

# LIKELY STORY

[www.likely-story.com](http://www.likely-story.com)

James Schamus  
Focus Features  
65 Bleecker St  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10012

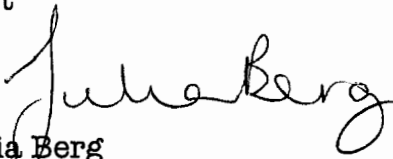
RE: SYNECDOCHE, NEW YORK

Dear James,

Per your conversation with Bill Horberg, please find enclosed a copy of SYNECDOCHE, NEW YORK written and to be directed by Charlie Kaufman.

Please don't hesitate to contact us further.

Best



Julia Berg  
Assistant to Anthony Bregman  
Ph: 212 695 6043  
Fax: 212 695 3518

# Synecdoche, New York

by

Charlie Kaufman

1022

MASTER WHITE SCRIPT March 12, 2007  
BLUE REVISION (FULL SCRIPT) April 27, 2007  
PINK REVISION May 18, 2007  
YELLOW REVISION June 5, 2007  
GREEN REVISIONS June 14, 2007

NO PORTION OF THIS SCRIPT MAY BE PERFORMED, DISPLAYED, OR REPRODUCED BY ANY MEANS, OR QUOTED  
OR PUBLISHED IN ANY MEDIUM WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT.

NO ONE IS AUTHORIZED TO SELL, TRANSFER, OR DISPOSE OF THE SCRIPT. IF LOST OR DESTROYED,  
PLEASE NOTIFY THE MYSTERIOUS CONDITION PRODUCTION OFFICE AT 212-695-6043.

A1 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BEDROOM - FALL 2005 - MORNING A1

Darkness. The sound of a radio and pots and pans clanging fades in. Caden, 40, opens his eyes in bed, and groggily looks at himself in the bureau mirror. The bedside clock reads 7:45.

1 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S KITCHEN - FALL 2005 - SAME 1

Adele, 40, in t-shirt and sweats, mixes a bowl of instant oatmeal, puts it in the microwave.

RADIO VOICE  
... a Labor Day luncheon today --

OLIVE (O.S.) RADIO VOICE  
Mommy! Done! -- at Stuckey Hall --

ADELE RADIO VOICE  
Okay! -- in downtown Schenectady --

Adele leaves the kitchen. Caden, also 40, enters as she's leaving. He's dressed in a ratty terrycloth robe.

CADEN ADELE  
Morning. Morning. Tried not to wake you.

CADEN  
Thanks. You didn't. I was just --

As Caden's voice goes under, we follow Adele into --

2 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BATHROOM - FALL 2005 - CONTINUOUS 2

Olive, 4, sits on the toilet. Adele enters, rips some toilet paper off the roll and proceeds to wipe Olive. The phone rings in the kitchen.

ADELE CADEN (O.S.)  
Caden, could you get that? It's Maria. I don't want to.

ADELE  
Ugh. Caden!  
(looks at bright green  
smear on toilet paper)  
That's weird.

The phone stops ringing.

OLIVE  
Is something wrong with my poop?

(CONTINUED)

2

CONTINUED:

2

ADELE MARIA'S VOICE  
No, honey. It's just green. Hi, it's me. Where are you?  
Maybe you ate something I'll try you on your cell.  
green.

OLIVE (CONT'D)  
I didn't! What's wrong with me?!  
  
A cellphone rings in the other room.

ADELE  
Honey, I have to get this. You're  
going to be fine.

OLIVE  
But, Mommy --

Adele runs into --

3

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S KITCHEN - FALL 2005 - CONTINUOUS

3

She rifles through her purse, grabs her cellphone, answers.

ADELE  
Hey.  
(laughing)  
Oh, wiping Olive's ass. You?  
  
Caden is pouring himself a cup of coffee. He sips it and  
stares out the window. It's raining.

ADELE (CONT'D)  
You're kidding! Holy fuck!

Caden exits with his coffee, annoyed about the phone call.

CADEN  
I don't feel well.

4

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BATHROOM - FALL 2005 - CONTINUOUS

4

Caden passes the bathroom. Olive is staring into the toilet  
bowl. Adele can be heard chatting in the background.

OLIVE  
Daddy, my poop is green.

Caden enters the bathroom, looks into the bowl at the green  
feces and smeared toilet paper. He seems freaked out.

OLIVE (CONT'D)  
Am I going to be okay?

(CONTINUED)

CADEN  
Of course, honey.

OLIVE  
Did you have green poop when you  
were little?

CADEN  
I'm sure I did, honey.

OLIVE  
Am I going to die?

CADEN  
Of course not. You probably  
ate something --

OLIVE  
I didn't! I didn't eat  
green!

CADEN  
It'll be fine, sweetie. I'll be  
back in a minute.

OLIVE (O.C.)  
(calling)  
Is poop alive?

5

EXT. CADEN AND ADELE'S HOUSE - FALL 2005 - MORNING

5

Caden steps out the front door in his bare feet and hurries  
down the driveway in the rain. He picks up the newspaper,  
pulls the mail from the box. As he heads back inside, he  
flips through the mail. There's a magazine called Attending  
to your illness addressed to Caden. A diseased person on the  
cover. Across the street a gaunt man watches Caden, unseen.

6

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S KITCHEN - FALL 2005 - MORNING

6

Caden sits at the kitchen table with his coffee, reading the  
paper, dated Friday, October 14, 2005.

ADELE  
All right, baby. See you then.

Adele clicks off her cellphone.

CADEN  
Harold Pinter died!

ADELE  
Yeah? Huh. Well, he was  
old, right?

CADEN  
Oh wait. He won the Nobel  
Prize. Good for him.

OLIVE (O.S.)  
Mom!

ADELE  
What?!

OLIVE (O.S.)  
Do you need to come look at  
my poop again?!

ADELE  
No, Olive, it's fine. Just  
flush.

OLIVE (O.S.)  
What if it's alive? What if  
I kill it? It's green! Like  
plants!

ADELE  
It's not alive, honey.

CADEN  
God, remember that production  
of The Dumbwaiter I did at  
Albanyfest?

The toilet is flushed.

OLIVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Everything's alive. Everything  
grows big. That's how you know.

Olive enters.

ADELE  
I have your oatmeal, honey.

OLIVE  
I want peanut butter and jelly.

ADELE  
Olive, c'mon. You told me  
oatmeal. This isn't a  
restaurant.

OLIVE  
I don't want oatmeal.

Adele growls, grabs the oatmeal, dumps it in the sink.

OLIVE (CONT'D)  
Sorry, Mommy! I'm sorry!

CADEN  
(looking at paper)  
They found Avian flu in  
Turkey. In the country  
Turkey not turkeys. It's in  
chickens.

Adele is making a peanut butter sandwich for Olive.

OLIVE (CONT'D)  
Can I watch TV till school?

Caden clicks the remote for Olive and goes back to his paper.  
A cartoon cow talks to a cartoon sheep.

COW

There is a secret, something at  
play under the surface, growing  
like an invisible virus of thought.

The sheep nods. Caden pours himself some more coffee, opens  
the milk carton to pour some in, then sniffs at the spout.  
He checks the date on the carton. It's October 20.

CADEN

COW

Man. Milk's expired. Jesus. But you are being changed by  
it. Second by second. Every  
breath counts off time.

Caden goes back to his paper. Adele puts a peanut butter  
sandwich in front of Olive.

ADELE

Here. Now you better eat this.

OLIVE

CADEN

I will.

The first black graduate of  
the University of Alabama  
died. Vivian Malone Jones.  
Stroke. Only 63.

Adele stares out the window at the rain.

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - FALL 2005 - DAY

Caden is in the dentist's chair, a bloody bib around his  
neck. The dentist, in surgical mask, probes his open mouth,  
calls out numbers to an assistant, who records them.

DENTIST

2, 2, 1. 3, 4, 2. 3, 4, 4.

(to Caden)

Family coming for Thanksgiving?

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BATHROOM - WINTER 2005 - NIGHT

Caden shaves. A faucet explodes and smacks him in the  
forehead. He is sent staggering backwards with a yelp, into  
the far wall, his razor flying and blood pouring from a  
jagged cut above his right eyebrow. Off-screen, we hear the  
pounding footsteps of someone running toward us. Half of  
Caden's face is covered with shaving cream. Rivulets of  
blood intermingle with it. Water shoots out where the tap  
was, spraying the mirror, which is splattered with blood.  
Adele, dressed in heavily paint-splattered clothes, hurries  
in and takes in the scene: the wet, the mess, the blood.

ADELE

Jesus! Caden! What the fuck -- ?!

Olive, in a nightgown, stands quietly in the doorway, her curled toes clenched. She holds a large stuffed owl.

CADEN

Um. I was shaving and --

ADELE

My God! Jesus! Look at your head!

Dumbly, Caden tries to look up at his forehead, then squints nervously at himself in the mirror.

ADELE (CONT'D)

(to Olive)

Honey, don't look.

Olive turns around.

ADELE (CONT'D)

Put pressure. Press. Press!

CADEN

Do I press above or below it?

ADELE

I don't know! Just... both!

Caden sits on the toilet, presses a towel to his head. Adele squats, goes into a spasmodic coughing fit, finishes, opens the cabinet under the sink, pushes her arm through bottles of cleaning products, old sponges, old toothbrushes, toilet paper rolls and other junk to the shut-off valves.

ADELE (CONT'D)

I can't turn it! It's gonna flood!

Olive hugs the owl tightly and it speaks.

OWL

Whooo. Whooo. Whooo are you?

ADELE

I can't -- Oh wait, got it!

Adele turns off the water. Olive looks back into the room.

OLIVE

Mommy, Daddy has blood.

Caden sits on a metal table. The room has some meager Christmas ornaments. A doctor stitches Caden's forehead.



Caden squints into the bright light the doctor uses to see his work. In the background we hear another patient.

PATIENT (O.S.)  
(crying)  
Please, please, please...

Caden sees a nurse shoving a tube far up into a man's nose. Another nurse wipes away the blood leaking out his nostril.

CADEN  
Will there be a scar?

DOCTOR  
Probably. It looks like a mudflap.

CADEN  
I prefer there not be a scar.

DOCTOR  
That fellow is annoying. He's in here every week. Like clockwork.

The off-screen patient continues to whimper. The doctor finishes his work on Caden.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
There. I think that should --

He looks at Caden's eyes, turns off the bright lamp and looks again. He turns the lamp back on and looks once more.

CADEN  
What?

The doctor feels Caden's pulse, then listens to his heart. He presses hard against the glands in Caden's neck.

DOCTOR  
Changes in bowel movements?

CADEN  
A little more yellow than usual.  
What?

DOCTOR  
I'd like you to see an ophthalmologist.

CADEN  
A neurologist?

DOCTOR

What? No, an ophthalmologist. I said, ophthalmologist.

CADEN

Oh.

The doctor stares blankly at Caden for a long moment, then looks suspiciously in Caden's ears.

10

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S CAR - WINTER 2006 - NIGHT

10

Adele drives and coughs spasmodically. The car swerves a bit. Caden has a bandaged head and a prescription in his hand. Olive, in her car seat, sings. Caden sees revelers in winter coats and party hats outside a house. They blow noisemakers and yell "happy new year!"

OLIVE

(singing)

It's a beautiful day and the sun is shining and yellow. And the world is too big to understand and today is Tuesday and --

(speaking)

Mom, is today Tuesday?

ADELE

No, it's Friday, honey.

OLIVE

(singing)

And today is Friday and...

Olive's singing continues but goes under.

ADELE

So what exactly did he say?

CADEN

My pupils weren't properly dilating and, um, not doing the opposite ...

ADELE

Constricting.

CADEN

No.

ADELE

Yes. The bump to the head?

CADEN

He doesn't know. Maybe. He said he doesn't think so. But maybe. But he doesn't know. But --

(CONTINUED)

ADELE Okay. I got it. Jesus. CADEN Sorry. I'm a little anxious.

OLIVE Did you have to get a shot, Daddy?

CADEN No, honey.  
(to Adele)  
It's the start of something awful.

OLIVE Do I have to get a shot?

CADEN What? No. Of course not.  
(pause, to Adele)  
This is really fucked timing.

ADELE Caden.

CADEN Sorry. Bad timing. OLIVE Did you tell him I have green poop?

ADELE (CONT'D) Remind me to call the plumber, would you? I need a to-do list. Caden! CADEN (realizing) I have rehearsal! Fuck!

CADEN Sorry. OLIVE How many years till I have to get more shots?

ADELE (CONT'D) Not for a long time, honey.

Caden pulls out a cell phone and dials.

OLIVE A million years?

ADELE Remember Dr. Woodman said after the last vaccination -- OLIVE Dad, what's a plumber?

CADEN He's the man who --

ADELE

Or woman, Dad.

CADEN

Right. He's the man or woman who fixes sinks and toilets and... do you know what pipes are?

OLIVE

No.

CADEN

(into phone)

Hey, Jim. I know. I'm sorry. I had an accident. No, I'm okay.

OLIVE

Like to smoke out of?

CADEN

Different kind of pipe.

(into phone)

Just run lines. I'll be there soon. 'kay.

(hangs up)

Houses have pipes. They're, like, tubes and they're behind walls and under the floor everywhere and --

Olive begins to whimper in horror.

ADELE

What's wrong, baby?

OLIVE

(hushed anxious whisper)

Every-single-where?

CADEN

It's okay. They just carry water to and from sinks and bathtubs and toilets. It's like in your body you have veins and ... um...

ADELE

Capillaries.

CADEN

And they're filled with blood.

Olive is crying in earnest now.

OLIVE

I don't want blood. I have blood?

(CONTINUED)

ADELE  
(to Caden)  
What are you doing? Jesus.

CADEN  
I'm trying to explain plumbing.

ADELE  
Well, stop it.  
(to Olive)  
It's okay, honey.

OLIVE  
(weeping)  
I don't want blood. Will it hurt?  
Will it hurt, Daddy?!

CADEN  
No, honey, you're fine.

OLIVE CADEN  
I don't want blood! I don't (holding head)  
want blood! I don't want I can't do this now.  
blood...

ADELE  
You don't have to worry, baby. You  
don't have blood.

CADEN  
Well, I don't think you should tell  
her she doesn't have blood.

ADELE  
Caden, stop it!

Olive cries. Adele coughs. Caden stares out the window. It's dark, but his pupils are pinpricks.

An ophthalmologist examines Caden's eyes. An eyeglass calendar on the wall is open to March 2006.

CADEN  
Thanks for getting me in right  
away.

The doctor touches Caden's eye repeatedly with a small probe.

CADEN (CONT'D)  
Is it the bump to the head?

11

CONTINUED:

11

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

No.

(writes in chart, then:)

Could be. But I think we need to  
get you to a neurologist. Nothing  
urgent.

CADEN

A neurologist?

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Yes, a brain expert.

CADEN

I know what a neurologist is.

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Fine. I just thought from  
the way you asked --

CADEN

I thought maybe you said urologist.  
Why do I need to see a neurologist?

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

For a look-see. The eyes are part  
of the brain, after all.

CADEN

That's not true, is it?

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Why would I say it if it weren't  
true?

CADEN

It just doesn't seem right.

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Like morally correct? Or right as  
in accurate?

CADEN

I'm not sure. Accurate, I guess.

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

Hmm. Interesting.

The doctor writes in Caden's chart.

12

INT. SCHENECTADY THEATER - 2006 - DAY

12

Caden sits in the almost empty theater. A few people with  
note-pads are scattered around. Centerstage, a 1948 Dodge  
Business Coupe. The car is surrounded by various rooms from  
that period: a kitchen, bedrooms, etc.

(CONTINUED)

Tom, the actor playing Willy Loman, stands center stage. Claire, the actress playing Linda Loman, sits in the set's bedroom. Davis, the actor playing Biff, lies on the top bunk of a bunk bed upstage. A fourth actor, playing Happy, lies on the bottom bunk.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)  
Willy, you coming up!!!!

TOM (AS WILLY)  
Sssssh!!

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)  
Willy?

Tom climbs in the car.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA) (CONT'D)  
Willy? Answer me!...Willy!

Tom starts the car and guns the engine. A brick wall off stage speeds into the car, accompanied by crashing and screeching sound effects.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA) (CONT'D)  
No!!!

DAVIS (AS BIFF)  
Pop!!

The wall continues to be pulled past the car crashing into the rest of the set, knocking walls over, creating havoc. A lamp post falls and hits Claire, knocking her over.

CADEN

(running to stage)  
Oh crap, Claire, are you  
okay?

CLAIRE

Yeah yeah, I'm fine. It's no  
big deal.

CADEN

David, what's happening here?

DAVID

(looking back from seat)  
Sorry, Caden. Hold on.

David runs on stage to deal with the mess.

CADEN

It's too late in the game to be  
having these problems, David.  
(to Claire)  
You're sure you're okay?

CLAIRE

God yes, it was funny.

DAVID

I know, Caden. I'm sorry.  
We'll get it.

Tom emerges from the car, covered with stage blood.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Please.  
(to Tom)  
That was good, Tom.

TOM

Yeah? I was trying something  
different. I was crashing  
differently. Ambivalently.

CADEN

I saw that. I like it.

Caden meets Tom at the foot of the stage. Behind them a  
group of technicians are lifting the wall and trying to re-  
set it. Claire primps in the bureau mirror.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Try to keep in mind that a young  
person playing Willy Loman thinks  
he's only pretending to be at the  
end of a life full of despair. But  
the tragedy is that we know that  
you, the young actor, will end up  
in this very place of desolation.

TOM

(taking this in)  
Okay.



12

CONTINUED: (3)

12

CADEN

Great. Let's try it again.

(calling)

How long, David?

DAVID

I think fifteen.

CADEN

Why don't you get cleaned up, Tom,  
and we'll go again.

Tom exits. Caden rubs his temples, then heads to the back of the house, pulling out his cell phone. He exits the theater.

13

INT. SCHENECTADY THEATER LOBBY - 2006 - DAY

13

Caden passes the box office. Hazel, 35, sits inside, reading a novel. She looks up, smiles warmly, and waves.

HAZEL

I just heard the death of the  
salesman.

CADEN

In more ways than one.

HAZEL

(compassionately)

Oh no.

(then:)

CADEN

(holding up cell phone)

In search of elusive signal.

(CONTINUED)

13

CONTINUED:

13

HAZEL

Signal's good here, oddly.

She pats her lap in a friendly manner.

CADEN

That is odd.

HAZEL

I know! Cell phones, they're  
crazy!

CADEN

(chuckles)

See you in a few.

HAZEL

(back in her book)

Yup.

14

EXT. SCHENECTADY THEATER - 2006 - DAY

14

Caden has the phone to his ear. He's squinting in the bright  
sunlight, pupils dilated. The gaunt man watches him unseen.

CADEN

Dr. Heshborg said I should see Dr.  
Scariano. My pupils don't work.

15

INT. SCHENECTADY THEATER BOX OFFICE - 2006 - CONTINUOUS

15

Hazel reads the first page of Swann's Way. The other volumes  
of In Search of Lost Time are stacked neatly nearby. She  
looks up and sees Caden standing outside the box office  
window watching her.

HAZEL

I keep reading the first line.  
It's a good line, I think. But I  
don't know much about literature.

