs to the front door and RINGS the DOORBELL. FOOTSTEPS. The door swings open revealing...

DEAN ARMITAGE, 59, a tall, balding, barrel-chested, bear hug of a man. Though clearly smart, Dean has an endearing cockiness and a bad case of Dad humor. He is the kind of guy who pronounces garbage, Gar-bahge.

And... MISSY ARMITAGE, 56, A beautiful beacon of intellectual patience. She is poised and warm; relaxed and in control. They stand in the shadows of the doorway smiling. Rose hugs her parents.

ROSE
Hi!!!

DEAN MISSY
There's my girl! Hello sweetheart.

ROSE (CONT'D)
I miss you guys.

MISSY
We miss you, Ro Ro.

Chris approaches with the bags.

CHRIS
Hi.

ROSE
Chris, these are my parents. Mom,
Dad, this is Chris.

CHRIS
Good to finally meet you...

Chris holds his hand out.

DEAN
Mr. Armitage will do.

CHRIS
Sure.

DEAN
I got him.
(To Chris)
Come here.

Dean grabs Chris' arm and pulls Chris in tight.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Call me Dean. We hug around here,
Fella.

CHRIS
Alright.

DEAN
My wife Missy.

CHRIS
I've heard so much about you guys.

Missy holds Chris' shoulders and examines his face and chest.

MISSY
Yes, you'll do just fine. So
handsome.

ROSE
Can we get inside before you guys
start embarrassing me?

MISSY
Of course, come inside, make
yourself at home.

CHRIS
I'm fine with the embarrassing by
the way; go ahead.

Missy and Dean laugh. The four enter the house. Missy shuts
the door behind them.

Outside, Walter watches as his smile fades away. He slowly
turns and goes back to work.

INT. ARMITAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY

A wonderful house looms ahead. The interior is worldly and interesting; clean and homey. Several paintings of castles and medieval battles accent the walls. Taxidermy. One wall is all bookshelf, and there is a fireplace.

Above the fireplace is a large hauntingly beautiful portrait an old man and woman.

CHRIS

Wow.

DEAN

"Wow" is good. We'll take wow.

CHRIS

I grew up in a one bedroom, so for me, this is ridiculous.

DEAN

It ought to be. Lord knows we've done enough work on it through the years...

MISSY

(To Rose and Chris)

How was the ride in?

ROSE

We hit a deer.

DEAN MISSY

Oh no! Where?

ROSE (CONT'D)

I don't know. Down around Lyons road?

CHRIS

It came out of nowhere.

MISSY

Are you guys okay?

CHRIS ROSE

Yeah. Yeah. It just fruck us out.

MISSY (CONT'D)

I bet.

DEAN

You know what I say. One down... a few hundred thousand to go.

Dean snickers.

MISSY ROSE

Dean. So awful! Dad.

DEAN (CONT'D)

What?! Those things are everywhere up here, Chris; like rats. The damage they've done to the ecology alone... Anyway, are we ready for the grand tour?

MISSY

Let them unload their bags first.

DEAN

Leave 'em. Walter will get 'em.

ROSE

I think we'll manage, Dad.

INT. ARMITAGE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Rose and Chris take their bags upstairs.

INT. ARMITAGE HOUSE - ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Rose's old room is preserved in the state of a young-minded teenage girl. Lots of pink and dated boy band posters, a stuffed lion. A window overlooks the front lawn.

Rose and Chris place their bags down.

ROSE

(sarcastic)

You think they wish I was still a kid?

CHRIS

I cannot believe they kept it the same.

Chris looks at some pictures posted on her dresser.

ROSE

So...

CHRIS

They're great.

ROSE

Yay.

CHRIS

No, they're totally sweet.

ROSE

I told you they'd love you.

He sees a picture of Rose in high school on stage in a production of 'The Crucible.'

CHRIS

What?! Is this you?

ROSE

"The Crucible." I was Abigail.

CHRIS

I didn't know you acted.

ROSE

There's a lot you don't know about me.

Rose grabs Chris by the belt and pulls him to the bed on top of her. They kiss. She goes for his fly.

CHRIS

Wait, what about the tour?

ROSE

"The tour?" Are you serious?

CHRIS

We just got here. I don't wanna be disrespectful...

ROSE

Who gives a fuck? Be disrespectful.

He stops her.

CHRIS

I'm serious. Later.

INT. ARMITAGE DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Dean and Chris walk and look at pictures on the wall. Rose and Missy catch up in the living room.

DEAN

Frankenstein's monster. Only pieces of the original structure remain; I like to think the soul is in tact though.

They keep walking.

DEAN (CONT'D)

There are seven bedrooms, ten bathrooms, three indoor dining areas, two study's, two main kitchens. There's an observatory wing on the top floor. And you'd be hard pressed to find a room that doesn't serve as library.

Chris zones in on a photograph taken in the 90's in front of the Armitage house. Dean and Missy are younger, and Rose and her brother Jeremy are kids.

DEAN (CONT'D)

That's Jeremy. Rose's brother. He's in Med school.

CHRIS

I've heard stories.

DEAN

He went through a couple dark spots but came out the other side. You'll meet him later.

CHRIS

Oh, cool.

Dean points out the older couple in the picture, the same from the portrait in the living room; GRANDPA and GRANDMA.

DEAN

Mother and Father lived here till the end. They died a few years ago now. Passed away within weeks of each other...

CHRIS

I hear that happens a lot.

DEAN

"Love" is a powerful thing.

They move down the hallway to a black and white framed picture of a 25 year old man posing in the starting position for a race.

DEAN (CONT'D)

My Dad was a runner. A good runner; great sprinter.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Oh, In fact, you might find this interesting, he was just beat out by Jessie Owens in the qualifying round for the '36 Olympics in Berlin. That's the one where--

CHRIS

--Owens won in front of Hitler.

DEAN

You know your history.

CHRIS

Not really. That one always just stood out in my mind.

DEAN

Of course. One of those perfect moments. There's Hitler on his high horse with his perfect Aryan race, and here comes this black guy to prove him wrong on the world's stage. What a moment.

CHRIS

Yeah, tough break for your father though.

DEAN

He almost got over it.

Dean winks.

HOUSE - MISSY'S OFFICE - DAY

Dean opens the door to the office. He and Chris stand outside the door as Dean reaches in to turn on the lights. In front of the desk two comfortable-looking chairs face each other. Books line the walls, and are stacked everywhere. Dean and Chris don't enter. A white cat laying next to a teacup wakes up on the desk.

DEAN

Okay Snowbell just looking.

(To Chris)

Missy's office. This is where she takes appointments.

CHRIS

She's a Therapist right?

DEAN

Yeah. One of the best in the world. Not a tidy woman.

CHRIS
Like mother like daughter.

Dean Cackles.

INT. ARMITAGE HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

CHRIS
And you're a surgeon?

DEAN
A neurosurgeon; was. I retired
early. Now, I pretty much focus on
the house and twiddle my thumbs.

Dean and Chris pass a closed door.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Oh, downstairs is the wine cellar,
the games room, some storage.
Apparently a black mold issue down
there. Almost everything needs to
get thrown out; shame.

INT. ARMITAGE KITCHEN - DAY

Dean and Chris continue their walk-through. The kitchen is
large, homey and pristine. Large windows overlook the
backyard. GEORGINA, African American, 30 stands facing a wall.
She is still.

DEAN
My mother loved her kitchen.

Upon hearing them, Georgina comes alive. She resumes cleaning
the kitchen.

CHRIS
That view.

DEAN
Oh, Georgina, this is Chris;
Rose's boyfriend.

Georgina turns to them. She has the same eerie smile as
Walter. Like she's masking something.

CHRIS
Hi.

GEORGINA
Hello.-

DEAN

Ah ha! But now for the piece de resistance...

Dean opens the glass back door.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATE AFTERNOON

The yard is huge and the woods beyond it ominous. The wind RUSHES through the trees. Dean leads Chris out through the yard towards a gazebo.

DEAN

Badminton and bocce ball, croquet; we're a family who loves games. Two other families have properties on lake Pontaco, and they're way on the other side. Total privacy.

Chris is distracted by Walter who prepares the lawn mower in the distance.

DEAN (CONT'D)

I know what you're thinking.

CHRIS

Yeah?

DEAN

Well-to-do white family; black servants...

CHRIS

I wasn't gonna go there.

DEAN

You didn't have to. We hired them a few years ago to help care for my parents; they became part of the family. Couldn't bear to let them go. I hate the way it makes us look though...

CHRIS

Hey. People need work.

DEAN

Yeah.

They arrive at an outdoor patio. Dean stops Chris from stepping on a dead sparrow.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Well, crap.
(Calling)
Walter!

Walter turns to face them. He has that same eerily mild smile.
Vacant in its sincerity.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Another dead bird!
(To Chris)
Damn things fly into the patio
from time to time; break their
necks.

Walter nods slowly. Dean gently kicks the bird's carcass out
of their way.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Iced tea?

EXT. OUTDOOR PATIO - DAY

Dean, Missy, Chris and Rose sit with iced teas.

MISSY
(to Chris)
Rose tells us your parents aren't
with us.

CHRIS
My Dad was never really in the
picture. My mom passed away when I
was 11; She was hit by a car.

MISSY DEAN
Oh, that's awful; so young. I'm so
sorry to hear that.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Yeah. My aunt raised me, with my
cousins. We didn't have a lot of
money or anything, but she's a
good person; kept me off the
streets. She gave me my first
camera.

Rose holds Chris' hand.

MISSY
You two seem like you've been
together for years. How long has
it been now?

CHRIS ROSE
4 months? 5 months.

CHRIS
5? She's right; I'm wrong.

DEAN
'Atta boy Chris. Get used to saying that.

MISSY
Not a lot of time, anyway. So...?
You guys in love or what?

ROSE
Mom.

CHRIS
I mean, we've been trying to take it slow but...

MISSY
Yep. You're in love. I can tell.

DEAN
Can't resist the inevitable.

Walter mows past them in the distance.

MISSY
And how did you meet, again?

CHRIS
At the blood drive.

ROSE
Remember when I volunteered at the community center?

DEAN
Ah, yes.

MISSY
And he really is so good looking, isn't he? You'd have beautiful babies.

ROSE
I know!

DEAN
Uh oh. Get out of here before it's too late!

ROSE
(to Chris)
Now, all you have to do is just
quit smoking.

DEAN
Oh no! A smoker!?

MISSY
And we were just beginning to like
you.

CHRIS
No. I'm quitting.

DEAN
You should have Missy take care of
that for you.

ROSE
Oh God.

CHRIS
How?

DEAN
Hypnosis. Works like a charm.

Missy watches Chris' reaction intently. He is uncomfortable.

CHRIS
Oh.

DEAN
I thought the whole thing was B.S.
too. I smoked for 20 years. She
puts me under once, now the sight
of a cigarette makes me wanna
vomit.

