

17

by

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Rewrite

Offspring Entertainment
Script dated 10/5/07

EXT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL - DUSK

A few cars scatter the parking lot. WE hear GRUNTS followed by the distinct sound of basketballs shredding net.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - CONTINUOUS

An empty gymnasium except for a shirtless MIKE O'DONNELL, 17. Mike stands feet BEYOND the 3 point line, grabs balls from a hopper and rapidly shoots, shoots, shoots. SWISH...SWISH...SWISH. This kid's automatic.

Mike's hair, a pompadour mullet a la '21 Jump Street' and short shorts circa 1989.

Mustached and curly haired COACH HARVEY, 40, enters.

COACH HARVEY
Hey, O'Donnell, save some for the game.

Mike sinks one last jumper, turns to the Coach.

MIKE
Just warming up, Coach.

Coach Harvey hands Mike a towel.

COACH HARVEY
First game of the season and the scouts are already lining up. You have half the season I know you're capable of, you can play anywhere you want, Mike.

MIKE
That's the plan coach.

The rest of the FITCH FALCONS basketball team jogs out from the locker room followed by a PHOTOGRAPHER.

COACH HARVEY
Round up, Jock Straps! Picture time.

The Team assembles in the middle of the court. A PLAYER kneeling in front holds a sign, 'FITCH FALCONS, 1989'.

MIKE
Hold on. Ed's not here yet.

DOM, 17, handsome, tall, long rat tail, scoffs-

DOM
Who cares? He's the water boy.

MIKE
And you suck, Dom, but we're
letting you in the picture.

A shoving match breaks out between Mike and Dom.

COACH HARVEY
Hey! Hey! Knock it off.

Coach Harvey pulls the Players apart just as the gym doors burst open. ED FREEDMAN, 17, sporting a jacket over a WIZARD costume, runs in, trips on his robe, gets up, peels his clothes off.

ED
Sorry I'm late. I was locked in a
life and death battle with the dark
wizard...

COACH HARVEY
...Fall in, Freedman. Hurry up.

Ed takes a spot next to Dom.

PHOTOGRPAHER
And 3, 2, 1-

WE see Dom reach behind Ed, grab hold of his underwear...RRRRIIPP...FLASH. And with the flash WE cut to:

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - NIGHT

The Falcons run, pass and shoot on one end of the court. On the opposite end, a TEAM in BLUE warms up.

Lights dim. Cue MC Hammer's `Can't Touch This'. CHEERLEADERS at center court perform the Hammer DANCE ROUTINE. PAN around the gym, everybody's doing the Hammer dance.

Ed awkwardly tries to imitate Mike.

Coach shakes his head in disgust and when the routine ends-

COACH HARVEY
Alright, Ladies, bring it in!

The Falcons swarm to the bench, take seats. Ed hands waters to the Players, skips Dom, stops at Mike.

MIKE

Ed, I can't help you with the girls if you keep showing up places dressed like the Cookie Crisp guy. Okay? Dude, don't look now but I think Muffy Campanella is scopin' you hard.

ED

For real?

Ed jerks around to blatantly stare at her.

MIKE

Smile, pud.

Ed flashes a goofy smile. MUFFY mimes puking.

MIKE (CONT'D)

My bad.

GIRL'S VOICE (o.s.)

Mike?

SCARLET, 17, an 80's beauty, stands at the end of the bench.

MIKE

Who's that stone cold fox? Oh, it's my girlfriend.

(walks over)

I'm glad you're here, Scar. This whole scout thing's got me wicked nervous.

Dom dribbles past, smiles at Scarlet.

DOM

I'm dedicating my first basket to you, Scarlet.

MIKE

Way you shoot that might be mid-season!

(to Scarlet)

Everything cool?

She smiles nervously, lies...

SCARLET

Oh yeah. Everything's totally copacetic.

Totally? MIKE Totally. SCARLET

REFEREE blows the whistle.

COACH HARVEY
 Let's go! Remember, Boys, winners
 get the girls. Losers please
 themselves!

MIKE
 (to Scarlet)
 Excellent. Gotta run.

He kisses her cheek, starts off, turns back-

MIKE (CONT'D)
 What's wrong?

LONG SHOT: We hear nothing but see Mike's body deflate. He
 steps away from Scarlet towards center court.

Muffy and her friends mock Ed and laugh hysterically

ED
 Do you really think Muffy's in to
 me?

Mike, in a daze walks right past Ed. Takes his place for the
 jump ball. The Crowd stomps and cheers LOUDLY.

The Ref is about to toss the ball. Mike looks up at the
 stands, sees a crushed Scarlet heading for the exit. Mike's
 torn. Play or go after her. He goes after her.

COACH HARVEY
 Where you going!? O'Donnell!?

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/TUNNEL - NIGHT

Mike rushes in.

MIKE
 Scar! Wait.

She turns, slumps against the wall. Mike catches up to her.
 Mike leans in and kisses Scarlet.

CUT TO:

EXT. PALISADES NEIGHBORHOOD. PRESENT DAY - MORNING

Opulent HOMES. OCEAN views. Luxury CARS. Manicured LAWNS.

The sound of an alarm clock shatters the silence as WE settle in on a large, MEDITERRANEAN STYLE HOUSE.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/MIKE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

MIKE O'DONNELL, now 36, angrily slaps the alarm off...6 AM. He climbs out of bed, bones creaking, stiff, groans.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

A showered, suited Mike stands before the mirror, knots a tie around his neck.

MIKE
(uninspired)
Today is going to be a good day. I
love my job. I am a lucky man.
Who's lucky? Mike O'Donnell.

Mike yanks his tie straight up as if he were hanging himself.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - MORNING

ED FREEDMAN, now 36, lies on a portable table in his boxers. ACUPUNCTURE NEEDLES protrude from every inch of his body, neck and face...at least 5000 needles.

A HOT, YOUNG ACUPUNCTURIST adds more to him.

ACUPUNCTURIST
Can you feel your Qi flowing
freely?

ED
I'm not sure if its my Qi or
internal bleeding.

Mike enters, shakes his head in amusement.

MIKE
What are you doing now?

Ed looks over, sees Mike watching.

ED

There he is. There's Mr. Sunshine.
Fei Jing Acupuncture. It's all the
rage. Makes you look five years
younger.

Ed climbs slowly off the table, shuffles over, groaning in pain the entire way. He pours himself a shot of BROWN LIQUID from a pitcher, throws the shot back and immediately SPITS it all over the place.

ED (CONT'D)

(calls to Acupuncturist)
What's this brown stuff again?

ACUPUNCTURIST

Rhinoceros urine. Pure protein.

ED

Delish!
(to Mike)
The girl has absolutely no clue
what she's doing.

MIKE

Then why are you letting her stick
needles in you?

ED

Because she's hot. But today's not
about me. It's about you becoming
the new regional sales manager.

MIKE

I better be. I've invested 18
years of my life in that miserable
company.

ED

No negativity. Negativity's for
the 800 pound fat lady who needs to
be airlifted out of bed. You,
Michael Shawn O'Donnell, are a
winner.

MIKE

A winner doesn't have to crash at
his best friend's house because he
was kicked out of his own house.

ED

Are you kidding?! It doesn't get
any better than this!

(MORE)

ED (CONT'D)

I gotta get back. My legs just went numb. Good luck today.

Ed drags painfully back to the Acupuncturist.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - MORNING

Mike wheels his Audi A4 below a nondescript, two level building. Sign reads, 'Wyatt Pharmaceuticals'.

INT. WYATT PHARMACEUTICALS/CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

PHARMACEUTICAL DRUG POSTERS cover the walls. Smiling faces, happy couples...little pills.

Surrounding a conference table are Mike's colleagues...HOT WOMEN, 20 to 35, in skimpy business suits, chatting away.

Mike sits amongst them, the only male present. A glum look on his face. WENDY, bubbly, ditsy, 22, leans over to him.

WENDY

Congratulations, Mike. You deserve it. You're like a totally amazing salesman.

MIKE

Thanks, Wendy. That like totally means so much to me.

ROGER, 23, boss, strides through the door.

ROGER

Good morning, peeps. As you all know, today I'll be naming the new regional sales manager. What's it take to be an RSM? Leadership skills, a comprehensive knowledge of today's prescription pharmaceuticals and most importantly a dedicated soldier.

Mike straightens his tie, buttons his suit jacket.

ROGER (CONT'D)

All being said, congratulations-
(Mike begins to rise)
Wendy.

Dumbfounded, Mike slumps back into his seat. Wendy springs up out of hers, SCREAMING and BOUNCING.

ROGER (CONT'D)
 Now go out there and sell some
 drugs peeps!

The Women stream out.

MIKE
 How could you do this to me? I've
 been a salesman here 18 years.
 Wendy's only been here 2 months!?

ROGER
 Look, your sales are admittedly
 better but she has the college
 degree. What can I do?

MIKE
 You can give me the promotion,
 Roger!

ROGER
 Things have changed. I couldn't
 even hire you now with only a high
 school diploma. My hands are tied,
 bro-ski.

Mike swallows his pride and exits.

EXT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/PARKING LOT - DUSK

Mike pulls into the empty parking lot, climbs out of his car
 and into the building.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HALL - DUSK

Mike hurries down the hall, opens a door, peeks his head in.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - DUSK

Mike peers around...nobody.

MIKE
 Alex?

No answer. A basketball sits in the middle of the floor.
 Mike enters, picks up the ball, begins dribbling...faster,
 between his legs, around his back, up to the 3 point line-

MIKE (CONT'D)
 3, 2, 1-

Mike hits a perfect jumper at the imaginary buzzer, smiles.

MIKE (CONT'D)
The kid's still got it.

Mike dashes for the bouncing ball, scoops it up, goes for a reverse lay up, makes it but when he lands...he lands...CRACK...hard. Mike grabs his lower back, groans-

MIKE (CONT'D)
Ooooh. That was stupid.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HALL - DUSK

Mike limps out of the gym, wanders over to a wall covered in PHOTOGRAPHS...Fitch basketball teams of the past.

Mike searches the pictures until he finds it...the photo WE saw being taken earlier...the team of 1989. Ed mid howl from Dom's wedgy.

Mike stares at the photograph...lost in time and thought. The smiling, confident image of his youth stares back at him.

MALE VOICE (o.s.)
You know someone in that picture?

Mike startles from his daydream, turns. A kind-faced, old JANITOR, stands behind him, mop in hand.

MIKE
I do. Me. I'm in the center there.

The Janitor leans in, takes a closer look at Young Mike.

JANITOR
Adolescence can be so cruel.

MIKE
What are you talking about?
(lost in the picture again)
I had life by the balls in that picture. Everything was possible. Then a few minutes later, pfffffft, all gone.

JANITOR
`For of all sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are these: `It might have been...'

MIKE
That'll be my epitaph.

JANITOR
We all have regrets.

MIKE
Why's it have to be that way?

JANITOR
Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't.
Can't hurt to ask. You never know
who's listening, Michael.

Michael wistfully eyes the old photo, looks back to the
Janitor-

MIKE
How did you know...

ALEX (O.S.)
...What are you doing, Dad?

ALEX, 15, messy hair and slight, and MAGGIE, 17 and awkwardly
pretty, appear at the other end of the hall.

MIKE
Hey, Guys. I was just talking to-
Mike looks back to the Janitor...GONE.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Never mind. Sorry I'm late. You
ready to get some dinner then?

They make their way towards the door. Mike limping.

ALEX
Why are you limping?

MIKE
Tweaked my back pumping iron.
Really, really heavy iron.

INT. CHEESECAKE FACTORY - NIGHT

Mike, Alex and Maggie sit before dinner. Alex eats heartily.
Maggie quietly pushes her food around.

MIKE
I bet your chompin' at the bit for
hoop season to start.

ALEX

Yeah, me and the guys are running drills, scrimmaging, getting in shape.

Maggie stifles a laugh.

MIKE

That's my boy. Remember, it's not how big you are-

ALEX

-it's how big you play.

Father and Son touch fists.

MIKE

And what about you, Mags? What's new?

MAGGIE

Nothing.

ALEX

She got into Georgetown.

MIKE

You did!? That's fantastic!

MAGGIE

It's no big deal.

MIKE

It's a huge deal. That's a great university. I'm proud of you.

(Maggie remains quiet)

Am I missing something here?

MAGGIE

You wouldn't understand.

MIKE

Try me.

MAGGIE

I have a lot of emotional stress right now. My friends are all going to different schools, I'm not even sure...

MIKE

That's not stress. Wait 'til you get out into the real world, get a crappy job, have some smarmy twerp-boss calling you bro-ski...

Maggie rolls her eyes.

ALEX

Did you get the promotion, Dad?

MIKE

Still waiting to hear.

Mike forces a smile hiding his disappointment.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY/MIKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike pulls up behind a `Dom's Nursery' van. He, Alex and Maggie step out. Mike eyes the van with disdain.

MIKE

Is your mom home?

ALEX

She's probably out back.

MIKE

Hey, next week we'll have a barbecue at Uncle Ed's. Sound good?

MAGGIE

I'm counting down the minutes.

