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## Orenda

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ORENDA

An honors Thesis

Presented to

The Department of Film, Theatre and Communication Arts  
of the University of New Orleans

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Bachelor of Fine Arts, with University Honors

And Honors in Film

by

Lauren Reeks

April 2014

## Acknowledgment

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## Abstract

The following work is a feature length screenplay about Anna Morris, an 18-year-old girl who finds herself faced with a moral dilemma when her estranged father, Robert, contacts her on her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. When she learns about Robert's past involvement in an online child pornography ring Anna must decide if she can forgive him, or -- more importantly -- if he is worthy of forgiveness. However, as the story unfolds we find that it is not just Anna who needs to forgive. This story approaches issues of repentance, growth, and the journey into adulthood as Anna takes on each new challenge.

Keywords: forgiveness, adulthood, family, pedophilia, psychology, ethics.

## Preface

This feature length screenplay is primarily designed to invoke in the reader questions of morality and ethics – how can we, as human beings, determine guilt and acquittal from an objective standpoint? Secondly, the story also focusses on topics concerning adulthood, healthy and unhealthy sexual behavior, and psychological disorders. This story revolves mainly around the main character, Anna, a young woman who has just turned 18, and to whom a moral quandary arrives in the form of a phone call from her father, Robert. The subsequent revelation of Robert’s criminal past as a collector and distributor of child pornography will present Anna with the main challenge – will she be able to forgive Robert for his actions? This is complicated even further when it is revealed that Robert is dying and may not have much more time to live. However, Anna is also faced with many smaller challenges including deciding what she will do with her life, forgiving her mother, and matters of self-reflection. The story attempts not to reach a definitive solution to the problems at hand – concerning whether it is possible to forgive Robert for his crimes – but instead reaches its conclusion in overall personal growth on Anna’s part.

Child pornography and pedophilia is an uncomfortable subject, and I wanted to embrace this aspect of the work. Therefore, many scenes exist which may be disturbing to readers. For example, scenes of Anna touching herself, and of Robert possibly touching Anna inappropriately when she was only three years old. These moments are not meant to shock the reader, but instead are meant to convey the emotional experience child of abuse and the extent of the impact that it can have on the victim’s life. It is never made clear whether Anna’s “memory” of Robert’s abuse is real or a figment of her

imagination, but I feel that that unknowingness is representative of many cases of childhood abuse.

The title of the piece, “Orenda,” comes from ancient Native American mythology, which says that every living thing has a spark or a light inside of them which has the power even to overcome destiny. Anna believes deep down that it is her destiny to become a sexual deviant because her father was one. She believes that her early predisposition to touch herself and to have sexual thoughts is indicative of a disorder that will only grow stronger and stronger until she is an outcast of society, just like her father. However, Anna meets a wandering gypsy on the beach, Storm, who introduces her to the idea of “orenda” and suggests that Anna has the power to decide her own fate.

Another aspect of this story resides in the straightforward psychological approach to the subject of sexual disorders. When Anna realizes that her mother sent her to a psychiatrist when she was very young in order to determine whether Anna had been abused by Robert, Anna decides that it will be beneficial now to return to that psychiatrist to seek insights. The psychiatrist, Miss Allie, addresses Robert’s disorder from a perspective that Anna hadn’t considered before, and one which is often overlooked by society at large. Miss Allie explains to Anna that Robert’s brain is functioning incorrectly, and she cites an example of a man who had been guilty of pedophilia only to discover that he was suffering from a brain tumor and once that tumor was removed, all compulsions for pedophilia were gone.

In the end, Anna must make her own decision as to whether she can forgive Robert, but her final decision may come as a surprise. After having a disturbing dream/uncovered memory about Robert having touched Anna inappropriately when she

was a little girl, Anna decides that she can grant Robert forgiveness, but that she has no need for him in her life. She makes the decision to never see Robert again.

This emotional, uncomfortable, and personal piece is one that explores the depths of right and wrong, mature and immature, of guilt and forgiveness. It cannot provide an answer to what is the right action when faced with a dilemma such as Anna's, but it can provide an option – a way that Anna can live a peaceful life in spite of all of the pain caused.



Orenda

By

Lauren Reeks

INT. ROBERT'S KITCHEN - MORNING

ROBERT, a 50-something ex-rocker, taps his fingers nervously on a counter top in a small, dark apartment. His appearance is gaunt and grey but his features suggest that he might have been handsome in his youth. Robert sits at his breakfast bar, hand on an out-dated phone. With a deep breath, he picks up the phone and dials.

ROBERT

Renee? ... It's Robert. Please don't hang up.

CUT TO BLACK

We hear several VOICES finishing a rendition of the "Happy Birthday" song.

ALL

... Happy Birthday tooo youuu.

FEMALE VOICE

Blow 'em out!

We hear the WHOOSH of candles being blown.

INT. ANNA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

ANNA MORRIS sits at a worn-in dining room table facing a birthday cake topped with a wax "18." She is dressed in a mixture of vintage and secondhand clothing, a reflection of her artistic side. Surrounding Anna are her mother RENEE, best friends CLEMY and PAUL, and her aunt, LILY.

ANNA

I'm technically an adult!

RENEE

Does this mean you will start acting like one? Like maybe washing the dishes without being begged?

LILY

(To Anna)

Well, I just hope you'll help us vote someone decent into the white house for a change.

ANNA

Oh, here we go.

(CONTINUED)

RENEE

She's not going to be voting Democrat, if that's what you're suggesting. Anna's got more sense than that.

LILY

Can you deny that some of the best economic times this nation's had were during the Clinton years?

RENEE

Please. Need I remind you -- that pervert reaped the benefits of the policies that Bush Senior put into place.

Lily and Renee continue to argue politics in the background.

ANNA

(To Clemy and Paul)

Alright, I'm thinking adulthood sucks.

CLEMY

Can we eat the cake now?

INT. ANNA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ANNA, CLEMY, and PAUL sneak, cake in hand, into the living room where there is an assortment of comfy armchairs, poufs, and a gigantic pink sofa. LILY and RENEE follow, still arguing politics. Paul pulls Anna aside.

PAUL

I got your real present back home. Thought I could show you later. Y'know, without everyone --

CLEMY

Paul, stop hogging the birthday girl. She's got presents to open. Mine first!

Clemy shoves a badly wrapped GIFT into Anna's hands. Anna plops down on the pink sofa to unwrap it.

ANNA

Oh, it's... Stickers of Japanese cats?

(CONTINUED)

CLEMY

It's Kitty Bang Bang Deluxe Design Kit! I'll be stealing some of those for my own purposes, heads up.

ANNA

Purposes?

CLEMY

And there's this too!

ANNA

Hot pink kitty-shaped sunglasses?

CLEMY

For your beach trip this weekend! Brendan will be smitten, kitten.

ANNA

Thanks, Clemy. Glad to know you've got my new adult wardrobe under control.

PAUL

Here. Got you this. Really nothing. Totally stupid. You're gonna think it's lame probably.

ANNA

If it's from you then I'm sure it's not lame, Paul. Let me see!

Anna unwraps a beautiful leather bound BOOK with unlined pages. The cover is embossed with her initials, A. I. M.

ANNA

Wow, Paul. It's -- it's gorgeous. I absolutely love it. Thank you.

PAUL

Glad you like it. Thought you could use it to draw stuff in. Or something.

RENEE

Alright, Anna. This one is from me.

Renee hands Anna a large, rectangular gift. Anna shakes the present.

ANNA

What could it be? Oh... "All You Need to Know About the Universities of Oregon?"

(CONTINUED)

RENEE

Most colleges' early admission deadlines are in the Fall. It might be time to start narrowing down your top choices, and I thought this could help.

ANNA

Thanks. But I'd go to the University of Neverland before I commit to another four years in Oregon. Besides, we don't even know if I am going to college right after senior year...

Renee chokes on a piece of cake.

RENEE

Please tell me you're joking. Clemy already knows where she is going to go to university.

CLEMY

Well, I have my heart set on Brown but I haven't even finished my application yet.

RENEE

But you're at least thinking about it, dear.

ANNA

So, who's got more presents?

LILY

Here's mine, sweetie.

ANNA

Alright, here we go... (Ripping into the paper) What! A year's membership to Swan River Yoga? I can't believe it! This is too much! AH!

LILY

No worries, little lady. I have my ways... I went on a couple of dates with the owner back in the 80's. See? I used to be cool once upon a time.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Used to? You are the coolest! Thank you thank you thank you!

RENEE

(To Lily)

Eugh, you're not talking about Donald are you? He was a sleazeball.

LILY

You're one to talk --

CLEMY

Okay, a year's worth of yoga classes and a relaxing beach trip this weekend? I am officially stealing your life when you are asleep.

RENEE

Speaking of sleep, I think it's getting to be about that time, everyone.

ANNA

Oh, but Clemy, Paul and I were going to hang out at Clemy's house for a bit. We're going to savor the last moments of my first day as a real live adult.

RENEE

It's already eleven o'clock, Anna. You will have the rest of your life to savor your adulthood. And a great way to start acting like one would be to go to bed at a reasonable time.

PAUL

But -- I still have one more thing to give Anna.

CLEMY

We'll have her back so so soon Ms. Morris, we promise.

LILY

Maybe it's okay if she goes, Renee...

(CONTINUED)

RENEE

Oh alright, but Clemy -- Why don't you go on ahead with Paul in your car and I'll drive Anna to meet you in a little while. I need her to help me clean up.

ANNA

But there's hardly anything to do.

RENEE

Don't push me Anna. If you want to be an adult so badly then help me clean up your own mess.

ANNA

FINE. Sorry guys, I'll catch up in a minute.

CLEMY

It's alright. Just text me when you're on your way.

PAUL

Bye, thank you Ms. Morris, Lily.  
Bye Anna, see you in a bit.

Lily waves goodbye as Clemy and Paul exit. She shuts the door and turns to Renee.

LILY

Do you need my help with...?

RENEE

No, I have this under control,  
thank you Lily.

LILY

Alright. (To Anna) Well, I am just feeling totally beat. It's off to bed for me. I'll leave you two to it. Happy Birthday, my love.

Lily kisses Anna on the cheek and jogs upstairs. Anna begins to help Renee put away the cake.

ANNA

What was that all about?

RENEE

Anna -- here, I got that honey -- could you sit down for a second? I have something to tell you.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

You know, I really wish you wouldn't lecture me in front of my friends.

RENEE

I'm not lecturing you, I'm trying to help guide you -- Look, Anna, that's beside the point. It's important that I tell you what I have to say. Maybe you should put off going on that beach excursion this weekend.

ANNA

Ohh, here we go. This is where you tell me that Brendan might try to rape me or kidnap me or sell me to the circus right?

RENEE

Well I don't think you should be so flippant about this boy, yes. But that's a talk for another time. Anna, your father called me today.

ANNA

What? (Pause) I -- I thought you hadn't spoken for years -- since the divorce?

RENEE

15 years, yes. I still don't know how he got my number after all this time but I can assume that your Aunt Lily had something to do with it.

ANNA

Wow! That's nuts. Well, what did he say? Did he ask about me?

RENEE

He did. Actually, he called to ask permission to see you.

ANNA

Permission? ... Why would he need permission?

RENEE

Well Anna, up until now you've been a minor. Now that you're legally an

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



RENEE (cont'd)  
adult, I can't stop you from seeing... Robert. But I want to give you all the information before you make that decision.

ANNA  
You mean you've been keeping me from him this whole time? Because I was a minor? I cried every night for months because I thought that Dad never wanted to see me again, and you never said a word. How could you?

RENEE  
Anna, there are a lot of things that you still don't understand... About your father.

Renee reaches out to touch Anna's hand but Anna pulls back.

ANNA  
I do understand. I understand that my dad wanted to see me this whole time and you haven't been giving him PERMISSION.

RENEE  
Anna, I'm not finished.

ANNA  
There's more you've been hiding?

RENEE  
No. I mean -- just be reasonable. If you would listen to me for one minute.

ANNA  
Oh right. Because you were so reasonable when Dad left. You were just a perfect emblem for strength and motherhood all those days you wouldn't even get out of bed to acknowledge my existence. If it wasn't for Aunt Lily I probably would have starved to death. That was all reasonable, right?

RENEE  
Please, Anna. I didn't want this to be traumatic for you. I know I made  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RENEE (cont'd)  
some mistakes, but I was in deep,  
deep pain. This is really difficult  
for me too. Please just listen.

ANNA  
Oh, I feel so bad for you.

RENEE  
Anna, your father and I divorced  
because I found him looking at  
child pornography.

Anna stares blankly at the table.

RENEE  
It was sick. I didn't know what he  
was capable of... I had to make him  
leave the house and call the  
authorities.

ANNA  
What? Wh-- how do you know it  
wasn't just a mistake? Maybe he  
didn't mean to--

RENEE  
Sweetheart, Robert was part of a  
group of men running a website to  
trade these photos. It wasn't a  
mistake. After the investigation,  
he went to jail for several years.

ANNA  
How could you keep this from me?

RENEE  
Sweetheart, I'm so sorry. There's  
really no right time to say  
something like this. I'm just doing  
the best that I can. I only wanted  
to protect you. We took you to  
Doctor Allie to see if you were  
okay... To see if he might have...  
hurt you --

ANNA  
-- That's why I went to Miss Allie?

RENEE  
(Sniffing)  
She said you were happy and  
healthy, and that she didn't think  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RENEE (cont'd)

that he -- that Robert had -- done anything. She said that you might be too young to understand at that time so I just... I just wanted to let you have a normal childhood.

ANNA

You think my childhood was normal?

RENEE

WELL WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE? TELL ME ANNA. HOW WOULD YOU HAVE FELT IF YOU DISCOVERED YOUR HUSBAND -- If the man you loved... was a monster?

ANNA

I wouldn't have waited so long to tell my daughter, that's for sure.

RENEE

I'M SORRY. I'm sorry I didn't know what to do. I'm telling you now. Robert wants to see you. Anna, however you may act, you are an adult now. You have the right to make your own choices.

Aunt Lily has snuck quietly into the room. She puts her arm around Anna.

LILY

I heard yelling...

ANNA

Did you know about this? The whole time?

LILY

Yes, my baby. I knew. But Renee wanted it this way, and she's your mother. It wasn't my place to interfere.

