50/50

by

Will Reiser

Shooting Script
EXT. SEATTLE - DAY

It’s an unusually clear winter day as the peaks of Mount Rainier look down on the avenues and harbors of Seattle.

ADAM LERNER (27) jogs through the streets of Seattle. The morning mist envelops the PIER. Adam’s iPod blares in his ear as he passes the FISH MARKET.

Adam arrives at a street corner. Ahead, a “Don’t Walk” sign blinks. So he does. Running in place, Adam looks from side to side. There’s not a car, person or thing in sight this early in the morning. He looks again at the orange hand, urging him to stop.

Another JOGGER runs up behind Adam, and disobeys the crosswalk, running past him and across the street. Adam continues to wait for the light to change.

The light goes green. He crosses.

INT. SHOWER - MOMENTS LATER

Adam tries to squirt shampoo into his hand, but the bottle is empty. He looks over at a large assortment of women’s products, grabs the first one – Fructis by L’Oreal – and squirts some into his hair. He proceeds to lather his entire body in the product.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Adam dresses in front of the mirror. His outfit is well put-together. He pulls out a LINT BRUSH and meticulously combs his cardigan. RACHAEL (24), wearing her oversized “KEEP TAHOE BLUE” shirt, enters the bedroom brushing her teeth.

ADAM
So are you staying over tonight?

RACHAEL
Uh...Not sure. There are a couple of gallery openings I want to check out.

Rachael goes through Adam’s drawers looking for something.

RACHAEL (CONT’D)
I’m so nervous about my show. I still have so much work to do.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
I need two more paintings and everything I’ve been coming up with is completely derivative of what I’ve been seeing at the Henry.

(confused)

Where’s my stuff?

ADAM
It’s in your drawer.

RACHAEL
(honored)
I have a drawer?

ADAM
(sheepish)
Yeah, I just figured I’d put some of your things... there wasn’t anything in the drawer. Well there were a few things, but I just moved them to a different one because... It made sense that way.

RACHAEL
(touched)
Awwwww. Honey. We’re getting so domestic.

SFX: A CAR HORN.

EXT. ADAM’S HOUSE – SAME TIME

Kyle sits in his car front of Adam’s house, his seat reclined, his eyes squeezed shut, hungover. He honks the horn again, winces at the noise.

INT. BEDROOM – SAME TIME

Adam rushes to gather his things.

ADAM (CONT’D)
Good luck with the paintings.

He moves to her, leans in - despite her mouth full of toothpaste.

RACHAEL
Oops, I’ve got toothpaste in my mouth.

She wipes it off his nose. He gives her a small kiss.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RACHAEL (CONT’D)
Have a good day.

ADAM
(big smile)
Bye.

INT. KYLE’S CAR – CONTINUOUS

Adam gets into the car.

KYLE
Yo!

ADAM
Sorry I’m late.

Kyle sniffs the air.

KYLE
...What’s that smell?
(Sniffs Adam)
Did you sit in jam or something?

ADAM
What are you talking about?

KYLE
You smell all fruity.

ADAM
No.
(smells himself)
I ran out of shampoo. I had to use Rachael’s.

KYLE
Well, you smell like you fucked the cast of “The View”.

Adam looks at his watch.

ADAM
Are we gonna go? We’re gonna be late.

KYLE
If you really care about being on time, you should probably learn how to drive.

ADAM
I deserve that.

(continues)
CONTINUED:

KYLE
You know what’s really going to make us late? When I stop for cappuccinos.

ADAM
No, no, no. We have coffee at work.

KYLE
Delicious cappuccinos.

Kyle drives off.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

Adam and Kyle stand in line. Kyle watches as Adam yawns repeatedly. He looks exhausted.

KYLE
Back still hurts?

ADAM
Yeah, I’m going to see the doctor today.

KYLE
Have you been fucking in weird positions?

ADAM
Of course that’s where you have to go with it.

KYLE
Sometimes it happens when I try new positions - like I tried froggy style for a while; fucked up my back.

ADAM
“Froggy style”? I don’t even want to ask what that is.

KYLE
It’s kind of like doggy style but you get way higher up.

ADAM
(beat)
We haven’t done it in three weeks.

(CONTINUED)
KYLE

(shocked)
You haven’t had sex in three weeks!?

ADAM
Well, she had a yeast infection, and then she had her period.

KYLE
You can fuck on a yeast infection.

ADAM
No, it hurts.

KYLE
It does?

ADAM
Well, that’s what she says.

KYLE
I think that’s bullshit.

ADAM
No, I’ve heard that before.

KYLE
Has she been sucking on your dick, giving you blow jobs?

ADAM
No, she doesn’t like to.

KYLE
(a little upset)
No fucking shit she doesn’t like to! Who likes putting dicks in their mouths? That’s why they call them jobs!

ADAM
Don’t get hysterical, it’s not that big a deal.

KYLE
I’m not hysterical. She stays at your house all the time. She leaves her fucking shit everywhere. You clean it up. You’re a nice person. The least she can do is felate you.
EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Kyle and Adam walk down the sidewalk. Adam’s a few steps ahead, walking at a hurried pace as Kyle takes his time, sips his coffee.

KYLE
You put up with a lot of shit when you date a hot girl. Truthfully, that’s why if you recall in high school I didn’t date any hot girls.

ADAM
That’s why?

KYLE
Yes. That’s why.

ADAM
Well, we’re not in high school anymore. The relationship I have with Rachael is about more than sex.

KYLE
(condescending)
What is it about, Adam?

ADAM
We care about each other -- talk to each other.

KYLE
Wouldn’t it be nice if you could do that and bang the hell out of each other afterwards?

They walk up the front steps of SEATTLE PUBLIC RADIO.

ADAM
Ideally, yes. But it’s not a perfect world, OK?...Can you hurry up please?

Kyle stops and leans over.

KYLE
Ugh...Just got to tie my shoe.

INT. SEATTLE PUBLIC RADIO - DAY

Adam and Kyle enter the offices of Seattle Public Radio. They pass JENNY at the reception desk. Kyle shoots her a smile.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

KYLE
Morning Jenny.

She ignores him. As they continue, Seth looks over at Adam
nervously biting on his finger nails.

KYLE
That’s so gross man. You shouldn’t
do that.

PHIL (40), Adam and Kyle’s boss, passes by.

PHIL
Kyle...Adam.

KYLE AND ADAM
Hey Phil.

ADAM
(worried)
Sorry we’re late.

Phil looks at his watch, not even aware of the time.

PHIL
Huh. Look at that, you are late.
Don’t do that.

ADAM
Listen, I wanted to talk to you
about the volcano piece, it’s
coming along really well, I’ve done
all the research and interviews--

PHIL
Great.

ADAM
Yeah but the narration is turning
into a bit of a problem. Whoever
did it, he kept clearing his throat
and he didn’t pause, he just kept
talking – there aren’t any edit
points. If he had just stopped and
cleared his throat I could cut
around it, but he didn’t--

Phil’s cell phone rings.

PHIL
Cool.

KYLE
Yeah, grab that.
CONTINUED: (2)

Phil pulls out his Blackberry and walks off, ignoring the conversation.

ADAM
OK. I’m just going to--

Adam and Kyle watch Phil walk away. Adam turns to Kyle.

ADAM
It’s like he doesn’t care.

KYLE
It’s like we got to put shit on the air. And it’s pointless to spend months working on something that someone’s going to hear for two seconds stopped at a red light.

ADAM
I like it when my work is good.

KYLE
Good luck with that.

INT. ADAM’S CUBICLE – LATER

Adam sits at his desk, head phones on, editing his volcano story on Pro-Tools. He meticulously edits the same audio point over and over. He cringes at the deafening sound of Kyle’s laughter across the office.

KYLE
(into phone)
You’re in Wales? So does that make you Welsh? Or Wale-ish?

Adam looks at Kyle in annoyance.

KYLE
OK. World Music...Can you hear me? You sound like a robot...Does it sound weird to you? It sounds weird to me...

ADAM
You have to be quieter, I’m--

Kyle is oblivious to Adam.

KYLE
I said you sound like a robot... Wait, wait, wait. Go back.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

   KYLE (cont’d)
   It’s unbelievable. I know. I don’t
   know what ‘World Music’ is either!

Annoyed, Adam imitates Kyle to himself.

   ADAM
   (as Kyle)
   I’m such a fucking asshole. I’m the
   king of the world, suck my dick. I
   hear Adam hasn’t gotten his dick
   sucked in six fucking months.

EXT. PACIFIC GENERAL HOSPITAL - LATER

Adam steps off a BUS and walks toward the hospital’s vast sunlit entryway. He enters through the sliding double doors, eventually disappearing into the din of the crowd.

INT. DR. ROSS’ OFFICE - LATER

Adam leafs through a pamphlet on incontinence when the pedantic DR. ROSS enters.

   DR. ROSS
   (curt)
   Hi.

Dr. Ross looks over Adam’s chart, examines his MRI scans, and pulls out a DICTAPHONE -

   DR. ROSS
   (into the dictaphone)
   Patient has been complaining of
   back pain, and night sweats. Blood
   tests and urine analysis are
   normal. MRI suggests a massive
   intradural malignant schwannoma
   neurofibrosarcoma extending into
   psoas muscle with nerve root
   compression syndrome and bone
   erosion.

We see Adam’s face gradually look more and more confused. He slowly begins to raise his arm as if to ask a question.

   DR. ROSS (CONT’D)
   Growth extends from the L2 to L5.
   Will send patient for biopsy to
   confirm.

Dr. Ross turns to see Adam holding his arm in the air.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DR. ROSS (CONT’D)

Yes?

ADAM
I’m so sorry, I didn’t follow that. Is there something wrong with me?

DR. ROSS
(points to MRI)
If you look here on your MRI, you see this cephalopod-like object spreading down along your spinal column?

Adam squints. It all looks the same.

DR. ROSS (CONT’D)
That is a massive schwannoma neurofibrosarcoma.

ADAM
I’m sorry, I still don’t--

DR. ROSS
It’s a malignant tumor.

ADAM
A tumor?

Yes.

DR. ROSS
Me?

ADAM
Yes.

ADAM
That doesn’t make sense...I don’t smoke. I don’t drink. I recycle...

DR. ROSS
Well your case it’s actually quite fascinating. Your cancer is the result of an incredibly rare gene mutation in chromosome 17p in the p53 gene that causes the growth of malignant cells in tissue around the nerves. In your case it’s grown along the nerves in your lower spine.

Adam walks over to the window and peers out.

(CONTINUED)
People can go years without knowing they’re sick. We’re lucky we caught it before it metastasizes. Given the placement and size of your particular tumor, the wisest course of action is to see if we can possibly reduce this thing down to a more manageable size.

(Beat)
I’m going to put you on a four month regimen of chemotherapy.

(beat)
Now Chemotherapy can result in fertility issues--

**ADAM**
But I’m going to be okay?

Dr. Ross puts on his best act of reassurance. His words are seemingly genuine; his tone is anything but.

**DR. ROSS (CONT’D)**
If you need to talk to someone...
We have an excellent staff of social workers and psychologists here in the hospital. They specialize in cases...in these...sort of matters. They’ll be able to help you.

Dr. Ross continues to talk as Adam looks out of the window.

**INT. ADAM’S OFFICE - DUSK**

CLOSE ON a computer screen:

“Neurofibromasarcoma Schwannoma is a malignant or cancerous form of Schwanoma.


It is a rare tumor type, with a relatively poor prognosis.

Patient response to treatment will vary based on age, health, and the tolerance to medications and therapies.

