

3-3-2017

The Doormen: A Creative Exploration into the Effects of Modern Technology on the Development of Youth

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[10.15760/honors.356](https://doi.org/10.15760/honors.356)

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The Doormen

by

Sean Burns

An undergraduate honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Science

in

University Honors

and

Film

Thesis Advisor

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2017

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Artist Statement: *The Doormen*

With the advent and adoption of modern communication, specifically the innovation of streaming television, social media, and cell phone technologies, questions arise as to what impact these technologies have on the psychological, sociological, cultural, and biological development in youths (Janna, erson, and Rainie; Rosen, Mark Carrier, and Cheever; Ahn; Elam, Stratton, and Gibson; Hershatter and Epstein); Are these effects positive or negative, and to what degree will our future generations and future society be impacted (Janna, erson, and Rainie)? With my script *The Doormen*, I attempt to create a fictitious representation of our modern day youth in the throes of self discovery as they negotiate a world blanketed by clashing generational differences, shallow thinking, split attention spans, and multitasking behavior. The goal of this project is to offer a palatable tool of self-reflection to the viewer; an entertaining narrative as a vehicle to navigate and aide the millennial generation through the seemingly mundane experience of this highly informational and communicative new world. This paper will attempt to dissect the makeup of each character in order to explain what they represent and how their depiction is intended to illuminate and portray issues associated with developing in the modern age.

The lead character of the story (protagonist) is Jake Crossman. Entrepreneurial in spirit, altruistic in intention, Jake is meant to stand apart from the influences of modern society. He views these influences as either the tools for, or the distractions to, progress in his life. He is both a product of the millennial generation—collaborative and driven—and it's solution—deep thinking and introspective (Glass; Janna, erson, and Rainie; Rosen, Mark Carrier, and Cheever). He is a vessel through which the audience is meant to recognize, relate, and reflect upon. Working against him, and to which he stands in stark contrast to, are the overabundant cell phone

use, shallow thinking, lack of patience, and the shortened attention span that plague and control his peers (Elam, Stratton, and Gibson; Janna, erson, and Rainie). Inhibited by this surrounding world, and operating within the confines of his seventeen-year-old desires, Jake trudges towards a future he can carefully manipulate himself. As a result, Jake carries with him a sense of estrangement and isolation, and his thoughts and views go misunderstood even by Tim Kasdan, Jake's best friend. At home, Jake copes with his depressed/overmedicated mother and overworked father, whom like most Gen Xers, both struggle with a work/life balance (Glass).

Tim Kasdan is Jake's best friend. Although they are close, Tim does not share Jake's world view. In fact, Tim displays all the negative effects of technology that Jake stands against. His attention span is short, he texts/plays with his phone during any momentary void, and he often falls victim to his negative emotions from the lack of stimulus from his phone/device. Like many of his peers, Tim has fully embraced technology. He values the comfort and complacency new technology provides (Janna, erson, and Rainie; Rodriguez), but fails to acknowledge the negative side effects that accompany said technology—side effects that are at the forefront of Tim's day-to-day life. He is a quick decision maker, and uses technology to endlessly search for one ultimate solution (Janna, erson, and Rainie; Hershatter and Epstein). Tim's mastery of new technology allows him to order drugs from the dark web, a secret section of the internet where illegal activity is carried out (Van Hout and Bingham). There is a path for him there, a means to escape the grief of his mother's death and estrangement from his now suddenly over-worked Chief of Police father. Tim is not worried about the consequences of his behaviors or his own well-being. Like Jake he retains a drive towards acceptance, but his methodology to getting there is very much a point of conflict.

Michael Waltz is another one of Jake's friends. Michael's response to technology causes him to be overly anxious and agoraphobic. He is easily agitated by the simple qualms of life, like meeting strangers. Michael represents a "freeze" response to tech culture, whereas Tim is more representative of a "flight" response. Michael clings to one distraction after the next to occupy his time to moving his attention occupied throughout the day, any prolonged absence of mental stimulation causes him to grow increasingly more uncomfortable. Similar to Jake and Tim, Michael also feels disenfranchised by society. However, unlike both boys, he lacks a stable coping strategy; Jake offers the strength that Michael lacks, and in response Michael is a fiercely loyal to friend.

I hope to use Mr. and Mrs. Waltz to illuminate some of the broader issues leftover from what I couldn't convey through Jake's character. Mr. Waltz's ideological, moral, and intellectual foundation is comprised of futurist thinking like Jakes, but he attempts to change the system from the inside rather than subvert it to his benefit. He recognizes the future impact of things like job displacement as a result of an influx of robots(Harari; Morris), societal manipulation through scaremongering(Burnett), as well as the cheapest way to solve homelessness(Baer, May 28, and 54). Mrs. Waltz retains a similar albeit a more pessimistic foundation to Mr. Waltz. Which challenges both characters and their relationship throughout the story. The parents also carry with them the family-first views of generation Xers, but like many other generation Xer's struggle with work/life balance particularly when their passions get in the way of their parenting(Glass).

Jenna Waltz, Michael's sister is a representation of the most positive outcomes of Millennial youth. She's sharp, driven, and with the discipline of becoming a doctor she's warded off some of the worst effects of technology. She's tough, and fought her way through depression

experienced in med school due to the persistent second-guessing of her talents(Koti). She feels a drive to help people and looks for collaborative environments aimed at philanthropic efforts like other Millennial youth(Glass). She retains a soft spot for her brother Michael. Growing up in the same household, she relates to the feelings of parental neglect as her parents were off busy pushing their political agendas.

Jessica and Brandi's characters are more products of troubled youth, Jessica like Tim copes with drugs. Brandi like Michael panics when without mental stimulus. Further along they will experience more qualms of life with their own nuances.

Alone these representations and depictions of societal influence on individuals seem like very isolated personal experiences, but my hope is to show how their stories coalesce into a collective representation of a world heavily influenced by technology; a world in which globalization and innovation wreak inconspicuous havoc on the seemingly mundane aspects of everyday life.

Creative Process

The idea for *The Doormen* came to me a number of years ago on a bus ride back from visiting my hometown. While making the long public transit journey back to university I found myself in a weird mood, contemplating the quality of life my childhood friends were living at their respective colleges. During my visit I grew concerned about their partying habits and began to question their well being, not just in school, but emotionally. Suddenly I had a vision of this security team that watched over these parties, making sure they didn't get out of hand, or I guess in some weird way, made sure my friends were safe. Further I envisioned the leader of this unofficial security detail as someone who wasn't an adult, but could become the "adult" in the necessary situations for example: keeping tabs on the noise level, preventing people from drinking in the front yard, and talking to the police if they showed up. Additionally this person saw beyond the party itself, they saw the reason for the party, why the party took place, and to the extent these partygoers experienced the emotional turmoil of everyday life. Before I knew it I wrote a very brief outline in the memos application on my cell phone and called it *The Doormen*.