Maggie heads straight for the modest ranch house and inside.

MIKE

What's with her?

ALEX

We see you once a week for a couple hours. What do you expect?

Alex follows Maggie into the house. Mike makes his way around back.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

As Mike rounds the corner, he almost runs into a smiling Dom Johnson, 36. Don lugs 3 loaded trash bags.

DOM
 Hey, Mike. Good to see you. Tough
 break, you and Scarlet.

MIKE
 Bite me, Dom.

Dom serves Mike a cocky wink, continues on. Mike scowls.

Scarlet, 36, slams a shovel into the ground, wedges it
 beneath a dying shrub and rips it out.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 A little late for a delivery isn't
 it?

SCARLET
 Dom was in the neighborhood. He
 offered to make a dump run for me.

MIKE
 Doesn't he live 30 miles from here?

SCARLET
 What's your point?

MIKE
 Come on. He's been after you since
 10th grade and he's after you now.

SCARLET
 At least someone's after me.

Mike smiles playfully and begins to serenade-

MIKE
 `In touch with the ground, I'm on
 the hunt I'm after you.'

Scarlet shakes her head-

SCARLET
 Please, Mike. This isn't high
 school. That's not gonna work.

MIKE
 'Smell like I sound, I'm lost in a
 crowd, and I'm hungry like the
 wolf.'

Mike flirtatiously stalks her. Scarlet fights smiling.

SCARLET
You can stop now. It's not
working.

MIKE
`Mouth is alive, with juices like
wine, and I'm hungry like the wolf'

Mike gets close to Scarlet's face. She smiles, stops herself
and pushes him away.

SCARLET
You no longer have the right to
invoke the "wolf."

A chastised Mike eyes the yard...it's a WRECK...holes and
mounds of dirt everywhere, carcasses of dead plants, bushes
and flowers strewn about.

MIKE
Why are you destroying the yard?

Scarlet stops shoveling, wipes dirt from her face.

SCARLET
I'm gonna use it as a showpiece for
clients. Thanks for asking.

MIKE
Kind of a big undertaking isn't it?

SCARLET
I am a landscape designer. Then
again you barely took an interest
in my work so I guess that's a fair
question.

An awkward silence. Then-

MIKE
I didn't get it.

SCARLET
I'm sorry. But maybe this is what
you needed. Maybe it's time you
looked for something else?

MIKE
That's a great idea, Scar. Because
there are so many options out there
for a 36 year old with only a high
school diploma.

Scarlet throws the shovel to the ground.

SCARLET
And it's all my fault, isn't it?

MIKE
I didn't say that.

SCARLET
No, but it's what you think, right?

Mike's silence says it all. Scarlet fights back tears.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
I never asked you to marry me.

MIKE
But I did.

Scarlet shakes her head in frustration.

SCARLET
I'm sorry you're not happy with the
way your life turned out Mike,
really, I am, but you're not the
victim here.

Scarlet goes back to shoveling. Mike turns, steps, falls
into a hole.

INT. MIKE'S AUDI - NIGHT

A somber Mike drives alongside the Los Angeles River. An old
song plays low on the radio...static...then...BOOM. THUNDER
roars scaring Mike and literally shaking the Audi. SPLASH.
RAIN drops in buckets.

MIKE
Jesus!

Mike turns the wipers on high. Not much help. He slows the
car to a crawl, straining to see out the windshield.

LIGHTNING flashes. We see the Janitor leaning over the
railing looking into the raging river. Mike brakes, throws
his door open, jumps out into the pouring rain.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

MIKE
Hey!? Get away from there!?

Mike, blinded by the rain makes his way to the railing. The Janitor's GONE.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Oh no!! Hello!?

Mike leans over the rickety railing, looks down...

The phosphorescent water swirls angrily...rising quickly. It's mesmerizing. Magical. Mike can't take his eyes off-

LIGHTENING FLASHES Mike's 17 year-old face reflection stares back up at him.

MIKE (CONT'D)
What the-

CRACK. The railing BREAKS. Mike FALLS...SPLASH...headlong into the river.

CUT TO:

EXT. ED'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

Mike's Audi rolls into the driveway. The door swings open. A muddy, shoeless foot steps out followed by a shoed foot but in no better shape.

WE follow the feet, tattered slacks dragging on the cement, to the door. 2 filthy hands dig into pockets, searching-

MIKE
Damn it.
(pushes doorbell)
Ed! Ed! I lost my key!

INT. ED'S HOUSE - MORNING

Ed, wrapped in a robe, tissue between his toes, wobbles to the door so as not to mess up his freshly polished nails.

ED
Coming! I've been worried sick!
Where-

Ed opens the door...standing before him is Mike, covered in MUD. His ripped, grimy suit now hangs off of him because...HE'S 17 AGAIN.

Ed's eyes widen with FEAR.

MIKE
I've had a really rough night.

ED
AAAAAHHHHHHHHH!!!!

Ed slams the door, frantically wobbles away. The door opens, ANGLE ON the muddy feet as they enter and follow the trail of cotton balls up the stairs and to the bathroom door.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

ANGLE ON Ed cowering against the back wall, brandishing an over-sized loofah. The door slowly swings open. Ed gasps-

ED
Don't come any closer! I'll use it!

MIKE
What are you gonna do? Exfoliate me to death?
(Ed shrieks)
You got into my samples case again, didn't you?

A whimpering Ed points to the mirror.

MIKE (CONT'D)
What's your problem, it's only mud.

The muddy feet turn toward the mirror and-

MIKE (CONT'D)
AAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!

ANGLE ON the mirror. Mike's 17. He turns on the water, splashes his face frantically. Mud gone. He's still 17.

MIKE (CONT'D)
AHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!

Mike tears his suit jacket and shirt off...hairless chest. He yanks off his pants, peeks down his boxers-

MIKE (CONT'D)
I'm dreaming right? Is this some kind of hallucination?

Mike pulls Ed up by his robe.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Do something! Anything! Pinch me!

Ed throws a knee into Mike's nuts, bolts out the door SCREAMING. Mike crumbles.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I said pinch!

INT. ED'S HOUSE/FOYER - DAY

Ed reaches the door, fumbles with the locks. He just manages to open the door when Mike tackles him to the floor.

The two buddies roll around, limbs intertwined.

MIKE
Calm down! We need to talk! We can work this out!

FEMALE VOICE (o.s.)
Aye dios mio!

They stop wrestling, look up. The LATINO MAID stands in the doorway genuflecting.

ED
Maria, we're just friends. Really.

The Maid hurries off muttering prayers in Spanish.

CUT TO:

EXT. ED'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - LATER

ED
My theory is that you were transformed by a freak congruence of some of the planets most volatile elements. I've recreated the exact contents of the LA River. The toxic pollutants, the contaminants.

REVEAL Mike in the gurgling green water of the hot tub.

MIKE
Well, it obviously isn't working.

ED
That's because the cocktail's not
complete.

Ed picks up a TOASTER attached to an extension cord.

ED (CONT'D)
Last night we had the worst
electrical storm of the last
hundred years.

MIKE
Is that true?

ED
It was pretty bad.

Ed raises the toaster-

MIKE
Wait!! Wait!! Wait!! Do you
really think this'll work?

ED
It could.

Ed tosses it in. Mike screams. Nothing happens.

ED (CONT'D)
Oops. Came unplugged. Won't be a
moment.

Ed reaches down to plug it in.

ED (CONT'D)
What were you doing by the river
anyway?

CLOSE ON MIKE, Light bulb goes off. He leaps out, runs for
the house.

MIKE
The janitor!

CUT TO:

EXT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/PARKING LOT - DAY

The Audi screeches to a stop in front of the school. Mike
bounds out, wearing a robe, races inside.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HALL - DAY

Mike rushes past baffled STUDENTS, asking no one in particular-

MIKE

Has anyone seen the janitor? Is the janitor here? Where's the janitor?

Mike reaches the familiar wall of pictures. Kids point, laugh, stare.

A FEMALE JANITOR, steps from a room.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Excuse me! Excuse me!? Can you tell me where I can find the night janitor?

JANITOR

I'm the only custodial engineer currently employed here.

MIKE

There was an old guy, white hair. I showed him this picture of me-

Mike points to the 1989 team photo.

JANITOR

-Of you? That picture's from 1989.

Mike backs away from the picture and the Janitor.

MIKE

Right. Forget it.

Confused, Mike stumbles to the bathroom. He's about to enter, three letter jacket wearing JOCKS, STAN, JAZZ and KEVIN, burst out laughing, knocking Mike on the way by.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/BATHROOM - DAY

Mike enters, moves to a sink, turns the water on-

VOICE (o.s.)

Can I get a little help in here?

Mike turns, sees what appears to be UNDERWEAR stretched over the corner of a closed stall door.

Mike approaches the door, swings it open...there HANGS Alex, sneakers dangling 3 feet off the ground. The back of his underwear wrenched up over the corner of the door.

MIKE

Alex? What are you doing up there?

ALEX

I wanted to see if I could get my nuts into my esophagus. What do you think I'm doing!? Get me down!

MIKE

Okay. Okay. I'll get you down.

Mike pulls the underwear off the door. Alex drops, reaches down his pants, adjusts his underwear.

ALEX

How do you know my name?

MIKE

I'm...Mark...Freedman. Your Uncle Ed's son. He told me to look out for you.

ALEX

Uncle Ed has a son?

MIKE

Believe me, it's gonna be a surprise to him too. **Did those guys do this to you?**

ALEX

Goons from the basketball team.

MIKE

But why?

ALEX

Because they can and so they do on a daily basis.

MIKE

(shocked)

But you're one of them.

ALEX

No, I'm not. Nice robe, guy. Gotta go.

Alex walks out bowlegged. A devastated Mike watches him go.

INT. AUDI - MOMENTS LATER

Mike drives off out of the parking lot. To his left he spies-
ANGLE ON: Stan and Maggie making out against Stan's Mustang.

Mike pounds on the horn, scaring them apart. Drive's off.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ed sits at the island, a laptop in front of him. On the screen WE see he's perusing www.spellscursesincantations.com.

The sound of the front door opening and closing. Mike enters.

ED

Did you find the janitor?

MIKE

He doesn't exist. Nothing makes sense.

ED

Did he ask you for your soul?

MIKE

No?

ED

That's a good sign. We can eliminate Satan.

(clicks on a link)

I think what we're dealing with here is a spell of enlightenment.

(peruses the page)

"Spell affect"..."casting procedure"...yada, yada, yada. Basically it's a learning spell. There's something you need to figure out and until you do you'll stay a kid. My guess is that janitor was probably a war...

MIKE

...I'm going back to high school.

ED

...lock. I'm sorry. Could you repeat that? Because I thought you just said you were-

MIKE

Going back to high school.

Mike grabs a beer from the fridge, cracks it. As Mike is about to take a sip, Ed swipes the beer from his hand...CHUGS it down.

ED

Are you out of your freaking mind!?

MIKE

My son was hanging by his underwear from a bathroom stall door and my daughter was being mauled by a smarmy gorilla. They need me.

ED

What about your job?

MIKE

Email and telephone. I got it covered.

ED

Well, Scarlet, then. What are you gonna tell her?

MIKE

Nothing.

ED

You're just gonna disappear?

MIKE

To be honest, I think she'd rather have it that way. What's with the attitude?

ED

Because I know you're going to suck me into this and I'm not going back there, Mike. You'll never get me to go back to Fitch. Never!

CUT TO:

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/OFFICE - DAY

ED

I hate you.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL Ed and Mike sit outside Principal's office. Mike is dressed in an overly exaggerated hip style, (a grown-ups concept of what's cool- he looks ridiculous).

MIKE

Take a deep breath. All you have to do is enroll me and say as little as possible.

Ed calms. Mike pulls a manila folder out of his book bag.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Are you sure these look legit?

ED

(offended/cocky)

Please. I created software used to launch the space shuttle. I think I'm capable of forging some report cards. What's up with the gear?

MIKE

This is hip teenage apparel. I got it right off the mannequin at Ed Hardy.

SECRETARY

Ms. Goodwin will see you now.

Mike and Ed stand, head for the door marked `Principal'.

ED

First sign this old hag is on to us
I'm-

Mike and Ed step through the door-

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

MS. GOODWIN, 35, sits behind her desk...she's no hag. She's an attractive, buttoned-up professional.

Ed's face lights up and without missing a beat-

ED

-so glad we chose this school. I'm
Ed Freedman.

Ed steps in front of Mike, shakes Ms. Goodwin's hand.

JULIE

Nice to meet you. I'm Julie Goodwin, principal here at Fitch Senior High. And you behind there? You are?

Mike tries to peer around Ed. Mike finally physically moves Ed steps aside.

ED

Oh, right. Sorry. This little chicken pock here is Mark. Say hello, Mark.

Ed smiles, rubs Mike's head vigorously. Mike slaps his hand.

MIKE

Nice to meet you, Julie.

JULIE

Around here you're going to have to use Ms. Goodwin. Please, sit.

Mike and Ed sit.

ED

Before we get started I want you to know that Mark's a bastard.

JULIE

Excuse me!?