5 Year survival rate: 50%.
5 year survival rate after metastasis: 0%.”

(CONTINUED)
He stares at the screen. This is not good. Everyone else is leaving for the day, shutting off lights. Adam stays, immobile and alone.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Adam sits deep in thought - or in shock - hard to tell. The dusky pink sky of Seattle streaks by through tinted glass.

INT. ADAM’S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Adam and Rachael are on the couch, her eyes filled with tears.

    RACHAEL
    Oh Adam...

    ADAM
    Listen. I don’t expect you to take this on. It’s not like we’re married or anything. If you have to bail, bail.
    (off her look)
    I hope you won’t--I mean, I want you with me. But if you have to--

She looks at him, into his eyes, closes hers:

    RACHAEL
    I’m not going to bail on you, Adam.

She leans over, hugs him.

    RACHAEL (CONT’D)
    I’m here for you.

    ADAM
    Thank you.

Rachael rubs Adam’s back.

    RACHAEL
    It’s going to be okay.

Rachael leans in and puts her forehead against Adam’s.

    RACHAEL
    Everything’s going to be okay.
EXT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Adam and Kyle stand outside the coffee shop. Kyle looks sick.

KYLE
I’m going to throw up.

ADAM
Don’t throw up -- you’ll be fine.

KYLE
I actually think I’m going to throw up.

ADAM
You’re not going to throw up.

KYLE
I’m going to throw up.

ADAM
Just open your eyes...Look at me. Alright?

They both take a deep breath.

KYLE
What kind of cancer is it?

ADAM
It’s something rare.

KYLE
Well, what’s it called?

ADAM
Schwanoma something...

KYLE
(confused)
Schwanoma?...What’s Schwanoma?

ADAM
That means tumor basically.

KYLE
Do you have a picture of it, can I see it?

ADAM
Why would I have a picture of it?
KYLE
It’s common practice to fucking get pictures of shit now!

ADAM
It doesn’t look like anything, it’s just a lump.

KYLE
Well are you going to be okay? What are your odds?

ADAM
I don’t know, I looked it up and it said 50/50, but that’s the internet so...

Kyle sighs in relief.

KYLE
(upbeat)
That’s not that bad. That’s better than I thought. You’re going to be fine. You’re young...People beat cancer all the time. Every celebrity beats cancer. Lance Armstrong, he keeps getting it.

ADAM
Yeah.

KYLE
The guy from “Dexter”? He’s OK. Patrick Swayze; he’s fine.

ADAM
Patrick Swayze?

KYLE
And he’s older.

ADAM
But dude, that guy’s dead.

Kyle looks at Adam in shock.

KYLE
Really?

ADAM
Yeah.
KYLE
That’s really fucked up. I didn’t know that.
(beat)
Don’t even think about him...Don’t worry about that. You got to look at the bright side here--

ADAM
The bright side of what?

KYLE
You’ll be fine.

Kyle quickly tries to change the subject.

KYLE
What did your parents say? Did they freak out?

ADAM
Oh, I...they...I’m not going to tell them.

KYLE
You’re not going to tell them? You’ve got to tell them. Your mom’ll probably deal with it better than most people...Your dad has Alzheimer's.

ADAM
Yeah, but you know how she gets.

KYLE
You have to tell her.

ADAM
(concedes)
I know. I’ll tell her.

Kyle takes another deep breath.

KYLE
You’ll be fine. 50/50! If you were a casino game you’d have the best odds!

Kyle pats Adam’s shoulder.

ADAM
Yeah. Thanks.
CONTINUED: (3)

KYLE
Good talk.

Kyle begins walking away from the coffee shop.

ADAM
You don’t want coffee?

KYLE
I’m awake now.

EXT. ADAM’S HOUSE - DAY

Adam’s mother, DIANE LERNER (58), steps out of her car and onto the curb where she’s greeted by her son.

ADAM
Hi Mom.

DIANE
Hi Honey!

She gives Adam a big hug and kiss. Based on his body language, it’s clear Diane’s very existence annoys the shit out of Adam.

RICHARD LERNER (60) wanders out from behind Diane. On first glance he seems like a perfectly normal middle aged man, but on closer examination it’s clear that Alzheimer’s has altered his sense of reality. He extends his hand to Adam.

ADAM
Hi Dad.

RICHARD
Hi, I’m Richard.

DIANE
(to Richard)
This is Adam -- your son. Remember?

Adam shakes his dad’s hand and gives him an awkward pat on the shoulder. It’s clear Richard makes Adam uncomfortable.

RICHARD
Adam...

Meanwhile, Rachael stands on the porch, awkward smile plastered on her face.

RACHAEL
(from porch)
Hi!
CONTINUED:

Diane politely nods and waves in her direction as she and Adam walk toward the house.

   DIANE
   So what’s the big news?

   ADAM
   It’s nothing...I’ll tell you inside.

   DIANE (CONT’D)
   She’s not pregnant?

Adam stops, turns and looks at his mother.

   ADAM
   Mom!

   DIANE
   I know, I know, you use protection.

Adam cringes, totally mortified. He stares at her for a beat then turns and walks into the house, shaking his head.

As Diane follows behind she notices the paint on Adam’s porch is chipping.

   DIANE (CONT’D)
   You need to talk to your landlord about painting this.

   ADAM
   It’s fine.

Adam rolls his eyes and walks:

INSIDE

Diane follows after him.

   DIANE (CONT’D)
   Just give me his number and I’ll call him.

Diane notices an ABSTRACT PAINTING hanging on the wall above the TV.

   DIANE
   That’s new.

   ADAM
   Rachael made it for me...It’s called “Oppression”.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

Rachael leans over and corrects him.

RACHAEL
“Liberation”.

ADAM
That’s right! That one’s “Liberation”. “Oppression” is in the bathroom.

Diane feigns a smile, trying to seem impressed.

DIANE
Nice.

RACHAEL
Thank you.

INT. ADAM’S HOUSE. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Adam, Rachael, Diane, and Richard sit at the dinner table, eating pizza. Diane hands Richard a fistfull of pills. Richard takes the pills, puts them in his mouth and swallows. He smiles...Diane scans the house.

DIANE
So, what’s the special occasion?

Adam hesitates.

ADAM
I need to tell you something. But, before I do, you have to promise me you’re going to stay calm.

DIANE
Oh Adam, don’t be so overdramatic.

ADAM
Mom, just promise me. Okay?

DIANE
I promise...You make me out to be some kind of irrational loon.

ADAM
Have you ever seen “Terms of Endearment”?

RACHAEL
Oh, Jesus, Adam...Just tell her.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

DIANE
Tell me what?

Here goes nothing.

ADAM
(mumbles)
I have cancer.

DIANE
What do you mean, “I have cancer”?

ADAM
I have cancer. What do you want me to say?

DIANE
When did this happen?

ADAM
(reluctant)
I found out a few days ago.

DIANE
A few days ago?! You waited a few days to tell me?!

ADAM
I’m sorry.

DIANE
Honey.

Adam nods. Diane’s face literally crumples. She tries to compose herself.

DIANE
(beat)
I’m moving in.

ADAM

DIANE
I’m your mother Adam.

ADAM
You already have enough on your plate with dad.

DIANE
Who’s going to take care of you? You can’t even drive! Who’s going to take you to your appointments?
Adam looks over at Rachel, who notices.

RACHAEL
(hesitates)
Me. I will. I’m going to take care of him.

Diane sits motionless for what seems like an eternity. The only indication that she’s not dead is the movement of her index finger, which twitches uncontrollably. Adam sits uneasy, trying to anticipate his mother’s next move.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Mom?

Diane calmly rises from her seat and heads to the:

KITCHEN

Adam follows after her:

ADAM (CONT'D)
Mom, what are you doing?

Diane lights the stove, puts up a kettle:

DIANE
I’m making you green tea.

ADAM
Please, will you come sit down?

Diane holds up the package of Green Tea.

DIANE
I saw on “The Today Show” that it reduces your risk of getting cancer by fifteen percent.

ADAM
Well -- I already have cancer.

Adam puts his arm on his mother’s shoulder.

ADAM
Please come back to the table.

Diane hugs him and begins to weep.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Adam walks down the corridor and stops at a reception desk.
ADAM
I’m looking for Dr. McKay?

THE ATTENDANT silently points to an office a few doors down.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The office is a pit of chaos; small with stacks of psychology books and files strewn about. An attractive young woman, KATHERINE (24), sits on the couch reading a file while she eats a rather messy sandwich. She, like her office, is scattered in appearance. She takes a bite of her sandwich as Adam pokes his head in the door. She looks up-

KATHERINE
(mouth full of food)
Can I help you?

ADAM
I have an appointment with Dr. McKay.

KATHERINE
Oh... please come in...

Katherine removes her files from the couch, while awkwardly balancing her sandwich on top. She rises and puts her hand out to shake Adam’s – he reluctantly shakes it.

KATHERINE
...and please, call me Katherine.

ADAM
(confused)
You’re Dr. McKay?

KATHERINE
I am. Have a sit.
(corrects herself)
Sit down please.

Katherine wraps up her sandwich and puts the rest away. Adam looks her up and down.

ADAM
Aren’t you supposed to be like sixty-five and wear earth-toned sweaters?

KATHERINE
(slightly defensive)
Why? Did someone say that’s what I look like?

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
No. But, if you don’t mind...How old are you?

KATHERINE
(put off)
Twenty-four.

ADAM
Twenty-four? What are you like Doogie Howser?

KATHERINE
Who?

ADAM
Doogie Howser...

Off Katherine’s blank look.

ADAM (CONT’D)
...The teenage doctor.

KATHERINE
Does he work here?

ADAM
No. Nevermind...but aren’t you too young to be a doctor?

KATHERINE
(almost laughing)
Oh, technically I’m not a doctor yet. I wish. I’m actually working on my doctorate.
(off Adam’s look, trying to be serious)
This is a training hospital.

ADAM
I see...So have you had many patients?

KATHERINE
My patient history is not--

ADAM
(shocked)
I’m your first patient, aren’t I?

KATHERINE
No. Not at all.
ADAM
Your second?

ADAM (CONT'D)
Third.

Katie looks at him in silent acceptance. Adam’s eyes widen with concern:

ADAM (CONT'D)
How are the first two doing?

Katherine doesn’t answer. She bites her tongue.

KATHERINE
Can’t talk about that.

ADAM
And this is like part of your training?

KATHERINE
It’ll be part of my dissertation. But, don’t worry I’m not gonna use your real name.

ADAM (uncomfortable)
Okay. I guess that’s fine.

An awkward beat. Katherine pulls Adam’s file:

KATHERINE
So, Dr. Ross filled me in on your situation. This must be incredibly difficult.

Adam shrugs.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
How are you feeling?

ADAM
You know, honestly, I feel fine. I’ve actually never been more calm.

KATHERINE (proud of herself)
That’s a very common symptom found in patients like yourself. Right now your body is in survival mode. What you’re actually experiencing is shock...

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
No, I think I’m fine.

KATHERINE
...That’s why you feel that sense of calm. Would you describe what you’re feeling as a kind of “numbness”?

ADAM
I would describe it as fine.

KATHERINE
Because certain patients--

ADAM
(defiant)
I feel great.

Katherine bites her tongue.

KATHERINE
Wonderful, I think that’s wonderful -- if it’s alright with you, today I’d like to start with some very simple relaxation exercises.

Adam nods, tense.

ADAM
But I am relaxed.

KATHERINE
I know you are. But if you want to lie down...

ADAM
Lie down?

KATHERINE
Yeah.

Adam clearly doesn’t trust her, but lies down. Katherine presses play on her laptop – playing new agey meditation music.

KATHERINE
And close your eyes.

ADAM
Really?

