

**BRAD'S STATUS**

Written by

Mike White

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FADE IN:

1 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT** 1

BRAD SLOAN, lies in bed, staring anxiously up at the ceiling. His wife, MELANIE, is asleep beside him. Moonlight illuminates the room. It is deathly silent, then we HEAR a NARRATOR's voice.

NARRATOR

Brad was lying in bed at 3AM  
wondering why he felt so anxious.

CLOSE ON BRAD as his mind wanders from thought to thought.

NARRATOR

He scanned through all the possible  
sources of his dread - as there  
were many - until he seized upon  
the Architectural Digest.

Brad winces as his memory is stirred.

2 **INT. SACRAMENTO LIVING ROOM - NIGHT** 2

TEN PEOPLE are gathered in a living room, drinking and chatting.

NARRATOR

That night, he and Melanie had gone  
to a dinner party with some of her  
co-workers.

Brad spots an ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST on the coffee table. He notices the cover and picks it up.

ON ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

Photos of some sleek modern house.

NARRATOR

There was a photo spread of a  
hideous steel and glass monstrosity  
in Los Angeles.

2

The page flips. The owner of the house, NICK and his LATINO BOYFRIEND sit on the couch, grinning, in one of the photos.

NARRATOR

Brad realized the home belonged to a college friend, Nick Pascale.

ON BRAD - he grimaces at the photo - a stricken look. \*

NARRATOR

The article stated he bought the house for nine million dollars and put another two into it.

BACK AND CLOSER ON PHOTO OF NICK AND HIS HUSBAND.

NARRATOR

Brad knew Nick had become successful, but felt gut-punched nonetheless.

Brad tosses down the magazine. \*

3

OMIT

3

\*

4

**INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

4

As the other GUESTS, including Melanie, laugh and chat, Brad glumly stares into space.

NARRATOR

This ruined the dinner party for Brad. He stared into space mostly.

GLIMPSES of the other DINNER GUESTS, talking and eating.

NARRATOR

He realized the other people at the table were mediocrities. Underachieving beta males, living in Sacramento, a secondary market. Guys thinking they were big fish in the most inconsequential of ponds.

Brad looks around at the others with a sour expression.

NARRATOR

He felt contempt for himself and everyone there.

5 **INT. BRAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT** 5

Brad rolls over in bed, restless and agitated. He picks up his cell phone on the side table. It GLOWS to life.

NARRATOR

Brad's mind went to other successes that pained him.

**ON PHONE - MOMENTS LATER**

We SEE Brad's finger scroll across a SERIES of GOOGLE IMAGES of Craig Fisher - a political wonk and talking head. Craig - in a studio, posing with the President, getting interviewed.

NARRATOR

There was Craig Fisher - who had worked for the White House. He had written two successful books and was always on TV. He had always been a self-confident know-it-all and now life had affirmed his delusions of grandeur.

We now SEE Brad's fingers ZOOM in close on a PHOTO of Craig, his WIFE and TWO DAUGHTERS all smiles, at an event.

ON BRAD - illuminated by the light of the phone, he grimaces. He puts the phone down. He looks back up at the ceiling.

NARRATOR

He thought about Jason Hatfield...

6 **EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - DAY** 6

JASON HATFIELD walks with TWO EXECS. An attractive ASSISTANT intercepts him and they hop in the back of a waiting SUV.

NARRATOR

...whose hedge fund had made him obscenely wealthy. That he was a nice guy who was a philanthropist and had even given money to Brad's non-profit somehow made it even worse.

7 **EXT. MAUI BEACH - DAY** 7

A tan BILLY WERSTLER sits on the beach with TWO YOUNG SURFER GIRLS, chatting them up. \*

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR

And Billy Werstler who had made enough money from his tech start-up to retire in Maui before he was even forty.

8 INT. BRAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 8

Brad grits his teeth, his mind reeling.

NARRATOR

Everyone had won the lottery but him. Bitter adrenaline pumped through Brad's body. He was never going to get back to sleep.

9 INT. BRAD'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 9

Brad's son, TROY, age six, is playing something for him on an electric keyboard. Brad looks over at... \*

...THE TV - where Craig Fisher is being interviewed on a news program.

NARRATOR

He remembered the first time he'd seen Craig Fisher being interviewed on TV.

ON BRAD - he stops listening to Troy and stares mesmerized at the TV. He rises, pointing at Craig's talking head.

NARRATOR

The memory was like a cluster of needles in his heart. This wasn't a fleeting jealousy. It was pain. It was real pain.

BRAD

*(calling toward kitchen)*  
Melanie!

CLOSER ON BRAD - as he digests this vision.

NARRATOR

Why was it so painful? What was wrong with him?

10

INT. BRAD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

10

Agitated and trying to get comfortable, Brad accidentally swats Melanie in the face, waking her.

MELANIE

Brad!

BRAD

Shit, sorry.

MELANIE

*(half-asleep)*

What the hell? You just hit me in the face.

BRAD

Sorry, sorry. I can't sleep.

*(beat)*

How much do you think your parents house is worth?

MELANIE

My parents' house? I don't know.

BRAD

Like two million? Two and a half?

MELANIE

I don't know.

BRAD

You've never thought about it?

MELANIE

Not really.

BRAD

*(grabs his phone)*

It'll say on Zillow.

\*

MELANIE

Why are you doing this?

\*

BRAD

*(types into phone)*

It says 1.857. That seems low, no?

For Seattle? 4300 square feet.

Zillow is always low. I bet 2.5 at

least. Don't you think?

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

What does it matter?

BRAD

Well, aren't you getting the house when they die?

MELANIE

When they die? I mean, I split it with my brother.

BRAD

Really?

MELANIE

What?

BRAD

But your brother married into a ton of money. He and Vanessa don't need your parents' money.

\*

MELANIE

It doesn't matter anyway, Brad. I mean...

BRAD

Why? Because of climate change? You think the world's gonna end before we retire?

MELANIE

Uh, no.

BRAD

*We might need that money, Mel.*

MELANIE

I think they're considering leaving it all to the grandkids.

BRAD

What do you mean?

MELANIE

Splitting everything among the grandkids.

BRAD

What? Steve has three kids. And they're already rich. We only have one. How's that fair?

MELANIE

It's not up to me. They've also thought about just leaving it all to charity so who knows?

BRAD

Seriously? That's absurd. That's mean.

MELANIE

You work for a non-profit - and you think that's absurd?

BRAD

Right. I work for a non-profit. And you work for the government. We need the money.

MELANIE

Look, I'm gonna be so distraught when my parents die, I'm not gonna give a fuck about the money.

BRAD

Really? Not at all? I think you will.

\*  
\*

MELANIE

What about *your* dad? You have money coming to you.

BRAD

He's an academic. Two hundred thousand dollars maybe.

MELANIE

It'll help pay for Troy's college. Is that why you're worrying about money? We'll be fine. We'll figure it out.

BRAD

Thank god we only had one kid.

MELANIE

Oh my god.

BRAD

How much do you think your parents are worth total? Four? Five? Split in half. Then taxes. That's like 1.5, 1.2.

(MORE)



BRAD (cont'd)

And they'll probably have health care shit to pay for - those senior living places can eat up the whole entire thing in no time...

MELANIE

What is wrong with you?

BRAD

I just feel like we're running out of time here. There's no more *potential* - this is it - we've plateaued - and clearly there's not gonna be some windfall out of nowhere that's gonna change the situation...

\*

MELANIE

We're not poor, Brad.

BRAD

In some circles. Yeah.

MELANIE

What circles? The one per cent? Please. Go to sleep.

Brad rolls over, then rolls back to her.

BRAD

I can't.

MELANIE

Stop thinking about this.

BRAD

We didn't work this hard to end up dying in a flophouse. You know?

MELANIE

*(turning away from him)*

You're freaking me out. Enough. We have a great life.

BRAD

I think you should talk to your parents and get some clarity. The grandkids don't need the money. Especially Steve and Vanessa's. I've seen their posts. They live like Saudi Arabian princesses. They have their whole lives ahead of them anyway. You and I are done!

10

MELANIE

Please shut up.

Brad shuts up. He stares into the middle distance.

11 **EXT. SACRAMENTO NEIGHBORHOOD - DAWN** 11

The sun is rising over Brad's residential neighborhood - modest, but attractive homes.

A YOUNG CYCLIST barrels down the center of the empty road.

SPRINKLERS go off at a nearby house. \*

A NEIGHBOR closes his trash can and pulls it up the drive. \*

11A **EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - DAWN** 11A \*

ESTABLISHING SHOT as a CAR drives by. \*

12 **INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - MORNING** 12

A few images of the house.

A FRAMED PHOTO of Brad, Melanie and their son, Troy - in the photo, maybe nine years old. They are all smiling.

A SUITCASE on ROLLERS is placed by the front door.

13 **INT. TROY'S BEDROOM - MORNING** 13

Troy, now 17, sits in a towel on his bed, with his BULLDOG. Troy stares lovingly at the dog.

CLOSE on Bulldog as he lifts his neck so Troy can scratch it.

TROY

I know you get mad when I go away.  
Please don't piss on the bed.

Brad opens the door.

BRAD

We have ten minutes.

TROY

(rising)  
Yeah, I'm ready. I just gotta put  
on my clothes.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TROY (*cont'd*)  
(*as BRAD lingers*)  
Can you give me a second?

BRAD  
(*surprised*)  
Troy - you suddenly have the body  
of a man, man.

(CONTINUED)

TROY

Please don't be weird, Dad. I'm stressed.

14

**INT. MELANIE'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY**

14

Melanie drives, talking to Troy, who sits in the back. Brad is in the passenger seat, looking out the window.

TROY

I have it, Mom. It's all on my phone.

MELANIE

Will you forward it to your dad? I don't think he has any sense of the schedule. Do you Brad?

*(no response)*

I don't think he has any idea. So it's really on you, honey...

\*

CLOSE ON BRAD - he is lost in thought. We can HEAR Melanie and Troy continue to talk in the b.g.

NARRATOR

The entire ride to the airport, Brad kept thinking about his protege, Chris Kanew - and about how Chris Kanew had quit that week. And all the things he said.

15

**INT. CHIPOTLE - LUNCH**

15

Brad sits at a LUNCH PLACE with a young colleague, CHRIS.

BRAD

So wait - I don't understand? Sounds like you're quitting.

CHRIS

*(solemn nod)*

I am quitting. I got another job actually. I start in two weeks.

BRAD

What? Where?

CHRIS

San Francisco. At City National. In their brokerage office.

\*

BRAD

Wait a minute. You're getting into banking?

CHRIS

*(nods)*

I've loved working with you, Brad. I've learned a lot from you. But I think this job has made me... kinda depressed. And I actually think I can do more good by just making a lot of money - and giving it away. Instead of spending all my time asking other people for *their* money to give away. You know?

Brad stares at him, floored.

16

**INT. MELANIE'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY**

16

As Melanie and Troy chat, Brad stares out the window, sinking into a deep funk.

NARRATOR

As he remembered the exchange, Brad felt a hot flush of humiliation. He felt exposed in some essential and embarrassing way. It seemed so obvious that his life's work was an absurdity. It might as well be tattooed across his face.

Brad absently covers the invisible tattoo on his forehead. \*

17

**EXT. SACRAMENTO AIRPORT - DAY**

17

Brad pulls their bags from the trunk. Melanie comes gives Troy a big hug. \*

MELANIE

Call me all the time. I want to know everything. This is so exciting! I love you!

TROY

Thanks, Mom. Should be cool.

Melanie approaches Brad. She's emotional.

MELANIE

I can't believe this. This is crazy.

BRAD

He's not leaving yet. We're just looking at schools.

MELANIE

*(in tears)*

I know. It just feels like a big moment. I'm so jealous. I wish I didn't have this stupid conference.

*(composes herself; smiles)*

The flight info's all on your phone - the hotels - it's all there. Be happy. Be present. Okay?

*(hugs BRAD)*

And take pictures. I love you.

Melanie gives Troy one last kiss, then gets back in the car. They wave her off.

18

**INT. SACRAMENTO AIRPORT - DAY**

18

Brad hands his and Troy's tickets to a TSA OFFICER.

TSA OFFICER

The economy entrance is [that line](#).

\*

BRAD

Well, what is this?

TSA OFFICER

Business, first class only. [Are you TSA Pre?](#)

\*

\*

BRAD

[No, but](#) I have a Silver Flyer card.

\*

TSA OFFICER

Sorry.

Brad nods and shuffles off, with Troy in tow.

19

**INT. AIRPORT GATE - DAY**

19

Brad and Troy sit in the crowded terminal, waiting for their flight to board. Troy listens to music.

Brad watches - a YOUNG FATHER, nearby - playing with his TODDLER SON.

After a moment, Brad turns to Troy and motions for him to take off his headphones. Troy does.

BRAD

You know what I'm thinking? Let's try for an upgrade.

TROY

What do you mean?

BRAD

This is a big moment. You're gonna go find your college. You and me - how many trips are we gonna have like this again? Let's fly business.

TROY

Business. Really? Okay.

BRAD

I have a lot of miles I think. Might cost a little money. It'll be fun. Let's make this fucking special. Right?

TROY

I've never flown business.

Brad gives Troy an emphatic that-settles-it grin then rises.

**INT. GATE COUNTER - MOMENTS LATER**

Brad has waited his turn in line. He approaches the FEMALE AIRLINE REP.

AIRLINE REP

How can I help you?

BRAD

Hi. I'm flying today with my son - he's a senior in high school and we're going East to look at colleges.

*(no response)*

Pretty cool. Umm, wondering if there's any room in business so we could upgrade.

AIRLINE REP

Let me see. I believe there might be. Two of you are traveling?  
*(taps away on computer)*  
Good news. There are two seats available in business.

BRAD

Awesome.

AIRLINE REP

Can I see your tickets?

Brad hands over his tickets. As she types...

BRAD

I was hoping I could use my miles. I have a bunch of miles I think...