ED

I had him out of wedlock. So the answer is yes, I'm very single...and very rich.

MIKE

Dad met mom in Thailand. She's a very successful prostitute.

Ed's smile fades.

JULIE

O-Kay. Did you bring your transcripts?

Mike hands Julie the folder. As Julie browses through it, Ed and Mike get into a pinching, elbowing fight. When she looks up, the friends stop. Both smiling.

JULIE (CONT'D)

So the last school you went to was Cutler High in Connecticut. And you were a straight A student. Very impressive.

ED

I help him with his homework...a lot.

MIKE

Oh, dad, the doctor called. You were right. It is herpes.

Ed's jaw drops. Julie rises abruptly.

JULIE

I think it's time we got Mark to class. Lisa! Lisa!

The door opens, in steps LISA, 18.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Lisa, will you print out a schedule for Mark and show him to class?

LISA

Sure. Come on, Mark.

Mike stands. Ed addresses him as fatherly as he knows how-

ED

Be a good boy now. And sit up straight.

Mike glares at Ed, follows Lisa out. Ed turns to Julie.

ED (CONT'D)

They grow up so fast. Mojito?

JULIE

I beg your pardon.

ED

You strike me as a Mojito gal. I know this little Cuban place, great plantains-

JULIE

-Yeah, no. I don't date my students' parents. It's a rule of mine.

ED
I'll enroll him somewhere else.

JULIE
I really need to get back to work.

Julie ushers Ed to the door.

ED
See you at the next bake sale then?

Julie shuts the door, shakes her head in disbelief.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/CALCULUS CLASS - DAY

Mike steps in. Scattered giggles at his appearance. Mike takes a seat, eyes three sexy girls wearing next to nothing, SAMANTHA, LAUREN and JAMIE, busy texting on their phones.

MIKE
Do their mothers know they dress
like that?

A GIRL next to him leans over-

GIRL
Those are the Wonder Bras. **Beware.**

The Jocks, Stan, Jazz and Kevin strut in. Mike's eyes narrow. Stan stops before Mike, looks him up and down-

STAN
What did you did do? Mug the
mannequin at the Ed Hardy store?

JAZZ
Tool!

Laughter from the class. Mike shies. The Jocks sit, Stan behind Mike. Just as the last bell rings, Maggie rushes in, sits with the Bras.

MAGGIE
Oh thank God he's not here. I ran
all the way from-

Something catches Maggie's eye. It's Mike waving to her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Why's that freak waving at me.

Maggie places a hand over her face, looks down.

MALE VOICE (o.s.)
Take your seats. Stop the talking.

MR. ADAMS, 45, prissy, strides in carrying a stack of papers.

MR. ADAMS
Here are yesterday's tests. Let's see how you all did.

Moans from the class. Adams walks up and down the aisle slapping them down on the desks..

MR. ADAMS (CONT'D)
C-, C, B-, D, D-, F

Adams reaches Maggie, drops the test on her desk...

MR. ADAMS (CONT'D)
D for O'Donnell.

Humiliated, Maggie lowers her head.

MR. ADAMS (CONT'D)
Let me guess. Early acceptance?
(Maggie nods)
Where are we going?

MAGGIE
Georgetown.

MR. ADAMS
If you flunk senior calculus you'll be lucky to get into beauty school, missy. So, if you plan on slacking your way through my class, don't. Save your parents tuition money and pick up a blow dryer...

Mike angrily stands-

MIKE
Enough!

Mr. Adams turns to Mike.

MR. ADAMS
Excuse me?

MIKE
Do you think humiliating a 17 year-old in front of her peers is helpful or do you just get off on it?

MR. ADAMS
And you are?

MIKE
Mark Freedman. It's my first day.

Adams turns, walks back towards the front of the room.

MR. ADAMS
Well, Mr. Freedman-

Stan signals his friends, takes out a LIGHTER, flicks it, leans forward and places the flame BETWEEN Mike's legs.

The flame GLOWS RED against Mike's jeans. The Jocks and Bras pull out their cells and begin VIDEOING.

Adams scribbles on a pad-

MR. ADAMS (CONT'D)
-you've earned yourself a trip to the principal's office. Welcome to Fitch.

Adams rips the paper off, holds it out towards Mike. Mike sniffs at the air-

MIKE
Is someone barbecuing?
(beat)
YYYYEEEEEOOOOWWWWWW!!!!

Mike LEAPS out of his shoes. A FLAME runs up his crotch. LAUGHTER. Mike, SCREAMING, runs around the room fanning his package.

MR. ADAMS
Get out, Mr. Freedman!

Mike snatches the slip from Adams and out the door.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/CAFETERIA - DAY

A packed lunchroom. The CLIQUES sit amongst themselves. WE notice all the KIDS hunched over STARING AT THEIR PHONES.

Mike enters carrying a bag lunch. A BLACK BURN MARK on the crotch of his pants. A GAYSIAN spots him, yells-

GAYSIAN
Go Hot Pants! Do your dance, Girl!

The entire cafeteria turns to Mike and erupts in laughter.

As Mike passes each table, WE see the kids are watching his 'fire dance' on their phones.

Mike approaches a table of the 3 BIGGEST LOSERS in school, unkempt hair, fat, acne. Mike begins to sit when-

BIGGEST LOSER

Look, we feel your pain. We really do. But life's hard enough, Brother.

Mike nods, continues on past the snickering and catcalls until he sees Maggie and the Wonder Bras.

ANGLE: Wonder Bra Table. Maggie, Samantha, Jamie and Lauren pick around plates of cafeteria food.

MAGGIE

What's the big deal? He stuck up for me in class. It was a nice thing to do.

SAMANTHA

He was totally sexing on you.

LAUREN

He's coming. Pretend you're not here.

Mike approaches, big smile. The Wonder Bras look off in every direction except Mike's.

MIKE

Hi, Maggie. Hi, girls. I'm Mark-

The Girls continue looking away, ignoring Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Girls? Hello? Anyone home?

LAUREN

Oh my God. Can't you see we're not here?

MIKE

Good. So there's plenty of room then.

Mike drops down next to Samantha and across from Maggie.

JAMIE

Oh, look. He brought a bag lunch.
How sped. (special ed)

Mike hides his lunch.

SAMANTHA

Look, this table is V.I.P. You're
a NIP.

MIKE

What's a NIP?

LAUREN

Not Important. Go away.

MIKE

Maggie, why are you friends with
these horrible girls?

MAGGIE

Listen, I appreciate what you did
in class but, I already have a
boyfriend.

MIKE

You have a boyfriend?
(his phone rings)
Excuse me a second.

Mike pulls out an OLDER Blackberry phone, looks at the caller
ID...Scarlet. He sends it to voice mail.

JAMIE

He still gets calls. How 2007.

SAMANTHA

I think my grandfather has that
phone.

MIKE

Maggie, could we talk somewhere
else-

The sound of a bouncing ball interrupts.

MALE VOICE (o.s.)

Yo!

Mike turns. Stan, Jazz and Kevin swagger over.

STAN
Bro-ski, what are you doing at our
table?

MAGGIE
Nothing. He was just leaving.

Maggie nods for Mike to go.

MIKE
(sarcastic)
We should do this again sometime.

Mike stands. Stan pulls Maggie up, starts making out with her, hands all over her. WE can see Mike's blood BOIL until-

MIKE (CONT'D)
Get your hands off her, you little
punk!

Oops. Stan stops groping, steps over to Mike, a solid foot taller than him.

STAN
You gotta problem with me, 'bra?

Mike looks around...the entire cafeteria watches. Defeated-

MIKE
No, no, I don't.

Stan takes Mike's hat off, picks up an ice cream from Maggie's tray, puts the ice cream in the hat, places it back on Mike's head and SMUSHES it down.

STAN
Now make like Tom and Cruise.

Flush with humiliation and ice cream dripping down his face, Mike turns and walks out.

MAGGIE
That was so not cool.

STAN
What? I'll buy you another ice
cream.

WE see Alex, seated by himself at a back table, shake his head in disgust.

INT. RESTAURANT/BAR - NIGHT

A beaten down Mike sits alongside Ed at the bar.

MIKE

It was terrible. The place is evil, Ed. That building needs to be exorcised.

ED

Come on. It couldn't have been that bad.

MIKE

My beanbag was lit on fire, videoed and sent to every member of student body.

ED

Yeah, I caught it on youtube. Funny stuff.

MIKE

They mocked my clothes and phone. My daughter got a tongue bath in front of me and I have mint chip in my ears.

ED

High school's great, isn't it?

The BARTENDER approaches.

BARTENDER

What can I get you?

MIKE

Double scotch neat.

BARTENDER

Funny, kid.

ED

Get the boy a Shirley Temple. Extra cherries.

The Bartender nods serves up the drinks. Mike miserably plucks a cherry off his pink drink.

MIKE

I'm not going back there.

ED

Mike, you're an adult sitting on 36 years of experience. You should be dominating these kids, ripping their hearts out.

An OLDER WOMAN takes a seat next to the boys.

MIKE

I know why you're encouraging me all of a sudden.

ED

Because I'm a supportive dad.

MIKE

Because you want to nail my principal.

ED

Did she ask about me?

MIKE

She's not your type. She's smart.

ED

As far as I can tell that's her only flaw. I need a reason to see her again. You could flunk your classes, start a fight, vandalise the place. You'll figure it out. Then I can rush in, a teary eyed, helpless, single dad who can't handle his angry, kitten killing son. What do you think?

The Older Lady, having listened to it all, turns to Ed-

OLDER LADY

I think you should be reported to child services!

ED

Mind your business, Lady. This is a family matter.

The Lady turns away in disgust.

MIKE

I can't do it. I don't have it in me.

ED
 Hey, no sweat off my sack. Tell
 Alex to stop wearing underwear all
 together. He'll be fine. That's
 what I did.

Mike eyes Ed, considers just how "well adjusted" Ed is. A
 determined look comes over Mike. He pounds the bar.

MIKE
 You're right! My kids need me.

ED
 At'a boy. Now what you need is a
 crash course on being a teen in
 2008.

A MONTAGE OF MIKE'S CRASH COURSE

EXT. MAGAZINE STAND - NIGHT

The Boys gather a stack of TEEN MAGAZINES and TABLOID RAGS.
 Ed slips a MELONS Magazine into the pile.

INT. TRENDY HAIR SALON - NIGHT

A picture of a YOUNG, POPULAR STAR torn from one of the teen
 mags hangs on the mirror.

A HAIRDRESSER cuts away and highlights Mike's long locks. Ed
 sits beside Mike sipping wine, enjoying a manicure.

INT. TRENDY CLOTHES STORE - NIGHT

It's the PRETTY WOMAN scene. 2 hip SALESGIRLS pull clothes
 from racks. A clean cut Mike tries on sneakers, jeans, T-
 shirts, hoodies, shirts, jewelry. Ed nods with his approval
 or disapproval.

At the register, the Girls hand Mike his bags of clothes. Ed
 takes out his cell to put their numbers in it. The Girls
 frown and go back to work.

INT. VIRGIN MEGA MUSIC STORE - NIGHT

Mike and Ed stand before the wall of 100 top albums. Both
 wear headphones listening and moving to the music.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/OFFICE - NIGHT

Mike and Ed, surrounded by the magazines and music discs, sit before the computer. Ed TEACHES Mike how to create a MYSPACE page.

Bogus About Me and Interests. Photoshopped pictures of Mike in exotic locations. All the `now' movies, music and books. They fill his Friends section with only hot girls.

The Boys view the flashy, finished product, tap fists. This page makes `Mark Freedman' look like a playboy.

INT. MAC STORE - NIGHT

A SALESMAN hands a smiling Mike his new iPhone.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/MIKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mike sits on the bed, types away on his laptop. A knock on the door. Mike looks up and YELLS. Ed stands in the doorway, his entire body and head wrapped in SEAWEED.

ED

Before you ask, it's a seaweed wrap. I'm detoxifying as well as losing an inch or 2 from my problem areas.

MIKE

There must be a very hot girl downstairs.

ED

There is. What are you doing?

MIKE

I forwarded my calls to my new phone, sent some work emails and just lobbed one to Scarlet, told her I was in Peru finding myself. Think she'll buy it?

ED

Probably not because when she called earlier I told her you were being detained at Guantanamo. Ready for tomorrow?

MIKE

I am so ready.

Ed flips Mike a set of keys. Mike's eyes light up.

ED

That ought'a put you over the top.
And don't forget to hook me up son.

Ed plods off. Off Mike's huge smile.

EXT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/PARKING LOT - MORNING

The usual pre-school ritual. Stan, Jazz, Kevin, the Wonder Bras and Maggie all hang around Stan's `stang.

Stan and Maggie wrapped in a heated embrace, kissing.

HONK. A horn blares. Stan and Maggie jump out of the way.

An ASTON MARTIN VANQUISH stops next to the crew. The tinted window rolls down revealing the new and improved Mike.

Mike winks then rolls on past.

SAMANTHA

Oh my god. Was that-

JAMIE

Did you see-

LAUREN

I told you he was cute.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HALL - DAY

It's the MOMENT. Mike walks the hallway, handsome and hip.