(CONTINUED)
KATHERINE
Yeah, for this to work, you’re gonna have to trust me.

Adam closes his eyes.

ADAM
They’re closed.

KATHERINE
OK.

MATCH CUT TO:

RACHAEL (O.S.)
No peeking...Keep your eyes closed.

INT. ADAM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Adam is in the living room with his eyes closed.

RACHAEL
OK. Open your eyes.

Adam opens his eyes to see Rachael standing next to a very old and giant GREYHOUND. The dog stands motionless.

RACHAEL (CONT’D)
Surprise!

Adam’s excitement quickly dissipates.

RACHAEL
His name is Skeletor. He’s a retired race dog.

ADAM
You got me an old dog?

RACHAEL
He’s not that old.

ADAM
Well, he’s old enough to be retired.

The dog continues to stand motionless.

RACHAEL
Having a dog helps with the healing process.

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
Why, does he have a medical license?

RACHAEL
Forget it. I can bring him back to the shelter in the morning.

ADAM
Well what’s going to happen to him?

RACHAEL
He’ll be put back in his tiny cage with ten other dogs who will bully, and rape him, until he’s eventually euthanized.

Beat.

ADAM
Fine, I’ll keep the dog.

RACHAEL
Really?

Rachael's face lights up.

RACHAEL
This is going to be so good for you, I promise.

Adam grumbles to himself.

INT. SEATTLE PUBLIC RADIO - NIGHT

It’s Adam’s going away party. Draped across the entrance is a “Bon Voyage” banner with an image of a Cruise Ship.

Jenny stands to the side crying as Kyle consoles her.

KYLE
This whole party was my idea. Thought maybe we could just celebrate his life.

JENNY
He’s going to get better, right?
KYLE
I hope so. But, tonight I thought it’d be best if we didn’t think about whether he gets better or not. We should be celebrating the Adam we all know and love.

Kyle steals a quick glimpse of Jenny’s cleavage.

CUT TO:

Adam stands in the middle of the party with JOE.

JOE
Started chemo yet?

CUT TO:

Adam stands with TED.

TED
So what kind of cancer you got?

CUT TO:

Adam stands with SUSAN.

SUSAN
Want to know the secret to beating this thing?

CUT TO:

Adam stands with GREG.

GREG
My uncle had what you got...

CUT BACK TO:

Kyle’s with Jenny who’s still crying. After a beat, he rubs her arm.

KYLE
I liked to be touched when I cry.

CUT TO:

Phil embraces Adam.

PHIL
(sentimental)
I’m gonna miss you so much.

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
(uncomfortable)
I’m going to miss you too Phil.

Phil leans his head on Adam’s shoulder.

ADAM
Hey, Phil--?

PHIL
Yeah, buddy.

ADAM
I want you to know, I’m still going to finish that Mount Moha Moha story.

PHIL
Take as much time as you need...I can’t wait to hear it.

Phil continues to hold Adam.

INT. RACHAEL’S CAR - DAY

Rachael’s Prius, which is covered in various Save-the-World type bumper stickers, is parked in front of the hospital. Adam turns to her.

ADAM
I just wanted to say that you’ve been really great the past couple of weeks. Thanks for the ride. And breakfast.

RACHAEL
Thanks for saying that.

Adam opens the passenger side door, and as he gets out, Rachael yells after him.

RACHAEL
Adam.

He turns back and sticks his head in the door.

ADAM
You coming?

She shakes her head hesitantly.
RACHAEL
If it’s cool, I’ll just wait here.

ADAM
It’s going to take four hours.

RACHAEL
I know.

ADAM
You’re gonna sit here for four hours?

RACHAEL
Honey, I don’t want to mix that world and this world. It’s like an energy thing, you know?

ADAM
(confused)
Right.

She gives him a kiss.

RACHAEL
Good luck!

Rachael watches Adam as he walks off into the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A small group of patients, including Adam, sit in the waiting room.

GEORGE, a tall male nurse of Bahamian descent, calls out-

GEORGE
Adam Lerner.

Adam stands.

ADAM
Yep.

Adam follows George into the:

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The doors slowly close as they ride down into the bowel of the hospital.
INT. CANCER WARD - CONTINUOUS

Walking through the long ominous halls of the hospital basement, Adam passes dozens of sick patients who are being shuttled into Radiation Therapy, Chemotherapy and other various treatment rooms. A sick, fat, bald elderly woman coughs as she passes. Adam winces in disgust.

GEORGE (CONT’D)
This way my baby.

George leads Adam into a Chemotherapy Treatment room.

INT. HOSPITAL. CHEMOTHERAPY ROOM - LATER

Adam is seated in a plush leather chair where he’s hooked into a chemo drip. He's surrounded by three other patients. An 74 YEAR OLD MAN, who munches on macaroons, a MIDDLE AGED BALD MAN, and a BALD WOMAN, who knits as she listens to music on her headphones, a Zen look on her face.

ALAN (84), sitting next Adam, whispers to him:

ALAN
(to Adam)
Want a macaroon?

ADAM
Thanks. I’m alright.

Adam looks down to see that Alan is holding box of macaroons.

ALAN
(whispering)
There’s weed in ‘em.

Adam looks to the middle aged man, MITCH (55), who smiles at Adam as he pops a macaroon in his mouth.

ADAM
I don’t do weed.

ALAN
C’mon. Just get high with us!

Adam reluctantly eats a macaroon. Mitch leans over, stoned as hell.

MITCH
How old are you?

ADAM
Twenty-seven.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ALAN
That’s just the worst? A perfectly good youth wasted.

MITCH
Alan, stop it. Don’t listen to him, he’s just messing with you.

ALAN
(To Adam)
Listen to me, this cancer is bull shit. First your hair’s going to fall out, then your balls’ll shrink. And if that isn’t enough, your dick becomes a constant source of disappointment.

Alan and Mitch laugh like two teenagers.

ADAM
I got to tell you, I was really nervous about this whole cancer thing, and then I met you guys, and boy do I feel better.

Alan and Mitch laugh.

ALAN
(to Adam)
I’m Alan Lombardo: stage 3 lymphoma. Pleased to meet you.

MITCH
Mitch Barnett, metastatic prostate cancer.

ADAM
Oh, I’m Adam Lerner, schwannoma neurofibrosarcoma.

ALAN
What the fuck is that?

MITCH
Tough break. The more syllables, the worse it is.

Alan and Mitch laugh. Adam pops another macaroon in his mouth.

ADAM
These are really good.

(Continued)
CONTINUED: (2)

MITCH
Thanks, my wife made ‘em.

ADAM
(chewing)
...how strong are they?

ALAN
Stroooong.

Adam sits back and closes his eyes. Upbeat music swells...

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATER

Adam walks in SLOW MOTION down the same ominous corridor he entered through before. Only it’s no longer ominous to him. He wears a big huge goofy smirk on his face as he passes:

--a SICK MAN on a gurney
--an OLD LADY wheezing
--a BODY BAG being carted on a gurney
--a FAMILY crying

Adam stops, stares at all the misery around and laughs...

INT. ADAM’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Adam jolts out of bed. His clothes are drenched in sweat. He quickly runs into the bathroom and throws up. A lot.

Rachael wakes up, and knows she should go to him, but can’t. Instead, she faintly calls out-

RACHAEL
Adam, you okay?

Adam says nothing, he just slumps over the toilet seat and throws up again.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Adam looks and feels terrible. His head pounds, causing him to rub it. Katherine sits in the chair next to him. Her tone is a little rigid - masking her lack of experience.

KATHERINE
So how are you feeling after your first treatment?
ADAM
It feels pretty bad, gotta say. My head is killing me.

KATHERINE
(empathetic)
Yeah I know. From what I understand it can be pretty rough. But it will pass.

She pats Adam on the arm. Her intention is to set Adam at ease, but the act just makes him more uncomfortable. Startled, he backs away.

ADAM
Uh...huh.

KATHERINE
I think it’s important to remember that these side effects are very normal.

ADAM
Good. I’d hate to think I was special in any way.

KATHERINE
(nervous)
That’s not what I meant. I was just trying to reassure you.

ADAM
(terse)
Well, thanks.

KATHERINE
I’m sensing some anger. Which is good.

ADAM
I’m not angry.
(beat)
Why is that good?

KATHERINE
Because you’re expressing yourself. You’re dealing with a really serious illness. That brings up a lot of emotions.

ADAM
You’re trying to make me freak out, right? That’s the goal here?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

KATHERINE
I’m not trying to make you freak out. I just want you to get in touch with what’s going on inside. And if you’re angry--

ADAM
(angry)
I’m not angry...Let’s do the relaxation thing... Can we do that? I want to hear some sitars. Go to my happy place and feel the warm of beam of light. Can we do that?

Katherine’s a little shaken by Adam’s outburst. He feels bad - although that outburst did feel kind of good.

KATHERINE
I see...

ADAM (CONT’D)
(beat)
I'm sorry...I was being an asshole. I didn’t mean to say that.

Katherine regains her footing.

KATHERINE
I don’t need you to take care of me. (smiles)
I’m trying to take care of you.

Adam nods, hesitant. Katherine exhales and scribbles on a piece of paper:

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Listen, there’s a few books I’d like you to read. A lot of people find them really helpful. You don’t have to read them cover-to-cover. Just take a look to see if they resonate.

She pats her hand on Adam’s shoulder.

ADAM
I’m sorry, are you going to keep touching me like that?

KATHERINE
What? This?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

Katherine puts her hand back on Adam’s shoulder. Adam pulls away.

ADAM
Yeah. That.

KATHERINE
(frustrated)
I’m trying to help you feel more at ease.

Adam imitates Katherine’s touching.

ADAM
That’s supposed to make me feel more at ease? It’s like being slapped by a sea otter.

KATHERINE
Touching promotes trust. It’s one of the key ways that hospital practitioners can help patients feel more secure in stressful situations.

ADAM
That’s, um, it’s not -- comforting. Sorry.

KATHERINE
Really, sea otter? Is this better?

Katherine tries again. This time it’s too gentle.

ADAM
Now it’s just getting creepy.

INT. ADAM’S BATHROOM - DAY

Adam stands in front of the mirror. Kyle stands behind him, tying a towel around his neck.

KYLE
I think you’re making a big, big mistake. Please don’t do this.

ADAM
What are you talking about?

KYLE
What if you have some weird Gorbachev bird shit thing on your head?

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
I thought you liked this idea?

KYLE
I liked the idea in theory. Now that we’re standing here about to do it, I’m a little worried you’re going to look like fucking Michael Stipe.

ADAM
We have to do it.

KYLE
I’m not going to do it!

ADAM
You said you would!

KYLE
I changed my mind - because if it looks bad, you’ll blame me every time you see your weird screwed up bald head.

Adam grabs the PAIR OF CLIPPERS and goes in for the shave. He pauses.

ADAM
Wait...what do you use this for?

Adam’s eyes widen.

KYLE
You know, my body.

ADAM
When was the last time you cleaned it?

Kyle wipes the clippers on his shirt.

KYLE
Right now.

Adam takes the clippers and proceeds to shave his head. Kyle covers his eyes in horror.

KYLE
Fuck! Dude! Holy Shit!

After a beat, Kyle grabs the trimmers and joins in.

Once finished, Adam looks at his bald head in the mirror.
CONTINUED: (2)

ADAM
It looks okay, right?

KYLE
No. It looks really weird.

ADAM
Why didn’t we go to a barber?

KYLE
That would have been a much better idea -- if we had paid someone to do it.

ADAM
Instead of using your balls trimmer--

KYLE
And I never wash them, ever. And it’s not my balls, it’s my asshole....I’m joking...

