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Crimp

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Crimp

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in
Film and Theatre
Film Production & Screenwriting

by

SanChavis Torns

A.A.S Baton Rouge Community College, 2013
B.A. Louisiana State University, 2015

May 2022

CRIMP

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - NIGHT

An upstairs room window glows purple.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A computer with rainbow lights glows on a desk covered in paper work, camera/audio reports, and sharpie marked screenplay pages.

TV REPORTER (O.S.)
Breaking news.

At it, lies a young man with his head on the keyboard, asleep.

EXT. SANDSTONE ROCK WALL - DAY

The sun is coming up. FINGERS covered in chalk cling to a small hold with little surface area AKA a Crimp.

They tremble as DAN (27, AA, messy long hair, low eyes, calm) faces the wall and leans into it, finding his balance.

Holding his new position, his hands scan the wall for a solid hand hold. Finding one, he takes a break to focus on his breathing. Long deep breaths.

One at a time, he shakes his hands. Dan doesn't bother looking down. He looks up instead, eying the roof he has to get over to finish the climb.

A faint tv broadcast can be heard:

TV REPORTER (O.S.)
Another young black man has been unjustly shot and protesters have been ramping up their calls for justice.

Dan's breathing becomes abnormal.

TV REPORTER (V.O) (CONT'D)
When we return, we will discuss the alarming spike in the declining mental health, increased substance abuse, and suicidal ideation.

He begins to hyperventilate.

A tear runs down his face to the ground 60 feet below. It crashes next to a pair of clean dress shoes.

They belong to a smooth young man in a nice blue suit and yellow shirt with a big messy afro, JAX (27, AA, Well-kept, and Energetic)

Dan finally looks down, seeing Jax.

He shuts his eyes, now completely shaken. As he gasps for air..

Defeated, he lets go.

He falls, staring at the ground as he quickly approaches it. The ground gets closer and closer until...

Dan sees Jax standing over him shaking his head.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Dan jumps out of his sleep sweating and hyperventilating as the news continues on the television in the corner.

TV REPORTER (O.S.)
A storm is in the works-

A SHADOWY FIGURE sits quietly in the corner as it exhales smoke from a pipe.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The sun starts peeking through the blinds. Smoke fills the room, creating beams of light.

Dan lies still in bed, awake.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Dan continues to lie awake making no attempt to get the day started.

A messy afro and a pair of eyes rises from behind him.

Jax begins shaking and screaming at Dan, trying to get him started.

JAX
Get. The. Fuck. Up!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dan pours a cup of coffee while Jax blows smoke in his face.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Dan tends to his house plants. Golden Pothos and Monstera.

Jax blows smoke in his face.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Dan sits on the toilet while Jax stands in the shower blowing smoke. Dan continues minding his business.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan sits at a desk writing and following along with something on a computer monitor. His phone vibrates and he picks it up. It's NAMEK (29 and Dan's brother) on the other line.

NAMEK (O.S.)
Can you help clean houses?

DAN
Today?

NAMEK (O.S.)
No motherfucker. Next month.

DAN
Boy. Fuck you. I can't do it. These online assignments keep sneaking up on me. I got you next week.

NAMEK (O.S.)
OK. Heard that. See ya.

Dan hangs up the phone and focuses back on his work. Jax walks past the door to the office blowing smoke the entire time. It doesn't faze Dan.

He taps the keyboard and the screen reads:

"Application Submitted"

INT. CAR - DAY

Dan bobs his head slightly to music as he drives, smokes a joint.

Jax blows smoke into his face. Dan ignores this.

They pass a sign that reads:

BATON ROUGE 27 MILES

A storm brews ahead of him.

Dan looks at it through his windshield, which starts to show a SMALL CRACK.

The storm causes everything to get dark quickly.

He continues to drive into it.

INT. ROCK CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan smiles and teaches a climbing class of four people, all white. They are not interested in Dan teaching. Dan stops smiling.

Jax blows smoke trying to bother Dan. It doesn't get to him.

DAN

Alright, this is a perfect figure
eight follow-through knot.

Dan fiddles with a piece of rope before holding it up to a white teenage climber who annoys him the most.

DAN (CONT'D)

It's a knot that will continue to
tighten the more you fall on it so
you would want to make it as neat
as possible.

He shows off the knot more. It's a beautiful knot.

DAN (CONT'D)

The neater it is, the easier it is
to untie. Got it?

He works to untie the knot.

DAN (CONT'D)
OK. So, belaying is a technique
that varies and is used to exert
tension on a rope so that a falling
climber doesn't fall too far.

The last sentence wakes the other three climbers up. They
look to each other.

They watch at Dan more intently.

DAN (CONT'D)
Falling is always expected. Get
used to it.

Jax looks up at Dan. He looks impressed.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - DAY

The class is over and Dan strings ropes together so they rest
neatly off the ground.

Some of the people from the class thank him as gym regulars
CHRIS GOODALL (Early 40's, White, English accent) and his
wife CARRIE GOODALL (late 30's, White, reserved) approach.

DAN
Goodalls. How are ya?

CHRIS
Doin' alright. This your playlist?

DAN
Oh yea.

CHRIS
I'm diggin' it, baby. Real chill.

DAN
Thanks. I appreciate that.
(To Carrie)
Oh yea. How was the rest of your
climbing trip?

Chris steps away to look at a route on the wall.

CARRIE
It was nice. Took a small fall on
my first climb. Slipped and banged
my knee but I was able to push
through. What about yours? First
time outside?

Dan hangs his head for a second before realizing what he's doing. Picking it up quickly.

DAN

Yea. Had some trouble on that route with the huge roof.

CARRIE

Taliban Soup?

DAN

That's it.

CARRIE

That's a tough one for your first climbing trip. 5.11?

DAN

Yea. Sucks I didn't get it, considering I finished a harder one the next day.

CARRIE

Well, don't beat yourself up about it.

DAN

After three years working here, I'm just happy I went outside. Feels like Chewie finally getting his medal.

This brings Chris back.

CHRIS

RIGHT!

They laugh. Carrie just smiles as she pushes Chris along making sure he doesn't geek out with Dan.

CARRIE

We'll see you later.

DAN

See y'all later. Have a good day.

Dan takes a moment before getting back to cleaning up after the class. Jax appears.

INT. BATON ROUGE BAR - NIGHT

Dan sits at a restaurant bar staring intensely at basketball on the TV with a beer in his hand.

Dan sits the glass down. Another beer appears quickly. The bartender BEE (23, strong and nurturing) hangs out.

He starts on the beer.

BEE
How you doin, Daniel?

He lowers his glass and gives her the stink eye.

DAN
I'm good. How's the night going?

BEE
Kind of slow but you know how the night goes.

He finishes his beer. LOS (47, Salt and pepper beard, from Guatemala, wise but youthful) enters. Bee sees this.

BEE (CONT'D)
Hey Carlos, Canebrake?

LOS
Yes, my dear.

DAN
And two shots.

Bee grabs glasses to fill. Los fist bumps Dan.

LOS
What's up, vato? We still climbing in the morning?

Jax appears from nowhere to listen. Dan tries to take a sip of the empty glass. A balled up napkin makes its way into the glass to the surprise of Dan and the rest of the bar.

GREY (O.S.)
And, It's already empty so I don't owe you another one.

GRAY (37, bald, laid-back, and manager) stands behind the bar with his arm still up from his shot.

LOS
Damn.

Dan looks to Los.

LOS (CONT'D)
What? It was a nice shot.

Bee brings Los and Dan their drinks. She also hands Dan a new beer.

LOS (CONT'D)
Salud.

They tap the shots together, tap them on the bar, and, together, throw them back.

EXT. BATON ROUGE BAR PATIO - NIGHT

Dan, Los, and Grey sit on a wooden deck with a brick fire place and steel chairs together laughing. It's not too far from the street so you can hear cars pass.

GREY
So, this idiot leaves his phone
unlocked on the bar when he went to
the bathroom.

Los shakes his head.

GREY (CONT'D)
And I set an alarm that goes off
everyday at 8 AM.

LOS
What was it?

GREY
"Go Fuck Yourself"

Los looks to Dan. Dan sips his beer.

DAN
Well, I haven't been late to the
gym since, have I?

Dan finishes and lowers his glass.

DAN (CONT'D)
Another?

Los and Grey look at each other.

EXT. BATON ROUGE BAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Dan and Los walk to their car. Dan is drunk but holds it well.

LOS
You good?

Jax is hopping down from sitting on the roof the car.

JAX DAN
Yea! Yea!

Dan and Jax look at each other.

LOS
Alright, Vato. You sure? I can
drive if you need-

DAN JAX
I said I'm good! I said I got it!

Dan and Jax look at each other annoyed.

INT. BATON ROUGE KITCHEN - DAY

LYNN (Dan's mother, AA, greying hair) moves around Dan as he
sips coffee. He can't keep up with her.

LYNN
I ask because you came home fucked
up. You fell on the steps... Again.

Dan holds his lower back.

DAN
That's why my back is killing me.
Thought it was because I'm getting
older.

LYNN
No. You bust yo ass.

She is tickled by this.

LYNN (CONT'D)
And because you're getting older.
Shit hurt don't it?

DAN
OK, smart ass.

LYNN
On some real shit, though..

DAN
What?

LYNN
What you're doing every other
night.

DAN
You mean enjoying myself.

LYNN
No. What you're doing is another
form of suicide. Don't play.

DAN
What?

LYNN
Drinking. Driving. Tuning
everything out. Waiting to get
pulled over? You know that is a
thing brothers are doing. Another
form of suicide. It's a thing.

DAN
It's fine. I'm fine. I'll be more
careful.