Samantha, Lauren and Jamie text by their lockers. Mike struts up to them. The Bras smile.

MIKE

So I've been here a couple days now
and I think I got it figured out.
You girls are lesbians, right?

The Bras' jaws hit the floor. Mike walks off, a huge grin on his face. Man, that felt good.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/CAFETERIA - DAY

Mike steps from the kitchen area carrying a TRAY, scans the crowded room, finds Alex seated at a table ALONE. It's a heartbreaking image. Mike approaches-

MIKE
Mind if I sit here?

ALEX
Mark? You look totally different.

Mike sits across from Alex.

MIKE
I got rid of the bull's eye on my forehead.

ALEX
Could you move to the left a little?

Mike inches left, peeks behind him...2 girls eat lunch together. The one facing them is a cute Latino, NICOLE, 16.

Nicole smiles. Alex quickly shies away.

MIKE
Who's she?

ALEX
Nicole Lopez. She's in my Spanish class.

MIKE
Have you spoken to her?

ALEX
No. I get all stupid so I just stare.

MIKE
I'll tell you a funny story. The first time I met your mother I was so nervous-

ALEX
My mother?

MIKE
What?

ALEX
 You said, 'the first time I met
 your mother I was so nervous...'

MIKE
 I did? That's weird. Is your mom
 hot?

ALEX
 Dude.

MIKE
 What's going on tonight? You wanna
 hang out? Do something?

ALEX
 Really?

MIKE
 Yeah you could show me around.

ALEX
 Cool.

The Wonder Bras sway in, take seats at the VIP table.

MIKE
 I'll swing by your house around 7.

Mike rises.

ALEX
 I wouldn't go over there. Stan and
 his Baboons have lunch this period.

MIKE
 Don't worry. I'll see you tonight.

Mike strolls over to the Bras' table, plunks himself down.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Did you girls catch Ellen
 yesterday? Rosie was on. Melissa
 Etheridge jammed-

SAMANTHA
 -You're so rude!? We're not gay.
 We like boys.

JAMIE
 Yeah, Samantha's a total slu...

Samantha's jaw drops.

LAUREN

Last New Year's Samantha made it
with my boyfriend.

SAMANTHA

I was on like 5 Red Bulls! I can't
believe you keep bringing that up.

The Bras' begin to bicker amongst themselves. Mike pulls out
his new iPhone, plugs the earphones in his ears.

The Bras immediately stop bickering, ogle the phone.

JAMIE

Rad phone.

MIKE

I know. I'll text you...NOT.
Later...much.

Mike rises from the table.

SAMANTHA

Like we'd ever give you our
numbers.

Stan, carrying a basketball, his goons and Maggie come up
behind Mike.

STAN

Heads up!

Stan whips the ball at Mike. Mike, cat-quick, spins around,
catches the ball.

The whole cafeteria turns their attention on Mike and Stan.
Mike points to the name `Stan' on Stan's letter jacket, reads-

MIKE

Stan. Did mommy sew that on there
so you wouldn't forget your name?

Laughter from the Students.

STAN

You think 'cause you got a haircut
and new clothes people'd forget
what a fag you are?

MAGGIE

Cut it out, Stan. Let's eat.

STAN
Gimme my ball back, bee-yotch.

Mike ignores him and starts dribbling.

MIKE
You know, Stan, I feel sorry for you.

STAN
You don't know me.

Mike speaks loudly now, playing to the cafeteria.

MIKE
Oh but I do. All too well. You're the man. Captain of the basketball team. Dates the pretty girls. High school is your kingdom.

Stan and his Posse tap fists. Mike dribbles between his legs.

MIKE (CONT'D)
But, People, Stan's a bully. Why? It would be way too easy to say Stan preys on the weak because he's simply a dick. No, Stan's more complex than that. According to leading psychiatrists Stan is a bully for 1 of 3 reasons. 1, under all that male bravado there's an insecure little girl banging on the closet door trying to get out. 2, like a caveman, Stan's brain is underdeveloped. Therefore Stan is unable to use self-control so he acts out aggressively. And the third reason-

Mike holds up his pinky then spins the ball on it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I'd argue that Stan suffers from all 3.

The entire cafeteria LAUGHS HYSTERICALLY.

Mike feigns whipping it back at Stan, who recoils, then gently rolls the ball back to Stan.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(winks)
Don't hurt yourself big boy.

Some students, including Alex, ERUPT. The Wonder Bras eye Mike with new found lust.

ANGLE ON Mike's face as he walks away.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 3, 2, 1...

Mike ducks just as the ball whizzes overhead, rockets across the cafeteria landing on Miss Goodwin's tray, splattering her with food. She glares at Stan.

Mike's iphone buzzes...ANGLE ON SCREEN: the Wonder Bras digits appear.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE CENTER - DAY

Mike enters, approaches MRS. MENCER, 60.

MIKE
 My guidance councilor made me come,
 but just so you know I'm not
 planning on going to college.

MRS. MENCER
 A lot of kids feel that way. Don't
 be intimidated. It doesn't hurt to
 take a look.

Mrs. Mencer hands Mike a hefty book.

MRS. MENCER (CONT'D)
 A good place to start is here...
 this book has information on every
 college and university in the
 country.

MIKE
 Thanks.

Mike sits, starts paging through the book and gets lost in the bright colored pictures...smiling STUDENTS, CAMPUSES and LECTURE HALLS...THE OPTIONS HE LOST YEARS AGO.

INT. ASTON MARTIN - NIGHT

A pumped-up Mike dials...ringing. On the seat beside him rests a stack of college applications. Ed answers.

ED (o.s.)

Hello?

MIKE

It was incredible! I was incredible! You should'a seen me! I humiliated Stan in front of the entire lunchroom. Everyone was clapping. The popular girls were begging to give me their numbers!

ED

See what happens when you put a little lipstick on the pig? **Did you manage to get sent to the principal's office?**

MIKE

Man, I feel great! I even shot some hoops after school. No aches. No pains. Gotta run, Buddy.

Mike hangs up.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The Aston Martin pulls up. Mike climbs out, walks to the door, takes a deep breath and rings the bell.

SCARLET (o.s.)

Coming!

The door opens revealing Scarlet in her dirty yard attire.

SCARLET (CONT'D)

I've been dying to meet **you**. **I've known your father since...**(gasps)

Scarlet...SPEECHLESS...visibly stunned by the resemblance...

MIKE

Is something wrong?

SCARLET

(flustered)

No. It's just...you look like...No. I'm fine. Come in. Please.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Scarlet and Mike sit across from one another. Scarlet stares at Mike as if examining every pore on his face.

SCARLET

And you say Ed Freedman is your father?

MIKE

That's my dad. All 68 inches of him.

SCARLET

You don't look anything like him. If you don't mind me asking, who's your mother?

MIKE

My mother...she...she was...a...

Mike spies Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment on a table.

MIKE (CONT'D)

-a convict. In New Jersey. They met while dad was at Princeton. She was on parole. B&E, fist fighting, shanking. Nothing major. But she's dead now.

SCARLET

Oh? I'm sorry.

MIKE

I warned her about kite surfing during hurricane season. So how are things with you? Doing anything exciting? Dating? Flirting with Dom Johnson maybe?

SCARLET

Why would you ask about Dom? Did Ed tell you to say that?

MIKE

I mean do what you want. You're a grown woman but, word on the street is Dom's been spreading gingivitis all over town.

SCARLET

I'll keep that in mind, Mark.

Scarlet can't take her eyes off Mike.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
It's crazy how much you like my
husband when he was a teenager.

Mike switches subjects, points to her dirty clothes-

MIKE
You doing some gardening?

SCARLET
I am. I'm a landscape designer.
I'm actually redoing the backyard.
I'll show you.

Scarlet stands, leads Mike to the french doors.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
It's a work in progress so you'll
have to use your imagination some.

Scarlet opens the doors, flips on the lights. The yard's been cleaned up. Fresh blankets of sod rest in piles next to stacks of limestone. HUNDREDS of unplanted plants, flowers, trees and shrubs sit around the yard in strategic positions.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Mike and Scarlet step outside.

MIKE
I almost don't even recognize
it...er...if I had seen it before I
probably wouldn't recognize it.

SCARLET
You wouldn't have. It was a
disaster back here a few days ago.
Obviously I have a lot to do still.
I'm laying the sod next and the
limestone pathway will go here.

Scarlet moves about the yard, pointing and explaining.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
Then I'll plant all those, over a
hundred different types of flowers
and plants. I have an amazing
fountain being delivered that'll go
here and a bench over there.
(MORE)

SCARLET (CONT'D)

And I'll string rows of tiny, white lights above it all so every night will be a starry one. It'll be a real sanctuary back here.

MIKE

It seems like a lot'a work for one person, Scar.

A chill runs up Scarlet's spine.

SCARLET

My husband's the only one that ever calls me that.

Alex appears at the doors interrupting-

ALEX

Yo, Mark. Let's do this.

MIKE

Good luck with the project.

SCARLET

Nice to meet you. And, Alex, be home by 10:30.

Mike heads back inside. Scarlet stares after him.

INT. ASTON MARTIN - NIGHT

Mike and Alex step in.

MIKE

How's your mom doing? You know, with your dad not being around and all.

ALEX

She doesn't like to show it but I know she's bummed. I think it bothers her more that he hasn't called me or Maggie in a while. Whatever.

BEEP. BEEP. Mike pulls out his iPhone, text message from Samantha. It reads:

SAMANTHA'S TEXT

Wat^? mobinit 2 zuma. soi! but w/e. brb. bk. gtg. ttyl. xo. sam.

Mike stares at the screen as if it were in hieroglyphics.

MIKE

I have no idea what this says?

Alex takes the phone from Mike, reads-

ALEX

It says `What up? Mobbing it to Zuma. So over it but whatever. Be right back. Back. Got to go. Talk to you later. kiss, hug. Sam.

MIKE

Let's hit the beach, wingman.

The two touch fists.

EXT. ZUMA BEACH - NIGHT

A BONFIRE illuminates the night sky. MUSIC plays. KIDS lay on blankets, play football. Others splash in the ocean.

WE find Maggie and the Wonder Bras seated by the fire.

SAMANTHA

We were on his myspace page. There's a picture of him jamming with the Chili Peppers at Coachella.

JAMIE

I heard Timbaland wants to produce an album with him.

LAUREN

Yeah, but he turned him down to help orphans with Brangelina in Nambib-ib-bib...in Africa.

SAMANTHA

Oh my God! I bet he knows Justin.

ANGLE: Mike and a nervous Alex make their way down the sand.

ALEX

This looks boring. Let's go back to my house and play video games.

Alex turns. Mike grabs his arm, turns him back.

MIKE

What are you so nervous about?

ALEX

The beach is for the older, cool kids. I don't belong here.

MIKE

What are you talking about? You're a basketball player. You're cool.

ALEX

I don't play basketball. I mean, I can play, I just don't play on the team.

Mike is stunned.

MIKE

But I thought you were getting ready for the season?

ALEX

I never told you that.

As a confused Mike and Alex approach the scene, BOYS call out to Mike, tap his fist. GIRLS fawn over him. Mike's become a celebrity...and he's eating it up.

ANGLE: Lauren spots Mike with Alex.

LAUREN

Here he comes!

The Bras whip their heads around, get all dreamy.

MAGGIE

Can he be any lamer? Using my little brother to get to me?

SAMANTHA

If that boy was an apple he'd be delicious.

Samantha leaps up, scurries over to Mike. Lauren and Jamie chase after her. Maggie shakes her head.

As Mike and Alex approach the gathering, Alex freezes up.

ALEX

Oh, man. It's her. She's here.

MIKE

Who?

Alex nods towards the fire. Seated with FRIENDS is Nicole.
Alex BELCHES loudly.

ALEX

She's so pretty it makes me gassy.

MIKE

Calm down. Here's what you're gonna do. You're gonna go over there and introduce yourself-

ALEX

She won't like me, Mark. I'm a loser.

Mike grabs Alex by the shoulders.

MIKE

Why? Because Stan says so? You think Stan's a winner? He's going nowhere. You're a great kid. Any girl would be lucky to get your attention.

ALEX

Really?

MIKE

Really. And right now, there's a girl over there who's dying to meet you.

A determined look comes over Alex.

ALEX

Okay. What do I say?

MIKE

Just introduce yourself. Then compliment her on something she never gets complimented on. Like if she has big, meaty, man hands tell her she should be a hand model.

(Alex burps nervously)

And don't burp on her.

ALEX

I can do that.

Alex takes a deep breath, marches off just as Samantha runs up and throws her arms around Mike.

SAMANTHA

You came! Why don't we take a walk somewhere private and play?

Jamie and Lauren rush over.

JAMIE

I don't think so, Sam. Mark promised me a walk on the beach.

LAUREN

Walk with me. I've got less miles on me.

A full blown ARGUMENT breaks out between the Bras. Mike sees Maggie sitting by the fire alone, slips out.

ANGLE: Alex steps over to Nicole and suddenly loses confidence. As he turns to retreat, Nicole looks up-

NICOLE

Hi.