ADAM
You’re not joking.

KYLE
No, I’m not.

INT. HOSPITAL. CHEMOTHERAPY ROOM - DAY

Adam, Alan and Mitch sit in their chairs, attached to their CHEMO DRIPS. Adam looks SLIGHTLY WORN.

MITCH
How come we’ve never met Rachael?

ALAN
Yeah. What the fuck?

ADAM
Hospitals kind of freak her out.

Alan and Mitch look at each other and groan.

ADAM
What?

MITCH
(being delicate)
Well Adam, no one likes going to the hospital. That’s not why people go--
Adam looks at him.

Adam

No, you don’t get it. She doesn’t want the negative mixing with the positive...it’s an energy thing.

Alan

Sounds to me like a bullshit thing.

Adam takes this in.

Adam

You guys can meet her after. She’s picking me up. I’m sure she’d like to meet you all...She’s really great, you guys.

Alan

(not convinced)

Okay.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DUSK

Adam, standing next to Mitch and Alan, is on his cell phone.

Adam

Hey it’s me again, just checking to see if you’re close...Talk to you soon.

He hangs up the phone.

Alan

Sure you don’t need a ride, kid?

Adam

Oh no, she’s gonna come. I’m sure she’s just caught up with something. You guys should head out, you can meet her next time.

Alan

Yeah. Sure.

Alan and Mitch give him a sympathetic look at Adam and then walk off together.
EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Adam’s seated on the steps out front. He looks exhausted. Rachael’s Prius speeds into the parking lot and stops in front of him.

RACHAEL
Adam! I know. I’m sorry. Please don’t be mad.

ADAM
I’ve been calling you for an hour.

RACHAEL
My cell phone died.

ADAM
You don’t have to do this, you know.

RACHAEL
(remorseful)
I’m sorry. I am. I know, I fucked up.

ADAM
I even gave you an out.

RACHAEL
I’m doing my best...Can we just go home?

Adam gets in the car, pissed, and they drive off.

INT. BOOKSTORE. SELF HELP SECTION - DAY

Adam and Kyle browse through shelves of books. Adam consults Katherine’s list of books. Kyle grabs the book, and rather than hand it to Adam, he reads the AUTHOR’S BIO on the back jacket of the book.

KYLE
(in excitement)
“Kasper Schlegel is an American ‘medical intuitive’ and ‘mystic psychiatrist’”. ‘Mystic psychiatrist’? What is he like Frodo’s psychiatrist? Why would you buy that?

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
Because my therapist said I should -
(shrugs)
I don’t know.

Kyle ditches the book and picks up one on Mardi Gras.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Let’s go to Mardi Gras!

ADAM
I have a girlfriend, why would I go to Mardi Gras?

KYLE
Oh yeah, your girlfriend, I forgot. Why go to Mardi Gras when you could be here, not getting hand jobs and blow jobs?

From across the store, Kyle notices CLAIRE (30), an attractive employee stacking books.

KYLE
(frustrated)
Well if you’re not going to take advantage of this, then I am.

Kyle yanks the list of books from Adam and crosses to Claire. He throws on a charming smile.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Hi-

Noticing Claire’s name tag.

KYLE
Claire. Kyle. Could you help me find a few books, please?

CLAIRE
Sure.

Kyle hands Claire the list of book titles. She reads.

CLAIRE
Oh. (Concerned)
Are these for you?...I’m sorry it’s none of my business.

(CONTINUED)
KYLE
No, thank God. Actually, they’re for my friend. The little guy in the hat.

Kyle nods towards Adam across the room.

KYLE
He’s my buddy, he’s really, really sick.

Claire shoots Adam a look - the way one looks at a dying puppy. Adam looks on in confusion.

CLAIRE
How awful.

KYLE
Yeah. He has ‘Type Four Back Cancer’ - not cool.

CLAIRE
Poor guy.

KYLE
I know. It’s been really hard.
(Feigning sadness)
But I don’t focus on that, I focus on the positive, by taking him out to book stores. I like to take him for walks. Plays. While he has time.

CLAIRE
That’s so nice of you.

Claire leads Kyle off to a stack of books.

INT/EXT. BOOKSTORE - LATER

As Adam and Kyle exit the bookstore, they pass Claire.

KYLE
(to Claire)
I’ll see you tonight.

Then as they exit, and walk along the sidewalk, Kyle can’t help but boast of his achievement; rubbing it in Adam’s face.

KYLE
Thank you, Claire! Nice to meet you, Claire!
INT. ADAM’S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT


ADAM
What, Mom?

DIANE’S VOICE
Jesus, what took so long to pick up? Are you okay?

ADAM
I’m fine. I didn’t hear the phone ring.

DIANE’S VOICE
Do you need anything? I was about to go to the Rite-Aid for your father...You want me to come over? I can bring dinner. I can make macaroni and cheese.

ADAM
Mom, I haven’t liked macaroni and cheese since I was like ten. (softens) It’s all right, Rachael’s going to come over later.

DIANE’S VOICE
You sure?

ADAM
Yes. I’m totally fine...

In WIDE SHOT, Adam sits alone in his house. Seemingly not fine.

ADAM
...Don’t worry so much.

DIANE
All right. If you say so. I love you.

ADAM
Love you too.
INT. ART GALLERY - NIGHT

A hip gallery opening. Kyle and Claire have drinks and stare at awful art.

KYLE
This one is really cool!

CLaire
(beat)
My friend did this, actually.

KYLE
(laughs)
No way! Your friend is a real talent.

Claire moves on to another piece.

CLaire
So what do you think of this one?

Kyle turns and looks.

KYLE
Uh oh! I think I have a new favorite!...This is genius...It’s making me a little emotional.

Just then Kyle sees Rachael across the crowded room.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Of course, I should have known I’d see her. We’re at a fucking gallery opening.

CLaire
Who is she?

KYLE
You know my best friend, the one who’s sick? That’s his pretentious girlfriend.

They follow Rachael as she walks up to a WHITE GUY WITH DREADLOCKS and flirts with him.

CLaire
She doesn’t look like someone’s girlfriend.

Just then Rachael gives the guy a passionate, deep kiss.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

KYLE
Fuck! I knew it!

The kiss goes on long enough for Kyle to take out his cell phone and snap a picture.

KYLE (CONT’D)
(ecstatic)
I nailed that cunt!
(to Claire)
Can you believe it?!

Claire walks away, disgusted. Kyle quickly follows after her.

KYLE
Sorry – I – uh, don’t usually use words like that.

INT. ADAM’S LIVING ROOM – LATER

Adam is asleep on the couch when he hears Rachael come in.

ADAM
(sleepy)
Hi.

RACHAEL
Didn’t mean to wake you.

ADAM
(reaching for her)
Come here.

RACHAEL
Oh, I’m so tired. Can we just get into bed?

She holds out a hand to help him up just as Kyle opens the front door.

KYLE
Hey! Surprise! It’s Kyle! What’s happening, guys?

He couldn’t be in a better mood.

ADAM
(confused)
Hey Kyle.

KYLE (CONT’D)
...bad time? Am I interrupting something?
ADAM
Well it’s midni-

KYLE (CONT’D)
Sorry, I was in the neighborhood. I had a date with Claire, the bookstore girl. It did not go well, due to a lack of chemistry and I think an overuse of profanity on my part. But, whilst on my date, I ran into - Rachael.

ADAM
Oh yeah?

Kyle pulls out his cell phone.

KYLE (CONT’D)
I would like to present...

Kyle holds the phone to Adam’s face.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Exhibit...whore!

On the camera screen is a very grainy picture of Rachael kissing the guy at the gallery.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Look! Look at it!!! That’s Rachael! And that’s a fucking dirty Jesus looking motherfucker, and they’re kissing! I did it!
(to Rachael)
I FUCKING NAILED YOU!!! I’ve hated you for months! And now I have evidence that you suck as a person!

Kyle looks at Adam and Rachael’s silent faces.

KYLE
Nothing?
(beat)
You two should probably talk about this...

He steps into the kitchen.

ADAM
You’re cheating on me!?

RACHAEL
No! I mean – yes but-
CONTINUED: (2)

ADAM
Seriously?

RACHAEL
(coming apart)
Adam - you have no idea how hard it’s been! I don’t know how to do this, and it’s been so stressful, and you’ve been so sick, and shit, you’re the one who told me Kyle keeps using your cancer to get girls! Why should I be the bad guy?

KYLE (O.S.)
Because you’re his girlfriend, and you cheated on him while he has cancer, you fucking lunatic!

RACHAEL
(ignoring Kyle)
Adam. We had problems long before you got sick. And then when you got sick, I didn’t know what to do.

ADAM
So why are you here? Why do you spend every night in my bed?

RACHAEL
(quietly)
I don’t know. I didn’t want to abandon you.
(beat)
Let’s go to bed, we can talk about this tomorrow.

Speechless, Adam sits on the couch: humiliated, heartbroken, ruined. Kyle re-enters.

KYLE
I can’t stay in the kitchen any longer.
(to Rachael)
You got to get out of here! You’re making this way too uncomfortable for everyone. Just leave!

Kyle leads her to the door. She resists.

RACHAEL
Adam, we’ll talk tomorrow.
KYLE
No you won’t! Why would you talk tomorrow?

RACHAEL
Adam, I care about you...Adam.

KYLE
You are reprehensible!

RACHAEL
(to Kyle)
Will you shut up?!
(to Adam)
Kyle doesn’t have your best interest in mind.

KYLE
I don’t? Cause I’m pretty sure I’m not the one who got caught making out with some disgusting hippie.

RACHAEL
Fuck you!

KYLE
You’re disgusting!

Rachael slams the door and leaves.

INT. ADAM’S BEDROOM – NIGHT
Adam lies in bed. He looks over at Rachael’s empty spot. He inhales, feeling very alone.

Just then Skeletor jumps up and lies down next to him, practically upending the bed. Adam looks at him, pets him.

EXT. STREET – NEXT DAY
Adam and Kyle are out walking Skeletor.

KYLE
This is the best thing that could have happened to you.

ADAM
Why?
KYLE
You deserve better, way better. If I was your girlfriend, I’d be baking you cookies and blowing you every thirty minutes...

ADAM
What kind of cookies?

KYLE
Any kind.

ADAM
Would you make me Snickerdoodle cookies?

KYLE
I’d bathe you in Snickerdoodle.

ADAM
This conversation is making me nauseous.

KYLE
Actually?

ADAM
No, that was a joke.

Just then an attractive girl, BODI, walking a dog approaches Adam.

BODI
Hi! What’s his name?

ADAM
Skeletor.

BODI
This is Marlowe.

KYLE
Why hello Marlowe!

BODI
You guys live around here?

KYLE
We sure do.

Bodi bends over and pets Skeletor.
CONTINUED: (2)

BODI
I love greyhounds.
(to Skeletor)
Helllllooo. You’re a good ol’ boy.

Nervous, Adam suddenly gets very protective of Skeletor.

ADAM
We should go, he doesn’t like the cold.
(to Bodi)
Nice to meet you.

BODI
Nice to meet you!

Adam pulls Skeletor away. The girl continues on her way.

KYLE
You could’ve fucked that girl, you realize that, don’t you?

ADAM
No one wants to have sex with me. Look at me - I look like Voldemort.

KYLE
You could’ve asked her to go on a doggie date, whipped out the cancer card, fuck the shit out of her!

Adam thinks-

ADAM
You really think a girl’s gonna go for me just because I have cancer?

KYLE
I know it. Help me, help you get laid.

ADAM
You think that would work?

KYLE
It would totally work!

Adam thinks more.