ANNA

But you wanted to tell me? All those times I asked you where he was?

LILY

I wanted to tell you sooner, yes.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

So when I asked you where Dad went and you said you didn't know...?

LILY

He is my brother. I did keep in contact with him. I lied to you Anna, and I am so sorry. But I had to respect your mother's wishes.

ANNA

(To Renee)

I don't understand though -- why would you wait 15 years to tell me and then do it before the beach? I know I just turned 18 and everything, but you couldn't have waited just a few more days until after my vacation to give me this life-altering news?

RENEE

There's one more thing you need to know.

ANNA

Are you serious? There's more?

RENEE

I'm terrible at this. Lily, could you please?

LILY

Anna, your father called to ask if he could see you because you are now 18. But it's also important you know this now because... His doctors found something. I'm afraid he hasn't got much time left. Perhaps you could put the beach trip on hold for a little while?

ANNA

He's dying?

LILY

I'm so sorry my baby. Just know that you're okay now. You survived and you will keep surviving. Because you are Anna. And Anna is brave, and strong. That will always be true. And that's the only thing you need to know.

(CONTINUED)

Lily tries to hug Anna but Anna gets up from her seat and bolts towards the front door.

ANNA  
I need to process this.

RENEE  
Anna!

LILY  
Let her go, Renee.

Anna slams the door shut behind her.

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE - 11:20 PM

Night has fallen in full and a few streetlights are lit while others flicker or remain dark, broken. Anna is halfway down the road. She is wiping away tears. Paul and Clemy run toward her.

PAUL  
Hey! Anna, slow down. I wanted to wait for you and then we heard yelling. What's wrong?

CLEMY  
What happened? Did you get into an argument with your mom?

ANNA  
My father is a monster. My life is a lie.

Anna continues walking. Paul and Clemy follow in shocked silence.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - MIDNIGHT

Anna, Clemy and Paul occupy three swings on a childrens' swingset in the local park.

ANNA  
They said it was my choice...  
Whether I wanted to see him or not.  
I just feel so confused knowing  
that this man that I thought that I  
loved and who I used to dream would  
come and rescue me from my mom for  
so long was actually the bad guy.  
But then what if he's changed? What

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNA (cont'd)  
if he's truly sorry? I've never  
even heard his side of the story.

Clemy reaches out to grab Anna's hand.

CLEMY  
At least it's all over now. All of  
this... horribleness is already in  
the past.

Clemy climbs off of her swing and walks to Anna, pulling her  
into a hug.

ANNA  
I just wish I had known what was  
going on at the time. She kept me  
in the dark for so long...

CLEMY  
Maybe you are lucky you don't  
remember. It may be a good thing  
finding out this way instead of  
sooner. Like when my parents got  
divorced in the 8th grade. I can  
remember all the nasty things they  
said to each other in perfect  
detail.

ANNA  
I wish I did remember though...  
Renee said they weren't sure if he  
touched me or not. What if he did?  
What if I was just too young to  
know?

CLEMY  
You'll drive yourself crazy with  
those thoughts.

ANNA  
This is kind of the worst birthday  
ever.

Paul touches Anna's arm.

CLEMY  
We will talk about this more. As  
much as you need. Call me any time  
you want to talk. I've got to go  
now though, it's getting really  
late and my mom is probably  
starting to worry. I love you.

ANNA  
Thanks, Clemy. 'Night.

Clemy leaves. Paul and Anna are left alone on the swings.

ANNA  
Don't leave me. Not yet.

PAUL  
I won't. Do you want to go for a walk?

Anna nods. They walk together through the darkened paths beneath the trees.

PAUL  
I can't imagine how you must be feeling right now.

ANNA  
You know that split second right after you smash your toe into something really hard? You know it's about to hurt like hell but you don't quite feel anything yet?

PAUL  
You always have an interesting way of putting things, Anna.

ANNA  
Not really. I have a little kid's way of putting things. Sometimes I feel like I'll always be a little kid.

PAUL  
That's what's so special about you, Anna. Lots of people try to hold on to their inner child and they can't. But you... you're different. You've had all this shit happen to you -- you're dad being gone, your mom checking out, now this -- and you're still... Just... vibrant and... pure.

ANNA  
Ha, I'm not sure "pure" is the right word for me. I just feel like I need to grow up in order to deal with all these things happening around me. I need to get my life together.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Here we are.

Paul and Anna walk into Paul's backyard where they stand silently staring at a giant old tree cradling a battered tree house. Paul gestures that Anna climb up the ladder to the tree house and Anna smiles for the first time since the party.

INT. TREEHOUSE - 1:15 AM

Paul lights a couple of candles and sets them on a ledge, illuminating the interior of the small treehouse.

PAUL

I wanted to show you something I found the other day.

Paul reaches for a tattered stuffed animal and pulls out an old NOTEBOOK from its cotton center.

ANNA

Our old book!

It is covered in children's writing that warns, "KEEP OUT OR ELSE," and loose pages hang out of its bindings.

PAUL

Remember how we used to pass notes to each other in this thing? We thought we were so damn cool with our little secret.

ANNA

Are you kidding? We were very damn cool little kids. Listen to this: "Florence Huckabee is a snotty tattletale. If her oinky nose was any bigger, she'd be able to shoot mucus from building to building and ride around the town like spiderman on her snot strings." And there's an illustration to match!

PAUL

That's a pretty good drawing. You really got Florence's likeness, mucus and all.

Paul pulls the book towards himself and flips to another page. He stops on a page covered in doodles of a magical land with castles and villages, all labeled prettily.

(CONTINUED)



PAUL

Seriously, you're a really good artist Anna. You should have kept drawing.

ANNA

Our teacher, Ms. Baker wanted to put me in the talented art program in the third grade. We had to create a portfolio with four drawings in it to turn in to the "judges." I misheard her and thought she said "forty" drawings... So, being an 8-year-old, I drew what I did best at the time. Forty pictures of our dog Pixie pooping in various positions. They didn't let me into the program that year. They said my style was "too immature." I think they just weren't artistically evolved enough for my vision.

PAUL

You were so ahead of your time.

Paul and Anna laugh and continue flipping through the book. Anna stops on a page. The smile leaves her face. She reads a passage.

ANNA

"I hate my mom. She doesn't even care that I exist. I know that if Dad were here he would take me away and things would be so much better for us. Mom is like an evil witch and she drove Dad away. I wish I knew where he was."

A tear rolls down Anna's cheek.

ANNA

I don't know what to believe. Or who to be more mad at.

Paul puts his arm around Anna's shoulder. She lays her head on him and he puts his head on hers. Paul closes his eyes and smiles.

INT. ANNA'S LIVING ROOM - 2:00 AM

All of the lights are out except for one lamp in the living room, under which Renee and Aunt Lily sit. Anna enters through the front door, carrying the OLD NOTEBOOK. Aunt Lily beckons for Anna to sit down between herself and Renee.

LILY

Your mom and I are ready to answer any questions that you have for us.

RENEE

I hope one day you can understand why I kept him from you all this time.

Anna turns to Lily.

ANNA

Where is he now?

LILY

He's been living in an apartment building about an hour from here. He can't purchase property because he is a registered sex offender. He makes money working as a truck driver.

ANNA

How do you know all of this?

LILY

I've kept in contact with Robert over the years. Mostly through letters. Anna, he's been through a lot. He is a truly changed man. He pays for his mistake every day of his life that he can't see you.

RENEE

As he should.

LILY

(Sighing)

Believe me Anna, he would never hurt you. He loves you very, very much. All he really wants is a chance to say he is sorry. And to say goodbye.

(CONTINUED)

RENEE

Well, not everything can be fixed with an apology. His actions were unforgivable. End of story.

ANNA

Stop. You don't get to have a say in this. You've had it your way for 15 years. Now it's my turn. What he did was really really wrong. But he is still my father. (To Renee) And the way you sprang this on me in the middle of my birthday party was absolutely THE worst timing you could have possibly chosen. But I guess it doesn't exactly matter to you how I feel.

RENEE

I know. Everything I do is the worst possible choice. I'm the worst mom in the world. Maybe one day you'll understand that I was protecting you from someone worse.

ANNA

You were hardly a mom to me while I was growing up. And now you want to jump in suddenly and be Superwoman and save the day? Well you can't. It's too late. You abandoned me as much as Dad did. Maybe that's one of those unforgivable things too. I've made up my mind. I want to see him. I need to hear what he has to say. That's my decision, Renee.

Anna walks out of the room and up the stairs. Renee has tears in her eyes.

RENEE

She is bound and determined to do anything that goes against my advice. I just don't want her to go through any more pain...

LILY

(Pausing)

One day she will understand how much you really care for her.

(CONTINUED)

RENEE

She's right though. I've made some horrible choices.

LILY

In situations like this, there is no "right choice" to make. You did the best you could. This is a tough situation for Anna, but she'll come around. Just give her time.

INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - 2:10 AM

ANNA slumps onto her bed, exhausted. There is a BUZZING noise. Anna brings her vibrating phone from out of her pocket. There is an incoming call from "BRENDAN."

ANNA

Hey.

BRENDAN

Hey sexy. What's up.

ANNA

Nothing. Actually, that's a lie. But it's a long story.

BRENDAN

I'm in the mood for a bedtime story.

ANNA

Hah, not this one.

BRENDAN

Alright beautiful, if you say so. Whatcha doin' right now?

ANNA

I'm lying on my bed.

BRENDAN

Mmm. Sounds sexy.

ANNA

Hah. Are you drunk?

BRENDAN

I had a couple drinks. But I couldn't stop thinkin' about you and how gorgeous you are when you're laying down on your bed all sleepy. What are you wearing?

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Oh my god. Umm... a t-shirt and shorts.

BRENDAN

Mmm, short shorts?

ANNA

Haha, I guess.

BRENDAN

Take 'em off.

ANNA

Haha, I can't believe you.

BRENDAN

Pleeeeeease?

ANNA

Fine. I'm taking them off. But only because I was about to go to sleep anyway.

BRENDAN

Don't go to sleep. I love talking to you. Are they off yet?

ANNA

Yeah -- (struggling) they're off.

BRENDAN

I bet your ass looks so sexy right now. Are you thinking about me?

ANNA

How can I not be, I'm on the phone with you.

BRENDAN

You know what I mean. Are you touching yourself?

ANNA

No...

BRENDAN

Try it.

ANNA

No!

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

Why not?

ANNA

I don't know, it's weird.

BRENDAN

Why is it weird?

ANNA

I don't know. It just is.

BRENDAN

It's not weird, it's sexy. I'm touching myself thinking about you lying there in your underwear... Your hands running down your stomach. Just try it.

ANNA

I can't, not with you listening.

BRENDAN

Haha, you're silly. Would you do it if I wasn't on the phone with you?

ANNA

I don't know maybe.

BRENDAN

You don't ever do it when you're feeling horny?

ANNA

I mean, I guess I do. I don't know.

BRENDAN

Okay, I'm gonna hang up the phone, but only if you promise to give it a try when I hang up. And I'll be thinking about you all night long.

ANNA

Ugh, alright. Goodnight.

BRENDAN

Night beautiful.

Anna hangs up the phone and rests it on her bedside table. She stares at the ceiling for a littel while. Finally, slowly, she runs her hand down her stomach and strokes underwear cautiously. Her right hand moves slowly in circles and she closes her eyes. She brings her left hand to cup one

(CONTINUED)

of her breasts. Slowly, she begins to pick up the pace. She begins panting and her bed is starting to squeak with the action until --

RENEE  
(From the hallway)  
Goodnight, Anna.

Anna wrenches her blanket over herself instinctually.

INT. ANNA'S BATHROOM - 2:30 AM

ANNA is washing her hands vigorously at the sink.

FLASHBACK: INT. ANNA'S BATHROOM - MIDDAY

A five-year-old ANNA is crying, staring at her face in the mirror. RENEE is looming behind her at the faucet -- she is vigorously washing Anna's hands from behind the little girl. Little Anna continues to sob uncontrollably.

FLASH FORWARD: INT. ANNA'S BEDROOM - 2:30 AM

Anna finishes washing her hands and dries them. She stares into the mirror deeply before turning off the light.

INT. DINO'S DINER -- 11:00 AM

ROBERT sits at an empty booth at Dino's Diner. He a 50-something non-descript white guy with graying hair. He might have been handsome once but he now looks rather gaunt. ANNA enters the small, quiet diner.

ROBERT  
(Standing up)  
Annabelle.

ANNA  
Hi.

ROBERT  
(Taking a deep breath)  
Wow, I can't believe it. You look just like your momma when she was your age. Here, sit down. I got us a table.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA  
(Sitting)  
Cool.

ROBERT  
(Sitting)  
I'm glad you came.

ANNA  
Yeah. Um, they have good bread rolls here.

ROBERT  
You probably don't remember us coming here together. Back when you were so small I could lift you over my head?

ANNA  
Yeah, I don't remember that at all.

There is a silence. The WAITRESS brings one non-alcoholic beer to Robert and a giant rootbeer float with a colorful straw and a cherry on top to Anna.

ROBERT  
I used to get you root beer floats and you would go crazy for 'em. I ordered you one already. Hope you don't mind. Though you're probably a little old for all that now.

ANNA  
No, it's great. Thank you.

ROBERT  
Are you hungry? Can I get you something?

ANNA  
Not really, thank you.

ROBERT  
(Pausing)  
I guess you have a lot of questions for me.

ANNA  
Yeah. I don't really know where to start though.



ROBERT

Let me. It's all true. Everything they said about me. I did it.

ANNA

Did what exactly?

ROBERT

I thought Renee told you everything?

ANNA

She did, I think. I just kind of... Want to hear it from you.

ROBERT

I understand. I guess I'll just... Start... I was a real bad man. I did bad things. Things that are real hard to say out loud. I have a sickness, I know that. And I don't blame Renee for keeping me away from you. She always wanted you to have a perfect life. She used to read those books, you know the ones about raising your kids right. She was so dedicated to giving you the best life. And my mistakes meant that I couldn't be a part of it.

ANNA

What did you do, exactly?

ROBERT

I collected pictures. Pictures of young girls. Children. I knew it was sinful. I'm so disgusted with myself for giving in to evil...

ANNA

Why did you do it?