Alex stops, turns back around and blurts out-

ALEX

Hi, Alex. I'm Nicole.

Nicole and her Friends giggle.

NICOLE

You don't look like a Nicole.

ALEX

You have big, meaty man hands. You should be a hand model.

The Girls' jaws drop. Nicole hides her hands.

NICOLE

Oh my God! Seriously!?

Alex rips a huge BURP. The Girls duck for cover.

GIRL 1

I think he got some on me!

ALEX

Wait. I'm sorry. I'm just real nervous and I've wanted to talk to you for so long. And Mark told me to compliment you on something you never get complimented on but I couldn't find anything because everything's so...perfect.

Nicole and her Friends MELT.

NICOLE

Do you want to sit down, Nicole?

Nicole scoots over making room next to her. Alex smiles.

ANGLE: Mike sits down beside Maggie.

MAGGIE

What do you want?

MIKE

Stan. Why are you dating him?

MAGGIE

Get to the point why don't you?

MIKE

I'm serious. He's not a nice guy. Matter of fact he's a jackass.

MAGGIE

Don't talk about him like that. You don't even know him.

MIKE

I know he bullies your brother.

MAGGIE

Stan barely knows Alex exists. We're moving in together after graduation.

MIKE

Whoa. Whoa. Whoa. I thought you were going to Georgetown?

MAGGIE

I'm going to Westwood Community College. Stan and I both are.

Mike loses it, leaps to his feet shouting-

MIKE

The hell you are, Young Lady! If you think I'm gonna let you throw your life away on some Sleestack you're crazy! I forbid you to see him anymore and that's final!

Maggie jumps up. Kids all stare.

MAGGIE

Who do you think you are!? My father?!

Maggie stomps over to the still bickering Bras.

MIKE

Don't you walk away from me, Margaret Sarah O'Donnell!

Maggie and the Bras turn towards Mike and glare. **Maggie heads for the parking lot.**

SAMANTHA

Who's Margaret?

LAUREN

He doesn't even know her name.

JAMIE

He's so not into her.

The Bras make the 'text me' sign then hurry after **Maggie.**

Mike kicks angrily at the sand and accidentally into the faces of a group of KIDS.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE/POOL - MORNING

A HOT GIRL wearing a 'Lifeguard' bathing suit sits atop a high chair.

Ed floats on a raft. A frozen drink next to him. Scarlet looms over him, the 2 in a heated conversation-

SCARLET

I haven't heard from him in three weeks. Obviously he doesn't care.

ED

He cares.

SCARLET
Then where is he?

Mike steps from the house, sees Scarlet-

MIKE
What's going on?

SCARLET
Nothing, Mark. I was just dropping something off.

Scarlet tosses a manila envelope on the patio table.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
Our court date is the 27th. If he has anything to say, he can say it then.

Scarlet exits.

MIKE
What was that all about?

ED
That envelope contains divorce papers.

Mike eyes the envelope, **in stunned silence.**

ED (CONT'D)
But what do you care? You're going to college, right? Life's one big panty raid for you.

Mike feigns innocence.

MIKE
I don't know what you're talking about?

ED
I saw the applications in your room.

MIKE
You went through my room!?

ED
If you'd cleaned like I asked I wouldn't have had to. You can't be serious about this can you?

Mike starts to argue then gives in-

MIKE

I have to face the possibility that I might never turn back and if that's the case, I'm going to do it right this time around.

ED

Karmically speaking, **in the** next life you're coming back as a hemorrhoid.

Mike **scoffs**, storms off. Ed calls after him-

ED (CONT'D)

I'm not paying for college!

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HALL - DAY

Mike shoves books in his locker. Stan approaches.

STAN

You like her, don't you?

MIKE

Who?

STAN

My girlfriend. She told me you were **trashing** me at the beach.

MIKE

Leave her alone, Stan. She's a good kid.

STAN

I don't know how good she is yet but after I find out, she's all yours.

Stan walks off. Mike slams his locker shut.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/CALCULUS CLASS - DAY

Mike slips inside the empty classroom, slathers KRAZY GLUE all over Stan's DESKTOP and CHAIR.

Mike sits just as the rest of the class files in. Stan kisses Maggie and takes his seat.

Stan leans on his desk, placing a FOREARM and a HAND on the sticky desktop. He catches Mike looking back at him and gives him a cocky wink. Mike winks back knowingly.

Mike's phone beeps. He checks it...A PIX MESSAGE...3 perfect ASSES in tiny bikini bottoms. A wide-eyed Mike spins in his seat to find the Wonder Bras smiling at him.

Mr. Adams enters.

MR. ADAMS
Settle, people.

Adams scribbles a large equation on the blackboard.

MR. ADAMS (CONT'D)
This was your homework. Who can
come up here and solve this for me?
Anyone?

Blank, uninterested faces. Scattered giggles. Adams tosses the chalk angrily on his desk.

MR. ADAMS (CONT'D)
Not one person. Fine. Miss
O'Donnell. Come up here and dazzle
us with your brilliance.

Maggie rises nervously from her seat, shuffles to the front of the class. As she passes Stan WE see...

Stan lifts his fingers from the desktop...it's WET...he places his wet fingers to the tip of his nose and smells.

When Stan tries to remove his fingers from his nose...they STICK. Stan tries to raise his other arm...STUCK.

STAN
Stuck!!! I'm stuck! My fingers!

Stan stands, hunched...the CHAIR GLUED to his butt. The DESK ATTACHED to his forearm and his FINGERS STUCK to his nose.

The Kids and Mike burst out laughing, break out their video phones as Stan fumbles around, dragging the desk, PANICKING.

MR. ADAMS
Sit down, Stan! Sit down!

STAN
It's glue! I'm glued to
everything!

Jazz bounds out of his seat, grabs hold of Stan's wrist.

JAZZ
I'll get it off!

STAN
No! No! Don't pull--!

RRRRRIIIIPPPP. Jazz yanks. Stan's SCREAM echoes.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - DAY

Mike, wearing basketball gear and bouncing a basketball, stands in the middle of the court. Alex enters.

ALEX
I got your text. What's so important?

MIKE
This year you're making the team.
We practice everyday 'til try outs.
That gives us a week and a half.

ALEX
Forget it.

MIKE
Yeah, you're right. You probably
don't have any skills anyway.

Mike begins to walk out.

ALEX
Hey! I got skills.

Mike turns back.

MIKE
So what's your problem? Is it Stan
and his friends?

ALEX
Just leave it alone.

MIKE
You don't need to be afraid of
them, Alex.

ALEX
I'm too small anyway.

MIKE

That's why we focus on your speed,
dribbling and outside shot.
Remember, it's not how big you are-

ALEX

-it's how big you play.
(quizzically)
Where did you hear that?

MIKE

(covers)
I don't know? Read it somewhere I
guess. *Be a sport. Show me what
you got.*

*Mike tosses Alex the ball. Alex begins to dribble. Mike
steps up to defend. Alex dribbles quicker, through his legs.*

MIKE (CONT'D)

Alright. You got a little game.

WHAM. The doors slam open. In walk Stan and his Posse. A
BLOOD speckled BAND-AID covers the tip of Stan's nose.

STAN

What are you 2 queers doing in my
gym?

MIKE

Let's go, Alex.

Alex *stops dribbling*. He and Mike move towards the door.
Stan and his Posse block the way.

STAN

I don't think so. You girls wanna
play with the boys then let's play.
2 on 2.

MIKE

We'll save you the embarrassment
for try-outs.

Stan takes the ball from Alex, turns his back, dribbles.

STAN

Come on, Ally. Embarrass me.

While dribbling, Stan moves backwards, bumping into Alex's
midsection, forcing Alex back.

MIKE
Back off, Stan.

Alex takes a deep breath, tired of being afraid-

ALEX
It's okay. I got him.

Alex throws his hands up, tries to defend the much bigger Stan. Stan easily backs Alex down, faking left and right.

STAN
You ready? Here it comes.

Stan spins, elbows high...POW...Alex catches one to the head and DROPS. Stan shoots and scores.

STAN (CONT'D)
2 points! And I was fouled!

Stan high 5's Jazz and Kevin. Blind with RAGE, Mike RUSHES Stan...WHAM...tackles him hard to the floor.

Jazz and Kevin throw Mike off Stan, punching and kicking him.

COACH HARVEY, now 58, enters the gym, runs over to the fracas, pulls the boys apart.

COACH HARVEY
Hey! That's enough! That's enough!

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/OFFICE - DAY

Mike and a nervous Alex sit outside the principal's office. Mike holds an ice pack to his eye.

ALEX
My mom's been in there a while.
She's gonna be pissed.

MIKE
Act like you're hurt and she won't be able to stay mad at you.

The door swings open. An elated Ed blows in.

ED
Way to go, slugger! Get any shots in?

The Secretary's jaw drops.

SECRETARY

Mr. Freedman, your son has a black eye.

ED

Wuss!

Ed sits between Mike and Alex.

ED (CONT'D)

Hey, Alex. How you doin', buddy?

ALEX

I'm okay I guess.

ED

Good. Good.

(turns to Mike, nudges him)

Nice goin'. How do I look?
Anything in my teeth? How's my
breath?

Ed flashes his pearly whites then blows on Mike. The principal's door opens, an angry Scarlet steps out.

SCARLET

Ed.

ED

Hey, Scarlet. Exciting, isn't it?
My first parent/principal
conference.

Scarlet looks sternly to Alex-

SCARLET

Fighting? What's gotten into you?

ALEX

(rubs his jaw)

I can't talk, Mom. My jaw.

SCARLET

(melts)

My poor baby. And how about you,
Mark?

Scarlet bends down so she's eye to eye with Mike. She removes the ice pack...a purple shiner.

SCARLET (CONT'D)

Ouch. You poor thing. Does it hurt?

Scarlet strokes Mike's face. Mike loses himself in her caring, gentle touch.

MIKE

Not anymore. You smell great.

Scarlet, a bit weirded out by Mike, stands.

SCARLET

Alex, I'll meet you at the car. I need to talk to Uncle Ed for a second.

Alex shuffles out of the office. Scarlet turns to Ed, hushed-

SCARLET (CONT'D)

Did you give him the divorce papers?

ED

I sent them to him.

SCARLET

Is it another woman? I can handle it. Tell me the truth.

ED

I haven't heard from him, really.

Scarlet looks down, fights back tears, unravels a bit...

SCARLET

Okay. If you do, please have him call home. For the kids...I'm running out of excuses-

ED

I'll tell him. I promise.

Scarlet forces a smile. Mike watches her go. For the first time he's seen HER REALITY...hurt, pain, frustration. Mike places his head sadly in his hands.

Julie the Principal pokes her head out the door.

JULIE

Ed, come on in.

Ed whispers to Mike.

ED
I'll take it from here.

As Ed passes Julie on the way in-

ED (CONT'D)
I'm heartbroken. The boy's
incurrigible.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Ed takes a seat across from Julie, puts on his best `troubled
parent' look.

JULIE
Look, if it was only one isolated
fight it wouldn't distress me all
that much. Boys will be boys.
But, it's also been brought to my
attention that Mark may have Krazy
glued a boy to his chair.

Ed stifles a laugh, puts on a serious face.

ED
My son? Mark! Get in here! Now!

Mike slouches in, takes a seat.

ED (CONT'D)
Did you glue a boy to his chair?

MIKE
No.

Ed throws his hands up in exasperation.

ED
See? The boy's out of control.
He's acting up at home. He won't
eat his vegetables-

MIKE	ED
He shaves his back.	He sucks his thumb.

MIKE	ED
He wears girls underwear.	He wets his bed.

JULIE

Enough! Mark, I know it's hard to be the new kid but if I have anymore trouble from you, you'll be facing detentions or worse. You can go now.

Mike nods, exits. Ed stands and with exaggerated sadness-

ED

He's crying out for help and I don't know what to do. It hurts so bad. Maybe we could discuss this over margaritas?

JULIE

Let's give him time to figure it out on his own. If the situation gets worse then we'll take the next step.

ED

You're the expert. I'm just a single dad out here blowing like dust in the wind.

Ed shakes Julie's hand and exits, sniffing.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

A dirt covered Scarlet wrestles a roll of sod down.

MIKE (o.s.)

Got an extra pair of gloves?

Scarlet peers over her shoulder...Mike wanders in. Scarlet stands, wipes her bare, dirty hands on her jeans.

SCARLET

Gloves are for sissies.

MIKE

Yeah, but I just had a **manicure**.

SCARLET

(laughs)

You're serious? You want to help?

MIKE

Are you kidding? I love **landscaping!**

(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's right up there with watching
"Sex and the City" and snuggling.

Scarlet laughs, eyes him skeptically-

SCARLET

Mark, I'm 36 years old-

MIKE

I'm just doing this to make a few
bucks so I can buy Laker tickets.

SCARLET

(blushes)

Embarrassing. Sorry. I'll give
you 10 dollars a day.

MIKE

Wow. 10 whole dollars. At that
rate I should be able to buy
tickets in...2011.

SCARLET

Fine. 20. Grab a roll.

Mike and Scarlet, step over to the sod, lift a roll together,
carry it over to the spot.