AIRLINE REP

Unfortunately, no - not for this flight, you can't. The cost to upgrade to business would be eight hundred and twenty one dollars a ticket.

*(types away)*

So the total would be sixteen hundred and forty-two dollars.

BRAD

Sixteen hundred dollars? For a domestic flight?

AIRLINE REP

Sixteen forty-two, yes.  
*(as he stalls)*

Do you want to go ahead and purchase the tickets?

BRAD

Uh... hmmm... sixteen...

AIRLINE REP

Do you want to sit down and think about it while I help some of the other passengers in line?

BRAD

You know what, let's just do it.  
*(gets out wallet)*  
I'll put it on the Amex. I mean, the MasterCard. No, the Amex.

(CONTINUED)



AIRLINE REP  
(takes card)  
Great! Let me just run that.

BRAD  
(justifying)  
It's a once in a lifetime thing.  
My only kid - going to college.

AIRLINE REP  
Mr. Sloan, actually, unfortunately -  
we can't upgrade you. I'm sorry.

BRAD  
Why not?

AIRLINE REP  
It seems as though you bought your  
tickets on a discounted website.  
With that type of ticket, we can't  
upgrade you. \*

BRAD  
Even if I pay sixteen hundred  
dollars?

AIRLINE REP  
There's actually no amount of money  
you could pay to get an upgrade.  
I'm so sorry. Anything else?

BRAD  
Uh, no. It's no big deal. What if  
I'm a Silver Flyer Member...?

The Rep shakes her head and waves the next customer up.  
Brad, disappointed, returns to his seat.

Troy and Brad board the plane, passing...

...the PASSENGERS in FIRST CLASS. They are being served  
mimosas and champagne. They're all wealthy and well-dressed.

Brad looks at them as he slowly makes his way down the aisle.

22

**INT. AIRPLANE - DAY**

22

Troy and Brad sit toward the back of the plane. They look cramped and uncomfortable. Brad pulls out his SILVER FLYER CLUB MEMBER CARD from his wallet.

BRAD

I'm sorry I couldn't get us the upgrade. I...

TROY

It's no biggie.

BRAD

This Silver Flyer Card is totally meaningless. It means nothing. It gets you nothing.

TROY

Well, get rid of it.

BRAD

I'm gonna. I'm tossing it. Should I? Yeah, fuck it - it's trash.  
*(nowhere to throw it)*  
I'll just keep it for now.

Brad puts it back in his wallet and SIGHS.

23

**INT. AIRPLANE - LATER**

23

Troy listens to music and thumbs through a magazine. Brad, deep in thought, looks out the plane's window.

NARRATOR

On the flight, Brad wondered when was the last time Craig Fisher flew economy. Probably not in decades.

24

**INT. FIRST CLASS - DAY**

24

We SEE Craig Fisher, sitting in First Class, drinking a mimosa, approached by a FLIGHT ATTENDANT.

NARRATOR

Brad imagined Craig enjoying all the perks of first class.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Mr. Fisher, can I offer you a warm towel?

(CONTINUED)

24

CRAIG

Warm towel. Yes, thank you.

With a tong, she hands him a towel.

Craig places it over his face and reclines in his cushy seat.

25

**EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY**

25

Jason Hatfield and his ELEGANT WIFE and their FOUR TOWHEADED CHILDREN cross a tarmac towards their PRIVATE PLANE.

NARRATOR

Then Brad thought about how Jason Hatfield has his own private plane. Probably never has to fly commercial at all.

26

**EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY**

26

Nick Pascale and his BOYFRIEND and their DOGS get out of a HELICOPTER and cross the tarmac, then walk the stairs to their private plane. \*

\*  
\*  
\*

NARRATOR

Nick Pascale probably flies private, too. Brad thought what a high it must be for these guys to always feel important and special and better than. It must be like a drug - a drug Brad distrusted yet coveted, and never seemed to have the opportunity to try.

27

**INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY**

27

The Hatfield family enters the plane. They begin eating, playing, taking pictures. \*

\*

NARRATOR

Brad imagined all the great vacations they went on - the exotic destinations.

Jason and his wife drink champagne from flutes, then chuck the glasses. She then takes a selfie of her and Jason.

28

**INT. AIRPLANE - DAY**

28

The same SELFIE PHOTO is on an INSTAGRAM page of JACQUELINE HATFIELD.

WE SEE Brad scrolling through Jason's wife's Instagram page, a sour look on his face.

ON PHONE - more PHOTOS of Jason's family living the good life.

NARRATOR

The adventures. And the sense of possibility. No door ever closed. Everything an option.

Brad puts away the phone and stares out the window.

\*

NARRATOR

The world for them is not a battlefield. Not even an obstacle course.

He looks out at the clouds and the landscape below.

NARRATOR

It's a playground. A dream. A Heaven manifest.

Troy taps Brad on the shoulder. A FLIGHT ATTENDANT stands behind him with her cart.

TROY

Dad, can I get some Pringles? They're seven dollars.

BRAD

Seven dollars? Yeah. Okay.

TROY

I need your credit card.

Brad pulls out his wallet and hands over the card.

29

**INT. AIRPLANE - LATER**

29

Troy has fallen asleep. Brad sits and stares, thinking.

NARRATOR

Brad's thoughts soon drifted back to his college days at Tufts.

30 **EXT. TUFTS UNIVERSITY - SUNSET** 30

The late '80's. From a grassy knoll, we WATCH a GROUP of MALE STUDENTS gather and greet each other. It's a nostalgic, beautiful image.

NARRATOR

Wasn't Brad then the golden boy?  
Wasn't he the one destined for  
great things? How did he end up  
the one compromised by life and  
living in the margins? Brad  
likened it in his mind to a love  
affair. When he was young, he was  
in love with the world. And the  
world loved him.

30A **EXT. SHOT OF PLANE LANDING** 30A \*

The SCREECH of TIRES on the runway. \*

31 **INT. AIRPLANE - AFTERNOON** 31

The plane has just landed. It taxis across the runway.

NARRATOR

It pained him to admit the world  
had fallen out of love with him  
first. This realization made him  
want to cry.

Brad looks like he might cry, then realizes Troy is talking to him.

TROY

...they say air travel leaves a  
huge carbon footprint - and with so  
many people flying now, it's a big  
contributor to global warming.  
Kinda sucks.

Brad snaps out of it, feigns attention to Troy.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)

Welcome to Boston. Local time here  
is 6:15 PM...

32 **EXT. BOSTON - DUSK** 32

ICONIC BOSTON SPOTS from inside a moving TAXI.

33

**INT. TAXI - TRAVELING - DUSK**

33

Brad and Troy are in the back of a taxi.

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR

In the cab ride to the hotel, Brad tried to locate the moment where things had gone wrong for him. And when. His first thought was Melanie.

33A INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

33A \*

Brad works at the dining room table. He looks over at Melanie - she has pulled Troy close to her and plays with his hair as they watch TV. The Bulldog is in Troy's lap.

NARRATOR

Yes, Melanie was a great mother and she loved Brad and was clearly happy with their life together.

Melanie looks over at him and smiles. He smiles back.

34 INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

34

Brad and Melanie are having a discussion in the kitchen as they make dinner.

Brad approaches her with a spoonful of sauce to try.

NARRATOR

But she was also easily satisfied - and maybe her contentment undermined his ambition.

Melanie tastes the pasta and smiles, nodding. Brad remains skeptical that it tastes good.

35 INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY

35

Nick Pascale's Boyfriend shows him a watch in a magazine.

NARRATOR

Nick Pascale's boyfriend obviously loved expensive things. Maybe his appetites spurred Nick's drive to succeed.

Nick takes out a WATCH BOX and hands it to Xavier. Xavier opens it - it's the same watch. Xavier exults.

36

**INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY**

36

Jason Hatfield's elegant Wife smooths down one of her daughter's pinafores and arranges her hair.

NARRATOR

And Jason Hatfield's wife was a  
blue blood.

*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*



36

CONTINUED:

36

NARRATOR (cont'd)

She had introduced him to rich clients, given him entree and status, and showed him the ways of the American aristocracy.

37

**EXT. RED CARPET - NIGHT**

37

\*

Craig and his wife, DIANE, are both being interviewed separately on a red carpet before an event.

NARRATOR

And Diane Fisher was a celebrated intellectual herself. She and Craig competed with each other - and that dynamic had driven Craig to become a stand-out in his field.

They stop and pose for photos.

38

**INT./EXT. TAXI - TRAVELING - DUSK**

38

\*

Brad's PHONE - he is now looking at PHOTOS of Craig and Diane at the same event on his phone.

NARRATOR

Maybe Brad had married the wrong woman.

Brad reacts to the photos.

BACK ON PHONE - an incoming call - the screen reads "MELANIE". He answers.

BRAD

*(into phone)*

Hey, honey. Yep, we made it - we're on our way to the hotel. How's it going there? Yeah?

39

**INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT**

39

Brad hands over his credit card to the EMPLOYEE at the REGISTRATION DESK. Troy lingers nearby. As the Employee runs Brad's card...

...Brad eye-balls an OLDER MAN beside him, complaining to another HOTEL EMPLOYEE.

(CONTINUED)

OLDER MAN

There's this draft, moving the curtains - and I'm hearing this constant whistle and it's driving me crazy...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

NARRATOR

Brad's suspicions then turned to his father.

40

**INT. BRAD'S PARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT**

40

BRAD'S DAD, a rumpled academic, sits in a reading chair, jotting his thoughts onto a yellow legal pad.

NARRATOR

His dad had been a professor and had spent years writing an exhaustive study on Institutional Fascism that was never published.

Brad's Dad reads over what he's just written, finds it lacking and scratches it out. He starts over.

NARRATOR

Brad found his father self-pitying and defensive.

41

**INT. BRAD'S PARENTS' KITCHEN - NIGHT**

41

\*

Brad and his dad, now older, have an argument over dinner.

BRAD'S DAD

I don't need the humiliation. I know they have no interest. It's not about vampire children - or whatever. These publishing houses...

As his dad pontificates, we HEAR:

NARRATOR

His lifelong commitment to exposing the tyranny of the powerful had hardened over the years into a crippling paranoia. It bothered Brad that his father had no perspective on his own failings - but found fault everywhere else. The Sociology department, the University, corporate America.

41

BRAD'S DAD

The values of society have become  
the values of the ruling class.  
Forget about subversion.

Brad, exasperated, shakes his head and gives up.

42

**INT. PRIVATE PLANE LOUNGE - DAY**

42

\*

Jason Hatfield's FATHER and MOTHER have joined the family.  
They are a distinguished-looking older couple. Jason and his  
Father have an animated conversation, while his Mother  
attends to her grandkids. We SEE the plane in the b.g.

\*

\*

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, Jason Hatfield's dad had  
been a state senator and a  
businessman. Steadfast,  
uncomplicated, cheerful. Of course  
Jason had been given all the tools  
he needed to succeed.

They all stand to exit. A hand reaches in for a forgotten  
sweater.

\*

\*

43

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

43

As Troy unpacks his bag, Brad sits on the bed, thinking.

NARRATOR

Unlike Brad, who had inherited his  
father's indecisiveness, his  
authority complexes, his tendency  
to lay blame. Even now, here he  
was blaming his father for his own  
disappointments.

Brad shakes his head with self-loathing.

NARRATOR

Enough. Brad's choices were his.  
Brad did it. He's the piece of  
shit.

Suddenly, Troy tosses his baseball cap, hitting Brad's head.

TROY

Dad.

Brad looks up, a bit stupefied.

(CONTINUED)

TROY

You deaf? I was asking you if you  
wanted to go get some food.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD  
(*rallying*)  
Yeah. Let's do it. Let's get some  
food. I'm hungry.

TROY  
All I've eaten today is that can of  
Pringles.

44

**INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

44

Troy and Brad sit, looking at menus. Everyone else in the  
restaurant is old and Chinese.

TROY  
This menu is pretty weird.

BRAD  
Not sure where else to go.

TROY  
I thought you went to school here.

BRAD  
Tufts is another part of town. And  
it was twenty-five years ago.  
(*forces a grin*)  
This is cool, hunh? We're really  
doing it! You want to go over your  
schedule?

TROY  
Not really, but okay.  
(*off BRAD's look*)  
It's on your phone. I sent it to  
you.

Brad takes out his phone and looks up the e-mail.

BRAD  
(*reading*)  
Okay, tomorrow Harvard - interview  
and tour.

TROY  
And then I'm supposed to meet up  
with this girl from high school who  
goes there. She's in the music  
department so...

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

Wednesday - Tufts interview and tour. That's gonna be weird - I haven't been back there in so long.

*(shrugs)*

Okay, then Thursday - we rent the car - drive to Amherst - then Williams...

*(looks up)*

These are all competitive schools, Troy. You have some safety schools you're applying to?

TROY

Yeah, sure.

BRAD

Just try not to get too caught up in the game. The brands. Don't put too much pressure on yourself. It all works out. In the end, you end up at the right place.

TROY

I'm not worried.

BRAD

You shouldn't be.

TROY

I'm just stoked to get out of Sac. Everything else is gravy.

BRAD

Ahh, Sacramento's all right.

Troy lets out a little laugh.

BRAD

You'll miss your parents.

TROY

That's true.

BRAD

When I was your age, I was so freaked out about college. I wanted to go to Yale. I was obsessed. I don't even know why. Why Yale? Then I got wait-listed - and then I didn't get in. But it all worked out. I loved Tufts. Tufts was a fantastic school.

*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*

BRAD (cont'd)

Made great friends. I had a professor - Bob Connor - took me under his wing - blew my mind - changed my life - made me want to save the world.

Brad's mind drifts for a bit, then he returns.

BRAD

Anyway, fuck Yale. You know what I'm saying? And if you don't get into Tufts, fuck Tufts.

TROY

My counselor thinks I'll get into Yale.

It takes Brad a moment to process this.

BRAD

She does?

TROY

He does.

BRAD

He does?

(off TROY's nod)

Why does he think that?