ROBERT

It happened when I discovered the internet. I found that there were other people like me out there that I could talk to. Before then, I felt alone. I didn't know what to do or who I could trust to talk to about my problem. I had fallen away from the church. But these other guys online were like me -- they had a problem that they couldn't

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT (cont'd)  
understand or control. Some of us wanted to stop. It gave me a sense of community. They were my friends. We tried to help each other, to give support. But at the same time, this urge just takes you over. We would send pictures back and forth. The internet was new, we didn't know where the pictures came from. In a twisted way, we thought we were helping each other. Doing the right thing by only looking at pictures. But I know now that it was all wrong.

ANNA  
I don't understand... Why did you feel like you needed to do... that stuff?

ROBERT  
I've been asking myself that question every day for 15 years. I still don't know the answer. God works in ways we can't always understand. But I do know that I would NEVER hurt you, Anna. I have paid for my sins in every way you could think of. I went to jail for three years. When I got out, I couldn't buy property because no one would sell to me. I couldn't get a decent job, so I was stuck with my old job driving trucks. This is my driver's license now.

Robert pulls out a DRIVER'S LICENSE that is branded with large red letters: "SEX OFFENDER."

ROBERT  
But the greatest punishment has been not being able to see you grow up. Not being able to get to know the beautiful young woman sitting across from me. But I know Renee did a good job raising you. I can see her toughness in your eyes.

ANNA  
If I have strength, it came from Aunt Lily. She took care of me after... everything happened. Renee

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNA (cont'd)

forgot about me. She wouldn't even get out of bed.

ROBERT

I put her through more trials than any woman should ever have to go through. I understand that maybe you feel she wasn't there for you when you needed her, but baby, she was making real tough decisions in order to keep you safe.

ANNA

Maybe she was a better person when you knew her but she's different now. She's suffocating me. She wants me to grow up and make adult choices but she just won't let me GO.

ROBERT

I remember when I was your age. I thought my momma and daddy were trying to ruin my life. They didn't like my "rowdy" friends or my long hair. One night my momma came in my room with a pair of scissors and I bolted right out the door and never came back. I was 16 years old and I thought that I was invincible. I made a lot of stupid choices. But when my so-called friends left me high and dry and I came crawling back home with my tail between my legs, I realized that I was wrong about my momma and daddy. They took me back in with open arms and they forgave me. They only wanted to protect me from making what I now know were some really stupid decisions.

ANNA

But I'm not trying to run off with a rock-and-roll band. I just want to take a year or two off before I go to college. I want to get out of Oregon and see the world. I don't even know what I want to DO with my life yet, so why should I pay a hundred thousand dollars for some degree that I don't even want?

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

I don't have all the answers, Anna, and it sounds like you're realizing that your momma doesn't either. If there's one thing I know though, it's that she loves you with all her heart. Try not to be so hard on her. Life is short.

ANNA

Maybe you're right.

Anna stirs her rootbeer float idly and Robert gazes out of the window.

ROBERT

Do you think... Do you think I might have a chance?

ANNA

A chance at what?

ROBERT

Do you think Renee would agree to see me? I'd like more than anything to apologize to her. For everything I put her through.

ANNA

I don't know, I'm sorry. She's very stubborn.

ROBERT

I know. That's why I fell for her in the first place. I just wish I could get one chance, just five minutes, just to make things right. I don't know how much your momma told you... but I'm sick.

ANNA

They said you don't have much time.

ROBERT

That's right. I know it's not much, and that nothing can ever make up for me not being there for you, but I've saved up a lot of money over the years. I didn't really have anything to spend it on. I want you and your momma to have it when I die.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

You don't have to do that, really.  
We're fine.

ROBERT

I want to. It's yours.

ANNA

That's really not necessary.

ROBERT

I've already written it into my  
will. It's done. Money is nothing  
to me. The only thing I ever really  
wanted was your forgiveness.

ANNA

I don't know if I'm ready for that.

ROBERT

(Tears in his eyes)

I don't blame you. And I don't want  
to force you to make that decision.  
But please, let me be in your life.  
We can come here and talk about  
whatever you want.

ANNA

I guess that'd be okay... I have to  
go now.

Robert wipes his eyes as she gets up from the booth.

ROBERT

Anna. Will you meet me here  
tomorrow? Same time? Please. I want  
to be there for you, just once.

ANNA

Okay.

ROBERT

I love you.

ANNA

Bye.

Anna leaves Robert sitting in the booth alone.

INT. ANNA'S KITCHEN 11:30 AM

RENEE is washing dishes in the sink. The radio is on a talk show and the RADIO DJ is babbling innately about the latest celebrity gossip. Renee picks up a pot and begins scrubbing. She finds a spot on the pot that just won't leave. She begins to scrub furiously. She scrubs faster and faster and is gasping for breath, tears streaming down her face. Finally she flings the pot across the room and collapses to the floor. Her fingers are bleeding. The RADIO DJ reports that Justin Beiber is dating a new starlet when the FRONT DOOR is heard opening offscreen. Renee quickly stands up and gathers her composure.

ANNA  
(walking in)  
Hey.

RENEE  
How did it go?

ANNA  
It was alright. He seemed... Nice.

RENEE  
Yeah. He can seem that way.

ANNA  
You should cut him some more slack.  
He's dying, after all.

RENEE  
Everyone dies eventually. It  
doesn't make them a nice person.

ANNA  
I can't believe you. He defended  
you when I told him what a shitty  
mother you were. And you can't do  
anything but put him down. He's got  
a problem. He's working on it. Who  
knows, maybe he really has changed?  
You're just too stubborn and  
cold-hearted to give him a chance  
to show you.

RENEE  
People don't change, Anna. They  
adapt. They just find better ways  
to hide what they truly are. That's  
what he's doing to you. He's  
fooling you Anna, just like he  
fooled me.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

You're wrong.

RENEE

I know I'm wrong about a lot of things, but I am right about this. Robert will never change. He will always be who he is, and that is a sicko. A pedophile --

ANNA

Stop it. He's still my father.

RENEE

He's a pervert and a menace to society --

ANNA

STOP IT --

RENEE

HE'S A MONSTER AND HE DOESN'T  
DESERVE TO BE ALI--

Anna flings herself onto Renee, tackling her to the ground. The two struggle, pulling hair and scratching.

ANNA

SHUT UP SHUT UP SHUT UP!

RENEE

GET OFF ME!

The two struggle on the floor for a moment before Anna finally breaks free and stands up over Renee, wild-eyed. There is a fingernail scratch on her cheek collecting blood.

ANNA

I loathe you.

Anna runs up the stairs.

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE - 1:30 PM

LILY walks up the driveway carrying groceries. ANNA bursts from the front door, carrying several bags of clothing, her hair still in disarray.

LILY

Anna, what's going on?

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

I can't live with her anymore.

LILY

What? What happened?

Anna stalks off down the street. Lily watches her leave and then enters the house.

INT. ANNA'S KITCHEN 1:30 PM

RENEE is still slumped on the floor. We hear the front door open from offscreen and LILY walks into the kitchen. She drops her bags when she sees Renee.

LILY

Oh my -- what happened?

RENEE

She's gone... She's gone...

Lily crouches down and cradles her sister's head on her chest, rocking her back and forth.

LILY

Shhh, it's okay.

RENEE

She'll never come back...

LILY

Shh... it's alright.

EXT. CLEMY'S HOUSE - 2:00 PM

A bedraggled, bag-laden ANNA rings the doorbell. CLEMY'S MOM answers.

CLEMY'S MOM

Anna. Uh, hi. Good to see you...  
Come in. Is everything alright?

ANNA

Everything's fine Mrs. Fulton. Is  
Clemy home?

Clemy's Mom calls upstairs.

CLEMY'S MOM

Clementine? Anna's here! Go on up,  
Anna.



INT. CLEMY'S BEDROOM - 2:00 PM

Clemy's room is meticulously organized and decorated with bright, coordinated colors and a matching set of stylish furniture. There are awards scattered across the walls and one overburdened shelf supports trophies of various Shapes and sizes. CLEMY is sitting at her desk typing when ANNA enters the room.

CLEMY

Hey girl. Woah, what happened to your face?

ANNA

I got into a fight with my mom.

CLEMY

What, a fist fight?

ANNA

More like a hair-pulling, scratching kind of fight, but yeah. I think I'm missing a chunk on the back of my head.

CLEMY

Holy shit.

ANNA

Yeah. I don't think I can go back.

CLEMY

Seriously? Whatever happened, I'm sure it'll blow over by tonight. Renee will want you back home.

ANNA

No, I'm not going back. She's driving me insane... Do you think I could crash here for a little while?

CLEMY

Umm, I don't know. I can check...

Clemy leaves the room and Anna slumps down on the bed. She leans over to take a peek at what Clemy is writing on her laptop. It is the beginnings of an essay for Brown University. Anna sighs and falls back on the bed. Clemy returns.

(CONTINUED)

CLEMY

My mom said no... She's friends with your Aunt Lily from book club and she doesn't want to start any drama. I'm really sorry. I can hide you in my closet if you'd like. It's kind of small but you can come out at night...

ANNA

(laughing)

It's okay, Clemy. I understand.

CLEMY

What are you gonna do?

ANNA

I don't know. I'll figure something out. Ugh, why can't I just have a perfect life like yours?

CLEMY

You've got to be joking.

ANNA

No, I'm serious. You're perfect. You always get good grades and you're responsible. You never act irrationally or get in trouble. You plan ahead, you know what you want to do with your life, and you don't get in fist fights with your mom over your dad being a pedophile.

CLEMY

... Is that what happened?

ANNA

Yeah.

CLEMY

Ugh, I'm sorry.

ANNA

You have nothing to apologize for.

CLEMY

No, I know that. I'm just sorry that you have to go through all this craziness. You're right, sometimes I forget that I do have it pretty good... But I'm not perfect. I want to have fun too.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

I know, I know. I'm just... So lost. This new thing about my dad... I don't know what to think. I saw him today.

CLEMY

You did? How did it go?

ANNA

It was... weird. He just seemed like a normal guy. I think he's really sorry for what he did. But I still don't know if I can forgive him for being gone all of those years.

CLEMY

I mean, my dad left my mom for a sixteen year old Phillipino girl he met on the internet.

ANNA

Wait, was Su Ang seriously sixteen?

CLEMY

Probably, did you see her? If I'm being truthful, she looked about 12.

ANNA

Okay, but Su Ang must've been at least 18 for them to be able to get a marriage certificate.

CLEMY

Fine. But I'm 18 too. That's disgusting. Why do men do that? Go for girls way way younger than them?

ANNA

Remember when Lenny Kravitz came into town? Hailey Rothberg waited on him at the restaurant she worked at and he invited her back to his hotel room. I think she was barely 18 at the time too. Meanwhile his own daughter is 26.

CLEMY

To be fair, I'd totally do Lenny Kravitz.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

What! But Lenny Kravitz is way older than your dad!

CLEMY

Yeah but his yumminess factor is off the charts. It counteracts all age boundaries.

ANNA

Oh my god, listen to yourself. You are no worse than your dad.

CLEMY

Woah, woah, woah. This is in no way the same thing. Lenny Kravitz is not a preteen Phillipino child.

ANNA

Well he might as well be! Or maybe you are the preteen Phillipino child in this Kravitz scenario.

CLEMY

It's not the same thing at all. You know how I feel about my dad. I can't believe you would even compare me to him. What if I did the same to you?

ANNA

Okay, okay, I'm sorry. I'm just saying, maybe you should cut your dad some slack. Yeah, Su Ang was young, but at least she was technically of age to give consent. My dad on the other hand, well, he likes little children. Actual, innocent little children, like the ones who still pick their noses and eat it. So yeah, don't be so hard on your dad.

CLEMY

You're right, I'm sorry. Your situation is much worse. But I'm not about to cut my dad any slack... Anyway. So, where can you go if you're not going home?

ANNA

I don't know, maybe Brendan's place?

(CONTINUED)

CLEMY

Ugh, his place is such a dump.

ANNA

Well what do you expect from a bunch of college guys living together in a small space?

CLEMY

Haha, I guess. I just don't understand why it smells so strongly of corn chips.

ANNA

That's probably all they eat.

CLEMY

I bet you're right. I'm pretty sure one or two of them has scurvy by now. Can I ask you something though? What is it exactly that you see in Brendan?

ANNA

I don't know. I don't hate spending time with him?

CLEMY

No seriously. He doesn't seem like... your type.

ANNA

My type? I'm only 18 and you want me to have a type? I don't know, he's smart and he knows how to have fun. He lives in the moment and he doesn't do things just because other people tell him to.

CLEMY

He definitely functions on his own wavelength.

Anna smiles.

INT. BRENDAN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

BRENDAN, an 18-year-old, wild-haired punk, has his back turned and is hunched over something in the center of the living room. The room itself is shabby and completely out of date. There are bits of trash and dirty plates scattered about the floor and on every surface. Three other BEDRAGGLED

(CONTINUED)

TEEN boys are sprawled across a large sofa and armchair. Brendan turns around to exhale a large puff of weed smoke.

BRENDAN

Yipes. Here you go bro.

Brendan hands a giant three foot pipe to a bedraggled teen with glazed-over eyes.

BRENDAN

So I told him that his answer key was completely effed. I said, if you give me five minutes I can prove to you that all these answers are wrong. So I sat down at the front of this class -- and it's a lecture hall of about 200 students -- and I went one by one. This answer is wrong, this answer is wrong. The dude was fucking blown away. He told me that he'd been using that same answer key for years and no one had ever pointed out his mistake before. He just thought everybody kept doing really badly on the test.

BEDRAGGLED TEEN 1

That's wild man.

BRENDAN

That's why you can't trust people in places of power. Most of the time they don't know shit. I'm like, did I come here for you to teach me, or for me to teach you?

BEDRAGGLED TEEN 2

Heheheheh.

BEDRAGGLED TEEN 3

Dude, I need you to talk to my precal professor. She's failing the shit out of me. It's gotta be a mistake.

BRENDAN

Nah, that's probably you man.

BEDREAGGLED TEEN 3 throws a piece of sushi at Brendan's head, but Brendan dodges and catches it midair, popping it into his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

BEDRAGGLED TEEN 3  
Waste of a good piece of sushi.

There is a knock at the door. Brendan gets up and peers through the peephole for a second. He opens the door.

BRENDAN  
Anna Montana, hey.

ANNA  
Hey. Can I come in?

BRENDAN  
Course you can, what's up?

ANNA  
(To the others)  
Hey guys. (To Brendan) Can I talk to you?

Brendan walks Anna to the Hallway.

INT. BRENDAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Much like the rest of the house, Brendan's room is disheveled, but slightly less so. There are band posters on the walls and a drum kit in the corner. BRENDAN and ANNA enter. Brendan beckons Anna to sit on the bed.

BRENDAN  
What's going on? Did you get in a fight?

ANNA  
Yeah, with my mom.

BRENDAN  
Damn. You wanna talk about it?

ANNA  
Maybe later, not right now.

BRENDAN  
Fair enough, no worries babe.

ANNA  
Do you think I could stay here for a little while?

BRENDAN  
You can crash here for as long as you need.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Thank you. I really appreciate that.

Anna lays back on Brendan's bed, sighing.

ANNA

Tell me something nice.

BRENDAN

Alright. You are the most beautiful girl I've ever seen.

ANNA

Haha, shut up. No, tell me something real.

BRENDAN

You really don't know how beautiful you are, do you?

ANNA

Tell me about our beach trip. What are we gonna do?

BRENDAN

Alright. Well, Christian scored us some acid. You still wanna try it right?

ANNA

What is it like?

BRENDAN

What do you mean?

ANNA

Just, tripping. What is it like?

BRENDAN

It's hard to explain. When you take acid, you're kind of at the mercy of your own mind and your surroundings. If you're not in the right place -- mentally or physically -- the acid can turn ugly.

ANNA

Ugly?

(CONTINUED)



BRENDAN

Yeah, but don't worry about it babe. We'll be on the beach with good people. It's the perfect location for a first timer to trip.

ANNA

Yeah, but what if I'm not in the right "mental" place?

BRENDAN

You mean because of whatever happened with your mom?

ANNA

Yeah. But it's actually more than that. A lot more.

BRENDAN

Well I won't push you to tell me if you don't want to. But if you do, I'm ready to listen.

ANNA

Everything's just falling in on me, all around. I don't even want to tell you. It'll just drag you down.

BRENDAN

You can tell me.

ANNA

My mom dropped a bomb on me the other day. She said she and my dad got divorced because... my dad was a pedophile.

BRENDAN

Damn.

ANNA

Yeah.

BRENDAN

Did he ever--?

ANNA

Touch me? No. At least, I don't think so. Shit, I don't remember. I was only three when he left. Apparently he was part of some sort of illegal kiddie website. He even went to jail for years, and I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNA (cont'd)  
didn't know. He's a felon. And I just remember him as "Daddy," you know?

BRENDAN  
That's messed up.

ANNA  
Yeah. So I went to see him today.

BRENDAN  
Oh yeah? Alone?

ANNA  
I mean, we went to Dino's, it's not like he was going to try anything.

BRENDAN  
Still, you could have let me know. I work there, I could have gotten one of the fry cooks to stand on guard and beat him with a spatula if he did.

ANNA  
Ha, shush. He's actually not that bad. I think he might me really sorry for everything. Oh, and I forgot to tell you the kicker. He's dying.

BRENDAN  
Holy shit, babe. I'm sorry.

ANNA  
Yeah. And it seems his dying wish is to have me forgive him. And my mom too I guess.

BRENDAN  
Are you gonna? I mean, he's a pedophile. Those people don't change. They can't. They're brains are hardwired wrong. We talked about it in Psychology.

ANNA  
Maybe you're right but he seems really sad. He's lived this horrible life. I don't think he has any friends or anything. I'm supposed to meet him again

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNA (cont'd)  
tomorrow. Maybe the least I could do is give him some peace before he dies.

BRENDAN  
So what's stopping you?

ANNA  
There's just this... weird, nagging feeling that I can't explain. I have memories of me sitting on his lap and playing, you know? Just normal kid stuff. But what if it wasn't normal? What he if he was like -- I can't believe I'm about to say this out loud, but -- what if he was enjoying it?

BRENDAN  
I'm sorry to say this but you might be right.

ANNA  
He said he never wanted to hurt me and I think I believe him but I can't be sure. I was just so young at the time. There was this lady. Miss Allie. My mom took me to her after the divorce. We would play games and draw pictures. I thought she was just a sort of babysitter. But my mom told me that she was actually a psychiatrist. They took me to her to see if I was abused i guess.

BRENDAN  
Well, what did she say?

ANNA  
Apparently she said I was fine. But I don't know how she could tell just from me playing with legos.

BRENDAN  
Well, why don't you find her? Go talk to her and see if she can tell you what Little Anna said. It'll ease your mind.

ANNA

That's actually a really good idea. Thank you Brendan, I'm going to do that.

BRENDAN

We can go tomorrow morning. Figure out where she is and I can drop you off and then when you're done, if you don't want to see him you don't have to. We can do something nice, like go to the park or something.

ANNA

That's incredibly sweet of you. (Sighing) I'm sorry I just dropped that emotional bomb on you.

BRENDAN

It's okay, don't sweat it babe. My home life was kind of messed up too. Nothing like that, but still.

ANNA

What happened?

BRENDAN

It was my big bro and I. We didn't get along. He kinda tortured me relentlessly, beat the life out of me sometimes for fun. And to my parents, he was just the golden child. A genius, math and science prodigy. He could do no wrong. Every time I tried to talk to them -- tell them what Noah was doing -- Noah would find a way turn it all around and blame it on me. And they always believed him. That's why I moved out when I was thirteen.

ANNA

Really? Where did you live?

BRENDAN

With friends mostly. Hopped from sofa to sofa. Survived. But hey, I'm paying my own way through college now. I don't need them.

ANNA

That must've been really hard though. You were only a kid.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

Nah. It was better than staying at home. Not with them constantly putting me down for not being good enough. For not being more like Noah.

ANNA

But didn't you do really well in school too? I mean, I heard this story -- I don't know if it's true or not -- that you memorized 100 decimals of pi one year? It's practically legend now.

BRENDAN

That's close. It was 400 decimals. At the end of our first week of class in 7th grade, our algebra teacher told us that any student who could memorize four hundred decimal places of pi and write them all on the board on Monday morning would have an "A" in the class for the rest of the semester. It was one of those impossible challenges that teachers use to get kids motivated, but that they think no one will ever actually pull off. But that weekend, I studied. I memorized it all by separating it into chunks of ten. When I went out and played frisbee, or ate dinner, or took a shower, I recited the digits, chunk by chunk, until I knew all four hundred by heart. The look on the poor guy's face when I wrote it all out on the board on Monday morning was hilarious.

ANNA

What did he do? Did he give you an "A" in the class?

BRENDAN

Sure did. Every time we had an exam I'd hand in my blank test sheet with just my name on it. I got an "A" plus back every time.

ANNA

That's amazing... And kind of terrifying. I'm -- I can't say

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNA (cont'd)

"impressed," that just falls too short.

BRENDAN

Well, the ol' mom and pops weren't impressed either. Noah could do no wrong, and it seems I could do no right. I thought that if I could show them that I could succeed too, that they would finally see me as more than just "Not Noah." But it didn't change anything. Noah only tortured me more and in more inventive ways. He'd do horrible things and blame it on me. He'd create false evidence and everything to frame me. He found pleasure in seeing me miserable. Our parents were probably glad to see my ass leave in the end. They probably thought it would be a relief -- the "troubled child" was finally gone. Idiots.

ANNA

That's horrible.

BRENDAN

That's how I learned that I couldn't depend on anyone else though. I found out how to grow up really fast.

ANNA

Yeah. You did really well for yourself.

BRENDAN

I can help you too. Anything you need, I got you.

Anna leans towards him. The two begin to kiss. Piece by piece, they shed their clothing, though they are covered by a thin blanket. Brendan begins to kiss Anna's stomach, and then moves between her legs.

ANNA

Wait, stop.

BRENDAN

What's wrong? I want to make you feel good.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

I just, I feel dirty. I've been out all day.

BRENDAN

So? I like it.

ANNA

Just don't, please?

BRENDAN

Okay, I won't.

The two begin kissing again.

EXT. BRENDAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

ANNA is pacing up and down the porch, her PHONE to her ear.

ANNA

1701 Maple? Okay, thanks Aunt Lily.

BRENDAN emerges from inside.

ANNA

I don't know when I'll be coming home. Yes, I will let you know. Love you too. Bye.

BRENDAN

Did you get an address?

ANNA

1701 Maple.

BRENDAN

That's actually really close.

ANNA

Cool. The only thing is, she doesn't know that I'm coming. What if she's not home or she doesn't want to talk to me?

BRENDAN

Well, we can see if she's available and if not, I'll drive you back to my place. No harm, no foul.

ANNA

Thank you so much. For everything.

Brendan kisses Anna briefly on the cheek and they both hop in his car.

EXT. MISS ALLIE'S HOUSE - MORNING

ANNA is already at the door. Miss Allie's house is charming, like a fairy tale home. There are overflowing flower pots hanging all around and the glass front door is hung with a lacy curtain. Anna peers back at Brendan who motions a "thumbs-up." She turns back around and knocks on the door. From inside the house, a DOG BARKS loudly in response. After an uncertain moment passes, the lacy curtain parts to reveal MISS ALLIE, peaking through the door. She takes one look at Anna and opens the door, arms open wide.

MISS ALLIE

I would remember those green eyes anywhere. Anna, it's so good to see you. You look just like Renee.

Anna stares back at Brendan, who is grinning.

MISS ALLIE

Come in, come in! Don't be shy.

Miss Allie ushers Anna into her home.

INT. MISS ALLIE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Miss Allie's living room is similar in charm to the outside of her home. There are soft chairs and rugs placed with loe around the home. A giant old SAINT BERNARD sniffs Anna excitedly.

MISS ALLIE

This is Georgie. He's a giant cuddlebug. Can I get you something to drink? Pop? Lemonade? Tea?

ANNA

I'd love a glass of water, actually.

MISS ALLIE

I'll be right back. Have a seat wherever you like. They're all comfy!

Anna looks around and chooses an orange-ish armchair with a particularly poufy cushion which she sinks into just as Miss Allie returns with a glass of water.

(CONTINUED)



MISS ALLIE

(Handing Anna the glass and  
taking a seat of her own)  
So, Miss Anna Banana. How have you  
been? My you have grown into a  
young woman, it's incredible. What  
grade are you in now?

ANNA

I'm about to be a senior in high  
school.

MISS ALLIE

My, oh my. Well that means I'm  
quite the old crone indeed. I  
remember when you were just a  
little thing, not even tall enough  
to reach my waist, and here you  
are, so tall.

ANNA

My mom never let me drink coffee.  
She said it would stunt my growth.  
I don't think that's true though.

MISS ALLIE

Perhaps she was right. I drank  
nothing but coffee back in my  
college days. And look at me, five  
foot two, barely taller than  
Georgie here.

Georgie barks happily from the sofa he has completely  
sprawled out on.

ANNA

He's really big.

MISS ALLIE

Never drank a spot of coffee in his  
life.

ANNA

(Laughing)  
He seems sweet.

MISS ALLIE

Do you have any pets?

ANNA

I had a dog, but she ran away.  
Pixie was her name.

(CONTINUED)

MISS ALLIE

Oh yes, I remember you drawing some very sweet pictures of Pixie.

ANNA

Oh my gosh, were they poop drawings?

MISS ALLIE

I'm sorry?

ANNA

Oh, nothing.

MISS ALLIE

You had such a talent for drawing, even at a young age. Do you still practice?

ANNA

Not really.

MISS ALLIE

Why do I get the feeling that you didn't come here to talk about our pets and your art career Miss Anna?

ANNA

Right. I didn't... I actually came to talk about... Well, my dad.

MISS ALLIE

I figured as much. I suppose Renee has told you the truth about... Robert, was it?

ANNA

Yeah, she did. And I went to see him yesterday.

MISS ALLIE

Really? How is he?

ANNA

He's dying.

MISS ALLIE

Oh, that is a shame. How must you be feeling about that?

ANNA

I'm sorry, I just came here without calling, I should have made an appointment.

(CONTINUED)

MISS ALLIE

Please, I'm retired now. I'm all alone here with just Georgie to keep me company.

Georgie barks happily.

MISS ALLIE

I have open ears and nothing but time. And cookies.

Miss Allie gestures to a plate of cookies. Anna shakes her head.

ANNA

Well. It's just that... Now that I know everything -- about my dad, and about his preference for little girls -- I just can't help but wonder. My mom told me you said I was okay, and that you didn't think that my dad did anything to me.

MISS ALLIE

And you're wondering now if that's really true?

ANNA

Well, yeah. Or, I mean, how did you come to that conclusion?

MISS ALLIE

When we're talking about a very young child, as you were, it becomes difficult to discern to what level that child is aware of his or her surroundings. At around three years old, the brain begins to store some of the first memories of life. When I met you, you were a happy, healthy little girl. Of course, when I asked you about mommy and daddy you were distraught over daddy's departure, but that was to be expected. I asked you to draw pictures of your family and nothing seemed out of place. There was nothing to suggest that Robert had abused you in any way. This went on for many weeks until I felt satisfied that, in time, you would be able to lead a relatively happy and normal life. Which I deeply hope you have.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

For the most part, yeah.

MISS ALLIE

Than that's all I could ask for. I know you came here looking for a definitive answer but I truly cannot give you that, as I have no concrete evidence one way or the other. But ask yourself, is it really worth knowing? What is it that you are searching for?

ANNA

The truth. I just want to know the truth.

MISS ALLIE

You are clearly a very bright girl, Anna. You understand computers and such? The brain is a very complex computer. Right now, yours is squeaky clean and running at maximum efficiency. But sometimes our computers can be put together wrong, or they can break down due to old age or even external factors. The study of psychology can reveal all the ways in which a brain can "malfunction." I once came across a study of a man very similar to your father. He was normal in most every way until one day he was caught looking at lewd pictures of very young girls. His family couldn't understand it. Even he knew something was wrong. When other symptoms began to show, the doctors scanned his brain and found a tumor. Luckily, they were able to remove the tumor, and miraculously the man felt no urges to continue his pedophilic behavior. It was as if a switch was turned off. Years went by and the man lived a normal life, started a family. Until one day he began to get those same strange urges. He went back to his doctors, and sure enough, the tumor had returned.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

They didn't tell me what he was dying of... Maybe he has a tumor too?