MIKE

What are the benefits like here?

SCARLET

I'll throw in a baloney sandwich.

MIKE

Deal.

Mike and Scarlet share a laugh.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/LIBRARY - DAY

Mike strolls in, sits at a back table, pulls a college
application from his knapsack. He takes out a pen, places
the tip to the paper where it says 'name' when-

WE hear the muffled sound of CRYING. Mike rises, follows the
sobs through the maze of stacks until he finds-

MIKE

Maggie?

-seated on the floor, head hidden between her knees. Maggie
looks up, sees Mike, quickly dries her eyes.

MAGGIE

What do you want? To rub it in my face? Say I told you so?

MIKE

You lost me?

Maggie drops her head back between her knees.

MAGGIE

Stan dumped me.

Maggie BAWLS loudly. Mike panics, fearing the worst-

MIKE

What happened? What did he do? You didn't...

MAGGIE

My mom was working last night. Stan came over with a box of-

Mike slaps his palms over his ears.

MIKE

Your next word better be `cookies' or you're in big, big trouble!

MAGGIE

What am I going to do? I can't live without him.

Maggie takes Mike's shirt, BLOWS her nose on it.

MIKE

Maggie, did you two...you know...do...

MAGGIE

Do what?

MIKE

That thing...that rabbits do a lot of and that a girl your age should never do and should only do when she's married.

MAGGIE

Sex? No, that's why he dumped me!

Maggie bawls again. Mike silently celebrates, sits beside her, awkwardly pats her on the back.

MIKE

There, there now. It's okay.

MAGGIE

Sure he was a jerk but he was there for me. Which is more than I can say for any other man in my life.

Maggie sobs uncontrollably. Mike takes a deep breath, calms-

MIKE

When you're young everything seems like the end of the world. But it's not. It's just the beginning. And you might have to meet a few more jerks, but one day you'll meet a boy who treats you the way you deserve to be treated...like the sun rises and sets with you.

MAGGIE

You really think so?

MIKE

I know so.

Maggie throws her arms around Mike, hugs him tight. Mike hugs her back. A moment he's never had with his daughter.

MAGGIE

You're so sweet.

ANGLE ON Maggie's face. She's SMITTEN.

MONTAGE OF LIFE

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Alex dribbles, using both hands, while running through a maze of cones. Whenever he messes up, Mike makes him start again.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

Mike and Scarlet settle the limestone rocks into the freshly laid sod creating a walkway.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/CALCULUS CLASS - DAY

Maggie solves a difficult problem on the board, much to Mr. Adam's chagrin.

Maggie turns from the chalkboard and smiles flirtatiously at Mike. Stan catches this exchange and pops the back of Mike's head.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

Lights shine down. Alex stands behind the 3 point line. Mike feeds him balls. Alex shoots and moves. Shoots and moves. More misses than hits.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Again, Mike and Ed sit before a stern Julie.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Mike teaches Alex the cross over dribble. Scarlet brings the boys water. Mike checks her out as she goes back in the house. Alex bounces the ball off his head.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/CALCULUS CLASS - DAY

A muffled buzz. Mike reaches into his pocket, pulls out his phone. A PIX MESSAGE. Mike opens it. A close up of perfect CLEAVAGE.

Mike peeks over his shoulder...the Wonder Bras text on their phones. He's confused until-

-Mike turns a little more in his seat...MAGGIE smiles seductively at him, blows a kiss. Mike GASPS, spins back around...TRAUMATIZED.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

Scarlet fills holes with plants then waters them with a hose. She turns, finds Mike SLEEPING in the grass. Scarlet picks up the hose, TURNS IT ON HIM. Mike leaps up, chases her.

EXT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/PARKING LOT - DAY

Mike, Alex, Nicole, Maggie, the Bras and a slew of KIDS hang by Mike's Aston. Stan, Jazz and Kevin are all that's left by Stan's Mustang.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Alex scampers through the maze of cones, dribbling from hand to hand...and does it perfectly. Mike and Alex high 5.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

Mike and Scarlet lug an ornate, wooden bench to it's spot. They sit. Mike casually places a hand on Scarlet's leg. Scarlet casually removes it.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - DAY

A game of 1 on 1. Alex dribbles up to Mike. Mike crouches in a defensive stance. Mike goes for the ball. Alex crosses over. Mike misses. Alex pulls up, shoots and scores. Mike smiles, shakes his head.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Again, Mike and Ed sit before Julie. She hands Ed a slip of paper...3 detentions. Ed chokes back crocodile tears.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HALL - DAY

Mike places books in his locker, shuts the door revealing...a goo goo eyed Maggie. Mike startles and RUNS. Maggie chases.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Alex stands behind the 3 point line. Mike rapidly feeds him balls. Alex catches, shoots and moves. This time...they're all going in. Mike passes the last ball. Alex shoots and we-

CUT TO:

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - DAY

CLOSE ON a ball going through the hoop. Wider reveals Alex following through. He and Mike tap fists.

It's TRY-OUTS. Coach Harvey, a number of HOPEFULS, Maggie, Nicole and the Bras watch the game of half court, 2 on 2. Stan and Jazz vs. Mike and Alex.

Mike and Alex school Stan and Jazz. Steals, picks, fancy passes and scoring. The Coach watches with awe. A final 3 pointer by Mike in Stan's face seals the deal.

COACH HARVEY
That makes 11-3. Game over.
Gather up.

As Alex passes Harvey, Harvey stops him-

COACH HARVEY (CONT'D)
You've gotta little bit of your old man in you, O'Donnell.

The Team and the Hopefuls huddle around Coach Harvey.

COACH HARVEY (CONT'D)
As you all know due to the amount of seniors coming back I only have 2 open spots on the roster. It's Freedman and O'Donnell. The rest of you hit the showers.

The Hopefuls trudge out of the gym. Alex leaps into the air.

ALEX
Wooo! We did it, Mark! We did it!

MIKE
You killed it out there!

Alex runs over, hugs Nicole. Mike beams with pride. Coach Harvey puts an arm around him-

COACH HARVEY
Son, I don't know where you came from but you just made my year.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alex rushes through the door. Mike and Maggie follow. Maggie slaps Mike's butt.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

ALEX
Mom! Mom!

SCARLET (o.s.)
I'll be right out, Honey!

MIKE

I got'a use the bathroom.

WE follow Mike down the hall. As he passes a half open door, he pauses, peeks in...Scarlet, facing away, pulls a shirt over her nude back, shakes out her long hair.

Mike watches...no, he GAZES longingly, lovingly...lost in her beauty until...Scarlet turns, startles-

SCARLET

Mark? I didn't know you were there.

MIKE

I'm sorry. You just look so beautiful.

Scarlet blushes...it's been a while since she's heard that.

SCARLET

Thank you.

MIKE

Can I zip you up?

SCARLET

I'm wearing a sweater.

MIKE

Your jeans?

Scarlet walks towards him and...SLAM...shuts the door on him. Mike wanders to the bathroom, shaking his head-

MIKE (CONT'D)

Stupid, idiot, stupid.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mike enters, steps over to the toilet. Maggie slips in behind him, shuts the door. He whirls around.

MIKE

Maggie, what...

Maggie places a finger on his lips.

MAGGIE

Shhh. I get it now. Why you didn't want me to be with Stan, the nice things you said in the library. It's because you wanted me.

Maggie backs Mike against the wall.

MIKE

Maggie, listen to me. I'm not the person you think...

MAGGIE

Shhh. Yes, you are. You're a good guy. You're not like the others.

MIKE

That's right! I'm not like the others. I'm very different than the others. So different that you and I can never be...

Maggie stops, looks quizzically at Mike-

MAGGIE

What are you trying to say? Are you..."confused"?

MIKE

Yes! Yes! That's it. I'm confused. Extremely confused.

MAGGIE

Ohmygod! It all makes sense now! Your hair. The highlights.

Mike starts to speak. Stops. Finally gets it-

MIKE

What? No-no-no-no. I'm not gay. I'm...I've been in love with the same girl since I was 17.

Maggie switches back into predatory mode.

MAGGIE

Who is it? Does she go to our school? Do I know her?

MIKE

No, you don't. Now-
(eyes the toilet)
-if you don't mind?

MAGGIE
Tell your girlfriend she better
keep a close eye on you.

Maggie smiles seductively and struts out.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Alex types on his phone. Mike enters.

MIKE
Who you texting?

ALEX
My dad. I have to tell him about
today.

Mike nods...then realizes...BEEP...BEEP. HIS PHONE. Alex and Maggie look to Mike. Mike checks his phone.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Did you just get a text?

MIKE
(nervous)
Me? No. Yes. It's Ed. I mean
dad. Not your dad. My dad. I'll
just call him back.

Scarlet enters. She looks AMAZING.

SCARLET
So? What happened? Tell me. Tell
me. I'm dying to hear.

ALEX
I did it. I'm a Falcon! The first
game's in 2 weeks.

SCARLET
Oh my God, Alex! That's so
incredible!

Scarlet wraps Alex in a big hug. Mike watches. It's a bittersweet moment for him.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
I'm so happy for you. And now I
want to show you guys something.

Scarlet, unable to contain her excitement, leads Mike and Alex to the french doors and flicks a light switch...

SCARLET (CONT'D)

Ta da!

Thousands of tiny, white lights illuminate Scarlet's OASIS...

MIKE

You hung the lights!

SCARLET

I wanted you to be the first to see it.

ALEX

Mom, it's sick.

EXT. MIKE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

The 3 step outside. Mike, truly blown away, takes picture with his iPhone.

MIKE

It's amazing. I'm speechless. I'm sorry I never saw how talented you are...I mean when people see this and how talented you are you'll be designing sanctuaries all over the city.

SCARLET

(beams)

Thank you.

ALEX

Mom, why are you all dressed up?

SCARLET

Oh my God. I almost forgot. I have a date.

Off Mike's stunned reaction.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE/FOYER - NIGHT

Mike marches in behind Scarlet. As they reach the door, he steps in front of her.

MIKE

Let's see who the lucky guy is.

Mike swings the door open revealing...Dom Johnson.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I knew it!

SLAM. Mike shuts the door, blocks it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I knew you had a thing for him!
You can't do this! You took vows.
What kind of example are you
setting for the kids!?

SCARLET
Mark, I'm flattered. Really, I am.
But I'm too old for you.

Scarlet moves Mike aside, opens the door. Dom stands in the doorway holding a bouquet.

DOM
Wow. You look absolutely
ravishing.

MIKE
Keep it in your pants, Casanova.

SCARLET
Don't mind him. You all set?

DOM
Let's do it.

Scarlet heads for the van. Dom looks to Mike-

DOM (CONT'D)
Hey, kid...if the vans'a
rockin'...well you know the rest.

Dom imitates humping, jogs after Scarlet.

MIKE
Don't you lay a finger on her,
Johnson! I know where you live!

Mike slams the door.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE/**KITCHEN** - NIGHT

A contemplative Alex scoops lasagna onto plates. An agitated Mike enters, pulls up a seat at the counter.

ALEX

It's weird to think about my mom
with someone other than my dad.

MIKE

It's adultery! If this were
Afghanistan she'd be dragged
through the village by goats. You
need to talk to her.

ALEX

My mom's been pretty sad the past
few months. She deserves to be
happy. My dad obviously
is...wherever he is.

MIKE

Maybe he's not? Maybe he wishes he
could be here right now with you
but there's a real good reason he
can't be.

ALEX

No, my dad's not a family guy. This
is dumb but I used to tell him I
was on the basketball team because
I knew he'd never make it to a
game.

MIKE

Then why would you tell him that?

ALEX

I guess I was hoping it would make
him like me more.

Mike is CRUSHED.

INT. GUCCI STORE - DAY

Mike paces in front of a dressing room. A SALESMAN waits by
the door.

MIKE

My wife's moving on. My son
doesn't think I like him and my
daughter's in love with me. I need
to change back, Ed.

Ed steps from the changing room wearing very tight, ultra hip
clothes that belong on a 20 year old...he looks ridiculous.

ED
What about college?

MIKE
I'm not going. I'll be a pharm rep
til I die. I just want my family
back.
(beat)
You're not gonna wear that, are
you?

Ed checks his butt in a full length mirror, nods happily.

ED
Baby's got back.

Ed retreats into the changing room.

ED (CONT'D) (o.s.)
Now that Julie's agreed to go out
with me tonight, I need you to
start behaving. I can't have her
thinking my son is a complete
degenerate.

MIKE
Fine. I want to have some kids
over tonight to celebrate Alex
making the team. Is that cool?

Ed, wearing only his banana hammock underwear and socks,
steps from the room, hands the clothes to the Salesman.

ED
Wrap it up. No, it's not cool. I
remember hearing what those parties
were like, kids peeing everywhere,
food on the ceilings, puke in the
pool.

MIKE
Listen to you. You sound like an
old man.

Other SHOPPERS eye Ed oddly as they pass.

ED
No party. I mean it. Don't make
me take the car away.

MIKE
Don't treat me like a child, Ed.

ED
I won't when you stop acting like
one.

Mike grabs Ed's bare tits and TWISTS. Ed screams, grabs
Mike's tits and TWISTS. Both of them HOWL in pain.

