FADE IN:

MOLECULAR HEART.

A blue electron chases a pink one around the nucleus of an atom.

Atoms bind together one by one forming a tight knit blanket of little solar systems.

IRIS(V.O.)
(Laughing)
Spin it! Spin it!

THOMAS(V.O.)
I'm going to be late.

IRIS(V.O.)
Around and around we go, where we'll stop nobody knows.

Atoms form a pulsing human heart.

INT. WALL CENTER- DAY

THOMAS SULLIVAN (30) follows IRIS MOON (25+) inside revolving glass door.

THOMAS
Iris. Come on.

IRIS
Are you getting old on me already?
Old man.

THOMAS
No, I just, I have to work.

Iris faces Thomas, pushing the door with her back.

IRIS
No you don't, you don't have to work, Thomas.

THOMAS
It's too early for philosophy
Iris, come on.

Iris stops the doors so they're both trapped in separate sections.
IRIS
What if we were stuck in here forever and we could only look at each other through the glass but never touch?

THOMAS
But we're not?

IRIS
Yeah, but what if we were?

THOMAS
I don't know, then, then it'd be a terrible waste.

IRIS
Why?

THOMAS
Iris, I have to go-

IRIS
-Tell me. Why would it be a waste?

Thomas checks his wrist watch.

THOMAS
It'd be a waste because, because I don't like to browse, okay? It would be torture, come on.

IRIS
You think looking at me for eternity would be torture?

Thomas finds a bottle of grape cough medicine in his pocket.

THOMAS
If we could never, you know, then yeah.

IRIS
It's all in your head.

THOMAS
Touch isn't.

He unscrews the cap and swigs the cough syrup.

IRIS
Yeah, but you could always touch yourself and I-
THOMAS
- Look, masturbation, lacks the element of surprise, now I have to go, seriously.

Stuffs the bottle back in his pocket.

IRIS
Kiss me and you can go.

Iris puts her lips to the glass.

THOMAS
Come on Iris there's people watching-

IRIS
- Exactly, don't disappoint them.

Thomas quickly pecks the glass on her lips.

THOMAS
There, can I go now? Please?

IRIS
If you really really want to?

She pouts her lips.

THOMAS
You're so cute, it's not even fair.

Thomas closes his eye's.

THOMAS
Rent, hydro, phone, food, rent hydro, phone, food, yep I definitely have to go.

Opens his eye's.

Iris pushes the door to let him out.

He smiles and walks toward the elevator. She spills into the lobby after him.

IRIS
Three!

He looks back.

THOMAS
Two.
IRIS

One.

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM- NIGHT

DOCTOR rubs paddles together over Iris's limp body.

    DOCTOR
    Clear!

Presses paddles onto her chest. Jolts her.

NURSE and Doctor check monitors. Flat line.

    NURSE
    She's still in defib!

    DOCTOR
    Charging!

Presses paddles on her again.

    DOCTOR
    Clear!

Iris contorts, then limp.

    DOCTOR
    Fuck, come on Iris! Help us out here hun!

    NURSE
    Nothing.

    DOCTOR
    (Fading out)
    Charging.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM-NIGHT

Thomas stands with the Doctor.

    DOCTOR(V.O.)
    (Fading out)
    Clear.

    THOMAS
    I don't understand, what do you mean she's, she's what, she's?

    DOCTOR
    I'm sorry. She's gone.
THOMAS
No, no, no, no ,no, no, no, no, no.
No! No! This is not happening.

DOCTOR
We a, I'm sorry-

THOMAS
-No, no, uh-uh, don't, don't, it's okay. It's because, because-

Thomas walks away backwards down the hall.

DOCTOR
-Sir? Where are you going? You shouldn't be alone right now.

THOMAS
I'm just going to, um, it's fine.
It's fine. I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine. Fine.

He turns and starts jogging down the hallway.

INT. LARRY AND JACKIES HOUSE/KITCHEN- DAY

Thomas stirs a coffee at the table. JACKIE SULLIVAN (32), fries eggs.

JACKIE
I just wish we could have met her you know?

THOMAS
You would have loved her Jack'. She was funny.

JACKIE
How are you holding up anyways? You know if you need anything me and Lar' are here okay?

THOMAS
I'm fine. Thanks.

LARRY (30's) buttons his shirt and takes a seat.

LARRY
Tom hey. Jackie, you tell him yet?

THOMAS
Tell me what?
JACKIE
Not now, Lar'.

THOMAS
What?

LARRY
Looks like you're going to be an Uncle Tom buddy.

JACKIE
Ugh, Larry, I'm so sorry Tom.

THOMAS
Really, you're, you're pregnant Jack'?

JACKIE
Jesus Larry, you know?

LARRY
What?

JACKIE
My brother just lost somebody, I don't think he wants to hear our good news right now.

LARRY
Oh shit, yeah sorry man.

THOMAS
No, no it's fine, that's really cool, I'm, I'm really happy for you guys.

JACKIE
Really Tom?

THOMAS
Yeah, totally, it's, it's, you're going to be a great mother Jack'.

LARRY
See I told he'd be happy-

JACKIE
-Shut up Larry. You're so insensitive sometimes you know that?

Larry rolls his eyes and opens a newspaper.

Tom checks his watch.
THOMAS
Thanks for the coffee, I've a, I've got a run.

Tom puts his coat on.

JACKIE
See now he's leaving Larry.

THOMAS
No, I'm fine, I've just got somewhere to be.

LARRY
See he's just got be somewhere. You can't blame everything on me babe.

JACKIE
Are you sure you're okay, cause I was going to wait until like it was born before I told you?

THOMAS
Jack', it's all good, I love you guys okay. I'm happy for you.

Tom kisses Jackie on the forehead. Leaves.

JACKIE
I told you not to say anything you idiot he's a mess right now!

LARRY
Hey I'm sorry but I didn't kill his girlfriend so maybe you could stop yelling at me.

JACKIE
Ugh!

Jackie flips a scoop of scrambled eggs all over the table. She storms out the room.

Larry forks a bite into his mouth.

LARRY
I prefer sunny side up hun! Yep, I'm sleeping on the couch.
EXT. CEMETARY—DAY

A headstone bares the name IRIS 19??-2009.

Thomas kneels, lays flowers upon it. Sips some grape cough syrup.

THOMAS
Hey, um, I saw my sister today. She's pregnant, I'm going to be an uncle Tom. You would've loved that. This is so dumb because, you can't hear me because you're dead and when you die that's that. And I really fucking miss you.

An OLD MAN, kneels at a headstone beside Tom.

Tom wipes his eye's.

OLD MAN
You think she can hear you?

THOMAS
No. I don't know. Do you?

OLD MAN
Only if you want her to.

THOMAS
What do you mean?

OLD MAN
There are always ways around death.

THOMAS
What are you talking about, I don't understand?

Old Man hands Thomas a business card from his inside pocket.

The Card says only "1=2" in the center.

OLD MAN
Here, I think he can explain it better than me. She doesn't have to be gone.

THOMAS
You're crazy. Why would you say that to me? You're a fool.
OLD MAN
Maybe, or maybe I'm not, even, here.

POOF! The Old Man vanishes.

THOMAS
Ahh! Shit.

Tom falls onto his backside. Searching all around. Nothing.

THOMAS
Hey? Hello? This isn't funny. Hey!
Fuck you! Fucking liar! Fuckin', hey I'm talking to you! Hey!

INT. DR. KELLER'S OFFICE- DAY

DR. BRENDA KELLER (40) listens cross-legged across from Tom. She takes notes throughout.

DR. KELLER
And have you had any other hallucinations recently?

THOMAS
No.

DR. KELLER
Can you see this old man right now?

THOMAS
No. Do you think I'm going crazy Dr. Keller?

DR. KELLER
Well under the circumstances, Thomas, I think what you experienced is a perfectly normal reaction to the loss of somebody special. You said that this old man said um, said um-

Dr. Keller reads her notes.

THOMAS
-He said she doesn't have to be gone.

DR. KELLER
Right, now, what that says to me is subconsciously you are still in the denial stage, searching for hope or some strand of Iris to cling onto.
THOMAS
Well, I miss her.

DR. KELLER
Of course you do. But, the mind is a very powerful, very mysterious thing and you need to be careful not to lose touch with reality. Iris is gone Thomas. And I think that she has to be gone, in order for you to move forward in a healthy fashion.

THOMAS
Yeah, I know.

DR. KELLER
Acceptance is our goal here. That's what I can offer. Whenever you're ready.

EXT. STREETS- DAY
Thomas drifts down the busy sidewalk. He pops inside a pharmacy.

INT. PHARMACY- DAY
Thomas browses the cold and flu aisle. He is drawn to a bottle of grape cough syrup. He reaches for it and collides with the hand of DARLA MURPHY, (27+) humble beauty.

DARLA
Oh sorry.

THOMAS
No, go ahead, I'll get the next one.

They each grab a bottle of grape cough syrup off the shelf.

DARLA
Tom? Tom Sullivan?

He postures up to examine her closer.

THOMAS
Whoa, hey Darla, how are you, you look, great.

DARLA
I'm good um, how, how are you, you look, how are you?
THOMAS
I'm uh, you know alright um, yeah, so you come here often or?

A SHOPPER looms around browsing the shelves.

DARLA
Not, really um.

She looks at the cough syrup bottle in her hand.

THOMAS
Looks like we use the same breath freshener.

DARLA
Um, yeah, that's weird huh, your breath can never be too fresh.

THOMAS
Yeah, this, stuff works great.

Shopper looks at them with a face of confusion.

DARLA
Yeah it's great um.

THOMAS
Listen, Darla, we're still bigger than small talk aren't we?

DARLA
Yeah, yes, of course we are, this is silly. We're adults now right I mean, come on?

THOMAS
Right, exactly and listen, um, I uh, I'm, you know the way things, I-

DARLA
-Too big, for right now, if that's okay?

THOMAS
Yeah, no, you're right, um, I'm just sorry and, that's all, if that's okay, to say.

DARLA
Okay.
THOMAS
So, um, how have you been anyways?

EXT. STREETS- DAY
Tom and Darla saunter through crowded sidewalk.

DARLA
So I don't know, you know, I was thinking about maybe taking some night classes or something, I always kind of wanted to get in psychiatry but, life happens right?

THOMAS
Yeah, but that sounds cool though, I think you'd be good at that. Getting into, into peoples heads and poking around and stuff.

DARLA
Maybe although, sometimes I wish someone would poke around in my head and tell me what the heck's going on in there you know what I mean?

THOMAS
Oh yeah. Completely. So are a, are you this guy pretty serious then?

She smile bashfully.

DARLA
Actually, yeah, he's, he's, he's just so, perfect for me, oddly, you know? In every way. It's strange too, like we finish each others thoughts and stuff it's crazy.

THOMAS
What's his name?

DARLA
Well, his name is Tyler, but I call him Taylor because I say he's been tailored just for me. Corny I know.
THOMAS
No, no, I'm really happy for you Darla. It sounds like everything worked out for the best.

DARLA
Thanks Tom. That really means a lot.

THOMAS
Listen, I uh, I better get going. I've got some errands to run, and Iris, my girlfriend is meeting me um, somewhere so-

DARLA
-Oh, really, but we barely got a chance to catch up. I didn't even get to hear about how you're doing?

THOMAS
Next time, you know. We'll go for coffee or something, yeah?

DARLA
Okay, I guess. I won't blab so long about me next time I promise.

THOMAS
I like hearing about you. Um, but yeah, I'll see you later.

He holds out his hand. She looks at it and the puts hers in it.

DARLA
Take care of yourself Thomas.

They shake hands.

THOMAS
Yeah, um, you too Darla. Bye.

DARLA
Bye.

INT. THOMASS' APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Thomas lays in bed holding a framed picture of Iris in front of him.
IRIS(V.O.)
What if we were stuck in here forever and we could only look at each other through the glass but never touch?

THOMAS
It's torture.

INT. THOMAS'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN - DAY

Thomas pours a cup of coffee. Reaches inside his pocket. Pulls out the Old Man's business card.

The coffee mug drops from his hand exploding everywhere.

EXT. SIDEWALK DOWNTOWN-DAY

At a news stand Thomas buys cigarettes and a lighter. Lights a smoke. Sips some grape cough syrup from a bottle.

He reads the backside of the business card; ONETWOONETWO 12TH AVENUE.

EXT. 1212 12TH AVENUE-DAY

A revolving glass door stares at Thomas. A well-dressed DOORMAN waves Thomas in.

DOORMAN
Just spin it.

THOMAS
I know.

Thomas enters the door.

INT. 1212 12TH AVENUE- DAY

A sign beside the elevator reads: 1=2-Twelfth floor.

INT. 1212 12TH AVENUE/TWELTH FLOOR CORRIDOR- DAY

Two doors oppose each other. One reads "1=2" the other reads "2=1."

Thomas enters the "1=2" door.
INT. 1=2 OFFICE-DAY

An all white room. A RECEPTIONIST behind a desk. A doorway behind the desk. Thomas examines the room. Other PATIENTS are waiting reading magazines.

    RECEPTIONIST
    Good morning Thomas. You can go right in.

    THOMAS
    How, how do you know my name?

    RECEPTIONIST
    Everything will be explained after your analysis.

She signals to the door behind her.

    THOMAS
    Analysis?

INT. 2=1 EXAMINATION HALL- DAY

An endless white hallway. The floor is an escalator. A tiny soft blue light at the end. Thomas looks at the moving floor. A WOMAN'S VOICE directs him.

    WOMAN'S VOICE
    Welcome Thomas Shepard, please step forward carefully.

    THOMAS
    Hello? Who are you?

    WOMAN'S VOICE
    Please carefully step forward.

He steps onto conveyor and begins towards the blue light.

    WOMAN'S VOICE
    Thomas Shepard, thirty one year old male.

A picture of Thomas appears on the wall.

    WOMAN'S VOICE
    Current account active for, five years, three months and fourteen days. Checking credit.

Walls are now a slide show of Thomas.
WOMAN'S VOICE
Credit approved. Searching hard drive.

Pictures of Iris and Thomas start to appear all around him.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Last known creation. Iris Moon, twenty seven years of age. Female.

THOMAS
What is this? What is this place?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Current status of Iris Moon. Terminated by Thomas Shepard.

THOMAS
No. That's not true. That's not right! Hey! What the fuck is this?

He looks down at the blue light.

THOMAS
Fuck this.

Thomas runs towards the growing blue light. Pictures of Iris chase him along the walls.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Please remain calm. Please remain tranquil.

He charges into the blue at the end.

INT. DR. FAUST'S OFFICE- DAY

DR. BENJAMIN FAUST (50) sits behind a white desk.

Thomas pours into the room followed by blue light.

DR. FAUST
Thomas Shepard.

THOMAS
Who the fuck are you?

DR. FAUST
My name is Dr.Benjamin Faust.

Dr. Faust rises and comes around from his desk.
THOMAS
What is this place, how do you know so much about me? And Iris?

DR. FAUST
Five years is far too long between check ups Thomas. How have you been supplementing the medication required?

THOMAS
What medication? What, what? Tell me what's going on? Now? Is she, is she alive?

DR. FAUST
That's really up to you. You see Mr. Shepard you have come to the end of your contract with us. If you wish to continue the one equals two program, we will need you to sign a new contract.

THOMAS
What the fuck are you talking about! What contract, who are you people?

DR. FAUST
You really don't remember? Hm. You were supposed to come in for regular checkups twice a year to maintain control of the fantasy. What we provide here Mr. Shepard is a state of conscious dilusion.

Dr. Faust points at a poster of the "1=2" logo which is two people intertwined with each other.

THOMAS
Conscious dilusion, what does that mean? Can you just speak English?

DR. FAUST
Basically it involves opening your imagination to the point where fantasy and reality are able to coexist. You work one job in reality but in your mind you're working the job of your dreams. You invent your perfect life partner. I've got a single sandwich artist who thinks he's a dj with an actress girlfriend for example.
THOMAS
This is bullshit. This, this isn't even possible.

DR. FAUST
Unfortunately you've lost sight of reality somewhere along the way. Now you've come to a crossroads. The question is, would you rather be happy, or aware?

THOMAS
Happy or aware? What do you mean aware exactly?

Dr. Faust presses a button on his desk. A picture moves revealing a TV screen. A paused image of a younger Tom in the same office appears.

THOMAS
Where did you get that? I don't remember that?

DR. FAUST
Let me ask you a question. What do you think you do for a living?

THOMAS
I'm, I'm a writer, I'm working on a novel.

DR FAUST
Really?

THOMAS
Yeah, really.

Dr. Faust presses play.

ON SCREEN
Tom sits in front of a camera in Dr. Faust's office.

YOUNGER DR.FAUST
How about your job, do enjoy your work?

YOUNGER THOMAS
No, not really. I thought I was going to be some prolific writer you know. Like Charles Dickens or Hemingway or something but, but, instead I'm stuck as an editors assistant. I type in all the corrections that my boss makes on someone elses masterpiece.
YOUNGER DR.FAUST
Not to worry Mr. Shepard, we can fix that here.

OFF SCREEN
Dr. Faust presses pause.

DR FAUST
Now do you see Mr.Shepard? Do you see the choice before you?

EXT. CEMETARY-DAY
Cross-legged Thomas tilts a brown-paper bag of liquor to his lips. The flowers he left before are wilted and the name on the headstone is different; "AGNUS BLYE(1889-1961)". Thomas breaks down shudders with visceral tears.

INT. GROCERY STORE- NIGHT
His face is overgrown and unkept. Thomas pushes, a papered bottle of liquor in upper basket, a shopping cart in dark black sunglasses.

Picking through tomatoes in the produce section.

FLASHBACK.

INT. GROCERY STORE- DAY
Iris sorts through tomatoes in produce section. Thomas clean shaven, holds onto a shopping cart.

IRIS
What else do you want with the meat?

THOMAS
What do you feel like babe?

IRIS
I don't know, I was going to make a little salad. We could do like corn on the cobb or asparagus or mashed potatoes or something.

THOMAS
Ooh corn on the cobb sounds good.
IRIS
Alright. The corns over there, start bagging some up then, big buddy.

THOMAS
Coolio.

Thomas moves for the corn.

IRIS
Check them this time please.

THOMAS
Yes mom.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. GROCERY STORE-NIGHT

Tom looks down at a full plastic bag of tomatoes. He leaves the bag on the tomato pile, pushing his cart around a corner into the...

Dairy aisle.

Swigs his liquor bottle. Then some Grape cough syrup.

Pushing faster and faster. Running with the cart, pulls his bottle out, he lets go. Stops to watch the crash. Smash! GROCERY STORE CLERK appears at the wreck.

Tom ducks into the...

Stationary aisle where he stops to stare at a section of picture frames. All contain the same stock photo of a handsome man giving a pretty woman a piggy back ride on the beach.

INT. GROCERY STORE/CHECKOUT-NIGHT

Third in line, Thomas dumps an armfull of frozen dinners on the moving counter. Takes a drag of a half finished cigarette and sips his drink.

CHECKOUT GIRL notices him.

CHECKOUT GIRL
Excuse me sir, you can't smoke in here. You can't drink that in here either.
THOMAS
Oh yeah, how do I know, that you're even real? Did you ever think about that? Huh?

SHORTLY AFTER.
Two POLICEMEN tug on Thomas's waist and legs as he grasps at the pile of frozen dinners, clutching onto the counter with one hand.

POLICEMEN 1
Is this real enough for you pal?

POLICEMEN 2
Let's go buddy, let go.

THOMAS
I just want my fucking frozen dinner, is that too much to ask?

POLICEMEN 1
Get your hands off of the counter, buddy relax.

THOMAS
No. No, let go of me you, you fuck.

He scrambles for a lasagna, clawing the moving counter. He grabs hold of one and let's go of the counter. The cops carry him away.

POLICEMEN 1
Nice try.

Policeman rips the lasagna box from Tom and hands it off to the Checkout Girl. Thomas wriggles, resists.

THOMAS
No, no, fuck you, fuck you!

Cops carry him through the doors outside.

THOMAS(O.S.)
All I wanted is a fucking tv dinner, you fucking, you're all in my head! Get out! Get, out!
INT. SQUAD CAR—NIGHT
Hands cuffed behind his back Tom in the backseat. The two Officers up front.

THOMAS
You two are nothing. Nothing. This is a taxi. This is a taxi. I'm in a taxi probably. Without me, you don't even exist. I'm, I'm-

Thomas looks out his window.

POLICEMEN 1
-Shut up.

Standing in the grocery store window is Iris pressing her hand on the glass.

As the car moves along, she kisses the glass, staring at him and then waves goodbye.

THOMAS
Just a body.

EXT. POLICE STATION—DAY
Larry and Thomas come down the front stairs. Thomas lights a cigarette.

LARRY
I didn't know you were a smoker?

THOMAS
I don't really know what I am right now.

Larry presses unlock on his key fob and his parked car Chirps.

Tom stops beside the passenger door, Larry opens the driver door, looks across the roof at Tom.

LARRY
You okay?

THOMAS
I don't know. Thanks for coming down here. Listen, don't tell Jack' I don't, with her being pregnant I, she's-
LARRY
-Don't worry about it. I won't say anything. Are you a, are you going to be okay Tom?

THOMAS
Yeah. I think I'm going to walk I a, I could use the fresh air you know?

LARRY
She must have been some girl.

THOMAS
Yeah, she was something.

LARRY
Well. Are you sure I can't drop you at home, it's on the way?

THOMAS
I'm fine. Thanks Larry.

LARRY
Don't mention it.

THOMAS
You're going be a good dad.

LARRY
You really think so?

THOMAS
Yeah, I do.

LARRY
Thanks man. You're alright then?

THOMAS
I'm good.

LARRY
Good enough, see you in a bit.

THOMAS
Take care.

INT. WALL CENTER- DAY

In a wrinkled suit unshaven, Thomas steps into a crowded elevator.

The doors close. A BUSINESS WOMAN turns to him.
BUSINESS WOMAN
Good morning Tom. How's that novel coming?

THOMAS
The novel? Oh yeah, it's uh, it's uh, it's coming to end real soon, I think.

BUSINESS WOMAN
That's good, what's it been now, like five years?

THOMAS
Um, yeah, five years. Five years.

He chugs back a bottle of cough syrup.

BUSINESS WOMAN
I can't wait to read it.

THOMAS
Me neither.

The doors open.

BUSINESS WOMAN
Huh?

THOMAS
Bye.

Thomas exits.

INT. TIMBER PUBLISHING OFFICE- DAY

A large room divided into cubicles. Thomas encounters PHIL CAMPBELL (50) on his way to his desk.

PHIL
Tom?

THOMAS
Good morning Mr. Campbell.