ADAM
Let’s do it.
INT. BAR - NIGHT

The bar is loud and packed with Seattle hipsters. With no room to move, Adam and Kyle stand pressed against the bar counter. The room is hot and Adam’s knit hat is causing him to sweat uncontrollably. Adam scans the crowd – this is definitely not his scene. A very ATTRACTIVE WOMAN leans into the bar.

KYLE
Lot’s of hot girls. Good odds tonight. Ok, over there, blue shirt? Go for it.

ADAM
Yeah?

KYLE
Just talk, spark up a conversation.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #1
(to the bartender)
One PBR.

Adam leans over to the woman, yelling above the music:

ADAM
How’s it going?

The woman doesn’t even look at him. Kyle leans in.

KYLE
Get into the cancer thing faster.

ADAM
Faster?

KYLE
It’s your hook man.

ADAM
So that’s the first thing I say? ‘Hello, I have cancer.’

KYLE
It’s what sets you apart. You’re sympathetic. Just try it.

ADAM
OK.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #2 (30) squeezes in next to him. She drunkenly bobs her head to the song as she orders a drink.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Adam reluctantly looks over at the woman.

    ADAM
    (to the woman)
    I love this song.

    ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #2
    Totally.

    ADAM
    I have cancer.

Kyle pulls Adam away as the girl looks on, weirded out.

    KYLE
    I was wrong, I was wrong. Doesn’t work like that. It doesn’t sound cool.

INT. BAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Kyle’s talking to two girls in their mid twenties, ALLISON and JACKIE. Adam stands alone in the distance.

    KYLE
    I’m Kyle, how’s it going?

    ALLISON
    Allison.

    JACKIE
    Jackie.

Kyle shakes their hands.

    KYLE
    Allison, Jackie. It’s my birthday today.

    ALLISON
    Happy birthday!

The girls raise their beers and toast Kyle.

    ALLISON
    Cheers!

    KYLE
    I’m here with my buddy actually.

Kyle points out Adam.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACKIE
The skinny one?

KYLE
One second.

Kyle rushes over to Adam.

KYLE
I met two girls over there.

ADAM
Are they nice?

KYLE
They are, very nice.

ADAM
Let’s talk to them.

KYLE
Yeah. Take the hat off.

ADAM
What? No.

KYLE
Take it off, take it off.

ADAM
I’m not taking it off.

INT. BAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

The bar’s less crowded now. Kyle and Adam are seated in a booth across from Allison and Jackie.

ADAM
What do you all do?

JACKIE
I just designed the website for the Swiffer--

ADAM
(excited)
Are you serious? Sorry, I’m a fan. I love the Swiffer! I use it for everything. Sweeping, mopping -- well that’s it really, so not everything.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:
The girls looks bored. Adam looks at Kyle out of the corner of his eye-

    KYLE
    (mouths)
    Do it.

Adam shakes him off.

    ADAM
    I just got a dog and he’s always shedding, and with the Swiffer all I have to do is attach the wet cloth and boom, I’m done.

    JACKIE
    Oh, I love dogs. What’s his name?

    ADAM
    Skeletor.

Adam looks back at Kyle then reluctantly pulls off his hat, revealing his bald head.

    ADAM
    It’s kind of warm in here, isn’t it?

    JACKIE
    (stunned)
    Oh wow -- you’re bald.

    ADAM
    Oh no, it’s just cancer.

    ALLISON
    Cancer?

    ADAM
    But don’t worry, I’m not contagious.

    JACKIE
    Oh my god, what kind of cancer is it?

    ADAM
    Spinal.

    KYLE
    It’s in his spine.
CONTINUED: (2)

JACKIE
Spinal? I didn’t even know that was possible. How’d you get that?

ADAM
I don’t know, bad mattress?

She laughs. Adam and Kyle look at each other. They’re in.

KYLE
He still has a sense of humor! It’s inspirational!

JACKIE
Can I touch it? Is that weird?

KYLE
You can do more than touch it!

The girls rub Adam’s bald head.

JACKIE
This is a very nice head.

KYLE
Let’s rub it together.

Kyle reaches out, also rubbing Adam’s head.

KYLE
You know, it’ll grow back if you rub it enough.

EXT. HOT DOG STAND – NIGHT

Adam slumps against a building, as the Jackie and Allison, now clearly drunk, order food. Kyle approaches.

KYLE
How you doing? You OK?

ADAM
Please let me go to sleep. All I want is sleep.

KYLE
No! Do not close your eyes. You’ve got to keep going! All we have to do is stay awake until they decide to go to sleep, because if we’re there when they do, sex will happen.

(beat)
(MORE)
CONTINUED: KYLE (cont'd)
We’re so close... Don’t waste my time, man!

Adam’s eyes flutter.

ADAM
I’m so tired. Can you give me an approximate time I’ll be having sex?

KYLE
In ninety-five minutes...

ADAM
I can’t wait that long.

KYLE
That’s how long it’ll take!

The girls return with two jumbo hot dogs:

JACKIE
You guys want to hit up Lush? I know the DJ--

ADAM
I think I’m actually done for the night. I’m pretty exhausted.
   (feigning)
   The chemo really wears you out.

Jackie looks at him, disappointed. Kyle is incredulous.

ADAM
   (beat)
   But, I have some really potent medical weed if you want to come over.

ALLISON
   That sounds cool.

KYLE
   Great idea! Let’s get a cab!

Psyched beyond belief, Kyle nudges Adam.

KYLE
   (whispers to Adam)
   That was pimp! Very impressive.

Adam smiles at Kyle.
INT. ADAM’S BEDROOM. NIGHT

Jackie and Adam lie in bed. She’s on top of him, eyes closed SCREWING HIS BRAINS OUT. Adam looks miserable. With each thrust, he winces in pain.

JACKIE
Am I hurting you?

ADAM
No.

JACKIE
Are you sure?

ADAM
Actually, yeah. It does--

JACKIE
Sorry, I’ll just get off you.

Jackie rolls off him. They lie next to each other awkwardly.

INT. ADAM’S KITCHEN- DAWN

In the rising light of dawn, Adam, in boxers and t-shirt, pours himself some water from a Brita. He puts it back in the fridge. He turns, enters the

INT. ADAM’S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kyle and Allison lie on the couch, both naked under a blanket, watching a gratuitously violent film on TV.

KYLE
I wonder what the machine gun budget on this film was.

ALLISON
Can we watch something else?

KYLE
No, I want to see how it ends.

Adam stands in the doorway. Kyle locks eyes with him. Adam’s not happy or sad - just lost. Kyle forces a smile. Adam shrugs and walks back into the bedroom.

MONTAGE VARIOUS DOCTOR’S APPOINTMENT

--CU of a light being shone in Adam’s face.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

--CU of a doctor’s hands pressed against Adam’s lymph nodes.
--CU of a tongue depressor probing Adam’s mouth.
--CU as a nurse slides the weight along a scale.
--CU of blood being drawn from Adam’s forearm.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Katherine walks to her car. She notices Adam sitting alone at the BUS STOP.

KATHERINE
Adam?

ADAM
(embarrassed)
Oh hey.

KATHERINE
What are you doing?

ADAM
Waiting for the bus.

KATHERINE
(beat)
I’m on my way home right now - want a ride?

ADAM
Oh, I’m used to the bus, but thank you.

KATHERINE
I can’t let you take the bus.

ADAM
I live kind of far away.

KATHERINE
Won’t take no for an answer.

INT. KATHERINE’S CAR - MOMENTS LATER (DAY)

Adam is seated in the front seat as Katherine drives. The car is filthy - it’s littered with papers, magazines, food wrappers, etc. Katherine’s body is pressed all the way up against the steering wheel with her eyes fixed on the road.
CONTINUED:

KATHERINE
Sorry about the mess. I’m not very good at getting rid of things.

ADAM
Yeah, I can see.

KATHERINE
Let me know if you need me to pull over...I know that the chemotherapy can make you...you know...nauseous.

Silent beat as they both stare out the windshield, unsure what to say.

KATHERINE
So, you don’t have a car?

ADAM
No. Don’t even have a license.

KATHERINE
Why not?

ADAM
It’s incredibly dangerous.
(beat)
It’s the fifth leading cause of death. Only a couple after cancer.

KATHERINE
Still. The bus. The bus after chemo.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Rachael usually drives me -- but we broke up.

KATHERINE
What? When did this happen?

ADAM
A few days ago. She kind of cheated on me.

KATHERINE
Oh. Adam. Do you want to talk about it?

Adam’s about to answer when...

ADAM
No. Nuh-uh. No therapy. You are giving me this ride as a friend.

(CONTINUED)
KATHERINE
Adam--

ADAM
(looking around)
You know what we could talk about?
All of this mess. Are you aware of the bacteria that’s probably living in here?

KATHERINE
Adam, your girlfriend cheated on you--
(beat)
I know what’s it’s like. Break ups suck, I just broke up with someone a few months ago.

ADAM
I’m sorry.

KATHERINE (CONT’D)
It’s fine. I ended it.

ADAM
How long were you two together?

KATHERINE
Three months --
(uncomfortable)
And we shouldn’t be talking about this.

ADAM
Why not? You know every thing about me.

KATHERINE
I just don’t think it’s appropriate for me to be telling you all this personal stuff. The whole therapist/patient relationship doesn’t work if you know all my problems.

She smiles, awkward.

KATHERINE
Admittedly, I do check his Facebook page everyday to see if he’s dating someone new. So pathetic--
(beat)
Probably shouldn’t have said that. We can just listen to the radio.

(CONTINUED)
Adam thinks for a beat. Then looks at the floor, looks at the pile of garbage at his feet.

ADAM
(abrupt)
Stop the car.

Katherine looks at Adam nervously.

KATHERINE
Why? What’s wrong? Are you okay?

ADAM
Just stop the car.

Katherine stops the car. Adam grabs a handful of her garbage and gets out.

KATHERINE
What are you doing?

ADAM
I can’t handle all this mess.

KATHERINE
Are you serious?

Adam tosses the garbage in a dumpster and comes back to the car for more. Katherine laughs as she gets out and joins him.

KATHERINE
Wait, no, not that. That’s my dinner.

ADAM
Which one?

KATHERINE
This.

Katherine grabs a food container from Adam’s hands.

ADAM
You’re going to eat that?

KATHERINE
Don’t judge me.

They leave Katherine’s dinner behind, then throw out the rest of the garbage.
EXT. ADAM'S HOUSE - DUSK

Adam and Katherine arrive at Adam's house.

ADAM
Well, this is me. Thanks for the ride.

KATHERINE
No problem. Thanks for cleaning my car.

Adam looks at his house. The lights are out. He’s really not in the mood to be alone. He gives out a deep sigh and then gets out of his car.

ADAM (CONT'D)
I’ll see you next week.

KATHERINE
You’ll be all right? By yourself?

ADAM
Yeah. Totally. I’m fine.

He gets out of the car and walks away. Katherine looks after him, with concern. She rolls down her window.

KATHERINE
Hey--

Adam turns around.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
I want you to have my cell number. Call me if you ever need anything.

Katherine scribbles her cell phone on a piece of paper and hands it to Adam.

ADAM
(teasing)
Did I just score your digits?

Katherine turns red.

KATHERINE
(uncomfortable)
No.

ADAM
That was a joke.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

KATHERINE
(awkward)
That’s fine. Jokes make for a good
coping mechanism...This is only for
emergencies.
(beat)
Or if you need someone to talk
to...Good night.

ADAM
Good night.

INT. ADAM'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Adam and Kyle smoke a mini-bong bubbler as they watch “Planet
Earth” on a brand new 50” flat screen TV. Skeletor is asleep
on the floor.