CADEN

Maybe you should read the first  
line of another series of books.

HAZEL

I'm trying to better myself, Caden.  
Recommend me something. You're a  
genius; you must've read nearly a  
dozen books.

CADEN

Exactly twelve. Have you read  
Kafka?

(CONTINUED)

HAZEL

Um, I've read his name. A lot! I  
swear!

1022

15

CONTINUED: (2)

15

CADEN  
His whole name?

HAZEL  
Okay, not his entire name. Heinz?

CADEN  
(laughs)  
You should read The Trial, maybe.

HAZEL  
If you say so, I will. Can't wait  
till Wednesday. I'm so excited to  
see it.

CADEN  
I hope you like it.

HAZEL  
It's pretty impossible that I  
won't, you know. I mean...

She trails off, shrugs. They smile at each other. Caden  
exits. Hazel looks at her book, re-reads the first sentence.

16 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BATHROOM - 2006 - NIGHT 16

Caden sits on the toilet. He finishes, looks in the bowl.  
His bowel movement is dark and loose.

17 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BEDROOM - 2006 - NIGHT 17

Adele lies in bed asleep. Caden steps out of the bathroom  
and climbs into bed.

CADEN  
I think I have blood in my stool.

Adele looks over, half asleep.

ADELE  
That stool in your office?

18 INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - 2006 - DAY 18

Caden and Adele sit across from Madeline, 40's, their  
therapist. Silence. Adele has a coughing fit. Then:

ADELE  
When I was pregnant with Olive...

MADELINE  
What was it like?

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

ADELE

Um... I don't know. Hopeful or something. Like something was going to change.

MADELINE

Something did, no?

ADELE

Yes, of course.

CADEN

Yes. I mean... big time.

ADELE

Maybe not as much as I had hoped. That's a terrible thing to say.

MADELINE

There are no terrible things to say in here. Only true and false.

ADELE

I feel alone sometimes. I feel exhausted. Can I say something awful?

MADELINE

Yes. Please do.

ADELE

I've fantasized about Caden dying and being able to start again. Guilt free. I know it's terrible.

19

EXT. SCHENECTADY THEATER - 2006 - DAY

19

Caden sits sadly on the steps; drinks coffee. He watches as Hazel pulls into the parking lot, gets out of her car. The gaunt man is behind the trash bin. She sits next to Caden.

CADEN

It's a nightmare in there.

HAZEL

The car crash?

CADEN

Well... not only.

HAZEL

Sorry. So I'm reading The Trial.

CADEN

Yeah? You like?

(CONTINUED)

HAZEL

Love. I'm such an idiot for not knowing about this book.

(conspiratorial whisper)

It's famous, it turns out.

CADEN

You're not an idiot.

Pause.

HAZEL

Then you say, in fact, you're very bright, Hazel. And I love your eyes.

CADEN

In fact, you're very bright, Hazel. And I love your eyes.

HAZEL

(playing charmed)  
Oh, am I? Oh, do you? Oh, darling!

CADEN

Then what do I say?

HAZEL

I can't say what then you say.

CADEN

Why?

HAZEL

Cause it's dirty.

A whistling noise turns their heads. In the distance a man with an unopened parachute is plummeting.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Oh my God! Jesus!

They watch as the man falls behind a building. A scream. A screech of brakes.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

He's gotta be dead. Right?

Caden enters. The plumber is working on the sink.

PLUMBER

Go ahead. I've seen boy parts.

21

INT. ADELE'S STUDIO - 2006 - DAY

21

The studio is a mess, the floor covered with paint. Adele, in her paint-spattered clothing, works on a tiny canvas, an inch square. She paints with a single-hair brush while looking through a magnifying glass. Caden pokes his head in.

CADEN

Can I piss in your sink?

ADELE

Um, yeah, I guess.

Caden pisses in the sink in the corner of the studio. His urine is amber. He finishes and peeks over Adele's shoulder, through the magnifying glass at the painting. It's an amazingly detailed and angrily colored painting of a woman in a state of profound despair, screaming to the heavens, while standing in a field of flames.

CADEN

It's gorgeous, Ad.

ADELE

Thanks. How was rehearsal?

CADEN

Awful. We have five hundred and sixty lighting cues. I don't know why I made it so complicated.

ADELE

It's what you do.

CADEN

Yeah. Anyway, we got through it. I think you'll be impressed.

ADELE

Caden, listen, I'm really sorry. I just can't go tonight.

(off his look)

I'm sorry. I've got to get two canvases ready to ship. By tomorrow. I know it sucks.

CADEN

But it's opening night.

ADELE

I know. I'm sorry. I would go if I could.

CADEN

I have to get ready.

(CONTINUED)

21

CONTINUED:

21

ADELE

I'll go tomorrow! We'll make  
tomorrow like the premiere!

CADEN

I mean, I can't take a dump  
in your sink! What am I  
supposed to do? I have to  
get ready!

22

INT. SCHENECTADY THEATER - 2006 - NIGHT

22

The theater is full. Caden stands nervously in the back.  
The lights dim. Hazel looks back from her seat at Caden and  
mouths the word "yay." He smiles. The curtain rises on a  
dark stage. Tom, as Willy, gets out of the car parked center  
stage and walks into the kitchen.

TOM (AS WILLY)

Oh boy, oh boy.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)

Willy!

TOM (AS WILLY)

It's all right, I came back.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)

Why? What happened?

(pause)

Did something happen, Willy?

TOM (AS WILLY)

No, nothing happened.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)

You didn't smash the car, did you?

TOM (AS WILLY)

I said nothing happened. Didn't you  
hear me?

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)

Don't you feel well?

TOM (AS WILLY)

I'm tired to death. I couldn't make  
it. I just couldn't make it, Linda.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)

Where were you all day? You look  
terrible.

TOM (AS WILLY)

I got as far as a little above  
Yonkers. I stopped for a cup of  
coffee... maybe it was the coffee.

(CONTINUED)



22

CONTINUED:

22

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)

What?

TOM (AS WILLY)

I suddenly couldn't drive any more.  
The car kept going off onto the  
shoulder, y'know?

The audience is rapt. Caden relaxes.

23

INT. QUINCY'S, BACK ROOM - 2006 - NIGHT

23

The cast party is in full swing. The opening was a success.  
Lots of drinking. Caden chats with Claire. Hazel watches  
from across the room.

CLAIRE

(scrunching her nose)

Ugh, I hated myself tonight. Plus  
I'm so bloated and enormous.

1022

(CONTINUED)

CADEN  
No. You looked great. You were great. I was very pleased.

CLAIRE  
I thought Tom was amazing!

CADEN  
Yeah. Absolutely.  
(squints suddenly)  
Sorry. I have a bit of a headache.

CLAIRE  
(kisses his forehead)  
I just want to thank you for everything. You've been absolutely brilliant and it's going to be miserable going ahead without you.

CADEN  
I'll be around. I'll check in.

She gets teary, gives him a kiss on the cheek.

CLAIRE  
God, I'm such a baby.

She just looks at him and smiles and nods.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
I'm going to get drunk, that's what.

CADEN  
Ok, Claire.

She backs away and gets lost in the crowd. Caden massages his temples. Suddenly Hazel is next to him.

HAZEL  
I figured I'd better get in fast.

CADEN  
Hey!

HAZEL  
I loved it! And, by the way, Claire is trouble. And not terribly bright.

Caden laughs.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
Just wanted you to know the word on the street.

CADEN

So you liked it?

HAZEL

Are you kidding? I cried for like fifteen minutes after. I loved every minute of it. Except Claire. I thought she was weak.

CADEN

Easy on the eyes.

HAZEL

Oh, Caden, not you, too. What I want to know is why she started crying in her last monologue, right after she had the line, 'I can't cry for you Willy...'?

CADEN

(laughing)

She felt very strongly that it was right.

They sip their drinks.

HAZEL

Where's el wife-o?

CADEN

Had to work. Her Berlin show is in two weeks. We're going to spend like a month there.

HAZEL

Ah.

CADEN

Ah.

HAZEL

Ah.

CADEN

Choo!

HAZEL

Hooray! We've still got it!

(pause)

I'll miss you.

CADEN

Yeah, me too.

HAZEL  
You're going to miss you?

CADEN  
Yeah, that's it.

HAZEL  
(pause)  
Why do I like you so much?

1022

CADEN

I couldn't begin to guess.

HAZEL

(sighing)

Me neither. It must be that you're married. Do you get high, my friend?

CADEN

Y'know. Sometimes.

HAZEL

You want to now? With me.  
In my car.

CADEN

I don't know.

HAZEL

Come on, it's a party.

CADEN

I get kind of... *something* when I'm stoned.

HAZEL

What does *something* mean?

CADEN

I don't know. Bothered?

HAZEL

What does *bothered* mean?

CADEN

Y'know... *bothered*. Horny.

HAZEL

And me with a station wagon and all. Could be dangerous.

CADEN

(laughing)

Yeah, it really could.

HAZEL

You're absolutely zero fun.

CADEN

You know I wish I could.

HAZEL

Jesus, I like you. I'm going.

CADEN

You're not staying for the reviews?

23

CONTINUED: (5)

23

HAZEL

I know it's brilliant. I don't  
need some dope with elbow patches  
telling me.

She smiles, gives him a hug, and heads toward the door.

24

INT. HAZEL'S CAR - 2006 - NIGHT

24

Hazel drives down a dark street, crying. People watch her  
passing car from various windows. There's a run-over dog,  
lit by a streetlight, glistening on the side of the road.

25

EXT. RESIDENTIAL SCHENECTADY STREET - 2006 - A FEW MOMENTS  
LATER

25

Hazel studies the dog. It's a bloody, gutty mess, squashed  
flat. Against all odds, it's still alive. Its head is  
lolling. She bends down to pet it.

HAZEL

You're not going to make it, baby.

26

INT. HAZEL'S BATHROOM (APARTMENT) - 2006 - NIGHT

26

Hazel takes off her make-up, hair back in a clip. She  
watches herself blankly in the mirror, somewhat erased  
without eye make-up. The run-over dog is sleeping in a box  
on the floor.

27

INT. QUINCY'S, BACK ROOM - 2006 - ABOUT DAWN

27

The party has thinned out. The remaining people are sitting  
around a table, drinking. Claire, next to Caden, rests her  
head, sleepily drunk, against his shoulder. Caden studies a  
series of lumps under the skin of his arm.

CLAIRE

What are you going to do now?

CADEN

I'm going to Berlin for a month for  
my wife's show. Then I don't know.

CLAIRE

I wish I was your wife or a wife or  
had a wife. Or was German even.  
I'm so lonely with none of those  
things.

A man walks in with a bunch of newspapers.

(CONTINUED)

27

CONTINUED:

27

CADEN

Yay or nay?

28

EXT. BURNING HOUSE - 2006 - DAY

28

Hazel gets out of her car and walks up to a neat little house on a street of neat little houses. Faint swirls of smoke escape from the windows. She rings the doorbell. The button is hot; Hazel pulls her finger away.

29

INT. BURNING HOUSE - 2006 - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

29

The rooms are hazy. The realtor coughs a little. Hazel surveys the scene.

HAZEL

I've always loved this house.

REALTOR

Yes. It's a wonderful place.

HAZEL

The truth is, I never really imagined I could afford it.

REALTOR

The sellers are very motivated now.

HAZEL

It's a scary decision. I never thought I'd buy a house alone. But, y'know, I'm 36, and I wonder what I'm really waiting for.

REALTOR

Home-buying is always scary.

HAZEL

But I mean with the fire and all especially.

REALTOR

It's a good size though, twenty-two hundred square feet. Not including the partially-finished basement

HAZEL

I don't know. I'm thinking I should go.

REALTOR

It's a perfect size for someone alone.

HAZEL

I like it, I do. But I'm really concerned about dying in the fire.

REALTOR

It's a big decision, how one prefers to die. Would you like to meet my son? Derek?

(CONTINUED)

29

CONTINUED:

29

Derek, 40 and scruffily handsome, appears around a corner.

DEREK

Hey, Mom.

REALTOR

Derek's living in the  
basement since his divorce.  
If that's okay.

30

INT. ADELE AND CADEN'S LIVING ROOM - 2006 - DAWN

30

Caden enters. Adele sits at the table across from Maria, 40.  
They are drunk and eating nachos.

ADELE

Hey.

CADEN

Hey.

MARIA

Hi, Caden. How'd it go?

CADEN

Hi. It's late.

ADELE

Maria came over to keep me company  
and we lost track. I'm sorry I  
missed the play. But I got  
everything done here. How'd it go?

CADEN

We're a hit. Reviews are great.  
New York Times said it was  
brilliant to cast young actors as  
Willy and Linda.

ADELE

Great.

MARIA

That's great, Caden! Good  
for you!

ADELE

I'll see it tomorrow. Tonight!

Adele and Maria laugh.

MARIA

Jesus, it is late. Early!  
I'd love to see it, too.

ADELE

Can we get a ticket for  
Maria?

Adele smiles.

CADEN

Are you stoned?

(CONTINUED)



ADELE

A little. I don't know. Y'know?  
I mean, are you happy with it?

1022

30

CONTINUED: (2)

30

CADEN

Yeah. Love to know what you think.

ADELE

It doesn't matter what I think.

MARIA

Absolutely! It's all about your artistic satisfaction, Caden.

31

EXT. RESIDENTIAL SCHENECTADY STREET - SPRING 2006 - DAY

31

Caden and Olive walk along. Caden holds a tax envelope. His face has pustules on it. The gaunt man follows.

OLIVE

What's wrong with your face, Daddy?

CADEN

It's pustules. It's called sycosis. Spelled differently than psychosis, but it sounds the same.

OLIVE

I don't know what that means.

CADEN

Well, there's two different kinds of psychosis. They're spelled differently. P-s-y is like if you're crazy and s-y is like these things on my face.

OLIVE

You could have both though.

CADEN

I could. But I don't.

OLIVE

Okay, pretend we're fairies. I'm a girl fairy and my name is ... La-ru...lee. And you're a boy fairy and your name is Teeteree.

CADEN

Ok.

OLIVE

What's my name again?

CADEN

La-ru-lee.

(CONTINUED)

31

CONTINUED:

31

OLIVE

No. I said ... La-ru-la...ay.

32

INT. SCHENECTADY POST OFFICE - SPRING 2006 - CONTINUOUS

32

Caden and Olive are at the back of the long line of people.

OLIVE

Pretend we fight each other. And I  
say stop hitting me or I'll die.  
And you say okay, but you're  
fibbing. And you hit me again.

CADEN

Okay.

OLIVE

Okay. Let's go. Hit me.

They pretend to hit each other. Olive makes hissing and  
roaring noises. She stops.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

Okay. You have to stop hitting me  
now or I will die.

CADEN

Okay.

He stops.

OLIVE

No! Pretend you're fibbing!  
Remember?

He mock hits her again. She falls.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

Now I have to die.

(beat)

Pretend you say you don't want me  
to die.

CADEN

I don't want you to die.

OLIVE

(compassionate whisper)

But I have to.

CADEN

But I'll miss you.

(CONTINUED)

32

CONTINUED:

32

OLIVE

I have to. And you'll have to wait  
a million years to see me again.

Caden tears up at this and tries to conceal it.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

And I'll be put in a box. And all  
I'll need is a tiny glass of water.  
And lots of -- tiny pieces of  
pizza. And the box will have  
wings, like an airplane.

CADEN

Where will it take you?

OLIVE

(thinks)

Home.

33

INT. SCHENECTADY THEATER - SPRING 2006 - NIGHT

33

Performance in progress. There is now a cemetery on stage.  
Linda, Biff, and other characters stand around a gravesite.  
Caden sits in the audience between Adele and Maria and his  
parents. He glances over at Adele's stony face. Maria is  
drunk and blurry.

DAVIS (AS BIFF)

Let's go, Mom.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA)

I'll be with you in a minute. Go  
on, Charley. I want to, just a  
minute.

The other characters exit the stage.

CLAIRE (AS LINDA) (CONT'D)

(talking to the grave)

I never had a chance to say good-  
bye. Forgive me, dear. I can't cry.

(begins to cry)

I don't understand it; I can't cry.  
It seems to me that you're just on  
another trip. I keep expecting you.  
Willy, dear, why did you do it? I  
search and search and I search, and  
I can't understand it, Willy. I  
made the last payment on the house  
today. Today, dear. And there'll be  
nobody home. We're free and clear...  
We're free... We're free... We're free...

(CONTINUED)

33

CONTINUED:

33

The stage lights go dark.

34

EXT. URBAN-ISH SCHENECTADY STREET - SPRING 2006 - NIGHT

34

Caden, Adele, Maria, and his parents walk along.

1022

(CONTINUED)

CADEN  
I just --

ADELE  
I don't know what it matters  
what I think.

CADEN'S MOTHER  
I loved the story. So interesting.

CADEN  
Because your opinion is --

ADELE  
It was good. It was well  
done. It was very ...  
successful.

MARIA  
Oh, I thought it was wonnnderful!

CADEN'S FATHER  
Why were the old people so young?

CADEN  
It was a choice, Dad. I'll  
explain later.  
(to Adele)  
But?

ADELE  
Nothing. But nothing.  
(pause)  
I can't get excited about  
your restaging someone else's  
old play. There's nothing  
personal in it.

CADEN  
I put my soul into that  
thing.

CADEN'S FATHER  
I mean, they were younger  
than their kids. That  
doesn't make sense.

ADELE  
Do you really believe that tripe?

CADEN  
Wow. It's not tripe. Jesus.

CADEN'S MOTHER  
I liked that the old people  
were so young. It was  
interesting.

ADELE (CONT'D)  
Ok, fine. But it's not you. It's  
not anyone. It's not real.

CADEN  
People come out crying,  
saying their lives are  
changed and --

ADELE  
Great. Be a fucking tool of  
suburban blue-hair regional  
theater subscribers. But  
what are you leaving behind?  
You act as if you have  
forever to figure it out.

CADEN

Why are you being like this?

Adele has a coughing fit.

1022

34

CONTINUED: (3)

34

ADELE CADEN  
I'm not being like anything. Are you seeing someone else?

ADELE  
Is that your entire frame of  
reference for relationship  
problems?

CADEN  
No. I don't know. It's a  
stressful time. Our shows. The  
whole health thing.

ADELE  
Oh, you're fine.

35 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S LIVING ROOM - SPRING 2006 - MORNING 35

Caden, in shorts and t-shirt, tiptoes past his parents,  
sleeping on the fold-out couch.

36 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S KITCHEN - SPRING 2006 - MORNING 36

Adele sits at the kitchen table with Olive. She drinks  
coffee and talks on the phone. Olive eats cereal and watches  
a cartoon. Caden enters. Olive doesn't look away from her  
show. A cartoon jackal talks to a man who looks like Caden.

JACKAL  
When you are dead there is no time.  
The world is a timeless rock.

Caden pours a cup of coffee, sits down at the table.

CADEN  
I think I might have arthritis.

Adele continues to talk on the phone.

ADELE  
No, I know. Exactly.

Caden picks up the newspaper. It's dated May 25th, 2006. He  
flips through, finds the obituaries and starts to read.

ADELE (CONT'D)  
Ok. All right. Yeah. Ok, bye.