He kisses her on the forehead before leaving. She yells after
him as she lights a cigarette.

LYNN
Be safe!

She realizes it's her last one.

LYNN (CONT'D)
Shit.

She looks up at someone off screen and hangs her head in
shame.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan stands on the ground belaying for Los as he climbs the
wall. He jumps to the last hold.

LOS
Take!

Dan starts pulling the rope through the belay device until
the rope is tight.

DAN
Gotcha!

LOS
Lower me!

DAN

Heard.

Dan confidently places the rope in his right hand behind his back and pulls a lever on the belay device with his left.

Los is lowered from the top quickly and sticks the landing.

They fist bump.

DAN (CONT'D)

Nice.

LOS

Wanna lead that purple traverse route?

He looks to Jax where he is leaning on the climbing wall smoking a joint. Jax shoots him an unsure look about it.

DAN

(quickly)

Yea sure.

INT. CLIMBING GYM LEAD ROUTE - DAY

Dan and Los stand in front of the purple route preparing to climb it.

Dan runs the rope through his hands, making sure there are no issues with the rope so it can flow through the belay device smoothly.

Dan ties a perfect figure 8 follow-through knot into his harness and Los runs the rope through his belay device and clips into his harness.

They check each other.

They fist bump and Dan turns to the wall. His hands shake but he shakes it off. He takes a deep breath.

DAN

Climbing?

LOS

Climb on.

Dan makes his first move on the wall. Los is there to spot him. Dan cruises to the first clip.

DAN

Clipping!

He grabs the rope from his harness and clips it.

LOS
Good clip. Belay's on!

Los continues to manage the rope, taking up slack and giving it out as Dan continues to move up.

Dan freezes, sizes up his next move, and adjusts his body for a move.

Jax looks on as he exhales smoke.

Dan holds for a moment before making a strong dynamic move up to the next hold. He attaches the rope to the last clip at the top of wall.

DAN
Take!

Los quickly pulls the slack out of the rope.

LOS
Gotcha!

Dan lets go of the wall and settles. He takes a deep breath. Los begins lowering Dan.

Dan reaches the ground.

LOS (CONT'D)
Nice. You flew up that thing.

They fist bump.

DAN
Again?

Jax turns around and leaves, flicking his joint in the process.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - NIGHT

It's Friday night at the gym. More of the regulars have taken over as there are new routes on the wall.

Members ruffle through their chalk bags at the top of the wall causing a snow like effect.

Dan takes this in while chalk lands in his hair. He smiles as he watches climbers figure out the new routes.

Some climbers stand at the bottom of routes figuring out their sequences of moves. Other climbers offer advice, acting out what movements got them up the wall.

There is a real sense of community.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - LATER

Dan walks up to a crowded spot where all the new routes have been set. LISA (40s, white, tough and well respected as a climber because of it) sees Dan.

She points at a route on the wall.

LISA
Any betas for these yet? I need a different approach.

DAN
Nah. Haven't had the chance.

LISA
Say no more.

DAN
Wha-

She walks up to the route and shoots a look at another climber. The climber backs off the route because nobody fucks with her, as she has no patience for most people.

Dan happens to be someone she has respect for. Dan's eyes shift as Lisa holds the end of the rope out to Dan.

He walks around a few people and takes it.

LISA
It's this one.

Dan looks it up and down as he ties in.

LISA (CONT'D)
All those crimps. Figured this one is right up your alley.

Dan looks back to Lisa.

DAN
Crimps are my favorite holds. On belay?

Lisa shows Dan her setup. It's checked and they are ready to go. Los walks up and nudges her. Lisa jokes back with Los. They both look up as Dan gets started.

The other climbers have stopped to watch, creating an audience. One of them being MILES (AA, 16, timid, messier hair than Dan, and lean) He stays to the back where no one notices him.

LOS
(to Dan)
Shows us what's up!
(to Leslie)
Has anyone sent this yet?

LISA
Nope.

Los looks to Dan.

LOS
Come on, brotha. Send that shit!

Other climbers join in to root Dan on.

LISA
Looking good.

LOS
Smooth.

Dan has made a couple of moves up the wall. He is focused on the task at hand. Jax watches from even farther behind Miles.

Dan is cruising through this. He looks very much at home.

He gets to the crux of the route and looks to his next hold, which is well out of reach.

He's going to have to jump for it, AKA a dyno.

He gathers himself for the move. The audience is quiet as Dan swings for momentum. One. Two. Three.

Dan launches himself off the wall. Using all of his length to reach. Everyone seems to hold their breath in this moment, including Jax and Miles.

Dan sticks it with one hand and swings in place as the crowd erupts for him.

LISA
Hell yea!

LOS

Aye!

Dan finishes the route and gets a hero's welcome on the way down. It continues on the ground and everyone comes to fist bump him.

LOS (CONT'D)

That was beautiful, man.

Los fist bumps him.

LOS (CONT'D)

That might have been the best climbing I've ever seen from you. Great footwork and everything.

LISA

Yea man. I'm impressed.

She fist bumps him, too.

DAN

(out of breath)

Thanks. Anyone know the grade?

A CLIMBER with their phone out.

CLIMBER 1

It's a 5.12!

LOS

Have you ever flashed a 12?

Dan is blown away with his hand on his head and a big smile.

DAN

No. That's my first one.

LOS

Atta boy. Gotta celebrate this one.

(to Lisa)

Beers in the lot?

INT. CLIMBING GYM - LATER

Miles slips a suggestion card into a red box.

On the way out of the gym, he bumps into Dan as he sweeps.

DAN

Headin' out?

MILES

Yea.

Miles rushes out.

DAN

Have a good one.

MILES

Thanks. You too-

DAN

Ya know.

Miles stops in the door. Dan looks after him and leans on the broom.

DAN (CONT'D)

If you keep your hip to the wall,
you'll get more reach out of your
arms.

Miles shoots a look of appreciation. Dan nods back at Miles with a warm smile and goes back to work.

DAN (CONT'D)

Later.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - NIGHT

Dan and Los sit by the climbing wall when FITZ (Early 20s, fit, curly hair, goofy but calm) is lowered by one of Dan's coworkers, NOLA (Early 20s, straight black hair, small but tough)

Nola disconnects from the rope and walks away.

FITZ

Dan. My man.

Dan looks over to see his friend.

DAN

Yoo! What's up? Saw you crushing
that last one.

Now sitting on the ground, Fitz works at untying the knot in his harness.

FITZ

Y'all done?

DAN

Yea. I'm about to close the gym but
I can give you a catch if you want.

FITZ

Cool.

They fist bump. Fitz walks toward Nola, who has changed clothes. They share a quick kiss. Dan yells to Fitz.

DAN

Don't try to ask when I'm starting
to close either!

Los looks confused. Dan catches this.

DAN (CONT'D)

He always does it when I'm counting
the drawer.

LOS

This motherfucker..

Nola is on her way out as she passes Dan and Los. She fist bumps them.

NOLA

Don't let that idiot climb until
close. Late, y'all.

DAN

See? She gets it.

INT. CLIMBING GYM FRONT DESK - NIGHT

Dan sits behind the desk melting into the chair staring into space. There are a few climbers in the gym. Los is finally on his way out. As he passes the desk.

LOS

I'll be in the parking lot with
some beers.

DAN

Heard.

LOS

See you out there.

Los leaves and Dan gets up to make a closing announcement. He taps the mic and turns down the music.

DAN
Attention climbers, the gym closes
in 10 minutes. So, send your last
route and pack it up.
(with a faint smile)
Yes, that means you, Fitz.

Fitz throws his hands up.

FITZ
(also smiling)
Come, on!

Fitz walks over.

FITZ (CONT'D)
At least gimme a lead catch real
quick.

Dan hesitates.

DAN
You're killing me.
(Stares at Fitz)
Fine. But let's make it quick.
Beers are waiting on me.

INT. LEAD WALL - NIGHT

Dan and Fitz are already set up. Fitz is moving quickly up
the wall as Jax appears from behind Dan.

JAX
Aren't you forgetting something?
Don't drop him. Drinking, again?

Jax blows smoke into Dan's face. The rope gets behind Fitz
leg as Dan finally responds to Jax as he swipes at the smoke
with rope in hand.

DAN
(looking to Jax)
Shut up.

While Dan is distracted, Fitz yells out to Dan.

FITZ
Clipping!

Fitz misses the clip causing the rope behind his leg to flip
him upside down on his way down. It catches Dan off guard.

The rope burns through his hands.

Jax smiles.

Dan lets go of the rope and Fitz comes all the way down to ground with a thud and crunch right in front of Dan.

Jax stops smiling.

Fitz twitches on the ground till he is no longer moving.

Dan and Jax stares at it, frozen in disbelief.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - NIGHT

Dan, shocked, watches a body bag be wheeled out by a CORONER as people move around him. An officer questions Dan but they don't register.

CORONER
(to himself)
Snapped neck on impact. Shit.

Jax blows smoke in Dan face.

INT. BATON ROUGE BAR - NIGHT

Dan sits alone at the bar. He drinks too much. He takes three shots in a row with a shaky hand. Grey enters.

GREY
Are you ok?

DAN
Yea. I'm fine- I'm fine, it's fine-

CUT TO BLACK.

A PSYCHEDELIC ANIMATED SEQUENCE OF DAN FALLING AROUND SEVERAL PEOPLE AND PLACES.

Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Bob Marley, Muhammad Ali, and Kid Cudi all look on as he falls.

Seeing Kid Cudi in their company confuses Dan.

KID CUDI
WHAT? SHIT.. IT COULD HAPPEN.