PHIL
Jesus Tom, what the hell happened to you? You look like shit.

THOMAS
Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm not really myself-
PHIL
-Water under the bridge. Listen, I need the "Free Will" edits in by five today. Do you think you can pull that off for me?

THOMAS
What "Free Will" edits?

PHIL
The book, the same book we've been on for six months come on now Tom?

THOMAS
Oh, that's the book I'm editing right now?

PHIL
You're pulling my leg aren't you. You son of bitch, that's why you're my guy Tom.

Phil walks off laughing.

PHIL
You're my guy Tom.

Tom sits at his desk. Photo's are pinned up on the cubicle walls. They are stock photos of a Handsome Man giving a Pretty Woman a piggy back ride on the beach.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE-DAY

A HOMELESS WOMAN rocks to and fro beside the doorway cross legged. Thomas steps out with a paper bagged bottle. He twists off the lid a fills his mouth.

HOMELESS
And Molly is so pretty with her freckles today. I had toast with jam and we played hide...

Thomas moves down the sidewalk lighting a cigarette.

A BUSINESS MAN passes by with bluetooth earpiece.

BUSINESS MAN
Hun I can't do it, I've got clients coming at seven. You know I want to be there. That's why you're the best sweetie...

Thomas fills his mouth with more booze moving along.

A DRUG DEALER has a JUNKIE pinned up against a brick wall.
DRUG DEALER
Don't make me start taking fingers
Frank. You hear me? I don't like
doing that but I will.

JUNKIE
This is my head. You're not
supposed to be in here. Do you
hear the triangles? Smell the
circles.

Thomas passes by them.

DRUG DEALER(O.S.)
Tommorrow Frank or it's eenie
meenie time, you listening to
me...?

Further down the street a MAN and WOMAN holding hands.
Homeless people cower in doorways. Junkies dance to silence.

MAN
This city's such a shithole.

WOMAN
Look at all the junkies. Holy cow.

Thomas staggers towards them swigging his paper bag.

MAN
Look at this drunk. Working hard
buddy.

WOMAN
Don't.

MAN
What? Our fucking taxes pay these
losers welfare. Hey buddy, you
like that free liquor I bought
you.

THOMAS
Huh?

MAN
Why don't you get a fucking job
you scab?

WOMAN
That's enough.

MAN
Relax babe.
THOMAS
Are you real?

MAN
You see this babe, it's people like this that exist purely to make us normal people feel better about ourselves. Yeah pal, I'm real.

THOMAS
Oh. Good.

Thomas swings his bottle of booze Smash! into the mans head.

WOMAN
Stop! No!

MAN
Ugh!

The Man falls to the ground unconscious. Woman kneels to attend to him.

Woman looks up at Thomas.

THOMAS
I used to be real once too. I'm sorry.

Thomas drunk runs away down the street.

WOMAN(O.S.)
Help someone help me.

INT. THOMAS'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN/DINING/LIVING- NIGHT

Empty liquor bottles scatter the apartment doubling as makeshift ashtrays. Thomas looks at a framed picture on the wall of a man giving a woman a piggy back ride at the beach.

Bottle of vodka in hand, smoke in his lips he staggers around the room. Every picture frame contains the same stock photo of the beach couple.

He rips a frame of the wall, throws it across the room, it Smashes to bits. He sweeps the mantle clear with his forearm. Frantically clears the walls of all pictures, littering the floor with glass and splinters.

He opens a cupboard door. Inside is hundreds off bottles of grape cough syrup. He digs at them, pouring onto the counter floor.
INT. THOMAS'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM- NIGHT

On his way into the bedroom he continues his carnage destroying any frame on the way to the bed.

Kneels down and slides three photo albums out from under the mattress.

He opens one and flips through it. All photos are either scenery or Thomas posing by himself.

INT. THOMAS'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM-NIGHT

Piled in the bathtub are pictures and frames and photo albums.

Thomas splashes liquor over top of the mess.

He starts to sobb. Flicks his lit cigarette into the tub igniting the fuel.

The flames grow and grow.

A sprinkler activates overhead, fire alarm sounds. Thomas leaves.

EXT. THOMAS'S BUILDING-NIGHT

People pour out of the building in pajamas and robes.

Firemen rush out of a flashing firetruck and into the building.

Thomas steps out soggy and drifts down the street.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S APARTMENT- DAY

CARTER MURPHY (6) watches cartoons. Toys litter the floor.

DARLA MURPHY (27+), humble beauty, marches in applying an earring.

DARLA
Carter, hunny, go get your lunch for mom okay sweetie?

CARTER
Okay mommy.

Carter rushes into the kitchen. Comes back and flops onto the floor in front of the tv again with a lunch bag.

Darla paces into the bathroom.
DARLA (O.S.)
Five more minutes babe.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM- DAY

Darla brushes her hair in the mirror.

DARLA
I think Riley's taking you to the aquarium today with little Jack and Natalie, that'll be fun hey?

CARTER (O.S.)
Natalie hits me all the time.

DARLA
Well, that's probably just because she likes you sweetie.

She applies eyeliner.

DARLA
(To herself in mirror)
Something good will happen to you today. Okay.

EXT. DARLA MURPHY'S BUILDING- DAY

Darla steps out of the old four floor walk up holding Carter by the hand. Thomas is slumped, in dirty and wrinkled clothing at the bottom of the stairs with a papered liquor bottle.

Darla and Carter step around him.

DARLA
Excuse me, come on Carter.

Thomas perks up. Darla and Carter wait at the curb.

DARLA
Come on Riley, where are you?

THOMAS
Darla?

She turns.

DARLA
Sorry?

THOMAS
Darla, hey, you look, great.

Thomas tucks bottle in his coat. Wipes his furry face,
fingers his hair.

DARLA
Tom? Thomas Sullivan?

THOMAS
Um, yeah.

A minivan pulls up and stops. RILEY (27+) driving. NATALIE (6), and JOHN (8) are strapped in the back seat.

DARLA
Uh, one second, Tom

Darla takes Carter to the minivan.

RILEY
Hey.

DARLA
Hey.

RILEY
Sorry I'm late, John was having an issue with his eggs and decided to do a Jackson Pollack piece all over the floor. You ready to go to the aquarium Carter?

CARTER
Yep.

RILEY
Okay hop in. Natalie open the door for Carter.

Darla kneels down to Carter and fixes his coat.

DARLA
Okay so what are we going to do if Natalie hits you?

CARTER
Tell Aunty Riley.

DARLA
That's right. And what are we not going to do?

CARTER
Hit her back.

DARLA
And why is that?
CARTER
A'cause hitting people is wrong, especially people that's a girl.

DARLA
Why especially girls?

CARTER
A'cause all girls are beautiful.

Darla wraps her arms around Carter.

DARLA
Mommy loves you so much, you know that? You have a really fun time today okay?

She kisses her boy and he gets into the van.

DARLA
I love you.

CARTER
I love you too mom.

Natalie closes the rear door. Darla leans in passenger window.

RILEY
That guy over there looks sort of like Tom Sullivan. Remember him.

DARLA
I'm pretty sure that is Tom.

RILEY
No way, you're not, you two didn't--?

DARLA
-No, no, no of course not.

RILEY
Well what's he doing here?

DARLA
I don't know, he just showed up.

RILEY
Looks like he needs a bath, or a hose.
DARLA
I really don't need this right now.

RILEY
Yeah well good luck with that sweetie.

DARLA
Thanks. Bye.

The mini van scoots away. Darla turns around.

DARLA
So um, Tom, what are you um, doing here?

THOMAS
Is that your kid?

DARLA
Yeah, yes. His name is Carter.

THOMAS
You had a kid. Hm. Are you married?

DARLA
No, but I am in a bit of a rush, what's, what's up.

THOMAS
Nothing, I just, my girlfriend sort of died recently, and I was just wondering if you would have that coffee with me but if you're-?

She closes the gap.

DARLA
-Jesus, Tom, oh my god, what, what, um, oh my god, I'm so sorry. Uh, uh, look um, I've just got this job interview to go to, and I really need this job, but after that I'm free all afternoon. We could meet or you could come and wait for me if you want, I geuss.

THOMAS
Yeah? Uh, uh yeah, sure I'll wait with you.
INT. OFFICE/WAITING ROOM- DAY

A RECEPTIONIST fields calls at a desk. Men and women dressed for business read magazines and newspapers.

Tom sits across the room from Darla. He swigs some grape cough syrup.

RECEPTIONIST

Julie Newell?

JULIE NEWELL (25+) rises from her seat.

JULIE

Present.

RECEPTIONIST

You can go in now dear?

THOMAS

Good Luck Julie.

Julie looks at Tom puzzled.

Julie heads around a corner behind the desk.

LATER.

Julie comes out and leaves the office.

RECEPTIONIST

Darla Murphy?

Darla rises. Shoots to the desk awkwardly anxious

DARLA

Um, present, present.

RECEPTIONIST

Go right in dear.

THOMAS

Good luck Darla.

Darla looks back. Other hopefuls glance at Tom strangely.

DARLA

Thanks.

Darla disappears around the corner.

Tom pulls out his liquor bottle, swigs it and then tucks it away.
A HOPEFUL gives him a dirty look.

Tom turns to him.

THOMAS
(Whispers)
Don't worry, I'm not your competition or anything, I'm not here for an interview.

The Hopeful nods and rolls his eyes.

HOPEFUL
Oh, well that's a relief.

THOMAS
Tell me about it. I'm in no shape for an interview.

INT. COFFEE SHOP- DAY

Darla sits alone in a booth. She checks the time on her cell phone. A SERVER comes around with a coffee pot.

SERVER
Are you ready for that coffee yet?

DARLA
Oh, no, sorry not yet, I'm just waiting for someone.

She looks out the window. Server walks away.

Thomas lumbers passed towards the entrance. A Passerby hands Thomas some change, Tom waves it off.

He comes inside and joins her.

THOMAS
Sorry, I had to wait long enough so they wouldn't think we were together.

DARLA
Oh, thanks.

THOMAS
Sure.

Server comes back.

SERVER
Is this the uh, friend you were waiting for?
DARLA
Yes, he is my friend, we'll just have coffee please.

SERVER
Alright then.

Server walks away.

SERVER (O.S.)
(Under her/his breath)
And I'll just go and book that trip to Hawaii.

DARLA
So, how have you been doing?

THOMAS
You look really great. Your kid looks really great. That's great.

DARLA
Thanks, he's my world.

THOMAS
I've been um, I've been drinking, mostly. A lot. Pretty much all the time.

DARLA
Oh Tom. Are you, um, are you like, are you homeless?

THOMAS
I don't know, I haven't checked that yet. I had a little campfire in my bathroom a couple nights ago. I have sprinklers though so, you know, it should be okay.

DARLA
Oh my god, Tom. Who, I'm sorry.

THOMAS
No it's okay.

DARLA
Who, was she?

THOMAS
She was, she was everything I imagined she'd be. The one, you know, if you believe in that sort of thing. She was, she was so (MORE)
THOMAS (CONT'D)
funny. We were even talking about, kids. Wow, I am such a lunatic, you know that?

DARLA
Why, what?

THOMAS
No, I just, we couldn't have had kids anyways, it's a long story. Can I ask you question?

DARLA
Of course, what?

THOMAS
If you had to choose between being truly happy, and being aware, what would you choose?

DARLA
Being aware? What do you mean by that Tom?

THOMAS
Okay, like what if you could trick yourself into, into, into believing something, no, you know what, it's a stupid question. Nevermind. How have you been?