Adele hangs up the phone, looks at the paper.

CADEN  
My joints are stiff. Who was that?

(CONTINUED)



ADELE

Maria.

CADEN

Right. It's been three hours since you spoke.

ADELE

Caden, I think I want to go to Berlin with just Olive.

Caden looks up.

ADELE (CONT'D)

I think it would be good for us.

Silence. Caden's father appears in the doorway.

CADEN'S FATHER

Morning, kiddos.

CADEN

(to Adele)

Christ. Is this about last night?

Caden's father smiles, nods, and exits.

37

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BEDROOM - SPRING 2006 - NIGHT

37

Adele packs. Caden sits on the bed.

CADEN

Can I ask you a question, Ad?

She looks up at him.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Have I disappointed you somehow?

She starts to cry, hugs him.

ADELE

Caden. I don't know. Y'know? I don't know what I'm doing. It's just a little time apart.

(pause)

We'll talk when I get back.

Everyone is disappointing. The more you know someone. The whole romantic love thing is just projection. Right? I don't know.

(pause)

I'm sorry. I love you. I don't know what I'm doing. We'll talk when I get back.

38 INT. ADELE'S STUDIO - 2006 - DAY

38

Cobwebs. The room is long abandoned. Caden slumps against a wall and stares into space. He starts to cry and can't stop.

Later: Caden watches a paint-spattered TV. A commercial: diffused images of people flying kites, having picnics, watching sunsets. A shot of Caden among them.

ANNOUNCER

Flurostatin TR allows you to live  
life when it's your turn to face  
the challenges of chemotherapy.  
Ask your doctor if it's right for  
you.

He feels the bumps on his arm, which have grown. He writes down Fluorostatin TR. He starts to clean Adele's studio.

Later: The room is sparkling. No more paint anywhere. Caden is on his knees, scrubbing the last bit of dirt. He is sweaty and focused.

39 INT. SCHENECTADY THEATER BOX OFFICE - 2006 - DAY

39

Caden, neatly groomed, leans on the counter chatting with Hazel. Her crushed dog sleeps on the floor in a box.

HAZEL

We should get a drink. Be fun.

CADEN

Be weird.

HAZEL

I like weird. I like you. See?

He doesn't say anything.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Anyway. I don't want to make you uncomfortable. I just thought it would be a fun diversion. Okay, I do want to make you uncomfortable.

CADEN

(laughs)

Oh, Haze. I wish I could.

HAZEL

You can, Cade. You can!

(CONTINUED)

39

CONTINUED:

39

CADEN

I have an appointment.

HAZEL

Crease.

CADEN

What do you mean?

HAZEL

It's just a word. Don't get all bent out of shape. Jeez.

CADEN

I won't. Sorry.

40

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - 2006 - DAY

40

The masked dentist probes Caden's mouth.

DENTIST

3, 3, 3. 3, 3, 5. 3, 4, 3. 3, 4,  
4. 5, 3, 3. 2, 4, 3.

(to Caden)

Some fives this time. Not good.  
Keep with the flossing. We'll see  
in three months.

41

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

41

Caden sits across from Madeline.

CADEN

I'm lonely.

MADELINE

Yes. Anything else?

Caden notices Madeline's feet in too-small shoes. There are visible blisters and band-aids on her feet.

CADEN

I'm hurt.

MADELINE

Yes. And?

CADEN

I think Adele's right when  
she says I'm not doing  
anything real.

MADELINE

What would be real?

CADEN

I'm afraid I'm going to die. They  
don't know what's wrong with me. I  
want to do something important.  
While I'm still here.

(CONTINUED)

41

CONTINUED:

41

MADELINE

That would be the time to do it,  
yes. I have a book that might help  
you get better.

CADEN

Better?

MADELINE

Yes. It's called Getting  
Better.

CADEN

Who wrote it?

MADELINE

I did.

(goes to full bookcase)  
All of these.

CADEN

Oh.

(looking at titles)  
Wow. I never knew that.

MADELINE

Wow. Yes, wow. Wow indeed.

She hands Caden the very thick book. He flips through it,  
catching words and snippets here and there: *Clairaudience*  
... *vaginal juices*... *The echo began* ... *Plumbing* ... *Cats*  
*eat rats* ... *Me who am as a raw nerve* ... *Crease*.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

That's forty-five dollars. Wow.

42

INT. CADEN'S OFFICE - 2006 - NIGHT

42

Caden finds a website online for Madeline Gravis. Amazing  
graphics. She is touted as one of the foremost psychologists  
in the world, a sought-after public speaker, advisor to world  
leaders. Her book Getting Better has sold millions of  
copies and is translated into fifteen languages. In a box  
at the bottom is a photo of a smiling Caden; it reads:  
Theater Director Caden Cotard says, "It'll change my life!"

43

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - 2006 - DAY

43

The dentist probes Caden's mouth. The Hygienist writes the  
numbers.

DENTIST

5, 6, 5. 5, 5, 6. 4, 6, 5.

(to Caden)

I'm going to recommend a  
periodontist. He'll probably  
recommend gum surgery.

44 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S LIVING ROOM - 2006 - DAY 44

Caden is on the phone. His legs are elevated and his pant legs are rolled up, revealing swollen, discolored calves.

CADEN

I'm looking for... I'm sorry, I  
don't speak German. No. I'm --

45 INT. QUINCY'S - 2007 - NIGHT 45

Caden sits by himself in a booth, reading the self-help book.

VOICE

We must live in the present moment.  
The now. The now. The now.

Caden tries to be in the present moment as a women sings about cancer on a small stage in the back.

Later: Caden nurses a beer. He seems unwell. Hazel plops down across from him. She has a smudge of soot on her nose.

CADEN

Hey! Thanks for meeting me.

He points to his nose. She wipes at the soot on hers.

HAZEL

God, I'm delighted. Thought you'd  
never ask. You did ask, right?

CADEN

I didn't want to be alone.

HAZEL

Who does?

(pause)

You don't look like you feel well.

CADEN

I'm going through some things.

HAZEL

You want to tell me about it?

CADEN

I can't really. But I'm meditating  
and running and taking vitamins.  
Cutting out sugar. I can't really  
say any more. It's ...

(CONTINUED)

HAZEL

Ok. Tell me something else.

CADEN

You tell me something. Oh. I've cut out wheat.

HAZEL

Um, I bought this really nifty sweater today. On sale. Fifty dollars reduced from three hundred!

CADEN

It's beautiful.

HAZEL

It's cashmere. So very soft. You must feel it.

Hazel holds her arm out. Caden touches it.

CADEN

What do we do with all this, Hazel?

HAZEL

I don't know. We fuck? We continue to sort of flirt? You divorce your wife and marry me and I make you happy for the very first time in your life and all your symptoms disappear?

(beat)

We call it a day?

(beat)

Don't choose the last one. I just said that one for effect.

CADEN

Do I have to choose at all?

HAZEL

No, I suppose not. Choosing is not your strong suit. You want to come over to my place, Cotard?

CADEN

Um ...

HAZEL

I'm won't let you off the hook by saying "never mind" this time.

CADEN

Adele is only on vacation.

HAZEL

She hasn't called you since she  
left. You've left countless  
messages. It's been a year.

1022

(CONTINUED)

45

CONTINUED: (3)

45

CADEN

It's been a week.

HAZEL

(stares at him, then:)

I'm going to buy you a calendar.

Caden rips a cocktail napkin into little pieces.

CADEN

Okay, just for one drink.

Hazel smiles and stands. She scoops up the torn napkin pieces and puts them in her purse.

HAZEL

Scraps for my scrapbook.

Caden watches her ass as she turns to leave.

46

INT. HAZEL'S CAR - 2007 - NIGHT

46

Hazel drives. Caden follows in his car. We see him in her rearview mirror, peering into her car. Hazel hikes her skirt and causally begins to play with herself with her right hand.

47

INT. BURNING HOUSE - KITCHEN - 2007 - NIGHT

47

Hazel fixes drinks, mixes them with her right index finger. She hands Caden one.

CADEN

I really can't drink very much because of my condition.

HAZEL

Caden's mysterious condition. Well, have one sip, anyway.

CADEN

Did you put something in it?

HAZEL

Would you like me to have? A little love potion, perhaps?

CADEN

Sure, why not?

HAZEL

If that's what it takes, consider it done. Poof! Love potion number 69.

(CONTINUED)



Caden laughs and takes a sip.

CADEN

It's good.

She takes a sip of her drink. Caden drinks some more of his.

HAZEL

Does it make you want to kiss me?

CADEN

Yeah. Kind of.

HAZEL

Tell me why?

CADEN

Um, I feel a lot of longing.

HAZEL

Hmm. Beg a girl, why dontcha.

CADEN

Um, okay. Please, Hazel, let me -- On your knees.

CADEN

What?

HAZEL

I'd like you to beg me on your knees for a kiss. Just for fun.

Dumbly, Caden gets down on his knees.

CADEN

Why am I doing this?

HAZEL

(smiling warmly)

For fun, baby.

CADEN

You'll help me forget my troubles?

HAZEL

Oh, kiddo, you don't even know.

CADEN

I have a wife.

HAZEL

You have me. And I adore you.

48

INT. BURNING HOUSE - BEDROOM - 2007 - NIGHT

48

Caden and Hazel have violent sex. Hazel watches Caden's contorted face. They finish and lie there. Caden starts to weep.

HAZEL

What? What is it?

CADEN

I don't know. I'm sorry.

HAZEL

What?

CADEN

I'm just so confused. I'm sorry.  
I'm really sick. I think I'm  
dying. I have a kid. I'm married.

HAZEL

Oh, Jesus. Oh, fuck me.

CADEN

I'm sorry. It's terrible, I  
know.

HAZEL

Yeah. I just thought this might  
change things. I hoped. Ugh.

CADEN

(still crying)

I had a good time. I think you're  
a very nice person. Really.

HAZEL

That is just the wrong thing to say  
right now, Caden. You should go.

49

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S LIVING ROOM - 2008 - NIGHT

49

Caden is on the phone.

CADEN

(crying)

I'm so glad I finally got you.

INTERCUT WITH:

A50

INT. ADELE'S BERLIN APARTMENT - 2008 - SAME

A50

ADELE (PHONE VOICE)

Hello? Hello? Who is this?

CADEN

It's Caden!

(CONTINUED)

A50

CONTINUED:

A50

ADELE (PHONE VOICE)

Ellen?

CADEN

Caden! I can't wait to see you and Olive on the 12th. um... I went someplace without you tonight, Ad. I went some place you couldn't come with me. I'm sorry.

ADELE (PHONE VOICE)

What? Who is this? Oh, I have to go. There's a party. I'm famous!

CADEN

Oh. Ok. Great. Have fu --

The connection is lost. Caden sits there, looks at the 2007 tax form in front of him, goes into convulsions. He manages to grab the phone, his hand flopping all over the dial.

OPERATOR (PHONE VOICE)

911. What's the problem, ma'am?

CADEN

I'm sick.

OPERATOR (PHONE VOICE)

We're out of ambulances, miss, but we'll send a taxi. Please wait in front of your house, miss.

50

OMITTED

50

A51 OMITTED A51  
51 INT. HOSPITAL - 2008 - NIGHT 51

Caden waits on a plastic chair in a dimly lit hallway, his beat-up suitcase at his feet. He reads a very old Vogue and opens to a spread about his wife. She seems glamorous. There are photos of her in Berlin, her work, her flat. She is the toast of the art world. Photos of her with two men, and also with Olive, who seems somewhat Nazi Youth-like now.

NURSE  
Mr. Cotard?

He looks up, having forgotten where he was. He grabs his suitcase and follows the nurse down a dismal hallway: gurneys against dirty walls, empty wheelchairs. Skinny man takes a flash picture of Caden. Nurses drinking coffee out of paper cups eye him. Puddles of vomit on the floor. They arrive at the end of the hall. A doctor pokes his head out of a room. He studies a file and doesn't look up.

DOCTOR  
Mr. Cotard?

52 INT. SMALL EXAMINING ROOM - 2008 - CONTINUOUS 52  
The doctor never looks up from the files.

(CONTINUED)

52

CONTINUED:

52

DOCTOR

You've had a seizure of sorts.

CADEN

What does that mean?

DOCTOR

Seems to be some synaptic  
degradation. Fungal in  
origin. Autonomic functions  
going haywire.

CADEN

It's serious?

DOCTOR

We don't know but yes.

They both sit there in silence for a long while.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

We'll get you enrolled a  
biofeedback program. Maybe you can  
learn some sort of manual override.

53

INT. SCHENECTADY POST OFFICE - WINTER 2008 - DAY

53

Caden waits in line, holding a big wrapped box, addressed to  
Olive in Germany.

54

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S LIVING ROOM - WINTER 2008 - NIGHT

54

Caden sits on the couch, wheezing and reading a dictionary  
entry for the word "crease." The definition is "n. a fold."  
He squirts artificial saliva in his mouth.

55

OMITTED

55

56

INT. PERIODONTIST'S OFFICE - WINTER 2008 - DAY

56

Caden is having periodontal surgery. It's bloody.

57

INT. SCHENECTADY THEATER LOBBY - WINTER 2008 - NIGHT

57

Caden, with swollen lower face and bleeding mouth, approaches  
the box office with a gift-wrapped box. Hazel looks up. The  
damaged dog barks.

HAZEL

Be quiet, Squishy.

CADEN

Hi.

HAZEL

Caden, I won't be yet another woman  
you feel guilty about.

(CONTINUED)

57

CONTINUED:

57

CADEN

Okay. Thank you anyway.

HAZEL

Here. Take this. I got like five  
for Christmas. Goddamn Christmas.

She hands him a 2009 calendar. It features photos of Adele.

58

INT. CADEN'S OFFICE - SPRING 2009 - NIGHT

58

Adele calender on wall, open to March. Caden reads Getting  
Better:

VOICE

Now. Now. Now! Be here now!

INTERCUT WITH:

A59

INT. ADELE'S BERLIN APARTMENT - 2009 - SAME

A59

Adele feeds a piece of paper into a fax machine.

A fax starts to come in. Caden watches as the words appear,  
fuzzy as if there is some interference in the process.*Olive wanted me to ask you not to read her diary. She left  
it under her pillow by mistake. G'glf n mesr-siy. Hewz wec.*

59

INT. OLIVE'S ROOM - 2009 - NIGHT

59

Caden lifts the bed pillow and finds a kid's diary. He  
studies it, puts it back. There's a knock at the front door.

60

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S LIVING ROOM - 2009 - NIGHT

60

Caden opens the front door. A man hands him an envelope.

61

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - 2009 - DAY

61

Madeline's feet are swollen and bloody.

(CONTINUED)

CADEN  
So I just got this MacArthur  
Grant last night.

MADELINE  
Oh, Caden!

CADEN  
Yeah. A lot of money.

MADELINE  
Do you know what you're going  
to do with it?

CADEN  
A theater piece. Something big and  
true and tough. Y'know, finally  
put my real self into something.

MADELINE  
Oh, Caden! What is your real  
self, do you think?

CADEN  
I don't know yet. The  
MacArthur is called "the  
genius grant." And I want to  
earn it.

MADELINE  
That's wonderful. God bless! I  
guess you'll have to discover your  
real self. Right?

CADEN  
Yeah, I mean, yeah. Oh, I wanted  
to ask you, how old are kids when  
they start to write?

MADELINE  
Varies.

CADEN  
Could a four year old keep a diary?

MADELINE  
Listen, there's an absolutely  
brilliant novel written by a four  
year old.

CADEN  
Really?

MADELINE  
Little Winky. By Horace  
Azpiazu.

CADEN  
Aww. Cute.

MADELINE  
Hardly. Little Winky is a virulent  
anti-Semite.

(MORE)

61

CONTINUED: (2)

61

## MADELINE (CONT'D)

The story follows his initiation into the Klan, his immersion in the pornographic snuff industry and his ultimate degradation at the hands of a black ex-convict named Eric Washington Jackson Jones... Johnson... Jefferson, with whom he embarks on a brutal homosexual affair.

## CADEN

Wow. Written by a four year old?

1022

(CONTINUED)



61

CONTINUED: (3)

61

MADELINE

Azpiazu killed himself at five.

CADEN

That's horrible.

MADELINE

He would've written so much more had he lived. They developed a method -- some software -- to determine what he would've written had he lived to ten, twenty, thirty, etcetera.

CADEN

Is that possible?

MADELINE

Which part?

CADEN

Any of it. Why did he kill himself?

MADELINE

I don't know, why did you?

CADEN

What?

MADELINE

I said, why would you?

CADEN

Oh. I don't know.

62

INT. OLIVE'S ROOM - 2009 - NIGHT

62

Caden paces nervously. He sits on Olive's bed and jimmies open her diary with a screwdriver. He reads:

VOICE

Deer Diry. Thank you for being my new best frend. My name is Olive Cotard. I am for yers old. I like choclit and --

63

INT. SCHENECTADY TOY STORE - 2009 - DAY

63

Caden looks at the toys.

VOICE

-- my favorite color is pink.

(CONTINUED)

63

CONTINUED:

63

CLERK

Can I help you?

CADEN

I'm looking for a Christmas present  
for my daughter. Something pink.

CLERK

How about this?

The clerk holds up a pink box with a picture of a nose on it.

CADEN

Yes. That's good.

64

OMITTED

64

65

INT. QUINCY'S - 2009 - DAY

65

Caden sits with Hazel. She seems somewhat distant.

CADEN

The idea is to do a massive theater  
piece. Uncompromising, honest. I  
don't know what it is yet or how to  
do it, but it'll come. It'll  
reveal itself.

HAZEL

Huh.

Pause.

CADEN

Here's what I think theater is:  
it's the beginning of thought. The  
truth not yet spoken. It's a  
blackbird in winter. The moment  
before death. It's what a man  
feels after he's been clocked in  
the jaw. It's love... in all its  
messiness. And I want all of us,  
players and audience alike, to soak  
in the communal bath of it, the  
mikvah, as the Jews call it. We're  
all in the same water, after all,  
soaking in our very menstrual blood  
and nocturnal emissions. This is  
what I want to try to give people,  
Hazel. And I want your help.

Hazel just stares. The food arrives. Caden looks at his  
plate and concentrates.

(CONTINUED)

HAZEL

What are you doing?

CADEN

Salivating.

(pause)

I have to concentrate.

(pause)

Biofeedback training.

HAZEL

Huh.

CADEN

So I was wondering if you'll help.

HAZEL

In your box office?

CADEN

No. Like as my assistant.

HAZEL

I'm not sure I can work with you,  
Caden. I'm kind of angry.

CADEN

I just want to normalize it, Hazel.  
I think we'd have fun together.

He swallows some food then concentrates. She watches him.

CADEN (CONT'D)

I miss you.

He concentrates some more. She stares at him.

CADEN (CONT'D)

I'm digesting.

HAZEL

It's really disturbing.

Caden, beads of sweat on his forehead, sits with a large group of actors, Tom, Claire, and Davis from Salesman among them. No one speaks. Finally, Caden clears his throat.

CADEN

We'll start by talking honestly.  
Out of that a piece of theater will  
evolve. I'll begin.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED:

66

CADEN (CONT'D)

(long pause)

I've been thinking a lot about  
dying lately.