Dan can be seen falling back to earth from outer space in the distance. The galaxy is quiet. The music becomes muffled.

Jax can be heard yelling. The volume of the yelling increases and becomes overwhelming. The music distorts.

The earth has turned into Jax's mouth that Dan is now falling into. This shakes him as he begins to scream as he approaches. He gets closer and closer until..

EXT. STREET - DAY

A phone goes off surrounded by broken glass and other car debris. It reads:

GREY
Did you make it?

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY

Dan sits alone in an orange jumpsuit with his hands cuffed along with his ankle to the bench. An officer enters. This gains the attention of Jax who is blowing weeds smoke at Dan.

OFFICER #1
Alright. You're getting out here.
Your people will meet you at the
hospital.

DAN
But I don't have a scratch on me.

OFFICER #1
Yea, you were in a wreck. Gotta get
a check up.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Lynn and Los sit together. Los hands her Dan's phone.

LYNN
How did y'all know where it was?

LOS
The gym called me looking for him.
Grey was able to track it.

LYNN
How?

LOS
He threw share location on one
night when Dan was drunk at the
bar.

LYNN
Thank you.

LOS

The officers say he was unstable
when they found. Having panic
attacks throughout the night. Has
he ever done anything like that
before.

Lynn looks down at the shattered phone in her hands.

LYNN

Not to my knowledge.

LOS

Ok. Well, if y'all need anything,
let me know.

He shakes her hand and leaves. Lynn picks her head up after
Los leaves. Lynn looks off to other side of the room and
speaks to someone unseen.

LYNN

I know. I know. He's like me.

She squeezes the phone and takes a beat, hanging her head
again.

INT. HOSPITAL BEDROOM - DAY

Jax smokes a joint with his arm crossed as he nods to what
the DOCTOR is saying.

DOCTOR

You're ok physically. There's not a
scratch on you all things
considered.

Dan looks confused. Looking up, he remembers.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A car lies on it side. Windows shattered with smoke rising.
We hear footsteps on broken glass.

Dan, drunk but ok, walks over to another car and leans into
the window.

JAX

Y'all good?

The driver and their passenger nod their heads, look at Jax,
and then passed him. Dan no longer there.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Says you flipped your vehicle a few
times and slid upside down into a
pole.

Jax smoking a joint turns around to see the scene as a whole.
Straightening up.

JAX
Oh.

Dan's car blows up.

INT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

DAN
What!?

DOCTOR
Yea, I'd say that's pretty
fortunate. You also didn't hurt
anyone. Pulled yourself outta
there.

Jax looks out of a window and nods his head slowly in
agreement. Dan shoots him a look and hangs his head.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
As I said, you're fine physically
other than the rope burn on your
hand. Maybe no climbing while it
heals but we're going to recommend
therapy.

JAX
Excuse me?

DOCTOR
When you were arrested, you had
several panic attacks. One where
you mentioned thoughts of suicide.
Which is why you were chained to a
bench earlier.

The Doctor continues but is drowned out by Dan's mind
racing...

DAN (V.O)
Fuuuuck. Me.

INT abruptly by the sound of a gavel hitting its mark.

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

A JUDGE reads out his ruling to Dan and his attorney, LITA, (AA, 40s, hustler, curly hair, means well) while Jax sits with shades on smoking a joint.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Dan is struggling to keep up with Lita when he sees Jax taking in the sun.

LITA

Look. This could be way worse. Just do your community service and attend the required sessions.

DAN

Community service? Required?

LITA

Yes. Did you listen at all? Volunteer at some nonprofit or at the gym you work at. Log the hours. I can spin that into community service for you.

DAN

I-

LITA

Look, man. You're gonna have to get it together. Handle your shit.

JAX

She's not wrong.

Flipping though her shit. Jax looking over her shoulder.

LITA

And attendance is required, not recommended, at therapy sessions weekly. It could be worse.

INT. HAYES' OFFICE - DAY

Dan sits on the opposite end of a room covered with natural light, mountain landscape art, and several plants in silence as HAYES (AA Female, 30s, Athletic, black hair) types.

Jax sits in another corner with shades on while he smokes a joint.

DAN
(looking around)
Are we waiting on someone or?

As she continues to type.

HAYES
No. I just understand you don't
want to be here. My name is Summer
Hayes. You can call me Dr. Hayes or
Hayes. Whatever you like. I'll be
your therapist.

Jax nods his head. Dan shrugs. Jax looks over his shades.
There's silence.

DAN
We think it's just a waste of time,
no offense-

HAYES
Oh, no. I agree. Especially if you
aren't willing to participate.
That's why I'm gonna keep being
productive over here with other
work.

Dan looks to Jax. Jax points at Hayes in approval. Hayes
types out "We?" On her computer.

DAN
So, I can just sit here?

HAYES
Yup and I'll report whatever you
need to whoever you need.

Dan and Jax nod their heads together. Hayes stops typing to
pulls to open drawer behind her desk.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Mind if I smoke?

Keeping his attention on Jax, Dan nods his head in agreement.

JAX
Doesn't get better than this.

Jax sniffs the air. Dan also sniffs it. They both look at
Hayes.

She has lit a joint. She extends it to Dan. Jax shakes his
head in skepticism.

Dan and Jax take a beat. Dan takes the joint.

INT. CLIMBING GYM OFFICE - DAY

Dan sits on a couch and MO(50s, grey hair, and lean.) walks in. He fist bumps Dan and settles into his chair behind his desk.

MO

Obviously, we aren't firing you.
You do good work, we value you as
an employee and more importantly,
as a person. You can understand if
we are worried about you.

Dan listens intently while Jax, as always, smokes a joint checking out the room.

MO (CONT'D)

You just lost a lot of trust from
the members throughout the gym.
You're gonna have to put in some
extra effort to get it back. You
can coach to help get some of your
community service but no climbing
or belaying.

Los enters.

MO (CONT'D)

Los here has vouched for you and
will serve as belayer and teacher
of belay technique.

Dan sinks into his seat, nodding his head as he hangs it, quickly picking it back up. He gets up to leave.

Mo stops him before he leaves.

MO (CONT'D)

Hey man. We love you here. If
there's anything we can do to help.
Please don't be afraid to ask.

Jax pokes his head back in.

DAN

I looked away for one second. I got
distracted and the next the thing I
know the rope is burning my hand-

He looks at wrapped his hand for the first time. He zones out. Mo snapping him out of it.

MO
Be more present.

Dan nods his head and leaves. Mo looks after him.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan walks through the gym as the members look at him and speak amongst themselves.

He sees Nola working behind the desk. He stops to approach. She hangs her head, not able to look at him.

Dan picks up his pace out of the gym.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan sits in his room and types on his computer. He stops and stares at the computer.

He gets an alert for an email. It reads:

"Your application requesting to enter into a dual masters in Film Production and Screenwriting has been approved. You will be the first to do so in your department. Congrats."

He rubs his forehead in frustration. He rests his face in his palms.

He rubs his eyes and gets back to work pushing through his frustrations. Jax appearing behind to look at the email and then at Dan.

JAX
Isn't this a win?

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan is asleep at his desk. Computer still on his work from the night before. Smoke is blown into his face. Dan shifts in his seat.

A blunt is held in front and more smoke is blown into his face. He opens his eyes slightly to check out what's there. He looks up, grabs the blunt, hits it, hands it back, and puts his head back down.

The hand that offers him the blunt smacks him awake.

DAN
What the fuck!?

NAMEK (tall, lanky, hair just as messy as Dan only shorter, and he pretty much is) stands over Dan with his spare key in hand.

NAMEK

You said you'd help me clean some houses and today is the day. Come on. We're behind.

Dan looks up at him in a daze. And lays his head back down.

DAN

I'm not feeling it. Not today.

Namek stares at him for a moment. He hits the blunt. Exhaling.

NAMEK

Moms said to come get you out of the house and you know I'm not fucking with her. Come on.

He hits the blunt again and extends it to Dan. He doesn't grab it.

NAMEK (CONT'D)

Oh. So you don't smoke anymore? You gone hit this shit.

Annoyed, Dan reluctantly takes it.

INT. NAMEK'S CAR - DAY

Dan stares out the window detached from everything in the car. Namek looks over to see him not present.

NAMEK (CONT'D)

Moms told me about your accident. How you holdin' up?

Dan sits back in his seat as he prepares himself to respond. It takes a moment like he doesn't want to answer. He starts and stop as if he doesn't know what to say. Finally.

DAN

I don't think I am.

Dan doesn't know what to say.

DAN (CONT'D)

Let's just get this over with.

They arrive at their destination. They do a their handshake.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Dan and Namek clean multiple houses.

They move through living rooms quickly, working around each other perfectly.

Side by side, they look at a giant mess in front of a house.

Namek holds up a pair of used underwear with a broom stick.

Dan calls Namek to look at the bathroom.

The toilet and bathtub are backed up.

They work together to unclog them. It continues to overflow.

NAMEK

Why's it so angry?!

Jax looks on in disgusted horror as the two men struggle.

END MONTAGE

INT. NAMEK'S CAR - DAY

Dan and Namek sit in the car smoking another blunt. As he exhales.

NAMEK

Check this out.

He hands Dan an enamel pin with two basketball players on it. One of them picking the other's head up.

NAMEK (CONT'D)

Found that yesterday. Thought it was fitting

Dan looks down at the pin. He looks to Namek. He raises it up and shakes it slowly at Namek out of appreciation. He looks back down at it.

DAN

Thanks.

Namek lights a black cigarette. He inhales. As he exhales.

NAMEK

Whatever happens, happened.

DAN

What?

NAMEK

Don't let this shit define you. We
all fuck up-

Dan no longer looking at Namek.