I sat on the idea for a number of years as I took in the world and went through another year or two of college. I grew as an individual and my perspective broadened to a global scale. My fears and anxieties about life were now subjects of research with supporting evidence and thought provoking societal consequences, but I never lost sight of the mundane. Although my vision was set towards the future on a massive scale, my attention remained focused on the small quarks of the modern age that carried a profound impact on the lives of my childhood friends, often times without their knowledge. Suddenly I was spiraling down a rabbit hole of different articles probing the ways in which their subject matter affected their lives. For example caffeine was recently added to the Statistics Manual of Mental Disorders due to its high correlation with

anxiety (Hullinger). How marriage is harder to find in the modern age because the old proponents like family life, companionship, economic support, respectability, and social status, are no longer sufficient. People of modern society need to fall deeply in love and in lust to have the perfect marriage (Lebowitz, Aug. 7, and 141). The spheres' of a person's physical and digital life are now blurring, no longer is it about protecting a home from being robbed by installing a security system, now they must suppress their most basic instinct of curiosity when finding a non-descript USB drive in their mail box (Satter). To me these seemingly disparate topics were heavily intertwined because they all spoke of inconspicuous influence on my friends behavior, how they cope with life and in turn their well-being. For example how anxious they might feel after the amount of coffee they drank, the underpinning emotional turmoil they might face when they can't seem to find love, and the amount of energy they must use to remain on guard, not just in their physical space, but also in their mental space.

A self proclaimed futurist, my readings didn't stop there. I went on to read about the advancements of 5G signal speeds over 4G (Kaplan) and milled about how this increase in speed might lead to more connected devices in turn splitting the attention of developing youth even further. I read about Germany's plans to ban gasoline engines by 2030 (Fingas), and probed the environmental, economic, and worldly power such a commitment incites, how it might inform the way other countries resolve climate change, and how the United States might reform its own policy and how that policy will affect the jobs my friends might seek to obtain in support of their lives and their families. I read about advancements of simulation technology in video games and virtual reality and how it's rapid development points to a time in the near future where civilization might possess the capability to simulate reality so well it's seamless to the the human mind. More thought provoking is the question that arises, do we already live in a simulation?

(Solon). How might said discovery that carries such a profound impact on the fundamental purpose of life itself influence the decisions people make on a day-to-day basis. When NASA completes their work on a warp drive reminiscent of *Star Trek* providing humanity with a realistic means of interstellar space-travel will we become an interplanetary species and how might this affect the lives of everyday individuals (Mack)? Scientists are hard at work researching a solution to aging and have already synthesized a compound that gave a two-year-old mouse the body tissue of a six month old mouse (Sarah Knapton, Dec. 20, and 13). These articles offer me a glimpse into one possible future. The more I read the more massive in scope this vision becomes, but I always draw it back to how it might affect the mundane aspects of life--the basic human behaviors of my friends. This tether between the increasingly influential future and the day-to-day lives of ordinary people form the basis of *The Doormen*.

However one of the scariest realizations I've made is the sheer volume of information shared between individuals makes truth ever more a rarity and healthy skepticism a virtue. It becomes easier to hold what individuals experience personally as their sole foundational truths and block out what could be substantiated claims. They instead relying on the sole foundational truths of others close to them, and those rely on their friends until it's a massive game of telephone most don't seek to confirm or deny. In order to combat this cycle I draw upon these disparate topics of the future and boil them down to personal experience and convey them through fictitious personalities set in an entertaining fictional world to make them palatable. In order to create this fictional world to convey my broader messages I draw on fictional influences.

I looked for inspiration from television shows that intrigued me in the past and what sorts of elements I found most engaging for example their character development, pacing, plot, structure, tone etc... Show's like *The O.C.(2003)* whose intimate portrayal of Ryan Atwood (Ben

McKenzie) as a fish out of water in a rich community incites a sense of relatability. The audience roots for the outsider-- the underdog. Additionally his story allowed room for the creation of its own pop culture in a sense, everything he engages with is new; his world is new. It's the blending of his personality and this new community that offers something the audience can really latch on to. Furthermore the furious pace at which story events unfold keep audience members engaged till the end of each episode. These aspects of *The O.C.* (2003) are highly influential in *The Doormen*. Ryan much like Jake's character feels disenfranchised and misunderstood by the community he grapples to fit into while coping with the unfortunate events that unfold before him like Jessica's coma, and his estrangement from his best friend Tim. Shows like *Dexter* (2006), *Breaking Bad* (2008), and *Weeds* (2005) contain incredibly complex and therefore engaging characters. Dexter Morgan (Michael C. Hall) is a Miami homicide blood spatter analyst by day, and a serial killer who kills other serial killers by night. Walter White (Bryan Cranston) is a cancer ridden chemist father who becomes a meth manufacturer. Nancy Botwin (Mary-Louise Parker) is a single mother who turns to drug dealing to maintain her social status after the death of her husband. These rich and thought-provoking characters are what inspired me to create Jake. A sharp, suburban teen who manipulates the throes of modern society in order to escape its hyper-normalized order. These anti-hero figures in current television are powerful because they show a more relatable take on humanity—no person is all good or all evil. Flaws remind the audience these characters are ultimately human. When creating each character I tried to look at both sides of the spectrum and make sure each character has their flaws, Chief Kasdan can't connect with his son, Tim Kasdan copes with the loss of his mother with drugs, Jenna's trying to make a name for herself without the help of her family's political ties; and strengths, Chief is a great police officer, Tim is entrepreneurial and personable, Jenna is a strong

driven doctor. The more rounded and relatable the characters are the better the audience is aware of the central message.

Tonally *The Doormen* takes cues from films like *The Chumscrubber* (2005) and *Donnie Darko* (2001) as they offer an embedded satirical look on the seemingly mundane aspects of culture, their motifs of overly medicated youth, the soulless suburban front, and accepted hyper-normality echo a similar message of awareness that certain developments in culture may have a negative impact on youth. Their thriller and horror undertones help captivate the youth audience while character driven stories help raise awareness.

There are many ways in which I am influenced by modern media and culture, but ultimately personal experience is a primary driver, and with influences changing minute to minute it's hard to pinpoint the exact specifics of the script each influence directly affected. With each passing draft I come under more influence and I encounter new experience that causes me to grow as a person, this makes the nature of the story and its characters ever changing.

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The Doormen v10.2

By

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JAKE CROSSMEN (17) leans spectating over a banister at the top of a stair landing as a house party rages below.

Stereos boom, drunk teens dance on all the furniture. An intensive beer pong game plays out in the corner. A group of stoners smoke hookah and take bong rips.

JAKE'S face a blank slate.

JESSICA BURDEN (17) tries to make her way down the stairs with the help of her just-as-intoxicated friend BRANDI LOTT (16). She glances back.

Captures Jake's attention, the roar of the party softens around him.

TIM (17) leans, red solo cup in hand, with his back against the balcony next to Jake.

TIM

I'd say this turned out prrrreeetty good.

SNAP - The roar of the party returns. Jake's stare returns

JAKE

Yeah. Sure.

TIM

I saw Jessica lookin attcha

JAKE

Oh. Sweet.

TIM

Why you bein so grumpy Mr.Grumpy pants? Lighten up. Here take a sip of that

Tim extends his red solo cup.

JAKE

What's in it?

TIM

More fun than you're having.

JAKE

No thanks.

TIM
Suit yourself.

Tim takes a big gulp.

JAKE
How we doin overall?

TIM
Well, I'd say Rick is getting his
money's worth.

Tim looks over the balcony

REVEAL - RICK THOMPSON (17) basket ball shorts, lanyard
hangs from his pocket. He takes a body shot off a half naked
girl. His boys throw their hands up to cheer him on.