CLAIRE

You're going to be fine, sweetie.

CADEN

I appreciate that, Claire, but --

CLAIRE

Well, you are. You poor  
thing.

CADEN

regardless of how this  
particular thing works itself  
out, I will be dying. So  
will you.

CLAIRE

Caden!

CADEN

So will everyone here. And I  
want to explore that  
unflinchingly.

There is a long silence as everyone looks uncomfortable.

CADEN (CONT'D)

We are all hurtling toward death.

(silence)

Yet here we are, for the moment,  
alive. Each of us knowing we will  
die; each of us secretly believing  
we won't.

Nobody says anything for a long moment.

CLAIRE

It's brilliant. It's brilliant.  
It's everything. It's Karamazov.

67

INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S BEDROOM - WINTER 2010 - NIGHT

67

Caden is in bed, reading Olive's diary.

VOICE

Dear diary. Germany is wonderful!  
So many friends here. My new dads  
are great and handsome. And  
brilliant directors of theater.

Caden grimaces in pain for a moment. His mouth bleeds. He  
dials the phone.

HAZEL'S ANSWERING MACHINE

It's Hazel. Leave a message or  
don't. Your dime.

(CONTINUED)

67

CONTINUED:

67

CADEN

Hi. I haven't heard from you so I  
thought I'd say hi. Hi, Hazel!

He giggles crazily, coughs, then hangs up, embarrassed,  
grimaces once more, then dials again.

CLAIRE (PHONE VOICE)

Hello?

CADEN

Hi, Claire, it's Caden.

CLAIRE (PHONE VOICE)

Hi! I was just thinking  
about you!

CADEN

Yeah? Um, I was calling to say hi,  
chat about today maybe.

CLAIRE (PHONE VOICE)

Hi! Here you are, on my phone!

CADEN

Yeah. Do you maybe want to get a  
drink or something? It's late so --

CLAIRE

Yeah! Yeah yeah yeah!

68

INT. QUINCY'S - 2010 - NIGHT

68

Caden waits in a booth, nursing a martini, watching people  
walk in, but not Claire. After a bit, Hazel enters with  
Derek from the burning house. She's laughing and doesn't see  
Caden. He slinks back into the booth. They sit at a table  
not far from Caden, who can hear their conversation.

HAZEL

(giggly)  
Stop!

DEREK

I'm just asking.

HAZEL

You are so obnoxious!

DEREK

You're so obnoxious.

HAZEL

Yeah, well, you find it awfully  
charming. My obnoxiousity.

DEREK

Obnoxiousity is not a word.

(CONTINUED)

HAZEL

You don't want to cross me.

DEREK

Don't I?

HAZEL

No. Because you like me so much.

DEREK

True. I like your obnoxiousity.

HAZEL

And my use of the word  
"obnoxiousity."

DEREK

Yes.

HAZEL

Yes. You're delicious in your  
acquiescence.

Claire enters, looks for Caden. She spots Hazel first.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Hi, Claire.

CLAIRE

Hi...!

HAZEL

Hazel.

CLAIRE

Of course. Hazel. I knew that!  
Duh! The box office.

HAZEL

Yes, I'm the box office.

CLAIRE

How are you?

HAZEL

Wonderful! You?

CLAIRE

Fine, thanks. I was supposed to  
meet Caden here. You know Mr.  
Cotard, right?

HAZEL

Yes, I recall Mr. Cotard.

Hazel looks around now, too. Both spot Caden at the same time. He smiles and waves and approaches.

CADEN

Oh, hey.

HAZEL

Hi, Caden.

CLAIRE

Hi, Caden.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Hi, Hazel. Hi, Claire.

HAZEL

This is Derek.

CADEN

Hi, Derek.

CLAIRE

Hi, Derek.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Hi, Derek.

DEREK

Hi.

CADEN

How's everything, Haze... ul?

HAZEL

Great, Cade. En.

CADEN

Good. It's good to see you.

CLAIRE

(awkwardly)  
Reunion night! How lovely!

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Yes.

HAZEL

So --

CADEN

We'll leave you be.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Yeah, okay. Thanks. Derek and I --

CADEN

No, of course. It was nice seeing you.

HAZEL

Take care.

Caden and Claire go to Caden's booth.

CLAIRE

That was awkward.

CADEN

Yeah, I guess.

Caden steals glances at Hazel, chatting animatedly, throughout his conversation with Claire. He hears occasional snippets.

CLAIRE

Let's talk about our project. I'm so excited about it.

CADEN

Really? Why?

CLAIRE

I just think it's... brave. I feel like I'm going to be part of a revolution. I keep thinking Artaud. I keep thinking Krapp's Last Tape. Grotowski, for Christ's sake!

CADEN

I don't know what I'm doing.

CLAIRE

But that's what's so refreshing. I mean, how much prepackaged ...

HAZEL

... cryptology...

CLAIRE

... theater can we take as a country? Y'know? Knowing that you don't know is the first and most essential step to knowing. Y'know?

CADEN

I don't know.

CLAIRE

I'm proud of you.

HAZEL

Ptolemy was the first to divide the day into 24...

CLAIRE

So tell me what you want from me?

CADEN

Hmm?

CLAIRE

From my character.



CADEN

Oh. Well, we'll build it over time together. Find a real person, maybe, to model it after.

CLAIRE

That sounds fun.

HAZEL

...hairstyle called a beaver tail. It's a loop of hair...

CLAIRE

That Hazel girl is kind of interesting, maybe. As a model.

CADEN

Um, yeah. Something to think about. Sure. Although --

CLAIRE

Y'know, why is she still working in a box office at her age?

CADEN

I don't know. Probably not that interesting.

CLAIRE

There's got to be a story there. Did she want to be an actress but lacked confidence? You seem distracted.

CADEN

Yeah. Could be. We'll talk about it.

CADEN (CONT'D)

No. I have these health issues.

CLAIRE

It's late.

HAZEL

... and the jet, it exploded, and she was sent plummeting.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Um...

CLAIRE

Well, we can talk more tomorrow maybe.

CADEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

(pause)

When I get tired I have to remember to breathe. It's a new thing. My autonomic functions are failing.

CLAIRE

Poor darling. It's fine.

68

CONTINUED: (5)

68

CADEN  
I'm just ...

CLAIRE  
(grabbing his hand)  
Shh. Shh. Shh. Shh. Shh.

Claire leads Caden past Hazel and Derek, deep in conversation, heads close together.

HAZEL  
Whitrow says, "If a mind is regarded to be a memory-based process of integration..."

69

EXT. DOWNTOWN SCHENECTADY STREET - WINTER 2010 - NIGHT

69

Caden and Claire walk. It's bitterly cold. They pass a store window advertising a Presidents Day sale. The female mannequins are dressed as Lincoln and Washington. Caden glances at their star-spangled bikini-bottomed crotches.

CLAIRE  
My mother died last night.

CADEN  
My God. I'm so sorry. What are you doing out?

CLAIRE  
Ugh, I couldn't deal with my sisters. It's like living in a Hieronymus Bosch painting.

CADEN  
Oh. I see. Well, um, What happened to your mother, if I could ask? I mean, God, that's an awful thing to ask. I'm sorry. I don't mean to -- It's just that, I'm --

CLAIRE  
Oh, this is me. No, it's okay. She fell. Slipped in her bathroom. Hit her head. It actually split in half. Horrible.

They stop at a small hatchback with a cow painted on it.

CADEN  
In half?

CLAIRE  
Yes. Well, it was nice meeting you. Did I say "meeting"? Ugh, I'm such an idiot.

(CONTINUED)

CADEN CLAIRE  
Slip of the tongue is all. Freudian slip.

CADEN  
I don't know how it's Freudian.

CLAIRE  
Y'know. Like "meet"? To meet?

CADEN  
Oh. Well, I'm sorry about your mother. In half?

CLAIRE  
It's okay. It's life. It's --

Claire's face contorts into a horrifying, paralyzed grimace.

CADEN  
What is it? What?

She weeps silently, with gaping mouth. Caden awkwardly embraces her. She remains stiff.

CADEN (CONT'D)  
Do you want me to drive you home?

She shakes her head "no" over and over. Then she looks in at her reflection in the car window.

CLAIRE  
Sometimes when I cry, I watch myself so I can remember how it looks for future roles. It's horrible. I hate myself.

CADEN  
It's okay. Everyone does that.  
It's -- is there anything I can do?

Caden sits with Claire and a large congregation. She rests her hand on Caden's.

MINISTER  
...there she met Ralph Keene. They fell in love, married, and soon their first child, Claire was born.

The minister's voice goes under.

CLAIRE  
(crying whisper to Caden)  
I used to be a baby.

1022

70

CONTINUED: (2)

70

CADEN

I'm so sorry.

CLAIRE

I was a baby girl with hair of spun gold, the prettiest baby anyone had ever seen. One day the townsfolk, who were jealous of my beauty, decided to steal me away.

71

OMITTED

71

72

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM (SCHENECTADY APT.) - 2010 - DAY

72

Curtains drawn, the room glows with afternoon sunlight. Caden sits on the bed. Claire enters naked from the bathroom, brushing her teeth and talking.

CLAIRE

There was a knock at the door.

CADEN

God, you're beautiful.

CLAIRE

(sits on bed next to him)

It was a bearded old man.

Caden can hold out no longer. He kisses her. They fall back on the bed. He kisses her all over as she continues to tell the story. Her voice becomes irresistibly melodious.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

He said to me, "young lady, I have in my satchel a ring. Whomever possesses it will receive all the magic of the woodland sprites."

CADEN

(eyes blurring, head lolling, breathing her in)

I have to fuck you. I have to.

CLAIRE

(spreading her legs)

"You can have this ring if you promise me one thing."

"Anything," I whispered in his ear.

Caden and Claire are having sex now.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

He said, "There is one more thing. You must never tell anyone what you promised me. If you do, you will die."

73

INT. CLAIRE'S BATHROOM (SCHENECTADY APT.) - 2010 - DAY

73

Claire sits on the toilet and pees.

CLAIRE

So I used my new power to kill all the townsfolk. Horrible, humiliating deaths. I was reunited with my family. And I lived happily ever after, doing only good with my new powers.

Caden cries and rests his head on her thigh.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Why are you crying, honey?

CADEN

I'm so in love with you.

Claire smiles, strokes his hair.

CADEN (CONT'D)

I have problems, Claire. I'm still attached to my wife. I have also -- I have also -- feelings for Hazel.

CLAIRE

(wiping)

Really? Hazel? Oh. Really? Our Hazel? That's really interesting. I must've picked that up unconsciously. Wow. Boy. Gosh.

CADEN

I've left them behind. I've gone somewhere without them. I'm guilty of so much.

CLAIRE

It's okay. We'll be fine. You're with me now. We'll be good.

74

EXT. PARK - 2010 - DAY

74

Caden and Claire get married. Caden is saying his vows.

CADEN

There will be no other before you.

75 INT. SCHENECTADY POST OFFICE - WINTER 2010 - DAY 75

Caden stands in line with a gift-wrapped box addressed to Olive. The clerks at the counter wear Santa hats and beards.

76 INT. TINY, CRAMPED REHEARSAL HALL - 2011 - DAY 76

Actors piled in. Claire sits at a makeshift "box-office." Davis approaches. Caden circles the action. There are ponderous pauses.

DAVIS  
I'd like to buy a ticket.

CLAIRE  
Okay. That'll be forty dollars.

DAVIS  
Okay. Forty dollars it is.

CLAIRE  
Okay. Here's your ticket.

CADEN  
Okay, hold it. We're not really --  
I think we need to work on your  
characters individually. We need  
to investigate, to really discover  
the essence of each being. Davis,  
I'll start with you.

Caden walks off with Davis. Claire seethes.

77 INT. CLAIRE'S KITCHEN (SCHENECTADY APT.) - WINTER 2011 - NIGHT 77

Claire chops vegetables. Caden feeds a baby. Christmas decorations are up.

CLAIRE  
Davis, I'll start with you.  
There's a difference between  
favoring me and pretending we've  
never met. I mean, we had Ariel, I  
think people know we've fucked.

(CONTINUED)

77

CONTINUED:

77

CADEN  
That's not the point.

CLAIRE  
Apparently not. I would've  
guessed you were sleeping  
with Davis.

CADEN  
We'll talk about your  
character after we get Ariel  
to bed. Okay?

CLAIRE  
Maybe you are. I just want  
to feel what we used to feel.  
Y'know?

78

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM (SCHENECTADY APT.)- WINTER 2011 -  
NIGHT

78

Claire sits on the bed and seems almost in a trance. She  
looks haggard and her cheeks are tear-stained.

CLAIRE  
She's 36. Works in a theater box  
office. She had acting aspirations  
but lacked the confidence to pursue  
them. Her life is passing by. She  
is alone. She's old and ugly --

CADEN  
I think you should pick another  
subject. Other than Hazel.

CLAIRE  
Sacred ground?

CADEN  
No. It's just. I don't feel like  
there's enough there.

Claire thinks for a moment.

CLAIRE  
I suppose not. She is limited.  
Okay. There's this single mother  
who lives downstairs. I find her  
really deep and sad.

CADEN  
Tell me.

CLAIRE  
I'm 42. I have a small child and  
no husband. I work long hours as a  
cashier at a mini-mart. Sometimes  
I worry my child will not even  
recognize me when I come home --

Claire cries like she did when her mother died. Ariel cries.

(CONTINUED)



78

CONTINUED:

78

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Check on her. Please, sweetie.  
I'm arriving at something.

79

INT. CLAIRE'S LIVING ROOM (SCHENECTADY APT.) - WINTER 2011 - 79  
NIGHT

Ariel sleeps in a crib in the corner of the living room.  
Caden sits on a tiny chair, thumbing through a magazine.

1022

(CONTINUED)

Claire weeps off-screen. Caden sees an article entitled "Flower Girl", featuring a photo of a naked Olive, smiling, her body covered from neck to ankle in tattoos of flowers. The article begins, "Ten year old Olive Wittgart of Berlin is the first child in human history with a full body tattoo..." Caden stares in disbelief. Claire pokes her head in. Her eyes are red.

CLAIRE  
Caden, I've made a  
breakthrough. This woman is  
beautiful. I've got --

CADEN  
I have to go find my  
daughter.

CLAIRE  
Your daughter is right here.

CADEN  
My real daughter.

CLAIRE  
What?

CADEN  
My first daughter. Olive.  
I've got to find her.

CLAIRE  
Please don't do this to us.

CADEN  
She's tattooed!

CLAIRE  
(revealing massive tattoo  
on back)  
Everyone's tattooed!

CADEN  
I've never seen that before.

CLAIRE  
You have responsibilities.

CADEN  
I'll be quick. I'll do it quick.

CLAIRE  
Everyone's tattooed. Please.

It's dark; most people are sleeping. Caden reads Getting Better.

VOICE  
Redundancy is fluid. Life moves to  
the south. There is only the now.

80

CONTINUED:

80

MADELINE

Hi.

He sees Madeline sitting across the aisle. She is different, sexier in make-up and a tight dress.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

When you cancelled, it freed me up.  
So I'm traveling, too! Yippee!

CADEN

I'm not sure I'm getting the book.

MADELINE

But it's getting you. You're  
almost non-recognizable now.

Madeline spreads her legs a bit and smiles at Caden. He nervously grins, goes back to his book. He reads:

VOICE

I offer my flower to you and you  
deny it. This book is over.

He turns the page. Blank. The rest of the book is blank.  
He looks over at Madeline. She is watching a movie.

81

EXT. BERLIN STREET - 2011 - DAY

81

Caden wanders a dirty store-front street looking for an  
address. He finds it. An art gallery. He enters.

82

INT. GALLERY - 2011 - DAY

82

The walls are hung with hundreds of Adele's tiny paintings.

CADEN

I don't speak German. I was -  
- Yes yes. I may help you,  
Mister?

GERMAN WOMAN

CADEN

I'm looking for Adele Cotard.

GERMAN WOMAN

Yes. We must not give addresses or  
other personal informations.

CADEN

I'm her husband.

GERMAN WOMAN

No. You are not her husbands,  
which is named Gunther und Heinz.

83

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - 2015 - DAY

83

Caden sits nursing a coffee. Maria approaches and sits down.

CADEN

You're here, too?

MARIA

I live with Adele and Olive and  
Gunther und Heinz and Uschi and  
Britt. I'm everyone's nanny.

CADEN

I want to see my daughter.

MARIA

They sent me.

CADEN

They? And who the fuck are  
Uschi and Britt?

MARIA

They decided it's not time to  
see you yet.

CADEN

Maria, I can't believe Adele got  
her tattooed like that. I mean --

MARIA

I did that. Olive's my project.

CADEN

She's a four year old!

MARIA

She's almost over eleven now.  
She's my muse. I love her.

Caden stares at her for a moment, then lunges. He punches her repeatedly as she tries to get away. She throws a punch which connects with the side of his head and knocks him down. She hurries off.

CADEN

What'd you do to my family? What'd  
you do to my daughter?

MARIA (IN GERMAN)

Screw you, Caden. Faggot! FAGGOT!

She turns down an alley. Caden, a half-block behind, hurries to the alley. She's gone. He walks through, looking for her. It's dark. Trash cans and garbage. He spots an unopened box next to the trash. It's pink with a picture of a nose on it. Caden drops to his knees and weeps. No tears come out. His eyes are dry and red. He pulls a vial of artificial tears from his pockets and moistens his eyes. Suddenly his breathing becomes wildly erratic.

A84 EXT. GERMAN HOSPITAL - 2015 - DAY A84

Caden limps up to the hospital.

84 INT. GERMAN HOSPITAL ROOM - 2015 - DAY 84

German words painted on the walls. Caden, in his underwear, lies on a metal table in a cold room, while an old man in white military jacket examines him, pressing on his body in various places. The man is silent except for slow, long inhalations and exhalations through his nose. When he is through he leaves the room without saying a word. Caden lies there, not sure what he's supposed to do. After a while, he gets up and opens the door, looks both ways down the empty hall. He closes the door, sits in a plastic chair and waits.

85 INT. PLANE - 2015 - NIGHT 85

Caden sits. A tube runs from his nostril to a small whirring machine on his lap. A frail old man sits next to him.

OLD MAN

Death comes faster than you think.

86 EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - 2015 - DAY 86

Caden, walking with a realtor, approaches a warehouse in a very old, decrepit, and abandoned-looking part of town.

CADEN

Yeah, I want to bring my production to New York. To get it seen. By people, you know, who matter. The sooner the better.

REALTOR

Well, this theater is centrally located. Heart of the theater district. So... great for plays.

CADEN

Yeah?

REALTOR

Yeah. Very much so.

87 INT. WAREHOUSE - 2015 - DAY 87

It's massive, empty, old, and dirty. Caden inspects it while the agent watches from a distance.

REALTOR

(echoey and far away)

Lots of room for seats over here.