KYLE
I thought the desert was crazy. The
ocean’s fucking nuts, man.

ADAM
I like the trees.

KYLE
The trees are going to be bananas.

There’s a knock at the door. Too engrossed in the TV, neither
guy moves. Rachael pops her head in the door. She looks at
Adam nervously as he puts on his hat, covering his bald head.

RACHAEL
Hey -- I’m just here to pick up my
things and then I’ll be out of your
way.

Adam does his best to play it cool.

ADAM
I put all of your things in a box.
It’s outside the door on the porch.

KYLE
Walked right past it.

RACHAEL
Oh. Okay. Well then I guess I’ll be
on my way.
(then noticing)
Are you smoking weed?

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
Yeah.

RACHAEL
Since when do you smoke?

ADAM
It’s medicinal.

RACHAEL
(impressed)
You got a prescription for medicinal marijuana?

KYLE
No, I got a prescription for medicinal marijuana, Adam was too afraid.

RACHAEL
What’s wrong with you?

KYLE
I have night blindness. Rods and cones are eschew, and weed fixes it.

Rachael grins and rolls her eyes. She notices the new TV, which has replaced her painting on the wall. The painting sits stashed in the corner. Sadness sweeps across her face.

RACHAEL
(disappointed)
You took my painting down.

KYLE
It didn’t really fit there with the new TV.

RACHAEL
Adam, can I talk to you outside for a second please?

EXT. ADAM'S PORCH – MOMENTS LATER

Adam and Rachael exit Adam’s house and sit on the porch stoop.

RACHAEL
So...how are you feeling?

ADAM
Pretty awesome.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RACHAEL
I wanted to tell you I’m sorry.

ADAM
(contrite)
I’m sorry too, I know this wasn’t easy for you. And I’m sorry I didn’t come to your opening, it’s only because I hate you so much.

RACHAEL
(embarrassed)
I’m glad you didn’t come. It was a complete disaster. No one bought any of my paintings.

ADAM
(smiles)
Really?...But they’re...so...great.

RACHAEL
Really?

ADAM
Yeah, you’ll get it next time.
She hugs him.

RACHAEL
I don’t want to break up. I can be better. We can start over again.

She kisses him.

RACHAEL
I’ll just be better.

He kisses back. After a beat.

ADAM
You should go.

She continues kissing him. He continues kissing back. He struggles to pull back, but does. He stares at her, shakes his head-

ADAM (CONT’D)
Please...I need you to get the fuck off of my porch now.

Rachael looks at Adam, pissed, hurt, ego shattered. She picks up her belongings, turns and walks toward her car.

(CONTINUED)
Adam notices Rachael’s painting still on the porch.

        ADAM (CONT’D)
        Your painting.

        RACHAEL
        I made it for you.

Rachael continues to her car. A beat. Adam then gets up off the porch and walks inside.

EXT. ADAM’S BACKYARD - DAY

TIGHT ON: Rachael’s Painting.

Adam and Kyle are hammering it to a tree. From a box of various supplies, they pull out the following items and destroy the painting: kitchen knives, screw driver, garlic press, a Molotov cocktail made out of hair-spray, eggs, orange juice, shaving cream, and an ax.

Adam and Kyle look down at the destroyed painting.

        ADAM
        It actually looks a lot better.

        KYLE
        It’s not that bad.

        ADAM
        Yeah, we could hang this up.

EXT. MITCH’S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - DAY

Adam, Kyle, Mitch and Alan laugh hysterically as they smoke a joint.

        ADAM
        (to Alan)
        You were around before TV, right?
        Because I want to hear about the radio...They talk about people just sitting around and listening to the radio--

        ALAN
        Glued to the radio.

        ADAM
        What did you listen to?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ALAN
“Little Orphan Annie”.

KYLE
What did you look at when you were listening, nothing?

ALAN
It engaged everything.

ADAM
I’m doing a radio piece on a volcano.

KYLE
I do radio I think people will actually like. Mostly stuff about food...Like hamburger. People like listening to that versus “Coming up next, a volcano!”.

MITCH
You know what I’d do? I’d turn on the TV.

ADAM
It’s not the same.

Just then, an attractive fifty-something woman, BERNIE, carries out a tray of wheatgrass.

MITCH
Thank you, sweetheart. Bernie just blended up some wheatgrass. Beware, it’s like drinking liquid lawn cuttings.
(beat)
Oh, Bernie, this is Adam.

ADAM
Hi. This is my friend Kyle.

Kyle takes a sip of wheatgrass and nearly gags.

BERNIE
(re: wheatgrass)
You like it?

KYLE
(in disgust)
It’s not good.

Bernie smiles, amused by Kyle, then turns back to Adam.

(CONTINUED)
BERNIE
So, you’re Adam? From the way Mitch described you I thought you were much older.

KYLE
He was eighty-five years old when he was three.

Mitch looks at his wife adoringly and takes her hand.

MITCH
Come here.

Mitch pulls her close her for a kiss. Adam looks at them, envious, a thin smile on his face.

INT. KATHERINE’S OFFICE – CONTINUOUS

Adam walks in, flustered and annoyed as he talks to his mom on the phone. He sits down -- wrapping up the conversation.

ADAM
(annoyed)
Mom it’s not a virus!...No, it’s the screen saver.

Adam mouths sorry to Katherine.

ADAM (CONT’D)
...Please, I’m telling you, just move the mouse...mom I can’t talk now. I have an appointment. Yes, right now. I’m standing inside the office as we speak...I don’t know what I’m making for dinner...something, I’ll figure it out.

Adam looks at Katherine, embarrassed.

ADAM (CONT’D)
...Mom, I really have to go. OK, hanging up the phone now. OK, I know...Love you too.

Adam hangs up the phone. Takes a deep breath.

ADAM (CONT’D)
Sorry about that.
CONTINUED:

KATHERINE
Don’t worry about it. I have parents too.

Adam grimaces.

ADAM
Do yours give you migraines?

KATHERINE
My parents are something I would talk about with my therapist.

ADAM
Really?

KATHERINE
Yeah, we could role play. I can be your mom.

ADAM
(repulsed)
Oh God, no. That’s disgusting.

KATHERINE
Why is that disgusting?

Adam sighs.

ADAM
My mom is a crazy person who worries incessantly. Honestly, it annoys the shit out of me. And it’s not helpful...I can’t talk to her.

Katherine thinks - connects the dots in her head.

KATHERINE
So now she has a husband she can’t talk to, and a son who won’t talk to her.

Adam’s taken aback by Katherine’s bluntness.

ADAM
Well, yeah, I guess.

KATHERINE
I mean, aren’t you being kind of a dick?

ADAM
I’m sorry? Is that a medical term?
CONTINUED: (2)

KATHERINE
Your parents are who they are, you
can’t change that. The only thing
you can change is how you choose to
deal with them.

ADAM
Aren’t you supposed to subtly
manipulate me into being aware of
my faults? Not call me out.

KATHERINE
I think we’re beyond that point.
You did clean my car.

Katherine looks at Adam with tenderness, grabs hold of his
shoulder, squeezing it.

KATHERINE (CONT’D)
(frustrated)
It’s weird, isn’t it? Shouldn’t
have done it. Shouldn’t have gone
for it.

ADAM
No, it was good, it was good.

KATHERINE
No, it wasn’t. It’s so forced.

ADAM
Here try again, I was too far. Come
in a little closer.

He inches closer to her, and sticks out his shoulder.

KATHERINE
I’m going to make it real natural.

Katherine places a hand on him, testing.

ADAM
That was better.

They share a smile. After a beat Katherine looks down - self
consciously.

INT. HOSPITAL. CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENT ROOM - MORNING

Adam sits down next to Alan, but notices there’s no Mitch.

NURSE
You’re all set.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ADAM
Where’s Mitch?

ALAN
(somber)
He died last night.

ADAM
But we were just with him, what happened?

ALAN
(shrugs)
What does it matter, his heart stopped.

They can’t look at one another.

EXT. LINDEN CEMETERY - DAY
Kyle’s car drives up the cemetery’s long driveway.

EXT. LINDEN CEMETERY - DAY
Dressed for a funeral, Adam and Kyle walk through the grounds passing hundreds of tombstones along the way. Adam is morose; Kyle is trying to cheer him up.

EXT. MITCH’S FUNERAL - DAY
Adam, Kyle and Alan stand next to a MINISTER as he speaks. Bernie stands in front of them, trying to hold it together. We PUSH IN on Adam, as the Minister’s voice recedes into the background.

INT. ADAM’S LIVING ROOM - DAY
Adam lights a joint. He turns on the TV. Matlock appears on his flat screen TV. Adam flips the channels. And finally to the NEWS -- BREAKING NEWS: MT. MOHA MOHA ERUPTING. Adam watches the volcano erupt with bittersweet sadness.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY
Adam lies on the bed of an MRI machine. His body is slowly drawn into the scanner.
INT. HOSPITAL. KATHERINE’S OFFICE – DAY

Adam lies on the couch staring at the ceiling.

ADAM
I’m just beginning to realize that I'm probably going to die.

KATHERINE
Did something happen? Did you get the MRI results back?

ADAM
No, but look at me, I'm not getting any better. I look in the mirror and it’s pretty obvious.

(beat)
Mitch died, Alan’s probably going to die, and so am I.

KATHERINE
You don’t know that...A lot of what you’re feeling is from the treatment.

ADAM
Look. Thank you, but you don’t need to try and cheer me up. I mean, in the end, what does it really matter anyway? We’re all going to die. You’re just going to die, hopefully a lot later than I am.

Not expecting this turn from Adam, Katherine’s demeanor stiffens – she looks anxious.

KATHERINE
Adam, okay, what you’re going through - is something called “The Alienation Phase”...And I know that you’re feeling helpless inside, but you should know that this is totally normal for someone in your situation.

ADAM
(annoyed)
I’m sorry, but, I’m going to have to call you on that. It’s bullshit. That’s what everyone has been saying. “You’ll get better” and “It’ll be fine”.

(MORE)
I don’t know why everyone is so fucking scared to say it. “You’re dying, dude”...It makes it worse.

KATHERINE
(speechless)
Adam, I’m here to help you.

ADAM
Why? So that when you’re at some dinner party in 30 years, you can tell some inspiring anecdote about you coached your third patient through the alienation phase, and helped him feel “normal” right before he died.

KATHERINE
Adam...I...I’m sorry - if - I said the wrong things. I-

ADAM
This isn’t working for me.

Adam leaves. Katherine is overcome with a sense of failure.

INT. ADAM’S HOUSE - DAY
The place is a mess. Adam dials the phone.

KYLE (V.O.)
Not around. Leave a message.

ADAM
Hey man, it’s Adam. I was wondering if you could give me a ride to my doctor’s appointment today...It’s the big one.

Adam hangs up and hesitates. After a beat, he dials again.

Adam holds the phone away from his ear and cringes. A pang of regret runs through his body.

DIANE
Oh my God, what’s wrong?

ADAM (CONT’D)
Hi Mom.
INT. DR ROSS’ OFFICE - DAY

Diane, Adam and Richard are seated in the exam room. Diane and Adam nervously flip through magazines while Richard is lost somewhere in his own world. The tension is thick. Diane looks at her watch and shivers. There’s a knock at the door. A friendly looking Nurse enters.

FRIENDLY NURSE
The doctor’s just in with another patient, but should be out in a few minutes. You guys holding up alright?

DIANE
It’s very cold in here. Is there anyway you can turn down the air conditioning?

FRIENDLY NURSE
Unfortunately the temperature is controlled by a central thermostat.

DIANE
My son has cancer.