DAN

Someone died. And that's on me.

Silence. Dan with his head down trying to keep his
frustrations in check.

DAN(CONT'D) (CONT'D)

It's-

Dan stops himself. Lips tucked almost biting his lip while he
shifts his head trying to avoid Namek's eye-line and find his
words.

He finally looks at Namek and we see that Dan's eyes are
watering. He throws his hands over his eyes and leans back in
his seat.

Namek looks down, ashamed. Dan removes his hand from his
face. He has gathered himself.

DAN (CONT'D)

I'm just not trying to be a bitch
about everything.

NAMEK

When we were younger and said
"Don't be no bitch." We didn't know
better. It's different now. Not
being a bitch is about getting back
up.

DAN

I think the damage is already done.

He looks outside to see Jax sitting on the porch waiting and
smoking joint.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dan is asleep at his desk as the computer watches him twitch
in his sleep.

EXT. CLIMBING WALL - DAY

Dan stands at the bottom of a route staring at the top when a
body drops and crunches on the ground. It doesn't faze him.

He walks over to see himself on the ground bloody with a broken neck.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan snaps awake and has a panic attack. He desperately tries to compose himself. To breathe. He can't. He never does.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dan again snaps awake and has another panic attack. This time, tears swelling in his eyes. He drops to knees gasping for air while Jax enters and stands over him.

INT. DAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Dan is sitting in the same spot. Bags under his eyes from a lack of sleep.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Dan stands over a tombstone surrounded by figure-eight knots and flowers. It reads:

"In Loving Memory of Fitz Alva. Don't worry. I'm behind you. Made ya look."

Dan smiles through held back tears looking up hoping the tears stay in.

Crouching down, he covers his mouth and looks away from his mistake.

DAN
(muffled)
FUUUUCK!

Collecting himself and placing a hand on the tombstone.

He closes his eyes hard, remaining silent.

Jax walks up from behind Dan, growing bigger in size as he approaches. Standing over Dan.

INT. BATON ROUGE KITCHEN - DAY

Dan walks into the kitchen and grabs some water. Lynn is sitting at the stove tending to breakfast sandwiches.

LYNN

You ok?

DAN

Yea. I'm fine.

She shoots him a look and looks back down at the skillet she's using on the stove.

LYNN

I know you're struggling. But you have to keep working on it everyday. At least, that's the case from my experience.

They sit in silence. Lynn anticipates her son response.

DAN

Hey Ma, can you do me a favor?

Lynn perks up at an opportunity to help.

LYNN

Of course. Anything.

DAN

Can you get me a copy of our family tree with their health records?

Lynn has leaned back on the counter to sip coffee.

LYNN

Yea. I should be able to do that. Might take a while. Why?

DAN

(quickly)
I'm just curious.

(slowly)
I've been having a hard time lately and wondering if it's something that could run in the family.

(quickly)
Not looking for anyone to blame or anything.

(slowly)
Just wanna know what I'm working with.

Lynn shoots a concerned look off in another direction. Jax tilts their head when they see this.

DAN (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Dan kisses his mother on the forehead and runs out of the door before anything else can be said.

INT. HAYES' OFFICE - DAY

Dan scans the room. Hayes fiddles with papers, probably from another job. We see a few degrees. Dan doesn't care to see what they are in. The office is littered with semi dead house plants.

HAYES(O.C.)

You look like shit.

DAN

Well fuck you, too.

Jax is behind Dan, enjoying the attitude. He rubs his hands together.

JAX

Good, good. Let the hatred flow through you. Tell her fuck her eyebrows.

DAN

You can shut up, too.

HAYES

What was that?

DAN

It's nothing.

JAX

Did you notice moms earlier?

DAN

(to Jax)

No. What are you talking about?

JAX

That twitch. Kind of like when you get caught talking to me. Shit might run in the family?

Dan glances to Hayes then back at Jax.

DAN

Nah. She would've told me.

JAX
You sure?

DAN
(to Jax)
You done?

Hayes checks her watch.

HAYES
Yea man. You'd be late for your
first practice.

Dan grunts and stands to leave. As he heads for the door.

HAYES (CONT'D)
And check the attitude.

Dan exits with Jax following. Jax flips a plant over on the way out.

JAX
Thanks for the session.

Hayes jumps in her seat a little as she looks up from her papers.

INT. BATON ROUGE KITCHEN - DAY

Lynn stands alone while she preps food. A soft VOICE can be heard slightly and you can't make out what is being said. Lynn looks over her shoulder and calmly notices the source. She looks to a file on the counter.

LYNN
I know he could resent me either way. I mean our situation works? We didn't need a therapist.

NOAMI (Well-maintained brown afro with hints of grey, Well put together, and relaxed) appears from behind Lynn almost coming out of her.

NOAMI
Yea, ours does. Doesn't mean theirs does. We were never rock climbers either. The situations are completely different. We can't compare them.

Lynn takes this in. Naomi leans onto a counter.

NOAMI (CONT'D)
You raised him though. Maybe,
believe you raised him well enough
to handle it.

LYNN
But I didn't prepare him for this.

NOAMI
He just needs to know is this isn't
his fault. That this normal for us.
It's the least you can do.

Lynn and Naomi share the same concerned look. Lynn reaches
for her cigarettes and realizes there are none left.

NOAMI (CONT'D) LYNN
Shit. Shit.

INT. UPSTAIRS CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan stands, watching climbers. He is zoned out watching them.
Everything becomes muffled as an overwhelming BEEP takes
over. A VOICE can be heard.

UNKNOWN VOICE
Dan?

He doesn't answer.

UNKNOWN VOICE (CONT'D)
Dan?

Dan snaps out of it to see Mo in front of him.

MO
You alright?

DAN
Yea, what's up?

MO
Wanted to introduce you to your
team.

DAN
Yea. For sure.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Mo and Dan walk together to the front desk up to a lone young
man, MILES, as he stares up and around the gym.

DAN
It's only one kid? I thought it was
a team.

MO
Well, they all backed out after
hearing about your 187.

DAN
What?

MO
Police for murder.

Dan shoots a confused look at Mo.

MO (CONT'D)
Too soon?

Now arriving at Miles.

MO (CONT'D)
Hey Miles, this is Dan. Your coach.
I'll let y'all get to it.

Mo leaves the two of them. Dan looks after Mo like he doesn't know where to start and looks back to Miles, who just stares back at him.

DAN
You're that kid from the other
night.

No response.

DAN (CONT'D)
I'm getting the feeling you don't
talk much. Perfect. Keep that
energy.

INT. UPSTAIRS CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan lounges on the couch while Miles climbs the boulder wall when Los walks up.

LOS
Yo. What up, mane?

DAN
Not shit.

Los looks at Miles then back at Dan.

LOS
You sure?

Dan looks up at Miles.

DAN
He's fine. Doesn't talk much. Just
gonna let him get a feel for it. Yo
Miles, come over here.

Miles takes his time heading over.

DAN(CONT'D) (CONT'D)
This is Los. He works here too and
might help out from time to time.

LOS
Que?

INT. UPSTAIRS CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan and Los stare up at Miles climbing. Los looks over at
Dan.

LOS
He's pretty good. You might
actually have to coach this kid.
You gonna teach him to belay?

DAN
(raising his rope burned
hand)
Probably not the best idea right
now, considering. I can just let
him climb.

Los shoots a disappointed look at Dan. Miles finishes the
route and Los yells out to him.

LOS
Nice. Good job.

Miles climbs down.

MILES
Thanks.

Dan and Los look to each other shocked at his first words to
them.

LOS
He speaks.

Dan reaches out to fist bump him. Miles bumps the fist.

DAN
Just don't start talking too much.
Got enough of that going around.
Want to try out some rope climbing?
Los will belay.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan walks over to Miles who is sizing up a route with Los.

DAN
Alright, Miles. I think that's
enough for today. What's your
parental pick up situation?

MILES
My dad is gonna pick me up.

DAN
Heard. We'll hang out till he gets
here.

MILES
You don't need to. He'll be a
while. I might walk.

DAN
Let's just wait it out. I remember
having to wait on my mom to pick me
up so I get it. Is he working?

MILES
No. He's-

An old truck SCREECHES to a halt outside the gym. Dan and Los
whip around to see what it is...

Miles hangs his head in shame, picking it up quickly as he
knows the deal and walks toward a beat down vehicle.

Dan notices the body language.

DAN
That's him?

MILES
Yea.

DAN
Ok. Don't forget to stretch. See ya
tomorrow.

MILES

Do you think you can actually coach
next time?

This catches Dan off guard.

DAN

I don't think that's a great idea.
I'll see if Los can take over.

Miles looks defeated and Dan notices this.

He watches as Miles leaves, enters the car, and gets a wild
look from the man, RODNEY, driving the old truck who takes
big swig from a flask.

Dan notices the entire interaction.

INT. RODNEY'S CAR - NIGHT

The inside of the car is beat up and littered with beer cans.

RODNEY

You know this shit ain't for us and
you keep fucking with this crazy
shit. Just like your mom. You see
where that got her.

Miles shoots a look at Rodney. Miles swells up.

RODNEY (CONT'D)

Say something, I dare you.

Miles settles and they drive off.

INT. AUTO SHOP OFFICE - DAY

Dan sits at a table watching an instructional video about
breathalyzers on a small and old television.

VIDEO (O.S)

So, you got a DUI.

Dan stares up and sighs heavily.

INT. AUTO SHOP OFFICE - DAY

The video ends and the MECHANIC enters the room.

MECHANIC

Alright, it's ready.

INT. DAN'S CAR - DAY

Dan hops into the car and closes the door. The Mechanic leans on the open window of the car.