88 OMITTED 88

89

INT. WAREHOUSE - 2016 - DAY

89

It's been scrubbed. There are small squared-off "apartment" areas, with actors in each, going about their days. A couple sleeps in a bed in one, in another there is a conversation between people over dinner, a man watches television alone in one, etc. There are at least fifteen configurations of people with a reel-to-reel tape recorders in each set-up. Caden walks from one to the other, eavesdropping, followed by an assistant, Michael. He stops at Claire's "apartment." She is ironing and watching a daytime soap, which is a closed-circuit TV. The actors in the soap are across the warehouse in another apartment. Ariel sits in a highchair and plays with a bowl of Cheerios. She is about two and a half.

ARIEL

Daddy! Daddy is mine!

CADEN

Daddy can't play now, honey.

CLAIRE

Daddy doesn't live with us anymore,  
baby. He had to find himself.

Claire shoots daggers at Caden and goes back to ironing.

90

EXT. BUS SHELTER (NEAR WAREHOUSE) - 2016 - NIGHT

90

Caden sits in the fluorescent shelter. He looks at a poster for a movie called Little Winky and Caden, which features Caden in an embrace with a muscular skinhead. The movie is "Posthumously Written" by The Late Horace Azpiazu.

Caden's leg starts to twitch, and he goes into convulsions.

91

OMITTED

91

92

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - 2017 - NIGHT

92

An old doctor examines Caden's shaking leg.

DOCTOR

I can't argue with further testing.

CADEN

Ok, you're a doctor, right? Am I  
dying? Can you tell me that?

DOCTOR

No.

CADEN

No, you can't tell me?

(CONTINUED)

92

CONTINUED:

92

DOCTOR  
I can't tell you.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
You can't tell me if you can't tell me?

DOCTOR (CONT'D)  
No.

93

EXT. NYC STREET - 2017 - DAY

93

Caden walks along, his leg shaking. He spots Hazel looking in a store window. He just watches her for a while. She sees him in the store window reflection. She turns.

HAZEL  
Caden! I was wondering if I was going to bump into you!

She gives him a hug, notices his shaking leg.

CADEN  
What are you doing here? You look great.

HAZEL  
Oh, thanks. You... I --

CADEN  
New haircut?

HAZEL  
Um, yeah. For a while now.

CADEN  
What are you doing in New York?

HAZEL  
Oh. I'm here with Derek and the boys. Mini-vacation! You know.

CADEN  
The boys?

HAZEL  
Yeah. I thought you knew.

CADEN  
Ah. Congratulations.

HAZEL  
Yeah. Thanks.

CADEN  
How old?

(CONTINUED)

HAZEL

Five. Twins. Robert and Daniel  
and Allan.

CADEN

Ah. Yes.  
(pause)  
Nice names. Where are they?

HAZEL

Oh. Derek took them to Natural  
History. So I could shop.

CADEN

Ah.

HAZEL

Nice to see you, Caden. How are  
things?

CADEN

Y'know. I was with Claire. We  
have a daughter, but we're  
separated now. How about with  
you?

HAZEL

Good. The kids are wonderful. I  
have a great job at Lens Shapers.

CADEN

Great. You wear a lab coat?

HAZEL

It's so good to see you. I should  
run. I want to get some shopping  
in. We're meeting back at the  
hotel at three. Then sushi!

CADEN

Okay. Good seeing you, Hazel.

Hazel smiles and waves and turns to head into the store.  
Caden watches after her.



94 EXT. HOTEL - 2017 - DAY 94

Caden watches Hazel, Derek, and the boys enter the hotel.

A95 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - 2017 - DAY A95

Caden trails behind Hazel and her family, laughing and enjoying each other as they head down the hall to their room. When they enter their room, Caden just continues down the hall toward the window at the far end. Without hesitation he opens it and begins to climb out. A man steps out of his room, sees Caden, grabs him and wrestles him to the ground. The gaunt man watches from down the hall.

95 INT. CADEN AND ADELE'S HOUSE - 2017 - NIGHT 95

Caden pulls Olive's journal from under his pillow and reads from somewhere in the middle.

OLIVE'S VOICE

(with German accent)

How I love Maria! She is so much more of a father than Caden ever was, with his drinking and unfortunate body odor and rotting teeth. I could only loathe him and perhaps pity him. But Maria!

Caden blots his sopping brow and gums, sniffs under his arms.

96 INT. HALLWAY (CLAIRE'S NYC APT.) - FALL 2018 - NIGHT 96

Caden, now walking with a cane, approaches an apartment door. There's a sad pilgrim cut-out taped to it. He knocks.

CLAIRE (O.S.)

Yes?

CADEN

It's me.

ARIEL (O.S.)

Daddy, Daddy!

CLAIRE (O.S.)

What, Caden?

CADEN (CONT'D)

I want to come back. I want to take care of you and Olive. Ariel.

There's silence then the door opens. Claire is crying.

CLAIRE

I just want you to love us.

(CONTINUED)

96

CONTINUED:

96

Caden hugs her. Ariel hugs Caden's good leg.

ARIEL

Why does you have a canes, Daddy?

97

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM (NYC APARTMENT) - 2018 - NIGHT

97

Caden and Claire in bed having sex. The gaunt man stands on the fire escape peering in. Ariel watches from the doorway.

1022

(CONTINUED)

97

CONTINUED:

97

The phone rings. Claire cranes her neck and looks at the clock. The gaunt man and Ariel both step out of view.

CLAIRE

It's 3:30. For crying out fuck.

Caden answers the phone.

CADEN

Hello? What's wrong? Okay. Okay.

Caden hangs up. Claire kisses Caden's neck.

CADEN (CONT'D)

My father died.

CLAIRE

Oh, baby.

CADEN

His body was riddled with cancer.  
He didn't even know. He went in  
because his finger hurt.

CLAIRE

It's okay, baby. It's going to be  
okay. Let me make you feel better.

Claire begins kissing her way down Caden's chest.

CADEN

They said he suffered horribly.  
That he called out for me right  
before he died. They said he said  
he regretted his life. They said  
he said a lot of things. Too many  
to recount. They said it was the  
longest and saddest deathbed speech  
any of them had ever heard.

98

EXT. CEMETERY - 2018 - DAY

98

Caden, Claire, and Ariel stand with Caden's mother as a child-sized coffin is lowered into the ground.

MOTHER

There was so little left of him.  
They had to fill the coffin with  
cotton balls to keep him from  
rattling around.

99 INT. CADEN'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - 2018 - DAY 99

Crowded with mourners. People chat and eat. Claire and Caden, on the couch holding hands, chat with a fat lady.

CADEN

Excuse me, I have to use the bathroom.

100 EXT. CADEN'S MOTHER'S BACK DECK - 2018 - A FEW MOMENTS LATER 100

Caden dials his cell phone.

CADEN

Hey.

INTERCUT WITH:

A101 INT. BURNING HOUSE - 2018 - SAME A101

Hazel is on her phone.

HAZEL (PHONE VOICE)

Caden?

CADEN

I had to talk to you. My father died.

HAZEL

Oh no. Oh, Caden. I'm so sorry.

CADEN

Thanks. I know.

HAZEL

Are you at your mom's?

CADEN

Yeah. With Claire and Ariel.

HAZEL

Oh. I see.

CADEN

I'm back with Claire.

Pause.

HAZEL

Yes, I got that.

CADEN

I'm sorry.

HAZEL

What are you sorry about?

CADEN

I don't know. You got quiet. I thought I should say something.

(CONTINUED)

A101

CONTINUED:

A101

HAZEL

You thought you should say something. That's lovely. That's what makes our relationship so special. The obligation.

CADEN

What am I supposed to do, Hazel? I have a kid with her. You have twins with Derek. Three twins. It's confusing!

HAZEL

You're not supposed to do anything.

CADEN

I really miss you.

HAZEL

Yeah, I guess that's what happens when you have a kid with somebody else. You having sex with her?

CADEN

Hazel...

HAZEL

I'm asking you a question. Did you have sex with her now that you're back together?

CADEN

Yes. Of course. I mean, what --

HAZEL

I have to go. I'm sorry about your dad. That's awful news.

CADEN

Hazel, please, I can't bear it if you go.

HAZEL

I have to. I'm going out. I have to get ready. Everything's fine.

CADEN

I need to use a cane now.

(pause)

Okay. Take care.

Hazel hangs up. Caden sits there.

101

OMITTED

101

102

OMITTED

102

103 INT. WAREHOUSE - CITY SET - 2020 - DAY 103

A rehearsal in progress. The shells of apartment buildings have been built. The actors, who previously had been spread out on the floor of the warehouse, are now perched on scaffolding in various apartment spaces. Caden, followed by Michael, surveys the scene by climbing up and down ladders. It's difficult to manage with his cane.

104 INT. CLAIRE KITCHEN (NYC APARTMENT) - 2021 - LATE NIGHT 104

Caden reads Olive's diary.

OLIVE'S GERMAN VOICE

Today I felt a wetness between my legs. Maria explained to me now I am a woman. And being a woman is wonderful with Maria to guide me.

105 EXT. BERLIN STREET - 2022 - DAY 105

Overcast. Caden wanders. Walls are plastered with posters of "Flower Girl." It's Olive, early 20's, very sexy and naked. There is an address and a date. Seems to be some sort of concert.

106 INT. LOBBY - 2022 - NIGHT 106

Caden waits on a long line behind a bunch of men.

107 INT DARK SMALL ROOM - NIGHT 107

Caden sits by himself in a cramped space. A light switches on behind scarred Plexiglas. Olive dances naked. Caden tries to get her attention by banging on the glass but she can't see him. A bouncer enters and beats Caden up.

108 INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM (NYC APARTMENT) - 2022 - MORNING 108

Caden, bruised, lies in bed while Claire hurries past, getting dressed.

CLAIRE  
Get out of bed.

CADEN  
I'm depressed.

CLAIRE  
The cry of the North American  
Caden.

CADEN  
I'd just like a little sympathy.

(CONTINUED)

108

CONTINUED:

108

CLAIRE

I'll save my sympathy for the  
eighty million people with avian  
flu, the Tsunami victims in Puerto  
Rico, the countless millennia dead  
from... how fucked it all is.

CADEN

Millennia dead? What? And since  
when do you care about anything?

CLAIRE

I care every day about things! I  
care about us! ... Y'know?!

ARIEL

Why do Daddy be sad now?

109

EXT. BURNING HOUSE - 2023 - DAY

109

The neighborhood seems abandoned and overgrown. Caden is  
parked down the block and watches Hazel's house. Soon Hazel  
and Derek walk by. Derek says something and Hazel laughs  
delightedly. Caden is in agony. He rolls down his window.

CADEN

Hazel!

Hazel and Derek turn.

HAZEL

Caden, what are you doing  
here?

CADEN

Sorry. Can I talk to you?  
Please?

Hazel kisses Derek, whispers something in his ear. They  
share a giggle. Derek waves at Caden and heads into the  
burning house. Hazel approaches Caden's car.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Tell me what to do.

HAZEL

Caden, everyone has to figure  
out their own life. Y'know?

CADEN

I want you to look at me like  
you used to.

HAZEL

Oh, honey, I can't anymore.

CADEN

(crying)

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I screwed  
everything up. I don't have any  
courage. I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

109

CONTINUED:

109

HAZEL

It's okay. I'm okay.

CADEN

I don't want you to be okay. I mean, I do but it rips my guts out.

HAZEL

I'll always be your friend. I'll help you through any way I can.

CADEN

I'll help you through, too.

HAZEL

Caden, I'm fine. I have Derek.

110

INT. WAREHOUSE - 2023 - DAY

110

Caden stands with his cane before the group of seated actors. The actors wait patiently as Caden finishes a coughing fit.

CADEN

I won't settle for anything less than the brutal truth. Brutal! Each day I'll hand you a scrap of paper. It'll tell you what happened to you that day. "You felt a lump in your breast. You looked at your wife and saw a stranger." Etcetera.

TOM

Caden, when are we going to get an audience in here? It's been seventeen years.

CADEN

And I'm not excusing myself from this either. I will have someone play me, to delve into the murky, cowardly depths of my lonely, fucked-up being. He'll get notes, too. And they will correspond to the "notes" I truly get each day from my God.

The actors glance uncomfortably at Claire. She smiles apologetically.

111

OMITTED

111



112 OMITTED 112  
113 INT. HAZEL'S CAR - 2024 - DAY 113

Hazel sits in her parked car and talks on her cellphone.  
Little kids in costumes walk by. A little girl walks by in a  
"nude" body suit with Olive's tattoos all over it.

HAZEL

They fired me. I caused an  
outbreak of conjunctivitis. I  
didn't wash my hands. I had pink  
eye hands! Pink hands!

INTERCUT WITH:

A114 INT. WAREHOUSE - 2024 - SAME A114

Caden sits at his desk, talking on his cell phone.

CADEN

Oh God.

HAZEL

I didn't wash my hands! I'm a  
stupid cow! I don't have anything  
to show for being on this planet.  
And this fucking private Christian  
school is killing us. It's not  
cheap. It's Derek's thing. I  
don't believe in that shit.  
Y'know? Try to be a good person.  
That's all there is. I'm sorry.  
I'm talking too much. Do you have  
anything for me, Caden?

(CONTINUED)

A114

CONTINUED:

A114

CADEN

Um, I have an assistant,  
Hazel. And there's no box  
office yet.

HAZEL

Please, Caden. Everything is  
falling apart. I miss you.  
There are problems at home.  
I'm worthless. I'm fat.  
What am I going to do?  
Nobody laughs at my jokes the  
way you did.

114

INT. WAREHOUSE - AUDITION CORNER - 2025 - LATER

114

The actors are in their apartments living their lives. Caden  
is in the far corner of the space, at a little sectioned-off  
area. There are a half-dozen actors sitting on folding  
chairs outside the partition. They all resemble Caden,  
except one very tall one. Hazel steps around the partition.

HAZEL

Sammy Barnathan?

Sammy Barnathan stands. He is the gaunt man we've seen  
following Caden. Hazel leads him to Caden. Caden stands.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

This is Sammy Barnathan.

SAMMY

I don't have a resume or  
picture. I've never worked  
as an actor.

CADEN

Good. Tell me why you're here.

SAMMY

I've been following you for twenty  
years. So I knew about this  
audition. Because I follow you.

Caden, hiding is nervousness, nods.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

I've learned everything about you  
by following you. Hire me and you  
will see who you truly are.

Caden stares at Sammy. Sammy stares back. There's fear in  
Caden's eyes but he doesn't drop his gaze.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Peek-a-boo.

Sammy transforms effortlessly into Caden.

(CONTINUED)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Okay, Hazel, I don't think we need to talk to anyone else. This guy has me down. I'm going to cast him right now. Then maybe you and I can get a drink and we can try to figure out this thing between us. Why I cried. I've never felt about anyone the way I feel about you. I want to fuck you until we merge into a Chimera.

(MORE)

1022

114

CONTINUED: (2)

114

SAMMY (CONT'D)

A mythical beast with penis and  
vagina eternally fused, two pair of  
eyes that look only at each other,  
lips ever touching and one voice  
that whispers to itself.

CADEN

Yes, okay. You've got the part.

Sammy nods and exits. Hazel follows him with her eyes.

HAZEL

He's good, Caden.

CADEN

Please don't fall in love with him.

HAZEL

I only have eyes for you, dear.

115

INT. WAREHOUSE - 2025 - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

115

Caden limps with his cane and a backpack toward the men's  
room door. His eyes are rheumy. He pushes open the door.

116

INT. WAREHOUSE - MEN'S ROOM - 2025 - CONTINUOUS

116

The room is filthy. Flies buzz. The urinals are covered  
with slime. Caden enters a stall, pulls down his pants, and  
sits. He strains. When he is done, he looks at his stool.  
It's gray. He wipes and flushes, pulls up his pants and  
exits the stall. Sammy stands there.

SAMMY

I've never seen your shit gray.

CADEN

It's new.

Sammy jots a note. Caden places his backpack on a sink. He  
looks at himself in the mirror, stalling.

SAMMY

I know it's pill time. You don't  
need to hide from me.

Caden opens his pack and pulls out a baggie full of pills.  
He takes them, one-by-one. Sammy watches and counts. When  
it's over, he speaks.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

You're missing your Fosonex.

(CONTINUED)

116

CONTINUED:

116

CADEN SAMMY  
No. Check your bag.

Caden pulls out books and notebooks and a sweater. The pill falls out of the sweater onto the grimy floor.

SAMMY (CONT'D)  
Fosonex, 2.5 mg.

Caden picks the pill up off the floor. It's got grime on it.

SAMMY (CONT'D)  
Swallow it anyway. It's important.  
Go on, sweetie.

Caden looks at Sammy and swallows the pill.

SAMMY (CONT'D)  
Good boy.

117

EXT. NYC CITY STREET - 2025 - EVENING

117

Caden exits the warehouse with Claire and Ariel, who is now five. Sammy walks alongside. There is a long line of people waiting to find out about tickets for the show.

MAN  
When is it opening?

CADEN  
When it's ready.

MAN  
We need to get in. It's bad out here.

They move on, passing poor people waiting in line for food distributed from a military truck. There are sick people being herded into a scary bus marked "Fun Land." The guards wear surgical masks.

CADEN  
I was thinking of calling it  
Simulacrum. What do you think?

CLAIRE  
I don't know what it means.

ARIEL  
Can me have a nickel if I doesn't  
play with my pee-pee no more?

A hovercraft glides down the street with searchlights.

(CONTINUED)

117

CONTINUED:

117

CADEN

How about The Flawed Light of Love  
and Grief?

CLAIRE

I'm not sure.

Sammy jots something in his book.

118

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM (NYC APARTMENT) - 2025 - NIGHT

118

Caden and Claire have sex. Sammy watches from a chair in the corner. Ariel sits on his lap. They finish and Caden glances at Sammy.

119

EXT. CLAIRE'S FIRE ESCAPE (NYC APARTMENT) - WINTER 2025 -  
LATER

119

Caden and Sammy watch the city: fires in the distance. Human wailing. Christmas decorations in windows across the way. Occasional explosions. Claire pokes her head out.

CLAIRE

I'm going to work in my journal.  
You guys need anything?

CADEN

No, thanks.

SAMMY

No, thanks, Claire.

CADEN

Claire? I want you to drop your  
study of Mrs. Kranstein.

CLAIRE

Caden --

CADEN

I want you to play yourself.  
Sammy's going to move into  
your apartment set as me.

CLAIRE

It's just that I've made such  
enormous strides as Jocelyn  
and --

CADEN

As the vision reveals itself,  
we all have to be willing to  
adapt, honey.

SAMMY

It'd be my honor to play your  
husband, Claire. You're an amazing  
actress. I saw you in Bernarda  
Alba last year at The Roundabout.

CLAIRE

Yeah? That was a fun play.  
Emotionally tough, but fucking  
fulfilling.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

119

CONTINUED:

119

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

And I loved working with so many strong female actresses. Ugh, Lorca's a genius. Okay. I'm going to start thinking about myself.

Claire exits.

SAMMY

Start, huh?

Caden chuckles.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

(beat)

Why did we leave Adele, Caden?

CADEN

She left us. You know that better than anyone. Except me.

SAMMY

Amazing artist though. The best living artist. There's no one who stares the truth in the face like she does. A sweet pussy, too.

Caden looks at Sammy, confused.

CADEN

How do you know that?

SAMMY

Oh. I read it.

CADEN

Anyway, I don't know where she is.

A strange dirigible flies very low overhead.