JAKE
Great.
(pause)
What about the front?

TIM
All clear, our boy Michael's down
the street keepin look-out as
always. Look Jake, these things
rarely get busted, you know that,
and even if they do that's part of
our job we can handle. So. Could
you please. For me. Chill out man!
It's a party!

A group of beautiful girls come up the stairs. Tim walks
over and bows as if to grant them passage.

Jake resumes his stare over the party.

His phone vibrates. He pulls it out. Answers.

JAKE
Hey.

2 INT. MICHEALS VAN - CONTINUOUS

2

MICHEAL (17) frantically ducks in his maroon utility van
underneath a pile of fast food wrappers that litter his
dash. Headlights flash across the windshield

MICHAEL
(whisper)
Code red! I repeat code red!
Chief's in route!

3 INT. STAIR BALCONY - AS IT WAS 3

Jake hangs up.

JAKE
(yells below)
ALRIGHT EVERYONE LISTEN UP! SOMEONE
CUT THE MUSIC!

A drunk Rick slops his hand over the stereo and hits the power button. The music ceases.

JAKE
EVERYONE TO THE KITCHEN NOW! THE
COPS ARE COMING, BUT THIS IS WHAT
I'M HERE FOR. YOU WANNA CONTINUE
THE PARTY? YOU SHUT UP. YOU WANNA
GET INTO THAT FANCY COLLEGE WITHOUT
AN M.I.P? YOU'LL STAND AWAY FROM
THE WINDOWS AND YOU'LL KEEP YOUR
MOUTH SHUT.
(pause; everyone stares
motionless)
MOVE! COME ON!

Teens drop their cups and frantically move to the back of the house towards the kitchen.

Jake makes his way downstairs to the front curtains. Draws them shut.

Swiftly he makes his way around the room and draws all the curtains shut.

Jake runs back upstairs and through the hallway.

He BURSTS into the first door on his left -

REVEAL-

4 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 4

Two bros in their boxers, their faces puckered, eyes squeezed shut, their lips two millimeters apart from one another. A girl in her bra and panties lays seductively between them, the side of her lip bit, her eyes wide.

They freeze, there heads snap to Jake, their necks almost break -

JAKE
Uh. Cops.
(pause; nobody moves)
(MORE)

JAKE (cont'd)
Just get down and shut up!

Jake flips off the lights. Moves back into the hallway.

BURSTS into the second door on the left.

REVEAL -

5 INT. STUDY - CONTINUOUS

5

Tim stands in a circle of five guys that surround an ottoman topped with a silver platter covered in a mountain of white powder.

They FREEZE -

TYLER LOTTS (17) in the middle of passing two huge stacks of cash to Tim who extends his hand that holds a white saran-wrapped block THEN -

Zack hastily finishes the exchange.

ZACK
Get the fuck out man!

Tim and Jake exchange looks. Jake flicks off the lights and shuts the door.

JAKE
(through door)
Cops! Just get down and keep your mouths shut!

He walks down the hall. The door flies open behind him. Tim rushes out.

TIM
Jake

Jake walks down the stairs. Tim rushes after him.

TIM
Jake look man, I can explain.

Jake stops. Whips around.

JAKE
Can you! I thought you understood when we started this is what it **wasn't** going to be.

TIM
 Maybe some of us need to explore
 other options.

Before Jake can respond -

SFX: DUHN DUHN DUHN

emanates from the front door.

Faint circles of light move across the closed curtains.

Tim and Jake freeze. Jake gestures his arm towards the kitchen to Tim. Tim runs off quietly across the living room.

Jake opens the door and immediately steps onto the porch and shuts the door behind him.

6 EXT. FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

6

Two uniformed officers armed with flashlights raise their eyebrows.

CHIEF
 Jake?

JAKE
 What can I do for you Chief?

CHIEF KASDAN (40s) dressed in full tan uniform, strong jaw, exchanges looks with his partner OFFICER MIKE ROKEN (29).

CHIEF CONT'D
 Jake. What are you doing here?

JAKE
 I'm house sitting.

CHIEF
 House sitting? For who?

JAKE
 I don't like to give away the name
 of my clients for safety purposes,
 I'm sure you understand.

CHIEF
 Well I got a noise complaint with
 the possibility of a party and
 underage drinking? You wouldn't
 know anything about that, would
 you?

Chief looks at the house. Still and quiet.

JAKE

Sounds like you've got the wrong house.

CHIEF

Would you mind if Officer Roken and I had a look around?

Chief nods to Officer Roken who takes off down the steps and heads around to the side of the house with his flashlight.

Jake maintains firm eye-contact with the Chief.

JAKE

I actually would. You see, when I was asked to watch over this house the number one rule my client specified was to not, under any circumstances, let anyone into the house. I simply want to respect their wishes. After all, my business is built on reputation.

CHIEF

(looks around)
Cut the shit Jake.

7 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

7

Tim FLIES in to find a crowd of teens crouched against the cabinets, under the sink, and behind the garbage cans. He waves his arm gesturing them to back up. He puts a finger to his lips. THEN--

A thin strand of light SLICES across the hardwood floor cutting off just before the toes of the front row of crouching teens. Their faces go pale - Tim pushes his finger to his mouth harder

OFF TIM'S FACE

8 EXT. FRONT PORCH - AS IT WAS

8

JAKE

What are you doing here?

CHIEF

What am I doing here? You told me I wouldn't get any calls!

JAKE

No, I said you wouldn't need to respond to some calls.

Chief looks off to the side of the house.

CHIEF

How do you think it looks when the chief of police denies a call he's two blocks away from!

JAKE

Well that's why I'm here, isn't it?

A pause.

Chief leans in.

CHIEF

Is there something in there the police shouldn't see?

JAKE

(lowers voice)

Depends, is there something you're finally ready to deal with?

Silence. They stare.

9 CROSS CUT -- INT. KITCHEN AND EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE 9

INT. - The thin string of light waves back and fourth across the floor. Teens hold their breath, their toes fight to inch back away from the thin line of light, their balance waivers. Everyone holds still.

EXT. - Officer Roken squints through a tiny gap in the window not wide enough for his eyes and flashlight at the same time.

INT. - A teen crouching at the back of the crowd JESSICA lets out a SHARP breath. The crowd turns to look. THEN - A SHARP inhale. Tim leans in, slowly waves his hand. He puts his finger back to his mouth. Her breaths shallow and quicken.

10 EXT. FRONT PORCH - AS IT WAS 10

Jake and Chief stare.

11 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 11

Jessica's breaths move faster and faster. The crowd watches the thin light sweep to the right. They all put their finger to their mouths, their heads push towards her.

She begins to tremble. Sweat glistens from her forehead. Her shoulders fall, her balance waivers. She leans to the left further and further, the crowd holds their breath THEN -

Hands snap to her shoulders. REVEAL - Brandi with outstretched arms holding her upright. Her hand moves to cover Jessica's mouth.

The line sweeps erratically now up and down left and right.

12 EXT. FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS 12

Jake and Chief stare.

CHIEF
(shouts)
Roken.

13 EXT. SIDE OF HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 13

Officer Roken drops his flashlight.

14 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 14

The string of light disappears. The crowd of teens let out a breath in unison. Their shoulders relax. Some sit down.

Tim rushes out of the room. THEN -

CRASH Jessica convulses on the floor.

15 EXT. FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS 15

Officer Roken approaches from the side.

CHIEF
Anything?

ROKEN
(shrugs)
Not that I could see.

Silence. Chief stares at Jake another moment.

Another.

CHIEF
(to Roken)
Let's get out of here.
(looks around)
Jake.

Chief and Roken walk to the squad car.

JAKE
Chief. Always a pleasure.

Jake watches them get in. The engine starts. They pull away.
He smirks.

THEN -

Tim pokes his head out of the front door.

TIM
Was it him?

JAKE
Yes.

TIM
Did you tell him?

JAKE
No, of course not.

Screams ERRUPT from the kitchen, teens scatter. Tim opens the door fully, we see - Jessica's trembling pale body dragged by Rick and Zack who support her from each arm. Spit-up LURCHES from her mouth.

RICK
We've got a big problem Jake.

Jake's face hits the floor.

He pulls out the phone and dials 911 --

Pauses--his thumb hovers above the call button.

He taps "*Contacts*"; scrolls to "*Michael*" and calls.

JAKE
(on phone)
Bring the car around as fast as you can and call your sister at the hospital. Don't ask questions, just do it now.

Jake hangs up.

TIM
Jake, you gotta call the ambulance man. It's over.

JAKE

With all due respect, Shut. the.
FUCK UP TIM! Bring her over here.

Tim freezes in the doorway. Rick and Zack drag Jessica's lifeless, puking body to the end of the driveway. Brandi, follows closely behind.

The crowd of drunk teen spectators string out across the front lawn. They trample a sign that reads: "*Waltz for Senator*"

Michael's van comes screeching to a halt. He gets out and sees-

MICHAEL

Oh my god. Ja-Jake what's going on?

JAKE

Michael we don't have time open the backdoor.

MICHAEL

We should call 911!

Jake opens the back doors. Zack, Rick, and Jake lift Jessica into the van.

JAKE

No, we'll be faster anyways.

MICHAEL

Jake I-I can't.

Michael keels over begins to hyperventilate

Brandi hops in. Rick and Zack head back to the house.

Jake hops out and tends to Michael.

JAKE

Michael give me the keys.

MICHAEL

Ja-jake the-they'll know.

JAKE

I'll fix it. Take deep breaths.

(leans down to his ear)

You don't have to be a part of this
but I need your keys Michael.

Michael tries to catch his breath.

JAKE

Michael!

Michael hands Jake the keys.

JAKE

Call your sister Michael. Call
Jenna!

Jake stares back at Tim

He slams the back of the van shut, rushes to the front, and
peels out down the street.

TIM

Alright. Everyone back in the
house.

(a pause everyone motionless)
Come on, everything will be okay.

A beat. Teens re-enter the house. Tim stares off down the
street.

OFF TIM'S LOOK

16 INT. VAN (MOVING) - NIGHT

16

The van bounces up and down. Brandi sobs, she crouches on
the side of Jessica's convulsing body.

JAKE

Brandi. Talk to me!

Jake speeds through the neighborhoods streets running stop
signs and traffic lights.

BRANDI

She's. She's. She's. Dy-dying.

JAKE

She's going to be okay. I promise
you that. Brandi, everything will
be okay. Just hang on!

Jake BLOWS through another light narrowly missing an
oncoming car that honks it's horn. Brandi doesn't flinch -
almost catatonic, she holds Jessica's hand. Tears pour off
her face.

17 EXT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS 17

The van bursts into the empty emergency entrances round-about.

Jake ERRUPTS out and sees a wheelchair on the side of the building. He grabs it and swiftly LIFTS it to the back of the van

JAKE
(opening doors)
Alright Brandy help me get her out.

Brandi slowly grabs Jessica's arm and helps Jake pull Jessica out of the van and onto the wheel chair.

Jake rushes Jessica inside. Brandi follows close behind him.

18 INT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS 18

JAKE
(yells)
I need help!

The NURSE behind the front desk immediately stands up and rushes over.

She walkies a code. She immediately takes out a small flashlight and checks eye responsiveness and pulse. The three jog down the hallway.

NURSE
How long has she been like this?

They blow through a pair of double doors.

JAKE
uh.I don't-Brandi?

BRANDI
(sobbing)
Maybe 15-20 minutes? I don't know.

NURSE
What did she take? How much did she take?

The three blow through another door.

BRANDI
Cocaine and Xanax, with alcohol I think. I think that's it? I don't-I don't know how much. I'm such a-

Doctors fly through the doors ahead of them with a stretcher. They move Jessica onto it.

NURSE

You need two need to wait here now.

Jake stops. Brandi follows.

NURSE

(to Brandi)

Wait here! I promise we will do everything we can. You did your part now let us do ours.

Brandi lets go stumbling back to the wall she slides down receding into a ball. Jake runs his hands through his hair and takes a deep breath.

FADE TO BLACK:

19

INT. WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

19

Jake sits next to Brandi who holds her knees to her chest half asleep.

A TV mounted in the corner of the room plays:

A political rally, red white and blue banisters labeled "*Waltz for Senator*" hang above a solid wooden podium. Behind which stands Mr. WALTZ (45) wearing a modern-fit, tailored, dark navy-blue suit, and a deep red tie. He waives to a cheering crowd. A MAN dressed in a black suit takes a microphone from the front of the stage.

MAN

Mayor Waltz it's said that your proposed policies on immigration reform will stifle diversity and hinder economic development that relies on the kind of talent recruited overseas, how do you respond to these comments?

MR. WALTZ

Well I want to make sure the safety and well being of Arizonans comes first, my immigration reform is not meant to stop people from entering the great this great state. It's meant to stop drugs, criminals, and terrorists from entering. I want to invest in the safety of our youth and make sure they have safe and affordable education.

MAN

But senator, your policy will displace hundreds of immigrants that live here illegally and tear children away from their family support structure. What do you say to that?

MR. WALTZ

Change is never an easy thing, but there's no more time for bureaucracy. It's time for action and development. Prosperity!

The crowd roars!

The sound of the TV fades, Jake looks off

A woman

JENNA(30) blonde hair, pony tail, wearing scrubs comes out of the ICU. Gestures to Jake to follow her.

20 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

20

Jenna tucks Jake and herself around the corner.

JENNA

(looks around)

Michael called me and told me what happened.

JAKE

Jenna I'm so-

JENNA

(low intense volume)

Save it! When I told you I would help with your little--*party-security business*-- you assured me no drugs. And if I had to deal with anything at all it was the extremely rare occurrence of some kid drinking a little too much and deciding it was a good idea to break beer bottles with his head or something.

JAKE

Jenna, I didn't know abo-

JENNA

No. Drugs. Jake. You hear me!

Jenna takes a second paces a couple of steps.

JAKE

Jenna, it won't happen again, I promise.

Lays into him again.

JENNA

Ok, well while you're figuring out how to prevent this in the future Jessica will be here in a coma.

Takes a few steps paces again.

JENNA CONT'D

Her vitals are normal, but we don't know how long it will be...

A pause. Jake stares.

JENNA CONT'D

In the mean time I'm going to make this go away, because I have to. I took over the paperwork as a favor but there has to be a report Jake, which means one of you will take the fall for this.

REVEAL --

Brandi comes around the corner. Jake rushes over to her.

JAKE

Brandi, go back to the waiting room.

BRANDI

(to Jenna)

Is she going to be okay?

JENNA

I don't know honey, her vitals are steady and she's breathing on her own, but it's still unclear.

JAKE

Brandi go sit down.

BRANDI
I-I did it.I killed her...

JAKE
Brandi-

BRANDI
(tears stream down her face)
She was..I gave her the..I-I-I
should have known. It's all my
fault..

JENNA
Brandi. Sweetie--

BRANDY
(sobbing)
I must have given her too mu-I
didn't see her take more-She's
going to-and I killed? What do I
do? What can I do?

JAKE
Brandi you've done enough.

JENNA
(to Brandi)
If you really want to help your
friend you'll tell me exactly what
you remember. The more details the
better we're able to help-

JAKE
Jenna-

Jake exchanges looks with Jenna.

Jenna takes Brandi by the arm and begins to escort her down
the hall.

JENNA
(to Jake)
I think you should go Jake.

Jake watches them walk down the hall, his emotionless stare
begins to crack.

OFF JAKE'S LOOK

21 EXT. JAKES HOUSE - DAY 21

Early morning. The sun is barely rising. Jake approaches a desolate house, the garage door is dented, the screens on the the windows have holes. Overgrown grass with weeds litter the yard.

He searches through the window to the right of the front door.

Slowly he sticks his key in the deadbolt and turns ever so gently.

22 INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 22

He quietly slips inside and shuts the door softly behind him. He peers into the kitchen - no movement. He quietly makes his way up the stairs and opens the door to his room softly.

23 INT. JAKE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 23

Jake enters and shuts the door behind him. He immediately rushes to sit propping himself against the side of his bed tears stream down his face.

The air is still except for erratic breaths.

He sobs-

For a moment-

For two-

He wipes away his tears and rubs his hands over his face. He slowly crawls into bed. His eyes shut

SMASH CUT:

24 EXT. SCHOOL - DAY 24

Jake eye's OPEN. He's outside. A cold fall day. He stands near the flag pole at the front of the school. Students begin to pour out. He searches THEN -

Sees Tim walking out with a group of classmates. He approaches.

Jake shoves Tim away from the group around to the side of the building.

TIM

Hey!

Jake grabs Tim's jacket and presses him against the wall hard.

JAKE

Where'd you get them?

TIM

What are you talking about man?

JAKE

You know what I'm talking about.

A pause.

TIM

Is she okay?

JAKE

Where did you get them Tim?

TIM

Is she okay?

JAKE

TIM!

Jake gives Tim another shove.

TIM

Ow. Ok ok. Damn, I got them from the internet.

JAKE

The internet?

TIM

Yeah Captain America, the internet.

A pause. Jake lets go.

TIM CONT'D

It was the deep web. I paid with bitcoin. No cartel or anything it was like making a purchase on amazon. Sketchier shipping though...

JAKE

What?

TIM

Come on Jake we tried. I tried, but it always had to be your way. And whatever deal you have going on with my father.

JAKE

What about your father?

Tim pushes Jake and gets into his face.

TIM

(explodes)

Don't play stupid Jake!

(a pause)

Don't play stupid, because I know you're not!

JAKE

Tim-

TIM

I'm done. I've had it! You think you know everything! You know what's good for me, but you don't. I'm sick and tired of you pretending like you don't think I'm stupid!

A pause. Tim wipes the tears from his face, he takes a deep breath.

TIM CONT'D

You treat me like a fuck-up! Not anymore Jake.

JAKE

Tim the only reason I started all this was to avoid this!

Jake gestures to the front of the school, everyone's talking. Everyone hunches over their phones.

TIM

Avoid what?

JAKE

This. Look at this. Everyone living a life they don't have, working towards one they don't want!

TIM

See this is the shit I'm talking about.

(pause)

Always seeing things us *normal* people can't? Look around Jake we're all still here. No one's dead.

JAKE

You really don't get it, do you?

TIM

Knowing the world's a messed up place isn't hard to understand.

Silence.

Jake turns around and walks away.

TIM

(yells)

Have fun being dad's golden boy!

Jake continues to walk and doesn't look back. Tim sniffles and wipes his face once more. He stares as Jake walks away.

OFF TIM'S LOOK

25

INT. MICHAEL'S DINNING ROOM - NIGHT

25

Michael digs his fork into meatloaf and drags it across his plate. He looks up across a long solid black table to Mr. Waltz who sits eating his food. Next to him is MRS. WALTZ (42) hair well manicured; wearing a teal blouse and slacks.

Stainless steel, glass, black and grey with red and silver accents

The room is quiet and dead, Then -

MR. WALTZ

Michael, how was that study session last night?

MRS. WALTZ

Yes, I didn't hear you come in?

MICHAEL

Oh-I, it was good. Lots accomplished.

MR. WALTZ
What did you study?

MICHAEL
Uh-I, it was physics.

MR. WALTZ
Excellent, that'll keep you
grounded

Mr. Waltz grins and exchanges looks with Mrs. Waltz.

MRS. WALTZ
(to Michael)
Oh! Honey.

SUDDENLY - Mrs. Waltz stops eating puts her fork down on her plate, wipes her face with her napkin, and leans down extending her hand down the table towards Michael.

MRS. WALTZ
I heard the most terrible thing
happened to one of your classmates.

Michael stops chewing.

MICHAEL
Oh..what'd-what'd you hear?

MRS. WALTZ
Jessica? Did you know her?

MR. WALTZ
What happened to her?

MRS. WALTZ
I don't know if it's really dinner
talk.

Mrs. Waltz returns to eating.

MR. WALTZ
(scoffs)
Ilean, you can't bring up a
terrible thing and then not tell
us.

MICHAEL
Yeah. Mom. What'd you hear?

MRS. WALTZ
She's at the hospital in a coma.

MR. WALTZ
When did this happen?

MICHAEL
Did they say who or how?

MRS. WALTZ
Last night I guess, and no, Mrs. Burden just mentioned she was in the coma, but stable. They're not sure when she'll wake up though. Isn't that terrible?

Silence. Mr. Waltz grinds his knife through his meatloaf and practically thorough his plate.

MRS. WALTZ
Patrick are you okay?

MR. WALTZ
It's unacceptable!

Silence washes over the room. Michael exchanges looks with Mrs. Waltz

MRS. WALTZ
Well honey this is why you're running.

MR. WALTZ
One of the reasons.

MICHAEL
(under breath)
Stopping immigrants won't stop drugs.

MR. WALTZ
I agree.

A beat. Michael looks up.

MICHAEL
But isn't that one of your major running points?

MRS. WALTZ
Honey, everyone needs a scapegoat.

MICHAEL
What?

MR. WALTZ

What your mother means is, yes immigration may be the reason people vote for me, but that's not the reason I'm running. Immigration is not a central issue.

MICHAEL

But you were saying you wanted to stop drugs and terrorism and all that?

MR. WALTZ

I do, but immigration reform isn't going to do that.

MICHAEL

Mom?

MRS. WALTZ

Your father is utilizing the powers of misdirection Honey.

MICHAEL

Dad?

MR. WALTZ

I'm going to be elected for my controversial immigration reform, but the true issues of our future lay within education reform.

MRS. WALTZ

The world's being taken over by robots sweetie, not Mexicans.

MICHAEL

Ok What!

MR. WALTZ

Your mother's right. Give it 20 years son, most of the U.S. jobs will be given over to robots. The lower end jobs that support the majority of people in the country like janitorial services, fast food, and truck driving, will all be gone. There will be a massive displacement of people.

MICHAEL

So what are you going to do?

MR. WALTZ

Improve education and make sure our youth has resources and tools to become engineers and data analysts that will service the machines that replace their parents' jobs in the future.

MICHAEL

So then robots and artificial intelligence are going to destroy us and we're too stupid to stop it is what you're saying

MR. WALTZ

I don't know about artificial intelligence taking over, but I do know the current education system is in need of desperate reform.

MICHAEL

So you're lying to everyone about immigration?

MR. WALTZ

Education. Immigration. They're more connected than you might think.

MRS. WALTZ

I love when you talk about saving us from future killer robots!

Mrs. Waltz smiles. Mr. Waltz smiles back.

MICHAEL

Uh-huh...may I be excused?

Mr and Mrs. Waltz locked into each others eyes.

MR. WALTZ

Yeah sure son.

MRS. WALTZ

Just clean up your dishes honey.

Michael gets up and carries his plate into the kitchen.

26 INT. MICHAEL'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

26

Michael dumps the food on his plate into the sink. Rinses it and sets it on the side. He leans and glances back into the dining room and sees Mr. and Mrs. Waltz laughing.

Michael pulls out his phone and texts Jake.

TEXT

We need to talk I'm going to pick you up! Be ready in 30!

Michael quickly puts his phone back in his pocket. He peers into the dining room once more. Mr. and Mrs. Waltz still talking to each other.

27 INT. POLICE STATION - CHIEF KASDAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

27

Chief Kasdan sits in his quiet office. Looking at his email on the computer.

SFX: Knock knock

Officer Roken pokes his head in. A manila folder sandwiches between his chest and the doorway.

ROKEN

Hey Chief you got a minute?

CHIEF

Yeah Mike, come on in.

Roken comes in and hands chief the folder.

CHIEF

What's this?

ROKEN

Something I thought you might find interesting. You know that O.D. the other night?

Chief opens the folder, there is a black and white photo of the hospital round about with Michael's van. He turns to the next photo: Two blurry figures get out. The next one: they unload a lifeless body onto a wheel chair.

ROKEN

Rosales is running the plates. One of those figures look familiar to you?

Chief squints a little harder.

CHIEF
It's hard to see their faces

ROKEN
Look at the time stamp.

Chief glances up at the corner of the page.

ROKEN
Just a little bit after we left
that phantom party.

The chief looks up.

ROKEN
You thinking what I'm thinking?

CHIEF
Let's pay a little visit to the
hospital.

The chief gets up and grabs his coat from the rack. They
storm out.

28 INT. TIM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

28

Tim enters his front door. Small quaint, void of
decorations. He quietly removes his back pack, his hoodie
now hangs off his shoulders.

He takes off his Nike Stefan Janoski skateboarding shoes and
places them next to a pair of shiny black tactile shoes in a
row near the front door.

He glances through all the hallways and the rooms. The house
is dark and quiet; empty. He makes his way slowly to the
stairs letting his finger tips brush against the walls and
then the stair banister.

He walks slowly up the stairs.

29 INT. TIM'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

29

Slowly he bounces from side to side through the hallway, his
fingers brush up against a picture frame. He turns his body
towards it.

In the picture is him aged twelve at the beach a woman
stands next to holding a bag of bread. Seagulls surround
them. This is his MOM.

A Moment.

Another.

Another.

He slides a little further, another picture frame captures his attention. His MOM stands with her arms around Tim's twelve-year-old self and Jake's twelve-year-old self. Another arm hangs around Jake's neck this is JAKE'S MOM, and next to her Jake's FATHER.

Another photo: Jake and Tim run playfully from a blurry man. Seagulls scare away. Their faces big with wide smiles.

30

INT. TIM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

30

Tim shuts his door. He walks over to the window and pulls the blackout curtains shut then switches on black lights. He surveys the room.

Black-light reactive posters line the walls, one of tropical fish, one of Alice in Wonderland's psychedelic mushrooms.

A tapestry hangs across his slanted ceiling. He turns on a ball of colored lights. They shoot around his room.

He slumps to a bean bag chair at the foot of his bed.

He pulls out his phone.

Scrolls through his contacts, hovers over Brandy's name. He opens a new text. Types.

TIM
(to Brandi text)
Hey.

Sends

A beat. He stares at the screen. For a moment. or two.

He flicks his phone off to the side and reaches around and under his bed and pulls out a little black tin cash-box.

He opens it.

REVEAL - a few joints. Rolling papers, various pill bottles, unlabeled viles

A photograph of him with his mother's arms around him. There's a torn edge and an extra limb reaching around him from the other side.

He grabs a joint and lights it inhaling deeply.

SFX: Buzz buzz

He looks at his phone.

BRANDI

(text)

I can't talk to you right now Tim.

A pause. He inhales deep again. Tosses his phone aside. Peers back into the black-box for a moment. or two.

He pulls out a plastic sandwich bag. Holds it up to the colored lights. A square sheet of paper perforated into tiny squares lays inside. He holds the joint between his lips, opens the bag, and rips off four of the squares.

He sets them on his knee closes the box and slides it away from him. He inhales deep.

He takes the four squares and slides them under his tongue.

He lays back against the foot of his bed, looking up at the smoke rising towards the array of colored lights bouncing off a now unnaturally vibrant tapestry. He takes a deep breath and shuts his eyes.

SMASH CUT:

31 INT. MICHAEL'S VAN (MOVING) - NIGHT

31

Michael and Jake bounce up and down, patterns of street lights rush across their faces.

MICHAEL

(mid rant)

...and then he-he was just looking at me, you know. Talkin about how robots and artificial intelligence are going to take over the world, like the terminator except without naked Schwarzenegger because it'll be too smart and we're all too dumb to see it and it doesn't even need to really kill us it'll just take our jobs and make us live on the streets homeless and use our own divided class system against us, the robots will be rich and of course my moms all supportive, I don't want to be homeless because of robots Jake-

JAKE

Michael-

MICHAEL(CONT'D)

No, I mean really, imagine if there were highly intelligent machines that took over everyone's job. And instead of being like, "whoa, this isn't good," everyone's just like, "this is great!" But then everyone quits, it's like no more drive, and so everyone becomes more stupid and it's straight out of that one movie with Luke Wilson Idiocracy--plants don't need electrolytes Jake! and if everyone's stupid how am I ever going to talk to people and I'll never get over anything and we're all going to die Jake!

JAKE

Michael calm down. We're fine.

MICHAEL

Why are you so fine! Why are you always fine! Jessica's in a coma andandand she's in a coma!

Michael tightens his grip on the steering wheel.

JAKE

Look, I have a plan, trust me. You're gonna be fine. Your parents aren't going to know. No ones coming to take you to jail.

Michael turns on his blinker and takes a left.

MICHAEL

So then what's this plan?

JAKE

We stay focused. We stay on track. Remember what we're doing. Remember we're there to help the host have a good time. We're paid to insulate. We're not drug dealers. We're not murderers and as long as you know that and I know that we're fine.

MICHAEL

Okay, but like what do we dooooo?

JAKE

We stay on our mission.

MICHAEL

Which is?

JAKE

Make enough money to leave this place.

MICHAEL

(rocks back and fourth)

Okay, but Jake. What. Do. We. Do? In the meantime? Because money and getting away is good and all, but is it reeeeeeally going to matter when we're all slaves to robots in the future? The same robots that will probably be responsible for heeling people like Jessica from comas.

JAKE

We go back to work-

The car screeches to a halt, it skids along the pavement to a halt ten-feet from the stop sign ahead.

MICHAEL

Are you insane! Why? How? What does Tim think about this?

JAKE

(looks out the window)

Tim's no longer with us.

MICHAEL

Oh my god!

Michael frozen.

JAKE

What? No. He's no longer-like our business. Not dead.

MICHAEL

(cusp of hyperventilating)

Oh thank god.

(deep breath)

Oh my god.. "*Tim's no longer with us..*" Who talks like that! I think I'm going to be sick.

(rests head on steering wheel)

A beat. The night is quiet and still, not a single car or person in sight.

JAKE
 (looks around)
 Where are you taking me by the way?

MICHAEL
 (lifts head slightly)
 Wha-oh, no where I'm just driving
 around. It's not safe anywhere
 else, there are people and it's
 public and there are a lot
 of...other..people who spend time
 in public spaces and they talk and
 one of them might talk to us...

Michael relaxes his head against the steering wheel and
 shuts his eyes.

32 INT. HOSPITAL - FRONT DESK - NIGHT

32

Chief leans over the front desk looking at the receptionists
 monitor pointing and talking. Roken stands looking over his
 shoulder.

A beat.

Jenna walks in from the double doors across the room.

JENNA
 Chief?

Chief looks up he leans in to the monitor once more and
 reads.

CHIEF
 Dr. Jenna Waltz?

JENNA
 Can I help you?

Chief and Roken walk over to her

ROKEN
 Like running for Arizona senator
 Waltz?

JENNA
 Dr. Jenna will work just fine.

Chief and Roken exchange looks.

CHIEF
 Well, Dr. Jenna, we came to ask you
 a few questions regarding a young
 (MORE)

CHIEF (cont'd)
 girl who overdosed the other night,
 a seventeen-year-old Jessica
 Burden. Your name was on the intake
 report?

JENNA
 Yeah, How can I help?

CHIEF
 Well it says here in the report
 there was only one accompanying
 party that brought Jessica in,
 sixteen-year-old Brandi Lotts? Is
 this correct?

JENNA
 To my knowledge.

ROKEN
 To your knowledge?

JENNA
 I wasn't here when she arrived
 necessarily, I rushed over from the
 hallway when she wheeled Jessica
 in.

ROKEN
 By herself?

A beat.

JENNA
 Yes. I'm sorry is there something
 wrong with the report?

Roken walks over and grabs a manila folder off of the
 receptionist desk he walks back over and opens it.

CHIEF
 These are pictures taken by the
 security cam at the emergency
 entrance. At the time Jessica
 arrived
 (turns to next photo)
 You can see there were clearly two
 people hoisting Jessica onto a
 wheelchair. Did you see anyone
 else?

JENNA

Huh, they must not have come in. I didn't see anyone else.

A beat. Officer Roken and Chief exchange looks.

JENNA CONT'D

Look, when a girl comes in convulsing and puking her life out I don't exactly step outside to look around.

A beat. Chief and Roken exchange looks. Chief closes the folder.

CHIEF

Are you sure you didn't see anything else? Did Brandy mention anyone she was with or say anything about who the van belonged to?

A beat.

CHIEF

Jenna?

JENNA

If she did it would be in the report.

CHIEF

Alright. Jenna, thank you for your time. If you remember anything else please give us a call.

Chief and Roken walk towards the exit.

A beat. Jenna stands frozen. Fidgets her fingers. THEN -

Quickly walks over to the front windows and watches Chief and Roken walk through the parking lot.

She quickly pulls her phone from her pocket.

She opens it. She taps the screen and holds the phone up to her ear. She watches Chief and Roken get into their respective cruisers. Roken's headlights turn on.

SFX: Ring Ring

The chief's headlights turn on.

Jenna stares frozen.

33 INT. MICHAELS VAN (MOVING) - NIGHT 33

Michael drives along the neighborhood streets.

SFX: BUZZ BUZZ

He reaches over and grabs his phone off the empty passenger seat.

He answers.

MICHAEL

Jenna?-

JENNA

They have your van.

MICHAEL

What!?

JENNA

The police. They came to see me.
They have pictures-security camera
footage of your van! They saw Jake,
they're probably running the plates
right now.

34 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 34

Michaels van comes to a screeching halt in the middle of the street. Black smoke radiates from the tires rising through the glimmer of street lights.

35 INT. MICHEALS VAN - CONTINUOUS 35

Michael sits. Catatonic. Not moving. Not breathing.

JENNA (O.S.)

Michael? Michael did you hear me?

Silence.

Michael takes a huge GASP in. Another GULP of air!

MICHAEL

(shouting)

FUCK! oh shit oh shit oh shit.
Jenna!

36 INT. HOSPITAL- FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

36

JENNA

I know! I know! Calm down! You
gotta calm down.

CROSSCUT - BETWEEN JENNA AT HOSPITAL FRONT DESK AND
MICHAEL'S VAN

MICHAEL

What do I do Jenna what do I do?
What do I do? What do I-What do..

JENNA

Listen you need to **call dad** and you
need to tell him everything. You
need to tell him what happened.
He'll know what to do.

Michael trembles. One breath. two breath. another another.
Then nothing.

JENNA

Michael?

Silence.

JENNA (O.S.)

Call Dad!

SFX: Beep

Jenna's gone.

Michael's eyes roll back into his head.

His face collides with the steering wheel. The cars horn
lets off a loud honk. He raggedy-ann-doll's to the side, his
head lands somewhere between the center console and the
front of the passenger street - his body strung up by his
seat-belt.

37 EXT. MICHAEL'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

37

The engine idles in the middle of the silent and still
neighborhood street.

CUT TO

38 INT. CHIEF'S POLICE CRUSIER - NIGHT 38

Chief steers through neighborhood streets.

SFX: BUZZ BUZZ

Chief looks down at his phone - "ROSALES"

He answers.

CHIEF

Hey Rosales what's up?

39 INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS 39

OFFICER ROSALES stands by a desk looking at a piece of paper.

ROSALES

Hey chief, I got the name on those plates you asked for. The van. Belongs to, get this, Michael Waltz, as in running senator's son.

40 INT. CHIEF'S POLICE CRUSIER - CONTINUOUS 40

A beat.

ROSALES (O.S.)

Chief?

CHIEF

Thanks Rosales. Can we keep this between you and me for now?

41 INT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS 41

ROSALES

You don't want me to tell Roken?

Rosales sits down at his desk.

42 INT. CHIEF'S POLICE CRUSIER - CONTINUOUS 42

CHIEF

Yeah I'll give him the heads up. I just want to keep a lid on everyone who knows. Keep ahead of the political shit storm that follows, you know?

ROSALES (O.S.)
Sure thing boss.

CHIEF
Thanks Rosales

Chief hangs up the phone and flips on his lights and speeds down the road.

43 INT. MICHAELS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 43

Mr. and Mrs. Waltz sit in a quiet living room. Mr. Waltz on his laptop and Mrs. Waltz reading articles on her cell phone.

A beat. Silence, then -

MR. WALTZ
(deep into his laptop)
Johnson's kind of a prick isn't he.

Mrs. Waltz looks up.

MRS. WALTZ
Patrick!

MR. WALTZ
Well he is, isn't he?

MRS. WALTZ
Whether he is or not, it's not nice to talk about people that way.

CROSSCUT BETWEEN EXT. CHIEF POLICE CRUISER AND INT. WALTZ LIVING-ROOM.

Chief BARRELS down the street crossing intersections dangerously. Myriad of car-horns honk.

The Waltz living-room as it was -

MR. WALTZ
Don't you hate his wife?

MRS. WALTZ
"Hate" is a strong word. I simply loath that she becomes a doormat every-time someone asks her about her political agenda.

Chief DRIFTS around a neighborhood street corner. Narrowly avoids being T-Boned. Speeds off into the distance

The Waltz living-room as it was -

MR. WALTZ.

(chuckles)

So I can't call Johnson a prick,
but you can call his wife a
"doormat?"

MRS. WALTZ

It isn't meant to be funny Patrick.
I think she could use separation
from her husband.

MR. WALTZ

I lean

A beat.

CHIEF's cruiser slides to a stop.

His car door opens.

Waltz Living-room as it was -

MRS. WALTZ

What? I don't mean that in a bad
way, she just isn't her own woman.

A beat. Mr. and Mrs. Waltz exchange looks.

CHIEF's feet walk up a drive way.

Waltz living-room as it was -

MR. WALTZ

You don't think that about us do
you?

SFX: KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Mr. Waltz looks at the front door and heads over. He
maintains eye contact with Mrs. Waltz.

MRS. WALTZ

I'm sorry Patrick, I think we could
use some time apart...

(goes back to reading phone)

..so you're not such a doormat.

A beat. Mr. Waltz smiles.

MR. WALTZ

I will always live in the shadow of
your political agenda.

CHIEF stands in front of a door. He knocks.

Waltz living-room as it was -

Mr. Waltz practically at the door.

SFX: KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Chief stands. The front door opens -

REVEAL -

Jake answers the door.

Waltz living-room as it was -

Mr. Waltz opens the door -

REVEAL -

Officer Roken stands next to Michael, pale, stares at the ground. Cruiser parked in the background.

OFF MR.WALTZ'S LOOK

44 INT./EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

44

CHIEF

Jake.

JAKE

Chief?

A beat. The two exchange looks. Chief glances over Jake's shoulder into the dark house.

CHIEF

We need to talk.

Jake steps outside

Chief follows him to the drive way.

CHIEF

You need to tell me exactly what happened at the party? To Jessica?

Jake stares off into the street. He leans against an old beat up chevy impala.

CHIEF CONT'D

And Waltz's kid? What's his role in all this? This looks really bad.

JAKE
It was an accident.

CHIEF
She's in a coma Jake.

A pause.

CHIEF CONT'D
More kids could've gotten hurt-

JAKE
(errupts)
You don't think I know that!
(pause)
I carried her body into the
hospital!

A beat.

CHIEF
What. Happened?

JAKE
I don't know I was talking to you
when she collapsed.

CHIEF
Why didn't you say something?

JAKE
I didn't know! I didn't know till
after you left.

CHIEF
You should've called Jake.

JAKE
It was faster for me to take her-

CHIEF
I don't care if you thought you
were faster! You're a
seventeen-year-old kid. That's not
your call to make!

A beat. Chief steps back.

CHIEF CONT'D
I was a kid once too, I partied and
had a good time, but this. You
can't be responsible for life or
death decisions.

(pause)
It's my fault...

Jake looks up.

CHIEF CONT'D
I gave you a free pass and that was wrong.

JAKE
No it isn't. You know what's wrong, is when people think just because we're young we can't handle anything. I've got news for ya Rick, the world's changing, no one has time to sit and think. You either deal with shit as it comes or find yourself thinking your way into a job you don't want; into a life you question, asking yourself time and time again, "this is it?" "This is my life?" because at the end of the day you followed the status quo, you fell victim to the process of becoming an idiot.

(pause)
So when you say it was wrong to give me a free pass, I say no. Because you tried something different. You said no to black and white depictions of good and bad. You questioned the processes and you saw there may be a different way and that's the only way we're going to make it through this mess.

CHIEF
No more Jake.

Chief walks towards his cruiser.

JAKE
You're just one more clog in the wheel Chief. Do yourself a favor and pay attention to what's really going on around you.

Silence. Chief's half way in this cruiser THEN-

JAKE
Just talk to him.

A pause..chief gets in and shuts the door. The headlights turn on. The engine ignites. The wheels spin over loose rocks on the cracked cement. Jake stares. The cruiser disappears into the distance.

OFF JAKE'S LOOK

45 INT. CHIEF'S HOUSE - NIGHT 45

Chief enters his front door. The house is still, small-quaint, void of decorations. He quietly removes his belt and badge places them on the table next to a backpack.

He takes off a pair of black shiny tactile shoes and places it next to a pair of Nike Stefan Janoski skateboarding shoes in a row near the front door.

He glances through all the hallways and the rooms. The house is dark and quiet; empty. He moves down a hallway and flicks on a light.

46 INT. CHIEF'S HOUSE- KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 46

He opens the fridge devoid of food. Lots of beer. He grabs one and opens it with a bottle opener on the side of his fridge.

He settles into a small chair at a small table against the wall and takes a sip.

Silence.

He looks down the hallway at the front door.

Silence. Another sip.

Slowly he raises his head peering through the floor above.

Silence. A beat.

He glances at his watch.

He sighs and gets up from the table.

Slowly he makes his way down the hallway towards the front door. Then rounds the corner and heads up the dark stairwell.

47 INT. CHIEF'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 47

He pauses, beer in hand at the top of the stairs.
Colored light leak out from under a door down the hall.
He quietly steps slowly towards the door.
He pauses.
Leans his ear to the door.

REVEAL --

Tim lays at the foot of his bed.

48 INT. TIM'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 48

Tim has earbuds in. He stares at the ceiling fan as it cuts through moving waves of light that make shapes and patterns all in motion across the tapestry on his ceiling.
He reaches out to touch them.

49 INT. CHIEF'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 49

Chief's ear pressed up against the door. We hear the low roar of music emanating from ear buds. The sound of the ceiling fan pushing air.
Colored lights illuminate Chief's face...a tear streaks down his cheek.

A beat.

For a moment

For two

For three

He raises his hand. It stops just before the door knob.

A beat.

His hand slowly falls. He turns around and walks away, back into the darkness of the hallway.

50 INT. WALTZ'S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

50

A single lamp illuminates a sleek wooden and black leather chair, with artful curves. In it sits Mr. Waltz with a small black book on his lap. His phone up to his ear.

SFX: RING....RING....RING....RING... Click

VOICE (O.S.)

Hello?

MR.WALTZ

Hi? I'm looking for Mr. Lotts? I heard he was good at fixing sensitive situations?

VOICE (O.S.)

I'm listening.

CUT TO BLACK:

THE END