MISS ALLIE

I'm not saying that that is the case with your father. But I will say that my life's work has shown me that malfunctions can occur within the brain. And we owe more to that than we'd like to believe.

ANNA

I think I understand that... And that's also kind of why I've felt so upset about this news. I guess there's a tiny part of me that thinks, "what if I'm messed up too?" What if I'm a pervert? I don't want to be with little kids or anything like that. But I was always interested in sex. Like a lot. And from a really young age.

MISS ALLIE

Well that's perfectly normal. Sex is a natural pleasure of life that we all enjoy. It's certainly nothing to be ashamed of.

ANNA

Yeah, I know, of course sex is normal. But I mean, even as a little girl. When I was five I used to touch myself all the time. My mom would catch me doing it and she would wash my hands and tell me that that's what monsters did. I don't even know where I learned how to do that. What if I inherited it from him? What if, in a way, I'm like him? A sexual deviant? A monster?

MISS ALLIE

Anna. You are no a monster. Your father has a disease, yes, but that doesn't make him a monster either. And you are in no way bound to become like him. Nature may deal the cards but ultimately you play the hand you are dealt. You make your own destiny.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

I know. It's just been on my mind.  
I haven't really even said it to  
myself until now.

MISS ALLIE

This is a really tough situation to  
be in, it would be stressful for  
anyone, and I'm so sorry you have  
to go through it my dear. But you  
are handling it so well. I can see  
that you are strong, just like your  
mother. You're carrying this burden  
like a warrior. But promise me you  
will try to find some time to relax  
and clear your mind. It no good for  
the psyche to ruminate over fixed  
circumstances for too long.

ANNA

I'm going on a beach trip tomorrow.

MISS ALLIE

Perfect. Enjoy the sun and the  
surf. Let life give you something  
sweet. Just go where the wind blows  
you.

ANNA

I will try.

MISS ALLIE

I hope I've helped you, Anna.

ANNA

You have.

INT. DINO'S

ROBERT sits at the same booth as before. He jumps up when he  
sees ANNA enter.

ANNA

Hey.

ROBERT

Annabelle, hi.

Robert opens his arms and Anna leans in for an awkward hug.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

Thank you for coming. It means a lot to me.

ANNA

No problem.

ROBERT

Who was that that dropped you off?

ANNA

Oh, Brendan? He's my boyfriend.

ROBERT

Boyfriend, huh? Are you two serious?

ANNA

I don't know. How can I say?

ROBERT

Does he treat you right?

ANNA

Yeah, I guess, I don't know.

ROBERT

I'm sorry, I just -- I never got the chance to be a real dad for you. I guess I'm kinda trying to make up for lost years.

ANNA

It's alright. Brendan's nice. He's very smart. And he plays music. You said you were in a band once. Do you still play?

ROBERT

Me? Nah. I played guitar once, yeah, back when I thought I was gonna be a rock star. But I gave all that up a long time ago. What does Brendan play?

ANNA

The drums.

ROBERT

A drummer, huh? Better watch out for those guys.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Renee hates him.

ROBERT

And her momma hated me when I was young. If it wasn't for your Aunt Lily and her being best friends, I'd never have been allowed in their house.

ANNA

So why'd you give it up? The guitar?

ROBERT

I guess it reminded me of the days when I was a reckless kid and did stupid things -- did drugs. Reminded me of all the mistakes I made that brought me to where I am today.

ANNA

Oh.

ROBERT

If I could do it all again I would have raised you right. Raised you in the light of God.

ANNA

Aunt Lily took me to church.

ROBERT

I know she did but Renee and I were never religious before. If I could do it again I would have been so I could set an example for you. Our time on this earth is short. Not jst for me, but for all humanity.

ANNA

What do you mean?

ROBERT

The signs are all there. Rumors of wars, natural disasters, disease. The end times are near.

ANNA

You really believe that?

(CONTINUED)



ROBERT

Of course I do. It's written in the Bible. His word is truth. My time may be up here, but you still have a chance. To live a life of righteousness. To earn salvation.

ANNA

Well, I think that whatever you've done, you've probably earned that.

ROBERT

God's will is only known to him. But tell me... Can you forgive me, Annabelle?

ANNA

I don't know if I'm the one that needs to forgive you. Maybe... Maybe you need to forgive yourself most of all.

Robert wipes tears from his eyes.

ROBERT

I don't think I can do that.

ANNA

Listen, Brendan's here. I told him to pick me up in 30 minutes... I've got to go. It's been nice talking to you.

ROBERT

Think about it, Annabelle. It would make me so happy...

ANNA

You think about it. Goodbye.

Anna gets up to leave. Robert slumps his head in his hands as she walks out of the jangling door.

EXT. PARK - MIDDAY

CLEMY, ANNA, and BRENDAN sit on a park bench across from the playground. All around them CHILDREN laugh, scream, and play games.

BRENDAN

I could have come in with you.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

You threatened to have one of the fry cooks assault my dad with a spatula.

CLEMY

How is that diner job Brend?

BRENDAN

I make \$200 a night. How much does your gig on the yearbook staff pay?

ANNA

Oh, ouch.

CLEMY

Hey, no need to get prickly.

BRENDAN

Sorry, it's just my natural reaction as a little brother to shit-talk. Anyway, Niels is having a party at our place after the beach trip. You should come, Clem.

CLEMY

I don't know. I still haven't nailed down my Brown essay yet.

ANNA

Oh, please come! You said you wanted to have a little fun in your life! This is your chance.

BRENDAN

I swear, one night of alcohol will not lower your grade point average. If it did, I would have failed out of college within the first week.

CLEMY

Alright, I'll go.

ANNA

YES!

Suddenly a large black lab, REX, bounds up to Anna and leaps into her lap, licking her face excitedly.

ANNA

Ohoho, calm down big guy!

PAUL walks up to the group and, pulling Rex from Anna's lap, clips the dog's leash back onto its collar.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Hey, sorry about that.

Paul's eyes linger on Brendan's arm, which rests on Anna's shoulder.

BRENDAN

Hey man, you got quite a beast on your hands don't you? You might want to keep that thing on the leash if it's going to randomly attack people.

ANNA

Um, Brendan, you've met Paul right? He's a good friend of mine.

BRENDAN

Oh, hey man. Yeah, you look familiar. Right, you went to school at James Cook?

PAUL

Yeah, we took P.E. together.

BRENDAN

Oh yeah, you were the little freshman that got clobbered every time played dodgeball. You would just curl up in the fetal position before coach even blew the whistle.

Clemy snorts.

PAUL

Right.

BRENDAN

Well hey man, there's a party going on this weekend at my pad on Oak. It's going to be legendary. You should come.

CLEMY

Please come. No offense but at least if you came I wouldn't have to third wheel it with these two.

PAUL

I don't know. I um... Have this really important... appointment. I can't miss it.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

Fair enough. Well, maybe you'll catch us next time.

PAUL

Right, next time. Well, Rex is looking a little restless. It's right around his dinner time. See you guys later.

ANNA

What? It's only 1 o'clock! Rex doesn't eat 'til 4.

PAUL

It's a new diet thing.

Clemy suddenly jumps up to join Paul.

CLEMY

I'm coming with you!

ANNA

Fine... See you guys later.

CLEMY & PAUL

Bye!

Clemy and Paul walk out of sight, leaving Anna and Brendan alone on the bench.

BRENDAN

You're friends with that guy?

ANNA

Paul? I've known him since kindergarten. Florence Huckabee tried to get me in trouble for stealing her puzzle pieces but Paul called her out for hiding them in her own lunch box. Paul and I have been best friends ever since.

BRENDAN

Wait, is this the same kid that wet his pants every day in 7th grade?

Brendan laughs but Anna's face is serious.

ANNA

That only happened once and your buddy Lars wouldn't let him forget it for the rest of the year. Paul

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNA (cont'd)  
had a bladder infection, he  
couldn't help it.

BRENDAN  
Oh, I remember now. Lars was only  
messing around with him. He's too  
sensitive. I guess you want me to  
be like that, huh? All artsy and  
sad, writing you little poems and  
leaving them inside your locker?

ANNA  
That's not such a bad idea.

BRENDAN  
Anna, light of my life, your face  
shines like a banana, so I must  
make you my wife.

Anna shoves his shoulder playfully and he pulls her into his  
lap and begins tickling her. The two fight and laugh.  
Finally Anna pushes him away forcefully.

ANNA  
Enough! You're killin' me!

BRENDAN  
Alright, alright. Oh shit, my shift  
starts soon. I better drop you off  
back home.

ANNA  
I'll pack up all of our stuff for  
tomorrow.

INT. PAUL'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

CLEMY and PAUL recline in Paul's room. His room contains an  
interesting mix of eclectic furniture and art. There is an  
old typewriter on the desk. It is clearly a "hipster" room.

CLEMY  
I just don't know what to write  
about on my application essay. I  
have nothing interesting to say. I  
wish I had a life like Anna's. At  
least then I might have a shot at  
standing out from the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Listen to what you just said. You really envy Anna right now?

CLEMY

You know what I meant. I envy her individuality. She's all creative and unique. Universities love that.

PAUL

You really gonna place your self worth on what some old geezers at an admissions office think about you? I bet the only excitement in their lives comes from collecting stuffed cats and pruning their prized fig bushes.

CLEMY

See? That's the kind of wit I need on my essay.

PAUL

Right... I wonder why she didn't call me though. She could have stayed here.

CLEMY

Who?

PAUL

Anna.

CLEMY

Oh, right. You're right. At least if she stayed at your place she wouldn't risk catching hep B from a stray needle or something. I'm being mean. Brendan's an asshole but I doubt he does heroin.

PAUL

What does she see in him?

CLEMY

I don't know. He is pretty smart I guess. They say he recited like a thousand digits of pi to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" or something.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

But he's a total douchebag.

CLEMY

You know us girls. We just caaan't resist a bad boy.

PAUL

If I didn't know you were being sarcastic I might believe that. He's gonna put her in danger. Or break her heart.

CLEMY

Then maybe that'll be the day she finally sees how much you love her.

PAUL

Huh?

CLEMY

Come on. Look at all those pictures you have of her on your mirror. You're crazy about her. You always have been.

PAUL

She's way beyond my league.

CLEMY

Leagues don't count between best friends.

PAUL

I've shown her how much I care about her before. She doesn't think of me that way.

CLEMY

Tried how?

PAUL

I -- I would do anything for her. If she ever needs me, I'm there.

CLEMY

Okay. I could say the same about my big brother. Have you ever tried to kiss her?

PAUL

No way!

(CONTINUED)

CLEMY

Why not?

PAUL

She has a boyfriend, for one.

CLEMY

Oh please, that douchenugget?  
There's no competition between you  
and him. She'll see that soon. Once  
the honeymoon phase is over.

Paul's mom, JOAN, enters the doorway.

JOAN

Paulie? We're going out for dinner  
tonight. Clemy, would you like to  
join us?

CLEMY

Oh, no thank you Joan, I have to  
work on my essay for Brown.  
Actually, it's already 5:00, I get  
back to it right now.

JOAN

I know you'll knock it out of the  
park, girl.

CLEMY

Bye Paul, by Joan.

Clemy exits.

JOAN

I'm choosing the destination  
tonight. Get your tastebuds ready  
for a feast!

Joan exits. Paul is alone in his room. He gets up to look at  
the pictures of Anna that he keeps clipped to the side of  
his mirror. His PHONE vibrates from the bureau. It's ANNA.  
He picks up.

PAUL

Hey Anna, what's up?

ANNA

Hey. I don't know. I just got back  
from the park. I'm sorry if Brendan  
offended you. He messes around a  
lot.

(CONTINUED)



PAUL  
Yeah, of course.

ANNA  
He wants us to take acid on the beach tomorrow.

PAUL  
Are you gonna do it?

ANNA  
I don't know, do you think I should?

PAUL  
I don't know, Anna. That's getting into some really dangerous stuff. You don't know what kind of consequences that could have on your mental state.

ANNA  
That's true, but I think this beach thing is going to be really good for me. Maybe I need this to kind of wind down and help me relax. Maybe the acid will be a distraction from everything that's been going on.

BRENDAN  
But do you really think that you know Brendan well enough to be in such a vulnerable state with him? I mean, what if he's not really trustworthy?

ANNA  
He cares about me more than you know. He's actually been really helpful throughout this whole thing. You need to let go of the grudge you have been holding against him from the 7th grade.

PAUL  
Is that what you think? That this is just a grudge?

ANNA  
Well what else is it? Because if it's not that then it sounds like you're just hating on Brendan for no reason.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

No reason? The guy is a jerk. He and his friends are drug dealers and deadbeats.

ANNA

You sound like the jerk here. He has no problem with you. He invited you to that party and you didn't want to go.

PAUL

I would rather chew off my own hand than spend more time than I needed to with Brendan.

ANNA

Well then you better not spend any time with me either. Because he is part of my life now.

PAUL

Anna.

Anna hangs up.

INT. BRENDAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

ANNA throws her PHONE aside. She tosses and turns on Brendan's bed for a moment. Her phone vibrates. She picks it up and looks at the screen. It's "RENEE." Anna lets the call go to voicemail. She then listens to the message.

RENEE

Hi Anna. I'm sorry about what happened yesterday. Please call me back. It's about your father.

Anna tosses the phone aside again and falls asleep.

INT. DINO'S DINER - 6:00 PM

PAUL sits at a booth with his parents, JOAN and HUNTER, both flower children now in their 60's.

PAUL

We really didn't have to come here.

JOAN

Dino's has the most delicious bread rolls. You should eat some if you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOAN (cont'd)  
ever expect to grow meat on those bones.

HUNTER  
Us Mendelson men don't need bulging biceps to attract the ladies -- we have some thing better. Brains! Besides, Paulie's already got a ladyfriend. Young Miss Anna's had her eyes on him since they were both little squirts.

PAUL  
For the hundredth time, Anna has a boyfriend and he is a moron.

The waiter appears at the table. It is Brendan.

BRENDAN  
Hey man. How's it hanging? Long time no see, huh? (To Joan and Hunter) Good evening, you must be Paul's parents. Wonderful to meet you both. Can I get you started with something to drink?

INT. DINO'S MEN'S ROOM - 6:20 PM

PAUL enters the men's room. BRENDAN follows soon after.

BRENDAN  
Listen, asshole. You think I'm a moron right? Well I'm not too dumb to see that your eyes all over my girlfriend. And guess what? She doesn't want you. Give it up man. You could probably get with one of those weirdo goth girls with your sad poems and your emo hair.

PAUL  
I know a lot more about Anna than you could possibly even care to know.

Brendan pushes Paul against the wall.

BRENDAN  
Don't let me see you around her anymore.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Don't worry. She doesn't want me  
around her anymore either.

EXT. BRENDAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

BRENDAN carries some of Anna's bags into his car.

BRENDAN

That's everything.

ANNA

I think I have a couple more  
bags... Nope, they're already in  
the back seat. Where's the water  
jug? Did we already put that in?

BRENDAN

It's all in except the tent. Gotta  
pack that in last so we can take it  
out first. Set up camp.

ANNA

Alright. Good. Are we missing  
anything else? Bugspray? Sunscreen?

BRENDAN

We have at least four bottles of  
sunscreen thanks to you.

ANNA

You can never have too much.

BRENDAN

I don't think we'll need that much  
sunscreen on Newport Beach.

ANNA

You never know... I'm just excited.  
And nervous.

BRENDAN

Haha, don't be nervous. We're going  
on a beach trip to trip acid on the  
beach! It's gonna be badass.

ANNA

Shhh! Don't say that so loud.

BRENDAN

What? Who's gonna care?

(Screaming)

(MORE)

Tripping on aciiid!

Brendan slams the trunk shut.

INT. BRENDAN'S CAR - MORNING

Anna reclines with her feet on the dashboard. They are both singing their hearts out to Led Zeppelin's "Kashmir" and flying down the empty highway.

INT. ROBERT'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

ROBERT packs up various boxes of items as if he is planning for a move. He is closing the lid on one box labeled "photos," when he stops, opens the box and peers at the picture on top. It is of himself as a young man. He is decked out in 80's glam-rock gear complete with leopard-print leotard and a teased-out a mullet. There are other pictures showing the whole rock group, all very young -- most likely in their late teens. Anna's age.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - AFTERNOON

Anna unpacks their camping gear from the car. Brendan is on the phone.

BRENDAN

Yeah, we're here man. Alright yeah. No, we got a really chill spot, it's right by the beach. Tonight's gonna be awesome. Alright, peace man.

ANNA

How far away are they?

BRENDAN

Christian, Jeff, and Rich are gonna be here in about thirty minutes. Adam and Katelyn are gonna be here tonight. They had to stop and drop off Katelyn's dog at her grandparents' house.

ANNA

I'm nervous about meeting your friends.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

Why would you be nervous?

ANNA

I don't know, I'm just weird. Here,  
help me with this.

Anna and Brendan wrestle with a tent rod.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - SUNSET

CHRISTIAN, JEFF, and BRENDAN ready a fire pit for a bonfire.  
ADAM, KATELYN and ANNA sit by on a couple picnic blankets  
laid out on the sand.

KATELYN

I usually hate camping, but Adam  
talked me into it.

ANNA

Yeah, but this isn't so bad. At  
least it's not hot and sweaty.

KATELYN

Ugh, but it's so windy.

ANNA

I guess. They'll have this fire  
running soon though, so no worries.

KATELYN

I hate all this sand. It's getting  
everywhere.

ANNA

It kinda feels nice though. If you  
stick your toes in it.

There is an awkward silence. Katelyn jumps up and walks over  
to talk to the guys, leaving Anna alone on the picnic  
blanket.

EXT. CAMPGROUND - NIGHT

Anna walks down the beach alone, kicking the waves. We see a  
bonfire in the distance before her. Anna creeps closer to  
inspect.

EXT. HIPPIE BONFIRE - NIGHT

The sound of bongos drifts across the wind. There are various individuals dancing around the fire, as if performing a ritual. As we draw closer, we see a dreadlocked 20-something guy, STORM, juggling five balls at once.

STORM  
(Spotting Anna)  
Ahoy, friend!

ANNA  
Umm, hi. Sorry, I kind of stumbled right in here.

STORM  
All are welcomed here. I'm Storm.  
Here, have a seat.

Storm gestures to a log by the fire. Anna sits next to a HIPPIE GIRL playing the banjo.

HIPPIE GIRL  
(To Anna)  
You are beautiful.

ANNA  
Thanks. I like your banjo. (To Storm) My name is Anna.

STORM  
Well it is spectacular to meet you, Miss Anna.

Anna blushes.

STORM  
Have you ever juggled before?

ANNA  
Yeah. Badly.

STORM  
Do you want to learn how to do it goodly?

ANNA  
I think I'm a lost cause.

STORM  
Anyone can learn to juggle. Here, come here.

(CONTINUED)

Storm holds out a hand to Anna. She hesitates, but accepts.

STORM

Here, you've got to start with two balls. Just pass them back and forth in your hands and get used to how it feels.

Anna awkwardly passes the balls back and forth.

STORM

There you go. You're a natural.

Anna drops the balls.

ANNA

Damn. See, I told you. It's no good.

STORM

Here.

Storm picks up the balls.

STORM

Do you mind if I show you?

Storm places the balls back in Anna's hand. He gently grasps her wrists and guides them, showing her how to make the proper juggling motion. Anna giggles.

EXT. HIPPIE BONFIRE - NIGHT

Anna and Storm are slightly separated from the group. They sit on a rock surveying the ocean. Storm passes Anna a pipe. She takes a small drag.

STORM

Anna, you just dropped by like a gift from the universe. Tell me about you. I want to know who "Anna" is.

ANNA

Okay, ask me something.

STORM

What's your favorite cheese?

ANNA

Havarti.

(CONTINUED)



STORM

That was a surprisingly quick answer.

ANNA

I'm serious about my cheeses.

STORM

What kind of music do you love?

ANNA

I can really listen to anything and find something to love. I know, that's cliché but it's true. I love all music.

STORM

(Passing the joint back)  
Okay, that's fair. But what music speaks to your soul?

ANNA

I guess... I always come back to 60's and 70's rock.

STORM

That must have been a beautiful time to be alive.

ANNA

(Taking a long drag)  
Exactly. I mean, those musicians, they were part of an incredibly special time for artistic creation. The buying power was in the hands of the 20-somethings. The music that fueled the market was music that spoke for their generation. It had a meaning, they had something to say. I mean, artists like Joni Mitchell and Grateful Dead had soul. Nowadays tweens are the demographic with the most cash to spend on music, so we get brats like Miley Cyrus and Justin Bieber flooding our ears with dancy pop ballads that repeat the same two or three lines of meaningless drivel over and over again for three and a half minutes.

(CONTINUED)

STORM

I can tell you really feel strongly about that.

ANNA

Yeah, sorry. I used to be a big music nerd.

STORM

Don't be sorry. You've got an amazing passion wrapped up inside of you. You should let it out.

ANNA

I feel like I just ranted for a minute.

STORM

Tell me something else. How do you feel about politics?

ANNA

Ohhh, I'm not really interested in one side or the other. As far as I'm concerned, neither the Republican nor the Democratic party really stands for what they are supposed to stand for anymore. They got completely wrapped up in the debate over drugs, abortion, global warming, and gay marriage that those things became the defining feature of the candidates more than their stance on economic policies and the role of the government. Every election year feels more like a high school debate than an actual election of a political figure. Besides, I'm starting to think that it's all for show anyway. Candidates can promise whatever they want and they are not held to those promises. And the Green Party isn't even allowed to participate at the presidential debate. It's just become the people with power and money keeping themselves powerful and wealthy. Our democracy is a sham -- it's an oligarchy now. And there I go ranting again. This is strong weed.

(CONTINUED)

STORM

No, it's good. I'm loving this.  
Keep going. How do you feel about  
religion?

ANNA

Why don't you tell me how you feel  
about religion? I want to hear what  
you have to say. Tell me who  
"Storm" is. If that is your real  
name.

STORM

It is. My mother gave birth to me  
in the middle of hurricane Andrew  
in a beat up Oldsmobile Alaro. She  
was a gypsy. You would have liked  
her.

ANNA

It seems she raised a pretty cool  
kid, whatever she did.

STORM

I've experienced a few potholes on  
the highway of life, but I'm no  
worse for the wear. And my mom  
always stayed strong for me. Even  
after my dad left us.

ANNA

My dad left too. I'm sorry, it  
sucks.

STORM

But that's another story.

ANNA

Right, let's save that for another  
time.

STORM

A believe you were asking me about  
my view on religion.

ANNA

I believe I was.

STORM

Well my answer may be pretty boring  
compared to your very passionate...

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Rants.

STORM

Haha. I don't believe in an afterlife. I believe that we're kind of a bundle of cells made up of a bundle of atoms that have decided to collide from the emptiness that is our universe. They dance together for a moment in space, and happen to become aware of themselves. And I believe that when we die, it's over. We take a bow and become emptiness again.

ANNA

Wow. That's beautiful. And very sad.

STORM

Is it? Well, what do you think happens after we die?

ANNA

Well. I think you're partly right. We are a bunch of randomly assorted atoms that are jumbled together into a human body. But I don't think we just become nothingness when we die. I mean, I guess I do, but then if you think about the universe being an infinite thing, then time becomes a non-thing. Every combination of atoms that can collide to form a human being WILL collide to form a human being. And with an infinite amount of time, those atoms statistically MUST combine again, and again, and again, in an infinite number of ways.

STORM

I love the way your brain works.

ANNA

I don't know where all this is coming from. What was in that pipe you gave me? Just kidding.

(CONTINUED)

STORM

Nothing but nature's finest green bud. So what's your next excuse for being so awesome?

ANNA

It's so strange. I never talk like this, even with my aunt, and she's very spiritual. Sometimes I can talk to Paul but even that is hard because I can see how much he loves me and he would agree with me about anything if eh thought it would make me happy.

STORM

Boyfriend?

ANNA

Oh, no, not Paul. He's been my best friend since kindergarten. I do have a boyfriend though. We came here together with his friends. I don't think they like me very much.

STORM

You shouldn't assume the worst if you don't even know the truth.

ANNA

What?

STORM

I just mean, you can't know what anyone thinks of you for sure, because you can't read their minds. So... what's the point of assuming they're thinking something negative?

ANNA

Well, maybe they give off signs about what they're thinking. And I can read those signs and come to a reasonable conclusion.

STORM

Yes, but you'll never know for sure. So, while you choose to believe something that makes you upset and self conscious, you could just as easily choose to believe something that makes you feel good.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

I've never heard airy optimism  
sound so... rational?

STORM

And I've never heard a choice of  
mine described as "rational"  
before.

ANNA

This is just a night of firsts  
then.

The two sit in silence for a moment, watching the waves.

STORM

We're so lucky. I mean, to be right  
here. Two random collisions of  
atoms that have randomly collided.

ANNA

In the middle of infinity.

STORM

At Newport Beach, Oregon, United  
States of Fagmerica.

Silence falls again.

ANNA

Is that the sun rising?

STORM

We've been out here for a while  
now.

ANNA

I should go back. Brendan will  
think I got lost or drowned.

STORM

Brendan. Is that your old man?

ANNA

He's my boyfriend, yeah. I don't  
think he's yet upgraded to "Old  
Man" status.

STORM

You're right, you probably need  
another 20 years before that kicks  
in.

Anna smiles thoughtfully.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

I should go.

STORM

Have you ever heard of the word  
"orenda?"

ANNA

(Shakes her head)

No.

STORM

It's a native american word. It refers to the spark inside all living things. It is what pushes us to accomplish great things. With it, they say you can find the strenght to shape your future. I see a great light in You Anna. You are going to do incredible things.

ANNA

Shh. Don't say anything else. I want that to be the last thing you ever said to me. Thank you. For everything. You have no idea how strange and wonderful meeting you has been.

Storm looks as though he will speak, but thinks against it and smiles, and instead hugs Anna for a long time. Anna finally breaks away from the embrace and takes one last, long look into Storm's eyes. She smiles, shakes her head, and slowly walks away.

INT. BRENDAN'S TENT - EARLY MORNING

Anna climbs into the tent carefully, so as not to disturb Brendan. Brendan moves aside wordlessly. Anna climbs under the covers and sighs deeply, closing her eyes.

INT. ROBERT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The small, drab room is nearly empty save for the boxes. ROBERT lies on his neatly made bed, staring up at the ceiling. He gets up and begins digging past the boxes in his closet until he unearths an old GUITAR CASE. Taking it in his arms, he sits back down on the edge of the bed and lovingly opens the case. As the sun rises, Robert strums a few notes on the guitar.

INT. BRENDAN'S CAR - THE NEXT DAY

ANNA and BRENDAN drive in silence.

ANNA

Why aren't you talking to me?

BRENDAN

Huh?

ANNA

I don't know, you're being really quiet.

BRENDAN

You're crazy.

ANNA

I had the most amazing sleep last night.

BRENDAN

Must've really tired yourself out.

ANNA

Brend, you won't believe what happened to me. Last night was probably the strangest and most magical night of my life.

BRENDAN

Wow. Sounds intense.

ANNA

I met this group of hippies. They were playing music and dancing and just... being free. And I learned how to juggle!

BRENDAN

Sounds like you had a crazy night out there.

ANNA

Yeah... What did you guys do?

BRENDAN

After you left we took the acid. Drank some booze, smoked some herb, got fucked up.

(CONTINUED)



ANNA

Sounds like fun.

BRENDAN

Must sound really boring to compared to your "magical adventure."

ANNA

It doesn't. I really wanted to trip with you.

BRENDAN

Must not have wanted to too badly for you to peace out all night without saying a word.

ANNA

I was just going to talk a little walk on the shore for a while. I didn;t know what to say to your friends so I just thought I would step away for second. I was going to come right back. But I found those people dancing and this guy juggling. And when they asked me to join in I just kind of... went with it. It was really selfish of me, there's no other way to put it.

BRENDAN

Well, sounds like you had way more fun than we did anyway. So you made the right choice.

ANNA

I'm sorry, I should have taken you too.

BRENDAN

Don't be sorry. You put yourself first rather than caring about what I want, or anybody else for that matter.

ANNA

It's not a matter of putting myself first at all.

BRENDAN

Of course it is. Hey, nothing wrong with selfishness. It's how we survive.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

But I still feel bad about ditching you though, I should have at least said something.