SAMMY

Maybe she's got a subplot in New York. Maybe the Met's doing a retrospective. Maybe, baby.

He hands Caden a slip of paper.

CADEN

Why are you giving this to me?

SAMMY

I want to follow you there and see how you lose even more of yourself. Research. For the part. Partner.

120 EXT. CITY STREET (NEAR 31Y BUILDING) - FALL 2026 - NIGHT 120

Dark, deserted part of town. The wind blows wet leaves. A kid walks by in a Hallowe'en costume, looking lost. Caden finds the address: an old, narrow, very tall, very dark building. There's a piece of looseleaf paper with the handwritten note "Death in family. God relieve our grief." taped to the front door. He approaches the tenant buzzers and buzzes 31Y. The name on the apartment is Capgras. The door buzzes.

121 OMITTED 121

122 INT. ELEVATOR (31Y BUILDING) - 2026 - MOMENTS LATER 122

It's small. The walls are panelled with ancient, scarred wood. Caden presses "31." The doors close; the elevator ascends, swaying and creaking. The doors open on 17; nobody gets on. As they begin to close:

FAINT FARAWAY VOICE

Hold it. Hold it, please.

Caden reaches for the "door open" button but doesn't press it. The doors close and the elevator continues its shaky ascent. The doors open on 31 and Caden exits.

123 INT. 31ST FLOOR HALLWAY (31Y BUILDING) - 2026 - CONTINUOUS 123

Sound of the elevator descending. Caden heads down the long hall, looking at apartment numbers. He gets to the end and is only at 31J. He turns and heads back. The elevator is ascending again. As he passes the elevator door, it opens and a very old, feeble-looking man or woman steps out.

OLD PERSON

I asked you to hold the door.

CADEN

I'm sorry. I pressed it, but I think it was too late.

OLD PERSON

You didn't press it.

Caden continues to walk down the hall. The old person walks behind him. Caden looks behind him and smiles awkwardly.

CADEN

Have a good night.

He picks up his pace, trying to be casual about it. He arrives at 31Y, glances over and sees the old person knocking feebly on a door down the hall.

(CONTINUED)



OLD PERSON

Frances, I need to go to the clinic. Something's terribly wrong with my nose.

Caden knocks on 31Y. No answer. He knocks again. Down the hall, the door opens and another old person steps out into the hall. This person examines the first old person's nose.

OLD PERSON #2

Oh yes. I see.

Old Person #2 squints over at Caden.

OLD PERSON #2 (CONT'D)

Are you Ellen? Ellen?!

CADEN

What?

OLD PERSON #2

(approaching)

Are you Ellen Bascomb? I'm to give the key to 31Y to Ellen Bascomb.

CADEN

(beat)

Yes, I'm Ellen.

Old Person #2 fishes a key out of the overcoat pocket.

OLD PERSON #2

She said you should just go in and get started. She said, don't forget to change the sheets.

CADEN

Ok. Thank you.

Old Person #2 turns and heads back down the hall to Old Person #1, whose nose has started to bleed.

OLD PERSON #2

Oh dear.

Caden enters the apartment.

An expansive, well-decorated place. Someone was just here: there's a steaming cup of coffee on the kitchen table.

125 INT. 31Y BEDROOM - 2026 - MOMENTS LATER 125

Clothing strewn about. There's a handwritten note on the night table. He reads it:

ADELE'S VOICE

Hi Ellen. Be a doll and do the sheets and whatever is in the hamper. Your money is under the toaster. Kisses, Adele. ps. bag of stuff in bedroom closet for Goodwill. Take what you want.

126 INT. 31Y BATHROOM - 2026 - LATER 126

Caden scrubs the filthy toilet bowl.

127 INT. 31Y BEDROOM - 2026 - DAWN 127

Caden folds laundry and puts it away. He spots the bag of clothing and goes through it. There are several blouses and skirts, a red beret, and some lingerie.

128 EXT. 31Y APARTMENT BUILDING - 2026 - MORNING 128

Caden exits with bag of clothing. Several Latina and Eastern European cleaning ladies are exiting buildings also.

129 INT. CLAIRE APARTMENT (NYC APARTMENT) - 2026 - LATER 129

Caden enters. Claire is in her bathrobe, worried and angry.

CADEN

I went for a walk. I had to think.

CLAIRE

All night? You smell weird. Are you wearing lipstick?

CADEN

No! What do I smell like? Like bad? Like an old person?

CLAIRE

I don't know. Like mold? I don't know. Like mold and ... cleaning products? Like you're menstruating? I don't know!

130 INT. CLAIRE'S BATHROOM (NYC APARTMENT) - 2026 - MORNING 130

Caden is scrubbing himself raw in the shower.

131

INT. WAREHOUSE - CITY SET - 2026 - DAY

131

The actors are in their "apartments" and rehearsal is in progress. Caden walks along the scaffolding followed by Hazel. He hands scraps of paper to each actor he passes, then turns his attention to Sammy and Claire. She's in her underwear and getting dressed. Sammy comes up behind her and rubs her ass.

CLAIRE

I don't like that guy you got to play you.

SAMMY

You don't like Sammy? Why? I think he's good.

CLAIRE

I think you need to fire him.

Caden hands her a scrap of paper.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

(reading, then to Caden)

Oh, fuck you. I'm forty-five years old. I don't want to do this shit anymore.

SAMMY

I'm not firing him, Claire. He's the best thing in the show. Next to you.

CLAIRE

He's coming on to me. He's feeling my ass during rehearsal.

SAMMY

He's your husband.

Claire turns to the real Caden and screams.

CLAIRE

He's not my Godamn husband! You are! What is wrong with you?

The actor underneath them pounds on his ceiling.

(CONTINUED)

131

CONTINUED:

131

CADEN  
Good, Jimmy!

SAMMY  
(to Claire)  
It's for the play. We're  
getting at something real  
here.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)  
Ugh! I'm going to rehearsal.

She grabs her coat, tosses the note into the trash, and  
storms out and down the stairs.

CADEN  
That's great, you guys.

Sammy sits at the table and starts to write on scraps of  
paper. Hazel hovers behind him, watching.

CADEN (CONT'D)  
Beautiful, Sammy.

Caden leaves the set and steps onto his platform.

SAMMY  
Caden, time out?

CADEN  
What's up?

SAMMY  
I feel we need a Hazel in  
here. There's a whole side  
of Caden I'm not able to  
explore without a Hazel.

Caden looks over at Hazel. Claire watches Caden from the  
street corner.

CADEN  
I guess, yeah.

Claire walks off in a huff.

HAZEL  
I get to be a character? Hooray!

132

INT. ELEVATOR (31Y BUILDING) - 2026 - NIGHT

132

Caden rides up. The elevator stops. Old Person #1 gets on  
with a big bloody bandage covering his nose.

OLD PERSON  
Hello, Ellen.

(CONTINUED)

132

CONTINUED:

132

Caden nods. They continue the ride in silence.

133

INT. 31Y BEDROOM - 2026 - NIGHT

133

Caden looks at the unmade bed, an imprint of a female form in the sheets. He touches it. He gets a melancholy look on his face. He lies on his back in the form. He sees a note on the night table:

ADELE'S VOICE

Hi Ellen. Crackerjack job last night! Would you do sheets again? We had quite a fuck last night and it's musky and gross. Kisses, A.

Caden smells the sheets, strips the bed.

A134

OMITTED

A134

134

INT. 31Y KITCHEN - 2026 - MORNING

134

Caden sips coffee at the kitchen table. He's writing a note:

CADEN'S VOICE

Hi Adele. Relined the cabinets. Just wanted to let you know I won a MacArthur Grant and I'm mounting a play, which I think is going to be pure and truthful. Best --

Caden hesitates for a moment, then signs it "Ellen."

135

INT. WAREHOUSE - CLAIRE'S APARTMENT SET - 2026 - DAY

135

Caden and Hazel watch as Claire waits in her bathrobe in the kitchen and Sammy enters the "apartment."

CLAIRE

Caden, what are you doing at night? I have a right to fucking know.

SAMMY

I've been going to Adele's place. And cleaning it.

Long pause. Caden rubs his eyes.

CLAIRE

Do you know what I've given up for you? For this. For you. For you.

(CONTINUED)

SAMMY

I'm sorry.

CLAIRE

I -- I thought I wanted to be  
just a working stage actress.  
But, y'know, I'm watching all  
the young girls crowding me  
out and it's --

There's a knock on the door. Sammy just stands there.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Get the door. Please. Just...

Sammy opens it. Tammy, playing Hazel, stands there.

TAMMY

Uh-oh. This looks serious. Am I  
interrupting?

SAMMY

What's going on, Hazel?

TAMMY

Just wanted to tell you the girl  
playing me is able to start today.

SAMMY

Oh, good. That's good.

CLAIRE

That's all we need around  
here, two Hazels.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

Okay. I'll take that as my cue.

Tammy closes the door and leaves.

CLAIRE

Maybe you can clean her toilet.

SAMMY

Maybe I will.

CLAIRE

It's over, Caden.

SAMMY

Claire, no.

CLAIRE

I'm not talking to you.

Claire turns to Caden.

135

CONTINUED: (2)

135

CADEN

I didn't say I was going to clean  
Hazel's toilet. He did.

CLAIRE

But you thought it.

There's a silence. Hazel watches Caden closely.

CADEN

I thought it. But I didn't say it.

Claire packs up her stuff.

CLAIRE

I got an offer to do Needleman in a  
Haystack and I'm going to take it.  
I want you out of the apartment.  
The real one. You can keep this  
one.

Claire heads down the stairs.

CADEN

Jesus. Claire! Please!

HAZEL

Already put out a call for a Claire  
replacement. Would you really  
clean my bathroom?

CADEN

(beat, sadly)  
Yeah.

HAZEL

God, Caden, it's all so fucked.

136

INT. WAREHOUSE - BATHROOM - 2026 - DAY

136

Caden digs in his bag, pulls out a sponge, gets on his hands  
and knees and scrubs the floor.

137

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - 2026 - DAY

137

Caden, wearing a pair of magnifying glasses that flip up and  
down, enters a crowded gallery of people wearing similar  
glasses. The paintings are microscopic. Museum visitors use  
the special glasses to study the paintings. There's a wall  
inscribed "Small Miracles: The Paintings of Adele Lack."  
Biographical info is under. Caden squeezes his way to the  
wall to look at paintings. He sees one of an African female  
genital mutilation ceremony;

(CONTINUED)

137

CONTINUED:

137

a woman weeping over the grave of a child; a man raping a woman. He comes to a wall titled: "Women I Love." He sees a self-portrait of Adele, a portrait of Maria, a portrait of Olive, naked and covered in tattoos. Then he comes to a portrait entitled "Ellen Bascomb." He steps back for a second, unable to look. The people behind him are impatient. Finally he flips the glasses and studies the painting. Ellen appears to be a chubby, 40 year old white woman, her mousy brown hair tied back in a kerchief. She is naked and spreading her vulva for the viewer. She has a kind face and what appears to be an appendectomy scar.

138

INT. CLAIRE'S KITCHEN (NYC APARTMENT) - 2026 - DAY

138

Caden moves boxes. Claire sits at the kitchen table with an actor. They are rehearsing lines from Needleman in a Haystack.

CADEN

This is the end of my stuff.

CLAIRE

Bye.

ACTOR

Bye.

Caden heads out the apartment door.

139

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY (CLAIRE'S NYC APT.) - 2026 -  
CONTINUOUS

139

Caden enters the apartment next door and closes the door.

140

INT. CADEN'S APARTMENT - 2026 - CONTINUOUS

140

It's filled with boxes. Caden hears laughter coming from next door. He puts his ear against the wall to listen.

141

EXT. CADEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - 2026 - DAY

141

Caden exits, crosses the street, and looks up, trying to see in Claire's window. He sees her walk by, then nothing.

142

INT. WAREHOUSE - 2026 - DAY

142

Caden sits with Hazel at a table facing the giant, open apartment building structure. An actress plays Claire. She sits at the kitchen table of her apartment with an actor playing the actor. They both hold scripts and read from Needleman in a Haystack. Sammy is in front of the building, looking up. Caden looks troubled. Tammy sits to the side of Hazel and studies her. Every once in a while, Hazel self-consciously glances over at Tammy, who does not avert her gaze.

(CONTINUED)



142

CONTINUED:

142

CADEN

This is a lie!

Caden paces. The actors stop what they're doing, sit with their legs dangling off the edge of their apartments, wait for instructions. Caden limps off to the set designer's office.

A143

INT. WAREHOUSE - WILL'S OFFICE - 2026 - CONTINUOUS

A143

Caden enters the office. Will, the production designer, looks up from his drafting table.

CADEN

Wall it up.

143

INT. WAREHOUSE - CITY SET - 2028 - DAY

143

Sammy stands across the street from the walled-up apartment building, an exact replica of the real one. He looks up at Claire's lighted window. Caden watches, pleased.

144

INT. CADEN'S APARTMENT - 2029 - NIGHT

144

Caden, hooked up to pumps, tries to sleep on the floor, surrounded by boxes. He listens to Claire having sex next door. He detaches his pumps, gets dressed.

145

INT. 31Y BEDROOM - 2029 - NIGHT

145

Caden sits on the bed and reads a note from Adele:

ADELE'S VOICE

Good for you with your grant!  
Listen, I fixed up the walk-in as a  
sort of bedroom if you want. We'd  
love to have you and you wouldn't  
have to schlep all the way to  
Queens. Just a thought. Kisses.  
A.

146

INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET - 2029 - NIGHT

146

Caden sees an unmade cot in the corner and a few cardboard boxes marked "Stuff for Olive." The "Olive" is crossed out and replaced with "Caden."

147

INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET - 2029 - LATER

147

The boxes are empty as Caden finishes making the bed. The room is decorated in a girly manner. Pink bedspread. Girly lamps and furniture. Girly prints on the walls.

148 EXT. CITY SET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2031 - DAY 148

Sammy, walking with a cane, exits his apartment building set and walks down the street. Caden and Hazel follow. Sammy passes people, nods hello to some. He stops at a newsstand and buys a paper. The set seems to go on forever.

A149 EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2031 - A149  
CONTINUOUS

Eventually Sammy arrives at a warehouse that looks exactly like the warehouse they are in. He enters.

149 EXT. CITY STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE) - 2031 - 149  
CONTINUOUS

Inside it looks exactly like the warehouse, including a duplicate city set. Sammy hands little scraps of paper to people, then dumps his pack on the table where Tammy sits. Hazel and Caden watch.

SAMMY  
Morning, Hazel.

TAMMY  
Hi, Caden. How was your night?

SAMMY  
Okay. Yours?

TAMMY  
Eh. Philip was colicky. I was up all night.

Caden looks over at Hazel for confirmation. She nods, slightly freaked out.

CADEN  
Sorry.

SAMMY  
(to Tammy)  
Sorry. Everybody here?

TAMMY  
(looking at clipboard)  
Sammy's not here. Jimmy called and said there's some subway problem.

Jimmy rushes into the warehouse.

(CONTINUED)

149

CONTINUED:

149

JIMMY

Sorry. Sorry, sorry, sorry.  
(sweetly)  
Hi, Hazel.

TAMMY

Hi, Sammy.

SAMMY

(to Tammy)  
Sammy likes you.

Caden looks at Hazel. She nods.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Hazel, could you get everyone  
situated? I need to speak to Will  
about some new sets.

Sammy pulls some Polaroids out of his backpack.

TAMMY

Yeah. We'll take it from June 9th?

Sammy nods, heads toward the set designer's office.

CADEN

Oh, shit. I need to do that, too.  
Haze, keep an eye on things?

HAZEL

Yup. June 9th?

Caden nods, rushes out the door of the warehouse set.

150

OMITTED

150

A151

EXT. UNFINISHED BRICK BUILDING (BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK)(INT. A151  
WAREHOUSE) - 2031 - CONTINUOUS

Caden finds Will up on some scaffolding, working on the set.

CADEN

Will, I need you to build this.

Caden hands Will shots of the exterior and interiors of  
Adele's building and of apartment 31Y.

151

INT. WAREHOUSE - AUDITION CORNER - 2031 - LATER

151

Caden sits at his desk. There are several overweight women waiting on the other side of the partition. Hazel ushers one in. She's a ringer for the painting of Ellen.

CADEN

Hazel, what do you think of this title: Unknown, Unkissed, and Lost?

HAZEL

Eh. Caden this is Millicent Weems.

CADEN

Hi, Millicent. Have a seat. How are you at cleaning?

MILLICENT

(sitting)

I'm very, very good at it.

CADEN

Because this part requires a lot of it. You'd play a cleaning lady.

MILLICENT

I played Egga the cleaning lady in Hedda Gabler at the Roundabout.

CADEN

Great. Okay.

MILLICENT

And Mrs. Dobson in Scrub-a-Dub at the Pantages.

CADEN

You're weirdly close to what I've visualized for this character.

MILLICENT

Glad to be weirdly close.

Millicent and Caden study each other.

152

EXT. CITY STREETS (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2032 - DAY

152

Caden heads to the warehouse set. He hands paper scraps to shopkeepers, pedestrians, a guy sweeping the street.

CADEN

Good work, everyone.

Nobody acknowledges him.

A153 INT. WAREHOUSE - WAREHOUSE SET - 2032 - CONTINUOUS

A153

Caden enters the warehouse set. Tammy sits alone at the card table. There's activity on the street and movement can be seen in various windows.

CADEN

Where're Sammy and Hazel?

Tammy jerks her head to the left. Caden sees that Sammy has Hazel with her back against a wall. They are talking intimately. Caden approaches.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Hey, Sammy, what are you doing?

Sammy and Hazel look over casually.

SAMMY

Hi, Caden. I'm being you. You like Hazel; I like Hazel.

CADEN

This Hazel doesn't exist for you. If you want to like a Hazel, like that one.

Caden points indicates Tammy. Sammy squints over.

TAMMY

That's what I tried to tell him!

HAZEL

Aw, no harm, no foul, Caden. It's Equity break anyway.

(loud)

Ten minutes, everybody!

The actors playing the people on the street immediately stop what they're doing. Actors pour from apartment buildings and shops, lighting cigarettes and talking on cell phones. Sammy goes off.

CADEN

Hazel.

What?

HAZEL

CADEN (CONT'D)

You don't like him, do you?

HAZEL

Kind of. He reminds me of you.

CADEN

I'm me. You don't need someone to remind you of me.

(CONTINUED)

A153

CONTINUED:

A153

HAZEL

Don't worry, Caden. I like you more. I do. Sammy's just fun.

CADEN

I'm fun.

HAZEL

Oh, sweetie. No, you're not.

Caden's cell phone rings. He answers it.

CADEN

Yes?

VOICE

Is this Caden Cotard?

CADEN

Yes.

VOICE

This is Officer Mark Mellman of Schnectady P.D.

CADEN

Yes?

VOICE

I'm sorry to inform you, your mother has been the victim of a home invasion.

153

EXT. CEMETERY - 2032 - DAY

153

A funeral is in progress. Caden stands with Tammy and his father as his mother's coffin is lowered into the ground. The coffin is banged up and crumbling.

154

INT. CADEN'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - 2032 - DAY

154

Lots of mourners. Caden sits on the couch with Tammy.