SALESMAN
Sir! Please!

Mike and Ed, both still titty twisting, look up. Everyone in
the store stares. They each let go, force smiles.

ED
This isn't over...son!

MIKE
Not even close...Dad!

Ed stomps into the dressing room rubbing his sore boobs.
Mike pulls out his iPhone, begins texting.

CUT TO:

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/HALL - DAY

The Wonder Bras stand by their lockers when their phones
beep...TEXT MESSAGE...

MIKE'S TEXT
Party at my house 2nite. 7. Get
the word out.

The Bras type away, simultaneously hit SEND. WIDE
REVEALS...hundreds of students...the beeps of hundreds of
cell phones.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

CARS line the street. A steady flow of KIDS stream towards
the front door. MUSIC pounds from within. It's a RAGER.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

MAYHEM. Kids raid the refrigerator, throw food around.
Another KID sprays the room with the removable sink head.

Mike rushes in, grabs the sink head from the Kid.

MIKE
Give me that!

WONDER BRAS (O.S.)
Hey, Sexy.

Mike turns without thinking SPRAYING all 3 Wonder Bras in the face. The Bras scream. Mike replaces the nozzle.

MIKE
I'm so sorry. Have you seen Alex?
The Bras wipe themselves off, grab Mike's hands.

SAMANTHA
Dance with us!
The Bras drag a reluctant Mike out of the kitchen and into -

INT. ED'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

PARTY-GOERS dance everywhere and on top of everything.

The Bras surround Mike, each girl grinding on him as if it were a competition.

Lauren takes Mike by the face, turns him towards her-

LAUREN
Nambib-bib-ib, that African country
makes me horny.

Jamie spins Mike towards her, places his hands on her boobs-

JAMIE
Perfect, aren't they?

Samantha pulls Mike roughly by the hair, twists him around-

SAMANTHA
Which one of us is it gonna be?

Mike tries to squeeze out. The Bras block him. The music changes...a remix version of Hammer's 'Can't Touch This' blares.

MIKE
I thought you girls wanted to
dance?

Mike breaks into the 80's Hammer routine WE saw from the first scene.

The Bras back up. Party-Goers stop what they're doing and watch...not sure whether to laugh or join in.

And then, the Bras fall in. Followed by others. The party just got hotter.

Maggie runs through the party and out the back. Stan chases after her. Mike inconspicuously Hammer walks his way out of the mix and outside.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE/POOL - NIGHT

Stan corners Maggie against the back wall.

STAN

I was upset. I'm sorry. But I need you to show me you love me. Then we'll move in together.

MAGGIE

Whatever. I'm with someone else now.

STAN

Yeah, right. Who'd be stupid enough?

MAGGIE

Him.

Stan turns angrily toward Mike as he approaches.

MIKE

Party's over, Stan. You're out of here.

STAN

Who's gonna make me leave? You?

MIKE

I would but it smells like you've been drinking so I'll let the cops do it.

Mike pulls out his phone. Stan looks to Maggie then back to Mike, laughs-

STAN

You can have the nun. She doesn't put out anyway.

MIKE

On second thought-

Mike SWINGS. Stan ducks, throws a giant uppercut. POW.
Mike's eyes roll back in his head and WE cut to BLACK.

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The HOSTESS shows Ed and Julie to their table by the window.
Ed wears his new Gucci outfit. Julie's under dressed.

HOSTESS

There you are, Mr. Freedman.

ED

Thanks. Put this towards your
studies.

Ed hands the Hostess a 50. Julie rolls her eyes.

JULIE

When you asked me to get together
to talk about Mark this isn't what
I envisioned. This isn't a date,
Ed.

ED

Are you insinuating that I'd use my
son's misfortune just to go out
with you? What kind of a father do
you think I am?

JULIE

As long as we're on the same page.

A WAITER approaches.

WAITER

Good evening. Would you care to
see the wine-

ED

Bring us the 1962 Petrus.

The Waiter nods, leaves.

ED (CONT'D)

You're going to love this wine.
\$2000 dollars a bottle.

JULIE

I don't drink. So tell me what you think's going on with Mark?

ED

It's baffling really but I noticed he's been drinking a lot of diet ice tea lately. Maybe he's gay?

JULIE

You didn't ask me here to talk about Mark, did you?

ED

Do you like caviar? Because if you do you have to try the Almas. 100 year-old Beluga. \$700 per ounce.

Julie throws her napkin on the table.

JULIE

You're disgusting, Ed.

ED

What? You don't like Beluga? You can get something else.

JULIE

I'm not some 22 year-old who you can impress with caviar and expensive wine.

ED

Would the caviar and expensive wine impress you if you were on a yacht off Monte Carlo?

JULIE

I came here because I'm concerned about the wellbeing of your son but you don't care about Mark. All you're concerned with is proving to me how wealthy you are.

ED

I do care about Mike...Mark. Whatever his name is.

JULIE

You know what's too bad, Ed? I'm sure when you were the guy the boys picked on and the girls ignored you were really sweet.

(MORE)

JULIE (CONT'D)

But you thought becoming rich would solve all your problems. Instead it made you just like them. I have to go.

Julie rises. Ed takes her wrist.

ED

Wait. You're right. I'm acting like an idiot. I'm sorry. Please stay.

Julie begrudgingly sits back down.

JULIE

Act normal or I'm leaving.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/MIKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Mike's face, eyes shut. A hand gently strokes his head. Mike stirs awake, smiles, eyes still closed-

MIKE

I had the craziest dream. I was 17 again and back in high school. It was horrible, Scarlet-

MAGGIE (o.s.)

Scarlet!?

Mike's eyes pop open. WIDER reveals Mike and Maggie on the bed. Mike's head rests on Maggie's lap.

Mike JUMPS off the bed, scrambles to the other side of the room and behind a chair. Maggie leaps off the bed.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

You wanna play? Okay, let's play. I'm the hungry lioness and you're a baby gazelle.

Maggie ROARS, chases Mike around the room.

MIKE

Wait! This is highly inappropriate and dysfunctional. Listen to me, Maggie. I'm your father.

Maggie growls, stalks Mike around the bed.

MAGGIE

And I've been a bad, bad girl, Daddy.

Maggie dives across the bed. Mike dodges, runs out the door.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Alex and Nicole sit closely by a fire pit, laughing.

ALEX

How about Mrs. Cruz? Every time she rolls her r's she spits all over me.

Alex imitates Mrs. Cruz. Nicole laughs, places her hand on Alex's leg. Alex looks down at her hand, then up at her, both staring at one another...THE MOMENT.

Nicole closes her eyes, moves in. Alex moves in then FREAKS. He bounds out of his chair, sprints inside leaving Nicole hanging.

INT. ED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A distraught Alex pushes his way through the insanity. He finds Mike running down the stairs.

ALEX

Mike, I blew it! I totally blew it!

MIKE

Blew what? What happened?

ALEX

She wanted me to kiss her but I panicked. I didn't know if I should close my eyes or which way to turn my head or how much tongue I'm supposed to use-

MIKE

Slow down. Have you ever kissed a girl before?

ALEX

Not a real one. I used to practice on my dad's Playboys.

MIKE

How did you find...forget it. It's easy. All you have to do is take her face in your hands gently like this-

Mike places a hand gently on either side of Alex's face.

MIKE (CONT'D)

-hold her still as you adjust your
head, close your eyes and kiss her.
The rest happens naturally.

A BOY walks past, sees Mike romantically holding Alex's face.

BOY

That is so wrong.

Mike and Alex quickly separate.

ALEX

What if I, you know, *pitch a tent*?

MIKE

If you feel it, you know, getting
angry, take a step back. Now go get
that kiss.

Alex takes a deep breath, steps outside.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

A determined Alex marches over to the seated Nicole.

ALEX

Nicole.

Nicole stands-

NICOLE

I'm sorry, Alex. I didn't mean to-

Before she can finish Alex's hands are on her face and his
lips on hers. It's as if time stands still.

INT. ED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike watches his son's MAGICAL FIRST KISS. And when Alex
takes a step back, Mike laughs.

BEEP. BEEP. Mike pulls out his phone. Text message.

SAMANTHA'S TEXT

911. ^stairs. mastr b-room.

Mike rushes to the stairs. An angry Maggie storms down them.
Mike ducks. Maggie passes. Mike races up.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mike sprints down the hall, throws open the door to find-

INT. ED'S HOUSE/MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Samantha, Jamie and Lauren in the bed, clothes on the floor.

SAMANTHA

We decided not to make you choose.

JAMIE

You can have all 3 of us.

The chance of a lifetime. A legend making moment.

MIKE

(looks sadly at the Bras)
Girls, if I was 20 years younger
I'd...probably only last 10 seconds
anyway. Put your clothes back on.

Mike turns, exits. On the way out WE actually hear SNIFFLING.

SAMANTHA

Was he crying?

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURNT - NIGHT

Julie **laughs** hysterically.

ED

God's honest truth. I had the
whole costume. I used to go
everywhere dressed like a wizard.
No wonder I didn't get a date all
through high school. **Annnnd you
think I'm the biggest nerd ever.**

JULIE

No, no, really. I don't.
(catches her breath,
suddenly serious)
Hark! Who goes there?

ED

(unsure)
Tis I. The Wizard they call
Marius. And who might you be fair
maiden?

Free to be herself, Julie lets her hair down, shakes it out.

JULIE
Tis I! Elf Princess Ariala of
Jamroar.

ED
NO WAY!

JULIE
YES WAY!

ED
Level 10.

JULIE
Mage. Level 15. Bitch!

They stare at each other incredibly turned on. Ed screams-

ED
Check please!

EXT. ED'S HOUSE/POOL - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a Heavy Kid leans over the pool PUKING.
Wider...Mike beside him while Kids cheer the Heavy Kid on.

MIKE
I'm so dead.

Mike turns, finds SCARLET making her way through the crowd.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Oh no!

Mike rushes over to her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Scarlet, what are you doing here?

SCARLET
I'm looking for Alex. It's past
his curfew and he wasn't picking up
his phone. Is he here?

MIKE
Yeah, he's fine. He's with his
girlfriend.

SCARLET
Alex has a girlfriend?

MIKE

He does and she's really cute.
Come on.

Mike leads Scarlet away from the pool.

INT. FERRARI - NIGHT

Ed and Julie drive through the upscale neighborhood.

JULIE

How did you get your hands on the
5th edition? That's not due out for
another three years.

ED

I have two words for you. Russian
mafia.

JULIE

Drive faster.

He steps on the gas. He fishtails around a corner. Cars pack
Ed's street and driveway. Boys and girls trample the front
lawn. One BOY urinates in a flower bed.

JULIE (CONT'D)

Calm thyself, Marius.

ED

That little-! I'll kill him!

Ed double parks the car, jumps out.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ed storms up the driveway. Julie hurries after him. A KID
spies Julie, calls out-

KID

It's Ms. Goodwin! Run!

All the Kids on the lawn SCATTER in different directions.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ed and Julie enter the crowded, loud room. Kids dance, stomp
around on the furniture. A furious Ed screams-

ED
Everybody out! Get out! Get out!

Nobody flinches. Julie WHISTLES loudly. The Kids stop.

JULIE
This party is over! If you don't
want to spend the next 3 months in
detention you will leave...now!

The Kids BEELINE for the door. Ed stops a GIRL.

ED
Do you know where Mark Freedman is?

GIRL
I think I saw him go outside.

SPLAT. A slice of pizza falls from the ceiling onto Ed's
head. The Girl laughs, exits.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Maggie enters, weeds through the crowd, bumps into the Bras.

MAGGIE
Have you seen Mark?

SAMANTHA
We're looking for him too.

Maggie scowls, heads for the back door. The Bras chase.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Mike and Scarlet hide behind the pool house, peek around the
corner, spy on Alex and Nicole by the fire pit. Alex is
animated, confident...

SCARLET
He's like a totally different
person.

Scarlet and Mike step back by the pool, sit on a lounge.

SCARLET (CONT'D)
It's been so good for him to have
you around. You have no idea.

MIKE

Believe me, I do. He's a great kid. And you're an amazing mother.

SCARLET

I'm not so sure. I mean look at me. I showed up at a party to drag my son home. Could I be any more embarrassing? And how many amazing mothers run their kids' father off?

MIKE

Hey, you didn't run him off. Don't blame yourself for his stupidity.

SCARLET

I knew he was unhappy. I knew he hated his job. I should've been more **supportive, more** sympathetic to what he was going through. He gave up a lot for me.

MIKE

That's bull shit! You, Maggie and Alex are the best thing that ever happened to me...him. He was just too selfish to recognize it. At least, that's how I see it.

Scarlet smiles thankfully at Mike.

ANGLE...Maggie and the Bras roam the backyard searching for Mike.

JAMIE

He's over there. By the pool.

SAMANTHA

Who's the ho?

MAGGIE

Mom?

ANGLE...Alex and Nicole, hand in hand, stroll back towards the house when Alex freezes-

ALEX

Whoa. What's my mom doing here?

ANGLE...Scarlet places a hand over Mike's.