BRENDAN

Stop. You don't owe me an apology. You don't owe me anything. You can never forget that ultimately you are number one in this world. You're number one, and all that other shit -- relationships, friends, family -- is extra.

ANNA

That kinda makes it sound like you're saying, "I come first everyone else can go fuck themselves."

BRENDAN

Well, if they try to get in your way.

ANNA

But doesn't that seem just a little... callous?

BRENDAN

World's harsh babe. You should know that. The sooner you come to terms with that truth the sooner you can learn to deal with it.

Brendan steps harder on the gas pedal.

ANNA

Right. I'll keep that in mind. Watch out!

Brendan swerves around a white car with its turn-signal on.

BRENDAN

Fucking idiot doesn't know how to drive.

ANNA

Oh my god, he's speeding up!

A middle-aged ANGRY DRIVER speeds up next to Brenda's car. Both cars are now speeding dangerously fast down the highway.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

He's yelling something at us.

Brendan flips the bird and swerves his car close to the ANGRY DRIVER, who is screaming unheard obscenities from his window.

BRENDAN

He wants to fuck with me? Asshole is gonna learn a lesson.

ANNA

Just slow down and let it go, you're really scaring me.

BRENDAN

You want me to slow down?

Brendan screeches on the breaks and veers off at the nearest exit. The other car follows.

ANNA

What are you doing?

BRENDAN

Just stay in the car.

Brendan pulls into a GAS STATION parking lot. The other car pulls up beside him and the driver steps out. He is a 50-something asian man.

ANNA

He's coming towards us.

BRENDAN

I can take care of this guy.

ANNA

Don't go out there! Or at least -- take my mace with you.

BRENDAN

I don't need any mace to deal with this guy.

Brendan steps out of the car.

ANGRY DRIVER

You need to be more careful with your vehicle, young man. You could piss off the wrong person and endanger yourself. I have a son your age --

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

You better step away from my  
goddamn car, asshole.

ANGRY DRIVER

You can't just flip the bird at  
anyone. We're all trying to get  
somewhere and if you flip the bird  
at the wrong kind of person --

BRENDAN

Looks like you're the wrong kind of  
person. Now step away from my  
vehicle before I make you.

ANGRY DRIVER

Listen, if my son were to --

Brendan shoves the angry driver to the ground and kicks the  
man repeatedly in the gut. The ANGRY DRIVER moans and gasps.

BRENDAN

You're not -- my fucking -- father  
-- piece of --

Brendan kicks the man between each word.

ANNA

Stop! That's enough!

Brendan finally stops and surveys the man on the ground. The  
man is writhing in silence. Brendan spits on him and returns  
to the driver's seat, fuming. He puts the car into drive and  
pulls out of the parking lot. Anna sits in shocked silence.

INT. BRENDAN'S CAR - NIGHT

BRENDAN and ANNA have been driving in silence for hours.

BRENDAN

I'm sorry. I lost my temper.

ANNA

What was that?

BRENDAN

He was going to hurt us.

ANNA

Maybe, but did you have to kick him  
once he was already on the ground?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

I shouldn't have done that. You're right. I'm sorry.

ANNA

It's okay... Could you drop me off at home though?

BRENDAN

You sure, babe? Look, I'm really sorry, I won't let that happen again.

ANNA

Yeah, I know. I just need to talk to my mom.

BRENDAN

Anything you want. You still gonna come to the party tonight?

ANNA

Yeah, of course.

BRENDAN

Okay, meet me at the park at 9. A bunch of us are gonna pregame there and then head to the party.

ANNA

Alright. See you then.

INT. ANNA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

RENEE and LILY sit on the big pink couch.

RENEE

She can be so cruel to me at times.

LILY

She's a teenage girl. She wants to try out her new wings, test herself. She has to push away from you so she can learn to fly solo. And the harder you try to hang on, the harder she will push back. It's only natural.

RENEE

I know that you're right. But I think it's much deeper than that. Have you ever noticed that she

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RENEE (cont'd)  
never actually calls me "mom?" I don't think I've heard her say it out loud for years. Sometimes I think she will never forgive me for... Everything I've done wrong in the past.

LILY  
Listen to me, Renee. You did the best you could. She's going through a lot right now, but she'll come around. Eventually.

RENEE  
Maybe so. But I just wish that I could have been her "mommy" when she was growing up. I feel like I've missed my chance now she's really becoming a woman. I will never get to be "mommy" to my little Anna ever again, and it kills me. You know she's always considered you more of a mother to her than I ever was.

LILY  
That's not true.

RENEE  
You know that it is. After Robert left, I couldn't even get out of bed to take her to school. You took care of her, and I thank you for that, truly, from the bottom of my heart, I do. But part of me is jealous for what I see between you and Anna that I don't have. She doesn't trust me, and I can't really blame her for that. I turned into a person that I didn't even recognize after... Robert. I can't imagine how frightening that must have been for her to lose her father and her mother at the same time.

LILY  
You can't keep punishing yourself, Renee. You have a big heart, and I know that you love Anna more than anyone in this world ever could. She WILL know that one day. I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LILY (cont'd)  
believe in her. She's an incredibly smart and sensitive girl. She gets that from you, by the way. Whatever you may think you, raised her right. Maybe you need to forgive yourself a little bit.

The front door creaks and Anna enters carrying several bags.

ANNA  
Hi.

Renee runs to greet Anna with a giant hug.

RENEE  
My baby.

LILY  
Welcome home sweetheart.

ANNA  
Alright, alright. It was only two days.

RENEE  
You scared me.

ANNA  
Can I put all this stuff down before you hug me to death?

LILY  
Go on sweetie. But can you come back downstairs and have a chat with us?

ANNA  
Uh oh.

LILY  
Don't worry, it's not about you leaving. Though that was very foolish. Just go and come back and we'll talk.

Anna shuffles upstairs with her bags.

RENEE  
To think we thought we had it bad growing up. Poor Anna has gone through more in this past week than any person can expect in their lifetime.

(CONTINUED)

LILY

To gain a father and then so soon  
to...

ANNA

(walking down the stairs)  
What's going on?

RENEE

(gesturing to a spot on the  
sofa)  
Come sit down, love.

ANNA

(choosing a single armchair)  
I'm good here.

RENEE

Fine. Anna, your Aunt Lily and I  
need to talk to you about your  
father. I tried to call you before  
but you didn't answer.

ANNA

I was at the beach. There's no  
service out there. What's up?

LILY

Robert's health has taken a sharp  
turn for the worse over the past  
couple of days. We don't know how  
much time he may have left. He  
might not make it through the week.

ANNA

What? He seemed fine when I saw him  
a couple of days ago! I mean, he  
was a little thin but he didn't  
look like he was about to die. Have  
they even tried radiotherapy?

LILY

He has a very advanced brain tumor.  
The doctors say it had probably  
been developing for years by the  
time they caught it. It would be  
impossible to operate now without  
causing permanent damage. Right  
now, he's in the hospital but it's  
only to keep him comfortable for  
the time being. There's nothing  
else left to do but wait and hope  
that he passes on to heaven  
peacefully...

(CONTINUED)



RENEE

Heaven? Oh please.

ANNA

Would you give it a rest? You are the one acting like a child here. Didn't you hear what Aunt Lily said? He has a BRAIN tumor. Who knows how long it's been growing? Maybe THAT'S the reason why he had those compulsive thoughts. I talked to Miss Allie and she said that there was a man in Texas who shot up a whole school. She said he left a note saying that he thought he did it because something was wrong in his brain, and when they performed the autopsy they found a tumor the size of a tennis ball! I know that what he did was disgusting, loathsome, scum of the human race kind of behavior, but what if he really couldn't help it? What if it could have been cured?

RENEE

Oh Anna. You're still so innocent and naive. I wish it were so easy to explain the bad things away and have a fairytale ending, but life is rarely ever that simple..

ANNA

STOP. TREATING ME. LIKE A STUPID. CHILD. Aunt Lily disagrees with you and I don't see you calling her naive and innocent. I'm not a child anymore, in case you haven't noticed. You had the chance to be a mother to me and you chose to check out instead. And now you're overcompensating by trying to lock me away from the world. YOU. Need to GROW UP. Aunt Lily, I want to see my dad tomorrow so I can forgive him before he dies. Will you take me?

LILY

Of course, Anna. But --

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Good. (To Renee) If you were a decent human being you would do the same.

Anna storms out of the the living room. We hear the door slamming shut from offscreen.

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE - 9:00 PM

Anna walks down the road. Streetlights flicker on.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - NIGHT

Anna and Brendan are on their backs, looking up at the nearly full moon.

Anna shivers and turns to Brendan, burying her face in his chest.

ANNA

I thought you said there were gonna be a bunch of people here.

BRENDAN

Yeah they bailed to go smoke hash. But that's alright, I'm digging just spending time with you. Here, I have some beers in my bag.

Brendan leans over and shuffles around in his backpack. He opens the beers, but takes a long time shuffling things out of view.

ANNA

Are those beers wrapped in a Chinese puzzle box or something? What are you doing over there?

BRENDAN

Here you go (handing her a can).

ANNA

(Taking a long gulp)  
Truthfully, I'm glad it's just us. I'm kind of stressing out about my dad and everything. They said he's only got a couple of days left. I have to go see him tomorrow for what might be the last time.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

Shit, I'm sorry.

ANNA

Do you mind if we don't go to the party tonight? I'm not really in the mood.

BRENDAN

Course not babe. Anything you need. Just relax and watch the stars.

Anna and Brendan stare at the stars together. Anna falls asleep with her head on Brendan's chest. When she awakes, she looks up at the stars again. They are brilliantly bright and fluorescent in color, and they are sliding around the sky hypnotically.

ANNA

What's going on?

Brendan mutters something, but the noise is distorted. Anna answers but her lips move in slow motion. The asphalt rolls like waves beneath them. Brendan says something but his voices fades into nothing.

INT. ANNA'S MIND

It is pitch black. Images of Paul and Anna's notebook and Japanese cats explode kaleidoscopically from the center of the vortex.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - NIGHT

Anna is babbling loudly.

ANNA

I see it. When I close my eyes. Everything. Woah. Woah. Woah. What did you do Brendan?

BRENDAN

Hey. Shush, it's okay. You gotta be quiet or someone will hear us. I put a tiny tab of acid in your beer. I felt bad cause you missed out on the beach.

ANNA

No, Brendan. Why?

Anna rubs her eyes and then inspects the skin on her hands.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

I don't like this ground. The concrete. Will you take me to a tree? I think I would feel much better by a tree.

BRENDAN

Alright, let's go by a tree. Come on, get up.

Brendan guides her up and then stops.

BRENDAN

Did you hear that?

ANNA

What?

BRENDAN

I think I hear voices. We should probably get out of here before the cops find us.

ANNA

Oh my god, do you think the cops will arrest us? I don't want to go to jail like this. I'm really scared.

BRENDAN

Come on, let's get out of here babe.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

Brendan opens the passenger door of his sedan for Anna and guides her in. Anna picks curiously at the buttons on her shirt. Brendan gets into the driver's seat.

ANNA

Do you hear the sirens?

BRENDAN

No babe. You're just tripping out. I don't hear anything.

Brendan starts the car.

ANNA

Where are we going?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN

Listen, I gotta drop off something for Bryant at this party. Then I'm gonna take you somewhere safe, okay? Just try to relax for now, alright?

ANNA

Alright. Okay. It's just... weird.

Anna leans in to inspect the dashboard.

EXT. BRENDAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Brendan and Anna pull up outside of a house that is blasting music.

BRENDAN

Alright, I'm going to go inside and find Bryant. Then I'm gonna come back and we'll go somewhere and relax. Just stay here. Even if it feels like a long time, don't leave the car. It's just the acid that makes it seem like time is going really slowly, alright? I'll be right back, babe.

Anna nods and closes her eyes.

INT. BRENDAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Teens are dancing and chatting and drinking beer. Loud electronic music plays. Brendan navigates through the crowd. JEFF, CHRISTIAN, and MATT are playing beer pong and trying to hit on girls.

BRENDAN

Bryant? Anybody seen Bryant? (To Jeff) Hey man how's it going, you seen my man Bryant?

JEFF

Bryant went on a beer run ages ago. Should be back soon though, bro.

BRENDAN

Alright, well I got this bag of hash for him. He better come get it before I smoke it alllll man.

(CONTINUED)

JEFF

Hell yeah, what are you waiting for? Let's light one up. Bryant probably so shitfaced he won't even notice, dude.

Brendan and the Jeff sit down on a couch. Brendan checks the time on his phone and looks towards the door. He then shrugs and lights up a pipe. CLEMY yells from offscreen.

CLEMY

BERNDAN. Is that you Berndan? Oh my god. Oh my god. I am SO drunk.

BRENDAN

(Sniggering)

Hey, the good girl has decided to come to the dark side. Hey, do you smoke hash?

CLEMY

I do now!

JEFF

ALRIIIIGHT! I like this girl!

INT. BRENDAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Anna traces lines in the fog on the car window. She draws a little stick figure girl and then falls back into her seat. She closes her eyes.

INT. BRENDAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Anna's eyes flash open. She opens the door and leans out to vomit, but nothing comes out. Anna drags herself out of the car and onto the ground. She then sits and clutches her knees. KATELYN and MATT are groping at each other in the bushes.

KATELYN

(Noticing Anna)

Look at how messed up that girl is.

MATT

(To Anna)

You having a good time?

The two laugh and move to a more secluded bush.

Anna moans. She gets up and erases the drawing of the little girl on the car window and walks into the house.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

Anna stumbles into the living room where drunk teens jostle her.

ANNA  
Brendan? Brendan?

Anna spots Brendan smoking on the couch. Brendan jumps up.

BRENDAN  
Baby, what are you doing? You shouldn't have left the car.

ANNA  
I want to go home. Right now. Take me home. I want to go.

JEFF  
Dude, your girl is freakin out.

BRENDAN  
Calm down, baby. Bryant is going to be here any second and then we can go.

ANNA  
Clemy?

Clemy is making out with Jeff out on the couch. Jeff's hand is well up her thigh. Anna pokes Clemy.

CLEMY  
(Seeing Anna)  
ANNA BANANA. I LOVE YOU. Oh my god. I am so drunk.

ANNA  
I'm so... confused.