DARLA
No tell me, Tom, please? It's not a stupid question.

THOMAS
Yeah? Well like, what if you could be happy for the rest of your life, but to do that, you had to live in sort of a fantasy land, uh this is silly-

DARLA
-It's not silly. It's easy, I would choose to be aware.

THOMAS
You'd rather be miserable for the rest of your life in reality than happy in lala land?
DARLA
Carter is my life now, I'm a mom. So yeah I'd rather be conscious for him than in some dream. Besides reality is what you make it. Who says you have to be miserable?

THOMAS
Right. I geuss that makes sense.

DARLA
You're talking about the drinking right?

THOMAS
Um, yeah, yeah, exactly, about the drinking.

DARLA
There are programs that can help. I know it's not what you want to hear Tom, but you can't drink it away hun. Sooner or later you'll have to deal with it and yeah it will be hard but you won't be miserable for the rest of your life. You won't, I promise you.

THOMAS
What happened to us Darla?

DARLA
Life, time, things you know?

THOMAS
No, I mean, like, what happened to us, you and me? Why didn't we work?

DARLA
I don't know, we were six years younger, we were kids. I don't think we really knew what it is we wanted yet. What we needed from one another you know? I think as you get older you start keeping a list of the things you don't want in a relationship until eventually by process of elimination, you know exactly what it is that you need. Then you search for it.
THOMAS
Do you have a list?

DARLA
Yeah, sure I do.

THOMAS
Do you think anyone ever really finds what's on their list?

DARLA
I think you have to prioritize it, but yeah the lucky ones get real close.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S APARTMENT/LIVING/KITCHEN/DINING- NIGHT

Tom sits on the couch watching a cartoon. Carter comes dancing into the room in pajamas.

DARLA(O.S.)
Got your pjs on babe?

CARTER
Yep, yep, yep, yep, yep.

DARLA(O.S.)
Ten minutes and then bedtime okay buddy?

CARTER
Okay mom.

Tom reaches into his coat and finds his mickey bottle. He walks into the kitchen.

He spins the lid off. Darla comes into the kitchen.

DARLA(O.S.)
I'm sorry, but you can't drink around my kid.

He shakes his head.

THOMAS
No, I-

DARLA
-Just don't.

He pours it down the sink.
THOMAS
This is what I came over here for. I'm a mess, but I'm still Tom. I'm not a scumbag.

DARLA
I'm sorry, I, I just swore that after Tyler, I would never let another drunk in here around Carter and-

THOMAS
-I don't have to stay here, I can go home probably now, it's totally fine Dar'-

DARLA
-No, you need a friend right now. Besides I'd like Carter to meet my old friend Tom. I'll introduce you tommorow formally after we clean you up a bit.

THOMAS
What you don't like the beard?

DARLA
No.

THOMAS
I was going to go for the whole rugged look.

DARLA
Yeah, it's not working for you buddy.

THOMAS
Are you sure that you're comfortable with me staying here, I mean it's kind of random isn't it?

DARLA
Hey, random was the thing we did best together. No sense in wasting talent.

THOMAS
Thanks, you are a dear friend.

Darla chokes up, she turns to hide it.
DARLA
I a, I have to put Carter to bed,
I put some linens out for you, the
a, sofa pulls out.

THOMAS
That's really great, thanks Dar'.

DARLA
Okay, I a, I'm going to bed too
so, um, I'll see you in the
morning. Goodnight.

She picks up Carter and takes him to bed.

CARTER
Goodnight mister.

THOMAS
Goodnight guys. Three.

DARLA
Two.

THOMAS
One. You remember?

DARLA
That was our thing. Goodnight Tom.

THOMAS
Yeah.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S-APARTMENT/LIVING/KITCHEN/DINING- DAY
Tom opens his eyes to Carter hanging upside down from a
recliner watching cartoons.

He stretches, listens to Darla talking in another room.

DARLA(O.S.)
He's a mess, I don't know, a few
days maybe. I know. I know. I know
Riley jesus what was I supposed to
do?

THOMAS
What are we watching big guy?

CARTER
Tom and Jerry.

THOMAS
Oh those guys are my favorite.
CARTER
Really? Me too.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM- DAY

Darla sits on toilet lid talking on her cell phone. She fiddles with a diamond engagement ring on her finger.

RILEY(V.O.)
Tell me you did not sleep with him Darla?

DARLA
Of course not what do you think I am?

RILEY(V.O.)
I think your heart is too big for your own good babe. You've got to take care of your child and yourself first this time.

DARLA
He'll be up any minute, I should go.

RILEY(V.O.)
You don't owe anybody anything Dar'.

DARLA
I Know, I love you, bye.

RILEY(V.O.)
Love you too.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S - APARTMENT/LIVING/KITCHEN/DINING-  DAY

Thomas sits on the floor with Carter watching cartoons. Darla watches from the hall for a minute.

DARLA
Good morning.

Tom turns around. Stands up.

THOMAS
Oh, hey, um good morning, um, Tom and Jerry's on, uu-

DARLA
-Um, there's some mens shaving stuff in the bathroom and a there's a box clothes in the closet by the front door that I've (MORE)
DARLA (CONT'D)
been meaning to get rid of so, um, help yourself.

THOMAS
Yeah, okay, um, thanks.

He passes her to the closet. She follows him into the short hallway.

DARLA
Listen, um, a shoot, look um, the thing is that we've both just come out of some pretty heavy situations and, I just don't want either of us to get the wrong idea here you know what I mean.

THOMAS
Yeah, I think so, hey I really appreciate your hospitality, and-

DARLA
-You can't like live here though, okay? Oh my god, was that really harsh, I'm sorry it's just-

THOMAS
-Darla, Darla, Darla, it's okay, I was planning on going home today anyways.

DARLA
Oh. I feel like idiot now.

THOMAS
You're not an idiot, you're just a good mother.

DARLA
You know, you don't have to leave like today. You could-

THOMAS
-No, really, I should go home and examine the damage. Besides, I was thinking about what you said and I think you were right.

DARLA
About what?
THOMAS
I think I want to try being aware for a while.

She wraps her arms around him.

THOMAS
What's this for?

DARLA
It's just nice to be right about something. Stay for breakfast at least.

THOMAS
Okay.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S APARTMENT/BATHROOM- DAY

Thomas, face covered in cream, wearing only a towel, brings a shaky razor to his face in the mirror.

Darla peeks in.

DARLA
You okay?

THOMAS
I think I'm sobering up.

She takes the razor from him.

DARLA
Sit. Let me do this for you.

He sits on the toilet lid. She wraps a towel around his neck and starts shaving him.

THOMAS
Thank you. So, what's your story anyways, how have you been?

DARLA
I don't know, you know, I think for the first time in my life I feel totally independant, which is good, but scary too.

THOMAS
That's good.
DARLA
It is, last week I finally paid off the last of the debt from Tyler and it was really liberating.

THOMAS
Who was this Tyler guy, anyone I'd know?

DARLA
No, you wouldn't know him. I met him at a nightclub which, you know is always the best place to look for love.

THOMAS
Of course.

DARLA
Yeah, and so anyways, everything was fine at first but then we decided to move in together and it turned into a total disaster. Everyday he'd come home and get smashed in front of my kid.

THOMAS
I'm sorry.

DARLA
It should have ended long before it did but I think I was too scared to be alone like I couldn't do it by myself. But, I couldn't let my kid be around him anymore so I told him he had to stop drinking and he gave me a black eye. Nice guy hey?

THOMAS
Jesus, did you call the cops.

DARLA
Yeah, and he cried and cried and told me how sorry he was, and how he was going to change but, you know, I watched my mother go through the same bullshit with my father and those types of guys live their whole lives being sorry for all the cruel things they do. Forget that man, I'm not reliving that for anything. I'd rather be alone for the rest of my days.
THOMAS
Nobody deserves that kind of behavior.

He notices the engagement ring on her finger.

THOMAS
Looks like you at least got a nice ring out of the deal.

DARLA
Yeah, no, this, this is from someone else.

She shaves the last bit away.

DARLA
Okay you're all done I'll go fix breakfast.

She puts the razor down and races out of the bathroom.

THOMAS
Thanks, Darla.

INT. DARLA MURPHY'S - APARTMENT/LIVING/KITCHEN/DINING- DAY
Thomas steps out of the bathroom clean and groomed.
Darla comes in.

DARLA
Wow. You still clean up real well, how do the clothes fit?

THOMAS
Thanks, um, they fit, they fit, perfect actually.

DARLA
Carter come here I want you to meet somebody.

Carter comes racing in the room.

DARLA
Carter, this is my um, this my old friend, Thomas Sullivan.

CARTER
I know mom, he likes Tom and Jerry jeez.
THOMAS
It's a true story, I love Tom and Jerry.

Tom kneels down to Carter. They shake hands. Darla's jaw quivers with emotion.

THOMAS
It's really nice to make your acquaintance Carter.

CARTER
I have lots of dinosaurs in my room, do you want to see them?

THOMAS
You know what I actually love dinosaurs too, but I have to get going right now how about next time buddy?

Tom looks at Darla who is holding her emotion in.

THOMAS
They'll be a next time right?

She just nods.

CARTER
Okay, I'll go set them up so that they are ready.

THOMAS
Good idea, I'll see you later little buddy.

Carter hugs Tom and then runs to his room.

CARTER (O.S.)
By buddy.

Darla turns into the kitchen where she loses her her composure to tears.

Thomas follows her delicately.

THOMAS
Hey, are you okay? What's going on? Did I do something?

DARLA
(To herself)
This is too much.

He moves closer.
THOMAS
Did I say something wrong here Darla?

DARLA
No. Just um, I have a lot of things going on today so.

THOMAS
Oh, okay um-

DARLA
Yeah I have this date tonight and it's the first one in a while for me you know and I've never seen Carter hug a man like that before and I'm very confused right now so I think it would be best for you to just leave for today and, and um we can talk again soon okay?

THOMAS
Um, yeah. Yeah, of course. That sounds, hey look I just want to say before I leave that um, I'm glad you're doing so well and your kid's great and, and um, I'm really lucky that you remembered who I was the other day. Thanks for bringing me back to life.

DARLA
You're, welcome.

THOMAS
Good luck with the date, I hope everything works out.

DARLA
Thank you.

THOMAS
Bye.

Thomas leaves the apartment. Darla sobs into her hands.

EXT. DR. FAUST OFFICE/BALCONY- DAY

City spreads out twelve stories below. Thomas leans on the railing smoking. Dr. Faust sits in a chair behind him.
THOMAS
It's amazing you know. So many little people crammed into this tiny spot on the planet. All trying to connect to everything except each other. What's wrong with us?

DR. FAUST
Well, we're scared Thomas.

THOMAS
Scared of what? We're all just people.

DR. FAUST
We're scared that we'll never get the things we desire. The things we need so desperately. Like love. Self fulfillment. Meaning.

THOMAS
And what? You think this, what you do here is somehow the answer to everyone's problems?

DR. FAUST
No, it's not for everyone. I simply want to provide an option where there was none before. An alternative to a life full of envy and jealousy.

THOMAS
Why is my apartment full of cough syrup?

DR. FAUST
So that's how you've been supplementing.

Receptionist pokes her head out.

THOMAS
What?

RECEPTIONIST
Sorry to interrupt. Do you want to go over the lists for spring flyer before I send it out or Dr. Faust.

DR. FAUST
I don't have time.
RECEPTIONIST
So just send it then?

DR. FAUST
Um, um, I don't know, let me think for a second. Um, you know what yeah, it should be fine. Send it out.

RECEPTIONIST
Okay, thanks, sorry.

She goes back inside.

DR FAUST
Um, oh, dextromethorphan.

THOMAS
Huh?

DR FAUST
Or DXM, it's a hallucinogen. It can be found in most over the counter cough medicines. It's also the chemical half of the equation that is "One equals two." You're supposed to be receiving proper doses from us at your check ups but-

THOMAS
-But I didn't come.

DR FAUST
Right well, it seems you've found another means anyhow. Look our window of opportunity is getting smaller. You're going to have to make a decision here. Do you want to be immersed again?

THOMAS
I don't think so. Five years is long enough of a sleep for me.

INT. LARRY AND JACKIES HOUSE/KITCHEN- DAY

Larry at the table in his underwear reading the paper. Jackie loads a dishwasher sporting a baby bump.

LARRY
Ha, listen to this one Jack'.
JACKIE
Can you put some freakin' clothes on already please my brothers going to be here any minute?

LARRY
Relax it's your brother, he's not the Dhali Lhama. Just listen-

JACKIE
-Come on Larry I can smell your sour ass from here, ugh nasty, why don't you go have a shower at least?

LARRY
I had a shower last night, give me a break, just listen for a second.

Thomas arrives in a suit and tie all clean.

JACKIE
Larry! Oh hey Thomas, wow, you look fantastic.

Tom and Jackie greet with a hug and cheek kiss.

THOMAS
Hey, thanks.

LARRY
Got a court date Tom? Kidding. Hey can you smell any sour ass in here?

Tom whiffs the air.

THOMAS
Um, I don't think so, why?

JACKIE
Ugh come on Larry, really?

LARRY
This pregnancy has given your sister a nose like a bloodhound. Hey Jack' where's Hoffa?

Tom has a seat. Jackie brings him a coffee.

JACKIE
So, Tom, how's work going?
THOMAS
Oh it's horrible, I actually have a really horrible job.

JACKIE
What, I thought you always loved that job?

THOMAS
So did I, but it turns out I don't, I'm actually looking for something different right now.

Larry reads a news article.

LARRY
Tom listen to this, you'll appreciate this one. Okay, you know how these days they got all these different ways for lonely people to meet each other. I mean like the real loser fest stuff like web dating, speed dating and date nights and all that bullshit?

THOMAS
Um, yeah, yeah.

LARRY
Okay right well now this one takes the cake, listen to this. "Living in the city breeds a people that are in dire need of human connection. For all those souls who urn for a little human interaction, we have the solution." Okay what I'm about to say next is probably the most ridiculous thing you've ever heard-

Tom fidgets nervously.

JACKIE
-Okay Hitchcock, spit out already.

LARRY
Okay, this new thing is called, you're so not ready. Okay it's called, cuddle parties. That's cuddle, parties.

JACKIE
What the hell is a cuddle party?
THOMAS

Let me see this.

Tom breathes relief.

Tom looks at the ad in the paper.

LARRY

I'll tell you what it is my love. Okay so you go to their office or whatever, you pay, how much does it say Tom?

THOMAS

Uh, thirty bucks.

LARRY

Thirty bucks and then you're supposed to state your boundaries, like what you're willing to do I guess. And then, you just start cuddling.

JACKIE

What do you mean and then you just start cuddling? With strangers?

LARRY

Yeah. You rub each other and cuddle and I don't know.

JACKIE

That sounds like an orgy to me.

LARRY

The world's getting pretty weird babe. Lucky you snagged old sour ass here while you did or you might be going to cuddle parties.

JACKIE

You'd be the one going to cuddle parties pal, playing dink tag.

THOMAS

It sounds reasonably priced at least I guess.

LARRY

What compared to a hooker? Come on.
JACKIE
Anyways, so? Have you talked to Darla again recently?

THOMAS
No, I think she's seeing this guy and I don't know, I've left a few messages but, she's got her own life to live right? I mean we hadn't seen each other in like six years or something like that. And then I just show up on her doorstep looking like death. I mean if I wasn't drunk I probably wouldn't have gone over there so, you know, what's she supposed to do.

JACKIE
You two were always so good together.

LARRY
He doesn't need to hear that jesus. Why do women always pick at the wound until it's gushing all over again?

THOMAS
It's alright.

JACKIE
I'm not picking at the wound okay? Women actually like to reflect on their choices in life, there underwear boy. We need to know that we are making the right decisions to get what we really want out of life.

LARRY
No, women like to beat themselves up about all the bad choices they made so they can build up the lush green grass behind the fence that separates reality and fantasy land right Tom?

THOMAS
I'm Switzerland here man.

LARRY
Oh you dirty sell out and you know it's true too.
THOMAS
I just know how to choose my battles.

JACKIE
We don't do that Larry, and don't try and recruit my brother okay?

LARRY
Whatever women totally do that okay but it's not your fault. It's North American culture. We're pounded in the face since birth with absurd images of what a man and women should be. Look at tv shows even, like that crime scene show. Okay you really think detectives show up to pull a semen sample off of a filthy mattress in a low cut blouse and stelletos? No, they fuckin' don't.

THOMAS
True, that show is totally out to lunch, that main dude only talks to people on weird angles, you ever notice that?

LARRY
Yeah, that Horace guy, he can't face anyone straight on.

JACKIE
What does a tv show have to do with anything we're talking about here?

LARRY
Because it raises our expectations as human beings Jackie. That's why so many people get divorced. It's like if your wife doesn't look like Angelina Jolie or your husband doesn't look Brad Pitt you have failed or settled. Studies have proven that most people feel that they are inadequate in someway. I mean look at me okay? I'm not the most handsome guy in the world, and I'm sure you feel like you settled.
JACKIE
No I don't. Do you feel like you settled? Do you feel inadequate?

LARRY
No, but I'm different. I just don't give a shit. That's the secret. The sooner you stop caring about what other people think you should be or who they think you should be with, the sooner you can actually figure out what you want. You're lucky you found a guy who's comfortable enough with himself to just hang out in his underwear babe.

THOMAS
Wow, I think that was the most insightful thing I've ever heard from a man in briefs.

LARRY
Thank you Tom.

Larry postures up properly, flicking the newspaper straight.

JACKIE
That whole speech was just to justify your undies wasn't it?

LARRY
No. Yeah, pretty much.

JACKIE
Never marry a lawyer Tom. Never marry a fucking lawyer.

EXT. BUS STOP- NIGHT

Pouring rain.

Tom smokes a cigarette under the bus shelter.

A bus splashes to a stop. He flicks the butt and boards.

INT. BUS- NIGHT

Tom walks down the aisle toward the back. All ears on the bus are filled with headphones.

He slumps at the back of the bus.
INT. THOMAS'S APARTMENT/ BEDROOM— DAY

Laying in bed, an open laptop lights Tom's face from his lap.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN

A dating website called ONE CALL. Pictures of attractive women and a phone number.

OFF SCREEN

Tom paces beside his bed with a cell phone to his ear.

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
Welcome to One Call and how are you tonight?

THOMAS
Hi, um, I'm, I'm fine um—

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
-Good and what's your name sir?

THOMAS
My name um?

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
Yeah, we need to create a profile for you so we can help you get connected with a potential one. We start with your name.

THOMAS
Sure, sure, okay my name, my name is, is Larry.

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
Okay Larry, great, now what is your online user name?

THOMAS
Oh, uh, uh, lonely guy thirty one.

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
Okay, let me just pull that up on my screen here one second.

Thomas opens his top drawer of his dresser. Inside is a half burned photo album. He flips through it.
ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
Okay so it looks like you've provided us with your credit information so we're all ready to make your voice recording now okay?

THOMAS
What voice recording?

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
Well how this works is I'll transfer you to an automated system where you can make a voice profile that other potential ones can listen to in order to decide if they'd like to be connected with you.

THOMAS
Oh, so I won't talk to anyone tonight because I was sort of hoping that I could you know get the ball rolling?

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
I can't promise that you'll get a call tonight, it really depends on our volume and how interesting your voice profile turns out okay?

THOMAS
Yeah, I guess so.

ONE CALL OPERATOR(O.S.)
I'll transfer you now.

INT. THOMAS'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN- NIGHT
Thomas pulls a frozen dinner out of the freezer and plops it on the counter. Cell phone to his ear.

THOMAS
Hi, my name is Larry and, and, fuck.

He presses a button on the phone.

AUTOMATED VOICE responds.

AUTOMATED VOICE(O.S.)
To start your recording again, press nine, now.

He presses nine.
THOMAS
Hi, my name is Larry and I'm uh, I'm a lawyer and I'd like to just talk to somebody and you know see where it goes I guess, you know, nothing too serious, just talk and, and so if you'd like to, if you'd like to talk to a complete lunatic who just got out of five year relationship with himself give me a call, I can't do this.

He presses a button.

AUTOMATED VOICE(O.S.)
To start your recording again, press nine, now.

He pushes nine.

THOMAS
Hi my names Larry, I'm just looking to talk so give me a call if you're interested to know more bye.

He presses a button on the phone.

AUTOMATED VOICE(O.S.)
To make this message your voice profile, press three, now.

He presses three and then hangs up.

INT. THOMAS'S APARTMENT/KITCHEN/DINING/LIVING- NIGHT
Thomas peels the lid off of his steaming lasagna dinner box sitting in front of him on the coffee table.
He switches the tv on with a remote.
Takes a bite of lasagna.

THOMAS
(Mouthful)
Awe, shit.

He spits the boiling food back into the rest.

THOMAS
Ow, shit.

Phone rings! beside his lasagna.
He answers it.
THOMAS

Hello?

ASHLEY responds from the other end.

ASHLEY(O.S.)

Hi, is this Larry?

THOMAS

Uh, yeah, who is this?

ASHLEY(O.S.)

Hi, Larry I'm Ashley. I heard your recording on One Call and I just had to call you, I hope that's okay?

THOMAS

Um, no yeah, that's fine, I just, I thought it would take longer to get a response um.

ASHLEY(O.S.)

Oh good, good, yeah I really liked your profile.

THOMAS

Oh yeah, um, which part?

ASHLEY(O.S.)

Um, everything. So Larry what are you up to right now?

THOMAS

Right now, well, I was just burning my mouth with lasagna um, why?

ASHLEY(O.S.)

Well, you know, I was seeing if you wanted to meet up tonight?

THOMAS

Meet up? Tonight? Uh, uh I don't know, is that what we're supposed to do or?

ASHLEY(O.S.)

Yeah, for sure.

THOMAS

Oh okay um, well do you want to meet for a coffee or something or-?
EXT. COFFEE SHOP- DAY

Pouring rain.

Tom smokes under an umbrella. He checks the time on his cell phone.

A taxi pulls up and stops. ASHLEY (25+) pretty, steps out in a long black coat and high heels.

She moves to him.

ASHLEY
You must be Larry?

He tosses his smoke.

THOMAS
I'm quitting soon, uh, yeah I am, you must be Ashley, hi?

ASHLEY
That's me.

THOMAS
Wow, you look, you're really, uh, you look great.

ASHLEY
Thanks.

THOMAS
So should we go in, I guess?

ASHLEY
No, I'm not really thirsty. So um, okay so it's four hundred for everything. You can pretty much do anything you want until you know, the happy little end.

THOMAS
I'm sorry, what--?

ASHLEY
-If you only want me to give you head that's two hundred. You have to provide the place so we can either go to hotel or your apartment or whatever, but I need to be paid first.
THOMAS
What, what, hold on, hold on what are we talking about here?

ASHLEY
Come on man I don't have all night you know, I've got other calls so do you want to go somewhere and make that sound or what?

THOMAS
Jesus. You're a. You're a, you're a prostitute? A hooker?

ASHLEY
For four bills I can be whoever the fuck you want me to be sugar—?

THOMAS
-Look Ashley, I'm sorry but I misunderstood the, I thought this was a dating service so-

ASHLEY
-It is.

THOMAS
No, I mean like a real dating service.

ASHLEY
Oh you mean like the type of dates where you take a stranger out for a coffee or dinner and then they never call you again?

THOMAS
I guess so, look I'm sorry okay? I'm just not comfortable paying for, you know?

ASHLEY
Whatever look, they're going to charge you card the minimum hundred dollar fee anyway so, I can offer you a handy in the alley if you want.

THOMAS
A handy in the alley?

ASHLEY
Yeah, a hand job, you want it or not.
THOMAS
Um, no, fuck no, what the fuck is going on in this city?

ASHLEY
Fucking prude. Who do you think you’re kidding? Haven't you realized by now that one way or another we all pay for sex. Welcome to reality.

Ashley turns to the curb. Raises her hand.

ASHLEY
Taxi!

EXT. HUMANECTION BUILDING- DAY

Thomas pulls a newspaper clipping out of his pocket. Reads it then and then approaches the front door.

Sign above door reads "HUMANECION."

INT. HUMANECION/CUDDLE ROOM- DAY

Half of the room is shag carpet the other half is a massive mattress covered in blankets and pillows.

On the carpet Thomas holds hands in a circle with seven other CUDDLERS and the GROUP LEADER(dressed in yoga wear).

GROUP LEADER
I want everyone here to know that this is a very safe environment okay? Everyone is here for the same basic reasons so we need to feel like we can all trust each other before we can start our journey. That's why we are holding hands. Now, some ground rules, um, this isn't about sex people. So no touching each others delicates please. Accidents are accidents and that's fine but, let's just be respectful of each other through this process and we can all share in a very powerful experience. So, um, let's start off by stating our personal boundaries.

A FEMALE CUDDLER nods in.
FEMALE CUDDLER
I just don't want any dry humping okay? I don't want a massage from someones crotch.

GROUP LEADER
Okay, I think that falls under the no sexual behavior category so-

FEMALE CUDDLER
Okay but I was here last week and this really lonely guy was dry humping me really really slowly and it made me uncomfortable.

GROUP LEADER
Okay, that's understandable thank you-

FEMALE CUDDLER
And don't rub my ass for more than like five seconds at a time because I don't like that either.

GROUP LEADER
Okay then. Anyone else?

LATER.
Piled on the mattress Thomas is woven into the other Cuddlers arms and legs. Bodies all squirming and massaging each other. Thomas massages the Female Cuddlers back in a very clinical manner.

Cuddlers moan, and breath relief.

FEMALE CUDDLER
(Whispers)
What are you doing back there?

THOMAS
Uh, massaging you.

FEMALE CUDDLER
It feels like I'm being examined.

Group leader lifts his head from the mattress.

GROUP LEADER
(Whispers)
Try putting some more emotion into your finger tips Thomas. Let's truly connect here. Let the love just pour out of you until we are laying in a big pool of love together.
FEMALE CUDDLER
Yeah, that sounds nice.

THOMAS
I'll, um, try that.

Thomas closes his eyes and rubs her down. Lower and lower down her back. Then onto her rear. The pile of humans pulsing and moaning.

FEMALE CUDDLER
(Panting)
Mm, ooh, yeah.

She moans. He opens his eyes. He stops massaging.

FEMALE CUDDLER
What happened? Why'd you stop?

THOMAS
I'm sorry, I can't do this, this is too weird for me.

Tom unwraps himself from the tangle of limbs and slides off the mattress to his feet.

GROUP LEADER
Don't you want to feel connected to someone Thomas? Don't you want to be loved?

FEMALE CUDDLER
We can love you. We are all here to love each other.

THOMAS
Not like this. This isn't real. I, I can't fake it anymore. I can't. You're just a bunch of waitresses smiling at me while you take my order.

EXT. STREETS- NIGHT

Thomas spins the lid off of a bottle of liquor fills his mouth. He lights a cigarette. Glances around the streets focusing on an all night pharmacy.
INT. ALL NIGHT PHARMACY— NIGHT

Three bottles of aspirin and a bottle of grape cough syrup are placed in front of a CLERK.

Thomas counts out money.

   CLERK
   Is this everything?
   
   THOMAS
   This is it.

EXT. STREETS— NIGHT

Drinking and smoking Thomas saunters along the busy streets. Two guys pass by holding hands. Further and another couple pass by, boy and girl, her head on his shoulder.

FLASH BACK.

EXT. STREETS— NIGHT

Iris rests her head on Thomas' shoulder as they stroll the sidewalk people watching. A senior couple passes by.

   IRIS
   How long do think we'll make it?
   
   THOMAS
   Forever.
   
   IRIS
   No we won't nothing lasts forever. Seriously.
   
She stops and turns to face him. Straight faced.

   IRIS
   How long are you going to keep this up?
   
   THOMAS
   What do you mean?
   
She cracks a smirk.

   IRIS
   Nothing.

END FLASHBACK.
EXT. THOMAS' BUILDING- NIGHT

Thomas stops at the door and tilts his liquor bottle to the sky, swallowing mouthfuls. He chases it with cough syrup.

THOMAS' COAT POCKET

His hand flips the lid off of a bottle of aspirin.

EXT. THOMAS' BUILDING- NIGHT

Thomas lowers the half empty bottle. Takes out a handful of aspirin. Darla comes from behind him and swats his hand sending little white pills scattering all over the street.

DARLA

No!

Thomas spins around.

THOMAS

Darla? What are you doing here?

DARLA

What are you doing Thomas? What were you going to do to yourself? Why would you even think that Thomas? How could you do that-?

THOMAS

-You don't understand Darla! Okay? It's all a lie. I'm a lie. I'm a fucking lie, lie, liar. Fucking liar!

DARLA

What are you talking about Thomas?

THOMAS

Just. Just go home Darla. Go and be happy. Can you do that for me? Please? That's all I want. That's all I want, because people don't get to be happy that much anymore.

DARLA

What are you saying?

THOMAS

I'm saying, look, I'm a disaster and, you don't need that you know? You've got Carter, and he's so great and you've got love with that guy you're seeing and, and I'm just crazy Darla-.
DARLA
-Tom-?

THOMAS
-I did something after we broke up okay? I don't remember doing it, but I did it. One equals two Darla. You know what that is?

DARLA
-Tom-?

THOMAS
-It's a place that desperate losers like me go to to make deals with the fucking devil. And I'm so drunk and I'm so tired of being drunk and confused all the time you know what I mean Darla-?

DARLA
-Tom listen to me-?

THOMAS
-No Darla listen okay, you have to do this favor for me. You have to be happy for Carter, and for me. You have to-

DARLA
-Don't you ever shut up Tom? I want to be happy with you. I want to be happy with you Thomas. There is no other guy, I was confused too. You came out of nowhere you know?

THOMAS
You want to be with me? Why? Look at me, I mean-.

DARLA
-I am looking at you. I still love you. I always have and I always will. You're a part of who I am Thomas. Can't you see that?

THOMAS
I've missed you. We wasted so much time, Darla.
DARLA
That can all stop now. Listen I have to tell you something. I should have told you before but I didn't want to hurt you.

THOMAS
You can tell me anything. What?

DARLA
Thomas, Carter is. Carter is your son Thomas. He's our little boy.

THOMAS
But, but, how I mean we, wow. I thought we, wow. So I have a little boy. I'm a father.

DARLA
Yes. Do you hate me?

THOMAS
Hate you? Are you kidding me. Darla, I've loved you since I the second I found out that you existed. I'm a dad.

Thomas wraps his arms around and picks her up swinging her around.

THOMAS
I'm a dad, I'm a dad, oh my god, what took us so long?

Thomas stumbles.

DARLA
We're slow learners, maybe you should stop spinning us, that bottle looked pretty much empty.

He stops sets her free and stumbles himself steady.

THOMAS
Good call. So, what do we do now my love?

DARLA
Let's go home.

She extends her hand. He slips her hand into his and they disappear down the street.
INT. DARLA MURPHY'S APARTMENT—NIGHT

The front door swings open. Tom kisses Darla firmly backing her into the hallway. She kicks the door shut as they strip each other's shirts off.

DARLA
Shh, Carter's asleep okay?

THOMAS
Okay?

Their mouths reconnect stumbling together into the...

BEDROOM

She falls back onto the bed. Thomas lays on top of her kissing as they wiggle to the center of the bed.

Darla reaches between her legs and unbuckles his belt. She slides it from the loops and tosses it onto the floor. She loosens the button and unzips the fly.

DARLA
(Whispers)
Take them off.

He pushes off the bed to stand and removes his pants.

DARLA
Come here.

He moves back onto her.

DARLA
Take my clothes off.

Thomas unbuttons her fly and rolls her pants down her legs and off her feet.

DARLA
Connect us.

THOMAS
I love you Darla.

DARLA
I love you.
INT. HOTEL ROOM- DAY

Sunlight beads onto Thomass' closed eyes. He lays asleep on a tossed about mattress. The quilt is a big lumpy mound behind him.

He squints his eyes open. Turns over toward the quilt mound. A woman's hand is peeking from under the mound.

THOMAS
(Whisper)
Oh. Hey babe, Darla are you awake?

The quilt moves.

WOMAN
(Yawning)
Uh, you were an animal last night baby.

Thomas lays on his back looking at the ceiling. He breathes a sigh of relief itching his stomach.

THOMAS
Uh, for second I thought it was a dream Darla, you believe that? No more drinking for me. That's it, I mean I'm a dad now. A dad. I can't believe. Hey do you know if Carter's up yet?

The hand bats the quilt flat and Ashley sits up from under the covers naked.

Thomas falls back off of the bed kicking himself back until he hits the wall.

ASHLEY
Who the fuck is Carter, man? Look Larry I'm all for roll playing and everything but give it rest already. All night, Darla this and Darla that. It's a little dehumanizing even for a call girl-

THOMAS
-Shut up. Shut up! What, what, what are you doing here? Why are you here?

ASHLEY
You're a freak.

She steps out of bed searching for her clothes which are littered around the room.
THOMAS
Why are you here? Why are you here?

ASHLEY
Where are my fucking panties Jesus.

THOMAS
Hello, what are you doing here? What did you do to Darla?

She finds her undies and slips them on.

ASHLEY
Okay I need to be paid now so I can leave.

THOMAS
Where's Carter? Where's my son? I have a son don't I? I'm a dad right?

ASHLEY
Not with me I can tell that. You owe me eight hundred bucks buddy let's have it.

She puts her skirt and shirt on. Straps her shoes on.

THOMAS
I have a son! Don't you know that? I have a fucking son!

ASHLEY
You know what pal, fuck it. You're way to loony toons for me. I'll just get Tracy to pull it off of your credit card. whatever.

Thomas buries his face in his arms sobbing. Ashley puts her coat on. She grabs the door handle. Thomas springs up and wraps his arms around her.

THOMAS
You can't leave.

He spins her to face him and shakes her with each word.

THOMAS
Where's Darla!? Where's my son!?
ASHLEY
I don't know what you're talking about! Now let go of me you fucked up son of a bitch!

She slams her knee between his legs and he crumbles to the ground.

Thomas curls up balling. Ashley storms out.

ASHLEY(O.S.)
You're a fucking dead man Larry. Freak.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY- DAY

Thomas buttons his shirt speeding passed the front desk. A HOTEL STAFF stand up behind the counter.

HOTEL STAFF
Will you be checking out today sir?

Thomas stops and looks over with a tear soaked face.

THOMAS
How long have I had that room for?

HOTEL STAFF
Oh, let me check here. You're first night was, three monthes ago sir.

Thomas swallows hard.

THOMAS
I won't be needing it anymore.

Tom smiles at him.

HOTEL STAFF
Very well sir.

INT. 1=2 OFFICE- DAY

Thomas the wreck bursts into the office startling waiting clients. A Receptionist rises.

THOMAS
Where is he?

RECEPTIONIST
Oh hello Thomas how are-
THOMAS
I want to see that fucking guy
right fucking now! Or I'll fuck up
your head like you did mine.

He eyes a door behind her.

RECEPTIONIST
Thomas relax. You're scaring the
other patients-

THOMAS
-Is he through there?

RECEPTIONIST
Well yes but-

Thomas blows passed her into through door.

RECEPTIONIST
-You can't go in right now he's
with a client Thomas.

Receptionist turns to the frightened patients.

RECEPTIONIST
Not to worry everyone, he's one of
our original clients from before
the change over. That's why we
stress the importance of the
biannual check ups. It's all there
in your orientation package.

INT. DR. FAUST'S OFFICE-DAY

Thomas kicks his way in the room. Dr Faust stands up at his
desk. A CLIENT jerks around.

CLIENT
Jesus Christ!

DR. FAUST
Excuse me, oh, Thomas, what's
going on here? What's wrong?

THOMAS
You know. You know what you do
here.

Dr. Faust addresses the Client.
DR. FAUST
I'm sorry but I'll have to take this so we'll continue a little bit later okay?

CLIENT
Um, sure.

The Clients steps gently passed Tom.

THOMAS
Don't let them do this to you.

CLIENT
Hey just don't hurt me, buddy.

The Client leaves.

DR. FAUST
Thomas come on, that's not right now.

THOMAS
He's scared of me. You believe that? Me. I had a son Dr. Faust. I had love. Why would you give that to me and then take it away? Why would you do that Dr. Faust? Why?

DR. FAUST
Oh, shit. Shit. The spring flyer. I'm terribly sorry, Thomas. Shit. I forgot to take you off the outgoing list you see?

THOMAS
Spring flyer?

DR. FAUST
Yes we send a sample of our new updates to all of our regular clients once a year. I've just been so busy lately that I forgot to remove your name from the list. I'm sorry. I imagine I'll have a few other irate visitors. Shit.

THOMAS
So it's all been bullshit.

Thomas slumps into a chair.

THOMAS
Business is good is it Dr. Faust?
DR. FAUST
It is a very lonely world Thomas you know. What we offer, it's, it has a high demand. It's as real as you let it become.

THOMAS
What you offer is a fucking lie. A boat load of bullshit. You breed quitters. You prey on desperate people. But they're people Dr. Faust. Human beings, I mean don't you think they deserve to be happy in reality?

DR. FAUST
Thomas, Thomas, you seek us out. Our procedures are elective. We barely advertise, I mean, every one of our clients is thoroughly informed about what it is that we do here. We're not criminals-

THOMAS
-But it's a lie.

DR. FAUST
I prefer to think of it as an exaggeration. Everyone already has a little voice in their head to keep them company. We just give that voice a personality of it's own. We make it a little more attractive. A little more appealing. Everything from stubbing your toe to reaching orgasm, they're all things you experience by stimulating receptors in your brain. We simply have the technology to manipulate those receptors to bring a little more sunshine to such a cloudy world. What's so wrong with that Thomas.

THOMAS
You know what they call that? Schizophrenia.

DR. FAUST
Yes. Exactly, schizophrenia is the very foundation of our research. That was all in your orientation package. Don't you remember coming here at all.
THOMAS
I don't know what memories to believe anymore. I want you to undo whatever it is you did in my head?

DR. FAUST
Well, Thomas, that's not exactly possible you see. You have one of our older designs in your head and the way it's wired, well, if we try to remove it now after being there for so long, you could die.

THOMAS
There's actually a device inside my head?

DR. FAUST
Well yes, some electrodes and a little micro processor. It's very small. We're not magicians you know. It's technology.

THOMAS
How are you allowed to perform brain surgery.

DR. FAUST
Loop holes Thomas. There are always loop holes.

THOMAS
So what, I'm, I'm going to be crazy for the rest of my life now?

DR. FAUST
No, no, no, we can destroy it from the outside using micro waves. We just can't remove it.

THOMAS
Is it dangerous?

DR. FAUST
Well, I don't know. We've never tried it before.

THOMAS
You've never tried it before what do you mean.
DR. FAUST
All of our other original clients requested immediate re-immersion. Thomas, you're the only client who's ever chose reality over happiness. What if you never find happiness out there on your own? If we disable that implant, that's it. You can never be immersed again.

INT. 1=2 OFFICE/OPERATING ROOM- DAY

Dr. Faust flicks switches and turns dials on a control panel from behind thick glass.

Thomas is strapped to a chair. A microwave helmet lowers over his head coming to a rest upon his shoulders. A tiny glass window shows his face.

Dr. Faust communicates over an intercom.

DR. FAUST
(Intercom)
Okay Thomas, now are you sure you want to do this?

THOMAS
(Inside helmet)
I'm sure.

DR. FAUST
Alright. I am going to activate the microwave emitter for six seconds. That is the maximum amount of time your brain can handle before we start doing serious damage.

THOMAS
This going to work right?

DR. FAUST
I hope so, hm, I mean yes. I think so.

THOMAS
Okay.

DR. FAUST
Alright, here we go then. Three.

THOMAS/DR. FAUST
Two. One.
INT. WALL CENTER—DAY

Tom pushes through the revolving glass doors into the lobby. Boards a crowded elevator adjusting his tie.

A BUSINESS WOMAN turns to Tom in the elevator.

BUSINESS WOMAN
How's your novel coming?

THOMAS
Well actually, the truth is, I haven't been writing a novel.

BUSINESS WOMAN
Oh?

THOMAS
Yeah, but, I think that's what I wish I was doing. I think I always wanted to be a writer.

BUSINESS WOMAN
So what have you been doing here all this time?

THOMAS
Well.

INT. PHIL CAMPBELLS OFFICE—DAY

A desk separates PHIL CAMPBELL(40) from Thomas.

PHIL
I thought you were happy here Tom.

THOMAS
I probably was Phil. But you wake up one day and realize, hey, I'm doing data entry for eight hours of everyday of my life you know? Where does that lead?

PHIL
So, what are you going to do?

THOMAS
I don't know. I was thinking about writing a book, maybe. A novel.
PHIL
Well, alright I guess. Are you sure you don't want to stick it out for your last two weeks?

THOMAS
I don't even want clear out my cubicle Phil. And hey, I totally understand if this voids my severance or whatever.

PHIL
Come on Tom. I'm not a monster here. I'll make sure you're compensated. You're my guy here.

THOMAS
Thanks Phil. Well, I better get a move on.

They stand and shake hands.

PHIL
What's the plan for today?

THOMAS
I'm going to look for an old friend.

PHIL
I hope you find her.

Phil smiles. Thomas smiles back.

INT. LARRY AND JACKIES HOUSE/KITCHEN- DAY

Larry sports a fat lip and a black eye eating breakfast.

Jackies stomach bulges out of he shirt. She shovels eggs down her in mouth. Tom picks at his food.

LARRY
A writer huh? I could see that. You'll get paid in compliments instead of money but.

JACKIE
I always thought you had wild imagination Tom. Are you sure this is what you really want to do?
THOMAS
No, at this point I'm only sure of
the things I don't want. It's a
start though. Are we going to talk
about your face Larry? What the
hell happened to you?

LARRY
Some disgruntled clients sucker
punched me.

JACKIE
Out front of the court building,
can you believe that.

FLASH BACK.

EXT. COURT BUILDING—DAY

Larry dawning a suit and tie carrying a briefcase, exits the
courts and walks across a large courtyard toward the parking
lot.

LARRY(V.O.)
Yeah, it was insane, I had just
finished the first day of this new
case I'm on and I'm walking to my
car when I look over my shoulder
and see these four huge guys
behind me.

Larry looks over his shoulder. Ashley and DANNY march toward
him.

LARRY(V.O.)
I'd never seen these guys in my
life before but you know you hear
stories about pissed off clients
getting revenge on their lawyers
all the time. But I know how to
fight, right, so I turned around
to face these four monsters.

Larry starts running towards his car. Ashley and Danny give
chase.

LARRY(V.O.)
I look at them and say. You got a
problem?

LARRY
I don't want any trouble.
LARRY (V.O.)
I could tell they were kind of nervous you know, cause they weren't expecting me to just confront them like that.

Larry gets to his car. Fumbles in his pocket for keys.

LARRY
Come on, come on, fuck.

Ashley and Danny catch up and corner him against his car.

LARRY (V.O.)
So we're looking at each other. Sizing each other up and I decide that I better just start hitting the biggest guy first.

DAN DILLY
Are you Larry?

LARRY
Y-yeah, what, what can I do for you man?

DAN DILLY
Is this the guy Ashley?

ASHLEY
I was wasted but I think so.

LARRY
You think so? What do you mean you think so-

DAN DILLY
-Shut the fuck up!

LARRY (V.O.)
As soon as I knew that there was no way to resolve this thing peacefully, I just wound up and punched the big guy in the face.

Danny slams Larry in the mouth several times.

DAN DILLY
See what happens when you don't pay your bills pal. You see what happens? You don't fuck Dan Dilly you got me bitch?

Thomas crumples into a ball beside his car protecting his head.
LARRY
I got you, I got you, who the fuck are you?

ASHLEY
You know what you did Larry! You know what you did to me!

Ashley and Danny stand over Larry kicking him spuratically

DAN DILLY

LARRY
I swear to God I've never seen this women before in my life. Help me! Help.

LARRY (V.O.)
I must have hit him fifteen or twenty times before they all ran off.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. LARRY AND JACKIES HOUSE/KITCHEN—DAY

Larry takes his plate to the sink.

JACKIE
Those people should be locked up.

THOMAS
Um, wow, yeah that's crazy man.

LARRY
Yeah, anyways, how are you doing?

THOMAS
Well, actually, there's something I need to tell you guys.

Jackie looks over at Larry.

THOMAS
Five years ago, after me and Darla broke up, I had a procedure done at this, clinic called one equals two. Have you ever heard of it?

Larry opens a drawer under the counter and takes out a manilla envelope.

Larry flops the envelope in front of Tom. It has the 1=2
logo on it. (Logo is two people wound around each other).

    JACKIE
    We know.

Larry sits back down.

    THOMAS
    You know?

    LARRY
    We were your sponsors for the program.

    THOMAS
    Why didn't you tell me?

    LARRY
    Legally we couldn't.

    JACKIE
    You had us sign contracts Tom.

    LARRY
    You had me draw them up, don't you remember.

Tom ponders. He opens the envelope. Inside are signed confidentiality contracts.

    THOMAS
    You let me live a lie for five years. I almost killed myself Jackie. I killed my imaginary girlfriend for Christ sakes and you just went along with it?

    JACKIE
    Those were your wishes Tom.

    LARRY
    You were a mess after Darla-

Thomas bursts out of his chair.

    THOMAS
    -What do think I am now!

Tom leaves out the back door.

THREE MONTHS LATER.
INT. SKYTRAIN—DAY

Curling up on a bench seat Thomas writes in a notebook. Periodically gazing out of the window at the passing cityscape.

THOMAS (V.O.)
Looking back now I don't regret my decision to see Dr. Faust. Even though the microwave therapy was ineffective and I am now at the mercy my thoughts and desires.

He glances at a woman seated across the train smiling. It's Iris. She waves. He smiles at her and looks back to his notebook.

THOMAS (V.O.)
I am aware. I am alive. Iris didn't die. I needed to kill her off to wake me up. To remind me of all the things I had given up for this idea of happiness.

He looks back at Iris. She dissolves, vanishes before his eyes. They share a silent giggle as she disappears.

THOMAS (V.O.)
Only now do I understand, that true happiness needs to be shared. A connection needs to be made. An exchange.

EXT. MURPHY HOUSE—DAY

A two story suburban home. Thomas climbs the stairs and knocks on the door. The door opens. MRS. VERA MURPHY (50) answers wearing a headband with a card reading "BOOGER".

MRS. MURPHY
(Talking over her shoulder)
Don't you even think about cheating, I'll just be a second.

She looks at Tom.

MRS. MURPHY
Hello, can I... Thomas? Thomas Sullivan?

THOMAS
Yeah, hey, Mrs. Murphy, how's it going?
MRS. MURPHY
I don't believe my eyes. What are you doing here Thomas?

THOMAS
Um, uh, I uh, I didn't know how to get a hold of Darla and well-

Mrs. Murphy takes Tom's arm and tugs him inside.

MRS. MURPHY
-Where are my manners, come inside and have a coffee. Are you hungry at all?

INT. MURPHY HOUSE- DAY

Around a round kitchen table Tom sits with, Mrs. Murphy, CADEN (4), LILY (5), all wearing head bands. A manilla envelope bearing the 1=2 logo peeks out from under a stack of papers on the counter.

Toms reads "Poo."

Lily's says "Chocolate."

Caden's says "Giraffe."

THOMAS
Is it a thing?

The kids grin and nod.

THOMAS
Okay, can you eat it?

The kids giggle and look at Grandma.

MRS. MURPHY
No, I don't think that would be appropriate.

THOMAS
Okay, okay, um, hm.

He looks at "Booger," on Grandma's head.

THOMAS
Is it yellow?

Caden

Nope.
LILY
It's brown.

CADEN
Lily. You're not supposed to tell him that.

MRS. MURPHY
It's a secret Lily.

LILY
Okay Grandma.

THOMAS
Do I have poo on my head?

The kids burst out laughing. Grandma chuckles.

THOMAS
There's poo on my head isn't there?

They all nod.

LATER.

Kids are playing in earshot in another room. Thomas and Vera drink coffee.

MRS. MURPHY
You like kids Thomas?

THOMAS
Uh, um, yeah, kids are awesome.

MRS. MURPHY
You want some we're having a sale?

THOMAS
Yeah? So, how is Darla?

MRS. MURPHY
She's, she's good.

THOMAS
Is she um, married or?

MRS. MURPHY
My poor little girl. She just recently became a widow.

THOMAS
Really?
MRS. MURPHY
I never even met the poor lad can you believe that.

THOMAS
How are the kids holding up?

MRS. MURPHY
We haven't told them.

THOMAS
Oh.

MRS. MURPHY
Well, they've never met the poor soul either so why upset them?

THOMAS
They never met their father?

MRS. MURPHY
Oh dear, these are Julie's children. You remember my other daughter Julie don't you?

THOMAS
Oh. Yeah, Julie not Riley. Do you know where I can find Darla?

MRS. MURPHY
She's a bit of a mess right now. Thomas. Her head's out of sorts. She's checked in at the hospital.

Thomas gets up from his seat. He kisses her on the cheek.

THOMAS
Thank you very much, for, for, for everything.

MRS. MURPHY
Tell her to call her mother okay dear.

THOMAS
Of course Mrs. Murphy.

He races out of the house.

EXT. FLOWER SHOP- NIGHT

Thomas trades money for a bouquet of roses. He speed walks down the street weaving through human traffic.
INT. HOSPITAL- NIGHT

Thomas walks down the corridor toward reception desk with roses.

THOMAS BRAIN

A tiny micro processor with branches of electrodes sparks.

INT. HOSPITAL- NIGHT

Everyone Thomas sees is Darla now. He stops at the reception desk. Three RECEPTIONIST DARLA'S look up at him. He is smiling.

RECEPTIONIST DARLA 1
Those for me?

THOMAS
Sort of, but no.

RECEPTIONIST DARLA 2
We're not that lucky.

THOMAS
Do you know what room Darla Murphy is in.

They check the computer.

RECEPTIONIST DARLA 3
Oh isn't that the girl we just had sedated?

THOMAS
No way, really?

RECEPTIONIST DARLA 1
Come on he brought flowers and everything. Don't pick on the good guys.

RECEPTIONIST DARLA 3
You guys are no fun.

RECEPTIONIST DARLA 2
No one's been sedated. That's just a little reception humor. Darla Murphy you said right?

THOMAS
Yeah, yeah.
RECEPTIONIST DARLA 2
Okay yeah, she is in room three sixteen. Now it's a little tricky to find, but okay here I'll draw it out for you.

INT. HOSPITAL/THIRD FLOOR HALLWAYS- NIGHT

Thomas paces down the long corridors. A DOCTOR DARLA passes by smiling. Then he passes a NURSE DARLA, a JANITOR DARLA, another NURSE DARLA. He looks into a patient room and sees a PATIENT DARLA, every room he passes, he looks in and sees another PATIENT DARLA looking back.

FLASHBACK—FIVE YEARS AGO

EXT. STREETS DOWNTOWN—NIGHT

Teary eyed sobbing Darla marches backwards down the sidewalk.

Thomas watches from across the street.

She turns her head.

DARLA
(Crying)
Fuck you, Tom.

THOMAS
I feel like shit every time I'm around you!

She marches backwards until she is directly across the street from him.

DARLA
I don't even know who you are anymore Tom. Why are you being like this?

THOMAS
Just so I said it to you in person and there's no confusion. We're done. I'm single as of today.

She paces backwards across the street until she is beside him.

Her mascara is running with tears.
DARLA
You know fuck off Tom. I'm out of here. I don't have to listen to this shit.

THOMAS
Because that's what sluts do Darla, they fuck around when they're bored.

DARLA
I've never cheated on you, why would I cheat on you?

THOMAS
It's only a matter of time before end up at some strange guys apartment Darla come on.

DARLA
What is you're problem Tom!

END FLASHBACK.

INT. HOSPITAL/THIRD FLOOR HALLWAYS- NIGHT

Thomas turns a corner. A light flickers from out of a doorway at the end of a long corridor. Still he peeks in each passing room seeing PATIENT DARLAS.

FLASHBACK.

EXT. STREET DOWNTOWN- NIGHT

Thomas and Darla walk backwards toward a nightclub entrance.

DARLA
You're such a fucking drama queen man. Fucking buzz kill God. This is why I don't like going out with you.

THOMAS
Why do you lie to yourself? He had his hand all over your ass Darla.

DARLA
We were just dancing okay man, like, relax. I'm an adult Tom.

THOMAS
How bad did you want to fuck that guy on the dance floor?
DARLA
What?

THOMAS
But you have to be honest.

DARLA
What?

THOMAS
Can I ask you a serious question?

END FLASHBACK.

INT. HOSPITAL/THIRD FLOOR HALLWAYS- NIGHT
Tom grows closer to the flickering doorway.

FLASHBACK.

INT. NIGHTCLUB- NIGHT
Tom sits in a booth drinking. He watches Darla dancing with a handsome man on the dance floor.

The Handsome backs away from Darla. She walks backwards toward Tom's booth. She turns and looks at Tom.

DARLA
Suit yourself, I'm sure someone will want to dance with me.

THOMAS
I don't dance you know that.

DARLA
Do you want to dance or what?

INT. HOSPITAL/THIRD FLOOR HALLWAYS-NIGHT
Tom reaches the glowing doorway. The room number is "Three sixteen."

He enters to find a tossed about bed and a TV left on in the dark. On the floor are cut up pieces of photographs. He picks some larger pieces up and assembles them in his hand.

They form a stock photo of a Handsome Man giving a Pretty Woman a piggy back ride on the beach.

He drops them to the ground and notices a trail of the clippings leading out the door. He follows them into the...

STAIRWELL

More shards of pictures lead him up the stairs five floors
to the...

FLASHBACK.

INT. NIGHTCLUB- NIGHT

In the booth Darla sips her drink. Tom is slumped in the booth bored. She looks at Tom like a puppy.

THOMAS
I hate this place.

DARLA
You hate everything that I like to do.

THOMAS
That's not true.

DARLA
Okay Tom.

THOMAS
It's just like, why are we even here? This where single people come to meet other single people.

DARLA
You'd rather just sit at home every night and watch tv?

THOMAS
Sure.

DARLA
That's not enough for me Tom. I'm not ready to just die and disappear from the world because I'm in a relationship with a fucking hermit.

THOMAS
Whatever.

DARLA
Come dance with me please? Please?

THOMAS
I don't even like this music.

Darla gets up and faces him from the other side of the table.
DARLA
Do you want to dance or what?

THOMAS
I don't dance you know that.

DARLA
Suit yourself, I'm sure someone will want to dance with me.

She turns and walks to the dance floor. A Handsome Man approaches her and they start dancing together.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOF—NIGHT

Darla stands on the edge of the eight story buildings roof crying. A pair of scissors lays next to the end of the photo trail.

Thomas bursts through the doors onto the roof with the bouquet.

Darla turns to face him. They stare at each other for a moment.

THOMAS
I want to dance.

DARLA
Thomas? You're not really here are you? It's all a joke.

THOMAS
I'm here. I'm just really really late. And I'm really really sorry.

DARLA
Are those flowers for me?

THOMAS
Yeah, but you have to come and get them.

DARLA
I did something really stupid you know. I tried to fall in love without you.

THOMAS
I know. So did I. It didn't work. Come here.

Darla steps off the ledge and marches towards him. They wrap their arms around each other tight.
DARLA
(Whisper)
You're real.

THOMAS
(Whisper)
Yeah. You too.

They kiss with passion and dance on the spot under the moonlight.

THOMAS
Three.

DARLA
Two.

THOMAS/DARLA/FAMILY
one.

ONE YEAR LATER.

EXT. BACKYARD—DAY

FAMILY crowds the backyard. Carter (1), sits in a high chair with lit birthday cake in front of him.

DARLA
Blow out the candle Carter.

Carter just digs his hand into the cake.

THOMAS
Help him out babe.

DARLA
Okay, mommy help okay.

She blows the candle out. The Family all cheers.

Tom and Darla meet for a hug in the middle of all the family.

DARLAS BRAIN
A spark in the processor.

THOMAS BRAIN.
A spark in the processor.
EXT. BACKYARD—DAY

Hugging Tom, Darla looks over his shoulder and instead of family members she sees a crowd of Toms.

Tom only sees Darlas over her shoulder.

THOMAS
(Whispers)
I can only see you.

DARLA
(Whispers)
Good.

THE END