MECHANIC

You watched the video so you should
know what to do. If it beeps, you
blow.

Jax laughs. Dan rolls his eyes. It takes Dan a few attempts to get it going. He gets it to work

EXT. INTERSTATE - DAY

Dan's car speeds on the interstate.

INT. DAN'S CAR - DAY

Dan is concentrating on the road when the breathalyzer BEEPS.

He picks it up and blows into it. It flashes the word:

"Pass"

Dan lays it down and continues to focus on the road when it BEEPS again.

Dan looks at the device in horror.

DAN

Oh shit.

INT. HAYES' OFFICE - DAY

Dan sits in his usual spot. Hayes gives him the eye.

DAN

What?

HAYES

You know what.

DAN

I don't.

HAYES

You don't remember flipping over my
plant?

DAN

No. I apologize.

HAYES
Tell that to the plant.

Dan turns around to look at the spot where the plant was.
It's not there.

HAYES (CONT'D)
It didn't make it.

DAN
Why didn't you tell me? I could've-

HAYES
So you do remember knocking it
over?

DAN
What?

HAYES
I never said which plant.

DAN
I don't appreciate your ruse,
ma'am.

Jax, who has been sitting on another couch, shakes his head
as he looks down, disappointed in Dan.

HAYES
I think that's enough for today.

DAN
What? You sure?

HAYES
Yea. I got enough for today.

JAX
Got enough? Bitch.

HAYES
Don't forget your 12 AA meetings...

BEEP.

HAYES (CONT'D)
32 hours of community service...

BEEEEEP.

HAYES (CONT'D)
Safe Driving Course...

BEEEEEEEP.

HAYES (CONT'D)
MADD Panel...

BEEEEEEEEEEEP.

HAYES (CONT'D)
And get to your Substance Abuse
Assessment.

BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP.

HAYES (CONT'D)
All before August.

Dan and Jax find the day's date reads: June 26th.

He gets up to leave.

Something in one of the mountain landscape photos catches
Dan's eye.

It's Hayes on the top of a mountain in a climbing harness.

DAN
You climb?

He turns to face Hayes.

DAN (CONT'D)
Why didn't you say so?

HAYES
You never asked.

He looks back to the photo.

DAN
Interesting.

INT. STREETCAR - DAY

Dan and Jax sit side by side as Jax smokes a joint. People
look at Jax.

DAN
You don't think I should be talking
to her?

Jax looks at Dan. They stare at each other for a moment. Jax
ashes his joint.

JAX
No, probably not. She's not a
dumbass.

He looks away from Dan.

JAX (CONT'D)
Unlike you. Someone who has
officially started talking to
themselves. On public
transportation.

Dan retreats. Looking down to see he's holding the joint and
that passengers have been looking at him. He puts it out
quickly. Looking back to Jax, he is gone.

Dan continues to sit as we hear Dan's thought process:

JAX (V.O.)
She can put together that you might
need actual help and get you sent
away when you become too much.
Search your feelings, you know this
to be true.

DAN (V.O.)
No. That's outdated. People are
much more understanding. Did you
just quote Star Wars?

JAX (V.O.)
Sure. And no, you just quoted Star
Wars? Try to keep up here.

More passengers watch Dan as he looks like someone trying to
work a complex math problem in their head.

JAX (V.O.)
You're complicating things for
yourself and for what? Just look
the part for now.

DAN (V.O.)
The part?

JAX (V.O.)
Like you're ok.

DAN (V.O.)
But I am ok.

JAX (V.O.)
Right. Just like that.

The streetcar slows down and catches Dan's attention. He looks out the window.

DAN
Shit. I missed my stop.

INT. DAN'S CAR - DAY

Dan sits in the driver seat blowing into his breathalyzer. BEEEEEP. It reads zero. He starts his car up. He turns up his music up and pulls off.

He lowers the music and listens for his breathalyzer.

Nothing.

He picks it up and glances at it.

Zero. He tosses it.

He rubs his forehead.

BEEEEEEP.

Dan glares at the device. Jax laughs.

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

A slim young woman, DOYLE, walks to the front of the class past a diverse group of adults. She gets to the front where Dan sits at the front and inserts a DVD into a player. She turns to face the class.

DOYLE
Hey everyone. My name is Ms.Doyle.
You can call me Doyle.

She grabs a sharpie and cracks it open.

MS. DOYLE
Let's see how much this DUI cost
you.

She points at Dan. He drops his head with Jax sitting next to him rubbing his hands together.

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

Dan sits alone as two women, one tall with shorter dark hair, LUNA, and the other short with dirty blonde hair, DANA. The latter speaks first.

On a board behind Dana reads "Mothers Against Drunk Driving"

DANA
My name is Dana. I've been a
volunteer with MADD for 9 years.
We're not here to tell you not to
drink. Let's get that straight.

INT. DR. FREDRICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan and another man, DR. FREDRICK (AA, EARLY 30'S, glasses, calm) sit across from each other. Dr. Fredrick is going through his papers getting organized.

DR. FREDRICK
Ok. So, I'm gonna ask you a lot of
questions about you, your home
life, your relationships, Etc. Just
answer, honestly, with yes or no.

Jax appears at Dan's side and leans into his ear.

JAX
Lie. Lie. Lie.

DAN
Ok.

BEEEP.

INT. STREET CAR - DAY

Dan sits staring out of the window as it passes neighborhoods covered in foliage.

DOYLE (V.O)
You're in this class, so that's
about \$100. And the \$50 for the
MADD panel.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan grips his hangboard with the tips of his fingers. He holds on for as long as can which isn't very long. He looks at his rope burnt hand.

DANA (V.O)
We just want you to make better
decisions. If you do drink, have a
plan.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. FREDRICK (V.O)
Does your drinking ever interfere
with your work?

Dan is asleep at his desk. A beer is sitting on it as smoke rises from the still lit joint in an ashtray.

The computer is deleting Dan's work as he lays on the keyboard.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - NIGHT

Dan catches a glimpse of Fitz falling.

CUT TO:

INT. DR. FREDRICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan shifts in his seat for a moment.

DAN
No.

Jax smiles approvingly.

JAX
My man.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dan jumps from his sleep.

DR. FREDRICK (V.O)
Are you drinking or using any
substances everyday?

BEGIN MONTAGE:

INT. NEW ORLEANS HOUSE - DAY

Monday: Dan chugs a beer with a lit joint in the same hand quickly as he types at this computer with one hand.

Tuesday: Dan sips beer. Jax hands him a joint.

Wednesday: Dan knocks back three shots of whiskey. Black.

Thursday: Dan sleeps on his keyboard. Jax shifts him out of the way and starts typing at the computer.

Friday: Jax is still typing at the computer into the early morning.

Saturday: Dan reads at his computer shaking his head with his face squinted in distaste all while pouring a drink.

Sunday: Black.

END MONTAGE

CUT TO:

INT. DR. FREDRICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan shifts in his seat avoiding eye contact, mouth fixed to whistle.

DAN

No.

INT. UPSTAIRS CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan looks on as Miles climbs the boulder wall.

DANA(V.O)

My son was in the wrong place at the wrong time. He wasn't even drunk. Do what you can to look out for people.

INT. DAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Dan is in the car as it crashes, flip onto its side, and slides to the side of the road.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dan jumps out of his sleep again.

DR. FREDRICK (V.O.)

Are you losing any sleep?

CUT TO:

INT. DR. FREDRICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan closes his eyes, taking a deep breath before opening them again.

DAN

No.

Jax, now more in shadow, continues to nod his head in approval with the glowing ember of his joint in his mouth.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan continues to train his fingers on his hangboard.

DR. FREDRICK (V.O)

Has your mental health declined?

Dan now hangs with Jax on his back. He manages to hold on but not for long.

He and Jax fall together.

CUT TO:

INT. DR. FREDRICK'S OFFICE - DAY

Straight forward and with eye contact. Rubbing his rope burned hand.

DAN

No.

INT. BATON ROUGE BAR - NIGHT

Dan and Los sit together having a beer.

DOYLE (V.O)

And that brings it to a little over \$10,000 with all the classes, fines, etc.

Dan looks at the beer.

DANA (V.O)

If someone had just stopped to asked the driver if he was good, or offer to drive them, my son would still be here.

He sets it down on the bar.

DR. FREDRICK (V.O)
Does your substance use mess with
your financial situation?

DAN
(to himself)
Shit.

END MONTAGE

INT. DR. FREDRICK'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. FREDRICK
Ok. That's everything. Thank you.

JAX
That's it?

DR. FREDRICK
Yup. I'll get this sent to you and
your LITA.

DAN
Thank you.

DR. FREDRICK
No problem. Have a good day, one at
a time.

Jax quickly shoots a long look of annoyance at Dr. Fredrick.

INT. BATON ROUGE BAR - NIGHT

Dan and Los sit at the bar with their beers. Dan stares at
his. Almost in a trance.

LOS
Yo!

Dan jumps.

LOS (CONT'D)
What's up? Babysitting drinks is
unlike you.

DAN
Yea. I know. All the fines and
classes are starting to take a
toll. It's all I can think about.
And my finances.

LOS

I see.

DAN

I think I'm gonna stop. At least a month to see what's up.

LOS

Not a bad idea. I'll join you.

DAN

You don't have to do that.

LOS

I know. I want to.

DAN

Thanks.

They toast their last beer and take a sip.

DAN (CONT'D)

I'm going to miss this.

LOS

The beer?

DAN

Well, of course. But also, coming here. Feels like a home away from home.

LOS

Yeaaaa, that's probably a sign we need to stop.

DAN

I get you, but I mean the community, I guess.

LOS

You don't have to drink to come hang out.

DAN

Yea. I know. It's weird but it'll free me up to focus more on climbing.

LOS

But you can't climb at the gym anymore.

DAN
I.. completely forgot about that
part. So much other shit has been
going on. I haven't had to time to
think about that.

Dan rubs his forehead and hair. Takes a swig of his beer.

DAN (CONT'D)
And I start AA tomorrow so I
haven't even begun to figure out
Miles.

LOS
Talk to him how you talk to
everyone else. That's how mentoring
works. You can't offer him what
others do or in the same manner as
them. So do you, be you.

Dan nods, thanking Los. He finishes his beer and takes his
phone.

He swipes his "Go Fuck Yourself" reminder out of the way to
open up the calendar.

DAN
Looks like I'll be one month
without alcohol ooon..

He scrolls. He perks up.

DAN (CONT'D)
My mom's birthday.

Los looks over. Looks at Dan.

LOS
That's actually pretty cool.

They nod in unison.

INT. BATON ROUGE KITCHEN - DAY

Dan stands as he brews at pot of coffee. Lynn enters.

DAN
Good morning.

LYNN
Morning.

Dan gives her a kiss on the forehead.

DAN
Were you able to track that info?

LYNN
I'm gonna need more time.

Noami appears and looks disappointed at Lynn. She looks to Noami and quickly back to Dan. Jax, now beside Dan, nudges him.

JAX
See? She did it again. Watch.

Dan says nothing, just nodding. He has learned his lesson from the street car.

DAN
(to Lynn)
Have we ever had family that has gone to therapy?

LYNN
Nope. You are first.

DAN
Really?

LYNN
Yea. We don't really do that.

DAN
Our family?

LYNN
Black people in general.

Lynn gives Noami the side eye.

Dan notices this and tilts his head in shock, quickly reeling in the reaction.

He looks to Jax who just nods his head slowly.

A TV REPORTER is heard and seen.

TV REPORTER
A cat 5 storm is approaching. It is crucial that you are prepared and ready to evacuate if needed. Here's a list of shelters.

Dan, Jax, Lynn, and Noami all hear this.

INT. DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan listens to the online meeting intently as different AA MEMBERS share.

AA MEMBER #1

A lot of people don't fully understand what we are getting at when we talk about service. It can be small things like holding the door open or not doing the wrong thing when we want to so badly. We are presented with these opportunities more than we realize.

Dan nods in agreement.

INT. HAYES' OFFICE - DAY

Dan shifts in his seat as Hayes goes through the paperwork.

HAYES

I'm impressed you got this done so quickly.

Dan nods. Jax smokes his usual joint. They look to each other. Jax shakes his head no at Dan.

Dan thinks to Jax.

DAN (V.O.)

I'm already here. I might as well get some kind of help.

JAX (V.O.)

I've been helping you.

DAN (V.O.)

Helping me kill people? I'm sure I'm better off without you. She can help me get rid of you soo..

This makes Jax retreat and Dan notices a shift in him. He goes along with his plan.

HAYES

Who are you talking to?

This catches Jax and Dan's attention. Jax throws his hands up in defeat. He goes to say something but silences himself, gesturing to Dan to go ahead. Dan looks to Jax and back at Hayes.

DAN
Do you get a lot of black patients?

HAYES
No. There's still a stigma around
getting help in that demographic.

DAN
Why?

HAYES
Usually, "getting help" is related
to weakness. It's a bit backwards
in my opinion.

DAN
How?

HAYES
Having weakness is only human. Not
attempting to do anything about
that weakness is another level.
You're letting other peoples
opinion get in the way of operating
the way you need to in order to get
by.

Dan takes this and deep breath in before responding.

DAN
I-

HAYES
Have been seeing things that aren't
there?

DAN
A person.

Jax looks nervous.

HAYES
I figured.

Dan and Hayes shoot at look of disbelief at Hayes.

She opens a drawer, grabs a joint, and lights it. She hands
it to Dan.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan uses his hangboard. He hangs on with Jax on his back and
a blunt in his mouth.

He is under control with his breathing and is able to handle hanging on with Jax on his back.

JAX
I'm impressed.

DAN
Sure.

Dan lets go of the hangboard, letting his feet touch the ground.

JAX
What's the attitude?

Jax watches Dan as he picks up some chalk.

DAN
You want to be supportive now?

JAX
Aren't I always?

Dan looks at him crazy. Then grips the hangboard again and prepares to hang.

DAN
Absolutely not.

JAX
Say what?

DAN
You're the main reason I'm in this situation.

JAX
What situation? Trying to become a healthier version of yourself? Sounds horrible.

Dan silently goes back to hanging.

DAN
In what world does inciting panic in me while I'm climbing help?

JAX
How else would I have gotten through?

Dan lowers from the hangboard.

JAX (CONT'D)

All I'm saying is that you're doing a lot better than you were. Haven't you ever heard of making a mess to clean a mess.

DAN

You just made that up.

Dan walks away from Jax.

JAX

No, you just made that up. You know I'm not real. Everything I am is you. Choosing to hide your declining mental health. You. Those doubts are all you. You're playing the victim. There's nothing wrong with you but that. Only when I disturbed your peace did you take action. I'm keeping you alive.

Dan heads for the door.

JAX (CONT'D)

There you go again. Running. I hope you don't pass that energy to Miles.

This catches Dan off guard and he hesitates before exiting.

EXT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan exits the house.

DAN

Shit.

EXT. LAKEFRONT - NIGHT

Dan sits with Namek by the lake. Namek hands Dan a blunt as he looks at the pin from earlier.

Dan takes this in and hands the blunt to Namek.

DAN

What do you think about the stigma amongst people?

Namek inhales and exhales.

NAMEK

That it's real as a mothafucka. Why do you think I gave you that pin?

Dan shrugs and looks out to the lake.

NAMEK (CONT'D)

You're horrible with subtext. I gave it to you as a reminder. Yes, to keep your head up but also, to help other keep their head up.

He hands the blunt to Dan. A storm brews in the distant. Dan takes it. He looks back to the lack.

DAN

They said it's gonna be a bad one.

NAMEK

Nothing we aren't used to.

DAN

I'll be in Baton Rouge, helping the gym as shelter. Be safe. There's space for you if you need it.

They do their handshake as water crashes into the stairs behind them.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - NIGHT

Several people hang out on the mats in sleeping bags. A storm rages on outside when the power goes. It's still a cozy space due to the lanterns on throughout the gym. Dan and Los sit together behind the front desk.

LOS

Have you heard from Miles?

DAN

No.

LOS

Did he evacuate?

DAN

I don't know. He's probably with his dad.

Los shoots him a look.

DAN (CONT'D)

What?

LOS
You could've checked on him.

DAN
If he wanted help, he'd ask.

LOS
Would you?

This stops Dan in his tracks.

DAN
Fuck.

EXT. MILE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

INT. CLIMBING GYM - NIGHT

Dan and Miles sit together.

DAN
Where'd your Dad go?

MILES
He left days before the storm was
announced.

DAN
Did he check on you?

MILES
No. Rodney did not check on me.

Dan can't say anything.

DAN
Why didn't you come to the gym? You
knew we'd be here. Thought you
liked it here.

Miles hangs his head.

MILES
I do. I just wasn't down to be
pawned off again.

DAN
No one is pawning you off here-

Miles cuts him off with a look. Dan accepts this look and
understands.

Dan nods his head.

DAN (CONT'D)
I didn't set out to make you feel
that way. I apologize for that. I
just got caught up in my own shit.

A beat of silence.

MILES
Have you realized you're the only
black person that works here and
the main one climbing here?

DAN
Well, yea-

MILES
Do you realize the position your
in?

DAN
I haven't-

MILES
You're the only one who looks like
me here. Representation matters,
dumbass. Rodney can keep spewing
bullshit because he doesn't see
black people climbing.

Dan is stunned by this.

DAN
Why does it matter what he thinks?

Miles takes a moment. He grabs a photo and points to the
woman with baby.

MILES
My moms died on this climbing trip.
She died doing what she loved.

This makes Dan shiver.

MILES (CONT'D)
Rodney blames climbing and every
time he talks shit, it feels like
he talking shit about my moms for
doing what she loved.

Dan takes this in.

DAN
So, you're climbing to prove him
wrong?

MILES
What's wrong with that?

EXT. UPTOWN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The storm surges on.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - LATER

Members at the gym moves supplies from new arrivals to the gym.

Namek arrives at the gym which surprises Dan. Namek removes his hoodie.

NAMEK
Is Dan around?

Dan approaches him. They do their handshake. The Goodalls and Lisa are hanging out near the front desk.

LISA
You have black friends?

A few people laugh, hold back laughter, or spill something from their mouth including Namek, Los, and Miles.

Dan shoots a look at Miles. Miles subtly throws his hands up as he turns around.

DAN
Yes. This is Namek. He's not blood
but he's pretty much my brother.
Consider him that.

They all wave at each other. Dan pulls Namek aside.

DAN (CONT'D)
What's up?

NAMEK
I felt shit was going sideways so I
got out of there. I don't think
anybody else is getting out behind
me. How y'all making out?

DAN

I don't think we have dealt with a storm this bad as adults. Power just went out not too long ago.

NAMEK

Damn, that's crazy. Got any weed? Nerves bad as hell.

Dan gives him a side eye but agrees. Namek shrugs.

NAMEK (CONT'D)

How's Moms by the way?

Dan looks up at Namek.

INT. DAN'S CAR - NIGHT

The storm surges on as Dan, Miles, Namek, and Los drive to Lynn's house.

As Dan squints through the storm, the crack in the windshield grows bigger.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Dan, Miles, Namek, and Los sit together in a circle "That 70s' Show" style and smoke. They are pretty high already.

DAN

I'm gonna get two masters degrees. That shit is crazy.

LOS

Considering how much you drink and smoke, that's impressive.

DAN

Right.

NAMEK

Congrats.

Miles is just confused. Everyone catches this.

NAMEK (CONT'D)

He's done for.

LOS

Oh, most definitely.

DAN
This is a safe space right?

LOS
Yea, man.

Los looks to Namek.

NAMEK
Of course.

They look to Miles. He's not paying attention.

DAN
It's wild. When I dropped Fitz..

This get everyone's attention, even Miles.

DAN (CONT'D)
I was distracted by a figment of my
imagination that feels incredibly
real. He-it is always with me and I
see him every day. I'm not sure why
and I've tried getting rid of him-

Everyone is a bit more sober after hearing this.

DAN (CONT'D)
I feel crazy. It sounds crazy-

MILES
Have you asked your mom?

Everyone looks at Miles thinking he wasn't tuned in. This
clicks with Dan. Dan gets up to leave, looking at Jax through
a reflection in a mirror.

INT. BATON ROUGE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Lynn is standing over a portable stove making coffee when Dan
enters through the back door. Lynn turns to face her son in
the doorway.

LYNN
What's going on?

DAN
Did you ever find those records I
asked for?

LYNN
I-

DAN
Or are you keeping them from me?

LYNN
Why would I-

Naomi shoots Lynn a look.

DAN
What is it?

LYNN
I didn't- it didn't seem like a
problem for you till now.

DAN
What didn't?

LYNN
I grew up and learned to keep these
issues to myself. We just didn't
talk about it and did our best to
not let it show. I should've told
you what you were up against from
the get go instead of assuming
you'd be fine. I didn't wanna
believe we could pass it on. You've
always been so happy, we didn't
think you would turn out like us.

DAN
Us?

LYNN
Your father and I both suffered
from Psychotic Depression. Your
father a bit more than me. He
couldn't handle it so I made sure
you were out of his way.

DAN
Why have kids?

LYNN
Like I said, we didn't talk about
it. We didn't know this about
ourselves and we definitely didn't
know what to do about it.

Dan takes this in. He slowly backs away from his mother.

LYNN (CONT'D)
I apologize.

She reaches out for Dan. Dan throws his hands up to avoid the contact.

DAN
It's ok. I just need to register
the information. I'm too high for
this.

Dan doesn't make eye contact. He continues his exit.

DAN (CONT'D)
I'll talk to you tomorrow.

He exits. Jax lingers looking back at Naomi. He follows Dan out the door.

INT. HAYES OFFICE - DAY

Hayes sits in her office. She jumps at a BANG on the door. The BANGING continues until Hayes approaches the door.

HAYES
Who is it?

DAN (O.S.)
It's Dan. Let me in.

She opens the door and Dan is out of breath.

DAN (CONT'D)
Can we talk?

LATER

Dan sits up in his chair with Jax leaning on the wall behind him. Lynn passes him a joint.

HAYES
So, your mother has been
withholding? Can you blame her? She
grew up in another generation where
it would've been the right thing to
do.

DAN
I get it. I get it.

He hits the joint.

HAYES

It's not like you always had Jax.
It probably scared her seeing it in
you. Doesn't it make you want to
look out for the people you see
yourself in?

DAN

Little on the nose?

HAYES

It's not my best work.

DAN

I can't help anyone if I can't help
myself.

HAYES

Then help yourself.

DAN

What?

HAYES

This all started with a panic
attack on the wall right?

DAN

Yea.

HAYES

Go back and finish.

This gets all of Jax's attention.

HAYES (CONT'D)

You've told me that you've been
seeing Jax since that incident. So
you should go back to where it
started, right? Finish the route.
Do you remember what you felt in
that moment?

DAN

No, not really. Just a feeling of
not being able to breath.

HAYES

All the more to reason to go back
and conquer that route. Try to
understand what triggered it in the
first place.

Jax looks interested in this idea. He looks at Dan, who looks back at him.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - DAY

Dan grabs his harness and shoes out of his cubby when Mo appears at the door.

MO
Going somewhere?

Dan stands to face Mo.

DAN
If y'all don't trust me, I'll climb outside.

MO
You sure that's a good idea?

Dan thinks about this briefly. With a smile.

DAN
I'm better. Not the best. This is a step I have to take to get there.

MO
I get it. Do you what you gotta do.

DAN
Thanks.

They fist bump.

INT/EXT. BATON ROUGE GARAGE - DAY

Dan loads up his car with gear as his mother looks on from her balcony. He stops when he catches this.

EXT. BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Lynn sits in a chair smoking a cigarette looking out over the balcony.

LYNN
I guess I can't question where you're going?

DAN

You can. You just can't judge me about it. We're good, though. You know that, right?

LYNN

Yea?

DAN

Yea. I mean I am disappointed in you and feel you're better than this moment. I'm not gonna sit here and blame you for the depression and shit.

Dan hugs his mother and kisses her forehead.

LYNN

Be safe.

DAN

Will do.

Dan gets in his car and drives off. Naomi and Jax signal goodbyes to each other.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

EXT. LOS'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan and Miles load up Dan's car with Los's gear.

INT. DAN'S CAR - DAY

Dan, Los, and Miles laugh and joke as they drive.

They pull over for a smoke break.

They switch drivers a few times.

They arrive at camp getting out to stretch and set up camp near small cliff by a creek.

They set up tents and go for a walk through the woods.

EXT. ROCK WALL - DAY

They arrive at a rock wall with a slight roof. The roof casts a shadow over majority of the route.

MILES

So, this is the one? Taliban Soup.

They all look up the wall.

LOS

No, It's that one over there.

Los points at a route with a solid overhanging part at the end. The shadow it creates extends to the ground. It has permanent clips attach to the route. They all look over.

MILES

..oh.

LOS

Yup.

Los walks passed him. Dan follows, tapping Miles on the back as he does. Miles doesn't move as he is stuck looking up at the wall.

MILES

What am I doing here?

He follows them.

LOS

Ha. Dan said the same thing.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The group sits around the fire and watch the stars as the night expires.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Dan and Los sit in front of their tents with coffee. They talk as Miles emerges from his tent.

Dan and Los celebrate Miles finally being awake. Miles is not amused.

EXT. ROCK WALL - DAY

Dan teaches Miles how to belay as Los watches on.

EXT. ROCK WALL - DAY

Dan ties a knot into his harness. Los checks it. Dan checks Los's setup. It's good.

Miles watches as Dan cruises through a route.

Dan is lowered. When he gets down, it's the usual fist bump from Los.

Miles gives him one too.

Dan gestures to Miles to try.

He agrees.

END MONATAGE.

EXT. ROCK WALL - DAY

Miles is set up on a rope, ready to climb. He takes a deep breath and starts up. Dan stops him and double checks the setup of the rope, harness, and belay device.

Dan gives him the thumbs up.

DAN
You got this.

Miles takes another deep breath and starts. He starts out a little nervous.

His legs shake a little in between moves.

He gets to the top.

LOS
Let him enjoy the view.

Dan agrees.

Miles looks out over the trees as a breeze rushes over them. He is blown away at what he did.

He takes it in. Dan lowers him.

Miles gets down and look to Los and Dan. He looks at what he just did and back to them.

He nods.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Dan, Los, and Miles look up at the route, Taliban Soup.

MILES
You ready?

DAN
It doesn't look as threatening as
before.

MILES
Really?

LOS
It's because we put in the work.

Los reaches for a fist bump from Dan as he starts down the trail.

Dan doesn't notice so Los connects with Dan's chest instead.

LOS (CONT'D)
You got this.

Los keeps moving forward. Dan follows. Miles stares on.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

The trio sits around the fire.

LOS
So we're gonna try to get an early
start tomorrow before it gets too
hot.

Dan nods his head in agreement as he stares into the fire.

Miles rummages through his bag. Los sees this.

LOS (CONT'D)
What are you looking for?

Dan looks up from the flames to pay attention.

MILES
I brought something for us.

He pulls a vial from the bag and holds it up.

DAN
What's that?

As he hands it Dan.

MILES

Acid. I figured we could micro dose. I heard it could help with the mental.

DAN

Where did you get this much?

Dan holding it up, looks at Los. Los reaches for it and Dan stands up to hand it Los.

As he does.

DAN (CONT'D)

Shit!

Dan slips on a rock and slide down the small cliff disappearing behind it. He tumbles down it. Los and Miles laugh as they get up to look over the cliff.

MILES

You good?

Dan appears fine although he doesn't respond. He's busy holding at this wrapped hand.

The vial has broken in the same hand as the rope burn causing a solid cut in it.

All of the LSD spills into the wound.

DAN

(to himself)

Oh, fuck.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Los dresses Dan's wound.

LOS

In all my years, I've never experienced anything like this, so I'm not sure what's about to happen. How are you feeling?

Miles looks on from behind looking on with curiosity.

DAN

I think I'm ok.

The beeping from Dan's breathalyzer can be heard faintly.

Dan's eyes dilate quickly.

Oh. LOS

Oh. MILES

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. DAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Dan vomits uncontrollably.

 MILES
Oh my god!

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. DAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Dan sits in the back seat blacked out, not moving. Miles and Los stand on the outside of the car.

 LOS
Ok, I think he's done.

Dan dry heaves causing them to jump.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. SLOT CANYON - DAY

Dan walks along a thin alley. Foliage has taken over the walls. Some of it hangs and loops from wall to wall.

The volume of the beeping grows.

It's a bit overcast but the sun still shines through casting a beam of light.

He approaches a tent with home coming out of the top.

 DAN
Hello?

No response. Dan enters the tent.

INT. TENT - CONTINUOUS

The inside is hazy as two people share a pipe.

DAN

Hey-

One of people turn toward him. It's Fitz, who hands the pipe to Dan but he is reluctant to take it.

DAN (CONT'D)

Fitz. I'm so sorry man.

Fitz nods his head. He tries to hand the pipe Dan again, who is still reluctant.

DAN (CONT'D)

Am I dead?

The other person faces Dan. It's KID CUDI.

KID CUDI

No. This is more of a crossroad.

Dan turns toward Kid Cudi.

DAN

What?

KID CUDI

You're stuck in your head. No more than usual. All you have to do is leave.

DAN

Come, again?

Kid Cudi gets to his feet. He takes the pipe from Fitz.

KID CUDI

Let's walk.

Kid Cudi ushers Dan out of the tent. Dan moves slowly with him as he looks at Fitz stare into a light.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - NIGHT

Dan and Kid Cudi approach the wall as Dan surveys his surroundings.

DAN

How did we get here? This doesn't make any sense.

KID CUDI

Makes sense to me.

Kid Cudi hits the pipe.

KID CUDI (CONT'D)
Seems like you're in the right
place to me.

Kid Cudi looks up at the wall. This causes Dan to look up too.

DAN
Taliban Soup?

KID CUDI
You came here to climb it, right?

DAN
Well, yea. Still doesn't make
sense.

KID CUDI
You're in your head. Got a little
too much LSD in your system. Now,
you're in a coma.

Kid Cudi hits the pipe and offers it to Dan. He is still looking up.

DAN
Am I gonna wake up?

KID CUDI
That's on you.

DAN
How's that? I have no control over
any of this?

He gestures to the space around them. Time shifts around them going from day to night and vice versa until it stops at night.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - NIGHT

The pair of men stare up at the night sky as they sit in front of a fire.

KID CUDI
You have more power over yourself
than you realize. Just gotta get
out of your head. Be present.

DAN
I know. You said that already. So?

A shooting star passes over them.

KID CUDI
Just do what feels right.

Kid Cudi taps the side of his head.

DAN
Are you high?

KID CUDI
Well..

Kid Cudi shifts his eyes left to right.

KID CUDI (CONT'D)
Yea.

Kid Cudi walks away from Dan. He follows.

DAN
(Sarcastically)
So, what? I need to climb the
mountain in my head?

Kid Cudi stops in his tracks.

KID CUDI
It's not really a mountain but if
you don't?

Dan slows his pace.

DAN
I'll stay up here. I'll die?

KID CUDI
Or live as a vegetable? If you
don't get up the wall and out of
here. Make the climb and embrace
what's at the top.

Dan kneels as he takes this in. He looks up into the night sky.

DAN
Fuck.

Kid Cudi turns his back to Dan. He starts to morph into something else.

He shakes out features out like long claws, teeth, and tongue. Shedding human skin in the process.

He has turned into a giant humanoid lizard.

DAN (CONT'D)
What the fuck?

Dan falls back. He scramble backwards away from the lizard.

Full formed, it hisses and charges Dan.

Dan throws his guard up.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKY - DAY

Dan free falls, much like he did in earlier dreams, into a giant mouth that belongs to Jax.

This time he continues to fall almost hitting the ground, his fall being arrested just in time by a rope and harness.

A moment passes as Dan is frozen in place a few inches above the concrete when a body falls next to him, liquefying instantly.

This repeats over and over until Dan starts to repeat to himself:

DAN
It's just a trip. It's just a trip.

His fall gets arrested again just in time. The body still falls next to him creating a puddle of human.

This time, Dan is dropped. He is surprised by this. In this brief moment he relaxes, Dan start to be swallowed by the human puddle.

He struggles in a panic against the puddle, but he eventually over powered.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - DAY

Dan stands alone in front of the 70 foot wall as he examines it. It's has somewhat small holds on it and a few cracks.

He takes a step toward the wall and a body falls in the spot he just left. Dan looks up at the wall and back the body on the ground.

DAN

Shit.

He make his first couple of moves up the wall. After about 30 feet, a JEEP slides into the bottom of the wall exploding shortly after under Dan.

Dan hesitates for a moment, shaking his arms out before pressing on.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - NIGHT

Dan concentrates on the climb. Flashing police lights reflect off the wall. Another body falls behind Dan, it crashes to the ground.

The police shoot at the puddle of a human.

Dan pays no mind as he keeps going.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - DAY

Dan climbs as it gets extremely hot. His hands sizzle on the rock.

Another body falls behind Dan. The puddle body sizzles on the ground.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - NIGHT

Bloody fingers cling to the wall. Dan hangs with one hand as he tries to nurse his fingers with his shirt. He hangs his head and hears voices.

Another body falls behind Dan creating a puddle. Dan looks down.

VOICES (V.O.)

Just give up.

Echoes of the voice continue. Dan shakes it off and moves up the wall.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - DAY

Dan climbs when he hears BEEP. BEEP. BEEEEEP. He jams his hand into a crack and looks around for the source of the noise.

The crack closes on Dan's hand, crushing it.

He screams out in pain.

The wall shifts and spirals around Dan's hand, grinding it more, and pulling more of Dan into the wall.

Dan fights against it but he faints from the pain. The wall continues to shift and spiral as it pulls and grinds him into the rock.

END MONTAGE

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - NIGHT

Dan and Kid Cudi sit around a fire. Dan scoots away from Kid Cudi.

DAN
Weren't you a lizard?

KID CUDI
Nobody said this was easy.

Dan takes this in.

It starts to rain and it puts out the fire.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - DAY

Dan climbs on. He pauses on a hold and shakes on his hand out.

Kid Cudi defies gravity as he walks up the wall. He offers Dan the pipe as he exhales smoke.

DAN
That's what got me here in the
first place.

KID CUDI
Maybe it's what will get you out?

Dan shakes his head and moves up.

Kid Cudi watches.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - CONTINUOUS

Time shifts from day to night around Dan as he moves up. He approaches the top of the wall and he hesitates on the moves.

This makes him slip and bang his head on the wall. He is knocked on conscious instantly. He falls to the ground where he wakes on impact.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - NIGHT

Dan snaps awake. Kid Cudi looks on. He offers Dan the pipe.

DAN
Worst spirit guide ever.

KID CUDI
I can be worse than Jax.

He throws up air quotes.

KID CUDI (CONT'D)
Your guardian angel.

DAN
My what?

KID CUDI
You're not dead yet, right?

Dan takes the pipe. He hits it for the first time. He coughs hard.

DAN
What is this-

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP - DAY

Dan climbs hard up the wall. He pulls himself up aggressively using his momentum. He reaches the beginning of the roof.

He throws his foot over a ledge and cranks himself up to another hold.

The next part of the roof is just out of reach so he swings a bit and uses his momentum again to throw himself to it.

He reaches it and his feet dangle off the wall for a moment before he gets them set up for the last move.

He bends at the knees with his eyes on the last hold. He doesn't hesitate and jumps to next hold.

He sticks it and pulls himself over the top where he is met by an excited Jax.

JAX
What took you so long?

This scares Dan and he jumps back, falling off the ledge and back to the ground.

Jax watches the whole fall.

JAX (CONT'D)
Shit.

EXT. TALIBAN SOUP TOP - DAY

Jax waits for Dan to get back to the top but this time, he remains calm. He doesn't scare him off the wall. This time, he just sits and lets Dan approach him.

JAX
Maybe I've been going about things
all wrong.

Dan sits next to Jax and looks to him.

DAN
Maybe we've been going about this
all wrong.

They sit and watch the sunset. They fist bump.

FADE TO YELLOW:

SUPER: 1 year later.

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

Dan enters his car.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Through a fixed windshield, Dan starts the car without a breathalyzer.

INT. HAYES' OFFICE - DAY

Dan and Hayes smoke together. Through the smoke, we see a photo of them on a climbing trip.

INT. CLIMBING GYM - NIGHT

A party is being thrown. Low lights. Climbing. A banner with 5 year anniversary can be seen in the back of the gym.

Mo hands Dan a rope and they have their photo taken.

The photo is placed on a wall.

INT. BATON ROUGE KITCHEN - DAY

Dan and Lynn sit alone with coffee with fresh biscuits on the stove.

Dan gets up to leave. Lynn looks up to her son. Dan gets to the back door of the kitchen. He looks up for a moment.

LYNN
So, what next?

Dan smiles warmly at her.

EXT. ROCK WALL - DAY

It's an early morning. Chalky fingers cling to the wall.

Los belays and he points things out to a group of young black men led by Miles.

They all look up to the wall.

Dan is approaching the top.

He pauses to collect himself, shake his hands out, and make a big move up to top.

He slips and almost swings off the wall but engages his fingers at full force to stay on.

Dan resets himself on the wall. Takes a deep breath and makes the last move.

He climbs over the top where he sees Jax levitating with his legs crossed enjoying the view.

Dan joins him in sitting on the ground first then slowly levitating to the same level as Jax.

They enjoy the view together.

THE END.

Vita

SanChavis Torns is a filmmaker born in Petersburg, Virginia and raised in Birmingham, Alabama and Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He earned an associate degree in Entertainment Technology with a concentration in film from Baton Rouge Community College in 2013. In 2015, he obtained a bachelor's degree from Louisiana State University in Theatre focusing on film. He has worked as a freelance projectionist, film liaison for Loyola University of New Orleans, and as a climbing instructor after joining the University of New Orleans MFA Film Program.