CLEMY  
I know, it's weird. But I'm at a party and I'm drunk and it's awesome!

ANNA  
No, I mean --

BRENDAN  
Anna, go back to the car, I'll be right there.

Anna pushes Brendan away and he falls back onto the couch. She turns and walks out of the door and Brendan shrugs to his friends.

EXT. PARTY HOSUSE - NIGHT

Anna sits down on the lawn and grabs her phone. She calls Paul.

ANNA

Paul? I'm on acid and I'm confused.  
I need you.

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

Paul's beat up minivan pulls into the driveway. He is still in his pajamas as he walks out and lifts Anna to her feet.

ANNA

You're here.

PAUL

I'm here.

ANNA

I'm so sorry I yelled at you. I'm  
so sorry, Paul.

PAUL

Shhh, it's okay. Everything is  
going to be okay now. I'm here.

Paul guides Anna to the passenger's seat and he gets into the driver's side.

ANNA

I don't want to go home like this.  
I can't be alone. I'm scared.

PAUL

You will never be alone if you  
don't want to be.

ANNA

(Crying)

Paul, it was awful. I saw... I  
saw... I can't think straight.

PAUL

It's okay, you don't have to talk.  
We can just go to my house, is that  
okay with you?

(CONTINUED)



ANNA

Yes. I don't want to be here anymore.

INT. PAUL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Paul guides Anna in through the front door.

PAUL

Okay, we have to be quiet now until we get to my room. Do you think you can do that? Let's go, quietly now.

INT. PAUL'S ROOM.

Paul grabs his dirty clothes and shoves them into a hamper while Anna looks around. She stares into the mirror for a while and then catches sight of numerous pictures of herself and Paul taped up around the edges of the mirror.

PAUL

You don't have to sleep in my bed if you don't want to. I can make you a place on the couch. Or -- or you can sleep on the bed and I'll stay on the couch. Or --

ANNA

Just lay down with me for a second. Tell me something. Anything. Talking is good. I think the acid is wearing off.

Anna lies down on Paul's bed. Paul lies down with her and stares at her. He reaches out to hold her hand.

PAUL

They're cutting down the treehouse.

ANNA

Noooo.

PAUL

The tree's rotten.

ANNA

We have to go see it. One last...

Anna is already asleep. Paul smiles.

## INT. ANNA'S MIND

From Anna's POV, we see her being carried in ROBERT's arms. She is just around 3 years old. Robert is smiling at her and bouncing her up and down. He brings her into his bedroom. Robert lays Anna down and takes off her pajama pants and pink undies. He has a jar of vaseline in his hand. He takes the vaseline and rubs it on her vagina, smiling.

ROBERT

You have a little rash there don't you. That feels good though, doesn't it?

The dream ends.

## INT. PAUL'S ROOM - MORNING

The sun is peaking through the curtains and a ray shines on Paul and Anna's hands, still clasped together. Hunter opens the door.

HUNTER

Paul, do you have any--

Hunter catches sight of Anna and smiles. He backs out of the room and closes the door. Paul cracks open an eye and extracts his hand from Anna's. He gets up and leaves the room.

Anna's phone rings. She rubs her eyes and checks the screen which reads, "Aunt Lily."

ANNA

Hello?

LILY

Morning sweetheart. How are you feeling?

ANNA

I'm okay.

LILY

Your dad is really ecstatic that you decided to see him today sweetie. You are being so mature about all of this. I just want to say that I am really proud of you.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Yeah. Thanks.

LILY

We're going to be leaving for the hospital at 10:00 is that alright? Can you make it here by then?

ANNA

Yeah.

LILY

Okay, great. He's so excited to see you.

ANNA

Okay.

LILY

Alright, sweetie. I won't keep you any longer. You can do this. I'm so, so proud of you honey. You're doing a really good deed.

ANNA

Thanks Aunt Lily. Bye.

LILY

Bye!

Paul walks into the room, carrying breakfast.

PAUL

Good morning. How do you feel?

ANNA

Queasy.

PAUL

Okay, well you don't have to eat if you don't want to. Are you still feeling a little weird from last night?

ANNA

No, I'm fine. I thought I would never be sane again but I'm fine now. Except, I'm supposed to be home so we can go to the hospital at 10:00. And last night... I saw something really disturbing.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

What, like a hallucination?

ANNA

A hallucination, or a dream, or a memory, I don't know. But it was of my dad.

PAUL

Oh. Do you think it could be an uncovered memory?

ANNA

I don't know. I also saw your face and dancing cats, so it could have just been the drug.

PAUL

Listen, Anna. you don't have to go today. You can take some more time, I'm sure your dad would understand.

ANNA

We've already waited long enough. He might make it any longer.

ANNA

Do you think you could give me a ride to my house?

PAUL

Of course I will, Anna. I'd do anything for you.

ANNA

Thank you Paul. Really. Just one thing first. How do I look? Be honest. I'd hate if the last time my dad ever saw me I looked like I just crawled out of a trash can.

PAUL

You look surprisingly alright considering I found you in a puddle of mud and possibly vomit.

ANNA

Thanks.

INT. PAUL'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Paul and Anna walk down the stairs into the living room where Hunter and Joan are waiting, poised in horrible attempts at seeming natural.

ANNA

Hi Joan, hi Hunter. I'm sorry I had to stay here last night without announcing myself. Paul kind of rescued me from a tough situation last night.

HUNTER

Don't be ridiculous. You know you're more than welcome to stay here any time you like, Banana.

JOAN

Will you tell Renee I said hello sweetheart, and that she should stop by soon? I've found a low-light indoor plant that would be perfect for her bay window. She'll love it.

ANNA

Will do. Thanks again. Bye.

JOAN

Have a good day you two.

HUNTER

Have fun!

When only Paul can see, Hunter winks at Paul. Paul rolls his eyes and follows Anna out the front door.

EXT. ANNA'S HOUSE - NOON

PAUL and ANNA pull into the driveway. Brendan is waiting there in his sedan. He gets out of his car just as Anna and Paul exit theirs.

BRENDAN

Anna, I've been waiting for you.  
(To Paul) what the hell are you doing with her?

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Paul was the one who picked me up last night when you were too busy getting high with your buddies.

BRENDAN

Are you still tripping? Because I told you to wait in the car and that I would get you home safe and sound when I could. And I'm sorry I got caught up taking care of your drunk shit-show of a friend.

ANNA

You are the most manipulative, sadistic --

BRENDAN

You are acting crazy and you made a fool of yourself at the party last night.

Paul steps between Anna and Brendan.

PAUL

I don't like the way you are talking to her.

BRENDAN

Oh that's nice. I see how it is. Did you sleep with her last night? You sleep with him Anna? I bet you did. I bet he told you it was all going to be alright and to just relax in his bed. You whore.

Paul raises his fist but Anna pushes him aside. She is shaking with rage and she swings her fist hard into Brendan's face. Brendan doesn't hesitate to swing back.

PAUL

Wait, stop! You'll hurt her!

Paul tries to push himself between Anna and Brendan but Anna knocks him aside.

ANNA

I can fight my own fights!

She turns back to Brendan whose nose is bleeding and pounces on him, knocking them both down. The two begin wrestling on the lawn.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Stop! No!

Renee appears at the front door.

RENEE

Oh hell no.

GEORGE

Woah now.

Renee runs back inside the house. Renee reemerges, carrying a can of mace. She grabs him by the hair and aims it right at Brendan's eyes. Brendan screeches.

RENEE

If you ever lay a hand on my little girl again, I'll break it off of you. Understand? Now you are gonna get the hell off of my lawn or I will call the police.

BRENDAN

Okay!

Brendan scrambles to his car, wiping his face.

ANNA

(To Brendan)

Don't ever contact me again.

INT. ANN'S LIVING ROOM - MIDDAY

Renee tries to inspect a cut on Anna's cheekbone. Paul looks on.

ANNA

No, mom. It's alright. What you did out there was really cool. Totally crazy, but really cool.

RENEE

It was exhilarating!

ANNA

Come on, Paul. I can get you some disinfectant for that cut on your hand.

INT. ANNA'S ROOM - MIDDAY

Anna and Paul enter Anna's room. Paul picks up the notebook that is still lying on Anna's bed.

ANNA

Wait here a sec.

Anna leaves and returns a moment later with disinfectant. Taking Paul's hand, she gingerly applies a cotton swab to his tiny scrape.

PAUL

Ouch, it stings.

ANNA

You'll live, I think.

Paul stares at Anna and then leans in to kiss her. She pulls back.

ANNA

Woah, hey. I'm -- I'm really sorry Paul. I just --

PAUL

What? You just what? Anna, I want to ask you something and I want you to really think about it. What am I to you?

ANNA

I don't know, I --

PAUL

I am always there for you at your every beck and call and then just pat me on the head at the end of the day. I love you. I want to be with you. I want to kiss you and hold you. This came out all wrong, I'm sorry. I wish I could have written it down.

ANNA

Paul... You're my best friend. I love you too. I love that you are there for me when I need you. But does that mean that we have to be romantic? I just don't know if that's where you belong in my life.

(CONTINUED)



PAUL

Well maybe I don't belong in your life at all. Is that what you are saying? Maybe the only space you have is for assholes who ditch you at parties and call you a whore.

ANNA

Get out.

PAUL

I'm gone. But I'm taking this. You don't deserve it.

Paul picks up the notebook and storms out.

Renee enters and wordlessly wraps her arms around Anna. Anna begins to cry uncontrollably and buries her face in her mother's arms.

ANNA

Mommy...

Anna lays her head into Renee's lap. Renee strokes Anna's hair.

RENEE

Oh, my Annie. It's alright.

ANNA

It's almost 10:00. We're supposed to be at the hospital.

RENEE

I'll take you.

INT. RENEE'S CAR - NOON

Anna sits in silence, picking at her sleeve while Renee drives. After a few turns, Renee pulls the car into the parking lot.

ANNA

What time is it?

RENEE

It's 10:15. We're a little late, but I'm sure it's okay. You know, Anna, no matter what I may think about your dad, I think it's very brave of you to be doing this today. I'm proud of you. You better get going. I'll be right here.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Mom?

RENEE

What is it, honey?

ANNA

I don't think I need to do this. Look, whatever he did is in the past. We'll never know whether he's actually sorry or healed or reborn or not. I want to believe that he's sorry. But I don't need to see him to do it.

RENEE

Okay. But he's in there expecting you to show up.

ANNA

I know. I expected him to show up every day for years, and he never did. And after a while, I accepted life without him. I don't hate him and I'm not angry. If it's forgiveness he needs, I can tell Aunt Lily to let him know that I forgive him completely for being human. But I've already got a kickass, mace-weilding mom. I don't think there's anything I need from him anymore.

RENEE

Maybe you're right. But you don't have to tell Aunt Lily to pass on your message.

Renee opens her car door and steps out. From the car, Anna can see her mother walking steadily into the hospital. After some time, Renee returns.

ANNA

What did you say to him?

RENEE

I told him that you forgave him. And I told him that if he truly was sorry... that I forgave him too.

Renee starts the car and begins to drive home.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA  
I'm proud of you, mom.

RENEE  
Alright, alright.

They drive on.

EXT. PARK - MIDDAY

Anna and Clemy sit on a park bench. Anna is drawing in a notebook.

CLEMY  
The moment I pressed "send" on the application, I thought of a million things that I could have changed. Now all I can do is wait. I hate waiting. Oh, I'm secretly terrified Anna.

ANNA  
It's hardly a secret. You've told everybody that you met today.

CLEMY  
But what if I get waitlisted? They say Brown only accepts a handful of their waitlisted applicants every year. I'd rather just know for sure that I didn't make it.

Anna and Clemy are silent for a moment.

CLEMY  
I promise I will never bring this up again if you don't want me to, but can I ask... What about your dad? How are you dealing with everything that happened?

ANNA  
Actually, I'm kind of alright. I went to the funeral, just to finally close that whole chapter of my life and really say goodbye. But it wasn't painful for me. I never really knew him. I have one amazing mom and that's enough.

(CONTINUED)

CLEMY

Don't hate me but... This would make an incredible college application essay.

ANNA

I'm thinking I might take a year off and hitchhike across the country. Learn to juggle five balls at once.

A large truck rolls by that reads, "Frank's Tree Removal."

ANNA

Hey, I gotta go. I'll see you later.

CLEMY

Alright, see you.

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - MIDDAY

Anna walks down the street. She approaches Paul's house where Frank's Tree Removal is already unpacking their chainsaws and other gear. Paul is standing out front.

PAUL

Anna. Hey.

ANNA

I'm sorry. You were right.

PAUL

I was an asshole.

ANNA

No, you were right. I was using you. I knew how you felt about me and I took advantage of that. It wasn't fair and I'm sorry.

PAUL

Why are you apologizing? I was absolutely out of line. I should never have said --

ANNA

It's okay. I understand why you said those things. I need to learn how to be strong and depend on myself now. Which means I have a lot of self-exploring to do.

(CONTINUED)

Anna rips a page out of her journal and hands it to Paul.

ANNA

This is for you.

It is a drawing of Anna and Paul together as kids -- the same one from Paul's bedroom. Anna reaches into her purse and pulls out the actual photograph.

ANNA

Sorry, I stole it from your room.

PAUL

Thank you Anna. This drawing is incredible. I will treasure it always. Except I really wish it was a picture of your dog pooping.

ANNA

You're a poop.

Paul laughs. Then he runs into the back yard. Anna follows.

EXT. PAUL'S BACK YARD - MIDDAY

The crew are getting ready to saw down the tree which holds Anna and Paul's treehouse.

PAUL

Wait! Wait.

Paul climbs into the treehouse and retrieves the tattered old notebook.

PAUL

I was going to let them shred it. I thought it would be poetic justice or something, but I realize that's actually really dumb.

ANNA

I'm pretty sure that's not what poetic justice is anyway.

PAUL

I told you it was dumb.

The two watch as the crew saws down the tree, finally reducing it to a stump. Pan out to view the Oregon suburb and further out until green forests are all that can be seen.

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109.

THE END

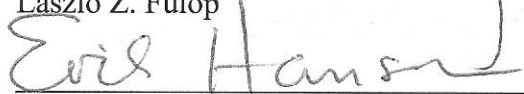
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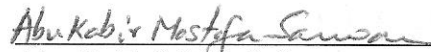
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