MISSY
Of course, I'd give you the
service for free. You are family
after all.

CHRIS
Wow. I don't... Thank you. Um, I
don't know.

Chris looks to Rose for help.

ROSE
You guys, normal people don't want
strangers fiddling around in their
heads.

MISSY

If you change your mind... We're
just glad you could join us for
the big get-together.

Georgina brings the pitcher of iced tea around and refills everyone's glass. Chris tries to thank her with a look. She smiles and avoids eye contact.

CHRIS

The get-together?

ROSE

The party tomorrow? I told you.

CHRIS

I must have forgot.

MISSY

Oh, well we host a shindig once a
year for our friends.

DEAN

A tradition. Some of my Dad's old
social club. Some old patients.
Some just friends...

MISSY

Drinks, good food, good people...

CHRIS

Sounds fun.

Georgina has been pouring Chris' drink too long and his glass has overflowed.

MISSY

Georgina!

Georgina snaps out of her daze. She realizes what she's done and starts to clean.

MISSY (CONT'D)

It's fine George, I'll get it.
Maybe you need a nap.

Georgina nods, smiles and walks away. Chris and Rose look at Dean. That was odd. Dean shrugs.

A CAR HORN HONKS in front of the house.

DEAN

Jeremy's home.

JEREMY, 29, rounds the house with open arms.

He's "Rich kid intense"; handsome and strong with an unpredictable wildness behind his eyes.

JEREMY

Who answers the door around here?!

INT. ARMITAGE DINING ROOM - LATER/NIGHT

Everyone laughs.

Dean pours the remainder of a bottle of wine into Chris' glass. Their meal is done and they are tipsy. Jeremy pops the cork on a new bottle of wine as he energetically holds court.

JEREMY

One more... So, let me set the scene. I'm a junior; Ro's a freshman and she has a crush on this guy Connor--

ROSE

--No. Mom.

MISSY

Jeremy...

CHRIS

No, no... These are good. I wanna hear this.

DEAN

Manners, Rose. Give the guest what he wants.

JEREMY

Yeah, Rose.

ROSE

I hate you.

JEREMY

Connor Garfield was on my lacrosse team. Huge guy, like 6'3", and crazy, just like "Looney Tunes," right? We had thrown a party--

ROSE

You did.

JEREMY

I think my parents were in Greece or something. We had gotten into their liquor cabinet and we're all shit-faced.

MISSY

No you weren't. Were you?

JEREMY

We put water in the bottles so you wouldn't know. Let me finish.

Okay, so I'm upstairs in my parents' bathroom hooking up with Jenny Richardson. Hottest girl in our class.

MISSY

Uch.

ROSE

You realize you're coming off like a total douche right now, right?

JEREMY

Thanks. All of a sudden Connor starts banging on the bathroom door, right? I open it, and he's got blood gushing out of his mouth and he's screaming "Your thith-ter bit my fuckin' thongue off!!!!"

CHRIS

Whoa, what?

JEREMY

Sure enough, there is a centimeter of tongue meat missing right here.

Jeremy demonstrates and Chris winces.

CHRIS

(To Rose)

Ahhhh! You bit him?

ROSE

He cornered me and shoved his tongue in my mouth, so yeah.

CHRIS

Damn. That's badass, Bae.

MISSY

I'm going to see how dessert is coming along.

(to Dean)

Maybe we can change the conversation to something a little lighter.

ROSE

Yeah, great story. Thanks for making it totally uncomfortable.

Missy walks out of the dining room into the kitchen. The door swings open and Chris gets another glimpse of Georgina who stands with a kitchen knife and wears an intense and wicked little smile. The door swings shut.

DEAN

Okay, new subject. Chris, Yanks or Mets?

CHRIS

Ah, Orioles. My mom was from Baltimore so--

JEREMY

You an MMA fan?

ROSE

Oh God.

JEREMY

What?

DEAN

She's right. Let someone else talk for a bit.

JEREMY

You've had your chance. He's dating my sister. I can't bond with the guy?

Dean exhales.

CHRIS

You mean like UFC? Yeah, nah. Too brutal for me. I'm a lover, not a fighter.

JEREMY

You ever get into street fights as a kid?

CHRIS

Not really. I did take Judo for after-school in 1st grade.

ROSE

Awww.

JEREMY

Cause, with your frame, your genetic make-up? If you pushed your body, I mean really trained, you'd be a beast.

CHRIS

Cool... Thanks?

The kitchen door swings open again, and Missy walks back in with a perfect carrot cake. Georgina is gone.

MISSY

What'd I miss?

ROSE

More ramblings from King Awkward.

JEREMY

We're talking about sports.

(To Chris)

Stand up. Let me show you something.

MISSY

No karate at the dinner table.

JEREMY

It's not karate, it's jiu-jitsu.

He stumbles a little towards Chris and tries to put him in a headlock. Chris stands.

CHRIS

I've got a rule. I don't play-fight with drunk dudes.

JEREMY

I'm just--

DEAN

--Alright, enough Jeremy!

JEREMY

I wasn't going to hurt him.

Dean is loud and stern for the first time. Jeremy's eyes flutter, DRUNK and embarrassed. He grabs a wine bottle and goes upstairs`.

ROSE

And that's my brother.

EXT. THE ESTATE. NIGHT

Full moon. CRICKETS.

INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rose and Chris make hushed love in her bed. A stuffed lion seems to watch Chris. He turns it away.

INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Rose sleeps, but Chris is wide awake. There's a buzz in his ear. He smacks his own head and sits up. A soft HOWL of WIND rushes through the room. The CLOSET DOOR CREEKS open.

Chris' eyes drift to the pack of cigarettes sticking out of his camera bag pocket draped on the desk chair.

INT. ARMITAGE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Chris leaves Rose's room and walks down the dark hallway. A floorboard creaks under his feet. He turns down the stairs.

INT. ARMITAGE DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Chris gets to the bottom of the stairs. He hears the floorboard creek upstairs. He stops and turns, expecting someone to follow him down. Nothing. Chris continues to walk down the hallway past the pictures towards the kitchen.

The basement door is open a crack. Chris peers into it curiously. A stairwell leads down into pitch darkness. Chris shuts the door. A figure now stands at the end of the hallway behind him. He doesn't notice. He just keeps going into...

INT. ARMITAGE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Chris walks through the kitchen. He bumps into a bar chair moving it slightly. He keeps walking. He continues out the sliding back door of the house.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Chris steps out the back door and takes a cigarette out. Chris looks into the vast night around him. The CRICKETS are deafening.

Suddenly, something DARTS FAST across the yard in the distance. Chris peers out into the darkness. The thing RUNS across the lawn again. A moment of terror comes over Chris. He makes out a shape. It's now running towards him. Chris backs up in fear just as the figure emerges from the shadows and into the moonlight. It's Walter, the grounds keeper. He passes Chris without noticing. Chris gathers his breath.

The kitchen light turns on and floods the backyard. Chris drops the cigarette and stomps it out. He turns back towards the house and finds himself face to face with Georgina, who glares through the window dead in Chris' eyes. He's caught.

Georgina doesn't react. Chris it still. Georgina suddenly exposes her teeth in a frightening grimace. Chris backs away slowly.

INT. ARMITAGE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Georgina sucks her teeth. She doesn't actually see Chris at all. She's looking at her teeth in the reflection in the window which, front lit, reflects her and the room around her. Outside is invisible.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Chris realizes he's not caught. Close call. Inside Georgina notices the bar chair has been moved. She moves it back into its original position, and begins cleaning the kitchen cabinets. Chris quietly sneaks around the house.

INT. ARMITAGE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Chris sneaks in through the door in the dark dining room.

INT. ARMITAGE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Chris moves through the living room towards the stairs, the lamp in the middle of the room turns on startling Chris. Missy sits near him; cat in lap; almost seductively. He's caught; for real this time.

MISSY
Quick fix?

CHRIS
Yeah. Nerves got me I guess.

MISSY
Come. Let's nip this in the bud.

INT. MISSY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Missy sits in a chair and directs Chris to sit across from her. She pours them both some tea. Chris sits.

CHRIS
I still don't know if this is
right for me.

MISSY
There really is no need to be
nervous.

CHRIS
I'm good. The dude was running out
there. Scared me.

MISSY
Walter starts early every day.
He's borderline obsessive
compulsive. Tea?

CHRIS
Nah, I'm good. It'll keep me up.

Missy puts two sugar cubes in her cup. She begins to stir slowly, CLINKING the SPOON softly and rhythmically against the sides of the cup.

TING TING. TING TING.

MISSY
How's the bed. Good?

CHRIS
Yeah.

MISSY
Comfortable enough?

CHRIS
It's perfect, thanks.

MISSY
Enough sheets?

CHRIS
Yep.

TING TING. TING TING.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
So, how does this work? Are you
going to swing a pocket watch in
front of my face?

MISSY
You watch a lot of Television.
Now, you are feeling very
sleepy...

They share a smile.

MISSY (CONT'D)
We do use focal points sometimes,
but just about any object or
simple motion can guide someone to
a state of heightened
suggestibility.

CHRIS
Heightened suggestibility. Okay,
where do we start?

MISSY
Your childhood.

CHRIS
Yeah, my memory sucks.

TING TING. TING TING.

MISSY
Wounds get locked in your heart
and they fester and grow into ugly
little things like depression and
addiction. But, they are all in
there somewhere. All we need to do
is find the key.

TING TING. TING TING.

The world around Chris slowly goes out of focus.

CHRIS
I guess if it makes me quit...
Wait... Has it started--?

MISSY

--we're going to go back to a place that might be uncomfortable for you. Your Mother's death to be specific. Were you there when she was hit?

CHRIS

I was home. I was watching TV.

MISSY

Let's go back there. Hear this place. Let the vibrations rush run through your body and ears. Hear it... Find it... Tell me when you find it.

The sound of RAIN AGAINST a WINDOW slowly fades up along with the MUFFLED sound of a SITCOM ON TELEVISION.

CHRIS

Okay... Yeah, I found it.

TING TING. TING TING.

MISSY

Good. How did you find out she died?

CHRIS

I knew it. She was never late after work. When she didn't come home, I just knew something was wrong.

MISSY

Good. Now touch. Feel your surroundings. Feel every part of your body and what you touched. Feel it. Find it... Tell me when you find it...

FLASHBACK - INT. SMALL APARTMENT. NIGHT

Close on 11 year old Chris' hands scratches the bed post nervously.

MISSY (V.O.)

Tell me when you find it.

CHRIS (V.O.)

I found it.

His toes brush the carpet as his dangling legs swing off the side of his bed.

TING TING. TING TING.

PRESENT DAY - INT. MISSY'S OFFICE. - NIGHT

Chris' feet try to swing but are too long. He scratches the arm of the chair in Missy's office.

MISSY

You said 'you knew something was wrong.' What did you do?

CHRIS

Nothing.

MISSY

Nothing?

CHRIS

I just sat there. Watching TV.

MISSY

You didn't call someone? Your Aunt or the police?

CHRIS

No.

MISSY

Why not?

CHRIS

I don't know. I thought if I did, it would make it real.

MISSY

Next is smell and taste. Breathe in and let the scent fill your nose. Smell that place. Taste it. Find it.

Chris is getting emotional. He breathes deep through his nose.

FLASH BACK - INT. SMALL APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

Young Chris finishes inhaling. The rain hits the window sill.

MISSY (V.O.)

Tell me. Tell me when you find it.

Young Chris takes sip of a juice box.

PRESENT DAY - INT. MISSY'S OFFICE. NIGHT

26 year old Chris sips from an invisible straw.

CHRIS
I found it.

TING TING. TING TING.

MISSY
Good. Now lastly, you must see it.
Let the light flood into your
eyes. Every color, every detail.
See it. See it. Find it.

Chris' eyelids flutter. He continues to scratch the armchair.

TING TING. TING TING

FLASHBACK - INT. SMALL APARTMENT - NIGHT

11-year-old Chris scratches through the wood on his bed,
splintering the wood. He watches TV from his bed next to some
action figures.

MISSY (V.O.)
Tell me when--

11-year-old Chris nods.

TING TING. TING TING.

PRESENT DAY - INT. MISSY'S OFFICE. NIGHT

Chris nods and cries.

CHRIS
--Found it.

MISSY
(realizing)
You think it was your fault.

Chris nods.

TING TING. TING TING.

MISSY (CONT'D)
I want you to feel that fear
again, Chris.

CHRIS
I don't want to.

MISSY
It's okay. I'm here.

Chris trembles anxiously.

MISSY (CONT'D)
Are you afraid now? Paralyzed like
that day?

He nods. Her empathetic expression turns into a sick smile.

MISSY (CONT'D)
Good. Now sink into the floor.

CHRIS
Wait--

MISSY
Sink! Now!

TING TING...

Chris' hand has compulsively scratched open the arm of the chair. His hand stops. His mouth drops and eyes open, frozen.

FLASHBACK - INT. SMALL APARTMENT - NIGHT

...TING TING.

Suddenly, 11-year-old Chris falls through the bed and floor.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DARKNESS

Terror. Chris, 26 again, breathes fast but falls in slow motion through darkness as if through water.

TING TING. TING TING.

He flails towards a pitch black abyss. He's illuminated by the fading blue flicker of a large downward facing TV-like screen. On it Missy sits Speaking to him and clinking her teacup.

Missy's voice is everywhere.

MISSY
Good. Good. Sink. Sink.

PRESENT DAY - INT. MISSY'S OFFICE. NIGHT

Chris' body sits in his chair motionless. He can't move. His eyes are wide open, staring strait at Missy.

INT. DARKNESS

Chris continues to slowly fall backwards. Missy approaches on the screen above him. It shows what his eyes are seeing.

CHRIS

No! NO!!! I'm done! Bring me back!
Please!!!!

There is no response. Chris cries. Eventually he slows down and comes to a stop. He lands feet first on a soft ground. This place sounds like it's crawling with insects. He looks up. He can still see the screen above but it is far away, like the mouth of a deep and expansive well.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Mrs. Armitage!!!

On the screen, Missy stands. She walks towards Chris' body and looks down at him through his own eyes.

MISSY

Now you are in the Sunken Place.

Missy reaches towards the screen and shuts his eyelids. The abyss goes almost completely dark. Now he's alone in the dark. He cries in terror.

Chris hears a DEEP HULKING BREATHING in the darkness.

CHRIS

(whispering)

Something's down here...

No response.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Bring me back. Bring me back.
Bring me back. Bring me back...

In the darkness, the SOUND OF HOOVES CRUNCHING ON SOFT GROUND approaches.

THUNK THUNK. THUNK THUNK.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Bring me back. Bring me back.
Bring me back.

The sounds get louder and louder.

THUNK THUNK. THUNK THUNK.

An antlered thing emerges from the shadow. It's head is that of a deer, but with the flesh stripped off and with mostly its skull exposed.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

No!

Its eyes glow and flicker faint blue in its sockets. It MOANS A WRONG SOUNDING MOAN; in hateful anguish. It charges Chris...

THUNK THUNK. THUNK THUNK. THUNK THUNK.

The bloody deer impales Chris on its antlers. They both MOAN.

INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Chris wakes up with a start in Rose's bed sweaty and heaving. He's alone and confused. Bad dream? Headache.

The SHOWER RUNS inside Rose's bathroom. SHE HUMS.

DING DING

He's gotten a message. It's a picture of Rod pretending to pour beer in Sid's mouth. Chris smiles. The batteries are low. He plugs his phone in and puts it on the dresser.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAWN

It's Golden hour. Beautiful. Chris walks through the yard to the edge of the forest with his camera.

Chris keeps walking. He looks through a long-zoom lens into the wilderness. He sees a bird and snaps a picture.

He turns to the house. Georgina can be seen through an upstairs window knitting. He raises his camera. She's beautiful. She stands and begins to remove her wig. Then as if aware she's being watched, she turns towards him. Chris turns away, taking a picture in another direction. He glances back at the window. Georgina is gone.

BANG. A sparrow slams against the gazebo and falls to the ground. Startling Chris.

CHRIS

Damn.

He turns away and is startled even more by Walter smiling serenely at him about 50 feet away in the yard. Embarrassed, Chris gathers himself. He walks towards Walter.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
What's up?

No response.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
They working you good out here,
huh?

Walter's voice is soft and methodical. His eyes remain distant as though he is looking through Chris. Chilling. There is a hidden anger behind his pleasantness.

WALTER
Nothing I don't want to be doing.

CHRIS
Ha!

Walter isn't joking.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Yeah... yeah. No, I can tell. I
never really got to meet you
actually, up close. I'm Chris.

WALTER
I know who you are. You're Rose's
friend.

Chris stops walking about 15 feet from Walter. Something doesn't feel right.

CHRIS
Yeah. That's one way to put it.
So, where you from originally?

WALTER
She is lovely isn't she?

CHRIS
Rose? Yeah, she is...

WALTER
One of a kind; a real doggone
keeper.

Chris is weirded out.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Sorry if I scared you last night.

CHRIS
Oh, yeah. Actually, I guess I was
pretty drunk.
(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)
I don't remember much.

WALTER
And the hypnosis? Did it work?

CHRIS
Hypnosis? No, I didn't...

Chris remembers.

WALTER
Well, I should get back to work.

Chris raises his hand in a timid 'black power fist.' Walter raises his hand in an open wave.

CHRIS
There's another bird...

Walter nods. Chris turns and walks to the house. Chris makes pops a cigarette into his mouth. He is repulsed by the taste of it. He looks at it. More of last night seems to come back to him.

INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Chris enters as Rose finishes blow drying her hair. He's worked up.

ROSE
Hi. Where have you been?

CHRIS
Out. Taking pictures. Hey, so I think your mom hypnotised me last night.

ROSE
Wait, what?

CHRIS
(hazy)
I think I snuck out for a smoke, and she caught me and offered? I don't know. I must have agreed to it 'cause the thing just made me nauseous.

ROSE
Okay. Well then that's good, right?

CHRIS

No, not good. I can barely remember any of it even happening; I don't like that. Plus I had these fucked up dreams.

ROSE

That happened to me too.

CHRIS

What did?

ROSE

The nightmares. When I was a kid. She hypnotized me once for stage fright, and I had the craziest nightmares, but it worked...

She wraps herself up in Chris' arms. Chris thinks.

CHRIS

And, what's the deal with the help?

ROSE

Like... The iced tea thing? Yeah that was weird.

CHRIS

That, but also the lawn-mower guy creepin' me the fuck out too.

ROSE

Why? Did he say something?

CHRIS

It's not what he says, it's how he says it. You know?

ROSE

Yeah, something about them seems... different.

Out the window, A CAR DRIVES onto the front yard. Rose hears and looks.

ROSE (CONT'D)

They're here.

Chris looks as well. A car parks on the front lawn. A Chauffer gets out and opens the backseat passenger door. A well-trained Husky service dog exits the car followed by JIM HUDSON, 57. Jim is blind and has slicked back grey hair.

EXT. FRONT YARD - NOON

Bird's-eye view. Walter helps direct 12 expensive cars onto a makeshift parking lot on the front lawn. Wealthy guests emerge from each one.

EXT. BACKYARD - NOON

The party is in full swing. The 30 or so guests mingle excitedly. They are all white except for one Japanese man.

Through the kitchen window, Georgina fixes food and helps occupy four white children by helping them make Hors d'oeuvres.

Rose and Chris get a drink at the bar. They walk through the party. Missy mingles with some guests. She makes eye contact with Chris and winks. He looks away.

Chris and Rose are stopped by GORDON GREENE, 68, and his wife EMILY GREENE, 67. Gordon is a cute man with a cane and impish excitement. Emily is pretty and birdlike. They watch Chris intently and smile from ear to ear. Gordon shakes Chris' hand thoroughly.

GORDON

Nice to meet you, Chris. Nice to meet you indeed.

(to Emily)

Good grip.

CHRIS

Thanks. You too.

GORDON

You ever play golf?

CHRIS

Once, actually; a few years ago. I wasn't very good.

EMILY

Gordon was a professional golfer for years.

CHRIS

Oh? No kidding.

GORDON

Can't quite swing the hips like I used to though. You know, I met Tiger.

Rose and Chris share a subtle smirk.

ROSE CHRIS
Wow, that's great. Cool.

EMILY
Gordon loves Tiger.

GORDON
Best I've ever seen. Ever, hands
down. Let's see your form.

CHRIS
Me? I could barely hit the thing.

GORDON
Show me...

Chris does.

GORDON (CONT'D)
If I knew what I know now at your
age? Now then I could really play.

CHRIS
It'd be kind of a waste of time
travel though.

They laugh.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

Chris and Rose speak to NELSON DEETS, 82, who's smiles in a wheelchair with his jaw hanging, and LISA DEETS, 54, a loose-lipped trophy wife smiles at Chris in a predatory manner. They have Dutch accents.

LISA
(To Rose)
How handsome is he?

ROSE
Extremely.

Lisa squeezes Chris' bicep. A bit too familiar.

LISA
Not bad huh, Nelson?

NELSON
Eh?

LISA
(to Rose)
So, is it true? The love making.
Is it better?

Rose cackles at the bluntness of the question. Chris almost chokes on his drink. Lisa continues to size Chris up.

CHRIS
Wow. Um..

LISA
(to Rose)
I'm being too forward?

ROSE
We'll talk later.

CHRIS
Oh, will you now?

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

Chris and Rose talk to PARKER DRAY, 60, and APRIL DRAY, 57. They are an overweight, rose-cheeked tipsy wasp couple. Chris and Rose try to mask boredom and annoyance.

APRIL
Who even cares about skin color?
My God.

CHRIS
Right. I mean--

PARKER
The world cares, April. But it's
not a question of physical
superiority, it's "What skin color
is more culturally advantageous?"

As Parker drones on Chris looks around the party. Dean schmoozes animatedly with two couples. He quickly scans the party, finds Chris and points him out. The two couples wave and smile giddily. They had all just been talking about him. Chris pretends to not see this.

ROSE
"Advantageous?"

Suddenly, Chris sees another black guy walking through the crowd. Relief. It is Andre, the jogger from the first scene, but he's very different than before.

He seems glazed-over with the same frozen smile as Walter and Georgina, and wears a particularly square ascot and golfing hat.

PARKER

Fairer skin is has been in favor'
the last couple of thousands of
years, but the pendulum has swung
back again hasn't it..?

CHRIS

I'm sorry. I'm going to get
another drink.

Chris walks away.

PARKER

I didn't mean to offend him.

ROSE

Really? 'Cause you have yet to say
anything that's not a blanket
statement about race.

PARKER

Now, Rose.--

EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Andre stands by the bar and makes himself a Martini. Chris approaches him.

CHRIS

It's good to see another brother
around here.

Andre turns to face Chris neatly. Andre's voice is completely different from the first scene. There is no longer any trace of an urban dialect. He speaks in a lower pitch and slow, enunciating his words precisely.

ANDRE

Yes, of course it is.

Chris expects Andre to engage more. He doesn't. He just stares at him smiling.

CHRIS

Who do you know?

ANDRE

Why, the Armitage's of course.
We're friends of the family.

PHIL, 65, a craggy effeminate man with manicured eyebrows, cuts between them.

PHIL
(to Andre)
There you are. Here, put this
somewhere.

Phil hands his napkin to Andre who pockets it obediently. Phil places his hand on Andre's back possessively.

PHIL (CONT'D)
(to Chris)
Oh, hello. I'm Phil... and you
are...?

CHRIS
Chris. Rose's boyfriend.

PHIL
Fantastic. Logan and I know Rose
very well.

ANDRE
I'm sorry, where are my manners.
Logan, Logan King.
(To Phil)
Chris was just telling me that he
felt more comfortable with my
being here.

Chris is let down. Andre isn't what he had hoped.

PHIL
That's nice. Logan, I hate to tear
you away, dear, but the Wincott's
were asking about you.

ANDRE/LOGAN
Ah, well it was nice meeting you
Chris.

CHRIS
Sure.

Chris holds out his fist for Andre/Logan to bump. Andre/Logan shakes Chris' fist and then, realizing his error fist bumps him like it's the first time.

Andre/Logan and Phil laugh and walk away. They join a small group of people who applaud Andre's arrival. Andre does a little spin showing off his clothes.

EXT. BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Chris comes back to Rose. He is more creeped out and agitated.

ROSE
Where's your drink?

CHRIS
What? Oh, I forgot.

Dean projects over the crowd.

DEAN
Hello!

Everyone applauds and gives Dean their attention.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Achem! Once again, I want to thank
you all for coming. Words cannot
express how much it means to us
that after all these years we can
all still get together and share.
I'm reminded of stories of how the
knights of old would gather in
honor of a new crusade...

EXT. GAZEBO. DAY.

During Dean's speech, Chris wanders away from the group.

JIM
Ignorant shit...

Chris hadn't seen Jim Hudson, the blind man, who sits in the gazebo with his seeing eye dog. He is close to Chris, but far enough away from the group that no one else hears them.

CHRIS
Who?

JIM
All of them. Ignorant assholes.
They have no idea what real people
go through.

CHRIS
I guess people only see what's in
front of them.

Chris notices his faux pas.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I mean...

JIM

Heh. No, you're right. And usually not even that much. That's people.

Jim holds a glass up. Chris fist bumps the glass.

JIM (CONT'D)

Jim Hudson.

CHRIS

Chris-

JIM

I know who you are. I'm an admirer of your work; you have a great eye...

CHRIS

Wait. Jim Hudson... of Hudson Galleries?

Jim smiles.

JIM

The irony of being a blind art dealer isn't lost on me.

CHRIS

How do you do it?

JIM

I have an assistant describe work to me. You've got something... The images you capture... so brutally melancholic. Powerful stuff.

CHRIS

Thank you. Yeah, I just like finding the beauty in abandoned things.

JIM

I used to dabble myself. Wilderness mostly. I submitted to Nat Geo 14 times before realizing I didn't have "the eye" for it; Began dealing. And then, of course, my vision went to shit.

CHRIS

Damn.

JIM

I know. Life can be a sick joke.
One day you're working in a dark
room, and the next day - BAM. You
wake up in the dark. Genetic
disease.

CHRIS

Shit ain't fair, man.

JIM

Yeah.

Jeremy comes over with his preppy friend, Derrick, 29.

JEREMY

Chris, we need you...

CHRIS

Yeah, sure.
(to Jim)
Nice to meet you.

JIM

Stop by the gallery some time.
Bout time you had a solo show.

CHRIS

Really? Wow, okay. Thank you. That
would be a game changer.

JIM

I think we could do wonderful
things together.

EXT. BACKYARD - LATER

Chris and Rose play badminton against Jeremy and Derrick. A
gaggle of party guests watch, entertained. Chris is actually
having fun. He swings big but misses the shuttlecock.

JEREMY

HA! Come on. You can do better
than that!

CHRIS

Not my game, what can I say.

JEREMY

Yeah, I see that.

ROSE

Shut up Jeremy.

JEREMY

I'm just saying, if your boy isn't gonna bring his 'A' game, we might as well bring Mom up here.

CHRIS

Whoa, whoa, okay. Now we talkin' smack huh?

Chris serves the shuttlecock hard. The following rally is long, captivating the crowd. Chris ends it with an impressive diving swat. Derrick misses the return and the crowd goes wild. Chris throws his arms up in celebration.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Boom!

ROSE

Yay, baby!

JEREMY

See, that's what I'm talking about!!! Okay, again!

Chris is about to serve. He scans the crowd of beaming faces. Everyone is rooting for Chris. They love him. Chris scans the crowd. It's too much.

CHRIS

Hold up. Here.

ROSE

Where are you--

CHRIS

I'm gonna go to the bathroom.

Chris gives his racket to Gordon Greene.

INT. ARMITAGE HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Chris walks through the kitchen.

INT. ARMITAGE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Chris slips past several small groups of guests mingling. He goes up the stairs to the second floor.

As soon as he is out of sight and earshot, the mingling guests stop in mid-conversation. Everyone in the room waits and listens to CHRIS' FOOTSTEPS above.

It is now clear that their conversations have been fake. They are all hanging on Chris' actions.

INT. ARMITAGE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Chris walks to Rose's room.

INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Chris exits the bathroom in Rose's room. The bed is made. He picks his phone up from the dresser. It's unplugged and out of batteries. That's odd. He plugs it in again as he hears a CREAK down the hall.

INT. ARMITAGE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Chris leaves Rose's room. A door at the end of the hallway is a crack open. Chris slowly walks down the hall, and peers inside. A couple lacrosse trophies and one for ju-jitsu. Jeremy's room. Movement inside. It's Georgina making the bed. The door creaks alerting her of his presence, she turns slowly. Before she sees him he walks quickly back to Rose's room just as she comes upstairs.

ROSE

Hey! You okay?

Chris waves for her to join him back in her room.

INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Chris speaks quietly and frantically to Rose.

CHRIS

The housekeeper unplugged my phone.

Rose sighs. "Not this again."

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I'm trying to check in with Rod, and I got no juice.

ROSE

I'm sure it was an honest mistake.

CHRIS

Yeah, or maybe not. Maybe she doesn't like the fact that I'm with you.

ROSE

Chris...

CHRIS
What? It's a thing.

ROSE
You think my family's housekeeper
gives a shit who you're with?
That's crazy bae.

Chris sits on the bed and rubs his forehead.

CHRIS
Forget it. Nevermind.

ROSE
Look, I get it. This whole thing
is stressful. I mean, they're
circling you like hyenas down
there. I just don't get why you're
taking it out on George and
Walter.

CHRIS
(passive aggressive)
You're right. I'm being paranoid.
I just need a minute and I'll be
down.

ROSE
Fine.

Rose leaves a little annoyed.

INT. CHRIS' APARTMENT - DAY

Rod eats a cheeseburger and watches a true crime show on
Chris' couch with Sid the dog. His PHONE RINGS.

ROD
Hey.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ROSE'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Chris is alone in Rose's room. He peers out the window.

CHRIS
Bruh. What's up?

ROD
Not much. Sid's chillin'. We
eatin' burgers. What's up with
you?

CHRIS

Yeah...

ROD

Uh oh. That doesn't sound good.

CHRIS

They just got me over here meeting all the family friends. It's like they never met a black dude that doesn't work for them or some shit.

ROD

Oh, they got you on display?

CHRIS

Exactly. Also, I got hypnotised last night...

ROD

Nigga, what the fuck? Oh, Hell no!

CHRIS

Yeah, to quit smoking. Rose's mom is a hypnotherapist--

ROD

--Nope. I don't give a fuck if she's Dr. Drew up in this bitch. You ain't getting in my head.

CHRIS

(Seeing Rod's point)
Right.

ROD

Who knows what they'll make you do. You know white people into some crazy sex slave shit.

Chris laughs.

CHRIS

Yeah, I'm like 99% sure they're not a kinky sex family, but-

ROD

Why not? Jeffery Dahmer ate niggas' heads, but that was after he fucked the heads.

ROD (CONT'D)

You think they saw that shit coming? Hell no.

(MORE)

ROD (CONT'D)

One second they think they just gonna suck some dick, next second they sucking dick but their head isn't on their body Chris.

CHRIS

And thanks for that image, right there.

ROD

I saw that on A&E, so that's real life.

CHRIS

It's the black people out here that are the weirdest. The help. It's like they're possessed or...

ROD

Hypnotised.

CHRIS

(dry)
Ha ha--

ROD

I'm just connecting the dots you presenting me with. The mom puttin' trances on niggas and fuckin' them. It's clear as day and that's fucked up. She hot?

CHRIS

What's fucked up is: You're the first line of defense against terrorism.

ROD

This is good shit tho.

CHRIS

Oh, and the one other black guest is like the whitest-most dude at the party.

Rod laughs.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I mean Rod, if you could see what this dude is wearing.

ROD

Send me a picture. You are a photographer.

(MORE)

ROD (CONT'D)
You should be documentin' this
shit.

CHRIS
(amused)
Aiight. I'll try.

ROD
And yo, don't say I didn't warn
you 'cause my ass sure as Hell
ain't coming up to the country to
save you from no fuckin' witch
coven... Unless the mom's hot. She
hot?

CHRIS
Thanks Rod, bye.

Chris hangs up and brings his phone with him. He opens the
door. Georgina stands right outside it, eerie smile and all.
Chris is startled.

GEORGINA
Hello.

CHRIS
Hi.

Georgina's voice is shaky and careful.

GEORGINA
I owe you an apology. I shouldn't
be touching things that don't
belong to me.

CHRIS
Oh, no. It's cool. I was just
confused.

GEORGINA
I lifted your cellular phone this
morning to wipe down the dresser
and it accidentally came undone,
see?

CHRIS
Yeah, I--

GEORGINA
Rather than meddle with it
further, I left it that way.

CHRIS

Really, it's okay. I didn't mean
to rat you out.

Georgina eyes get lost for a moment. There's a pain behind her
smile.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

...get you in trouble.

GEORGINA

Oh no, no, no, no, no, no...
Aren't you the sweetest thing? Not
at all. The Armitages are so good
to us; They treat us like family.

EXT. BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

Chris walks back into the back yard where Dean entertains
seven people Chris hasn't met. They turn as Chris approaches
smiling eagerly. They all seem to share a private joke.

DEAN

Chris! There you are. I wanted to
introduce you to some old friends.
We'll do it quickly. Down the
line: David and Marcia Wincott,
Ronald and Celia Jeffries, Hiroki
Tanaka, and Fredrich and Jessika
Walden.

Each couple - DAVID and MARCIA, RONALD and CELIA, HIROKI,
FREDRICH and JESSIKA - waves as they are named.

CHRIS

Too many names to remember but...

The couples all laugh nervously.

HIROKI

(to Dean in Japanese)
Can we ask him questions?

DEAN

(Japanese)
Of course.

HIROKI

Do you find that being African
American has more advantages or
disadvantages in the modern world?

Chris pans the crowd who all give him their undivided
attention. The silence is long. Chris sighs. He looks for
Rose. She is off talking to someone.

CHRIS

Yeah, I don't know, man.

They all smile like hungry vampires. Chris is very uncomfortable with this unprovoked group interrogation. Andre/Logan and Phil approach.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

That's actually a great question.
Logan! They were asking me about
the African American experience.
Maybe you could take this one.

Andre/Logan is a little caught off guard but dives in.

ANDRE/LOGAN

My life as an African American has
been, for the most part, very
good. It's hard to be too specific
as I haven't much desired to leave
the house in a while.

The crowd chuckles. Chris takes out his phone.

PHIL

We've become homebodies...

ANDRE/LOGAN

(To Phil)

But recently, even when you go to
the city, I've just had no
interest.

(To the group)

The chores are my sanctu--

With the attention on Andre/Logan, Chris subtly backs away from the conversation. He raises his phone toward Andre/Logan and the group and snaps a picture. The FLASH POPS.

CHRIS

Shit.

Everyone turns to Chris. Andre/Logan steps forward and looks at Chris oddly; His head cocks a little and his peaceful expression drifts slowly to maddened horror. Some of the party guests gasp.

PHIL

Logan?

Andre/Logan drops his glass and stumbles towards Chris. Chris backs up, but Andre is already up in his space.

ANDRE

Get out.

Andre/Logan's voice is higher and scratchy, like it was in the first scene.

CHRIS

Hey, man, I'm sorry, I--

Andre/Logan grabs Chris by the shoulders and screams shrilly. Blood trickles out of his nose.

ANDRE

GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!!!!

Phil and Jeremy grab Andre. They have to pry Andre/Logan's grip off of Chris. When they do Andre/Logan screams bloodcurdlingly. It takes all their strength to bring him into the house. Missy and Dean follow.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Rose sits on the couch. She's been crying. Chris comforts her but is clearly traumatised. A few other concerned guests mill around. Dean enters everyone gives him their attention.

ROSE

What the Hell was that?

DEAN

It was a seizure.

ROSE

A seizure?

DEAN

Yes. Logan's okay. Missy's with him now. Are you okay Chris?

CHRIS

Yeah. Why did he come at me like that?

ROSE

Yeah seizures don't make people attack people, I'm sorry.

DEAN

It was an abnormal manifestation but yes, actually, sometimes they do. The flash on your phone must have triggered it.

Andre/Logan enters with stands with Missy and Phil to a smattering of concerned applause.

He addresses a group in his lower pitched "Logan" voice.

ANDRE/LOGAN

Well, I do believe I owe you all
an apology.

The group grumbles.

MISSY

We're just glad you're feeling
yourself again.

ANDRE/LOGAN

Well yes I am. It's quite like
being trapped in a dark room and
watching my experiences through a
window. Thank God you and Dean
were here to calm me down.

DEAN

It's a simple glitch of the brain.
Nothing to be afraid of.

ANDRE/LOGAN

I know I scared you all quite a
bit.. especially you Chris.

CHRIS

No, I'm sorry about the flash. I
didn't know.

ANDRE/LOGAN

Of course. How could you have?

PHIL

(to Andre/Logan)

You shouldn't have been drinking
either.

The group chuckles.

ANDRE/LOGAN

As I said I'm feeling much better
now, but you'll all have to
proceed without the aid of my
marvellous wit; the whole thing
has left me a quite a bit
exhausted.

DEAN

Of course.

ANDRE/LOGAN

It was nice meeting you.

CHRIS

Yeah, you too.

Chris is skeptical. Missy shows Phil and Logan out. Andre and Phil leave.

DEAN

Let's do sparklers shall we?
Brighten the mood?

He gives Chris and Rose sparklers and to other people who light them.

ROSE

Let's go.

Rose takes Chris' hand.

MISSY

Anybody need a drink?

ROSE

We're going on a walk.

Rose grabs Chris' hand and leads him out the front door. The party guests in the living room, Dean and Missy included, go silent. As their sparklers burn they approach the window, watching Rose and Chris leave the front yard.

EXT. LAKESIDE - AFTERNOON

Rose and Chris walk by the lake. Their sparklers fizzle.

CHRIS

My cousin is epileptic. That
wasn't a seizure.

ROSE

Honestly? That was one of the
strangest things I've ever seen in
my life.

CHRIS

Also, this is gonna sound weird,
but when he got up in my face like
that, I got the feeling like I
knew that guy.

EXT. BACK YARD. SAME TIME

With Chris and Rose are away, the party guests have all gathered in the back yard facing Dean who stands by a large picture of Chris on an easel. Everyone is silent.

Dean raises his hand and makes numbers with his fingers: "Three and three." Several party guests raise their hands. Dean points to the Waldens.

This is an auction.

EXT. LAKESIDE - SAME TIME

CHRIS

Let's go back home tonight.

ROSE

What? Wait, no.

CHRIS

I'm just... Something doesn't feel right.

ROSE

You mean with us?

CHRIS

No. With this whole situation! I just... I can't explain but I need you to trust me. Let's just go. It doesn't even have to be a big deal.

ROSE

It is a big deal. It's my family. I wouldn't even know what to tell them.

INT. BACKYARD - SAME TIME

Dean raises his hand again making more numbers with his fingers: "4, 5."

Gordon Greene raises his hand. Dean points to him accepting his bid.

EXT. LAKESIDE - SAME TIME

ROSE

Yes, it's weird. There are a lot of ways I wish this was going different. I wish my brother wasn't a cock. I wish my parents friends were chill; but just because it's tough, it doesn't mean you run away...

Rose cries.

CHRIS

Baby, I--

ROSE

...I'm late.

CHRIS

Late?

ROSE

I should've got my period like last week.

CHRIS

Oh.

ROSE

I mean, I did change my birth control, so it could just be that, but...

Chris thinks silently.

ROSE (CONT'D)

So...?

CHRIS

I don't know what to say.

ROSE

Okay... Try any emotional response whatsoever.

He's silent. Rose wipes her tears.

ROSE (CONT'D)

If you wanna go then go. I'm not going to force you to stay but I'm not leaving.

EXT. BACKYARD - SAME TIME

The auction is flying now. Dean's hand signals are going fast. It's down to three couples.

Dean signals "5, 6." Mr. Greene raises his hand. Dean points.

Dean signals "5, 8." Mrs. Deets raises her hand. Dean points.

Dean signals "6." Jim Hudson raises both his hands and signals "10." His chauffeur stands beside him whispering in his ear. Dean points at him.

Dean scans the crowd signalling "10, 2?" "10, 2?" The crowd looks around. No one is challenging. Dean smiles. Finally Dean bangs his fist onto his open palm and points to Jim Hudson. Jim's chauffeur whispers in his ear.

The guests clap in a mixture of delight and disappointment.

EXT. LAKESIDE - DUSK

Chris and Rose sit watching the sunset over the lake. Chris kisses her hand. He hears the faint APPLAUSE in the distance. He looks in the direction of the house.

CHRIS

I told you about the night my mom died. How I didn't call 911; didn't go out looking for her.

ROSE

Baby--

CHRIS

One hour went by, then two, three... I just sat there... I just watched TV.

ROSE

It wasn't your fault--

CHRIS

I found out later she had survived the initial hit.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

She laid there bleeding by the side of the road all night, cold and alone. And that's how she died in the early morning... Cold and alone. And I was watching TV.

(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)

There was time. If someone was
looking for her, there was time.
But no one was looking.

Chris cries. Rose embraces him.

ROSE

You were just a kid.

CHRIS

Yeah... yeah. So, I'm not gonna
leave here without you. I'm not
going to abandon you. Never.

They share a moment of pure love.

ROSE

Fuck it. Come on. Let's go back
home.

CHRIS

Yeah?

ROSE

Yeah. I mean, you're right. This
sucks. I'll go back with you. I'll
make something up.

CHRIS

I love you.

ROSE

I love you too.

The two get up and walk back toward the house.

EXT. FRONT LAWN - DUSK

Chris and Rose approach the house as the last of the guests
get into their cars and drive off. The fireflies are out.

CHRIS

That was fast.

ROSE

Yeah.

The guests wave to Dean and Missy, who stand at the front
door, and then to Chris and Rose. Lisa Deets, the trophy wife,
is tipsy. Nelson is in their car.

LISA

Bye Chris! It was a pleasure
meeting you. I hope you--

Chris and Rose wave.

NELSON

Come on, Lisa. Before you say
something stupid.

Chris laughs. Walter shuts the car door behind Lisa. Walter
stands pleasantly watching the cars leave. He turns to Chris
with the same 'ol smile. Chris and Rose enter the house.

INT. ARMITAGE BATHROOM - DUSK

Sink running. Chris washes his hands and looks in the mirror.

His phone SIGNALS a text message from Rod. It's picture from
the internet of witches in a circle around a man being
sacrificed followed by the text message. "You dead yet?" Chris
texts back. "Bruh, you have no idea." He finds the picture he
took of Logan/Andre on his phone and sends it.

Moments later, his phone vibrates.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CHRIS' APARTMENT - DUSK

Rod is on the phone.

ROD

That's Dre.

CHRIS

Dre?

ROD

Andre um... Hayworth! Yeah! He
used to kick it with Veronica.

CHRIS

Veronica from...

ROD

...Teresa's sister! Worked at the
movie theatre on 8th;

ROD (CONT'D)

got us into the movie a couple of
times; Rush hour 2 and, um Usual
Suspect.

CHRIS
Yeah. That is him. But...

ROD
...But what?

CHRIS
This is so fuckin' crazy. He's
different now.

ROD
Different? How?

CHRIS
Different. Slower... I mean he was
street; now he's all like...
white- seeming. Oh, plus he's gay!

ROD
No, he ain't.

CHRIS
I'm telling you: He's gay, I met
his man. He's--

ROD
Chris, you in a fucked up Eyes
Wide Shut situation. You need
to--.

The phone goes dead. No batteries.

INT. ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chris' phone lays on the dresser plugged in. He's in a hurry now. He packs his small bag and looks out the window. One car remains parked in the designated parking area. It's the first to have arrived for the party: Jim Hudson's. The driver brings the dog to the back seat. He gets a green envelope from the glove compartment and brings it to Missy at the front door. She accepts it silently.

The driver drives away without Jim.

Chris goes to leave Rose's room. Her closet creaks open. Chris sees a framed picture of Rose inside. Not quite knowing what he's looking for, he goes to the closet. The picture is a frightening one. Rose is one of the witches in a high school production of Macbeth. It's on top of a red shoebox that has the drama/comedy masks drawn on top of it.

He takes it off of the shelf. Inside is a pile of pictures. On top is one of Rose dressed as Juliet in a high school play.

The next one is of Rose at 13 playing Ms. Hannigan in Annie. Chris flips through a few more pictures of Rose at different ages in different class plays.

Finally Chris comes upon a photo printed from a computer. It's a selfie of her and some other black guy. The picture is almost identical to the one she took with Chris before the ride up. Under the image are written the words. "X-mas 2014" Stunned, Chris flips to the next picture. It's another romantic selfie, this time with a different black guy. Underneath, the caption "Memorial Day 2013"

He continues flipping through the stack of pictures of Rose with 8 different black guys. The last one is a picture of Rose with Walter. In it she kisses Walter's cheek intimately. "Thanksgiving 2009" Walter looks different in the picture. He isn't smiling vaguely; he's got swagger.

ROSE
(emotionless)
What are you doing?

Rose stands there in the doorway behind him. Chris subtly drops the pictures back in the shoebox.

CHRIS
Um... Looking for my camera.

Rose points to her desk. He grabs his bag and the camera.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
Where are the keys..? I gotta put
our bags in the trunk.

ROSE
Walter can do that.

CHRIS
Nah, I'll do it.

Rose is truly distant for the first time. A different person. She is methodical and emotionless. The jig is up, and now she is now phoning it in.

ROSE
I was just looking for them. I'm
such a mess, will you help me?

Chris walks out the door, leaving Rose.

INT. FOYER/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rose follows Chris down the stairs.

ROSE
Chris... What's wrong?

CHRIS
Nothing.

Jeremy stands near the front door twirling his lacrosse stick.
Dean and Missy sit in the living room.

JEREMY
Where are you going? The party's
just getting started.

CHRIS
I'm going to the car; see if we
left the keys in there.

MISSY
I just made tea.

CHRIS
I'm good.

The family is silent. Missy's glare pierces Chris. He avoids
eye contact.

ROSE
Oh, I know where they are. In my
bag. Duh.

MISSY
You're leaving us.

CHRIS
Yeah.

MISSY
Is something wrong?

CHRIS
No. Well, yeah... Um.

ROSE
(still blank)
His dog is not well. He needs to
go to the vet first thing in the
morn--

Dean hits play on the sound system. Darkly valiant classical
music begins. He standing in front of the fireplace.

Lost in the fire, Dean begins conducting the music.

DEAN

What is your purpose, Chris?

CHRIS

What?

DEAN

In life? What is your purpose..?

CHRIS

Right now, it's finding the keys.

DEAN

We've been looking for our purpose for such a long time. Fire has mesmerized man since the Stone Age. It is a reflection of our impermanence in the world. Fire is born, it breathes and then it dies.

CHRIS

Rose...

Rose lamely rummages through her bag.

ROSE

I'm looking.

CHRIS

Rose, what is this shit?!

DEAN

There's a reason we worship the Sun, Chris. He who lights the way through the darkness of life. He in all his glory was around long before us and will be here long after we are gone, but he too will die some day! That's right even the Sun God will die. It is no less mortal than we, but it inspires us to defy it! So what do we do?--

CHRIS

--Rose.--

DEAN

(unhinged)

--What do we do?! We baptize ourselves in the firewater!

(MORE)

DEAN (CONT'D)

We bathe in his reflection, for
one chance to emerge having defied
death!

DEAN (CONT'D)

You'd take that baptism wouldn't
you, Chris? The baptism of
immortality?

CHRIS

I was raised Episcopalian.

Chris starts toward the door, but his path is blocked by
Jeremy swinging at air.

JEREMY

Whoa! Be careful, bro.

MISSY

Don't hurt him, Jeremy.

JEREMY

What? I'm not doing anything.

DEAN

Listen, Chris--

CHRIS

--I don't know what you're saying!

DEAN

(Through tears of joyous
madness)

I'm saying that we've found OUR
PURPOSE!!! There must be a
sacrifice! Sacrifice is essential
for the righteous to achieve our
true potential. A vessel must be
comprised. A host must be born!!!

CHRIS

Rose! The keys!!!

Rose backs away.

ROSE

Oh baby... You know I can't give
you the keys.

Chris makes a run for the door. Missy CLINKS the cup with her
SPOON.

TING TING. TING TING.

The world instantly blurs around Chris. He begins to fall. He sees a flash.

INT. DARKNESS

Chris falls through the abyss towards 'The Sunken Place' again just like when he was hypnotized. The blue screen above him shows what his open eyes see. It's his own perspective falling to the floor. CRASH! The screen now shows the living room ceiling. Jeremy leans over him.

JEREMY

Oh shit!

MISSY (O.S.)

Is he hurt?

CHRIS

What the fuck?

JEREMY

Did you see him drop?

DEAN (O.S.)

He hit his head pretty good.

ROSE (O.S.)

It's just a bump. He's fine.

CHRIS

Rose!!!

MISSY (O.S.)

Why do you push them, Dean?

DEAN (O.S.)

It's important to me that they acknowledge the purpose.

MISSY (O.S.)

Why do you think he ran?

JEREMY (O.S.)

Rose gave it away.

ROSE (O.S.)

He already knew.

MISSY (O.S.)

Take him to the games room.
Jeremy, get the legs. Dean, help him.

JEREMY

I can take him alone.

MISSY (O.S.)

No. We've already damaged him
enough. Dean, please.

Chris continues to fall slowly further from the screen above which continues to show his body's POV as it is being lifted by Dean and Jeremy and carried out of the room.

CHRIS

Rose!? No, no, no, no. Shit,
shit...

DEAN

You're going to drop him.

JEREMY

No I'm not.

MISSY (O.S.)

Be careful what you say, everyone.
He can hear every word.

CHRIS

Rose!!!!

ROSE (O.S.)

It doesn't matter any more does
it?

A DOOR CREAKS open. Chris' body is taken downstairs into the darkness. The screen in the abyss goes dark.

CHRIS

No!! Help!!! Help!!!!!! Help!!!!!!

Chris sinks, his screams are enveloped by the pitch black.

INT. AIRPORT - SECURITY CHECK - DAY

Rod sits by the bag x-ray but stares into space distracted by thought. GARY (40) a condescending supervisor snaps his fingers in Rod's face.

GARY

Hey... two strikes. Go take 10;
get it together.

EXT. AIRPORT - DEPARTURES TERMINAL - DAY

Rod smokes a cigarette and dials Chris.

CHRIS' VOICEMAIL MESSAGE (V.O.)

It's Chris. I'm away from my phone
or I just don't want to talk to
you.

ROD

Sup? Making sure you good. I
thought you were coming back
yesterday, so hopefully you home
already and just sleeping or some
shit. Aiight. Let me know.

INT. CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Rod opens the door. Sid wags his tail hungrily.

INT. CHRIS' KITCHEN - LATER

Rod opens dog food while he calls Chris.

CHRIS' VOICEMAIL MESSAGE (V.O.)

Hey, it's Chris. I'm away from my
phone or I just don't want to talk
to--

Rod hangs up. He places Sid's bowl down. Sid doesn't eat.
Instead Sid looks back up at Rod and WHINES.

ROD

Yeah... me too.

INT. CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - LATER

Rod sits at Chris' desk in front of his laptop. Sid sits on
Rod's lap. Rod types "Andre Hayworth" into the search engine.
Images of Andre come up.

Rod finds an article entitled: "What Happened to Andre
Hayworth?" under in bold "Brooklyn Native Goes Missing In
Evergreen Hallow."

Rod's eyes go wide.

ROD

Oh shit.

INT. GAMES ROOM - LATER

Chris wakes up with a bump on his head. In front of Chris, a deer's head is mounted above an old-school floor-standing television. Behind him, a goat's head is mounted under a taxidermy owl, wings spread.

His arms and legs fastened to a leather upholstered chair in the middle of a small dark room full of board games.

Chris pulls at the straps that bind his arms and legs.

CHRIS

Hey. Hey!!!! Rose!!!!

Chris tries to gnaw at the harnesses, but they are too thick.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Oh shit. Oh shit. Oh fuck. Oh
shit. The fuck?!?! Y'all are
psycho!? Is that it? Let me out of
this chair.

Chris looks around.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

People know I'm here. I told a
bunch of people where I was going!
You don't know me!!! You don't
know me!!!! Hey! Hey!! Hey!!!!!!

The television screen turns on. Chris watches intently. The image of deer walking through woods comes on. The words

"YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND by James Taylor" comes up as the song starts to PLAY. It's a forest-themed karaoke video.

Chris is confused. He tries to slip out of the binds again drawing blood on his wrists.

INT. CHRIS' LIVING ROOM - DAWN

Sid wakes Rod up with a lick to the face. He's on the sofa.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Rod sits at a desk with Sid on his lap.. DETECTIVE LATOYA 50, African American enters. She looks like she's been doing this way too long. She speaks to someone outside her office.

DETECTIVE LATOYA

...Then he should've gone back up
there and made sure everything was
accounted for.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE LATOYA (CONT'D)
'Cause hey, look; how about this?
If you record the evidence, you're
responsible for it.

Latoya shuts the door and sits at her desk. She begins opening
and eating a bag of cashews.

DETECTIVE LATOYA (CONT'D)
Hello Mr...

ROD
Williams... Rod Williams...

DETECTIVE LATOYA
From the TSA?

ROD
Yes Ma'am.

DETECTIVE LATOYA
You know that TSA issues should be
brought to your authorizing
officer, right?

ROD
It's not TSA business, ma'am.

DETECTIVE LATOYA
Please don't call me "ma'am," or
we're not gonna get along. How can
I help you, Rod Williams from the
TSA?

CHRIS
Here it is: My boy Chris has been
missing for two days.

DETECTIVE LATOYA
Your son is missing?

ROD
No, sorry, not my son, my boy.
He's my friend. He's 26. His name
is Chris... Washington...

He gives her time to write the name which she doesn't do. She
just stares at him.

ROD (CONT'D)
He left town on Friday with his
girlfriend Rose... Armitage...
She's white.

DETECTIVE LATOYA
That's four days ago.

ROD
Yeah, I mean he's only been
MISSING for two days. He was
supposed--

DETECTIVE LATOYA
--I'm gonna stop you right there.
Now you know the minimum amount of
time without contact before you
can file a missing persons report
is--

ROD
--Three days I know, but I have
reason to believe he's been
abducted.

DETECTIVE LATOYA
Go on.

ROD
Chris was set to come back home on
Sunday. I was watching his dog
Sid.

Latoya points to Sid

DETECTIVE LATOYA
That's Sid.

ROD
Yup. Cute right? Now look...

Rod takes out his phone and scrolls to a photo of Andre.

ROD (CONT'D)
Chris sent me this which he took
at the girlfriend's parents house.
That's Andre Hayworth, a guy we
knew from back in the day. Come to
find out he went missing 6 months
ago in an affluent suburb upstate.

DETECTIVE LATOYA
Don't look too missing to me.

ROD
Well that's the thing. We found
him and now, according to Chris,
he's gay with a different
personality.

DETECTIVE LATOYA

Gay?

ROD

But he didn't used to be.

DETECTIVE LATOYA

I think he might just argue with you on that one.

ROD

I know what I'm about to say is gonna sound crazy.

DETECTIVE LATOYA

Try me.

ROD

You ready for this...? I think this family is abducting black people and brainwashing them to work for them as sex slaves and shit... Sorry.

DETECTIVE LATOYA

...Brainwashing?

ROD

Yeah.

DETECTIVE LATOYA

Hold on one second.

(over her intercom)

Garcia, Frostie, get in here a second.

(To Rod)

I want you to tell these officers exactly what you just told me.

INT. POLICE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Two detectives, Garcia, 37, and Drake, 43, stand behind Latoya.

ROD

...See, I don't know if the hypnosis makes you a slave or if just turns you gay or what, but they already got two brothers that we know of, and who knows how many more there could be.

The officers are all riveted... Then... All three detectives laugh. Rod is not being taken the slightest bit seriously.

LATOYA
(to her colleagues)
So, I don't want none of you
sayin' I don't do nothin' for
you... White girls'll get ya every
time!

They laugh even harder.

INT. GAMES ROOM - LATER

The SONG PLAYS Over and over. Chris is too weak to struggle.

CHRIS
Is this the only song you got?

INT. GAMES ROOM - LATER

The SONG ends. It BEGINS again.

CHRIS
Okay. Okay! What do you want? You
tryin' to break me? I won't say
shit!! I'll just... I'll do what
you say, just answer me!

INT. CHRIS' LOFT - DUSK

Rod sits by the window with Sid. He looks out over rooftops and thinks. He picks up his phone and calls Chris again. He knows Chris won't answer. Then--

ROSE
Hello?

Rod is taken off guard. He almost drops his phone.

ROSE (CONT'D)
Chris?

ROD
Yo. Um, Rose? It's Rod.

ROSE
Hi.

ROD
Where's Chris?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ARMITAGE HOUSE. DINING ROOM - DUSK

Rose stands by the dining table on Chris' phone. Rose starts to cry.

ROSE
He left like two days ago.

ROD
He left?

ROSE
We got in a fight. He got all
paranoid and flipped out; He took
a cab home. He forgot his phone.
Wait... You haven't seen him?

ROD
No. He never made it back here.

ROSE
Oh my God.

ROD
I've been calling. I went to the
police and everything.

Rose is silent.

ROD (CONT'D)
Hello?

ROSE
What did you say?

ROD
I told them he was missing.

ROSE
Uh huh...

ROD
So... What cab company did he use?

ROSE
I don't know. A local one I'm
guessing. Maybe uber? Wait, I'm so
confused...

ROD
Hold on a second.

Rod knows she had something to do with it.

He opens up 'Garage Band' on Chris' computer and puts the phone on speaker, recording her.

ROD (CONT'D)

So, last time Chris and I talked,
he told me your mom hypnotized
him?

Rose is silent. Then...

ROSE

Rod, just stop.

ROD

Huh?

ROSE

I know why you're calling.

ROD

Why is that?

We now see Rose's family standing in the living room behind her. They watch her operate.

ROSE

Come on. I mean, it's kind of
obvious.

ROD

What?

ROSE

That there's something between us.

ROD

No. I'm calling about Chris.

ROSE

We'd all go out drinking... I
remember you looking at me.

Rod is put on the spot. He becomes extremely uncomfortable.

ROD

That's my best friend. If you did
something--

ROSE

I know you think about fucking me,
Rod.

ROD

--No. You crazy... No.

Rod hangs up in a panic. He looks at Sid helplessly.

Rose's flirtacious smile goes blank. She places the phone on the dining room table and looks back at her family. They watch in approval.

INT. GAMES ROOM

"You've Got A Friend" plays.

Chris, still strapped to the chair, hangs his head in resignation. Eyes shut, he sings along.

CHRIS

...Winter, Spring, Summer and
Fall, all you need to do is call.
And I'll be there. You got a
friend. Ain't it good to know
you've got a friend. Ain't it good
to know you've got a friend. Oh,
yeah, yeah, you've got a friend.

The song is over. After a moment. Chris begins to sing the opening guitar lick. He gets a couple notes before realizing he's singing alone.

The television in front of Chris flickers off and then back on to the image of a tea cup comes into focus on the screen. A spoon comes into the shot and clicks the side of the cup.

"TING TING, TING TING"

CHRIS (CONT'D)

No-

Before he can react, Chris falls asleep.

Later...

Chris wakes up bald. Static snow clicks fills the TV lighting the room. The image clicks to that of...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY (TELEVISION)

Jim Hudson, also shaven, sits on a hospital bed. And faces Chris through the television.

JIM

Hello Chris. How's it going...?
You can answer. There's an
intercom in the room; I can hear
you.

CHRIS

I need water.

JIM

Yeah, sorry about that. If it makes you feel any better, I'm thirsty too.

CHRIS

I need to get outta here.

JIM

Right. So, the reason I am talking to you now is so you can understand what is happening to you. I guess your 'understanding' it raises the success rate of this whole thing. Not even sure I 'understand' it.

CHRIS

Where's Rose?

JIM

Hot isn't she? Hot voice anyway, you dirty dog. You're one of the lucky one's. The son Jeremy's wrangling method sounds way less pleasant.

CHRIS

Is this some kind of a game to you?

JIM

They asked me for my favorite song, which was hard; I like all types of music. Turns out they really just needed one I knew all the words to: I went with James Taylor's "You Got a Friend." I hope it hasn't been too torturous; that wasn't the point. The point is that you learn it, and for us to have that knowledge in common.

CHRIS

Who the fuck are you people?

JIM

Oh right. Okay, let me back up and give you the cliff notes. The Armitages and I are a part of a society. A pretty extraordinary society actually.

(MORE)

JIM (CONT'D)

One whose sole purpose for many many years has been a search for a very powerful object. Armitage lineage redefined the nature of that search. They proved that the power didn't just exist in that object; You see, with science the Armitage's created a miracle.

CHRIS

You hypnotize me? Break my will..?
Make me a slave like the others?
This is some crazy racist shit.

JIM

No. Not racist, Chris. We don't hate you. We want to be you... You are not going to be a slave. You're going to be a vessel.

CHRIS

Wait, what?

JIM

Missy's hypnosis was merely to sedate you. Oh, that and to prepare you psychologically...

CHRIS

For what?

Jim smiles.

JIM

For the procedure.

CHRIS

What's the procedure?

JIM

Are you ready...? Drum roll please. Brain transplantation. Some say it could never be done;

JIM (CONT'D)

They experimented for centuries, but it turned out re-linking the brain to a foreign central nervous system was impossible. The nerve connections are far too intricate and delicate.

CHRIS

What the fuck?

JIM

Dean's the only guy who really gets the science. He's the one who discovered that full brain transplantation isn't actually necessary to transfer the soul, and that partial brain transplantation solves the little nerve ending problem.

CHRIS

No.

Jim holds up a Color coded diagram of the human Brain. There is a big red part that takes up 80% of the image. The other 20% is blue and located near the lower back of his skull.

JIM

Okay so... You see the blue part? That's the piece of your brain that's all rooted in the nervous system. So that stays; keeping those tricky little connections intact. The rest is discarded. Then they'll remove the red part of my brain from my skull and put in yours. Your "blue" and my "red" basically absorb each other. And apparently the brain heals surprisingly fast, so assuming everything goes as planned, we should be up and functioning in a couple weeks.

CHRIS

And my brain?

JIM

Your red part? It'll be discarded, but don't worry. You won't be gone. Well not completely. You'll still be in there somewhere; limited consciousness of course;

JIM (CONT'D)

you'll still be able to see and hear but your existence will be as a passenger... an audience. You will live in...

CHRIS
(defeated)
...The Sunken Place.

JIM
Yes. That's what she calls it.
Good! So you understand, I'll
control the motor functions, the
will of our body, effectively
making me--

CHRIS
Me... You will be me.

JIM
As far as the world is concerned.
It's still a pretty new operation.
Some kinks. We're supposed to stay
away from flashes of light for
example. They can trigger a
"momentary lapse in control of
motor functions..."

CHRIS
Why black people?

Jim is disappointed in the question.

JIM
Well, because you get the highest
bids. For the last decade or so
anyway. I wish it was less simple
than that, but it's not. You're in
fashion, baby!

Final hope sinks from Chris shoulders.

JIM (CONT'D)
Honestly though, personally..? I
couldn't give two shits about
race. I don't care if you're
black, brown, green, purple...
whatever. What I want is so much
deeper: Your eye, man. I want
those things you see through.

CHRIS
That's crazy.

JIM
Take it as a compliment.

CHRIS
You're not going to get away with
this.

JIM

We have and we will. We'll be
together soon, brother.

The television turns off. Chris clenches his body trying to pry free from his restraints, before his shoulders collapse with exhaustion. He lifts his head to a rip in the leather arm of the chair revealing its cotton stuffing. He looks at the cotton. We see Chris make a difficult decision.

LATER...

We hear nothing except a HEART BEAT.

Chris' head hangs, asleep. His lips are dry. Chris wakes up.

The Television turns on. On the screen, a woman's hand holds a tea cup. With a spoon, she clinks it. We don't hear it though. We still hear nothing but the HEART BEAT.

CHRIS

No, No--

Before Chris can finish SCREAMING, his eyes widen. He goes limp -- unconscious again.

Rose enters wearing a white and black nurse's outfit with a red cross on the chest. She rolls a medical table into the room. She draws a dotted line across his forehead and around to the back of his scalp. Then she unstraps his arm and prepares it for an IV. She inserts the needle.

She goes to put earbuds connected to an ipod in his ears but sees the arm of his chair has been stripped open. She looks at Chris. Cotton makeshift earplugs have been stuffed in his ears!

He's not really hypnotized!

Rose tries to scream but Chris grabs her throat with his free hand and squeezes. The HEARTBEAT quickens. Rose pleads, but we don't hear her.

ROSE

(inaudible)

Wait. Wait. Chris!.... Chri-

Chris chokes her. Tears stream down his face.

CHRIS

Shhhh.

Rose convulses. She scratches his hand and cheeks. He's too strong. She stares at Chris' eyes as her consciousness fades. Then, through the agony, her face curls into a twisted smile. She's having fun. Psycho. Rose goes limp in Chris' hands.

Chris takes the cotton out of his ears. We can hear again.
"You've got a Friend" plays on the earbuds of the ipod.

INT. OPERATING ROOM.

Earbuds also rest in Jim Hudson's ears playing the same song. He lies unconscious on one of two operating beds in the center of the room connected to an IV and heart monitors.

A bright medical light shines on Jim's shaved head which also has a dotted line around it. The other bed is empty and has a light shining on it as well. This bed is for Chris.

Dean stands in a black and white robe with a red cross in the middle, his palms upwards in silent prayer near some ceremonial candles. Jeremy watches his father. They are unaware of what's happening in the Medical room down the hall. Dean finishes his prayer.

DEAN

Saw...

Jeremy hands Dean a circular surgical saw.

DEAN (CONT'D)

The vessel.

Jeremy leaves as Dean begins to saw into Jim's cranium.

INT. DARK HALLWAY

Chris finds an old badminton set.

Jeremy exits the room briskly and walks down a dark hallway. He turns into the games room and finds Rose's body.

Jeremy's eyes go wild. He turns as Chris emerges lunging from the darkness with a badminton racket. Before Jeremy can scream, Chris slams him in the face with the metal side of the racket. He pulls Jeremy inside and shuts the door cutting off the sound from outside. Jeremy wilts in pain.

Chris whips him over and over warping the racket to a crumpled bloody mess.

INT. OPERATING ROOM

Dean finishes sawing the top of Jim's skull off. He removes the cranium precious exposing Jim's brain.

DEAN
Jeremy...?

Dean walks to the doorway. Dean scans the dark hallway. It's quiet.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Ro Ro...?

Chris emerges charging from the darkness with Deer's head in his arms. He punctures Dean through his neck and shoulder with the antlers. Dean and stumbles back into the operating room, deer's head attached.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Miss--

His call to Missy devolves into gargles. Dean falls knocking the unused bed over along with some candles. The bed has caught fire. The fire grows fast.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Missy takes a whistling tea pot off the stove and pours herself a cup. Georgina sits nearby knitting. The window, like before reflects the room around them.

She sniffs the air. She is suddenly afraid. She turns off the light illuminating the back yard. Walter runs back and forth in the distance. She turns the light back on again. Chris' reflection is now behind hers. He looks savage; covered in blood. Georgina screams and runs out the back door.

Chris heads to the door, but sees his phone on the dining room table. He goes for it.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chris runs through the dining room and finds his cell phone on the dining room table.

Chris picks up his phone and presses the power button. The loading screen comes up.

Chris grunts with frustration as he hears a creak behind him. It's Missy, now in the kitchen doorway behind him holding her teacup and spoon. She begins clinking her tea cup...

TING...

Chris knocks the cup out of her hand spraying hot water on her chest and face. She screams.

The cat bounds off the dining room table at Chris' face. Chris punches it out of the air. This has given Missy enough time to grab a knife. She lunges at Chris screaming psychotically. Chris can't pin her down. She slices his hands. Chris grabs the tea pot and cracks her in the head with it. She falls. He hits her one more time. Done.

The cat slinks out an open window.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Chris runs towards the front door. Before he can open it, he hears a footsteps running upstairs from the basement followed bloodcurdling scream from back in the kitchen:

JEREMY (O.C.)
Ahhhhhhhh!!!!!!!

Jeremy bursts though the dining room and pounces on Chris' back. The two roll around.

Chris throws his elbow back at Jeremy who blocks it and uses it to put Chris in a choke hold from behind. Chris slams the back of his head into Jeremy's face. He does it again, and again, and again. Jeremy squeezes tighter.

Chris, about to pass out, reaches into Jeremy's pocket and pulls out his keys. He scrapes them deep into Jeremy's eye. Jeremy screams in pain and Chris wriggles out of his grasp tripping him with an improvised Judo throw. Jeremy lunges at Chris again but slips on his own blood banging the back of his head on the coffee table. He's out.

EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Chris begins to run but then sees the beige sports car we recognize from the opening scene. He looks at Jeremy downed in the doorway and then at the keys in his hand.

Moments later...

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

Chris is in the driver's seat. The tubular metal helmet sits next to him in the passengers seat. His phone finally turns on. There is a very small amount of batteries. He turns the ignition. The English to French tutorial comes on.

TUTORIAL
I seem to have misplaced my
passport. Je crois avoi egare mon
passeport.

Chris peels off, driving fast through the field into the night. He dials 911.

911 OPERATOR
911 emergency, I'm at the home of
Dean and Missy Armitage--

Chris looks in the rearview mirror as the house gets smaller behind him. All of a sudden, BAM! The car slams into and over Georgina, who, in the night, seems to come out of nowhere. The phone falls.

CHRIS
Ahhhh!

TUTORIAL
Can you direct me to the nearest
hospital? Pouvez-vous me diriger
vers l'hôpital le plus proche?

He drives on a few more seconds on a flat tire but then stops the car. Chris breathes heavy.

CHRIS
(to himself)
No... no... Don't do it... Just
get the fuck gotta here... Just
go! Just... Fuck!

Chris puts the car in reverse and drives backwards beside the motionless bloody heap that is Georgina.

TUTORIAL
Where is the nearest train
station? Ou est la gare la plus
proche?

He looks back at the house which is now filling with smoke.

Chris quickly gets out of the car and lifts what's left of Georgina's mangled unconscious body into the passenger's seat of the car. He shuts the door and gets in the driver's seat. He floors it.

After a moment of driving, Georgina's eyes open and she rises. The wig slides off her head revealing an old surgical scar around the top of her head. Chris hasn't noticed her yet. He reaches for his phone.

TUTORIAL (CONT'D)
Can you please call the police?
Pouvez-vous s'il vous plait
appelez la police?

Annoyed, Chris turns off the sound system just before Georgina grabs his face and scratches it.

GEORGINA

Ahhhhh!!

CHRIS

Ahhhhhhhh!!

Chris, veers the car into a tree. Georgina's head hits the windshield hard and bursts open. She's dead. So is the car.

A bullet hits the rear view mirror. Jeremy stands in front of the smoking house with a hunting rifle. He's soaked in blood.

JEREMY

(Through tears)

Grandma!!!!

Chris looks at Georgina's body. Georgina was Grandma.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Grampa!

Walter, the grounds keeper, rounds the house at top speed. Walter is grandpa and he's so fast.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Get him!!!

Chris crawls out of the car as Walter/Grandpa sprints across the front lawn straight at him. Walter's hat flies off revealing the surgical scar around his head like the others.

Jeremy shoots again, and it grazes Chris' side. Chris runs through the trees. Walter/grandpa closes the gap quickly. Another shot hits a tree. As Chris reaches the road, Walter/Grandpa pounces like a jaguar and rolls him over on his back. He pushes his thumbs into Chris' eyes.

GRANDPA

Damn you to Hell!!!

Jeremy arrives behind them crying.

JEREMY

Kill him, Grandpa.

GRANDPA

The gun, Jeremy.

Jeremy tosses the rifle. Grandpa catches it and holds it up to Chris' head.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

You ruined everything!!!

Chris, blinded, raises his phone to Walter/Grandpa's face. He takes a picture, flashing straight into Walter/Grandpa's eyes.

Walter/Grandpa doesn't shoot. Instead he looks up. Jeremy is confused as to why Walter/Grandpa has stopped.

JEREMY

What...? Grandpa--?

Walter/Grandpa spins and gathers his bearing. His eye is cocked and blood trickles out of his nose. He let's out a PAINED MOAN reminiscent of the deer's.

WALTER/GRANDPA

Ahhhhhhh!

Walter/Grandpa shoots Jeremy in the chest. He falls. Chris, on his back, pushes himself away. Walter/Grandpa sees Chris' scurry. He turns looking mad.

CHRIS

Wait.

Walter/Grandpa raises the gun under his own chin and shoots himself through the head. He falls. Approaching sirens blare in the distance.

Chris lays in shock. It's over. Just then a hand grabs Chris face! Jeremy's still alive! Blood pours from his mouth.

JEREMY

Ahhhhhhh!

They both go for the gun, grabbing it at the same time. They roll around in the grass. Chris ends up on top. He bludgeons Jeremy over and over with the butt of the gun into the ground. Chris is lost in violence.

2 police cars pull up. He drops the gun.

COPS

Hands! Hands! Get away from the
weapon/ Show me your hands!/
Hands! Hands!! Get on your Knees!/
Hands! Hands!/ Goddamn Hands!!!

Chris, covered in blood, raises his sliced hands.

CHRIS

Look in the basement!

He is violently swarmed by officers. The house burns.

INT. MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON. VISITING ROOM - NIGHT

Rod sits down opposite Chris who wears a prison jumpsuit and smokes a cigarette. Both of them look like shit. Rod is gaunt with circles under his eyes. Chris' hair and beard have grown in.

There's a long silence.

ROD
I really need to...

CHRIS
...I don't remember...

ROD
...impress on you the importance
of remembering some of those
names. The fire didn't leave
enough--

They've clearly had this conversation many times before.

CHRIS
I don't remember.

ROD
You gotta help me out, Chris.
Secret societies doesn't get you
very far on Google. I'm over here
feeling like I'm playing connect
the dots on a fucking football
field. One name...

CHRIS
I don't remember.

ROD
Well, try again please.

CHRIS
Rod.

ROD
Let's start at the beginning; walk
me through it again.

CHRIS
Rod.

Rod knows he's been defeated.

CHRIS (CONT'D)
I'm good, man. I stopped it. You
know? I stopped it.

Chris is at peace. He takes a long good drag of his cigarette
then gets up and leaves.

INT. MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Two GUARDS escort Chris back to his cell. He WHISTLES "You Got
A Friend."

The End