TROY

I don't know. My grades. My scores. My compositions - I guess a lot of these schools want to fill orchestral spots.

(shrugs)

My counselor's pretty confident I'll get in everywhere I apply.

(off BRAD's look; laughs)

What? You look stunned.

BRAD

No. I just... do you think this guy knows what he's talking about?

TROY

He's been doing it for twenty years.

BRAD

He thinks you'll get into Yale?

(off TROY's nod)

That's amazing. Really? Wow.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRAD (cont'd)

I mean, I knew you had good grades.  
I've always thought you were a  
genius. But I just... That is so  
awesome, Troy.

(beams, then...)

But we're not visiting Yale.

TROY

I don't want to go to Yale.

BRAD

Why not?

TROY

I'm hoping I'll get into Harvard.  
There's a music professor there -  
this guy, Jerome Backaly. And he's  
doing really cool stuff. And I  
don't know - it's a cool program.  
I just have this feeling...

BRAD

You should meet him while you're  
here!

TROY

I'd like to. My friend from school  
- she says, there's a concert  
Wednesday night she's playing - and  
he might be there. So...

BRAD

(amazed)

You're going to Harvard.

TROY

Well, maybe - I don't know.

BRAD

Does your mother know this?

\*

TROY

She knows I want to.

BRAD

I just can't believe I didn't know  
this.

TROY

You knew we were coming here.

(CONTINUED)



BRAD

I knew we were checking out the school - but I didn't know you were actually gonna get in. \*

TROY

I might not get in.

BRAD

But it sounds like you might?

TROY

*(smiles)*

Yeah, I might.

BRAD

*(elated)*

My kid's going to Harvard.

TROY

Well, don't fucking jinx me, dude.

Brad is soon full of emotion. He works to keep it in check.

TROY

You okay, Dad?

Brad nods, composing himself.

BRAD

Life's crazy. How cool. Proud of you.

Brad looks like he might cry. The WAITRESS arrives.

WAITRESS

What can I get you?

BRAD

*(looks up)*

Hi. We're here visiting colleges. My son's first choice is Harvard.

Troy rolls his eyes, embarrassed.

WAITRESS

Okay. And what would he like to eat?

45

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

45

Brad and Troy lie back on their twin beds, both illuminated by the glow of their laptops.

On Brad - he is wide-eyed, energized - as he stares at the computer screen. We can HEAR classical piano leaking from his ear buds.

NARRATOR

Brad was electrified by this latest development. Here - suddenly - an unexpected lifeline - something tangible - an outward proof.

ON COMPUTER - Brad is watching a home video of Troy playing piano. He's clearly a prodigy.

NARRATOR

Of course. His child. His son.

Brad has tears in his eyes as he watches the video.

NARRATOR

A genius. With substance. His heart could burst with this deep satisfaction.

He looks over at...

...Troy, watching GAME OF THRONES on his laptop.

NARRATOR

Brad realized along the way, he'd somehow lost the plot. Cured of his amnesia, he now remembered what he'd been doing for the last seventeen years.

Troy senses he's being watched. He looks over.

Brad gives Troy a big, prideful grin.

NARRATOR

Planting and nurturing and modeling for this miraculous creature.

Troy smiles back, bemused, then turns back to the show.

Brad looks out into the middle distance, contemplative.

(CONTINUED)

45

NARRATOR

It occurred to Brad that Billy Werstler and Nick Pascale didn't even have kids.

46 **EXT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY**

46

Nick and his Husband have a pool party at their LA mansion with a bunch of YOUNG, ATHLETIC GUYS.

NARRATOR

The pleasures in their lives were like candy, Brad thought.

47 **EXT. MAUI BEACH**

47

Billy makes out with an attractive GIRL in the ocean.

\*

NARRATOR

Sugary, addictive, but ultimately empty, even potentially harmful.

48 **INT. HOTEL - NIGHT**

48

Brad puts away the laptop, smiling to himself.

NARRATOR

Not like the profound and sustaining pleasure Brad was experiencing right now.

Troy is now crouching in front of the mini-bar cabinet.

TROY

Dad, can I have this Toblerone?

BRAD

Of course.

As Troy opens the Toblerone...

NARRATOR

In this new light, Brad reconsidered all his regrets.

49 **INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY**

49

It's mayhem in the Hatfield family's private plane. The kids are all acting bratty, complaining and arguing.

(CONTINUED)

49

Jason Hatfield looks irritated, ignoring the chaos as he tries to work on his computer.

NARRATOR

If he had pursued money and power  
like Jason Hatfield, Troy might  
have ended up spoiled and entitled.

One of the young boys snorts a line of COCAINE off a tray.

NARRATOR

Maybe on hard drugs.

50

**INT. NEW YORK RESTAURANT - DAY**

50

Craig and Diane Fisher and their TWEEN TWIN GIRLS, in their Brooklyn hipster fashion, have a discussion over brunch.

NARRATOR

And if he had married a striver  
like Diane Fisher and stayed in New  
York, his kids could have been self-  
important and unbearable.

TWEEN TWIN ONE

We need capital for our digital  
newsletter. You must know  
investors.

CRAIG

Well, what is it exactly?

TWEEN TWIN TWO

We've told you, Dad. Feminist  
theory and shopping tips.

51

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

51

Troy hands Brad the last chunk of Toblerone. Brad pops it in his mouth.

BRAD

*(to himself; chewing)*  
Thank God for Sacramento.

TROY

Hunh?

Brad suddenly tickles Troy. They rough house a bit before  
Troy pushes Brad away.

\*  
\*



BRAD

You have a son? Daughter?

MOTHER

Yes, a son - he's interviewing.

BRAD

Mine, too. Where you from?

MOTHER

St. Petersburg.

BRAD

Russia??

MOTHER

*(shakes her head)*

Florida.

BRAD

Oh, right. Okay. My son is a very talented musician. Pianist. Keyboard. And he composes his own music so...

MOTHER

Wonderful.

BRAD

Looks like he's gonna have a lot of decisions to make. I think Harvard - is definitely in the running though.

MOTHER

*(dry)*

You think Harvard has a chance?

BRAD

What does your son, uh, do?

MOTHER

What does he do? He's a student in high school.

BRAD

Right, right.

*(sizes her up)*

Okay.

Suddenly, a sheepish Troy appears.

(CONTINUED)

TROY

Hey, Dad.

BRAD

*(confused)*

What happened? Is it over?

TROY

I got the day wrong.

BRAD

What?

TROY

I got the day wrong. It's yesterday.

BRAD

Yesterday. What do you mean?

TROY

Yeah, I don't know, I fucked it up. It was yesterday.

BRAD

Did they give you a time to come back?

TROY

I think they're pretty booked up. They said I could do an alumni interview back in Sacramento.

BRAD

Noooo. You don't want to do that. You want to do it with one of these guys. These are the guys that decide.

*(to the MOTHER)*

Right?

The Mother shrugs.

TROY

I'm just gonna go on the tour. It's not a big deal.

BRAD

It IS a big deal. Let me talk to them.

TROY

No, Dad, no.

*(CONTINUED)*

BRAD

Yes, I'm going to. We didn't come all this way so you could have an interview in *Sacramento*.

An ADMISSIONS OFFICER talks to Brad. Troy hovers, anxious.

ADMISSIONS OFFICER

I'd love to be able to accommodate you guys - but our schedule's been set - for months.

BRAD

We flew from Sacramento.

ADMISSIONS OFFICER

We have a pretty small staff here...

BRAD

I just want you to get a sense of my son. Harvard is his first choice. So...

TROY

Dad - it's okay.

BRAD

He's a pianist. He does community service. His counselor says he's Harvard material.

ADMISSIONS OFFICER

It's not necessary to have an interview here. Alumni interviews are just as good.

BRAD

Oh, come on. I know how important face time is, okay? We're here. Come on. Don't shine us.

TROY

Dad!

BRAD

Can't you just sit with him for ten minutes? What are you doing right now?



ADMISSIONS OFFICER

I have a staff meeting.

TROY

*(grabs Brad's arm)*

Please, please, please. Please.

Brad registers Troy's plaintive look and relents.

Troy and Brad have exited. They argue on the lawn.

TROY

What the fuck, Dad? You think arguing with the admissions officer is gonna help my chances?

BRAD

He won't remember this.

TROY

I think he will.

BRAD

I don't understand - how can someone who has the **brain** to get into Harvard, not have the brain to remember what day he made an appointment - so he could get into Harvard?!

\*

\*

TROY

I don't know. Fuck off.

BRAD

Don't tell me to fuck off.

TROY

I'm sorry. Can we walk somewhere else please? They're about to start a tour.

BRAD

So what?

TROY

I don't want everyone seeing me get bitched out by my dad, okay?

BRAD

I'm not bitching you out. I'm trying to solve a problem here. You need to have an interview. I mean, we're here. That's the point.

TROY

I thought the point was for me to get a sense of the school.

BRAD

No, the point is for the school to get a sense of you. You need to make an impression. I know you think you have this in the bag. But it's Harvard. Even geniuses get rejected, Troy.

Troy looks over and sees - a group of APPLICANTS and their PARENTS gathering for a tour.

TROY

Oh my god.

BRAD

You realize we're competing with kids from Hong Kong and everywhere! Okay? You're a white kid from the suburbs without a sob story. And you're not even a legacy. We're underdogs here - we need to do everything we can.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TROY

*(embarrassed)*

Dad - I'm about to flip the fuck out. Please shut up.

BRAD

Let me think. Go on the tour - and I will meet you back here when it's over.

TROY

What are you gonna do?

BRAD

I'm gonna make some calls.

Troy looks uneasy - but the tour is leaving.

(CONTINUED)

TROY

Just don't do anything uncool.

Brad grimaces and takes out his phone.

57

**INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - MORNING**

57

Melanie is feeding the BULLDOG, on her CELL PHONE.

MELANIE

Hey.

**INTERCUT PHONE CALL**

BRAD

Troy messed up - we're here at Harvard and he doesn't have an interview. *He got the day wrong.* Do we know anyone at Harvard? I want to get him an interview. They need to meet him.

\*

MELANIE

Who's at Harvard? Like a... like a... like a... dean?

BRAD

*(excited)*

Babe, Harvard is Troy's first choice. Did you know that? And his counselor thinks he can get in? Did you know *that*? *Who do we know at Harvard?!*

\*

MELANIE

I don't know. I mean... I gotta think. Toni Morrison?

BRAD

Toni Morrison? You know Toni Morrison?

MELANIE

No.

BRAD

She teaches at Princeton, Melanie. What the fuck are you talking about, Toni Morrison?

MELANIE

I don't know. Who would I know at Harvard?

BRAD

You know people in government. Someone musta gone to Harvard. Think. It's Troy's future.

MELANIE

I met one of the Kennedys in San Francisco.

\*  
\*

BRAD

Yeah?

\*

MELANIE

She's a yoga instructor. Doesn't Craig Fisher teach a class there?

\*

BRAD

What? No. Does he?

MELANIE

I think I read that somewhere. I think he's a visiting lecturer or something. He flies up from D.C.

BRAD

He lives in New York now.

MELANIE

He flies up from New York then. I'm pretty sure he lectures there, teaches a class or...

BRAD

Fuuuuuck!

MELANIE

What?

BRAD

I think you're right. Now that you mention it... shit!

MELANIE

What's wrong?

BRAD

I don't want to call him. Ugh. Goddammit.

(CONTINUED)

57

MELANIE  
What's the big deal?

BRAD  
(sighs; full of dread)  
I'll call you later.

Melanie realizes he's hung up.

57A **EXT. HARVARD UNIVERSITY - DAY** 57A

Brad exits the campus, deep in thought.

57B **EXT. CAMBRIDGE - HARVARD LAMPOON BUILDING - DAY** 57B

Brad walks through Cambridge.

57C **EXT. CAMBRIDGE - NEAR CHARLES RIVER - DAY** 57C

Brad crosses toward the Charles River.

58 **EXT. CHARLES RIVER - DAY** 58

Brad sits on a bench, watching **STUDENT ROWERS in BOATS** pass. \*

NARRATOR  
Brad thought about the last time  
he'd seen Craig Fisher.

59 **INT. MANHATTAN DINER - DAY** 59

Brad and Craig have lunch in a crowded diner.

NARRATOR  
They had both been in New York City  
for different reasons - and decided  
to meet up. Brad had just started  
his non-profit - and was full of  
enthusiasm.

Brad animatedly pitches Craig.

NARRATOR  
He had hoped Craig might want to  
get involved in some way. Offer up  
his famous friends.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

Even donate money. But Craig never took the bait.

Craig listens politely - takes a bite of his sandwich.

**INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY**

Brad sits at his computer and feverishly types an e-mail.

NARRATOR

Later, back in Sacramento, he decided to be more direct. He sent Craig an e-mail, asking him to come onto Brad's board of directors. He wrote passionately about the worthiness of the cause, his deep respect for Craig and how much it would mean to him, personally.

Brad reads over his e-mail, pleased.

**INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Brad, Melanie and a Young Troy (six) eat dinner.

Brad checks his Blackberry - nothing.

NARRATOR

Brad never heard back.

**INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Brad, sitting alone, watches...

...Craig being interviewed - on a CABLE NEWS SHOW.

NARRATOR

In fact, he never heard from Craig again.

Brad grimaces and changes the channel.

**EXT. CHARLES RIVER - DAY**

Sitting on the bench, Brad stares at his phone, considering what to do.

BRAD

Fuck it.

63

He places the call to Craig. He HEARS...

WOMAN'S VOICE

Welcome to Verizon wireless. Your call cannot be completed as dialed. Please check the number and try again.

Brad hangs up, annoyed.

64

**INT. EXECUTIVE SUITE - DAY**

64

An EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT in a handsomely-appointed office suite answers the phone.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Jason Hatfield's office.

65

**EXT. CHARLES RIVER - DAY**

65

\*

Brad rises and paces near the river.

\*

BRAD

Hi. Brad Sloan calling for him.