SCARLET

You're sweet. I have no idea why I'm telling you all this. There's just something so familiar...

Scarlet looks into Mike's eyes. Mike stares back. She's vulnerable. He loves her. It's perfect. Mike leans in and KISSES HER...PASSIONATELY.

SSSSSLAP. Mike falls off the chair. Scarlet leaps up.

SCARLET (CONT'D)

What do you think you're doing!?

Mike scrambles to his feet.

MIKE

Scar, just calm down. I have something to tell you but I need you to keep an open mind. Can you do that for me?

SCARLET

This conversation is over, Mark.

MIKE

I'm not Mark.

SCARLET

I'm not in the mood for games.

MIKE

It's no game. I'm me...him...Mike. It's me...your husband.

Scarlet winces as if dealt a blow-

SCARLET

What? Why would you say that?

MIKE

It's the truth. I'm the father of your children. You have to believe me.

SCARLET

Don't ever come near me or my family again. If you do, I'll have you arrested or better yet, institutionalized.

Scarlet marches towards the house. Mike on her heels pleading.

MIKE
Let me explain, Scar.

As she passes Ed and Julie.

SCARLET
Your son needs a shrink!

Scarlet storms off. Before Mike can protest-

MAGGIE
Pervert!

Mike turns. SLAP. Maggie lights him up, runs for the house. SLAP, SLAP, SLAP. The Bras add theirs on the way out.

Alex and Nicole march past. Mike reaches for Alex's arm. Alex pulls it away.

MIKE
Alex, wait. Let me explain-

ALEX
How could you do this to me?

Alex whisks Nicole into the house. Mike lowers his head. Ed stomps over, grabs Mike.

ED
This place is a disaster! A kid
pissed all over my English garden!
What were you thinking!?

MIKE
She hates me, Ed. I've ruined
everything.

Mike runs for the house. Julie looks quizzically to Ed.

JULIE
Who hates him? What's going on?

Ed shifts uncomfortably, takes a deep breath.

ED
Oh boy. I don't quite know how to
put this.

JULIE
Try being honest.

ED
 He's not really my son. I don't
 have a son.

SLAP. Ed looks like he's about to cry.

JULIE
 Mark's obviously having a crisis
 and you...you insensitive bastard,
 you disown him? He'd be better off
 with his mother in Thailand.

Julie strides for the house. Ed yells after her-

ED
 Should I call you?!

EXT. ED'S HOUSE - MORNING

All is normal. No signs of a party.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/HALLWAY - MORNING

Ed knocks and knocks on Mike's bedroom door.

ED
 Come on. It's been 2 days. Open
 up.

WE hear a dragging sound then...CLICK. Ed turns the knob,
 opens the door, enters.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/MIKE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Dark. Mike climbs back into bed. Ed waves at the air.

ED
 Jesus. It smells like Jeffrey
 Dahmer's kitchen in here.

Ed pulls up the blinds, opens the windows. A disheveled,
 Mike groans, rolls away from the light. Ed sits on the bed.

ED (CONT'D)
 Are you alright?

MIKE
 I really messed up. I've lost my
 family.

ED
That's not true. Nothing's ever
truly lost.

MIKE
What about you and Julie?

ED
Oh, that? That's lost.

MIKE
Sorry about the party. I'll pay
for any damages.

ED
Don't worry about it. My spa guy
got the last of the vomit out of
the pool so we're good. I don't
mean to rub salt in your wounds but-

Ed holds up the manila envelope of divorce papers.

ED (CONT'D)
-you're due in court in an hour.

A look of determination comes over Mike's face.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE - DAY

The BMW roars out of the garage, Ed driving, tears down the driveway, fishtailing onto the street, LOSES CONTROL, rips across a neighbor's lawn then back onto the road and off.

INT. LOS ANGELES COURT HOUSE/COURTROOM - DAY

Crowded pews. Scarlet stands before the JUDGE, her right hand raised as she's sworn in.

BAILIFF
-the whole truth and nothing but
the truth so help you God?

SCARLET
I do.

Scarlet sits beside her ATTORNEY. The Judge eyes her papers.

JUDGE

You've requested a divorce by the State of California citing irreconcilable differences. Is this correct?

SCARLET

Yes, your Honor.

JUDGE

Is Michael O'Donnell or his representative present?

SCARLET

(sadly)

No, your Honor.

JUDGE

Then I take his absence as agreement to the orders of the divorce. Let's proceed. You're not asking for alimony or child support?

JULIE

No, your honor.

EXT. LOS ANGELES COURT HOUSE - DAY

Ed's BMW skids to a stop in front of the building. Mike and Ed bound out, race up the court steps-

ED

What exactly are we doing?

MIKE

I don't know. We just need to stop her from going through with it!

ED

A well thought out plan. Good job.

INT. LOS ANGELES COURT HOUSE/COURTROOM - DAY

JUDGE

The mother will have full custody of the children. The father will have visitation rights of one weekend a month-

BOOM. The doors burst open. All turn to see Mike and Ed storm down the aisle.

ED

I declare a mistrial on the grounds of insufficient evidence and Sacco and Vanzetti!

Scarlet can only shake her head.

JUDGE

Sacco and...what are you...who are you!?

ED

I am legal counsel for Mike O'Donnell and I demand a stay of execution for this marriage, your Majesty.

SCARLET

He's my husband's best friend.

JUDGE

Are you a lawyer, best friend?

ED

No but I have been a defendant in numerous lawsuits so-

JUDGE

Bailiff! Get these 2 out of my courtroom.

The Bailiff grabs Mike and a yelling Ed, drags them toward the exit. Mike wiggles free, runs back to the front.

MIKE

Your Honor! I have a letter from Mike O'Donnell. Just let me read it. Please.

JUDGE

I'm sorry, **but**-

SCARLET

If it's okay, your Honor. I'd like to hear it.

JUDGE

Make it quick.

Mike digs into his pocket, pulls out a piece of paper.

MIKE

Thank you, your Honor.

(reads)

September 7th, 1988 was the first time I saw you. You were reading 'The Great Gatsby' and wearing a Guns N Roses T-shirt. I'd never seen anything so perfect. I remember thinking I had to have you or I'd die...not in a psycho kinda way but in that beautiful, innocent, unaffected way that way only a 17 year-old kid can have. You whispered you loved me at the homecoming dance and I felt so peaceful and safe because I knew no matter what happened from that night on nothing could ever be that bad because I had you. And then I grew up, lost my way and blamed you for my failures. But I was never lost. I'd just forgotten the way life makes you forget as you grow older. And I never failed at anything because on that September day you said 'yes' to me. And at that dance you said you loved me. And as I stand here...as I write this, I want you to know if I don't have you I'll die...not in a psycho way but in that beautiful, innocent, unaffected way only a 17 year old kid can have....oh and...P.S...I'm 'Hungry Like the Wolf'.

Mike places the PAPER ON THE TABLE, looks over to Scarlet. Scarlet just stares at him, tears streaming down her cheeks...sadness...recognition?

JUDGE

Alright, son, you have to go now.

Mike nods, walks down the aisle and out the door.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Let's proceed.

SCARLET

Your Honor, Sir. I'm sorry. I'm in no shape...I need to postpone...I'm sorry.

A tearful Scarlet starts to leave, stops, picks up Mike's `letter'...**DIRECTIONS TO THE COURTHOUSE**. She looks back confused.

INT. BMW CONVERTIBLE - DAY

A solemn Mike stares out the window. Ed turns the radio off.

ED
Maybe it wasn't a spell of
enlightenment.

Mike looks to Ed.

MIKE
What are you talking about?

ED
**According to the website once
you've learned your lesson you'd
turn back. That speech should've
broken the spell.**

MIKE
Enough with the magic crap, Ed.

ED
You know what this means? You need
to let them go. You need to let
them get on with their lives and
you need to get on with yours.

Mike chokes back tears...because he knows Ed is right.

INT. ED'S HOUSE/MIKE'S BEDROOM - DUSK

Mike works on his laptop, plugs his iPhone into
it...downloads pictures.

Mike moves to the bed, packs his Falcons uniform into a
duffel bag. A BEEP. Mike unplugs the iPhone, types an email
to Scarlet, "I think this will help your business. Best of
luck, Mark" Mike hits send, grabs his bag and exits.

EXT. ED'S HOUSE - DUSK

Mike steps outside, throws his duffel into the Aston. Ed
exits the house.

ED
Where you going?

MIKE
I'm moving on. See you at the
game.

Mike climbs into the car, pulls out of the driveway.

INT. MIKE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DUSK

Scarlet sits at the kitchen table working on her laptop. The noise of an incoming email. She clicks over...MARK FREEDMAN.

Scarlet reads Mike's email then clicks on the link. A web site pops up...`Scarlet's Sanctuaries'. Scarlet smiles.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - NIGHT

An empty gym. Mike stands feet beyond the 3 point line, grabs balls from a hopper and rapidly shoots, shoots, shoots. SWISH...SWISH...SWISH. Automatic.

Coach Harvey enters.

COACH HARVEY
Hey, Freedman, save some for the
game.

Mike sinks one last jumper, turns to the coach.

MIKE
Just warming up, Coach.

Coach Harvey hands Mike a towel.

COACH HARVEY
Son, I haven't seen anyone with
your shooting ability in, well, in
a long time. I called a couple
college scouts I know. They're
coming to the game tonight...to
watch you. If you have half the
season I think you're capable of,
you can play anywhere you want.

MIKE
That's the plan, Coach.

The rest of the Falcons basketball team jogs out from the locker room followed by a PHOTOGRAPHER.

COACH HARVEY
Round up, Jock Straps! Picture
time.

The Team assembles in the middle of the court. Alex moves away from Mike. A PLAYER kneeling in front holds a sign, 'FITCH FALCONS, 2008.'

PHOTOGRPAHER
3, 2, 1-

FLASH. And with the flash WE cut to:

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/GYM - LATER

A POPULAR SONG rocks the gymnasium. CHEERLEADERS dance on the sidelines. STUDENTS and PARENTS cheer wildly from the packed stands.

Julie gabs with a group of TEACHERS.

On one end of the court, the Falcons run a pass and shoot drill. On the opposite end, a TEAM in BLUE shoots around.

Mike sees Scarlet and Maggie enter. He smiles apologetically to them. Both turn away, climb the bleachers, join Nicole and the Wonder Bras.

MAGGIE
(to Scarlet)
I thought he was hanging out with
Alex to get to me- not you.

ANGLE...Coach Harvey claps loudly-

COACH HARVEY
Alright, Ladies, bring it in!

The Falcons swarm the bench, take their seats. Mike takes a deep breath, sits next to Alex. Alex looks down.

MIKE
Alex-

ALEX
I have nothing to say to you.

MIKE
I never meant to hurt you-

ALEX
Then why'd you kiss my mom!?

MIKE

Alex, I'm your fa...I don't know.
I'm sorry.

Alex stands-

ALEX

You're lucky I don't punch you out.

Alex moves down the line, takes another seat.

Ed strides through the door spots Julie, makes his way over to her.

ED

Julie, can I talk to you?

Julie excuses herself from the Teachers.

JULIE

What is it, Ed?

ED

I've seen a good friend of mine lose everything that means anything to him. And maybe we'll never be there but...I just really want to play D & D with you.

Julie can't help but smile, sizes Ed up.

JULIE

You can raid my dungeon anytime.

ED

I'll bring my long bow.

A REFEREE blows his whistle.

COACH HARVEY

Let's go! Remember, Boys, winners get the girls. Losers please themselves!

Mike and the Falcons jog onto the court. Mike takes his place for the jump ball. The Crowd stomps, cheers LOUDLY.

Mike looks around the gymnasium...it almost seems to SLOW UP...the sound deafening. He finds Alex on the bench...his hopeful face. Mike looks into the stands...Maggie and Scarlet. Scarlet abruptly stands, climbs back down the bleachers and exits the gym.

The Ref readies to toss the ball. Mike takes a deep breath...and walks off the court.

REFEREE

Son! Come back here! You're gonna get a delay of game!

COACH HARVEY

This can't be happening again.

Mike steps over to Alex-

MIKE

It's your turn now. Good luck.

Mike rushes off the court. As Mike disappears into the tunnel, WE see the OLD JANITOR amongst the crowd. He smiles.

Coach Harvey turns to Alex-

COACH HARVEY

Get off your butt, O'Donnell! Get in there!

Alex leaps off the bench.

INT. FITCH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL/TUNNEL - NIGHT

MIKE

Scar!

The tunnel is EMPTY. Crestfallen, Mike lowers his head...

ANGLE ON: Scarlet as she appears at the far end of the tunnel.

SCARLET

What took you so long?

ANGLE ON: Mike and he's 36 years-old again, bursting out of his uniform.

MIKE

The best choice I ever made was you.

Scarlet and Mike walk towards one another, picking up their pace the closer they get.

SCARLET

How did this happ-

Mike wraps his arms around her.

MIKE

Don't ask.

They lock lips.

Mike takes Scarlet's hand and as they walk out of the tunnel-

MIKE (CONT'D)

I think it's best if we don't tell
the kids about this. Especially
Maggie.

THE END