CADEN

Was my father standing with us?

TAMMY

I don't know what he looks like.

CADEN

He's dead. He looks dead, I guess.

TAMMY

Probably wasn't him then.

CADEN

A little moustache?

She shrugs.

CADE

Anyway, Thanks for coming with me.

(CONTINUED)

154

CONTINUED:

154

TAMMY

It's okay.

CADEN

I asked Hazel but she was busy tonight and you're the next best thing. I mean, it isn't that you're the next best thing but because you play her, it feels comforting. Does that make sense? Although the thing is offstage you're nothing like her. You play her very well though. Did Hazel mention what she was doing tonight because I called her house before we left and her husband said she wasn't going to be back till late and I thought that was weird because she told me Philip was sick.

TAMMY

She's going to dinner with Sammy.

CADEN

(calmly)

That's interesting.

TAMMY

He's supposed to like me.

CADEN

I'll have another talk with him. Can you excuse me. I need to use the bathroom.

Caden gets up and turns to leave.

TAMMY

Don't forget your phone.

CADEN

Thank you, Yummy.

Caden takes the phone and limps off.

155

EXT. CADEN'S MOTHER'S BACK DECK - 2032 - DAY

155

Caden talks on his cell.

CADEN

Hey. What you up to?

INTERCUT WITH:

A156 INT. HAZEL'S CAR - 2032 - SAME

A156

Hazel's driving while talking on her cell.

HAZEL'S VOICE

In my car. Heading to dinner with Sammy.

CADEN

Why didn't you tell me that before?

HAZEL

Caden. I don't want to say things that are going to make you sad.

CADEN

It mostly makes me sad that it doesn't make you sad.

HAZEL

You want me to be sad that someone's taking me out to dinner? I don't know how to do that.

CADEN

I want you to be sad that we had something really special and it's going away!

HAZEL

It just happened, Caden. I didn't plan it. You were with Claire. This probably isn't going to go anywhere, sweetie. I'm still your girl.

CADEN

Oh, Haze. C'mon.

HAZEL'S VOICE

It's just dinner. He's got stories! It just seems fun.

CADEN

He has stories about me!

HAZEL

Caden, I know everything about you and it's all adorable. I love you and I always will. So don't worry. I gotta go, I'm there.

Hazel hangs up. Caden stands there for a minute.



156 INT. CADEN'S MOTHER'S KITCHEN - 2032 - NIGHT 156

The house has emptied out. Caden and Tammy straighten.

CADEN

Did you always want to be an actress?

TAMMY

Every girl wants to be an actress.

CADEN

Is that true?

TAMMY

I did. So I figure everyone does.

157 INT. CADEN'S MOTHER'S BEDROOM - 2032 - LATER 157

Looks like there's been a horrible struggle. The bed is covered with blood. Caden and Tammy stare at it.

CADEN

I thought someone would've cleaned it up.

TAMMY

Who?

CADEN

I don't know! Someone.

158 INT. CADEN'S CHILDHOOD ROOM - 2032 - LATER 158

It's a kid's room. Caden and Tammy stand there.

CADEN

This is my room. You can sleep here.

TAMMY

Where will you sleep?

CADEN

The living room couch.

TAMMY

Don't you want to sleep with me?

(CONTINUED)

CADEN TAMMY  
Um... It's just sex.

CADEN  
Okay. If you think it's okay.

Tammy laughs, matter-of-factly gets undressed in front of Caden. He just stands there uncomfortably.

CADEN (CONT'D)  
How can you be like that?

TAMMY  
I get undressed every day.

CADEN  
In front of someone is different.

TAMMY  
I don't see why.

CADEN  
Maybe because you have a beautiful body. Maybe that makes it easier.

TAMMY  
I suppose it might. Do you want to fuck?

CADEN  
I do. Yes. Um. Do you?

TAMMY  
It'd be fine.

Caden starts to cry.

CADEN  
I'm sorry. I'm very lonely. I don't know what's wrong. I just -- I'm sorry. Can you understand? Do you understand loneliness?

TAMMY  
Yeah, I mean, I don't know. I feel okay mostly. Fucking might help.

CADEN  
I'm sorry.

TAMMY  
It's okay. I don't mind. Take your clothes off.

CADEN  
You're very pretty.

1022

TAMMY

Thanks.

CADEN

Sometimes I wish I were pretty like that.

TAMMY

You wish you were a chick?

CADEN

(long pause)

Sometimes I think I might've been better at it.

TAMMY

Interesting. It's kind of a drag in a lot of ways. You like guys?

CADEN

No. No. I like women. I only like women.

TAMMY

Well, I'm getting cold.

She climbs into bed.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

Take off your clothes.

Caden does, awkwardly and shyly. He then stands there naked. Tammy smiles sweetly at him.

TAMMY (CONT'D)

Pretty Caden.

CADEN

Thanks. Thank you for saying that.

TAMMY

Come to bed, Pretty Caden.

Caden turns off the lights and climbs into the twin bed with Tammy. She looks at his face, then kisses him.

A residential street in Schenectady. Caden drives and Tammy sits in the front passenger seat.

TAMMY

What is attractive? How are attractive people treated, how do they feel? How do unattractive people feel, how are they treated? How do attractive people feel about unattractive people, how do unattractive people feel about attractive people? How do unattractive people feel about other unattractive people? How do attractive people feel about other attractive people? How do unattractive men feel about unattractive women? How do unattractive men feel about attractive women? How do attractive men feel about unattractive women? How do attractive women feel about unattractive men? How do old people feel about attractive people? How do attractive people feel about old people? This is my study.

Caden slows down.

CADEN

That's Hazel's house.

Caden points to the house with smoke seeping out the windows.

TAMMY

Huh. Do you think we should have a Hazel's house on the set for me?

CADEN

Um...

TAMMY

It would be verisimilitudinous.

CADEN

Yeah. I don't know. I have to speak to the fire marshal.

TAMMY

It would be very verisimilitudinous if you could.

160

EXT. HIGHWAY (INT. WAREHOUSE) - 2032 - DAY

160

Hazel drives a golf cart along a fake highway. Caden and Tammy sit in back. Hazel eyes them in the rearview mirror. They seem cozy. Hazel scowls. Technicians are on the side of the road putting in plants and trees.

CADEN

I think both of you Hazels are going to like this. Turn off here.

Hazel rolls her eyes, drives down an exit ramp.

161

EXT. BURNING HOUSE STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2032 - DAY 161

Hazel drives the golf cart down the street in a state of near completion. She stops in front of a replica of her house.

CADEN

Hank! Okay!

The house begins to smoke.

TAMMY

My house!

Tammy kisses Caden on the cheek and runs into the house.

HAZEL

Is there no end to your pussy kissing?

CADEN

It's verisimilitudinous. I'm thinking of that as a title.

HAZEL

Whatever. I've got work to do. Tell your girlfriend to get out here if she wants a ride back.

CADEN

She's not my girlfriend.

HAZEL

Give it a rest, Caden. I can smell her on your breath.

CADEN

(beat)

Tammy! We have to get back.

162 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2032 - DAY 162

Sammy walks down the hall followed by Tammy. He stops at various doorways and listens to conversations or other noises within the apartments. They are followed by Caden and Hazel.

SAMMY

Jeremy is playing to us. Tell him  
he simply needs to talk to Donna.  
We'll hear what we hear.

Tammy takes down the note.

CADEN

Sammy's explaining too much. Feels  
expository. Needs to be shorthand,  
like, "Jeremy big."

Hazel writes that down. They all continue down the hall.

TAMMY

Caden? Can we stop for a second?

CADEN

Sure.

TAMMY

If Hazel's in love with Sammy and  
Caden's in love with Hazel, there  
would be a dramatic confrontation,  
where Caden turns to me and says,  
"It's obvious he's a substitute for  
me." I think then Hazel could have  
a good moment where she cries or  
gets angry. I'm not sure which  
yet, but it feels dramatically  
sound.

HAZEL

That didn't happen, Caden.

TAMMY

I think Hazel would do that, Hazel.

HAZEL

But Hazel hasn't done it, Tammy.

162

CONTINUED:

162

TAMMY  
Caden? What do you think?

CADEN  
I think we could try it.

TAMMY  
Great!

HAZEL  
Fuck. I'm going out for a smoke.

They watch her go. Caden turns back to the others.

CADEN  
Let's try it. Maybe it could happen at the director's table.

163

EXT. CITY STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2032 - DAY

163

Caden and Hazel sit at the director's table. The street life of the play is going on around them.

CADEN  
Tammy was right. I don't understand why you're with Sammy.

HAZEL  
He's nice. He's available. He fucks me without crying.

CADEN  
That happened one time! You fucked him?

HAZEL  
Yes! And you and I only fucked one time that's why you only cried one time! I give you endless opportunities.

CADEN  
What do you mean, he's available? Since when are you available?

HAZEL  
Derek left. Because of you!

CADEN  
When? How come you never told me?

HAZEL  
I don't know, Caden. How come a lot of things? It's not like we can start fresh, like Sammy and I can. There's all this pressure on us. We're finally both free and there's all this fucking pressure.

(CONTINUED)



163

CONTINUED:

163

CADEN

Fuck. I have to let the actor who  
plays Derek go. What is his name?

1022

(CONTINUED)

HAZEL

That's such a romantic response.  
I'm touched.

CADEN

It's not my response. It just  
crossed my mind. We have enormous  
budgetary concerns here.

HAZEL

Ugh. Forget it.  
(looking in book)  
Derek is played by Joe --

CADEN

Stop, okay. Just stop.

HAZEL

I don't like Tammy and she's  
nothing like me. How can you  
like her? Joe Abernathy.

CADEN

She looks like you. And --

HAZEL

No she does not.

CADEN

-- and she offered to have  
sex with me. Abernathy?

HAZEL

Yes. Was it good?

CADEN

I don't know. Yeah. It was nice.

HAZEL

Ugh.

CADEN

I'm just trying to be honest.  
It was nice. Not earth-  
shattering.

HAZEL

Did you cry?

CADEN

No!

HAZEL

You're making progress.

CADEN

Okay, I cried a little before.  
(long pause)

Hazel, you've been part of me  
forever. Don't you know that? I  
breathe your name in every  
exhalation.

163

CONTINUED: (3)

163

HAZEL

(stops)

Oh, Caden. Oh, fuck. What the fuck are we doing?

CADEN

I don't know.

Hazel latches her pinky around Caden's. Sammy has been watching the whole thing from behind a pillar. Caden glances at his watch.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Crap, Ellen's October 23rd scene!

164

INT. ELEVATOR (31Y BUILDING) (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2032 - 164 DAY

Millicent, Hazel, and Caden wait in the elevator. The elevator begins to ascend. Instead of a motor, the sound of grunting men is heard. The elevator stops short and sways a little bit.

WORKER (O.S.)

Sorry, everybody!

Caden pulls off a wall panel, and sticks his head through.

A165

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT (31Y BUILDING) (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - A165 2032 - SAME

Caden looks down the shaft. Five guys hold the elevator with a rope and pulley system.

CADEN

What's going on, Maurice?

MAURICE

Sorry. We have a couple of new guys on and we're not in sync yet.

CADEN

Okay. Are we good to go?

MAURICE

Yup.

B165

INT. ELEVATOR (31Y BUILDING) (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2032 - B165 SAME

Caden replaces the panel. The elevator continues its ascent to the sound of grunting men.

C165 OMITTED

C165

D165 INT. 31ST FLOOR HALLWAY (31Y BUILDING) (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) D165  
- 2032 - DAY

The two old people (actor versions) are standing at the open door of Old Person #2's apartment. Millicent knocks on Adele's door. Caden and Hazel watch.

OLD PERSON #2 (ACTOR)  
(to Millicent)  
Are you Ellen? Ellen?!

MILLICENT  
Shit. Line, please.

HAZEL  
"What?"

MILLICENT  
Right. What?

OLD PERSON #2  
Are you Ellen Bascomb? I'm to give  
the key to 31Y to Ellen Bascomb.

MILLICENT  
(beat)  
Yes, I'm Ellen.

Old Person #2 fishes a key out of the overcoat pocket.

OLD PERSON #2  
She said you should just go in and  
get started. She said, don't  
forget to change the sheets.

MILLICENT  
Ok. Thank you.

Old Person #2 looks back to Old Person #1, whose nose has started to bleed.

OLD PERSON #2  
Oh dear.

Millicent puts the key in the lock. It doesn't turn.

MILLICENT  
Wrong key.

OLD PERSON #2  
What?

(CONTINUED)

D165 CONTINUED:

D165

MILLICENT

It's the wrong key. It doesn't  
turn.

OLD PERSON #2

Oh, crap. Really?  
(fishes in pockets)  
It's the only one I have.

OLD PERSON #1 (ACTOR)

Does the nose look right,  
Caden? Make up was having  
trouble.

ADELE'S VOICE

I'm jumping in the shower.  
Make some coffee, would ya?

CADEN

(to Hazel)  
Did you hear that?

HAZEL

What?

CADEN

Did we hire an Adele?

HAZEL

I'm sure I would've remembered  
that.

The shower turns on. Caden grabs the key from Millicent.

MILLICENT

Caden, you're breaking the fourth  
wall.

He tries to turn the key in the lock. It won't budge.

CADEN

Sandy, this is the wrong key.

OLD PERSON #2

It isn't. And I don't appreciate  
the accusation. I've been working  
really hard on this scene.

Caden bangs on the door.

CADEN

Adele! Adele, are you in there?

OLD PERSON #1

Maybe it's the wrong key.

OLD PERSON #2

We've been over that, Terry. Adele?  
Don't start.

CADEN

(CONTINUED)

D165 CONTINUED: (2)

D165

HAZEL

Caden, you've got to let go of her.  
She's not here anymore. I'm here.

CADEN

Ok. Yeah. Ok.

165 OMITTED

165

1022

166

EXT. HOTEL STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2032 - DAY

166

Caden and Hazel walk past the set of the hotel she had stayed at with her family.

CADEN

Look familiar?

HAZEL

Oh, is this the place I stayed with Derek and the kids? We had so much fun that trip.

Caden looks crestfallen. There's a commotion. The actors on the street all look up. Caden and Hazel join them. Sammy stands on the ledge of a high window.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Oh fuck. Caden.

CADEN

That's where I was going to jump from! No fair, Sammy!

HAZEL

(screaming)

Sammy! Sammy! Just stay right where you are! I'm coming up!

Hazel rushes into the building set.

SAMMY

There's nothing to talk about, Hazel! This is not your fault!

CADEN

You can't do this! You can't jump from where I was going to jump from!

SAMMY

After me, there's no one left to watch you. You'll see. You'll wither anonymously in a hell of lack of interest.

CADEN

What?! What does that even mean? I don't understand what the fuck anyone's talking about!

(CONTINUED)

166

CONTINUED:

166

SAMMY

Yeah, well, you stole your girl  
from me! And now I have nothing  
now!

Sammy leaps. The actors below scatter. Sammy hits hard,  
breaks through the fake cement, and is dead. Blood  
everywhere. Hazel appears in a window on the 10th floor.

167

EXT. NYC CEMETERY - 2032 - DAY

167

Sammy is buried. An enormous crowd there: all the actors  
from the play, Caden and Hazel in front. Hazel weeps. Caden  
looks at the assembled group, from face to face.

1022

(CONTINUED)



167

CONTINUED:

167

CADEN

I know how to do it now. There are nearly *thirteen million* people in the world. Try to imagine that many people! None of those people is an extra. They're all the leads of their own stories. They have to be given their due.

168

INT. WAREHOUSE - CEMETERY SET - 2035 - DAY

168

The actor playing Sammy is in the coffin. There's an enormous crowd. Tammy plays Hazel and weeps. A stand-in for Sammy as Caden stands next to her. Caden and Hazel watch from the director's table.

CADEN

Do you see what I'm saying?

Hazel has her head in her hands. She looks over at Caden, imploringly.

HAZEL

Come over tonight? Please?

169

OMITTED

169

170

INT. BURNING HOUSE - BEDROOM - 2035 - NIGHT

170

The smoke is thick and there are flames. Hazel, in a robe, walks around lighting candles. Caden unpacks his pumps and monitors and places them next to the bed.

CADEN

We could get a place together. We could get a loft.

HAZEL

God, Caden, that sounds nice. I miss my daughter. Maybe she could come live with us.

CADEN

Yeah. I miss Olive. And the other one. The retarded one.

HAZEL

I'm a bad person.

(CONTINUED)

CADEN

No you're not. I'm a bad person.

HAZEL

I am. I should never... have gone out with Sammy. I was just trying to get to you.

CADEN

You can't cause someone to kill himself. He was troubled.

HAZEL

I'm so ashamed of myself.

Caden walks over to her and touches her shoulder.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Oh, Caden. I wish we had this when we were young. And all the years in between. So many years, so fast.

(crying)

What did we do?

Caden kisses Hazel's forehead. She coughs and smiles up at him, then cranes her neck and kisses him on the lips.

CADEN

My heart aches so much for you.

HAZEL

We're here, Caden. I'm here.

CADEN

I'm aching for it being over.

HAZEL

Yeah. The end is built in to the beginning. What can you do?

CADEN

God. You're just perfect.

HAZEL

I'm a mess. But we fit, don't we.

They kiss, then Hazel climbs into bed.

CADEN

It doesn't always happen for me now. Because of the medication and everything. I take a lot of pills.

HAZEL

I don't care. It's okay.

170

CONTINUED: (2)

170

CADEN

(climbing into bed)

I'm embarrassed. I just want you  
to know it's not you. And it's not  
me. It's the medication.

They are tender and quiet and intensely focused. The smoke  
in the room is dense. When it's over, they lie there  
quietly, with the occasional cough from both of them. Caden  
cries quietly.

CADEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

HAZEL

It's okay. It's different crying  
this time. I can tell. I'm  
crying, too. And I cried last  
time. After you left. I never  
told you. But I cried, too.

Caden kisses her again.

CADEN

I have a title. The Obscure Moon  
Lighting an Obscure World.

HAZEL

I think it might be too much.

171

INT. BURNING HOUSE - KITCHEN - 2035 - MORNING

171

Caden agitatedly paces through the dense smoke. He passes a  
scrapbook on the table. It's open to a page with ripped-up  
napkin pieces glued to it. He's crying hard. There's  
mumbling, quiet conversation coming from somewhere. He walks  
into --

172

INT. BURNING HOUSE - BEDROOM - 2035 - CONTINUOUS

172

Hazel lies in bed. A medic hovers over her, swabs in her  
mouth and pulls out cotton black with soot.

MEDIC

Might be smoke inhalation.

Caden just nods his head for a long time.

173

INT. CADEN'S CAR - 2041 - DAY

173

Caden drives. He stops at a school crossing as a group of  
young children are led across the street in front of his car.  
A young girl with red hair is among them.

(CONTINUED)

173

CONTINUED:

173

She looks at Caden and he is struck by her resemblance to young Olive. Suddenly the passenger door opens and Maria gets in the car. He glances over at her, then looks back out the windshield.

MARIA

Olive wants to see you. God knows why; the way you abandoned her.

CADEN

Oh, shut up.

MARIA

She's had a fucked-up life with issues, thanks to you.

CADEN

You're insane.

MARIA

She's dying, asshole. Is that insane enough for you?

MARIA (CONT'D)

Anyway, she wants to say goodbye to you. God knows the fuck why.

174

INT. NYC HOSPITAL ROOM - 2041 - DAY

174

Maria leads Caden into the room. Olive, 40, lies in bed, emaciated and pale. Maria and Olive speak only in German.

MARIA

Hello, darling.

OLIVE

Hi.

MARIA

This is him.

OLIVE

Hello.

CADEN

Hi, Olive. I've missed you so much.

OLIVE

Maria, would you leave us?

Maria kisses Olive again on the forehead.

MARIA

In heaven, my darling.

Maria exits.

OLIVE

(broken English)

Forgive me but no longer remember English. Speak German?

(CONTINUED)

CADEN

No. I'm sorry.

OLIVE

I had hope you have learned.

Weakly, Olive points to a headset on her night table. She pantomimes putting it on. Caden puts it on. Olive puts on her own. There follows a slightly delayed and staticky translation, in an accented male voice, of everything Olive says, with a delay between what Caden says and Olive's response, as she listens in translation.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

I'm dying, as I'm sure Maria told you. The flower tattoos have become infected and they're dying. So I am, as well. This is life.

Olive pulls down her hospital gown a bit to show Caden the now sickly and decayed flower tattoos.

CADEN

It's Maria. She did this.

OLIVE

Maria gave me reason to live once you left. The flowers defined me.

CADEN

Your mother and Maria took you away. I tried for years to find you. I didn't leave you.

OLIVE

You did *something*.

Caden is affected by this. It resonates.

OLIVE (CONT'D)

I want to talk to you about your homosexuality.

CADEN

What? I'm not a homosexual!

OLIVE

Maria said you would deny it.

CADEN

She's lying to you.

OLIVE

I had the same struggle when I first fell in love with Maria and we began to have dirty, aching sex.

(CONTINUED)

CADEN

Maria is your lover?

OLIVE

Of course. She introduced me to myself. To my vagina and to hers.

CADEN

You have no idea how evil she is.

OLIVE

I need to forgive you before I die, but I can't forgive someone who has not asked for forgiveness.

CADEN

I --

OLIVE

I have no time! I need you to ask for forgiveness!

CADEN

(long pause)

Can you ever forgive me?

OLIVE

For what?

CADEN

For abandoning you.

OLIVE

"For abandoning you to have anal sex with my homosexual lover Eric."

CADEN

For abandoning you to be have anal sex with my homosexual lover Eric.

OLIVE

(long hesitation)

No. No, I'm sorry, I cannot.

Olive dies. Dead flower petals slip from her hospital gown. Caden sits there. Maria hurries rushes to Olive's side.

MARIA

I hope you're happy, faggot.

Caden gets up and leaves.

175 EXT. NYC STREET - SUMMER 2045 - DAY

175

It's sweltering. Caden sits on his stoop, holding some dead flower petals, watching the world pass by. People are sick, angry. Some people wear gas masks. Government vehicles with strange symbols and gun turrets drive by. A woman walks a naked man on a leash. He defecates on the sidewalk. A wild-eyed man in a white t-shirt and Santa hat attacks Caden. As he knocks Caden to the ground and wrestles with him, Caden sees the t-shirt has a little dot: a painting from Adele's show. It's a moment in time, a street scene very much like the one Caden's in. In the painting, a man in a white t-shirt and Santa hat beats up a man who looks like Caden. The flower petals blow away. Caden tries to limp after them.

176 EXT. NYC STREET - 2045 - DAY

176

Caden dials his cell phone.

HAZEL'S ANSWERING MACHINE

It's Hazel. Leave a message or don't. Your dime.

CADEN

My love. I know how to do the play. It'll take place over the course of one day. The day will be the day before you died, the happiest day of my life. I'll be able to relive it forever.

177 EXT. CITY STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2048 - NIGHT

177

Caden weeps inconsolably at the director's table, Michael the pre-Hazel assistant is back, neat and efficient-looking, but old now. Hazel's dog, Squishy, sleeps on the floor. The scene in the play is dull. People walk back and forth aimlessly. Various passersby on the street have hacking coughs. Tammy steps out of the bathroom, meanders over to the director's table. Hazel's sweater is on Michael's chair-back. She casually pulls it off and tries it on. Caden watches. She looks so much like Hazel now, it's unbearable. He looks away. Millicent walks by carrying a mop and bucket.

CADEN

I need a Caden for my Hazel.

MILLICENT

I... I'd very much like to play Caden.

CADEN

Um...

(CONTINUED)

177

CONTINUED:

177

Tammy watches intently. Millicent smiles at her.

1022

(CONTINUED)



MILLICENT

I know it would be non-traditional casting, but I think I'm right for it. I think I understand Caden.

CADEN

I don't understand him.

MILLICENT

Caden Cotard is a man already dead, living in a half-world between stasis and antistasis. Time is concentrated and chronology confused for him. Up until recently he has strived valiantly to make sense of his situation, but now he has turned to stone.

CADEN

Okay. That sounds good.

MICHAEL

She's right? I didn't see that at all. I saw it all as more hopeful.

INT. NYC WIG STORE - 2050 - DAY

Caden and Michael look at a wig called "The Director."

MICHAEL

Any thoughts for today's rehearsal?

CADEN

(beat)

I have a new title, maybe.  
Infectious Diseases In Cattle.

MICHAEL

Huh.

CADEN

The title is about a lot of things. You'll see. It's about a lot.

(pause)

Are you gay, Michael?

MICHAEL

Yes. I don't see what that has to do with anything.

CADEN

Do you know someone named Eric?

178

CONTINUED:

178

MICHAEL  
(defensively)

No.

179

INT. WAREHOUSE - CEMETERY SET - 2050 - DAY

179

Caden, in "Director Wig," and Michael watch Millicent, dressed Caden-esque, sitting at the director's table. Tammy, in Hazel's sweater, sits next to her. They watch the "Sammy Funeral" scene replayed with actors playing Tammy playing Hazel and an actor playing the stand-in for Sammy playing Caden. Tammy has her head in her hands. She looks over at Millicent, imploringly.

TAMMY  
Come over tonight? Please?

MILLICENT  
I'd like that.

CADEN  
Ok, take off the sweater.

Tammy takes off the sweater, puts it on the chair back.

TAMMY  
I'm hot.

MILLICENT  
Yes, you are.

CADEN  
Smile shyly at each other.

They do. It lingers. Millicent looks over at the funeral scene. It's dull and static.

MILLICENT  
This is tedious. This is nothing.

Millicent touches Tammy's hand, heads over to the funeral scene. She whispers things to some actors, has longer conversations with others.

MICHAEL  
What's she doing?

TAMMY  
He's directing.

(CONTINUED)

179

CONTINUED:

179

MICHAEL

She's not getting the feel of you,  
Caden. You don't move around. You  
don't talk to people. It's not --

MILLICENT

Okay, folks, let's run it!

The scene comes alive with specific activity: weeping Hazel, a little boy in the back playing with dirt clods, a man and a woman eyeing each other flirtatiously from a distance, an old woman with Parkinson's fiddling with Rosary beads, a well-dressed woman squatting and peeing near a gravesite. Soon it starts to rain. People run for cover. A young man and woman in love walk happily through the lush green field, the woman opening her mouth to the heavens. Thunder rumbles. Caden looks up, surprised that such a system is rigged here.

180

EXT. BURNING HOUSE STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2050 -  
NIGHT

180

Caden sits with Michael at the director's table and stares into space. The actors are doing what they've always done, milling, walking to and fro. Millicent, holding hands with Tammy, heads up the walk to the Hazel's house set.

CADEN

Millicent.

She turns. He waves her over. Tammy sits on the stoop.

CADEN (CONT'D)

That was ... spectacular.

MICHAEL

It really was! Delightful!

MILLICENT

Thanks.

CADEN

I'm out of ideas. I'm dead.

MILLICENT

Oh. I... could take over... as  
you... for a bit. Until you feel  
refreshed.

MICHAEL

Yes! Yes!

Caden, looks sideways at Michael, remains silent.

(CONTINUED)

180

CONTINUED:

180

MILLICENT

I think you're tired, Caden.  
All these years of creative  
work.

MICHAEL

Yes. I think you just need  
some time. To regroup.

CADEN

I need to keep my hand in.

MILLICENT

Well, Ellen needs to be filled.

CADEN

Filled? You mean...?

MILLICENT

Her role. Just for a bit.

MICHAEL

It's a choice role. Just  
until you're refreshed.

CADEN (CONT'D)

(beat)

I do like to clean.

181

INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2050 - NIGHT 181

Caden sits on the unmade bed and reads the note:

ADELE'S VOICE

Ellen, Olive has died. It's a time  
of overwhelming grief so please  
forgive my mess; I haven't been  
able to get out of bed. Until  
today. Much affection, A.

Caden crosses to the window and looks up at the night sky,  
even though it's clearly the ceiling of the warehouse. A  
tiny plane flies by.

182

INT. 31Y HALLWAY (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2050 - NIGHT

182

Caden walks down the hall carrying a bag of garbage to the  
incinerator chute, dumps it in, and turns back to apartment  
31Y. Old Person #2 (actor version) is standing there.

OLD PERSON #2 (ACTOR)

Ellen? Is your name Ellen?

CADEN

Yes?

OLD PERSON #2 (ACTOR)

Caden asked me to give you this.  
You're to keep it in all the time.

(CONTINUED)

182

CONTINUED:

182

Old Person #2 (actor) hands Caden a small black button. Caden examines it. Old Person #2 (actor) points to his own ear, in which he wears one. Caden sticks it in his ear.

MILLICENT'S VOICE

... touched by the sadness of Adele's neighbor. So close to death. Reminds me of granny. I should really call her. Remember how Granny Bascomb bounced me on her knee pretending to be a horsie. I loved that so much. Say thank you to Adele's neighbor.

CADEN

Thank you.

OLD PERSON #2 (ACTOR)

(pause, listens, then:)

You're very welcome, young lady.

MILLICENT'S VOICE

Now say, have a very good day.

CADEN

Have a very good day.

OLD PERSON #2 (ACTOR)

(pause, listens, then:)

I will indeed.

183

INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2050 - NIGHT 183

It's dark. Caden lies in bed, attached to his pumps.

MILLICENT'S VOICE

... miss him. Why did he have to get bored with me? Everyone gets bored with me. I'm not very bright. And since I put on that weight, I don't get the looks I used to. It's not that bad. Lots of people have it worse. I've got a job and place to stay. Adele is nice to me. And so smart and talented. I don't understand her artwork, but that's just me. I wish I'd gone to college. I feel stupid around educated people like Adele. Eric was too smart for me, too. We didn't talk at all near the end.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

183

CONTINUED:

183

MILLICENT'S VOICE (CONT'D)

I'd try to tell him about my day  
and he'd get this far away look in  
his eyes. I kind of felt sorry for  
him; he seemed so miserable with  
me. I guess --

Caden drifts off to sleep.

184

INT. ELLEN'S KITCHEN - (2050) - MORNING

184

A tenement apartment. Ellen, in a terrycloth robe, is at the stove making scrambled eggs. Toast pops from the toaster and Ellen crosses to get it. She passes a mirror, glances at herself, seems momentarily surprised, pushes a wisp of hair behind her ear and continues to the toaster. Eric enters. He's an unhealthily thin middle-aged man. He doesn't acknowledge her, nor she him. He pours himself coffee.

ELLEN

I'm making eggs.

(beat)

Is everything okay, Eric?

ERIC

Everything's everything.

185

INT. ELLEN'S BEDROOM - (2050) - MORNING

185

Ellen sits on the bed with a cup of coffee and stares out the window. There's a city park across the street and she watches kids play basketball. She begins to weep.

186

EXT. FIELD - (2050) - DAY

186

It's spring and a ten year old girl watches her mother as she lays out a picnic on a blanket on the ground.

MOTHER

Ellen, why do you look so serious?

ELLEN

I'm going to remember this moment  
for the rest of my life, mama. And  
in exactly twenty years, come here  
with my daughter and have exactly  
the same picnic.

MOTHER

Baby, that's the loveliest thing  
I've ever heard.

187 INT. ELLEN'S BEDROOM - (2050) - NIGHT 187

Ellen lies in bed watching Eric sleep next to her.

ELLEN

There was supposed to be something else. I was to have something. A calm. A love. Children. A child, at least. Children. Meaning. I am always on the verge, never more than a tiny shove from tears. I can feel them in my chest now. That squeezing pressure. And it is so tempting to let go, but I am afraid, the next time maybe, I will never stop crying. I miss my husband even though he is lying here. He hates me. Oh God. I have disappointed him and he hates me. The one person who should be able to see me and he won't look. He will never look again.

188 INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2050 - MORNING 188

Caden lies on his back, and opens his eyes. His pumps drone.

CADEN

(quietly, mournfully)  
Eric.

Caden looks over. No note from Adele. He gets out of bed, glances in the mirror, seems surprised by his reflection.

189 INT. 31Y BATHROOM (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2050 - MORNING 189

Caden sits on the toilet and pees. He wipes himself.

190 INT. APARTMENT 31Y (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2051 - MORNING 190

Caden vacuums the hall.

MILLICENT'S VOICE

My period is late this month. I wonder what's going on. I'm bloated. I wish it would come.

191 INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2051 - NIGHT 191

Caden lies in bed reading a Judith Krantz novel.

(CONTINUED)

191

CONTINUED:

191

## MILLICENT'S VOICE

I can't believe she said that to  
him! She's a slut, anyway.

He sticks a bookmark in the book, puts it on the night table,  
turns off the light, and lies on his back with his eyes open.

## MILLICENT'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Maybe I can ask Adele for a raise.  
It's been three years. I do a good  
job. God, I'm so tired tonight.  
I'm getting old. I'm lonely here.

A192

OMITTED

A192

1022



192	OMITTED	192
A193	OMITTED	A193
B193	OMITTED	B193
193	INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2051 - MORNING	193

Caden awakens. He switches off his pumps.

1022

(CONTINUED)

193

CONTINUED:

193

## MILLICENT'S VOICE

Get up. Look at the night table  
for a note from Adele.

Caden gets up and glances at the night table. A type-written  
note:

## MALE VOICE

Adele died of lung cancer last  
night. You may stay on if you  
like.

## MILLICENT'S VOICE

Look shocked. Weep.

Caden looks shocked, then weeps.

## MILLICENT'S VOICE (CONT'D)

Go into the kitchen and --

The voice stops. Caden stops. He waits. Nothing. He takes  
out the earpiece and looks at it, shakes it, then slips it  
back in his ear. Nothing. He waits. In the distance he  
hears wailing and gun shots.

194 INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2053 - NIGHT 194

The lights are out. Caden sits on the bed, still waiting.

195 INT. 31Y WALK-IN CLOSET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - DAY 195

Caden sits on the bed, his head slumped against the  
headboard, sleeping. Distant explosions wake him. He opens  
his eyes and sits up straight, and waits. He taps his ear.

196 INT. 31Y HALLWAY (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - NIGHT 196

The hall is very dark. Caden exits apartment 31Y. Old  
person #2 (actor) stands in the hallway and faces away,  
unmoving. Caden walks past and nods. Old person #2 does not  
respond. Caden presses the elevator button.

(CONTINUED)

196

CONTINUED:

196

OLD PERSON #2 (ACTOR)  
There's nobody running it anymore.

Caden looks at Old Person #2 and nods.

197

INT. WAREHOUSE - 31Y BUILDING STAIRWELL - 2055 - CONTINUOUS 197

Dark. The unfinished, back-of-a-facade of the set is apparent. Caden walks down endless plywood stairs. The bowels of the building: fake water pipes, electrical cords.

198

EXT. CITY STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - MORNING 198

No lights. Vague daylight drifts in from high warehouse windows, from which cardboard has fallen. Deadly quiet, abandoned. Caden passes the occasional body on the street. Fires smolder in buildings. The streets are flooded with sewer water. Buildings are draped with massive tarps. Behind a fence are piles of bodies.

A199

EXT. BURNING HOUSE (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - MORNING A199

He passes the Hazel's House set, burnt to the ground.

B199

EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - MORNING B199

He arrives at the warehouse set and enters.

199

EXT. CITY STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE SET) - 199  
2055 - MORNING

Deserted here too. The same occasional fires, flooding, dead bodies.

A200

EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE SET) A200  
- 2055 - MORNING

Caden walks, soon arriving at the warehouse set within the warehouse set. He enters.

200

EXT. CITY STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE-WITHIN- 200  
WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - MORNING

Another dark, deserted street, more bodies, fires, floods. Caden panics. He pulls out his earpiece, shakes it, and puts it back. He walks.

A201

EXT. WAREHOUSE STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE- A201  
WITHIN-WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055

He arrives at the warehouse within the warehouse within the warehouse. He enters.

201 EXT. CITY STREET (INT. WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE-WITHIN- 201  
WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - DAY

Deserted. Caden walks. He gets in a golf cart and drives through the deserted street sets.

202 EXT. BEACH (INT. WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE-WITHIN- 202  
WAREHOUSE-WITHIN-WAREHOUSE SET) - 2055 - CONTINUOUS

Caden reaches the beach set, and drives the cart on the sand. He sees footprints. He gets out and follows them, spots a woman ahead walking with a suitcase. He hurries as much as he can with his limp, his weakness, his ancient body, to catch up with her.

CADEN

Hello.

The woman turns. She's middle-aged, face radiating kindness.

CADEN (CONT'D)

Where is everybody?

WOMAN

Mostly dead. Some have left.

CADEN

Would you sit with me for a moment?  
I'm very tired. And lonely.

The woman smiles at Caden. They sit on a log.

CADEN (CONT'D)

I feel like I know you.

WOMAN

I was the mother in Ellen's dream.  
Perhaps from there.

CADEN

Yes! That's it. Yes. You seem a  
bit older than I remember.

WOMAN

(chuckling)

That dream was quite a while ago.

He's silent. The woman touches his hand.

CADEN

I didn't mean to say you look old.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

I know.

CADEN

Everyone's dreams in all those  
apartments. All those secrets  
we'll never know. That's the truth  
of it -- all the thoughts nobody  
will ever know.

WOMAN

It's true.

CADEN

I'm sorry the experiment didn't  
work. I wanted it to with all my  
heart. I wanted to do that picnic  
with my daughter. I feel I've  
disappointed you terribly.

WOMAN

No. No. I am so proud of you.

Caden starts to tear up.

CADEN

All I want is someone to see me,  
someone to look at me with  
kindness. For me to be the most  
special person in the world to just  
one person.

WOMAN

I know, baby. I know.

He looks at her tentatively. She's looking into his eyes  
directly, clearly, kindly. She smiles.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You're going to be fine.

Caden starts to weep so hard he chokes. Strings of snot pour  
from his nose. The woman holds him, gently takes off his  
wig, and strokes his sparse hair. He looks out over her  
shoulder at the dark empty city at the far end of the  
warehouse. His rheumy eyes light up.

CADEN

I know what to do with this play  
now. I have an idea. I think --

The screen goes black fast.

202

CONTINUED: (2)

202

END

1022