\*

**INTERCUT PHONE CALL**

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Jason's not available right now. Can I take a message?

BRAD

It's kind of time-sensitive. Can you just tell him Brad Sloan is calling?

\*

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

I would, but he's on a plane.

BRAD

Oh. I see. I'm trying to get a phone number - I'm an old friend of his from college - and I'm looking for a phone number of another friend of ours...?

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Does Jason have your number?

BRAD

I think so, but maybe...

(CONTINUED)

65

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT  
I'll let him know you called.

BRAD  
Okay, but, maybe could... hello?

He realizes she's hung up. Annoyed, Brad wracks his brain.

66

**EXT. MAUI BEACH - DAWN**

66

Billy Werstler walks the beach with his DOG. He answers his PHONE. \*

BILLY  
Brad?!

67

**EXT. JOHN WEEKS BRIDGE - DAY**

67

Brad paces along the pedestrian footbridge. \*

BRAD  
Yo! What's up?! Billy! How's it going?

BILLY  
Dude! I'm good! It's like six AM here.

BRAD  
Ah, shit. Did I call too early?

BILLY  
Nah, man - I'm already on the beach - taking my dog for a piss.

BRAD  
Great, cool, well, how's life?

BILLY  
Life's fucking good, dude! It's excellent!

BRAD  
You're like retired. Amazing!

BILLY  
I know!

BRAD  
In Maui!

(CONTINUED)



BILLY

I know!

BRAD

You're like living the dream!

BILLY

Pretty much! Although I'm not really retired. I put some money into this beach bar here - and then it just blew up. Now, it's getting franchised all over Hawaii. And it's even coming to the mainland. So that's keeping me busy.

BRAD

Wow, great.

BILLY

And I'm also involved in this Polynesian cultural society which is really cool - trying to get the islanders more involved in local politics...

BRAD

Good for you, man.

BILLY

And I've got these two beautiful wahine who live with me. And they're fucking gorgeous and cool. They make these amazing necklaces made from shells and shit - I'm helping them open a store.

*(laughs)*

We surf and fuck then surf - it's awesome.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BRAD

Wait - so you have two girlfriends - that live with you?

BILLY

It's pretty fluid. We're making it up as we go along. You know. Anyway, what's up with you?

BRAD

Oh, I'm in Boston right now with my son, Troy - we're looking at colleges. Yeah. He's probably gonna go to Harvard.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

Yeah? Sweet.

BRAD

Yeah. He's a smart kid. The real deal. Anyway, hey, do you happen to have Craig's number? I wanted to ask him something and I guess he changed it...

BILLY

Yeah, I can text it to you. I just saw him in LA at Nick's wedding.

BRAD

Wait - Nick got married? To who?

BILLY

To Xavier.

BRAD

I thought they were married.

BILLY

No, they just lived together. They finally got married in July.

BRAD

Oh.

BILLY

I thought I'd see you there for sure. Craig was there. Jason and all his Aryan spawn were there. It was actually cool. Beautiful ceremony.

BRAD

Yeah? I didn't know about it.

BILLY

It was real small. Somebody mentioned you. I forget who.

BRAD

(stung)  
Uh-huh.

BILLY

Wondering where you were. Or what happened to you. Who was it?

BRAD

Oh. Hunh. Well, I'm just doing my thing.

BILLY

Dude, it's good to hear your voice. My dog just took a shit though and I gotta pick it up.

BRAD

Okay. Good to talk to you, Billy. Text me that number, would ya?

BILLY

Yup. I'll send it right now. Come to the islands sometime, brother. Later!

BRAD

Bye.

Brand hangs up. He looks gut-punched.

He sits for a moment, stewing. His PHONE BUZZES.

He looks down - it's a text from BILLY with Craig's number.

Brad stares at the number and frowns.

He presses the number, calling.

The PHONE RINGS once, then goes to VOICE MAIL.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Please leave a message.

BRAD

*(into PHONE; stammers)*

Hey, Craig - it's, uh, Brad Sloan. \*  
Ummm... I'm at Harvard with my  
son. He's ummm... if you could -  
if you have the time, uhhh, could  
you call me back? It's kind of on  
the urgent side. Thanks.

Brad hangs up and SIGHS.

Brad wanders across from the campus, in a funk. \*

## NARRATOR

Brad felt numb. The fact that he'd not been invited to Nick Pascale's wedding seemed to confirm every doubt he ever had - about his friendships, himself and his place in the world.

Brad stops in his tracks.

## 69 INT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY

69

A small wedding party. Nick and Xavier are congratulated by Craig and Diane, then Jason Hatfield and his family.

## NARRATOR

Brad kept picturing the wedding party in his mind. Everyone there, enjoying themselves. Basking in each other's glow.

## 70 EXT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY

70

We watch Nick and Xavier exit the house and greet people on the expansive lawn. They are approached by Billy and his Two tan Girlfriends.

## NARRATOR

Brad wondered if he'd been excluded or simply forgotten and couldn't decide which was worse.

Everyone continues hugging each other and enjoying the day.

## 71 EXT. HARVARD CAMPUS - DAY

71

Brad shakes his head, grimacing.

## NARRATOR

Whatever. He was a non-presence. A blip. A zero. A no-name. For a moment, he wished he were dead.

TWO HARVARD GIRLS pass by him, laughing about something. This snaps him out of it.

He watches them pass, then looks over...

...under a tree, there is a HOMELESS WOMAN, talking to herself. She looks miserable.

71

Brad takes her in - his compassion visible on his face.

NARRATOR

Brad felt a sudden kinship with  
everything that was ever unloved.

CLOSE on Brad as he spots about other sad creatures.

- A MISERABLE TEEN GIRL, looking lonely, passes; An ASIAN  
LADY, struggling with a heavy grocery bag; An OLD MAN, alone  
on a bench, feeding pigeons.

He then looks at the HEADSTONES of an old GRAVEYARD.

NARRATOR

The abandoned, the forgotten, the  
despised - those who never found  
love. Never, ever, ever.

72

**INT. BRAD'S PARENTS' HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY**

72

\*

Brad's Dad, looking old and frail, searches for something in  
his den.

NARRATOR

Brad thought about his father and  
how his book had been rejected by  
every single publisher. How lonely  
he was. How little affirmation he  
received - even from Brad.

73

**EXT. HARVARD CAMPUS - DAY**

73

Brad is now emotional as he wanders back toward the campus.

NARRATOR

How cruel is this world. How  
unfair. The prejudices of humans  
who shower their attention on the  
already popular - and ignore those  
who need it the most.

Brad wipes his tears, just as...

...a chipper Troy appears.

TROY

Hey, Dad.  
(sees his face)  
What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

BRAD  
(*composing himself*)  
Nothing. What happened to the  
tour?

TROY  
It's over.

BRAD  
Already?

TROY  
I've been gone an hour and a half.

BRAD  
Really? Oh.

TROY  
Wanna get something to eat?

Brad nods and they head off.

**EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - DAY**

Brad and Troy walk a busy street.

BRAD  
What about here?

Brad points to a MEXICAN RESTAURANT that is completely empty -  
save for an OLDER WOMAN, working the counter.

TROY  
There's no one in there, Dad. What  
about that place?

Troy points across the street, where there's a FESTIVE LUNCH  
PLACE and a CROWD is dining, *al fresco*.

BRAD  
Just because no one's in here  
doesn't mean it's not good, Troy.

TROY  
Usually it does, actually.

BRAD  
No, it doesn't. Why don't we go  
somewhere that really needs our  
business instead of some trendy  
popular place where we'd have to  
wait to get a table?

TROY

I don't really feel like Mexican,  
but okay.

Troy follows Brad inside the restaurant.

**INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY**

TWO PLATES OF UNAPPETIZING FOOD are set down on the table.

Troy frowns at the sight. Brad looks up at the OLD LATINA  
and smiles brightly.

BRAD

*Muchisimas gracias!*

OLD LATINA

*(lackluster)*

*De nada.*

The Old Latina walks off.

BRAD

So I may have a connection at  
Harvard - and I made a call. But I  
don't want you to get your hopes  
up.

TROY

It's not that big a deal.

BRAD

I just wish I could help you here.

Brad shakes his head, glum.

TROY

I have interviews everywhere else.  
And I can do an alumni interview  
for Harvard. It's fine.

*(looks at BRAD)*

Something wrong, Dad? You seem a  
little off.

BRAD

No, it's just... nothing... it's  
stupid...

TROY

What?

BRAD

Ah, just some... I don't know...  
some old friends got together  
and...

*(struggles; softly)*

...didn't invite me... 'cause I'm  
not, you know, at their,  
whatever... they're... it's just  
random...

\*  
\*

TROY

What? You're kinda mumbling.

BRAD

*(shrugs)*

I wouldn't have even wanted to go  
if I'd been invited, but - it's  
just kinda, I dunno... lame.

Troy gives his dad a consoling look.

TROY

I'm sorry.

Brad shrugs it off, forcing a grin.

TROY

They sound like dicks.

\*

Brad lets out a wry laugh, brightening.

Suddenly, Brad's PHONE BUZZES. He takes it out and answers.

BRAD

Hello? Heeey, Craig!

Brad gives Troy a hopeful look, pointing to phone.

BRAD

How's it going, man?! What? No,  
nobody died.

Craig stands in the wings of a NEWS STUDIO SET. We can SEE a  
CAMERA CREW and NEWS ANCHORS in the b.g.

CRAIG

You sounded weird on the message  
and you said it was urgent so I...

**INTERCUT PHONE CALL**



BRAD

No, no. Sorry, didn't mean to...  
I'm just up here in Cambridge with  
my son, looking at Harvard - and he  
was supposed to get an interview at  
the admissions office. And someone  
messed up over there. Yeah!

Brad notices Troy scrutinizing his every word.

BRAD

Hold on a sec - I'm in a restaurant  
- just gonna step out.

Brad rises and exits. Troy watches him go.

77

**EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - MOMENTS LATER**

77

Brad paces on the street.

BRAD

I knew you taught a class up here  
or something. I thought maybe you  
could help me out...

CRAIG

Sure, Brad. No problem. I can  
call over there after I finish this  
taping.

BRAD

Really? That would be so amazing.  
Thank you! Harvard is Troy's first  
choice - I mean, obviously...

CRAIG

You know, I'm actually flying up  
there tomorrow. You guys still  
gonna be around?

BRAD

Tomorrow? Yeah, we're here. We  
leave Thursday.

CRAIG

Maybe we can grab a bite to eat.

\*

\*

BRAD

That'd be great! Cool, listen, one  
last thing - Troy's a musician -  
like a true prodigy - I'm not  
saying that just 'cause he's my  
kid. Anyway, there's a professor  
here he'd really love to meet with.  
Oh, shit.

\*

\*

78

**INT. MEXICAN RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER**

78

Brad runs into the restaurant, frantic.

BRAD  
*(cupping phone)*  
What's the name of that music professor?!

TROY  
What?!

BRAD  
The music professor! The one you like! C'mon, c'mon!

TROY  
Jerome Backaly?

BRAD  
*(into phone)*  
Jerome Backaly. Yeah. That would be terrific, Craig. Man, I owe you. Fantastic! Yeah, dinner tomorrow. Yep! Talk soon! Hey - have a good, uh, taping!

Brad hangs up, feeling a mixture of emotions.

TROY  
What's going on? Dad?

BRAD  
I'm on it, okay? I'm on it.

Brad gives Troy a confident, cryptic look.

Troy rolls his eyes and returns to his burrito.

79

**INT. CAMPUS BOOK STORE - DAY**

79

Troy strolls the aisles, looking at various books on music.

Nearby, Brad pulls a book off a display table.

ON BOOK - "POLITICAL BEASTS by CRAIG FISHER".

\*

Brad reads a little of the book - contempt all over his face.

He turns over the book...

On the back - a PHOTO of Craig, arms folded, with a take-me-seriously expression.

Brad sticks out his tongue, nauseated.

Suddenly, Brad's PHONE BUZZES. He takes it from his pocket.

BRAD

*(into phone)*

Craig! Hey! Guess what? I'm in a book store right now, looking at your book! The new one, yeah.

It's got a big display here! \*

*(eyes widen)*

Yeah?! Seriously? Man, you are the best! I don't even know how to thank you! \*

But in his excitement, Brad drops the book onto the table.

BRAD

I can't wait to tell Troy!

**INT. CAMPUS BOOK STORE - MOMENTS LATER**

An excited Brad approaches Troy.

BRAD

Guess who you got a meeting with tomorrow morning!

TROY

Who?

BRAD

Jerome Backaly.

TROY

Shut up!

BRAD

And after - you've got an interview - with the Dean of Admissions himself!

TROY

No way!

BRAD

Way!

TROY

Now, I'm nervous!

BRAD

Come on!

TROY

Shit! Wait, but tomorrow I have  
Tufts.

BRAD

Fuck Tufts!

TROY

Right, right.

BRAD

We'll go in the afternoon.

TROY

Dad!

BRAD

What?

TROY

You're the King!

BRAD

*(grins)*  
I got you, pal.

They high-five, both in great spirits.

81

**INT. CAMPUS BOOK STORE - MOMENTS LATER**

81

Brad approaches Troy with a Harvard sweatshirt. \*

NARRATOR

Coming through for his son made  
Brad giddy. What if these meetings  
really did help Troy get into  
Harvard?Troy shakes his head, but then takes the sweatshirt with a  
sheepish smile. \*

82 INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - DAY 82

A euphoric Troy races into the room.

TROY  
I got in! I got in!

At the table, Brad and Melanie leap to their feet, exulting.

NARRATOR  
And what if, looking back, this was  
the fateful moment that started  
Troy onto a path of unimaginable  
glory.

83 EXT. MAGAZINE STAND IN SACRAMENTO - DAY 83

Melanie and Brad pull a WIRED MAGAZINE off the shelf.

The cover is a picture of TROY with the headline -  
"WUNDERKIND STARTS A MUSICAL REVOLUTION".

NARRATOR  
He pictured Troy as an adult, happy  
and wealthy, even famous.

Brad and Melanie hold each other as they stare at the cover.

84 INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY 84 \*

Troy, well-dressed and confident, sits across from Melanie  
and Brad. Troy has a beautiful GIRLFRIEND by his side.

TROY  
Dad, Mom, I love you so much. All  
my success is because of you.

Melanie and Brad react, touched.

TROY  
Guess what? I bought an island!

As Troy starts to show them photos on his phone, we HEAR...

NARRATOR  
He pictured Troy's triumphs  
eclipsing those of Brad's  
contemporaries. How gratifying  
that would be.

85 EXT. CAMPUS BOOK STORE - DAY 85

Brad and Troy have exited the store with their purchases.  
Troy tries on the sweatshirt for his dad.

Brad's expression seems to change as Troy models his new  
Harvard sweatshirt.

NARRATOR

Suddenly, Brad was struck with a  
pang of anxiety.

Troy takes the sweatshirt off again - embarrassed.

NARRATOR

What if Troy lorded his success  
over Brad - or hoarded it away?

86 INT. BRAD'S HOUSE - NIGHT 86

Brad and Melanie watch...

ON TV - Troy is being interviewed by JIMMY KIMMEL.

NARRATOR

What if, in the end, Troy's wins  
made Brad feel even more the loser?

In his chair, Brad is feeling a mixture of emotions.

MELANIE

Did he call you back yet?

Brad shakes his head. Melanie frowns.

NARRATOR

What if they became estranged,  
alienated by their diverging  
fortunes?

87 INT. BRAD'S OFFICE - DAY 87

A stung Brad takes down the framed WIRED MAGAZINE COVER of  
Troy from the wall above his desk.

NARRATOR

What if Brad ended up envious of  
his own son?

Brad drops the FRAMED PORTRAIT into a storage box.

88

**EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - DAY**

88

Brad and Troy walk across a busy intersection. Brad's expression has turned grim.

NARRATOR

The thought horrified him.

At the corner, they pass a YOUNG BUSKER, singing and strumming his GUITAR.

Brad pauses for a moment.

NARRATOR

But, then again, musicians don't really make money.

Brad looks over at Troy - who has also stopped to listen, enjoying the music.

NARRATOR

Maybe even with an expensive education, Brad could wind up a struggling artist.

89

**EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - DAY**

89

Now, it is Troy busking on a Cambridge street, playing music on his keyboard for the PASSERS-BY.

NARRATOR

Maybe Troy will take after Melanie - perfectly satisfied with practically nothing.

A PEDESTRIAN drops a dollar into Troy's upturned hat. Troy smiles, appreciative.

90

**EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - DUSK**

90

Troy, looking like a white-trash thug, and a few DIRTBAG FRIENDS smoke a joint and drink beers on the corner.

NARRATOR

Or worse, end up like Brad - bitter and restless and full of regrets. Maybe even blaming Brad for all of life's disappointments.

(CONTINUED)



TROY  
(to another GUY)  
My dad's a fucking loser, too...

Troy takes a swig, then tosses his beer can into the street.

91 **EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - DAY** 91

Brad and Troy listen to the Busker finish his song.  
The song ends. Brad and Troy and a few others CLAP.  
Troy drops a FIVE into the Busker's hat.

92 **INT. HOTEL ROOM - DUSK** 92

Brad and Troy change clothes for dinner.

BRAD  
If you're just gonna be a musician,  
do you even need to go to college?

TROY  
Hunh?

BRAD  
It's a fair question.

TROY  
*Just a musician?*

BRAD  
I'm just saying - do you need a  
Harvard diploma to play music in a  
band? Isn't that what you want to  
do?

TROY  
I don't know what I want to do,  
Dad.

BRAD  
Well, you need to start thinking  
about it - 'cause this isn't cheap,  
Troy. You're assuming a lot if you  
think I can pay for all this  
without taking out loans - and you  
taking out loans - and trying to  
get scholarships - and financial  
aid...

TROY

What the fuck just happened?

BRAD

*(softens)*

I'm just thinking out loud, okay?

TROY

I don't expect you to pay for everything.

*(beat)*

Are you not gonna be able to pay for everything?

BRAD

We'll see. Look, I don't want you to worry about that - yet.

TROY

Clearly.

BRAD

Hey, it might not be a big issue. Maybe one of your grandparents will die.

Troy reacts, disturbed.

As Brad and Troy step off the elevator, they see...

...a beautiful young Indian-American woman, ANANYA, (21) standing in the lobby.

TROY

Hey!

ANANYA

Hey, Troy.

She approaches and they hug.

TROY

This is my dad, Brad.

ANANYA

Hey, dad Brad. I'm Ananya.

Ananya and Brad shake hands.

BRAD

So you guys were friends at Country Day?

TROY

Not really. Well, Ananya was a Senior and I was a Freshman...

ANANYA

*(protesting)*

We were friends.

TROY

You were nice to me.

ANANYA

We were in orchestra together.

TROY

Ananya's an amazing musician.

BRAD

And now you go to Harvard?

ANANYA

*(nods)*

I'm a Junior.

BRAD

Are you liking it?

ANANYA

I am. It gets cold, but yeah, I love my classes. Great people. Yeah, no complaints!

TROY

Is it a lot of work?

*(off her emphatic nod)*

Listen, if you have a lot of work to do, you don't have to go to dinner with us. Please...

ANANYA

No, no, no. I turned in a paper this afternoon. I'm done for the night. And I'm glad to see faces from home! I got a reservation at a place around the corner. Should we go?

Ananya leads them toward the door.

94

**INT. HIPSTER RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

94

Brad and Troy sit across from Ananya.

ANANYA

That's cool you got a meeting with Jerome Backaly. How'd you manage that?

TROY

My dad's friends with a professor here.

ANANYA

Oh, yeah? Who?

BRAD

His name's Craig Fisher.

Ananya grimaces, then recovers.

BRAD

What?

ANANYA

What?

BRAD

You made a face.

ANANYA

I did?

BRAD

You definitely made a face. You can say whatever you want. We're not close or anything. We were friends a *long* time ago.

ANANYA

Well, I just took his class last year - he's kind of the worst.  
(*smiles; self-conscious*)  
Should I have not said that?

BRAD

No. Say it. Why?

ANANYA

He's just condescending. And I don't know - he's pretty sexist.  
(*MORE*)

(CONTINUED)

ANANYA (*cont'd*)

He's just got this air of someone who thinks they know everything because they're on TV and... they have contacts at the White House.

BRAD

So how do you really feel?

ANANYA

The way he sees politics - it's all a game. Who's up. Who's down. It's doesn't inspire me. Honestly - by the end of his class, I wanted to quit my major.

BRAD

Aren't you a music major?

ANANYA

(*shakes her head*)

Government. I love music, but I want to get into public policy.

TROY

My dad majored in Government.

BRAD

Communications and Government. This was at Tufts. Actually, Craig and I were in all the same classes.

ANANYA

Really? Was he like... a cocky prick then, too?

BRAD

(*smiles*)

Not as bad, I don't think.

ANANYA

So what do you do now?

BRAD

I have a non-profit I started a few years ago.

ANANYA

Really? Awesome.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

We help other non-profits use social media to get the word out about what they do - help them find members and donors and...

ANANYA

Like crowd sourcing or...?

BRAD

Some of that. We're consultants, basically. It sounds boring...

ANANYA

It doesn't sound boring. It sounds amazing.

BRAD

*(pleased)*  
Well, thanks.

ANANYA

I'm actually writing my thesis on NGO's - maybe I could talk to you at some point...

BRAD

Of course. Whatever you need.

ANANYA

Thanks. I once told my dad my dream job was to work at Amnesty International - he was like devastated. He wanted to disown me.

*(to TROY)*  
You're lucky your dad's so cool.

TROY

*(nods)*  
I am lucky.

BRAD

Tell us about your thesis...

ANANYA

Really? It's not fully formed but I want to write about the history of white missionary women - you know, the wives? - and how they came to India and Sri Lanka to "convert the heathens" but laid the ground work for social reform...

(CONTINUED)

As Ananya talks, Brad soaks her up. Ananya's voice fades as we HEAR:

NARRATOR

As she spoke, Brad became increasingly smitten. Ananya seemed to embody all the qualities he still loved about humanity. Here was someone who was young, but wise. Engaged, aware - but still idealistic. She almost gave Brad hope for the future of the species.

MOMENTS LATER

Their food has come. Ananya talks and eats.

ANANYA

It's basically about cultural identity as it relates to women's rights and how one of the sad legacies of colonialism...

Brad continues to listen, mesmerized.

NARRATOR

He felt a long-dormant stirring. He wanted to possess her - her energy, her passion, her beauty. At moments, this longing to absorb her became almost unbearable.

Brad looks pained by his train of thought.

Suddenly, another student, an Asian-American, MAYA, appears at the table.

NARRATOR

Then her friend, Maya, showed up.

Ananya introduces her to them. Troy and Brad shake her hand.

ANANYA

You guys, this is my friend Maya. I told her to stop by. I hope that's okay.

BRAD

*(enthusiastic)*  
Of course! Please sit down. Maya?

MAYA

Yeah! Thanks. How's it going?

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

You go to Harvard, too?

Maya nods and joins them at the table.

ANANYA

Maya plays the violin.

BRAD

And what do you play?

ANANYA

I play the flute.

She mimics playing the flute. Brad reacts, impressed.

MOMENTS LATER

Brad, Ananya and Maya enjoy wine and dessert. Troy sips a Coke.

MAYA

I just don't feel like it's my job to be the ambassador to all these Chinese students. I mean, of course I want to help them assimilate, but I don't even speak Mandarin. What the fuck?

Brad listens with a dumb grin frozen to his face.

NARRATOR

She was just as beautiful, just as compelling.

Brad's expression transforms into visible distress.

Across the table, Ananya and Maya laugh about something.

NARRATOR

Brad suddenly felt a kind of grief - for all the women he would never get to love and all the lives he would never get to live.

Brad catches a glimpse of himself in a reflection. He appears old.

NARRATOR

Brad never felt so old. Why did time compromise everything? Was age a hard truth or a defect of perception?

(CONTINUED)



The girls laugh even harder. Troy laughs, too.

Brad tries to join in, forcing his laughter.

94A **EXT. GREEN PASTURE - DAY**

94A

\*

Brad, Ananya and Maya run, laughing and happy through a green park full of trees and green.

\*

\*

NARRATOR

Couldn't life be constantly  
renewed? Couldn't we be forever  
reborn in each new fleeting moment?

94B **INT. HIPSTER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS**

94B

\*

Ananya and Maya raise their glasses.

A smiling Brad toasts them with his glass of wine. The mood is festive.

\*

95 **EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - NIGHT**

95

Brad, Troy, Ananya and Maya have exited the restaurant and congregate on the street.

ANANYA

Thank you so much for dinner!

MAYA

Yes, thank you!

BRAD

Hey - thanks for taking the time.  
I know Troy appreciates it.

TROY

Yeah, it was cool.

ANANYA

We're meeting a few people at the  
Druid for drinks, if you guys wanna  
come.

BRAD

(intrigued)  
Oh, yeah? Where's that?

MAYA

*(points)*

Just across the street.

BRAD

*(off TROY's look)*

Troy has these big meetings in the morning. He needs his sleep so...

ANANYA

Not even for one drink?

(CONTINUED)

Brad looks to Troy.

TROY

I'm not twenty-one - I don't think  
I could get in even.

ANANYA

Oh, yeah, shit. That's right.

BRAD

But you guys have fun, all right?

ANANYA

Oh, and we'll see you tomorrow  
night at the concert.

BRAD

You will?

TROY

Not you, Dad. My dad has a dinner  
with his friend. But I'll be  
there.

BRAD

Oh, yeah. Craig Fisher.

Ananya fake retches at the mention of Craig's name.

ANANYA

Have fun with that. Okay, well,  
bye!

MAYA

Bye! Nice to meet you!

Ananya and Maya head across the street, giggling.

Brad watches them go with a look of longing.

Brad and Troy walk back to their hotel.

TROY

Seems like you wanted to go.

BRAD

No, no, no. Just being polite.

95A INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

95A \*

Troy and Brad pass a DOORMAN.

\*

(CONTINUED)

95A

DOORMAN  
Good night.

\*  
\*

BRAD  
Good night.

\*  
\*

96

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

96

Troy is fast asleep in his bed.

(CONTINUED)

96

Brad, in the other bed, is still in his clothes, on his laptop. He looks over at Troy.

BRAD  
(softly)  
Troy? You awake? Troy?

No response. Brad puts down the laptop and rises.

97

**INT. HOTEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER**

97

Brad steps off the elevator and crosses toward the exit.

He stands in the lobby, having second thoughts.

He shakes them off and heads out, passing the same Doorman. \*

98

**INT. THE DRUID - NIGHT**

98

Ananya, Maya and a few other STUDENTS are drinking at a booth. The Bar is crowded.

Brad watches them, from the bar, looking awkward.

He turns and calls out to the BARTENDER.

BRAD  
I think I'm just gonna close out my  
tab!

BARTENDER  
Just the whiskey? Eight dollars.

Brad takes out his wallet and pulls out a TEN. He drops the bill on the bar and turns, startled to see...

...Ananya has approached. She gives him a cheery smile.

ANANYA  
Hey! You made it!

BRAD  
Hey - I was having a little  
insomnia so I just got a whiskey!

ANANYA  
We're over in the corner! Come  
join us!

(CONTINUED)

BRAD  
Ah, nah, that's okay! You guys are having fun! I just couldn't sleep!

ANANYA  
Oh, come on! We're not having fun - we're organizing a protest!

BRAD  
Are you really?!

ANANYA  
Kind of! To protect need-blind admissions!

BRAD  
Oh, yeah? A protest?!

Ananya looks a little buzzed. She puts her arm around him.

ANANYA  
Everyone at that table is a future do-gooder! Like you!

\*

BRAD  
Yeah? That's cool. I'm really impressed by you.

\*  
\*  
\*

ANANYA  
Yeah?

\*  
\*

BRAD  
Yeah - it's cool to meet someone your age who's so aware of what's going on - but you're also hopeful - and your values seem to be in the right place and...

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ANANYA  
Well, thank you.

\*  
\*

BRAD  
It reminds me of when I was your age and going to school and...

\*  
\*  
\*

ANANYA  
So what's your advice to me?

\*  
\*

BRAD  
My advice?

\*  
\*

ANANYA

Yeah! If you could go back in time  
and give yourself advice - what  
would you say?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BRAD

Seriously? Honestly?!

(CONTINUED)

ANANYA

Yes, honestly. I'd love to know.

BRAD

Honestly? I'd say, forget non-  
profits, Brad. And just go make a  
lot of money!\*  
\*

He sorta laughs. Ananya looks quizzical.

\*

ANANYA

Shut up! Are you serious?!

BRAD

Yes, I'm serious! If you want to  
make an impact in this world - and  
have respect - go be Bill Gates!  
Go make a lot of money - then do  
good stuff with it!\*  
\*  
\*

ANANYA

*(grimacing)*

That's what you would say?

\*

BRAD

Look, I go to a dinner party - and  
I tell people what I do - and for  
about three minutes, they act like  
they admire me and they're  
interested - and then after three  
minutes, I'm invisible! They don't  
admire me - and worse, they think  
I'm gonna ask them for a donation!  
And sometimes I do!\*  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
\*

Ananya's eyes narrow. He can tell he's losing her.

BRAD

What? Do I sound jaded? Just know  
I started out as idealistic as you  
or any of your friends! Believe  
me!\*  
  
  
\*

Close on Ananya, listening, with an attitude.

Then on Brad, talking a mile-a-minute, gesticulating.



Brad's voice fades under the VOICE of the NARRATOR.

NARRATOR

Brad could tell he had lost Ananya - lost her respect - and he desperately wanted it back. He thought if he could summarize the trajectory of his life - she would understand him - maybe even respect him - as someone who had lost the good fight - but had fought it nonetheless.

99

**INT. THE DRUID - LATER**

99

Brad and Ananya are now seated at the bar with new drinks. Brad continues talking. Ananya just listens, a blank expression on her face.

NARRATOR

He told her about his career mistakes - his years in journalism just as the newspaper business was folding. His attempt to start a digital muckraking magazine in San Francisco but how no one wanted to read long-form pieces anymore - and how he had won a few prestigious prizes, which he rattled off - but his magazine still had gone bust.

As Brad spews, Ananya takes a big GULP from her drink.

100

**INT. THE DRUID - NIGHT**

100

Ananya and Brad sit at the booth with her friends. As Maya and the other STUDENTS laugh and chat, Brad continues to monologue his life story for Ananya.

NARRATOR

He talked about Craig Fisher and his other college friends and how they had sold out and gotten rich and how they didn't even invite him to their milestone events anymore even though he had been the heart and soul of their group. Brad may have failed in their eyes, but at least he still had his integrity and could sleep at night.

Ananya just listens - but we sense she is judging him.

101 INT. THE DRUID - LATER

101

The bar has almost emptied. Maya and the other Students are gone. Brad and Ananya are the only ones left at their booth. Brad has not stopped talking.

NARRATOR

And even though his consulting non-profit had been struggling lately - he still felt he had done some real good with it.

\*

BRAD

Maybe if I were more in the field - and really meeting more of the people that we're helping - but I just feel kind of disconnected...

On Ananya - she is silent, but there's visible contempt in her eyes.

NARRATOR

Ananya just listened, saying nothing, taking him in. Finally, Brad became so self-conscious, he couldn't stand it anymore.

Brad, suddenly embarrassed, blurts...

BRAD

What is that look?

ANANYA

What?

BRAD

What are you thinking? Please tell me.

ANANYA

I'm thinking... you're lucky. You're fifty years old and you still think the world was made for you.

BRAD

I'm forty-seven.

ANANYA

It's like you're mad because you don't like your position in the ruling class. Most people don't even have a position. Most people can't even get in the door to see what's inside. Do you even know poor people?

BRAD

Of course.

ANANYA

When I visit my mother's family in Delhi, a lot of people there live on two dollars a day.

\*

BRAD

Right, I get that...

ANANYA

They don't complain about being ignored at dinner parties. They're happy they get dinner.

BRAD

Right - but I'm not competing with those people. You compete with the people who are your markers in life.

\*

\*

ANANYA

Why are you competing at all?

BRAD

It's the way this world is.

\*

ANANYA

From my point of view - you competing with your friends from college? *That* competition is the history of colonialism, okay? And the oppression of women - and the fucking up of the environment...

\*

BRAD

Look, don't go there, okay?

ANANYA

Stop competing already. The future of the world depends on it...

\*

BRAD  
(*talking over her*)  
I'm not the problem, all right? I  
work for a non-profit for fuck's  
sake.

ANANYA  
Sounds like you just kinda backed  
into it 'cause nothing else worked  
out.

Brad is momentarily silent, stung.

BRAD  
That's not nice.

ANANYA  
(*softens*)  
Sorry. It's just - from where I  
sit, it kinda sounds like white  
privilege, male privilege, first-  
class problems. \*

BRAD  
Maybe I seem like a cliché to you -  
but this is my life, you know?

ANANYA  
(*nods*)  
Just don't ask me to feel bad for  
you. You're doing fine. Trust me.  
I promise you. You have enough.  
I'm going to use the rest room.

She rises and walks off. Brad takes out his wallet.

102 **EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - NIGHT** 102

Ananya walks across the street and disappears into the  
darkness.

A forlorn Brad stands on the corner, watching her go.

103 **INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT** 103

Brad, now in his underwear, quietly crawls into bed.  
MOONLIGHT illuminates the room.

Troy is still asleep in the other bed. He doesn't stir.

Brad lies in bed and stares up at the balcony doors. A draft of wind pushes the curtains and creates a whistling noise. \*

\*

NARRATOR

Brad knew he had blown it. He could have gotten the validation he needed from this girl, but had gone about it the wrong way. He was too honest, too open. Nobody wanted that. That was never attractive. The story of his life.

Brad rolls over in bed. He sees...

...Ananya, lying in the next bed, smiling, warmly at him. \*

ANANYA

You're amazing.

They share a warm smile. She waves him toward her. \*

Suddenly, Maya appears, popping up on the other side of him.

MAYA

Totally.

Maya leans in and kisses Brad on the lips.

Alone in bed, Brad's eyes are closed - he kisses the air, fantasizing.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING**

CLOSE on BRAD - even though he is asleep, there is a yearning expression on his face.

Troy, in a towel, stands over him.

TROY

Dad! Dad!

Brad rouses - rubbing his eyes.

TROY

We gotta go. I have my meeting.

BRAD

Ugh. I'm hung-over.

TROY

Why? You only had one glass of wine.

Brad says nothing. Troy heads into the bathroom.

105      **EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - MORNING**      105

Brad and Troy cross the Harvard Bridge toward Cambridge.

106      **EXT. HARVARD QUAD - MORNING**      106

Brad waits on a bench for Troy to get out of his meeting.  
Brad is deep in thought.

NARRATOR

The next morning, Brad turned on  
Ananya. He kept replaying in his  
mind things she had said.

107      **INT. DRUID - FLASHBACK**      107

Ananya, at the booth...

ANANYA

Sounds like you just kinda backed  
into it 'cause nothing else worked  
out.

108      **EXT. HARVARD QUAD - DAY**      108

Brad grimaces at the memory.

NARRATOR

Youth can be so arrogant and  
unforgiving. He doubted she would  
ever live up to her own lofty  
ideals.

109      **INT. PRIVATE PLANE - DAY**      109

CLOSE on ANANYA, smiling with satisfaction.

NARRATOR

He could identify a strain of  
superiority in her. He bet if her  
circumstances were different, she  
would be singing another tune.

We PULL BACK TO REVEAL Ananya on a private plane with Jason  
Hatfield. Maya is here, too.

They all hold flutes of champagne and toast each other.

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR

One taste of luxury - and how quickly she might forget the suffering of the masses.

They guzzle down their champagne, *toss their flutes to the floor* and LAUGH.

\*  
\*

110 **EXT. HARVARD QUAD - DAY**

110

Brad shakes his head at the thought.

NARRATOR

Brad realized he was just trying to make himself feel better.

111 **INT. RESTAURANT - FLASHBACK**

111

Ananya, talking at dinner, full of passion.

NARRATOR

Ananya had a good heart - she seemed wise.

Brad smiles at her from across the table.

NARRATOR

She reminded him a lot of Melanie.

Melanie has replaced Ananya. She talks animatedly, looking radiant.

112 **EXT. HARVARD QUAD - DAY**

112

This latest thought causes Brad to snap out of his reverie.

BRAD

Melanie. Shit.

Brad takes out his PHONE and calls Melanie.

BRAD

*(into phone)*

Hey, hon. Trip's going great. Troy is meeting with one of the music professors here right now and then he's got an interview with the Dean of Admissions. So yeah - it all seems to be working out.



Brad spots...

...Troy and an African-American professor, JEROME BACKALY, exiting a building. Troy and the Professor shake hands.

The Professor returns inside as Troy heads toward his dad.

BRAD

Anyway, Troy's here now so call me back later. I've got dinner with Craig Fisher...

*(sarcastic)*

...so I'm really looking forward to that, as you can imagine. Love you, honey.

Brad hangs up and puts away his phone.

BRAD

How was it?

TROY

Good. He listened to some of my stuff and I think he liked it.

BRAD

That's awesome, Troy!

TROY

He said he was gonna put in a call to the admissions department, too.

BRAD

What?! See! There you go! Connections and talent. I give you the lay up - you swish it in.

Troy nods and smiles.

Brad and Troy walk along the campus.

BRAD

What's wrong?

TROY

Nothing.

BRAD

You seem a little... you should be pumped! You should be happy!

TROY

I am. I dunno. He just wasn't what I expected. But he was fine.

BRAD

How was he not what you expected?

TROY

It was just weird - it's like he's one of my heroes, but he was trying kinda hard to impress me. He was sorta bragging a lot. He was more into the business side of things, too, than I would have thought. He kept telling me ways I should monetize my music - weird stuff like that.

*(shrugs)*

I thought he'd be cooler.

BRAD

Uh-hunh.

They continue walking in silence. Then Brad stops.

BRAD

You know, don't be so judgmental, Troy.

TROY

Hunh?

BRAD

You've been living in a bubble. Remember that. Do me a favor and don't judge people who live in the real world until you've been out there yourself. Okay?

TROY

You asked me a question. I just said he wasn't what I expected.

BRAD

You said he wasn't cool. But what's cool to a seventeen year old hipster who doesn't pay his own bills isn't necessarily cool to the rest of the world.

TROY

Okay! Jesus!

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

Let's talk in thirty years - and  
then you can tell me who's cool!

TROY

You're fucking nuts, you know that?  
I'm about to have my interview - do  
you really need to jump all over  
me?

BRAD

*(back pedals)*

Troy. You're right. I'm sorry. I  
love you.

*(beat)*

You're the best. You're the best  
son in the world - you know I think  
that. And you're gonna kill it in  
there.

\*

\*

\*

Troy lets out a little laugh, shakes his head.

TROY

Dad, can you just leave me alone?  
I'm gonna go clear my head. I'll  
meet you after. All right?

BRAD

Okay. Good idea. Yeah.

As Troy walks toward the ADMISSIONS OFFICE.

BRAD

Proud of you, Troy!

\*

Troy just keeps walking and enters the building.

Brad stands on the lawn, unsure of what to do.

114

**INT. ADMISSIONS OFFICE - DAY**

114

Brad sits with another FATHER in the waiting room.

BRAD

Was that your daughter?  
*(off FATHER'S nod)*  
She have an interview now?

FATHER

Yes.

*(CONTINUED)*

BRAD

I hope it goes well.

*(beat)*My son is meeting *with the Dean* so  
he's been a little on edge.

FATHER

Good luck.

Brad's PHONE RINGS. He answers it.

BRAD

Hello?

115

**INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY**

115

Jason Hatfield is on the other end of the line. He paces the  
hall, wearing a suit.

JASON

Hey, Brad. It's Jason Hatfield.

**Intercut phone call:**

BRAD

Jason! Hey! *What's up?*

\*

Brad rises and quickly exits the ADMISSIONS OFFICE.

116

**INT. ADMISSIONS OFFICE - DAY**

116

Brad has moved to the corner of the waiting room.

JASON

*Uh, my office said you called me.*

\*

\*

BRAD

*Oh, yeah. Oh, right. I was  
actually just calling for Craig's  
number, but I got it from Billy.*

\*

JASON

Okay, good. All right, *well...*

\*

BRAD

I heard you guys all got together  
in LA. *How was that?*

\*

\*

JASON

Listen, man, *I can't really talk -*  
I got a lot going on right now.

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

BRAD \*  
(little laugh) \*  
Oh, okay. Well... \*

JASON \*  
Look, I don't mean to be rude, but \*  
I got all these clients looking for \*  
me. And I'm in Minnesota - at the \*  
Mayo Clinic to get these test \*  
results - but if I don't get on a \*  
flight to New York by noon, I'm \*  
gonna miss this deposition I've \*  
been preparing for for months... \*

BRAD \*  
Okay. I hear ya. At least you \*  
know the plane will wait for you. \*

JASON  
I don't understand.

BRAD \*  
Don't you have your own jet? Must \*  
make it a little easier... \*

JASON \*  
Jet? Are you being an asshole \*  
right now or...?

BRAD  
(thrown)  
What? No. I'm serious.

JASON  
I don't have a jet. What are you  
talking about?

BRAD  
I thought... I swear you told me  
once you had a private plane.

JASON  
No.

BRAD  
In San Francisco, when I saw you -  
you said you were just on your...

JASON  
My company leased a plane to get  
everyone out there, but...

BRAD

Oh, I misunderstood...

JASON

Look, I just found out my daughter has a tethered spine, okay? She's fucking three years old.

BRAD

*(attitude shifting)*

What? Oh, no. Man, Jason! What does that mean?

JASON

I don't know what it means - except she has to have major surgery tomorrow morning. She's so little.

Jason sounds like he's about to start crying.

BRAD

Oh my god.

JASON

It's killing me...

BRAD

Shit. Is she okay?

JASON

I think so. It's... I don't know.

BRAD

Is there anything I can do? I've worked with a lot of children's hospitals with my...

JASON

We're sitting down with the doctors now. I gotta go, Brad.

BRAD

*(genuine)*

Okay, Jason - keep me posted. And please give my love to your family. I'm really sorry...

The phone goes dead. Brad looks stricken.

116A

**INT. ADMISSIONS OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

116A

\*

Troy returns from his interview to find...

(CONTINUED)

...a contemplative Brad, sitting in the corner. \*

Seeing Troy, Brad rises and gives him a heartfelt embrace.  
He clutches Troy tight - smelling his hair.

The other PARENTS and STUDENTS turn. Troy is thrown.

117 **EXT. HARVARD CAMPUS - LATER** 117

Troy and Brad exit the campus toward Harvard Square.

TROY

Well, aren't you gonna even ask me  
how it went?

Brad stops and turns.

BRAD

Right, right. Yeah! How'd it go?

TROY

*(grins)*

Really good. He said Jerome  
Backaly already called him - and  
told him I was talented and to pay  
attention to my application. Isn't  
that awesome?

BRAD

That's great, Troy! Awesome! I  
knew you would!

Brad gives Troy a big high-five. Troy grins.

Brad then hails down a passing TAXI.

118 **INT. TAXI - TRAVELING - DAY** 118

Brad and Troy sit in silence in the back of the cab. Troy is  
smiling to himself.

He looks over and notices Brad's uneasy expression.

TROY

Dad?

BRAD

Troy, I don't want to like lay a  
trip on you but...

*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*

BRAD (cont'd)

just so you know - if anything bad  
ever happened - to you - whatever  
capacity I have left to feel joy...

Brad is about to choke up. He then shakes his head.

BRAD

Only good things are gonna happen  
to you. Only good things.

Brad musters a sweet smile.

Troy looks at his dad, slightly concerned, then turns to the  
window - his smile soon returns.

119 **EXT. TUFTS UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS OFFICE - DAY** 119

Brad and Troy walk up the stairs of the Admissions Building.

120 **INT. TUFTS ADMISSIONS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS** 120

Brad and Troy approach the RECEPTIONIST.

BRAD

Hey - I'm Brad Sloan and this is my  
son, Troy. He had an interview  
this morning - but we, uh, had to  
miss it, unfortunately. Is there  
any way he could still sit with  
somebody?

\*

RECEPTIONIST

(looks at computer)  
I'm not sure...

BRAD

I'm an alumni, actually. Class of  
'90.

RECEPTIONIST

Oh?

BRAD

And a donor.

Troy covers his face, embarrassed.

RECEPTIONIST

I'll have to check the schedule.  
I'll do my best.



BRAD

Thank you. Go Jumbos.

RECEPTIONIST

Meanwhile our next tour is about to leave, if you'd like to join...

TROY

Okay, cool.

They step away from the desk. Brad turns to Troy.

BRAD

Hey, Troy - while you're on the tour - I might go visit one of my old professors.

TROY

Oh, yeah? Okay.

BRAD

He was like my mentor - I told you about him.

TROY

Yeah, yeah. Do it. Go.

BRAD

It seems like you're eager to get rid of me. \*

TROY \*

What? \*

BRAD \*

*(smiles amused)* \*

Are you embarrassed of me? You embarrassed of your dad? \*

TROY \*

*(smiles, sheepishly)* \*

Me? No. Never. \*

BRAD \*

Well, it seems like it. You think I'm gonna make a scene or something? \*

*(off TROY'S head shake)* \*

I would never intentionally embarrass you. \*

TROY \*

Good. Thanks. \*

(CONTINUED)

Brad **smiles and** gives Troy a kiss on the forehead, then heads \*  
out.

As he goes, he calls out to the ADMISSIONS STAFF.

BRAD  
(*points to TROY*)  
You have a legacy here, people!  
And a genius! F.Y.I.!

Brad gives Troy a mischievous wink, then exits the building.

Troy flushes red, shaking his head.

121      **INT. COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA STUDIES - DAY**      121

Brad scans the DIRECTORY OF OFFICES by the entrance.

He finds - "Professor Connor - Room 107".

Brad heads off, down the hall.

122      **INT. COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA STUDIES HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Brad approaches Room 107 and peers inside. The office seems to be in transition. There are moving boxes on the shelves and on the floor.

A FEMALE PROFESSOR - around Brad's age - is at the desk. She looks up from her laptop.

BRAD

Uh, hi. I'm an old student of Professor Connor's. I was hoping to see him. Is he...?

FEMALE PROFESSOR

Oh, you just missed him.

BRAD

He just left?

FEMALE PROFESSOR

No. I'm sorry to say, he died. Just a few weeks ago.

BRAD

He did? His name's still on the... directory.

FEMALE PROFESSOR

I know - we need to change that. I just got in here.

BRAD

How did he... die?

FEMALE PROFESSOR

He had a stroke. And he never recovered.

BRAD

Oh. That's sad.

FEMALE PROFESSOR

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

He was a great teacher.

FEMALE PROFESSOR

He was a sweet man.

BRAD

*(after a beat)*

Well, have a nice day.

FEMALE PROFESSOR

Thanks. You, too.

Brad heads out. The Professor returns to her work.

123

**EXT. TUFTS CAMPUS - DAY**

123

Brad wanders the campus, lost in thought.

After a moment, we HEAR:

NARRATOR

Brad thought about the events of the morning and felt a sudden clarity. How ridiculous it was for him to be jealous - or insecure about his place.

Brad watches TWO STUDENTS - a young, attractive couple - walk past, holding hands. They are in love.

NARRATOR

What a waste of energy to resent other people's few pleasures.

Brad watches them go.

A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN, looking harried and stressed, is next to approach.

NARRATOR

How stingy and mean - when everyone struggles.

Brad gives her a consoling smile, as she passes.

124

**INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY**

124

A distressed Jason Hatfield sits in a hallway, waiting for news. His Wife can be seen, talking to a DOCTOR in the b.g.

NARRATOR

He pictured his friends in their private, anxious moments. No one is immune to pain.

Jason nervously cracks his knuckles.

125 **EXT. TUFTS CAMPUS - DAY** 125

Brad walks, then stops to look at...

...a MEMORIAL PLAQUE, commemorating a departed University President.

NARRATOR

Brad's thoughts then turned to death. The great equalizer.

Brad studies the memorial, closely.

126 **INT. COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA STUDIES OFFICE - DAY** 126

DIPLOMAS and DEGREES for "ROBERT CONNOR" have been placed into various boxes on the shelves to be taken away.

In one box, we SEE a PHOTO of the distinguished, old PROFESSOR shaking some important person's hand.

NARRATOR

His professor gone - without a trace - a brilliant man with a unique mind - and at the institution he had given his whole life to - already replaced.

We SEE now the Female Professor - she types blithely away at her computer.

127 **INT. BRAD'S PARENTS' HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY** 127 \*

A HOSPICE NURSE tends to Brad's dying dad.

NARRATOR

He imagined the moment his father would die - and what his legacy would vanish.

On a nearby couch, Melanie holds Brad's hand in hers, comforting him.

(CONTINUED)

127

127

NARRATOR

No money can keep you alive forever  
- no status.

CLOSE on Brad's dad - his last breath is expired.

128

**EXT. TUFTS CAMPUS - DAY**

128

Brad, deep in thought, sits on the stairs outside the Admission Office.

NARRATOR

Brad wondered which friend of his  
would die first.

129

**EXT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY**

129

The after-party for Nick's wedding. A gorgeous sunset.

We SEE Billy *Werstler*, drinking with his TWO GIRLFRIENDS. \*

130

**INT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY**

130

Craig and Diane have a spirited debate in the kitchen.

Nearby, Jason and his Wife corral their Kids, preparing to leave.

131

**EXT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY**

131

Nick and his Husband share a sweet kiss by the wedding cake.

132

**EXT. TUFTS CAMPUS - DAY**

132

Brad, looking wistful, still sits on the stairs.

NARRATOR

Life itself is the pleasure, Brad  
thought. The only real pleasure.

Brad looks out...

A GROUP OF MALE TUFTS STUDENTS are congregated under a tree,  
teasing each other and laughing.

(CONTINUED)

NARRATOR

In an important time in their lives, Brad and his friends had shared this pleasure together - and what a beautiful, profound thing.

Brad smiles at the sight. He continues to watch them.

NARRATOR

Something felt changed in Brad - he felt he would never see things the same again.

Brad looks over...

...the COLLEGE TOUR is returning. Troy is among the group. He gives Brad a half-wave.

Brad rises and waves back, smiling. Then his CELL PHONE BUZZES. He takes out his phone.

133

**INT. CONFERENCE CENTER - DAY**

133

Melanie, on her cell phone, has stepped away from some CO-WORKERS.

MELANIE

Brad - hey. I saw you called. Everything okay?

INTERCUT PHONE CALL

BRAD

*(into phone)*

Everything's great. Yeah. It's great. Mel?

MELANIE

Yeah?

BRAD

I just... isn't it crazy? You and me - we made this kid and now he's this brilliant, amazing person and...

*(chokes up)*

I wish you were here.

MELANIE

Awww. So do I. Well, honey, we're about to go into the conference.

*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*

MELANIE (cont'd)

I should probably go. I love you.  
I'll call you tonight.

BRAD

Yeah, great. I love you, too.

Brad hangs up and looks back over at...

...Troy, shaking hands with the TOUR GUIDE.

Brad and Troy are getting dressed to go out.

TROY

I liked Tufts. It's a good school.  
I'd be happy there. You went  
there.

(turns to BRAD)

Thanks for bringing me here, Dad.  
And, you know, going all out and  
everything.

BRAD

Ah, I didn't do anything.

TROY

You made all those calls. And now  
you have to go to dinner with a guy  
you hate.

BRAD

I don't hate him. I like him.

TROY

You said he was a jerk and you  
hated his guts.

BRAD

Nah, he's a good guy. He's an old  
friend. I'm looking forward to  
seeing him, actually. Old friends  
are important.

Brad pats a confused Troy on the back as he passes.

BRAD

K. I'm heading out. See you after  
your concert!

TROY

Bye! Have fun!



134

CONTINUED:

134

Brad exits, leaving Troy alone.

135

**EXT. AZALIA'S - NIGHT**

135

Brad enters the crowded, fancy restaurant.

136

**INT. AZALIA'S - CONTINUOUS**

136

Brad approaches the HOSTESS.

BRAD

Hi. I believe I have a reservation. It's for two at seven. The name's Sloan.

\*

HOSTESS

Okay, yeah. You're the first to arrive. Would you like to wait at the bar or go ahead to the table?

BRAD

I think - just go to the table.

The Hostess leads him toward a small table - right by the bar. PATRONS mill around. It's loud.

BRAD

I'm sorry, but is there another table? It's just really loud right here...

HOSTESS

We're fully booked tonight.

BRAD

Well, what about *that* table?

Brad points to a bigger, empty table in the corner.

HOSTESS

I'm sorry but it's not available.

BRAD

It looks available.

HOSTESS

Yeah - it's not.

Brad nods, giving up. He sits at the little table.

137

**INT. AZALIA'S - MOMENTS LATER**

137

Brad is getting jostled by BAR PATRONS. He looks annoyed.

He spots Craig... who enters the restaurant and approaches the Hostess. She greets him, warmly.

The Hostess leads Craig over to Brad's table.

CRAIG

Hey, buddy!

BRAD

*(rising)*

Hey, man!

Craig and Brad share a bear hug.

BRAD

Look at you. You look good!

CRAIG

Ah, I'm going gray!

\*

BRAD

Not as bad as me!

CRAIG

I know - we failed in life!

\*

BRAD

What?

\*

\*

CRAIG

We failed to stay young! Hey, grab your beer - we're moving tables!

\*

\*

BRAD

We are?! Oh, cool!

**MOMENTS LATER**

Brad and Craig have been seated at the quiet table in the corner. The Hostess hands Brad a menu.

BRAD

So I guess this table was available.

HOSTESS

*(perfunctory smile)*

Yes. Enjoy your dinner.

(CONTINUED)

The Hostess locks eyes with Craig, as she hands him a menu.

HOSTESS

Thank you for coming tonight. We  
love having you!

(CONTINUED)

CRAIG

Can I get a Jack and Coke?

HOSTESS

Absolutely! I'll get that for you!

The Hostess departs.

BRAD

You must be a regular.

CRAIG

*(shakes his head)*

Never been here before. I hear  
it's good though.

BRAD

Really? She was acting like you  
guys were best friends.

Craig shrugs, *faux-modestly*.

BRAD

Oh, so she just recognizes you.

*(off CRAIG's look)*

Must be nice.

*(beat; smiles)*

Dude! How long's it been?!

CRAIG

Must be over ten years!

BRAD

Yeah! I'm so glad to see you, man!

*(meaningful)*

I'm *really* glad to see you.

CRAIG

I'm glad to see you, pal. Welcome  
to Boston. Where you staying?

BRAD

We're at the Oak Tree Execustay.

CRAIG

*(makes a face)*

I don't think I've ever heard of  
anyone staying there. Is it nice?

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

It's not bad. Listen, thank you so much for getting Troy in to see that music professor and the Dean of Admissions. That's huge. He had great meetings.

CRAIG

Oh, I'm glad. Can't believe he's already looking at colleges.

BRAD

Me either!

CRAIG

Well, I guess my girls are, too. They're only twelve and they're all over it. Already filling out applications. They're so much more on it than we were.

BRAD

Troy's got a great attitude about it all.

CRAIG

Is he medicated?

BRAD

No.

The HOSTESS brings Craig's drink and sets it down.

CRAIG

So how's Melanie?

BRAD

She's great. She likes her job. She's always been pretty happy.

CRAIG

Diane just sold an article to HBO. They're gonna make a series out of it.

BRAD

Oh. Cool.

*(beat)*

So we went to Tufts today. Bob Connor died.

CRAIG

I know, I know.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

You knew?

CRAIG

Oh, yeah, I spoke at his memorial.

BRAD

You did?

CRAIG

Yeah, we'd been in touch. He'd asked me to come speak at his class a few times about journalism and government...

BRAD

*(slightly stung)*

He did, hunh? That's flattering.

CRAIG

I try to get out of stuff like that - but for him. Such a great person.

BRAD

Yeah. He was the closest thing I had to a mentor.

CRAIG

I remember. You were his favorite. At the time.

BRAD

I wish I'd been there at his memorial. I wish I'd known.

CRAIG

If I'd seen you at Nick's wedding, I would have told you about it - it happened right after...

BRAD

Yeah, I didn't know about Nick's thing either.

CRAIG

You didn't miss much. Nick's gotten so... I mean, I love the guy. But the more successful he gets, the gayer he gets.

*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*

CRAIG (cont'd)

He's now like a full-on flamer -  
with hairless dudes in banana  
hammocks running around his house,  
humping each other.

BRAD

I saw his house in an Architectural  
Digest.

CRAIG

Yeah, it's like a set for a sci-fi  
gay porno or something.

BRAD

I talked to Jason today.

CRAIG

Yeah? How's he?

BRAD

Well, he sounded stressed. His kid  
is sick. I think she has something  
wrong with her spine.

CRAIG

That sucks. Which one? He has  
like four.

BRAD

I think I might have offended him.  
I thought he had his own jet for  
some reason - and I brought it up -  
maybe I sounded glib - I don't  
know. But he seemed annoyed that I  
accused him of having his own  
plane. I felt bad.

CRAIG

He does have a plane.

BRAD

No, he doesn't.

CRAIG

Yes, he does.

BRAD

No. His company maybe leases one.

CRAIG

Yeah, *his* company. That's *his*  
company. That's *his* plane.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

Are you sure?

CRAIG

Didn't you read the piece in the Times?

*(off BRAD's blank look)*

He's getting sued. He lost a lot of money for a lot of powerful people. He's running scared. And there was this brutal take-down piece in the Times - actually written by a friend of mine - which put me in a really awkward position. It talked about his lavish lifestyles - the houses in the Hamptons - *the private planes*.

BRAD

Oh my god.

CRAIG

Might be why he was a little sensitive.

BRAD

Oh. I thought... I got it all wrong, I guess.

CRAIG

Jason's a pillar of society. He's a family man. He's a good dude. And he's a total crook.

Craig laughs.

BRAD

Really?

CRAIG

He's a thief. And there's a chance - albeit slight - he goes to jail.

BRAD

Jesus. Wow.

CRAIG

In his business - you don't want to stay at the tables too long. Get your money. And then get the fuck out. 'Cause somewhere along the line, you probably did something shady.

*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*



CRAIG (cont'd)

You don't get rich like that by being an Eagle Scout. He should do what Billy did. Flee.

BRAD

Right. Billy really seems to be living the dream. Two girlfriends.

CRAIG

Just don't call him after 5pm.

BRAD

Why not?

CRAIG

What do you mean? He's a drunk.

BRAD

He is?

CRAIG

Yeah - and a...

*(pantomimes snorting coke)*

And a...

Craig pantomimes injecting his arm with heroin.

BRAD

Shut up.

CRAIG

Don't be naive. You knew that.

BRAD

When we talked on the phone, he sounded okay. He was like walking his dog early in the morning...

CRAIG

He'd probably been up all night on a bender. In his defense, he's got a lot of time on his hands. You pick up vices.

BRAD

I'm so in the dark.

CRAIG

That's what happens when you drop out and move to Sacramento.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

I moved to Sacramento. I didn't drop out.

CRAIG

Why *did* you move to Sacramento?

BRAD

Melanie got a job there. And I can work anywhere right now.

CRAIG

Oh, right - with your little... thing. That's a cool thing you're doing.

BRAD

*(stung)*

Yeah. Thanks.

CRAIG

Good stuff. I'm sorry I never got back to you about that.

BRAD

It's all right.

CRAIG

It just came at a moment when I was getting bombarded. It's like every day I get hit up with requests. Speaking engagements, writing introductions to someone's book...

*(points to BRAD)*

...asking to be put on boards, executive boards, non-profit boards. There's just not enough time in the day - sometimes you've gotta just draw the line. As hard as it is - you just have to learn how to say no. Yesterday, I got asked to speak at the Aspen Ideas Festival in June. Well, *that* I'm going to do. That's cool, you know? Interesting people, well curated...

BRAD

Yeah. Listen - Craig - I just want to say - I'm proud of you. I really am.

*(MORE)*

*(CONTINUED)*

BRAD (cont'd)

I mean, I know it must be pretty stressful to have so many balls in the air and have so much going on, but from the outside...

CRAIG

Not that stressful. It's fun.

BRAD

Well, I'm just happy for you. To be honest, at first, I'd see you on TV - and it kind of... bothered me - just because we always had a little competitive thing going. But I'm happy with my life - and you're doing what you want to do - things work out the way they should.

Craig nods - then furrows his brow.

CRAIG

I was never competitive with you.

Brad takes a beat, his eyes narrow.

BRAD

Oh, come on. Really?

CRAIG

Maybe in school for like a second. But I haven't thought of you in that way for years.

BRAD

What is that supposed to mean?

CRAIG

It means... I dunno. Why would I compete with you?

BRAD

Oh, shut the fuck up.

Craig looks at Brad with a perplexed grin.

CRAIG

What?

Brad is suddenly defensive.

\*

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

I just... I'm trying to be real  
with you. I mean, it's like...  
what is your deal?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CRAIG

What do you mean?

\*  
\*

Suddenly, they are approached by a YOUNG MALE STUDENT.

MALE STUDENT

Excuse me, Mr. Fisher. My name's  
Mark - and I'm a big fan of yours.  
I love your books and everything  
you do...

BRAD

(interrupting)

Like do you know what I do? I  
actually help people. And like - I  
dunno - like why would you treat me  
like this?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CRAIG

Treat you like what?

\*  
\*

BRAD

What am I to you? Hunh?

\*  
\*

MALE STUDENT

I'm sorry. Am I interrupting?

\*

CRAIG

No, no, no.

MALE STUDENT

Is it possible to get a picture?

BRAD

My mother died - you never said  
anything, man. Like - you follow  
me on Facebook. I... I dunno. I  
just don't know.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CRAIG  
I'm confused. What's going on?

BRAD  
Are you my friend? You know? Are we even... what are we? All the shit-talking. Like right now I'm feeling like... I just know what I'm feeling and it's not...

Brad rises from the table.

CRAIG  
What the fuck? Are you okay?

BRAD  
Thanks for helping my son. But it's like... I'm just done - with this. Whatever this is.

Brad takes a TWENTY from his pocket and sets it on the table.

Brad turns and walks to the exit, in a hurry.

Craig and the Male Student, mouths agape, watch him go.

138 **EXT. AZALIA'S - NIGHT** 138

Brad exits the restaurant and lets out a long EXHALE.

He rubs his fingers through his hair, shakes his head. Worst case scenario. Then walks off, into the night.

139 **EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - NIGHT** 139

CLOSE on Brad - as he heads toward the CONCERT HALL.

NARRATOR  
The entire walk, Brad could only think about what Craig's take-away would be - and what he would tell everyone.

140 **INT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY** 140

Craig regales his wife, Diane and a few other GUESTS.

CRAIG

It was embarrassing. He's out of his mind. He's completely lost it.

141 **INT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY** 141

Craig talks to Nick and Nick's Husband.

CRAIG

He was the golden boy in college - and now I'm the one who's winning prizes and getting recognized. He's overcome with jealousy.

142 **INT. NICK PASCALE'S HOUSE - DAY** 142

Craig chats with Jason and his Wife.

CRAIG

He's insane. He's a pedophile. He looks old.

Jason and his Wife, nod, solemnly.

143 **EXT. CONCERT HALL - NIGHT** 143

Brad crosses the quad to the concert hall.

NARRATOR

Why did he let Craig get to him?  
After all these years, why didn't Brad have a stronger sense of self?  
Why couldn't he sustain a feeling about himself? Or even a point of view?

144 **EXT. CONCERT HALL - NIGHT** 144

Brad stands at the BOX OFFICE, lost in thought.

NARRATOR

Why was he always elsewhere, in his head, puffing himself up or tearing himself down? Enough.

TICKET SELLER  
Sir. Your ticket.

Brad snaps out of it. He takes his ticket and goes.

**INT. CONCERT HALL - NIGHT**

A small concert hall, mostly filled. Brad stands at the back, looking for Troy.

He spots him, sitting alone, near the front.

MOMENTS LATER

Brad appears by Troy's side.

TROY  
(surprised)  
Dad?

Brad gives Troy a smile and takes the seat next to him.

TROY  
What about your dinner?

BRAD  
I'd rather be with you.

Troy nods - as the AUDITORIUM LIGHTS GO DOWN.

The LIGHTS GO UP on the stage - a group of about THIRTY STUDENT MUSICIANS are seated.

Then, Ananya, with her flute, and Maya, with her violin, walk onto the stage.

BRAD  
Those are the girls from last night.

TROY  
I know.

The musicians begin to play DVORAK'S "HUMORESQUE".

The music is beautiful, soothing, smooth.

ON BRAD - as he listens, lost in thought.

Brad looks over at...

Troy, sitting still beside him, enjoying the music.

Brad takes Troy in with a proud, melancholy smile.

He then turns his attention to the stage.

ON STAGE - Ananya, on her flute, and Maya, on her violin, are playing their duet.

ON BRAD - as he listens, he looks increasingly stunned.

BRAD  
(loud whisper)  
They're so good.

TROY  
Shh. Dad.

Brad sits back in his seat, taking it in, really listening.

NARRATOR  
The music is beautiful, Brad  
thought.

The concert continues.

Ananya and Maya are extraordinarily talented.

NARRATOR  
These girls are beautiful.

ON BRAD - he is visibly moved.

NARRATOR  
He could love them and never  
possess them.

The entire orchestra joins in - the music is gorgeous.

NARRATOR  
Just like he could love the world  
and never possess it.

A dam of emotion bursts. Brad is now crying in his seat.

NARRATOR  
He still *did* love the world.

Deep, cathartic tears.

Troy looks over and sees that his father is crying.

TROY  
Dad?



Brad tries to get a handle on his emotions.  
He wipes his eyes and smiles reassuringly to Troy.

BRAD  
I'm okay.

Brad looks back toward the orchestra.  
He begins to become emotional again.

**LATER**

The very last moments of the performance. \*

The musicians finish. It's over.

The audience begins to politely CLAP.

Brad just sits there, spent. He starts to CLAP, too. In deep appreciation. \*

We HOLD on Brad and Troy clapping for a moment. \*

146 **EXT. HARVARD BRIDGE - NIGHT** 146

Brad and Troy walk in silence back to their hotel. We HEAR the noise of the passing CARS. \*

147 **INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT** 147

Brad is emotionally spent. He sits on the bed, still in his dinner clothes, exhausted.

Troy is checking out the MINI-BAR.

TROY

You want some chips?

Brad shakes his head.

Troy watches him for a second.

TROY

Ananya said you met up with her  
last night.

Brad looks up, sharply.

BRAD

Yeah, I couldn't sleep. It was  
just a drink.

TROY

*(nods)*

Dad. Are you having some kind of  
nervous breakdown or something?

Brad looks at Troy and lets out an amused exhale.

BRAD

No.

*(beat)*

It's just... sometimes I have  
doubts. I worry that people look  
at me - and think of me as a  
failure.

*(shrugs)*

But the feeling passes.

Brad gives Troy a strained smile.

Troy opens a bag of chips and sits down beside Brad on the  
bed.

TROY

When we were walking around today  
and you were embarrassing me - I  
kept thinking - if I go to this  
school, everyone here is gonna  
remember this. I'll never be able  
to live this down.

*(little laugh)*

But they won't remember. They're  
just thinking about themselves, you  
know? Nobody cares. The only  
person thinking about you is me.  
So the only opinion that should  
matter to you is mine.

(CONTINUED)

147

Brad turns to Troy.

BRAD  
Yeah. And what's your opinion?

TROY  
(*matter-of-fact*)  
I love you.

Brad's eyes instantly fill with emotion.

Brad nods, accepting this.

BRAD  
(*softly*)  
Thank you.

Brad looks at his son with gratitude.

148

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

148

The lights in the room are out. MOONLIGHT illuminates the room.

Brad, in bed, looks over at Troy, sound asleep.

Brad then looks up at the ceiling.

NARRATOR  
That night, a memory popped into  
Brad's head.

149

**EXT. TUFTS LAWN - DUSK**

149

Magic hour. We SEE a group of YOUNG MALE STUDENTS, from a short distance away, gathering on the quad lawn. They are CHATTING and LAUGHING.

NARRATOR  
He and his friends were back in college. They were on the quad, laughing about something. They were still young - all potential - unformed and undefined.

We STAY on this image for a while.

150

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

150

CLOSE ON BRAD - lost in his memory.

\*

(CONTINUED)

Brad stares at the balcony doors. A draft of wind blows the curtains slightly. We HEAR a faint whistling noise. \*

NARRATOR

A sudden rush of feeling flooded Brad. He lay there a while, letting himself really feel the life inside him. He kept saying in his mind - I'm alive. I'm alive. I'm still alive. \*

Brad smiles to himself rolling over on his side, turning away from us - we HEAR the beginning of Dvorak's "Humoresque" and we...

FADE TO BLACK.