FRIENDLY NURSE
(feels bad)
I’m sorry, really, if I could I would, but there’s nothing I can do.

Adam’s pissed that his mother has just involved him.

ADAM
(smiles to the Nurse)
Don’t worry about it.
(Scowls at Diane)
I’m fine.

FRIENDLY NURSE
Are you sure? I could get you a blanket.

ADAM
No, really, I’m okay. But thank you.

DIANE
I’d love a blanket.

ADAM
(to the friendly Nurse)
We’re fine.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FRIENDLY NURSE
Okay, but you let me know if you need anything.

The Nurse smiles and then exits.

DIANE
(Re: the friendly Nurse)
I don’t like her.

Diane puts her hand on Adam’s forehead.

DIANE (CONT’D)
You feel warm.

ADAM
I’m fine.

Diane gets up from her chair and paces around the room looking at the doctor’s various degrees on the wall. Adam looks on, annoyed at every step his mother takes. Diane closes in on one of the degrees and puts on her reading glasses for further examination.

DIANE
(disapproving)
Huh.

ADAM
What?

DIANE
Oh, nothing.

ADAM
(annoyed)
What?

DIANE
It’s nothing, he went to a state college.

ADAM
You’re unbelievable.

DIANE
I just worry that you’re not getting the best care possible. (beat) And I don’t think you’re eating right.

Adam can’t take it anymore. He explodes.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

ADAM
Will you stop! I’m not him. I can take care of myself.

Diane is so frustrated, she’s near tears:

DIANE
It’s so hard that you don’t let me help you. It’s really hard.

ADAM
You are helping me. You brought me here, didn’t you?

They sit in silence for a moment.

ADAM (CONT'D)
What about you?

She looks at him, baffled:

DIANE
What about me?

ADAM
How are you?

DIANE
(wiping her tears)
How am I?

ADAM
How are you? What’s going on in your life?

DIANE
Seriously? Nothing is going on in my life. The highlight of my week is this cancer support group I’ve been going to.

ADAM
You’ve been going to a support group?

DIANE
It’s for parents whose kids have cancer.

ADAM
I didn’t know you were doing that.
CONTINUED: (3)

DIANE
How would you? You never call me back.

He looks at her. He softens.

ADAM
I’m sorry.

DIANE
You don’t have to say you’re sorry.

Adam takes her hand in his. She’s clearly moved. A beat. Dr. Ross storms into the room carrying a stack of MRI films. He seems rushed.

DR. ROSS
Sorry to keep you folks waiting.

Adam and Diane look at Dr. Ross with blank stares.

DR. ROSS (CONT’D)
Anyway I’ll cut to the chase. The cancer’s not responding to the chemo.

Dr. Ross places the MRI into the light box.

DR. ROSS (CONT’D)
As you can see, the tumor is continuing to grow here, along the nerve. We have to remove it now or we risk metastasis.

Adam and Diane squint to see what Ross is talking about, but see nothing.

ADAM
So what do we do?

DR. ROSS
We need to operate. Now, I was able to move some things around, and I can get you in this Thursday morning with Dr. Walderson. He’s one of our best neurosurgeons.

DIANE
But he’s going to be okay, right? You’re going to fix it.
DR. ROSS
Considering the placement and size of the tumor, a surgery of this nature is very dangerous, and potentially life threatening itself. The surgeons will be very aggressive in their attempt. But if we're unsuccessful in removing the cancer...then unfortunately we're out of options.

Diane takes hold of Adam’s hand. They sit silently as the doctor’s words soak in.

EXT. PARK – LATER THAT NIGHT
Adam sitting in the park over looking the city. Kyle is drunk - Adam is still nursing his first beer.

KYLE
I’m not going to bring up the fact that your surgery is tomorrow. Not even thinking about it. So don’t worry about it, cause I’m not going to bring it up.

ADAM
You remember the last time we came out here?

KYLE
It was prom night.

ADAM
That memory is so far from me...

KYLE
It was a long time ago, I don’t even remember who you went with.

ADAM
(bitter)
Nora Mattingly.

KYLE
Oh yeah. That girl sucked. You really know how to pick ’em. Even then I think you knew.

ADAM
She seemed so sweet.
CONTINUED:

KYLE
She was never sweet. She always sucked.

ADAM
You just always hate my girlfriends

KYLE
That’s not true... OK it is, actually. But it’s because you date fucking dickheads. Needy bitches. Whhhyyyyy?

Adam looks like he’s on the verge of falling apart. Kyle puts his arm around him.

KYLE (CONT’D)
It’s fucking cold. And it’s only midnight! Dude, let’s go to a bar, try to get laid.

ADAM
(annoyed)
Don’t you ever give up?

KYLE
C’mon! I had fun with that!

Kyle points at Adam’s head as he stands, then stumbles. He’s drunk.

ADAM
I know you had fun.

KYLE
You could too, maybe.

ADAM
You’re drunk.

KYLE
It worked! Take your hat off!

ADAM
I think I should drive.

KYLE
I would let you drive but you don’t know how. You don’t have a license.

ADAM
(somber)
This might be my last chance.

(CONTINUED)
KYLE
Driving! That’s what you want to do? That’s your “Make A Wish”? To drive? We could be having sex with hookers while skydiving, and instead you want to do something I learned to do when I was fifteen!
(concedes)
Fine, but be careful.

Kyle hands Adam his keys.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Drive carefully. And don’t adjust my seat settings.

The two climb into Kyle’s car. Adam puts the key in the ignition.

KYLE (CONT’D)
(condescendingly)
Now, first thing you want to do--

Without checking the mirrors, he backs the car up. BOOM the car SLAMS into a BIKE RACK.

KYLE (CONT’D)
What the fuck!

Adam pulls out of the parking lot.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Make a left. Make a left! It’s a one way street!

Adam turns left onto a one way street. It’s the wrong way.

KYLE (CONT’D)
What the fuck? There’s a car! Wrong way! Wrong way! Wrong way! What the hell!

An oncoming car honks and swerves out of the way - only nearly avoiding a head on collision.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Adam! Stop man – stop!

Kyle pulls the emergency brake. The car stops abruptly.

KYLE (CONT’D)
The fuck are you doing, man? You’re being an idiot right now.
CONTINUED: (3)

A beat.

ADAM
Get out. Get out of the car.

Kyle stammers as Adam looks like he’s about to erupt.

ADAM
GET! OUT!

Adam starts hitting Kyle.

KYLE
Jesus Christ!

Kyle looks at Adam speechless, and then gets out of the car.

Adam locks the doors and sits quietly for a moment. He then proceeds to scream at the top of his lungs. Twenty seven years worth of suppressed emotions come out. Adam then sits in total silence. After a beat, he pulls out his cell phone. Kyle notices. He tries to open the door. It’s locked. Adam ignores Kyle and begins to dial.

KYLE (CONT’D)
Don’t you dare call her! Not after everything she’s done to you...You’re a pussy, Adam.

ADAM
You’re a selfish piece of shit who cares more about getting fucking laid than being my friend.

Kyle looks hurt. Adam holds the phone up to his head.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME (INTERCUT)

The phone rings. It’s not Rachael...it’s Katherine. She’s sitting on her bed, reading a book.

KATHERINE
Hello.

ADAM (nonchalant)
Hey, it’s Adam.

KATHERINE
Adam?

She looks at the clock, it’s midnight.

(CONTINUED)
KATHERINE
It’s midnight. What’s going on?

ADAM
(still nonchalant)
Oh, just having a nervous breakdown. I think I fractured my larynx.

KATHERINE
I’m really, really glad you called.

There’s a long silence. Tears roll down Adam’s face.

ADAM
I want this to be over. I’m so fucking tired of being sick...if this surgery doesn’t work, that’s it --
   (crying)
I’ve never been to fucking Canada or told a girl I love her...it sounds stupid.

KATHERINE
No. It doesn’t.

Katherine’s eyes begin to well.

ADAM (CONT’D)
(beat)
I’m sorry I was such an asshole.

KATHERINE
I was the asshole. I was so totally unprepared - for you. This job is really hard. If I fuck up, I could ruin someone’s whole life.

ADAM
I guess we’re both beginners at this.

KATHERINE
(smiles)
Yeah.

A beat.

ADAM
What were you doing when I called?
Were you on Facebook?
KATHERINE

(laughs)
You know, stalking my ex-boyfriend isn’t the only thing I do in my free time.

A beat. Adam sighs:

ADAM
I wish you were my girlfriend.

She takes this in, kind of wishing it too.

KATHERINE
Girlfriends can be nice. You just had a bad one.

ADAM
Yeah, but I bet you’d be a good one.

Silence as Katherine blushing. Then: There’s a loud knock on the window. It’s Kyle. He’s freezing.

KYLE
Let me in man, Jesus. It’s fucking freezing!

ADAM
I’m going to go. Thanks...Thanks for everything.

KATHERINE
Good night.

Adam hangs up the phone. Kyle bangs on the car window desperately. Adam finally unlocks the car.

EXT. KYLE’S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Kyle and Adam enter the building.

INT. KYLE’S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Too drunk to stand, Kyle uses Adam as a crutch to support himself as they enter his apartment, which is a mess - it looks like it hasn’t been cleaned in years. Kyle is unusually quiet. The mood is solemn - these guys never fight.

Kyle keels over to pass out on the couch. Adam walks into the bathroom.
INT. KYLE’S BATHROOM – CONTINUOUS

With his finger, Adam scoops some dust up off the counter. Grossed out, he looks around for a towel to wipe the dust off his hand. No towels. He wipes it off on his jeans. He then notices something on the ground, in front of the toilet. A book. He leans over and picks up “Coping with Your Loved One's Cancer”. The book is worn and has multiple book marks – indicating it’s been read. Adam looks out at Kyle, he had him pegged all wrong. Adam then turns and looks at himself in the mirror. He takes a deep breath. A beat. He claps his hands – the lights turn off.

EXT. SEATTLE STREET – LATER THAT NIGHT

It’s 3 a.m. The streets are completely vacant of life. Adam walks along this normally busy avenue all alone.

EXT. STREET – DAWN

Adam walks along the sidewalk of his street and turns up his front walkway.

INT. ADAM’S HOUSE – DAWN

Adam packs a small DUFFEL BAG.

INT. ADAM’S KITCHEN – LATER

Adam kneels down, pours some dog food into a bowl for Skeletor. He looks at the dog, who looks back, confused.

    ADAM
    Come here, boy.

Skeletor begins to eat. Adam looks in Skeletor’s eyes and gives him one last pet.

EXT. ADAM’S HOUSE – MOMENTS LATER

Adam steps out onto the porch carrying his duffle bag. As he walks down the steps, he looks back at his house, takes a deep breath, and leaves.

I/E. KYLE’S CAR – MOMENTS LATER

Adam gets into Kyle’s car. The mood is eerie and quiet.
INT. KYLE’S CAR - LATER

Kyle and Adam sit silently parked in front of the hospital.

KYLE
(beat)
You ready?

ADAM
Yeah.

KYLE
It’s going to be good. It’s going to be fine.

ADAM
Yeah.

We hear a voice from across the parking lot.

KYLE
That’s your mom.

Adam rolls down the window. Sure enough, his mom is yelling from across the parking lot--

DIANE’S VOICE
Adam!

KYLE
So I’ll park the car I guess, and then come inside--

ADAM
Yep.

KYLE
--and I’ll see you before you go in there?

ADAM
Um...I’m not sure how it works.

KYLE
Then I’ll see you after...

ADAM
Yep.

Kyle looks at him unsure what to say. Adam leans across and hugs Kyle.

KYLE
So I’ll see you in there...
Adam steps out of the car and walks across the vast concrete expanse toward his mother and father who stand waiting for him.

INT. HOSPITAL PRE-OP ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Adam lies on a gurney. His parents stand beside him. DR. WALDERTON the neurosurgeon enters.

DR. WALDERTON
Good morning, I’m Dr. Walderson, I’ll be performing your surgery today...How are you feeling?

ADAM
Good.

DR. WALDERTON

Dr. Walderson looks over her chart.

DR. WALDERTON
So we’re going to take excellent care of you. Our surgical team is top-notch. You just try to relax.

Adam’s completely terrified. Dr. Walderson exits. Nurse Stewart hands Adam a giant pile of disclaimers to sign.

ADAM
What is all this?

NURSE STEWART
Standard paperwork: hospital liability and disclaimer forms and organ donor authorization.

Richard whispers closely into Adam’s ear:

RICHARD
I got a new coat... Brooks Brothers. Silk Pockets. Feel.

Adam sticks his hand inside the pocket of Richard’s coat.

RICHARD(CONT'D)
Feel.

(CONTINUED)
Adam looks up at his dad, standing there in his confused state:

ADAM
Dad, listen. I know it’s probably hard to follow what’s going on right now -- but I want you to know that I love you very much.

Richard looks at his son, blank expression on his face:

RICHARD
OK.

ADAM
OK, Dad.

Adam smiles at his father, and then looks at his mother. DR. LEE enters--

DR. LEE
Hello Adam, I’m Dr. Lee -- I’m here to administer your anesthesia.

ADAM
(nervous)
Hi.

DR. LEE
Now relax, I’m going to inject the anesthesia through your IV... It’s going to take a few moments before you begin to feel the effects...

ADAM
You’re doing it now?

NURSE STEWART
(to Diane and Richard)
If you guys could just head over to the waiting room that’d be great.

ADAM
How long will it last?

DR. LEE
That really depends on the individual--

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

ADAM
Well, how do you know if it’s going
to last long enough so I won’t wake
up in the middle of surgery? Or
what if I don’t wake up after? Mom?

DIANE
Sweetie you’re going to be just
fine.

He leans over the bed into his mother’s arms. She holds him
for a long beat.

DR. LEE
I’m really sorry but we’ve got to
get Adam to the operating room.

DIANE (CONT’D)
Could you just wait a moment,
please?

Dr. Lee unlocks Adam’s gurney.

DR. LEE
I’m sorry.

Diane kisses Adam on the cheek.

DIANE
I love you, Adam.

Dr. Lee nods to a couple nurses, who pull Adam’s gurney
through double doors. He disappears into fluorescence.

INT. HOSPITAL SURGICAL AMPHITHEATER - CONTINUOUS

Adam’s gurney is PULLED INTO frame. We push in on Adam’s
unconscious face. Now, several ARMS reach out and grab him,
placing him on the operating table.

SFX: The rhythmic beep of his heart monitor. The echoing
sound of his breath. It initiates a

MONTAGE

--Katherine sits in her office, talking to a patient. She
nods, jots notes, but her head is somewhere else.

--Diane and Richard sit in the waiting room. She holds a
handful of pills. Richard takes them from her. She looks into
his eyes, terrified.
-- IN A WIDE SHOT, we see the operating table. Two neurosurgeons, Dr. Walderson and DR. PHILLIPS are in mid-surgery. Alongside the two doctors are TWO NURSES.

-- Kyle stands outside the hospital’s front entrance. Next to him, a couple of NURSES on a smoke break talk animatedly. He stares ahead, nervous.

-- The operating room is empty. Adam lies on the surgical table, now face up with an oxygen mask over his mouth. His eyes are closed and his complexion is cold and pale.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - LATER

Diane, Richard and Kyle sit together, anxious. Katherine enters the room and sits across from the others. They exchange awkward looks.

    DIANE
    (to Kyle)
    It’s been five hours.

Kyle looks over clearly very aware of that fact:

    KYLE
    Has it?

    DIANE
    Something’s wrong. We should have heard by now.

    KYLE
    Don’t worry. Adam’s going to be fine, okay?

Katherine hears Adam’s name. She leans over to Kyle, Richard, and Diane.

    KATHERINE
    Adam Lerner?

    KYLE
    (startled)
    Yeah.

    KATHERINE
    Dr. Walderson is one of the best surgeons in the country, so he’s in good hands.

    DIANE
    Who are you?

(CONTINUED)
KATHERINE
I...uh, I’m Katherine.

KYLE
The therapist! I’m Kyle, Adam’s friend.

They shake hands.

KYLE
These are Adam’s parents.

KATHERINE
It’s nice to meet you.

She smiles and nods awkwardly. Long beat.

KYLE
Did he say I was a dick? ‘Cause I’m not.

DIANE
I want you to know, I smothered him because I love him.

Katherine smiles politely.

KYLE
Seriously, did he say anything?

KATHERINE
I...I can’t...I wouldn’t...I wouldn’t talk about that sort of thing.

Kyle and Diane turn their attention away from Katherine, dejected. In the distance, they spot Dr. Walderson. Everyone jumps up as she approaches:

DR. WALDERSON
Mr. and Mrs. Lerner. So as you can imagine, with a surgery of this magnitude...there were some unforeseen complications. The bone erosion was much greater than initially anticipated. We had to remove part of the hip and pelvis, as well as most of the right psoas muscle. We also had to remove a good amount of sheath tissue around the sciatic nerve. It’s not going to be an easy road back, but he’s going to be okay.

(CONTINUED)
DIANE
(relieved)
He’s going to be okay?

Dr. Walderson nods.

KYLE
You should start with that
information. That should be the
first thing you say.

He turns to hug Diane:

KYLE (CONT'D)
He’s OK!

Diane and Kyle hug, then pull Richard into the hug.

DIANE
(to Dr. Walderson)
Thank you, doctor, thank you!

Diane and Kyle start crying. Katherine sees this tender
moment and shies away.

INT. HOSPITAL POST-OP RECOVERY - DAY

Adam’s in his hospital bed – still asleep from the surgery.
Richard and Diane enter the room. Adam reacts like a little
kid being picked up from pre-school.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Mommy!

DIANE
(crying)
My little boy.

ADAM
It’s nice here. I got a good room.

DIANE
I know.

ADAM
We need to go on more vacations.

DIANE
Yes, we’ll go on a huge vacation!
We can go to Hawaii!

Kyle awkwardly stands over Adam, trying to act normal.
CONTINUED:

KYLE
Hey man? What’s up?...I’m afraid to touch you, but um--

Adam sticks out his pinkie which Kyle gently fist bumps.

KYLE
Boom. You look really good.

ADAM
I’m high as a motherfucka.

Kyle looks at Diane with a guilty expression.

KYLE
Um...we don’t do that.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Adam lies in bed. His eyes open, staring at the ceiling. It’s quiet. Peaceful. Katherine knocks on the door and walks in. Adam speaks; woozy from the morphine, and very weak:

ADAM
It’s you.

KATHERINE
It is me.

She stands next to the bed.

KATHERINE
How are you feeling?

ADAM
Grrreat. I love morphine...What time is it?

KATHERINE
It’s eight o’clock. I was just working late, so I thought I’d stop by.

ADAM
(wide smile)
Working late - you got a new patient?

KATHERINE
I got a few new patients, actually.

ADAM
That’s good.
Adam smiles. Looks into her eyes for a long beat.

ADAM
I’d like to make you pancakes some time.

KATHERINE
That’s very nice, Adam.

ADAM
(dead serious)
You’re going to like them.

Katherine laughs. She sits next to him on the bed, and takes hold of his hand. Unlike her previous attempts, this time her grip is perfect. Adam notices.

ADAM
I’m peeing right now.

KATHERINE
I’m not going to look.

We stay on Adam and Katherine looking into each other’s eyes as Katherine moves her hand down his arm, finally clasping his hand in hers.

I/E. ADAM’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING
CLOSE-UP ON: WOUND

ANGLE ON: Kyle, staring at the wound with trepidation, absolutely disgusted.

KYLE
Ugh, it’s gross! Oh God – I keep looking back at it thinking it’s going to be less gross.

The wound is revealed to be on Adam’s back. Adam -- hair slowly beginning to grow back, looking much healthier, relaxed -- looks back at Kyle.

ADAM
Can we just get it over with? Come on.

KYLE
Your mom does this?

ADAM
She does it all the time.
CONTINUED:

KYLE
This is like some “Saw” shit.

ADAM
(unaffecte) 
Your words are so comforting.

KYLE
I’m just gonna do it, I’m gonna act like it’s nothing.

Kyle puts a gob of antibiotic ointment on his finger and very tentatively reaches towards Adam’s back.

ADAM
I’m going to be really proud of you.

KYLE
Ugh! I’m doing it. I’m inside you!

Adam looks over his shoulder, notices Kyle applying the ointment.

ADAM
Wait, wait, wait, is that your finger?

KYLE
What?

ADAM
Is that your finger?

KYLE
(guilty)
No.

ADAM
There’s Q-Tips!

KYLE
I know, I know...

Kyle quickly applies some ointment on a Q-TIP.

ADAM
That was your finger, wasn’t it!

KYLE
Would it be bad if it was?

ADAM
Did you wash your hands?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

KYLE
I used a Q-Tip the whole time, don’t worry about it.

Kyle swabs the wound with the Q-Tip.

KYLE
This looks like Kuato from “Total Recall”.

Adam grabs his back to imitate Kuato.

ADAM
The oxygen!

KYLE
(disgusted)
No! Don’t do that! Ugh!

Kyle feebly applies the DRESSING on Adam’s wound.

ADAM
Can we get this going? It’s seven thirty. Come on, put on the bandage.

Kyle gingerly applies the bandage whilst turning his head. Wound now covered, Kyle looks self-assured -- it’s a pretty shoddy job.

KYLE
And you, are ready for your date!

Adam gingerly stands and buttons up his shirt. He walks over and looks in the mirror. He rubs his short hair in contemplation.

ADAM
It’s crazy. I look pretty good.

KYLE
I’d fuck you.

ADAM
(smiles)
Thanks.

The DOORBELL rings. Adam looks at Kyle, a bit nervous.

KYLE (CONT’D)
(excited)
Who could that be? Go answer it, go!

(CONTINUED)
Adam takes a deep breath and opens the front door. He lights up when he sees KATHERINE standing in front of him. She’s holding a PIZZA.

ADAM
Hey.

KATHERINE
Hi.

ADAM
You look nice.

KATHERINE
Thanks.
(awkward beat)
You too. You look super nice.

ADAM
(smiles)
You want to come in?

KATHERINE
Yeah.

They walk inside.

KATHERINE
Look at you, walking up a storm.

Kyle clears his throat and waves meekly from the corner.

ADAM
You remember Kyle...

KYLE
Good to see you...I see you brought a pizza, which is good because I haven’t fed him all day. I just changed the dressing on his wound. There’s Vicodin in the bathroom if you need it; I know people take it recreationally but he actually needs it for his aches--

Adam stares at Kyle, blankly. Katherine looks to Adam, unsure how to react.

KATHERINE
(dead serious)
Are there channels he can’t watch?

Katherine cracks a smile. Kyle beams.
Adam opens the door and ushers Kyle out.

ADAM
Dude, you’re awesome.

KYLE
Alright!

Kyle moves toward the door and whispers to Adam—

KYLE (CONT’D)
She’s cool.

Adam smiles, and closes the door on Kyle. Adam then turns around and looks at Katherine.

KATHERINE
So.

ADAM
So.

KATHERINE
(smiles)
Now what?

A beat as Adam thinks, then flashes a smile.

MUSIC SWELLS as we go...

BLACK: