

LITTLE MEN

Written by

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Loud conversation, laughter, singing, and even dancing: the teacher is missing in a 7th Grade classroom. This rare absence of authority is intensely enjoyed by the crowd. It looks like it's party time for these KIDS.

They talk and laugh, show each other photos on their phones, draw spaceships and baboons on their notebooks, and fold pieces of paper into airplanes that fly around the room.

In a corner, a GROUP OF GIRLS dance to the tune of a song they are listening to on headphones.

On the other side of the room, TWO BOYS play like in a sword fight, without swords.

Suddenly, someone turns out the lights. There's random shouting and laughter.

An overhead projector is turned on, and a couple of the kids start to make puppet figures that are seen on the white screen.

A door opens, and a voice is heard, grave and authoritative.

MR. PLUMMER (O.S.)

What is going on here?!

The kids scramble back to their seats as the lights go on. MR. PLUMMER, the teacher, has come in.

MR. PLUMMER

What is this mess?? Didn't you promise me to be quiet? Can't I even leave you alone for five minutes?? Lionel, sit down. Sit down, I said! Melissa, put your phone away. Put it away right now! I asked you to be quiet, and... look at you. What a disappointment.

Mr. Plummer wanders around the classroom, inspecting everyone. Each kid has a different reaction. Some are frightened, others think it's funny. Some are respectful, and some others, defiant.

The teacher stops by a desk that's covered by a VERY COLORFUL DRAWING, while the STUDENT rushes to put away his large collection of Caran d'Ache pencils neatly in the box.

MR. PLUMMER (CONT'D)

Jacob, what is this?

JACOB "JAKE" JARDINE is pale and slender, with straight black hair, a bit longer than the other kids, and deep brown eyes - pretty in a delicate way, and shy, different from the other tougher boys in the class.

JAKE

It's the sky, Mr. Plummer.

Mr. Plummer picks up his drawing and shows it to the class.

MR. PLUMMER

A green sky with yellow stars??

JAKE

(barely audible)

It's Camp Jupiter's sky.

MR. PLUMMER

Watch out, Jacob: Vincent van Gogh ended up cutting off his own ear.

Some of the boys have a ball with this. Girls cover their mouths not to laugh out loud. Jake blushes, his eyes fill up with quiet, angry tears; he wasn't even talking to anyone, he was just drawing, doing his thing. Life is so unfair.

MR. PLUMMER

Quiet!! I said quiet, everybody!
This is not a playroom. It's not an art studio. Much less a disco, Ms. Neves. It's a classroom. It is my classroom, and I asked you to be quiet. A simple request, and you showed me you don't know how to behave yourselves. Was I talking to the walls? Amanda, please collect everybody's homework, and bring them to me.

AMANDA, the teacher's favorite, promptly goes around the class collecting homework. The individual students now listen intently to Mr. Plummer's speech. But there are exceptions; one or two still defy his authority, swallowing a laughter that cannot contain itself.

MR. PLUMMER (O.S.)

If I had to leave the class, it is because I had something very important to do. I come back, and I see you screaming and dancing! There's a saying, it's an old saying, that says: "Silence is golden." Write this down, children.

"

(MORE)

MR. PLUMMER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Silence is golden but my eyes still
see. Talking is cheap, people
follow like sheep."

Mr. Plummer writes this up on the board. Jake, instead of writing, furiously draws a wild dancing cobra on his notebook.

MR. PLUMMER
What does this mean?

Amanda raises her hand, ready to give an answer.

MR. PLUMMER
Not now, Amanda. I want you all to
write down your thoughts on this:
"silence is golden."

He underlines "silence is golden" on the board.

MR. PLUMMER (CONT'D)
Every child is to write an essay on
its meaning. Two pages minimum.
That's your homework for tomorrow.
Don't even come to the class if you
haven't done it! Now, let's open
our books. Page 23. Lionel, start
reading from the top. Stand up,
please. Stand up so we can all hear
you.

2 EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE SCHOOL - DAY

2

Large groups of KIDS are coming out through the main gate of the school. PILAR, a Filipino woman in her 50's, waits outside looking attentively at every kid who walks out. She sees the one she's looking for.

In the middle of different groups and cliques, Jake comes walking alone.

PILAR
Jake! Jake! Hey, Jake! Here!

Jake sees her, then runs and gives her a big hug, longer than expected.

PILAR
Hey hey hey. Look at you.

She ruffles his hair lovingly.

JAKE
What happened?

PILAR
Your parents are going to be coming
home very late tonight. Come on.
Let's go.

They begin to walk together away from the school.

JAKE
I'm thirsty.

PILAR
We can stop by Papaya King on the
way home.

JAKE
Yes!

2A EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE STREET - DAY

2A

Jake and Pilar are walking. Jake now has a drink from Papaya King in his hand.

PILAR
Listen, Jake. It's your
grandfather Max. There have been
some... developments.

JAKE
Some what?

PILAR
I mean, he got sick, and had to go
to the hospital.

JAKE
Sick with what?

PILAR
I'm sure your parents will talk to
you when they get home. But I'm
going to make dinner for you. What
do you want?

He thinks for a moment.

JAKE

I don't know.

(pause)

What happened to Grandpa Max?

PILAR

When you're old, things happen,
Jake. C'mon, let's make the light.
We need to get to the grocery.

They cross the street and continue on.

2B INT. UPPER WEST SIDE APARTMENT/JAKE'S ROOM - DAY 2B

Jake is at his desk working on a drawing.

3 INT. UPPER WEST SIDE APARTMENT/KITCHEN & LIVING ROOM - DAY 3

A comfortable, but cramped, NYC apartment.

In the kitchen, Pilar is preparing a steaming pot of
caldereta, Filipino beef stew.

A phone starts ringing, and Jake storms out of his bedroom.

PILAR

Hey! Did you finish your homework?

Jake grabs the phone.

JAKE

Jardine residence, good evening.

We hear the voice on the other end of the line.

STU GERSHMAN (O.S.)

(over the phone)

Good evening. And who am I talking
to?

JAKE

Who is this?

STU GERSHMAN (O.S.)

(over the phone)

This is Stu Gershman, I'm an old
friend of Max Jardine's. Is this
Jacob?

JAKE

Yes.

STU GERSHMAN (O.S.)

(over the phone)

Oh Jacob, last time I saw you, you were a little baby. I guess you're all grown up now.

JAKE

Umm...

STU GERSHMAN (O.S.)

(over the phone)

Is your dad at home? Your mom?

JAKE

No, they're not home yet.

STU GERSHMAN (O.S.)

(over the phone)

Oh well. I'm calling because... I'm very sorry to hear about your grandfather, Jacob. Max and I knew each other for so long, we met when we were about your age. You must be - what, ten now?

JAKE

Twelve.

STU GERSHMAN (O.S.)

He was such a dear old friend of mine, your granddaddy was. Do you know when the service is going to be?

JAKE

What service?

STU GERSHMAN (O.S.)

(over the phone)

The funeral. I imagine there's going to be a service soon?

Jake pauses to take this in - he has just learned that his grandfather has died.

JAKE

Hold on a second.

He goes to the kitchen and gives the phone to Pilar.

PILAR

Who is it?

JAKE

I don't know.

4 EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - DAY

4

LEONOR CALVELLI rolls down the metal shutters of a Brooklyn storefront. A sign above reads "CASA DE MODA". It's the ground floor commercial space of a two-story row house on a commercial street in Brooklyn. She pushes down the last bit of the gate with her foot to lock it up. You can still go in and out through a door space that's open. She lights up a cigarette and leans on the gate, calmly surveying the street - a daily routine.

Leonor is in her early 50's, dark hair and dark eyes, her beauty toughened up by a hard life. After a few puffs, she hears a car parking in front, doors open and close. Leonor recognizes someone, and throws her cigarette out. She opens the door, and calls inside the store.

LEONOR

Antonio! Antonio!

TONY (O.S.)

What?!

LEONOR

*Come! Come here!**

*- Throughout the film, italics will indicate when Leonor, Tony and others speak Spanish.

She forces a smile, greeting the still unknown visitor, then she turns to inside and calls again, impatiently.

LEONOR

Antonio!!

5 EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - DAY

5

Across the street from Leonor, Jake is helping his parents BRIAN and KATHY JARDINE get plates of food wrapped in cellophane and other catering goods from out of the car. The couple, dressed in formal dark clothes, have the youthful look of people who can afford to take a nice vacation once a year.

Jake sees when ANTONIO "TONY" CALVELLI, a handsome 13 year old boy with dark hair and eyes, comes running out from inside the store, and stops next to Leonor.

LEONOR

*What were you doing?? If I say
'come here', you have to come. Give
them a hand. Go.*

But Tony doesn't move, unsure of what to do. He looks at Jake, who is looking at him.

Brian drops a plate in Jake's hands and goes towards Leonor, with an extended hand.

BRIAN

Hello Mrs. Calvelli. Brian Jardine,
we've met.

LEONOR

Of course, Brian. I'm so sad for
what has happened. I'm so sorry.

Jake sees when Leonor, suddenly overtaken by emotion, grabs his father's hand and pulls him closer for a hug, which makes Brian visibly uncomfortable. Leonor tries to hide her tears.

LEONOR

I'm sorry. Your father was a such a
wonderful man.

BRIAN

Thank you.

LEONOR

He really was, you know.

BRIAN

I know.

LEONOR

This is my son Antonio.

Kathy approaches, carrying a plate of food.

BRIAN

I don't think you've met my wife
Kathy.

LEONOR

Hi. Nice to meet you. Leonor.

Kathy smiles warmly, as Brian opens the door to the house.

KATHY

So nice to meet you too. Sorry, my
hands are full.

BRIAN

We're having a little reception upstairs. Just family and a few friends.

LEONOR

Of course.

Brian and Kathy go upstairs with their bags.

Left alone by the car, Jake tries to grab a sketchbook from inside as he balances the big plate of food with his other hand and then, a bit clumsy, ends up dropping the bag.

Tony is suddenly there to help him out. He kneels down to pick up pages with drawings, pencils and stuff spilling out of the bag, immediately recognizing the first drawing he sees - a girl with red wings flying through a thundercloud.

TONY

Ella the Harpy!

JAKE

Can you hand that to me?

TONY

She's a nerd, but I have a thing for redheads... Don't you?

JAKE

Here, pass me that. I can carry it.

In the distance, Leonor watches, while Tony helps by pulling another set of plates and bottles out of the car, organizing a crate to be carried off.

TONY

Tyson is such a douchebag.

JAKE

Not in the end, he's not. I just finished *The Blood of Olympus*.

TONY

I have the game, wanna play?

JAKE

Now? I'd like to, but... I can't. It's my grandfather's--

TONY

I know. I never know what to say in these situations.

JAKE

I think you're supposed to say,
"I'm sorry for your loss."

TONY

That's right! I'm sorry for your
loss.

JAKE

Oh, that's okay.

Tony finds one last drawing that was left on the floor in the
car.

TONY

Wait a minute: what's this one
here?

JAKE

It's the sky.

TONY

Did you make this??

JAKE

Yeah, it's the sky above Camp
Jupiter, the day of the battle.

TONY

You're a real artist!

JAKE

Not really.

TONY

Of course you are. This is awesome!
You know you'll really like this
neighborhood.

JAKE

We don't live here. It's just a
reception.

TONY

It's become a very bohemian area.
You know what bohemian means?

JAKE

Yeah...

TONY

Very artistic.

BRIAN (O.S.)
Got it, son?

Brian is back by the car to pick up the stuff.

BRIAN
You okay with that, Antonio?

TONY
You can call me Tony.

BRIAN
Well thank you, Tony. I appreciate
the help.

The two boys follow Brian towards the house, the three of them carrying plates and bags.

6 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/FAMILY AREA - DUSK

6

The apartment is old and in desperate need of a paint job. It's a large space, crammed with the stuff of a long life. There are family photos, piles of National Geographic magazines next to faded velvety couches and solid furniture. A small, vintage color TV sits alone in the corner.

There's a quiet reception going on, with most people wearing black, or dark colors, and talking softly to each other. Amongst the mostly older friends and relatives of the deceased are Brian's sister AUDREY and her husband JAMES, and their teenage son, LIAM, dressed in a suit. They are sitting on a couch next to Brian, leafing through a photo album.

BRIAN
Let me see. That was our first year
in the house. Look; I still had
braces.

AUDREY
Dad looks so young here.

BRIAN
He was a handsome guy.

AUDREY
Listen to you.

BRIAN
What?

AUDREY
You look just like him, and you
know it. Can I have this? Please?

BRIAN

Yes. I'll let you have the photo
IF...

Brian picks up a book on the table.

BRIAN

...you let me have the first
edition of *The Velveteen Rabbit*.

AUDREY

Now, wait a minute.

6A INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/KITCHEN - DAY

6A

In the kitchen, KATHY is re-furbishing a tray of pastries with new ones from a box from an Italian bakery. Pilar is beside her, cutting fruit for a pitcher of punch.

6B INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/FAMILY AREA - DAY

6B

Jake is sipping some juice, like a cocktail, and looking at the art on the wall: a couple of oil paintings of Parisian streets in the wintertime of dubious quality doesn't arouse much interest, and he ends up in front of a vintage movie poster on the wall, with ahead of its time 60s graphics - probably the best piece of art in the apartment.

BRIAN (O.S.)

Jake, come here.

Jake goes to see his father, who's standing next to STU GERSHMAN, a well dressed gentleman in his 70's.

BRIAN

Do you remember Grandpa's friend
Stu Gershman?

JAKE

I don't know.

STU GERSHMAN

Look at you, all grown up now.
How's school?

JAKE

Okay.

STU GERSHMAN

So, what kind of sports do you like
to play?

Jake doesn't play any sports, and it's probably a point of contention between father and son, given the sudden uncomfortable moment of silence.

BRIAN

He likes to draw and paint.

Jake blushes.

STU GERSHMAN

So you'd like to be an illustrator when you grow up?

JAKE

I don't know.

STU GERSHMAN

Well, come here. Come here.

He pulls Jake in uncomfortably tight.

STU GERSHMAN

I want to tell you a few things about your grandfather, Jake: he liked to play ball but was a horrible pitcher; he hated summer but went nuts seeing the ladies walk by in mini-skirts; and he was the most loyal friend you could have. Loyalty was his greatest quality.

BRIAN

Aww... Thanks, Stu. Did you hear that, Jake?

Jake is saved from Stu by a knock on the door. He runs to open it, and there she is: Leonor holding a beautiful cake. Kathy, who also heard the knock, comes to see what's going on.

LEONOR

It's a dessert we make for special occasions in my country.

She hands the cake to Kathy.

LEONOR

I hope you like it.

Jake watches everything.

KATHY

Oh my God. You didn't have to.

LEONOR

Max loved this cake, so I
thought....

KATHY

Come in. You should come in.

LEONOR

It's okay.

KATHY

Please. I insist.

LEONOR

No, I just wanted to bring the
cake.

KATHY

Sorry if we didn't say anything
earlier. Brian and I... we're both
very tired. It's all been so fast.

LEONOR

It's okay. I still have some
paperwork to do at the store.

KATHY

Thank you so much for this. It's
very kind of you. Thank you.

Leonor leaves, and Jake shuts the door. Kathy is left with the beautiful cake on her hands. She looks across the room and sees Brian, in the middle of a crowd, holding court, being a good actor.

7 INT. JARDINE HOUSE/STAIRWELL - NIGHT

7

Brian walks down the interior stairs of the house, carrying a heavy bag full of trash. At the bottom of the stairs, he turns and walks down the dark corridor that leads to the backyard.

He finds the large metal trash containers, and throws the bags in.

Alone for the first time all day, Brian is overtaken by memories and allows himself a good cry.

8 INT. CASTING OFFICE - DAY

8

Brian is sitting at a table in a bare room, speaking in a strong Italian-American Brooklyn accent.

BRIAN

I swear B, I'm surprised at you. I sit there waiting for you to wake up, but everything's great with you.

We see he is holding a script, next to SUZANNE, a famous actress, who's also with a script in her hands. They are reading from Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge*. Brian is reading the role of "Eddie" as Suzanne plays his wife, "Beatrice".

An OPERATOR tapes Brian's performance with a video camera on a tripod.

SUZANNE

No, everything ain't great with me.

BRIAN

No?

SUZANNE

No. But I got other worries.

BRIAN

Why? What other worries you got?

SUZANNE

When am I gonna be a wife again, Eddie?

BRIAN

I ain't been feeling good. They bother me since they came.

SUZANNE

It's almost three months you don't feel good. It's three months, Eddie.

BRIAN

I don't know, B. I don't want to talk about it.

SUZANNE

Nice! Okay.

Suzanne smiles at Brian, already out of character. But Brian really would love to keep going.

BRIAN

You go "you don't like me, heh?"

Suzanne looks for help from the audience, gently cutting Brian off.

DEBORAH (O.S.)
That's good, Jardine.

The casting director, DEBORAH, sits with scripts and lists under a reading light, and a male ASSISTANT next to her. A DIRECTOR a PRODUCER, and a PRODUCER'S ASSISTANT sit next to him.

SUZANNE
(to the director)
Yeah, I need a break.

DEBORAH
Take a break, Suzanne.

Suzanne smiles again at Brian, and comes close to kiss him goodbye.

SUZANNE
I'm starving. I've been here since ten.

BRIAN
Of course.

SUZANNE
How's Kathy?

BRIAN
She's good.

SUZANNE
And your son?

BRIAN
Jake. He's great. He's in seventh grade already.

SUZANNE
Oh my God, I remember him running around backstage at The Lortel, when we did...

BRIAN
Dark Rapture?

SUZANNE
Yes! How old was he?

BRIAN
Two. Three, maybe.

SUZANNE

Time flies by.

BRIAN

It really does.

SUZANNE

Well, it was great to see you.

BRIAN

Great to see you also, Suzanne.
Maybe we'll see each other again
soon.

SUZANNE

I hope so.
(to the audience)
Jamie? Do you have lunch for me?

9

EXT. CASTING OFFICE - DAY

9

ROGER, Brian's agent, is standing outside the theater, texting on his phone. Brian comes out, and they begin to walk.

BRIAN

She fucking hates me.

ROGER

She doesn't hate you.

BRIAN

Ever since B.U. She dropped out - I stayed and graduated. Every time we've seen each other since then, she always tries to prove that she's better than me.

ROGER

You're paranoid. You did okay there.

BRIAN

Did I?

ROGER

Yes. But it's true that she'll have a say in who's cast as her husband.

BRIAN

I'm telling you. She doesn't like me. I'm in a slump, Roger. You need to help me here.

ROGER

Listen, maybe Broadway is not the right way to go for you right now.

BRIAN

I thought that was the strategy.

ROGER

Why don't we go have some coffee? You have options. There are a bunch of things that could pan out. Let me just finish this.

Roger goes back to his texting.

10

INT. JARDINE APARTMENT - DAY

10

The apartment has been completely redone. The old furniture is out, more modern - if used - furniture is in. There's less stuff, so it looks more spacious. There are new appliances in the kitchen, and some of the art from Brian and Kathy's old Manhattan apartment now hangs on the walls, which have been newly painted with fresh colors. Brian, Kathy and Jake have moved in, and it looks really nice.

There are still piles of plates and pans to be put away, and a few boxes on the floor by the kitchen. Pilar is taking stuff out of one of them. Plates and trays and things wrapped individually in bubble wrap and newspaper. Kathy unwraps them and looks for places in the kitchen cabinets to put them away.

While she's putting them away, Pilar unwraps a beautiful crystal serving plate.

PILAR

I don't remember this.

Kathy takes a looks at it, trying to remember where it came from.

KATHY

Oh my God. We took it home.

11

INT. CASA DE MODA/STORE - DAY

11

The store has women's clothes on display on simple racks, with a few chosen pieces shown on a large table. It's an old-fashioned store; the ambiance is simple and unsophisticated.

BIANCA, a salesgirl, is showing a dress with floral patterns to a CUSTOMER as Kathy comes in, carrying the crystal plate.

She is going to say hello to the salesgirl, but doesn't want to interrupt and goes directly towards Leonor, who is in the back of the store behind a sewing machine, fixing the collar of a shirt.

KATHY

Leonor.

LEONOR

Hi Kathy. The boys are in my office, in the back.

KATHY

No, no. Look what I just found.

LEONOR

It's my plate.

KATHY

I think that night we just ended up taking everything back to our apartment. And then we put things away, and I forgot. I'm so sorry.

LEONOR

No worries! Please.

KATHY

It's a beautiful plate.

She takes it from Kathy's hand.

LEONOR

Are you not working today?

KATHY

I don't see patients on Monday. I need a day a week to organize my life, you know.

LEONOR

Good for you.

KATHY

The store looks cute.

LEONOR

Huh... we're not doing so well.

KATHY

I like that dress over there. The one with the floral patterns.

LEONOR

I love that one. You should try it on.

KATHY

I have to go back-

LEONOR

Oh, c'mon. It'll take a minute.

12 INT. CASA DE MODA/STORE - DAY

12

Kathy pulls open the curtain wearing the floral dress, and shows it to Leonor, who's waiting outside.

LEONOR

Perfection.

Kathy walks towards the mirror wearing the floral dress.

KATHY

Are you sure? I don't know.

Leonor comes with expert hands and pulls a pinch on the shoulder strap.

LEONOR

It looks great. All you need is a little fixing up here, maybe a tiny bit tighter here on the waist. But the dress is beautiful.

KATHY

How much is it?

LEONOR

Whatever the price, I'll give you ten percent discount. Let me see.

Leonor looks for a tag around the cuffs.

KATHY

Did you make this?

LEONOR

No. Not this one. But everything here is handmade by the designers. This one is two hundred and fifty. It's made by a woman named Talita - she's from Colombia, and very talented. They probably do it in their kitchens, you know what I mean? They're not famous. Yet.

13 INT. CASA DE MODA/OFFICE - DAY

13

There's a video game on the TV. Monsters and battles, and sound effects.

And sitting in front of the TV set, taking it all in, are Jake and Tony. It's a small space in the back of the store that has been turned into an office - just a simple desk, a TV, a chair and a couch in the corner.

Kathy comes in, dressed in the floral pattern dress. Leonor is right behind her.

KATHY

Guys, what do you think?

The boys don't move an inch, their attention 100% on the TV screen.

KATHY

Jake? Jake, what is our deal?

She turns to Leonor.

KATHY

They're like zombies when they start playing these games.

JAKE

(eyes still on the screen)
Mom. I'm on vacation!

KATHY

So?

JAKE

Dad said it was okay.

KATHY

We have this rule in the house; no games during the week. And no internet before five either.

LEONOR

But during vacation they have all this free time, and what are you going to do?

TONY

Shhh! Quiet!!

LEONOR

Antonio! Watch your tone of voice, por favor!

(MORE)

LEONOR (CONT'D)

(back to Kathy)

When he's playing this stuff - I know it's not so good, but at least he's around, and I know where to find him.

Tony pauses the game.

TONY

(polite)

Mrs. Jardine. Maybe you will let us finish this level, please?

LEONOR

That's better.

KATHY

Sure, you can finish. But first you have to tell me: what do you think? The dress?

TONY

Great. I actually thought it was yours.

KATHY

Jake?

JAKE

Love it. Love the flowers.

The boys will say anything to get rid of their moms, so they can continue to play their game.

14 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

14

On the wall of Jake's new bedroom is the vintage movie poster that used to belong to his grandfather. The room is painted in bright colors, with a small bed, a small desk - a young man's cocoon.

Jake is on his bed, a sketch pad on his lap and his Caran d'Ache pencils next to him.

The door opens. Brian comes in.

BRIAN

Why don't you come help me prepare dinner?

JAKE

Where's Mom?

BRIAN

Your mother had an emergency with a patient. She's going to be late tonight.

JAKE

Another suicide?

BRIAN

Jake!

15

INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/KITCHEN - NIGHT

15

Brian washes greens for the salad, as Jake enters.

JAKE

Dad, I can't find my drawings.

BRIAN

What drawings? Help me cut these.

Brian hands Jake vegetables from the sink.

JAKE

The series I made on Percy Jackson. The sea of monsters?

BRIAN

Those old drawings?

Jake starts cutting vegetables julienne style, very carefully.

JAKE

Yes.

BRIAN

Did you look in the trunk?

JAKE

Yes, Dad. I looked. They're not there.

BRIAN

I don't know, Jake. Maybe they got thrown away.

JAKE

Why would you do that? They're my drawings!

BRIAN

Why don't you just make new ones.

JAKE

New ones are never like the old ones!

Jake wishes he could strangle his dad right now. He's truly upset.

BRIAN

Jake. We moved. We got rid of furniture. We threw away clothes, and we gave books away. We have a new apartment.

JAKE

So?

BRIAN

Listen. Let me tell you something. It's good to get rid of stuff. It's hard at first, but then it feels really good. You have to learn to let go.

Jake keeps cutting the vegetables. He's so angry, it's hard not to chop the zucchini into a million pieces....

16

INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/FAMILY AREA - NIGHT

16

Brian and Jake are having dinner.

BRIAN

I play Trigorin. He's a celebrated writer, and the boyfriend of a famous actress, Arkadina.

JAKE

Why the weird names?

BRIAN

Can I finish? Her son Konstantin is an aspiring writer who lives with his uncle Sorin in this dacha, where they all come together one summer to see his new play.

JAKE

Finished?

BRIAN

That's just the beginning, actually.

JAKE

What's a dacha?

BRIAN

A dacha is like a big country estate in Russia. That's where the whole thing takes place, and that's why the funny names. There's also Nina. She's the neighbors's daughter, who wants to be an actress. At first she seems to be in love with Konstantin but ends up having an affair with my character, Trigorin.

JAKE

Sounds complicated.

BRIAN

Well, it is complex. And unexpected. But it has a lot of humor in it too.

JAKE

What part?

The door opens, and Kathy comes in from work.

KATHY

Good. You guys are already eating.

JAKE

Hi Mom.

BRIAN

How was it?

Kathy drops her bag on a chair and goes to wash her hands before coming to join them at the table.

KATHY

Fine. She's doing okay. The problem now is her husband.

16A INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/BATHROOM - NIGHT

16A

Kathy is washing her hands in the sink.

KATHY

But the last thing I want to do right now is talk about work. I'm starving.

16B INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/FAMILY AREA - NIGHT

16B

They're already having entrees, but the salad bowl is still on the table.

BRIAN

I was just telling Jake about the play.

JAKE

I thought you weren't working with the Terrain anymore. I thought you were going to do Broadway now.

Kathy joins them and helps herself to a big plate.

BRIAN

It's not that simple.

JAKE

You said you weren't doing this non-profit stuff anymore. That the strategy was to reach "a wider audience".

BRIAN

Well, things have changed.

KATHY

Jake, you should applaud your father for being adaptable. That's what life is all about.

Kathy's worn out. It's been a long day.

17 EXT. HERBERT VON KING PARK - DAY

17

A tree-filled park in the middle of a quiet Brooklyn neighborhood. On a grassy lawn, a GROUP OF BOYS, 12 to 15 years old, are kicking a soccer ball into a goal. Two captains, UMAR and JOEY, are choosing one by one to form two teams.

Tony rushes by on his scooter, fast. He avoids bumps - he knows the area by heart. As he approaches the group of boys, one of the boys tries to stop him.

UMAR

Tony! Hey! Come play! We need one more here!

But Tony doesn't stop, and now comes Jake behind on his ROLLER BLADES, trying to catch up. He's surprised by a bump on the road, makes a false move, and almost falls.

JOEY

Oops! Watch out, Katy Perry!

All the boys laugh. Jake is upset but keeps going, pretending he didn't hear anything.

17A INT. JARDINE HOUSE/STAIRWELL - DAY

17A

The boys enter the foyer of an old NYC tenement apartment building. Tony carries his scooter, while Jake tries to take off his blades as fast as he can.

They clomp up several flights.

18 INT. LEONOR'S APARTMENT - DAY

18

An old apartment, functional and in need of paint job. Modest furniture dominates the space, but there are a couple of eye catching art pieces; a large modernist painting and a striking sculpture. In a corner, there's a large bookshelf filled with books, but one corner has been turned into a bar with a few different types of glasses, and various liquor bottles.

Leonor is in the living room preparing a drink next to HERNÁN ALONSO, Latin, early 60's, dressed in a suit and tie. He stands close to Leonor, and leans over to help her with the drink. At this very moment, Jake and Tony burst in through the door.

TONY

(out of breath)

Eight minutes and twenty three seconds!

He throws his scooter on the floor and runs to the kitchen. Jake stays by the door, polite, waiting to greet the elders, roller blades in hand.

LEONOR

Hey! Hey! Hey!

TONY

(looking at his cellphone)

A new record! Around the block and up the stairs in eight minutes and twenty three seconds!

LEONOR

Wow, I think you should call the Guinness Book.

TONY

That's a great idea! I'll write them an email.

Tony grabs a glass and opens the refrigerator to get some water.

JAKE

Good evening, Mrs. Calvelli.

LEONOR

Hi Jake.

(to her son)

You haven't said hello, Mister!

TONY

Hello Hernàn. This is my friend Jacob Jardine. But we call him Jake.

HERNÀN

Hello there, Jake.

TONY

He used to live in Manhattan, but now he lives above Mami's store. Jake, this is Hernàn.

He finishes his glass of water, and runs to his room. Jake stays alone with the adults.

HERNÀN

Ah! So you are the Grandson-

LEONOR

(cuts him off)

Yes. Max was his grandfather. His father is Brian Jardine, *the one that I told you about.*

JAKE

My father's an actor. And my mom is a psychotherapist.

HERNÀN

I see. So how do you like Brooklyn so far?

JAKE

I like it a lot. It's more peaceful than Manhattan, and we have much more space. It's great.

HERNÀN

So Jake, are you going to be an actor, like your father?

JAKE

I don't know.

HERNÀN

But you look like an artist yourself. With that long hair and everything.

JAKE

Maybe.

This conversation is getting too deep for Jake. Leonor sees that he's uncomfortable, and helps him out.

LEONOR

He'll tell us more later, right Jake? Go ahead.

Jake runs inside Tony's room.

19

INT. LEONOR'S APARTMENT/TONY'S ROOM - DAY

19

Tony's room is typical teenager with a small bed, a desk with computer and posters of music and movies. Tony's on the bed, lost in thought. He's clearly been listening in on the conversation in the other room.

TONY

Is your father any good at acting?

JAKE

I don't know. Maybe.

TONY

I thought if he was, I might have a conversation with him, cause I'm going to be an actor when I grow up. Maybe he can give me some pointers.

JAKE

Sure, yeah. I guess. He's not that successful or anything.

Tony jumps off his bed and pulls open the drawers of his desk.

TONY

My dream is to go to the LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts? You know that school? Nicki Minaj went there. And Al Pacino, but he flunked out.

JAKE

I think my dad applied there.

TONY

Really? It's my dream school. I'm looking around at some theater classes, and practicing on my own, so I can audition next year for ninth grade.

He pulls out a stack of plays from his drawer.

TONY (CONT'D)

These are some of the scripts I'm working on. I'm going to need to practice a lot, and sometimes I might need a partner, okay?

JAKE

But I'm not an actor.

TONY

That's okay. You can read, can't you? Here look at this. This is a scene from *Pariah, or the Outcast*, by August Strindberg. It's perfect for us to work on, cause it's just two guys.

Jake takes the book tentatively, and flips through it.

TONY

And you know what, if you practice your drawing more, and get better, maybe we could both go to LaGuardia. It's for all kinds of artists. It's very Bohemian.

Jake puts the script down, uncommitted.

JAKE

I guess I can try.

TONY

That's the spirit.

JAKE

Is Hernàn your mom's boyfriend?

TONY

Hernàn? Eww, gross. No. He's just a friend of her's from Chile. My mom is still married to my dad. They just don't live together much.

JAKE

I don't understand.

TONY

Me either! My dad travels a lot, so they are never together. He's a nurse, and he works for Doctors Without Borders, which is from what I can tell a job you get if you want free plane flights.

JAKE

Where is he now?

TONY

He's in Angola. That's in Africa. Until he was 20 he never left this neighborhood, and then once he left he barely ever came back. If I wasn't here I don't think he'd ever come back to Brooklyn.

Tony jumps up and goes to his desk.

TONY

Look what he sent me.

He pulls a box from a shelf, full of books and CDs and stuff.

JAKE

Do you miss having him around more?

TONY

At first I did. But it's been a few years now, so I got used to it.

JAKE

Sometimes my dad goes away, if he's shooting a movie. But it hasn't really happened in a while.

TONY

Maybe he's not the guy I should talk to.

JAKE

I don't know. He's been in a bunch of plays and stuff.

Tony is still looking... and he finally finds it.

TONY

Found it!

He picks up a big book and drops it in Tony's lap.

TONY

My dad and I are going to go on a safari, and these are just like some of the animals we are going to see.

Jake looks through pictures of African savannahs and animals.

JAKE

Do you wish they still lived together?

TONY

Sometimes. When my dad comes to visit, he'll cook *Porcheta*. It's like roast pork butt.

JAKE

Ewww.

TONY

(matter of fact)

It's good.

(pause)

We sit at the table just the three of us, and he tells stories about his work and the places he's been, and stories about the different people he's met in Africa. Then it seems like normal. But then, pretty soon they start fighting about something stupid. And I realize it's better when he's not around.

JAKE

Imagine if your mom goes with you on your safari, and they end up falling in love again.

TONY

I think there's very little chance of that happening.

JAKE

But just imagine: you get an envelope one day. You open it and it's two tickets to a safari. One for you, and one for your mom. And she decides to go, because she feels like she needs a vacation. So when you get to Africa, your dad picks you both up at the airport, and takes you to this incredible place. Like this photo here. You see lions and elephants, giraffes. And then, it's the end of a beautiful day in the African savannah. Your dad wants to take you up this big hill to see the sunset, but you're too tired, so you tell your parents you're going to rest in your hotel room.

TONY

So they go the two of them alone. And when they get there, the colors of the sky are like nothing they've ever seen before...

JAKE

A green sky with yellow stars...

The door opens, with Leonor in an apron and a wooden spoon in hand.

LEONOR

Who wants pasta primavera?

JAKE

Yes!

Jake jumps up and goes out running. Tony stays in for a moment, imagining...

20

EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

20

Jake and Tony and Audrey's son LIAM are kicking a soccer ball and running around the freshly cut grass and new plants - the yard has visibly improved since the old days, and the swing set has been removed.

Brian prepares a grill, talking with his sister Audrey.

20A INT. JARDINE HOUSE/STAIRWELL - DAY 20A

Tony and Jake come in from outside and run down the hall.

21 INT. CASA DE MODA/OFFICE - DAY 21

Leonor is sitting at her desk going through the store receipts and expenses with a calculator, taking notes on a notebook, and entering info in the computer. She is not happy doing this kind of work, the numbers make her frustrated.

Leonor goes through the same papers one more time, re-entering the same numbers in the calculator when Tony and Jake storm into the office.

TONY

Mami, can I stay for dinner with the Jardine's?

LEONOR

Tony...

TONY

Please Mami. They're having hamburgers.

JAKE

And hot dogs.

LEONOR

We have dinner at home. Besides, I can't come and pick you up later. And I don't like you walking home alone at night.

JAKE

He can sleep over.

LEONOR

(to Jake)

Have you talked to your father about this?

JAKE

He won't mind.

LEONOR

Are you sure?

TONY

Please, Mami.

22

EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

22

Brian and Audrey, holding chilled glasses of white wine, continue their conversation around the grill, when Jake comes running and interrupts.

JAKE

Dad!

BRIAN

Yes, Jake?

JAKE

Can Tony sleep over tonight?

Brian now sees Leonor and Tony approaching also.

BRIAN

Well, hello Leonor.

LEONOR

Sorry to interrupt, Brian.

BRIAN

No, please, you're not... You've met my sister Audrey, haven't you?

LEONOR

Yes, of course.

AUDREY

Hi Leonor. Long time no see.

LEONOR

Jake is asking if Tony can stay for dinner-

JAKE

And a sleep-over!

LEONOR

Yes, because after dinner it would be too late for him to walk home alone.

BRIAN

Tony, do you want to have hamburgers and hot dogs with us tonight?

TONY

Yes!

BRIAN
Done deal, bro.

He shakes hands with Tony. Tony and Jake go running to play in the grass.

LEONOR
(to Brian)
I just wanted to make sure with you...

BRIAN
Please. I can't tell you how happy I am that Jake has a new friend. He spends too much time alone. And it's not easy for him with other boys. So it's great that he and Tony get along so well.

Leonor doesn't respond.

BRIAN
You've got a great kid, but I guess you know that.

LEONOR
Thank you.

AUDREY
Leonor, do you want some wine?

Leonor considers for a moment.

AUDREY
Brian and I wanted to have a talk with you anyway, about some things, so maybe this is a good time.

LEONOR
No, thank you. I have to go back and finish some stuff at the office.

AUDREY
We'd love a minute with you if that's ok. Right, Brian?

The kids fall on the grass running after the ball.

AUDREY
Liam, watch out! Your cousin is smaller than you!

LEONOR

I have to go. But thank you.

BRIAN

You know, Leonor, after my father died, there was so much to do. We decided to move in, and time just flew by. You and I haven't really had a chance to talk about the store, and all that stuff. Maybe we can have a chat this week?

LEONOR

This week is not good for me. I'm doing inventory.

BRIAN

Next week?

LEONOR

Could be.

Brian gets his iPhone out, checking his calendar.

BRIAN

Thursday I finish rehearsal early, so I could come by early afternoon.

LEONOR

Sure.

BRIAN

Great.

23

EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

23

Dinner is served. There are garden lights, flowers on the table, chilled wine. Kathy has joined them, in her usual work clothes, as has James, Audrey's husband.

AUDREY

Truth is, the neighborhood is changing and that's a very old-fashioned store.

BRIAN

C'mon guys! The burgers are getting cold.

KATHY

She complained to me that business wasn't so good.

Jake and Tony approach the table. The adults continue their conversation in a hushed tone, once the boys are at the table.

BRIAN

Of course she's going to say that.
Contract is up.

AUDREY

My guy told me that a similar space
in the area is going for five
thousand.

KATHY

What??

JAKE

Can I have mine with cheese,
mustard and ketchup, please?

KATHY

That's crazy.

BRIAN

Guests first. What do you want on
yours, Tony?

TONY

Cheese, onions, avocado. And
ketchup, please.

AUDREY

That's in the low numbers.

TONY

And mayonnaise.

KATHY

Scary.

BRIAN

Jake, have some salad also.

JAKE

I'll have some afterwards.

BRIAN

Tony, salad?

TONY

No thank you, Mr. J. Is that
alright if I call you that?

KATHY

And what is the number now?

BRIAN

Sure, Tony. That's fine.

AUDREY

One something. For eight years,
never an increase.

BRIAN

Maybe we should talk about this
later?

Kathy agrees, shaking her head.

KATHY

So Tony, I hear your dad lives in
Africa.

TONY

In Angola. It's an old Portuguese
colony in Africa. I wrote a paper
on it last year at school, and got
an B plus, which was pretty good,
cause I only spent about an hour on
it. Sometimes at my school the
teachers are whack cause they give
you good grades for the things you
don't try hard on, and bad grades
for the things you do.

Everyone is enjoying Tony, who is making himself very
comfortable.

TONY

Can you pass the ketchup, Mr. J?
I've always liked a lot of ketchup.

The big family, eating dinner in the garden, under the
hanging lights.

23A INT. JARDINE HOUSE/STAIRWELL

23A

The boys come racing down the interior stairwell of the
building, skates and scooters in hand.

24 OMITTED

24

24A EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - DAY 24A

Wide shot of house as Jake finishes putting on his skates, and then follows Tony on his scooter down the sidewalk.

25 EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - DAY 25

The boys roll down the sidewalk of a busy Brooklyn shopping street.

They cross a busy intersection. Jake trips on a bump, nearly falling, but catches himself in time.

26 INT. ACTING OUT TALENT ACADEMY/LOBBY - DAY 26

Tony and Jake come in, sweaty and out of breath, looking around, not sure of where to go. A receptionist, LINDA, sits at a table full of fliers and a computer.

LINDA

Hi, can I help you guys?

TONY

We're here for the acting class.

LINDA

We have quite a few. Do you mean the Breakthrough Class?

TONY

Yes. That one.

LINDA

Well, it's twenty dollars for the first class. But you can buy a package of twenty classes for three hundred.

TONY

(to Jake)

Got cash, buddy?

Jake and Tony empty their pockets. Tony counts all their money together. There's ten dollars between them. Jake finds one more. Eleven.

TONY

Oops, sorry. Hmm. What's your name?

LINDA
My name is Linda. What's yours?

TONY
Tony. And this is my friend Jake.

LINDA
Hi guys.

TONY
What is your sign?

LINDA
My sign?

TONY
Of the zodiac. But no. Let me guess.

LINDA
Go ahead.

TONY
You're a Leo.

LINDA
How did you know??

TONY
Leos are very confident. You seem very sure of yourself.

LINDA
Wow. I'm impressed.

TONY
Linda, I'm going to be honest with you. My friend and I heard this place was the best acting school in the area, and we would love to check it out. To see if we want to make the investment. Can you make us a discount?

LINDA
Like I told you. If you buy a package of twenty, you get a discount.

TONY
They also say Leos are very generous.

LINDA

Comes down to fifteen bucks a class.

TONY

Well maybe you can help with something else.

LINDA

Sure.

TONY

Maybe you can give me some directions?

LINDA

Where to?

TONY

To your heart.

The receptionist is taken by surprise by the flirtatious joke. She laughs.

LINDA

You're too much. Go in. But only this time. And don't tell anyone.

Tony and Jake start past her, towards the classrooms.

TONY

Thank you, Linda. You won't regret it!

LINDA

(calling out)

Down the hall to the last door on the right.

27

INT. ACTING OUT TALENT ACADEMY/CLASSROOM - DAY

27

Two girls, JULIA (14) and SALLY(13), are standing facing each other in the middle of the room, surrounded by a dozen more kids sitting in chairs, Jake and Tony, and EVA (also 14) among them.

There is a moment of silence, and then the ACTING TEACHER starts to talk.

ACTING TEACHER

The first thing is to really look at somebody, and just talk and listen, listen and talk.

(MORE)

ACTING TEACHER (CONT'D)

Not to act. The genesis of acting is seeing. Yes? That's the first thing. The raw material of all acting is seeing, observing, understanding what makes behavior. I would say pay attention! So when we start doing the repetition exercise, that person does it to you; you just react. Whereas a lot of actors make it happen. Yes? But that's not acting. That's pushing, whereas you should just be relaxed.

The kids are listening, intently, taking it in.

ACTING TEACHER

Does that make sense?

No one answers.

ACTING TEACHER

Okay, let's begin.

Julia looks at Sally. Sally returns the look.

JULIA

You're wearing a pretty shirt.

SALLY

I'm wearing a pretty shirt.

JULIA

You're wearing a pretty shirt.

SALLY

Do you like my shirt?

The teacher interrupts, abruptly.

ACTING TEACHER

NO! No questions. Observations.
Let's start again.

Pause as the girls re-group.

SALLY

You have a little nose.

The other kids laugh.

ACTING TEACHER

Quiet! Concentrate.

SALLY

You have a little nose.

JULIA

I have a little nose.

SALLY

You have a little nose.

JULIA

Alright, I have a little nose.

SALLY

You have a little nose.

JULIA

I have a little nose.

SALLY

You seem a little bothered.

JULIA

I seem a little bothered.

SALLY

Yes. You seem a little bothered.

JULIA

You're getting a kick out of that.

SALLY

I'm getting a kick out of that.

JULIA

Well don't get offended.

SALLY

I'm not getting offended.

JULIA

You are acting like a baby.

SALLY

I'm acting like a baby.

ACTING TEACHER

Ok. Ok. Stop. That was okay. It could be better. Yes? Back to your seats.

He turns and looks at Jake.

ACTING TEACHER

You. Look at me. Don't move.

Jake squirms, as if he's been caught.

ACTING TEACHER

Stand up.

Jake reluctantly stands.

ACTING TEACHER

We've got to keep the contact.
We've got to keep the repetition.
The contact comes from my behavior.
Not just what I say, but what I do.

Jake looks for help from Tony.

ACTING TEACHER

Look at me. Now tell me something
you observed on your way here
today.

JAKE

I almost fell.

Laughter from the other kids.

ACTING TEACHER

You almost fell.

JAKE

I almost fell crossing the Parkway.

ACTING TEACHER

(to the class)

You see he didn't do it. What was I
saying?

JAKE

I'm sorry I don't understand.

ACTING TEACHER

You don't need to understand.
Acting is not understanding. It's
feeling. It's reacting. Does that
make sense? Look at me. Listen to
me.

Jake looks at him intently, trying to do the right thing.

ACTING TEACHER

What did I say without words? What
did my behavior say? Now say it
again.

JAKE

I'm sorry, say what again?

ACTING TEACHER

That you fell.

JAKE

You want me to say again that I fell?

ACTING TEACHER

Yes.

JAKE

With words?

ACTING TEACHER

Yes, with words!

JAKE

I almost fell on my way to class today.

ACTING TEACHER

You fell on your way to class today.

JAKE

I almost fell on my way to class today.

ACTING TEACHER

You fell on your way to class today.

JAKE

You're not listening to me.

ACTING TEACHER

I'm not listening to you.

JAKE

You're not listening to me.

Jake is getting more and more upset. Emotional.

ACTING TEACHER

I'm not listening.

JAKE

You're not listening.

ACTING TEACHER

I'm not listening.

JAKE
(on the verge of crying)
You're not listening.

ACTING TEACHER
Good! That's it. Good. Do you all
see the difference? Yes?

Tony is smiling, beaming. He's in his element.

28

EXT. HERBERT VON KING PARK/AMPHITHEATER - DAY

28

The group of guys and girls seen inside the acting school are now hanging out in the amphitheater of a City Park. Jake and Tony, are among them - the youngest in the group.

TONY
Hey, I know you from St. Grace,
right?

JULIA
Yeah, I used to go there. I go to
Humanities Prep now, in Manhattan.

TONY
Oh, la di da.

EVA
We all went to St. Grace. There
were some crazy people in that
school. Julia, you remember Mr.
Clay?

JULIA
How could I forget Mr. Clay? That
hair!

She imitates with her hand.

JULIA
Three hairs came from the bottom in
the back and somehow they ended
spreading like a wig in front. Does
he still do it?

TONY
Yeah. Only difference is now that
he's older, he does it with two
hairs, instead of three.

They laugh. The older kids are warming up to Tony.

EVA

I never even noticed his hair.

JULIA

How could you not?

EVA

Mr. Clay was the first love of my life. I was completely obsessed with him.

ALL

Eeeewww!!!

EVA

I used to fantasize about kissing him all the time.

JULIA

Gross!

Laughter. Tony laughs the loudest.

EVA

Did you ever see his body? Hello?? He used to play volleyball with us. In the summer he'd take his shirt off. He was as hairy as an ape. I loved it.

Everybody is laughing together, but Jake, who's not quite fitting in.

JULIA

So Jake, you were pretty good in class today. That was a tough exercise.

She makes him a little nervous.

JAKE

I don't know.

TONY

Jake's going to be an artist when he grows up.

SALLY

Are you? What's your medium?

JAKE

I paint, but you need to have something special to be a painter, and I'm not so sure I've got it.

TONY

You just need to believe in yourself a little bit. That's all.

(to the girls)

My friend has a little problem with his confidence. But we're working on that. Right, Jake?

He winks at Jake, as the girls look on.

TONY

Hey, who wants to do the repeat game with me? I need to practice.

SALLY

(taking the bait)

Who wants to do the repeat game with me?

TONY

(imitating the teacher)

No questions!!

Tony runs on to the stage of the amphitheater, and begins to imitate the teacher.

EVA

No questions!!

TONY

Look at me! Listen to me! Acting is not understanding! You don't need to understand. Does that make sense? Yes? Yes? Yes?

Julia, Jake and the rest of the kids are watching, amused.

29

EXT. ST. GRACE'S SCHOOL/SPORTS FIELD - DAY

29

The sports field at St. Grace's Catholic School, where Tony and his soccer group -- including UMAR and JOEY -- are playing soccer. They're serious about their game, concentrated, running around, sweating and fighting for the ball. Tony is the GOALIE.

30

INT. ST. GRACE'S SCHOOL/CAFETERIA - DAY

30

The school cafeteria at lunch time, filled with hungry BOYS and GIRLS sitting in common tables, sharing a meal. ALL THE KIDS ARE IN SCHOOL UNIFORMS.

Our SOCCER BOYS, accompanied by a couple of POPULAR GIRLS, including LIZZIE, the most popular, form a line by the food counter, getting some food.

TONY

Hey Umar, you should try that thing that the Brazilian does, Felipe Melo. You look to one player but you pass the ball to the other side.

UMAR

We could try it if you played with us more often.

TONY

I don't know what you're talking about.

They head to the tables with their trays.

UMAR

You didn't show up last Saturday.

JOEY

It's because Tony has a new boyfriend now!

The boys whistle and scream, teasingly, and the girls laugh too. Tony blushes, angry.

TONY

Yeah, ask your sister if she thinks I'm the type to have a boyfriend. She knows.

Oohss! and laughter from some other boys.

JOEY

My cousin Allen goes to 321.

TONY

So what?

JOEY

That's his school, isn't it?

TONY

What are you talking about?

UMAR

Roller girl.

JOEY

Little Jake. My cousin goes to his school. They say he's a weirdo.

TONY

Shut up, Joey!

JOEY

My cousin says he draws dresses for the girls during recess.

Tony places his backpack on the floor and grabs the hamburger on Joey's plate.

JOEY

Hey! Give that back to me!

Tony licks the bun all over, before putting it back on Joey's plate.

TONY

There you are. Eat it.

Joey grabs Tony's burrito, and swings it around in the air like an airplane.

TONY

Give that back!

He doesn't, provoking even more, so Tony hits Joey hard with a punch. The girls scream. Joey responds with a push. Tony almost falls for a second, but he gains his strength and dives forward to punch Joey. He is held back by the other boys, while some of them shout to actually heat up the fight.

31 INT. CASA DE MODA/STORE - DAY

31

Bianca, the salesgirl, is standing in the front of the store, waiting for an eventual customer, when Jake comes into the store.

BIANCA

Can I help you?

JAKE

No thank you.

Jake goes directly to the back.

Leonor is sewing. Jake walks by on his way to the office.

JAKE

Hi Leonor.

LEONOR

Wait, wait. Where do you think you're going?

JAKE

Is Tony in the office?

LEONOR

He is, and he's staying there. He's helping me out today.

JAKE

But we're supposed to meet some friends.

LEONOR

Are those the same friends that beat him up?

JAKE

What??

LEONOR

That's right. They beat him up. You should ask him why.

31A INT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA/STAIRWELL - DAY 31A

Jake walks through the maze of rooms and hallways behind the store.

32 INT. CASA DE MODA/OFFICE - DAY 32

Tony is entering numbers in the computer, copying them from a spreadsheet next to him. He has a band-aid covering a bruise on his forehead.

Jake enters.

TONY

Hey.

JAKE

(sees the bruise)
What happened??

TONY

Nothing. I bumped into Joey at soccer.

JAKE

But your mom--

TONY

She's so dramatic, she deserves an Academy Award. She doesn't want me to go out so I can help her with this. Look.

He shows Jake a spreadsheet of numbers.

TONY

She's terrible with numbers, you know. You go ahead. I'll come find you as soon as I finish here.

33

INT. OFF BROADWAY THEATER - DAY

33

Brian and two actresses, playing the roles of NINA and ARKADINA, are rehearsing on a stage of a small theater.

For now, there's just some old blankets and a small bench. Brian sits on the bench, "writing" something on a non-existent notebook. Nina sits on a blanket with pillows next to him.

NINA

What are you writing?

BRIAN/TRIGORIN

Nothing much, only an idea that occurred to me

(puts "book" in his pocket)

An idea for a short story. A young girl grows up on the shores of a lake, as you have.

Brian/Trigorin looks away, towards "the lake".

BRIAN/TRIGORIN (CONT'D)

She loves the lake as the gulls do, and is as happy and free as they are. But a man sees her who happens to come that way, and he destroys her out of idleness, as this seagull here has been destroyed.

A pause. Arkadina enters, but remains at a distance.

ARKADINA

Boris! Where are you?

BRIAN/TRIGORIN

I am coming this minute.

Brian gets up and walks towards Arkadina.

BRIAN/TRIGORIN

What do you want?

ARKADINA

We are not going away, after all.

Brian/Trigorin embraces Arkadina, while Nina gets up and stands up front stage, lost in thought.

NINA

It is a dream!

A pause. It's the end of the scene. A DIRECTOR approaches the stage from the orchestra.

DIRECTOR

Okay. Let's try this one more time.
And Brian, when you mention the
dead seagull, don't look away from
Nina.

An ASSISTANT comes to give the Director a script.

BRIAN

More seductive, you mean.

DIRECTOR

Exactly. You're very myopic. You
have an obsession with the details
of things, of people. And in this
scene you're fully focused on Nina.
You're like a razor beam.

34

EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - NIGHT

34

Brian comes walking down the street, a messenger bag around his torso, coming back from rehearsal. He approaches the house, and sees something that makes him pick up speed.

Leonor is outside, smoking a cigarette.

LEONOR

Brian. I was waiting.

BRIAN

I'm so sorry. Rehearsal went later than I expected. Is this still a good time?

LEONOR

Yes. I sent the girl home early so we could talk. You want to go inside? I'm just going to finish this.

35

INT. CASA DE MODA/STORE - NIGHT

35

Brian is inside the store. He looks around, not sure where to place himself. It gets darker and a loud 'bang' is heard. The metal shutter has been pulled down to close the store. Leonor comes in.

BRIAN

The store looks nice.

LEONOR

Thanks. I did a lot of work here.

BRIAN

The reason why I'm here, Leonor...

LEONOR

I know.

BRIAN

Your lease has been expired for more than six months now. I guess you guys were about to renew it when my father passed?

LEONOR

Brian, why don't you sit down.

They go towards the back of the store. Leonor sits behind her desk/sewing machine, Brian in front of her. He opens his messenger bag, and takes out a brown envelope.

BRIAN

My sister and I are working on the transfer of ownership for the house. It's almost done; Dad left everything in order, all the taxes paid and all that. The only thing still pending is the store, which needs to have a new lease.

LEONOR

You know, your father never thought much about contracts. He was very happy to have me here. Max thought my store gave "glamour" to the neighborhood, and he was proud to be associated.

BRIAN

The situation has changed, and now we have two families owning the house; mine and Audrey's. It's better for us, and for you, to have things done the right way, wouldn't you agree?

LEONOR

It depends on what the right way is for you.

BRIAN

Leonor, this neighborhood is changing very fast. The rents have gone up quite a lot in the past few years. I'm sure you've noticed.

LEONOR

Yes, I noticed and so did Max. But it was his desire that I stay here.

BRIAN

We don't want you to go away. My sister Audrey has prepared a new lease for you, and we think it's very fair. We aren't trying to get market rate here, we know that's not possible, but still, you can't expect to pay the same rent you paid when you first moved in.

Brian pulls some papers out of his bag.

BRIAN

Here, why don't you take a look.

LEONOR

Before we go any further with this conversation, I want you to take a look at this.

Leonor opens a drawer, and takes out a small pile of photographs. She hands them to Brian.

LEONOR

I am probably the last person to have photos printed, the old fashioned way. It's completely different than seeing them on a cellphone, don't you agree?

Brian looks through the photos. Leonor looks over his shoulder.

LEONOR

That's me in the backyard, on July 4th. That's me and Tony and your father at the Fair of St. Anthony's. That's us with my family, when they were visiting. Your father and I were very good friends. We spent a lot of time together. What you and your sister don't understand is that Max wanted me to stay here. He thought of me as part of this house, this neighborhood.

He returns the photos to Leonor.

LEONOR

I was more his family, if you want to know, than you were.

BRIAN

That's a ridiculous thing to say.

LEONOR

You hardly talked to each other. You never came to visit. I was the one here. I saw him everyday.

BRIAN

This is not what I came here for. Why don't we go back to the lease. Take a look, please. It's fair.

LEONOR

No, I don't need to. I have an idea what you and your sister have in mind. I'll just give this to my lawyer because, to be honest with you, Brian, I'm not sure I owe you anything. Maybe it's the other way around.

Brian is speechless, sideswiped by Leonor's intensity and conviction.

BRIAN

Well, I guess there's not that much more to be said then.

LEONOR

No.

Brian walks to the door, and out.

BRIAN

Goodnight, Leonor.

Leonor says nothing.

36 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

36

Kathy is setting the table. Brian enters and walks through without stopping.

KATHY

Brian. Want to help me out here?

BRIAN

Sure, but just give me a moment.

KATHY

What's wrong?

BRIAN (O.S.)

Is Jake here?

37 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

37

Jake and Tony are playing a video game when Brian comes in.

JAKE

Hi Dad!

TONY

Hi, Mr. J.

BRIAN

(angry)

Jake, you know it's a weekday. What are you doing playing video games?!

JAKE

Can Tony stay and eat with us?

BRIAN

(harsh)

No.

They stop playing, and look at Brian with surprise.

JAKE

Why not? He wanted to ask you about your acting career.

BRIAN

That's enough for tonight. Turn it off.

JAKE

Dad, c'mon!

BRIAN

I said no.

TONY

We're about to finish the level.

BRIAN

Tony, you need to go home now. We can talk about acting another time.

Brian notices the boys are getting uncomfortable.

TONY

Sure, Mr. J.

BRIAN

(to Tony, softening)

I'm sorry, buddy. Your mother is waiting for you downstairs.

Brian makes a quick exit, shutting the door behind him.

The boys look at each other, unsure of what to do.

38 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/BATHROOM - NIGHT

38

Water is pouring from the shower. Brian, naked inside the glass, tests the temperature with his hand carefully. He adjusts the temperature one bit more, and finally goes under the shower.

Brian takes a deep breath in, and a deep breath out as the water rains down on him, hoping it will wash off his apprehensions.

39 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

39

Jake, with a backpack, and Tony are in the middle of a conversation with Kathy.

KATHY

Did you ask your mother?

TONY

She loves when Jake comes over.

JAKE

Please, Mom? Please?

KATHY

Jake I just made dinner.

JAKE

I'll eat it tomorrow for lunch, I promise.

KATHY

Okay. But I want you back here in the morning.

JAKE

Yes! Thanks.

TONY

Thank you, Mrs. Jardine.

They run out of the apartment...

39A INT. JARDINE HOUSE/STAIRWELL - NIGHT

39A

... and down the stairwell, and out the front door, slamming it behind them.

40 EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - NIGHT

40

Outside the house, Leonor is closing the gate to her store, talking to Tony. Jake stands by watching, withdrawn by the tone of the conversation.

LEONOR

No, Antonio.

TONY

C'mon, Mami. We have spaghetti in the fridge.

LEONOR

When I say no I mean it. Don't ask me again.

TONY

But we're going to be super quiet!
Aren't we, Jake?

JAKE

Yes we are.

LEONOR

*Antonio. No. Listen to me and don't
argue.*

JAKE

It's okay Tony. I'll see you
tomorrow.

Leonor begins to walk away.

LEONOR

Goodnight, Jake.

JAKE

Goodnight, Mrs. Calvelli.

Tony reluctantly follows his mom, then turns towards Jake.

TONY

See you tomorrow.

JAKE

Yeah, see you tomorrow.

40A INT. JARDINE HOUSE/STAIRWELL - NIGHT 40A

Jake enters the dark stairwell. He stands by himself for a moment to collect his thoughts, before heading up to his family's apartment.

41 OMITTED 41

41A EXT. BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT 41A

A few shots of Brooklyn at night. The streets are quiet. A car passes. It's that hour when anyone who's still up maybe shouldn't be.

42 OMITTED 42

43 OMITTED 43

44 EXT. HERBERT VON KING PARK - DAY

44

Jake rolls through the park on his roller blades. He arrives at the sport's field, and stays on the edge, observing the activity of the players.

Half the kids are without shirts, playing against the other team, with shirts. They're running and kicking the ball, sweaty, screaming at each other, throwing themselves at the ball. Jake sees Tony, playing goalie, and walks towards him.

They talk as Tony continues to pay attention to game.

TONY

I'm not talking to my mother anymore.

JAKE

Why not?

TONY

She said you can't come over to our place. It's not right.

JAKE

Why doesn't she want me over?

TONY

I don't think your father wants me around very much anymore either. He might be too chicken to come out and say it, but I can tell.

JAKE

Why are they so mad at us?

TONY

Our parents are involved in a business matter and it's getting ugly. So they're taking it out on us.

JAKE

You're right. My dad was very cold to you.

TONY

You'd think I was the enemy.

JAKE

I won't talk to my parents either then.

The opponents head towards Tony and the goal.

TONY

Really?

JAKE

Really. Not unless they apologize.

UMAR

Tony! C'mon!! Are you playing or what?

Tony looks at Jake.

TONY

You sure you can handle it? It won't be easy.

JAKE

Of course I can handle it.

Tony returns his focus to the game.

TONY

You're a great friend, Jake.

JAKE

You too.

45 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/JAKE'S BEDROOM - DAY

45

Jake is sitting at his desk, working on his drawings.

BRIAN

Hey.

Jake's eyes remain glued to his drawing.

BRIAN

Did something happen with Leonor downstairs?

Jake looks at his father, but doesn't say anything.

BRIAN

The store is closed. It's not even five yet.

Jake shrugs his shoulders, turns his attention back to the paper.

BRIAN

Have you seen Tony?

Another shrug.

BRIAN

Jake, can you stop playing around
for a second??

Jake stops.

BRIAN

Did you see if the store was open
earlier when you got home?

Jake shakes his head yes.

BRIAN

Was it open?

Jake shakes his head no.

BRIAN

No? It wasn't?

Brian's cell phone starts ringing.

BRIAN

Talk to me Jake!

Jake looks at his dad, but doesn't say anything. Brian,
resigned, picks up his phone.

BRIAN

(on the phone)
Audrey. Hi.

Jake watches as his father walks towards the door, and out,
talking on the phone.

BRIAN

(on the phone)
No, I haven't heard from her. (...)
Today I got home early and the
store was closed, it's strange.
(...) Isn't it better if you call
her? (...)

Jake goes back to his drawing.

46

INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/LIVING AREA - NIGHT

46

Dinner time at the Jardine's; the meal in progress.

Kathy and Brian are in the midst of a discussion, as Jake
takes a seat at his usual spot.

KATHY
It's not your fault.

BRIAN
But I feel very responsible. We are
responsible.

KATHY
Audrey will tell you if she thinks
you owe her money. Don't worry
about it.

BRIAN
She sort of did already.

KATHY
What?

BRIAN
She told me we owe her money for
the store.

KATHY
Incredible.

Kathy can't believe this.

BRIAN
Yes, I know.

KATHY
Jake. Did you see Leonor today?

Jake, shakes his head no, and sits down at the table.

KATHY
Ah. Still not talking.

BRIAN
No.

She hands Jake the bowl of salad.

KATHY
You know, you can't go on with this
forever.

Jake starts helping himself.

KATHY
(to Brian)
Have you seen Jake's latest
artwork?

BRIAN

No.

KATHY

He's been doing a lot of mythological stuff.

BRIAN

Is that inspired by that book I gave you?

Jake swings his head side to side: more or less.

BRIAN

The Blood of Olympus.

Jake swings his head again, more emphatically: more or less, I said.

KATHY

Truth is, if he's really serious about applying to LaGuardia, he's going to need to start preparing a serious portfolio, no?

BRIAN

Yes. From what I remember, only 2% of the students who apply to LaGuardia get accepted. This means two out of a hundred. Twenty out of a thousand. They're not just looking for talent; they're looking for serious commitment.

KATHY

And you famously flunked.

BRIAN

I didn't "flunk"!

Kathy laughs. Jake also. Brian doesn't find it funny.

BRIAN

I wasn't accepted, which is different.

47 INT. CASA DE MODA/STORE - DAY

47

Bianca, the salesgirl, is rearranging clothes on the large display table up front when Kathy comes in.

KATHY

Hello.

BIANCA

Hi. Can I help you with anything?

KATHY

Thanks. I'm looking for Leonor. Oh,
I see her.

Leonor is behind the sewing machine in the back of the store,
fixing a pair of palazzo pants.

KATHY

Hi Leonor.

LEONOR

Hi. Just a second, let me just me
finish this.

Kathy sits on a chair across from her, and waits for her to
finish sewing. Leonor pulls the pants away from the machine,
and breaks the thread with her teeth.

LEONOR

You're home early.

KATHY

Monday.

LEONOR

Right. Your day off. Oh, you have
to see this new dress. Bianca, show
her the new dress! The green one.

Leonor puts another pair of pants on the machine, and starts
sewing.

Bianca picks up a green dress from the racks. Kathy,
politely, goes to check it out.

BIANCA

Remember the original wrap dress,
the first one that Diane von
Furstenberg made?

KATHY

Of course. Wow, that's an original?

BIANCA

No, we found this fabric, it's
vintage fabric. And Leonor made the
dress herself.

KATHY

It's beautiful. Wow. But it's really not my style. Thank you. I need to talk to Leonor.

Kathy approaches the back of the store again. This time Leonor keeps concentrated on her sewing job, and doesn't stop to talk.

KATHY

Cute dress.

LEONOR

I made it. The fabric is vintage.

KATHY

Yes. I really like it, but I can't wear anything too tight on the waist these days. I need to lose a few pounds first.

Leonor keeps sewing. Kathy looks around the store. She clearly wants to say something, but Leonor avoids any eye contact.

KATHY

Leonor, do you have a minute?

LEONOR

I have to finish this for a client tonight.

KATHY

Tony is still not talking?

LEONOR

No. Not a word to me yesterday.

KATHY

Same with Jake.

LEONOR

It's very annoying.

KATHY

The one good thing, I have to say, is that Jake has been drawing and painting more than ever.

LEONOR

Is that good?

KATHY

Yes! If he really wants to apply to LaGuardia, he needs to prepare a portfolio. Is Tony still planning on applying also?

LEONOR

How would I know? It's been four days and he hasn't said a word to me.

KATHY

Listen, Leonor, you know that I'm trained in conflict resolution, so I'm hoping I can help here, help settle this problem between you and our family.

LEONOR

Oh really? Has your husband asked you to do that?

KATHY

No. And by the way, he's been working really hard. I'm not sure you know that, but he's rehearsing for a new play.

LEONOR

No. I haven't seen your husband.

KATHY

I know he's been waiting to hear from you.

Leonor doesn't respond.

KATHY

Leonor?

Leonor continues to sew, until Kathy loses her patience, and slaps her hand on top of the piece of clothing Leonor is trying to sew.

KATHY

Can't we talk about what is really going on here?

Leonor is startled: a completely unexpected reaction from Kathy. She looks over to Bianca, to make sure she's not listening.

LEONOR

Shh. Not here.

48 EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

48

Leonor smokes a cigarette in the backyard. Kathy is next to her.

KATHY

I know you think we're the rich people coming into this neighborhood, but the truth is Brian hasn't made any money in years. I've been supporting this family with my hard work.

LEONOR

That's not my problem.

KATHY

I know it's not. I'm just trying to talk about it.

LEONOR

You think talking is going to solve all your problems, don't you? You think you can use some of your psychology class tricks and just wash away the dirt here? That dirt is my sweat, sweetie. It's my life. It's not going to be that easy.

KATHY

I know that. What I want to tell you is we will give you time, but we need this money. We need the shop to cover its rent. That's not an unfair thing to ask of a tenant.

LEONOR

But I'm not a tenant. To Max I was more than a tenant. I was family. I belong here. And before you go any further; let me ask you: do you know how much work I've done here? The tile floors? The marble bathroom? That office in the back? I paid for all that.

Leonor throws her cigarette out. She turns and goes back into the store, leaving KATHY alone in the yard.

49 EXT. ACTING OUT TALENT ACADEMY - DAY

49

Julia is putting on her roller blades. Tony stands beside her, trying to make conversation.

TONY

You look like you've been doing
this acting thing forever.

JULIA

Really?

TONY

Like when you did the Emotional
Recall exercise, it just seems so
natural, I can't explain.

JULIA

You know, my father was a stunt man
when I was a kid. So I spent a lot
of time on sets and stuff.

TONY

So you have been doing this
forever.

JULIA

No, because when I was eight years
old he died.

TONY

Did he die doing a stunt?

JULIA

No! He had throat cancer.

TONY

Oh.

(stumped, thinking)

I'm sorry for your loss.

Eva comes out of the School, and joins Julia.

JULIA

(to Tony)

I'll see you later?

TONY

I hope so.

She and Eva leave together, as Tony watches.

50

EXT. HERBERT VON KING PARK/AMPHITHEATER - DAY

50

At a table in the park, Jake is sketching the landscape in a
sketchbook, with his collection of Caran d'Aches spread
around him. Tony is sitting across from him.

TONY

Do you know anyone with a swimming pool?

JAKE

No, why?

TONY

I would do anything to see her in a bikini. Can you imagine?

JAKE

I never thought about that.

TONY

So what about you? Who do you like?

JAKE

They're all very nice.

TONY

You can tell me, you know.

JAKE

Tell you what?

TONY

If you like someone.

Jake keeps sketching in his book.

JAKE

I don't know.

TONY

That's what you always say.

JAKE

Well I do have an idea you might like.

TONY

What?

JAKE

Eva talked about going dancing. There's a matinee club, like after hours, for kids.

TONY

When is it?

JAKE

Sunday afternoon, in the City.

TONY

Let's go!

JAKE

It would be fun, right?

TONY

That would be perfect. If I can just dance with her...

Tony comes closer, to check out Jake's drawing.

TONY

Wow, that's getting good, Jake. I'm impressed.

51 INT. LEONOR'S APARTMENT/TONY'S ROOM - NIGHT 51

Tony is on his bed, playing a video game. There's a knock on the door, and Leonor sticks her head inside.

LEONOR

Your father.

52 INT. LEONOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 52

NICK CALVELLI, Tony's Italian-American father, is making himself a drink at the bar. He's taken by surprise when Tony enters running to give him a strong hug and a kiss.

NICK

Tony! Whoa, man, watch out buddy.

With the impact, some of the drink spills on Tony's head. Tony wipes his head with his father's shirt.

NICK

Wait, wait. Let me do this for you. Don't worry. This is good luck. There you go. So tell me; what's going on? How's school? You still hoping for LaGuardia?

Leonor brings a cup with ice to the table.

LEONOR

C'mon, Antonio. You're not going to talk to your father?

Tony shakes his head no, and gives his father another hug.

NICK

Did the cat get your tongue?

LEONOR

You forget he's too old for this kind of joke.

NICK

What happened?

LEONOR

He's mad at his mother.

NICK

What about?

LEONOR

Ask him.

Tony looks at them both; he's not budging.

NICK

Tony, now that I'm here you're not going to say anything to me?

Tony shrugs his shoulders. Nick looks at Leonor, questioning. She shrugs her shoulders too.

LEONOR

*Go finish your homework, Antonio.
We're having dinner soon.*

53

INT. LEONOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

53

Dinner is served. Leonor sits down and they start helping themselves to food. Tony, ever silent, pays attention closely to the conversation.

NICK

So what are you going to do, Leonor?

LEONOR

I don't know yet, but Hernàn is helping me out.

NICK

Hernàn? Isn't he a bankruptcy lawyer?

LEONOR

Yes.

NICK

Is he the best person for this?

LEONOR

He's my friend. He knows strategy.

NICK

Are we talking about an exit strategy?

LEONOR

No. A fighting strategy.

NICK

But you should have an exit plan.

LEONOR

I intend to fight. They can't do this to me.

Tony eats, but his ears are clearly on the conversation. He is very curious about all this.

NICK

What if they can?

LEONOR

What do you want me to say, Nick? That I'm going to open a drug store? Start making furniture?

NICK

Or look for a job?

Leonor stops eating for a moment. She can't believe her ears.

LEONOR

You can't be serious.

NICK

Don't take everything so personally, Leonor. The world isn't always stacked up against you.

LEONOR

What does this have to do with anything?

NICK

Rent goes up. That's life in this city. These people are not doing this to you.

LEONOR

Why do you always have to disagree with me?

NICK

I'm not disagreeing with you.

LEONOR

Can't you be on my side for once in your life?

NICK

I'm just being realistic. Life here is expensive. I think you should have a plan.

LEONOR

What do you think I'm doing? Do you think this is easy for me?

NICK

I know it's not.

LEONOR

That store is how I have raised our son. With not much help from you, thank you very much.

NICK

That's not true.

LEONOR

Really? Do you think that sending him a little gift at the end of the year is enough to keep him fed? To buy him clothes? To take him to a movie every so often?

NICK

Can we not talk about money now? Damn, Leonor. You spoil everything. I can't even eat.

At this, Tony bangs his fork and knife on the table, loudly.

54

INT. LEONOR'S APARTMENT/TONY'S ROOM - NIGHT

54

Tony and Nick are playing a video game on Tony's bed. They are both concentrated, playing and actually having fun.

NICK

Can you keep a secret? Swear? I was invited to head the mission in Kinshasa. It's a nice big city for Africa.

(playing the game)

Oh no. No! No!! Shit.

Tony smiles. He's winning. Nick jerks his body, tries hard, but it's too late. He's lost.

NICK

Not far from Angola. I'm finally going to have my own apartment. Why don't you come and stay with me for a while? We could go on a safari. The rainforest is incredible. They're famous for these big gorillas, hippopotamus, all kinds of animals.

Tony smiles, and gives his father a big hug.

NICK

This acting school thing. Is it serious?

Tony shakes his head yes.

NICK

How serious?

Tony shakes his head again. It's very serious.

NICK

That's good. There's a lot more in this world than Brooklyn.

Tony goes to hug his father.

NICK

Listen, Tony. I know your mom can be a little rough, but she's just worried about you. You're not a kid anymore, and she needs you to look out for her. I need you to look out for her.

54A INT. LEONOR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

54A

Leonor is cleaning up after dinner, drying the dishes.

55

EXT. MIDTOWN PLAZA - DAY

55

Audrey and Brian sit on a bench in a concrete garden in Midtown, the plaza of a great building, drinking to-go coffees.

AUDREY

Well, Dad must have really liked her. That part I think she's probably right about. He never raised the rent on the store. Not even once in more than eight years. And now Leonor's lawyer is charging us for improvements she made in the store.

BRIAN

What does that mean?

AUDREY

She wants to fight. The woman is trouble, Brian. Once again, our warm, lovable, unwise father left us with a big mess, and no instructions.

They both take that in.

AUDREY

Is it terrible, Brian, that I don't really miss him?

BRIAN

No, it's not terrible. It's sad, but I don't blame you.

AUDREY

Do you miss him?

BRIAN

Sometimes. But I live in his house, so I probably think about him more than you do.

AUDREY

She's claiming she has the right to stay paying almost nothing. I think we should start the eviction process as soon as possible.

BRIAN

I don't want to have to do that.

AUDREY

It takes a while, you know.

BRIAN

I just don't want this to get ugly.
The boys are best friends now.

AUDREY

Remember that Dad worked very hard
to leave us something. Now you have
a nice big apartment, and I'm
getting nothing.

BRIAN

Just give me a little more time.

AUDREY

I can't do this without you, you
know.

56 INT. KID'S DISCO - DAY

56

It's Studio 54 for KIDS and young TEENAGERS. Jake emerges from the bathroom and discovers a dance floor packed with boys and girls dancing in groups or doing solo numbers.

Some come up with elaborate choreographies, while others just shake their bodies best they can. Many of them are in costumes, some with lights blinking, laser flash lights and other Disco toys.

In the middle of the dance floor, Julia and Tony dance with each other - no choreography here, just plain dancing and having fun. He gives it all he's got, admiring her, while she closes her eyes, and lets the music take her away.

She opens her eyes, and sees Tony looking at her. Julia smiles at him and they have a little moment dancing. Tony feels confident.

TONY

Hey, do you want to come with me to
the beach?

Julia has a hard time hearing him.

TONY

The beach! This summer! You want to
come with me?

She just keeps on dancing.

TONY

Yes? No?

JULIA

No, Tony. You're really nice and everything..., but I'm into older guys.

Tony's legs slow down, he loses his rhythm.

TONY

Oh, okay. Thank you for being honest.

He's moved a little farther away and she has a harder time hearing him.

JULIA

What?

TONY

(shouting)

Thank you for being honest.

A couple of GIRLS begin to dance with Julia, and Tony gradually moves away from her.

For a moment, he seems lost on the dance floor. He looks around, and only see strangers.

By the bar, Jake watches Tony on the dance floor.

57 INT/EXT. SUBWAY - DUSK

57

SHOTS of the city passing by at night from inside a subway train.

There's only a few people inside the subway. Tony and Jake are on a bench together, not talking.

It's the end of a long day.

58 EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - NIGHT

58

Brian walks down the street, coming home late from rehearsal. As he approaches his house, he sees something that catches his attention. He moves closer, and takes out his phone to light a sign posted on the window of the store.

On the window, a sign: HELP WANTED - experience in retail required.

59

INT. JARDINE APARTMENT - NIGHT

59

Brian comes in from the kitchen, with a bottle of wine, to join Kathy. She is on the couch with a book, and a glass of wine in front of her.

BRIAN

Do you want some more?

KATHY

Sure.

He sits next to her, and pours some wine in both glasses.

KATHY

How'd it go?

BRIAN

I think it's going to be great. I love my part, I love the actors, the play is fantastic.

KATHY

I'll toast to that.

They make a toast, but Brian seems tense.

KATHY

What's going on?

BRIAN

Did you see the sign Leonor has posted in the window?

KATHY

No, I didn't see anything.

BRIAN

She doesn't acknowledge the new lease, she doesn't try to negotiate and she has no plans of leaving. And now she's actually hiring new people, can you believe it?

KATHY

I told you this wasn't going to be easy.

BRIAN

Audrey wants to start an eviction process. She has a lawyer ready to go already.

KATHY

Good. Then it's decided.

BRIAN

Is it?

Kathy takes a sip.

KATHY

Who's going to tell Jake?

BRIAN

I will. It's my problem.

KATHY

Well then tell him soon. Please.

BRIAN

He's just being so childish lately.

59A INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

59A

Jake is lying on his bed in his pajamas, with only a reading light on. He's concentrated on his work, drawing quietly, surrounded by his colored pencils.

60 INT. OFF BROADWAY THEATER - NIGHT

60

The stage is set; a lawn by a lake, a dead seagull and the wall of a house in the background. Brian and the actress playing NINA are in costume and in character. It's opening night.

NINA

What are you writing?

BRIAN/TRIGORIN

An idea for a short story. A young girl grows up on the shores of a lake, as you have.

Brian/Trigorin looks intently into Nina's eyes.

BRIAN/TRIGORIN (CONT'D)

She loves the lake as the gulls do, and is as happy and free as they are. But a man sees her who happens to come that way, and he destroys her out of idleness, and this seagull here has been destroyed.

A pause. Arkadina appears on the window of the house.

ARKADINA
Boris! Where are you?

BRIAN/TRIGORIN
I am coming this minute.

Brian/Trigorin gets up and walks towards the house. Arkadina remains at the window.

BRIAN/TRIGORIN
What do you want?

ARKADINA
We are not going away, after all.

Nina stands by herself at the front of the stage.

NINA
It is a dream!

The lights go out, and the audience begins to clap vigorously. Kathy sits next to Tony, who is next to Jake. Jake is clapping most vigorously of all.

61 INT. JARDINE CAR - NIGHT

61

Brian is driving his car through the city. Kathy is sitting in the passenger seat next to him, holding a BOUQUET OF FLOWERS. And in the back, Jake and Tony are there, sitting next to Roger, Brian's agent.

ROGER
It's in your delivery. It's very natural. You really manage to make Trigorin feel contemporary.

BRIAN
Well, thank you, Roger.

ROGER
He's like one of those famous artists we meet at a party, you know? You're excited at first, but the minute you start a conversation, you're begging not to be left alone with the guy.

BRIAN
Is that a good thing?

ROGER
Yes!

KATHY
He's such a tormented artist. It's wonderful.

Brian stops the car in front of Roger's apartment building.

ROGER
And there were some really funny parts too.

BRIAN
Isn't it! Chekhov called it a comedy in four acts.

ROGER
Act two, particularly.

BRIAN
(laughing)
It is.

Roger squeezes Brian's shoulder, and leans over the seat to give Kathy a kiss.

ROGER
Bye Kathy. Great to see you.

KATHY
Loved seeing you, Roger. It's been a great night.

He high fives with the boys, on his way out.

ROGER
Bye fellas. You should be very proud of this man here!

Roger steps out of the car. Brian gives a big smile, and waves goodbye to his friend.

The car starts again. Brian drives, and looks at the boys behind him in the rearview mirror.

BRIAN
So?

Jake and Tony smile.

KATHY

Jake? It's your dad's opening night.

BRIAN

Did you understand why Nina says she's the seagull?

Jake shakes his head yes, Tony shakes his no.

KATHY

Brian. They're kids. To be honest, I'm not even sure I get that part.

The boys look at each other and start laughing.

KATHY

But that doesn't take anything away from the pleasure of the story.

Brian drives on, silent.

Suddenly, he pulls the car over, and shifts the gear to park, then turns around, and faces the boys. He's upset.

BRIAN

Do either of you care about anyone other than yourselves?

Jake is startled, trying to figure out who to answer to, his father or his friend.

BRIAN

Jake? Say something.

Jake looks at Tony, who is shaking his head vigorously.

BRIAN

Say something!

Jake is frozen.

BRIAN

One of the hardest things to realize as a child is that your parents are people too. Can you understand that? That they care about things. That they make mistakes. That they try to do what they think is right. Does any of what I'm saying make any sense to you?

Jake shakes his head yes. Tony laughs.

BRIAN

What's so funny, Tony? Why don't you tell me, what's funny?? You think being an actor is easy? You think you have it in you for one rejection after another? Let's see how you react when you don't get into LaGuardia. Let's just see then.

KATHY

Brian...

BRIAN

God damn it!!

He turns around, and puts the gear in drive, lurching back into the street. The boys look at each other. They are a little frightened, and a little victorious.

62

INT. CASA DE MODA/STORE - DAY

62

Leonor picks up a dress from a pile on the main table, and shows it to the new salesgirl, VALENTINA.

LEONOR

Dresses go over there, on that rack on the left. Before you hang them, make sure they have a price tag. Also, try to arrange them by color, or tone. I usually like to start with lighter colors in the front, and end with darker ones. Black goes in the back. The women here like black a lot, so if they're looking for a little black dress, they might see a lot of other stuff before they get there.

VALENTINA

I see. So if they don't know what they want, I try to keep them here in the front first, and then show them the ones in the back.

LEONOR

Unless they ask specifically for black.

They hear a bell RINGING, and look towards the door. Brian comes in.

VALENTINA

Hello. Can I help you?

LEONOR

It's okay, Valentina. It's for me.
This is Brian Jardine, our
neighbor. He's a great actor.

VALENTINA

Oh really? Have I seen you in
anything?

BRIAN

I doubt it.

LEONOR

He's in a new play. What is it
called?

BRIAN

The Seagull.

LEONOR

Oh. That must be very popular.

BRIAN

Can you give me five minutes alone?
Please?

63

EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

63

Leonor and Brian are standing outside. Leonor lights a
cigarette.

LEONOR

The day your father died, he came
by in the morning. I asked him to
buy me a pack of cigarettes, and
then I never saw him again.

Leonor gets emotional, and a tear rolls down her face.

LEONOR

Your father cared about me, Brian.
Do you believe that? Every day we
would talk, and we would share
things with each other. Have you
ever had a friend like that?
Someone you could tell anything?

BRIAN

Only my wife. I'm a lot like Jake.
I've never been good at having
close friends.

Leonor takes another drag.

BRIAN

I hope you can understand that
what's happening is nothing
personal.

LEONOR

I can't afford to pay three times
the rent I paid your father. It's
not possible. I can't survive.

Brian doesn't respond.

LEONOR

I thought you were in a new big
play.

BRIAN

I am in a new play. But it's not
big, and it's not a lot of money.
It's just the way it is, Leonor.
I'm fortunate enough to have had a
father who left me a house in
Brooklyn.

LEONOR

He wanted me to stay here. He told
me so.

BRIAN

Leonor. I also have a sister, and
she has her own family, and we all
have to decide together what to do.
It's not just up to me.

Leonor takes a moment, and then proceeds in a new direction.

LEONOR

You know your father thought your
sister was the one who inherited
his brains.

Brian doesn't know how to respond.

BRIAN

They were very much alike. I'm sure he would agree with Audrey that, above everything, it's important to take care of business.

LEONOR

No. He wouldn't have agreed. I can promise you that.

BRIAN

Leonor, what do you want me to say? I have a family. We have bills too.

LEONOR

Do you know why your father didn't go to your son's birthday party, the last one?

BRIAN

He had the flu.

LEONOR

No. That's maybe what he told you. The truth is, he was embarrassed, Brian. He was embarrassed that everything in your house was paid for by your wife. He thought you should be more of a man. He hated being around you.

Brian tries to swallow some coffee, but the cup is empty.

BRIAN

Well, he's not around anymore, is he.

LEONOR

He certainly isn't.

64

INT. CASA DE MODA/OFFICE - NIGHT

64

Leonor is on the couch in the office, while Hernàn, her lawyer, sits on the edge of the desk holding official court room papers. He's very serious, and she's clearly very upset.

HERNÀN

This Holdover clause is common in any commercial lease.

He hands her a piece of paper, which she reads.

LEONOR

What am I going to do? I can't afford this.

Hernàn comes closer and puts his hand on her shoulder. The door opens all of a sudden, and Tony storms in, frightening Leonor.

LEONOR

Jesus! I told you to knock before you come in. What do you want?
()

Tony laughs at the fright he's given Leonor.

LEONOR

I am so tired of you playing this silly game!

Tony realizes by the tone of her voice that this is serious.

HERNÀN

I'm sorry, Leonor.

He takes the paper from Leonor's hands.

LEONOR

Where do they even get this number?

Her eyes fill up with angry tears.

HERNÀN

The penalty for overstaying may seem like a high number, and it is. That's why it's in the contract; to prevent that the tenant overstays paying below the market rent indefinitely.

LEONOR

Isn't there anything else we can do?

HERNÀN

Leonor, I've done everything I can. It's over now. You have a week to leave the premises.

Tony sees his mother's eyes tear up with the news. She starts to cry, and it's too much for him to bear. He goes and hugs his mother.

TONY

Don't worry, Mami. I'm going to help you. I promise, I'll figure out a way we can work it all out.

He holds her as her crying turns into sobs.

65 OMITTED 65

66 EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/STAIRWELL - NIGHT 66

The empty stairwell. The doorbell rings. Brian comes down the stairwell to the front door of the house.

The bell RINGS again, just as he OPENS the door.

Tony is there, with his mom behind him.

TONY

Hello, Mr. J. Is Jake home?

Brian takes in that Tony is talking to him for the first time in weeks.

BRIAN

Yes, he's doing his homework.

TONY

I'd like to talk to him if I could.

BRIAN

Of course, Tony. Come in.

Leonor catches his eye.

BRIAN

Why don't you both come in. Leonor. Please.

They walk up the stairs to the apartment.

67 INT. JARDINE APARTMENT - NIGHT 67

The door to Jake's room is closed.

Brian and Leonor sit together just outside at the dining room table.

Kathy is standing a few feet away, at the kitchen door.

They have been waiting for awhile, waiting for the boys to emerge. It's clearly an awkward situation for everyone.

KATHY

You sure I can't get you something,
Leonor.

LEONOR

Yes, I'm fine.

Another moment of awkward silence... Until suddenly the door opens and Jake comes running out.

JAKE

Mom! Dad! Mom!!

BRIAN

He talks! Jacob talks!

JAKE

Mom!!!

KATHY

What's going on?!

JAKE

Mom, Tony told me Leonor is being
evacuated from the store!

KATHY

It's not an evacuation. It's an
eviction.

JAKE

That's worse!

JAKE

How could you do that? How could
you do that to them? Dad??

BRIAN

It's a terrible situation.

JAKE

The rent is too expensive! She
can't afford it, Mom. So Dad needs
to give her a discount so she can!

BRIAN

Your mother and I wanted to talk to
you, Jake, but this not talking
didn't help!

KATHY

Don't blame this on him.

JAKE

It's okay, I'm talking now! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'll never do that again. I promise. Dad, I promise.

BRIAN

Jake, calm down.

JAKE

I have a great idea.

BRIAN

Let me explain to you, Jake. Grandpa Max left this house not just for the three of us here.

JAKE

I know. He loved Leonor too. Tony told me!

BRIAN

He liked Leonor, of course, but he left the house for us, and also for Aunt Audrey.

JAKE

But I have an idea! I know how we can make it work! We go back to our old apartment, and we rent this place and give the money to Aunt Audrey. Tony and I are both going to be at the LaGuardia High School for Performing Arts in Manhattan, so I won't need to take the subway or anything to school. I can walk. And you'll be closer to the theater. I loved the show, Dad. I loved it. Tony did too. We both talked about it a lot afterwards. You were so good! And I thought it was really complex and everything. I'm sorry I didn't tell you then. I'm sorry. But I loved it. I really did!

Leonor, Tony, Kathy, and Brian all look in silence as Jake goes on, trying to make this adult mess make sense again.

- 67A EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - NIGHT 67A
- We see the house from the outside. The gate has not been pulled down on the storefront yet, but most of the lights are off.
- Upstairs the lights are all on.
- 68 EXT. BROOKLYN - NIGHT 68
- A wide shot of the city of Brooklyn, houses and trees, the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in the distance.
- 69 EXT. BROOKLYN - DAY 69
- A similar shot across Brooklyn at day, with the bridge and the water and Manhattan in the distance.
- 70 INT. CASA DE MODA/STORE - DAY 70
- There are no clothes anymore, no decorations on the wall, the racks are bare naked. The store is completely empty.
- 70A EXT. JARDINE HOUSE/CASA DE MODA - DAY 70A
- Jake takes a look inside the store through the window. There's a "FOR RENT" sign on the glass. Jake looks for a good long moment, and then skates off down the street.
- 71 EXT. HERBERT VON KING PARK - DAY 71
- Boys are playing a game of soccer.
- Jake approaches on his roller blades, and comes to a stop at the edge of the field. He watches the game from the side. Umar and Joey are among the players, but not Tony.
- Jake skates away, through the park.
- 72 EXT. BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY 72
- Several shots of Jake skating through the neighborhood streets.

72A EXT. WATERFRONT PARK - DAY 72A

We see Jake alone for almost the first time, and he is both more vulnerable, and more confident. He passes by the Verazzano-Narrows Bridge, and then along the waterfront. He moves in silence, only the sound of the wind and the expanse of the Bay beside him.

73 OMITTED 73

74 EXT. WATERFRONT PARK - DAY 74

Brian pulls up in his car, comes to a stop, and gets out. And already walking towards the car is Jake, with bandages on his right knee, being helped along by a PARK RANGER, who carries his roller blades.

PARK RANGER

Mr. Jardine?

BRIAN

How are you, Son?

JAKE

I'm sorry, Dad.

BRIAN

What happened?

JAKE

There was a bump on the path...

PARK RANGER

We got a call from a woman who saw Jake here flying through the air and landing on the asphalt. When we found him, he couldn't move.

JAKE

I'm better now.

PARK RANGER

He is better. But he probably shouldn't be on his own at his age.

JAKE

There was a bump, I didn't see.

BRIAN

Are you hurt?

Jake shrugs.

PARK RANGER

He fell on his right side shoulder,
and he scraped his knee.

BRIAN

Let's go home.

The ranger helps Brian put Jake in the back, with his leg stretched out and his foot up on the seat. Brian gets in to the driver's seat of the car.

75

INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

75

Jake is lying down on his bed. Kathy applies antibacterial cream carefully to his scraped knee.

KATHY

Is it okay like this?

JAKE

Yeah. Go slow.

KATHY

And how's your arm? Can you move it okay?

JAKE

It hurts when I go like this.

He moves it up and down a hair. Brian is standing behind them, in the dark.

BRIAN

Dad had a heating pad that he used
to use. I can't find it.

(to Kathy)

You know where it is?

KATHY

I think it's in the hall closet.
I'll get it in a minute.

She finishes with the cream, then gives Jake a kiss, and steps out.

Brian takes over for her to finish the bandages.

BRIAN

Do you still have a lot to do to
finish your portfolio?

JAKE

I just need to finish one painting,
and then I'm done.

BRIAN

That's what you said last week. You
just had to finish one painting.

JAKE

I want them to be good.

BRIAN

Jake, do you by any chance remember
that story I told you, about my
friend Tina?

JAKE

The one who sold her hair in India
for a train ticket?

BRIAN

No, that was Martine. Tina was a
girl I knew in high school who was
a dancer. Her mother was a dancer.
She was literally born to be a
dancer. She had a perfect ballet
dancer's body, and all of us were
certain she was going to be a big
success.

JAKE

Have I seen her dance?

BRIAN

No. During high school, she got
into a really good conservatory,
and I ran into her a couple of
times after that, and she was
always about to get this, or about
to get that. But each time, her arm
would be in a sling, or she would
be on crutches. She would have a
pulled ligament. Or a stress
fracture in her back. The last time
I saw her, I ran into her on the
subway, it was clear she hadn't
danced for years. She was fat. You
would have never imagined that she
was the same girl.

JAKE

Gee, thanks Dad. That's a very
encouraging story.

BRIAN

Why do you think Tina didn't go very far?

JAKE

I don't know.

BRIAN

She trained too hard. She practiced too much. She didn't trust her own natural abilities.

He continues to wrap the bandage.

BRIAN

Jake, you're going to meet a lot of really talented people in your life. But they won't all be suited to be artists, they won't all have the brains to know when to insist, and when to stop. When to push yourself, and when to relax. Most of them won't have that balance.

JAKE

And how do I know if I have the balance?

BRIAN

That's why I'm telling you this, because you'll turn in your portfolio soon, and they're going to love it. They're going to love you. I know they will. You'll go to LaGuardia, and you'll have fun, but also plenty of challenges. Soon enough you'll find out if you have the balance.

The bandage is done.

BRIAN

There you go. Do you know if Tony got in?

JAKE

I don't know. I don't know what he's doing.

Brian looks at Jake.

BRIAN

Son. I wish I'd done things differently.

JAKE

What do you mean?

BRIAN

With Tony, and his mother. I wish I had told you earlier what was going on.

JAKE

Would it have changed anything?

BRIAN

No, probably not. But still.

JAKE

Dad, would you mind if I give you some advice? Would that be okay.

BRIAN

Please.

JAKE

Don't worry so much.

Brian waits for more.

JAKE

That's all.

BRIAN

That's a lot.

Brian gives Jake a kiss on the forehead, and stands up.

JAKE

Dad, would you mind if I play one of my video games? I know it's Tuesday, and I know I should do something more productive with my time, but I'm kind of tired.

BRIAN

Of course, Son.

Brian finds the game controller, and hands it Jake.

JAKE

Will Mom be mad?

BRIAN

I don't think so.

75A INT. JARDINE APARTMENT - NIGHT 75A

Kathy stands outside the door, heating pad in her hands, listening to her husband and son. She holds back her tears.

Brian comes out of the room and closes the door. He sees Kathy, who begins to weep, as quietly as she can.

Brian wraps his arms around her and they hold each other tightly.

75B INT. JARDINE APARTMENT/JAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 75B

Jake is in bed. He can hear the sounds of his parents outside the door.

He switches on one of his video games, and let's the noise cover everything around him.

76 INT. BROOKLYN MUSEUM/FOYER TO BEAUX-ARTS COURT - DAY 76

A small group of stylish BOYS and GIRLS are sketching some of the pieces in the foyer of a grand room in the Brooklyn Museum. By the way they dress and move, they're clearly artistic. Among them, looking more mature, more serious and maybe gay, with a stylish scarf around his neck, is Jake. Time has gone by; maybe a year or two.

76A INT. BROOKLYN MUSEUM/BEAUX-ARTS COURT - DAY 76A

Jake and his friends enter the formal and elegant Beaux Arts Court. Across the way, between arches, Jake sees a group of kids in khaki's and red shirts -- Tony's Catholic school uniform -- walking in the opposite direction.

They are with one AFRICAN BOY, who is not in uniform.

For a moment, he doesn't know what to do. Until, suddenly, he makes up his mind, and moves.

76B INT. BROOKLYN MUSEUM/BEAUX-ARTS COURT - MOMENTS LATER 76B

Jake walks in one direction around the courtyard.

Tony and his friends continue to walk around the other side.

Jake sees Tony and his friends exit the Court, and he follows.

76C INT. BROOKLYN MUSEUM/STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER 76C

Tony and his friends walk down the interior stairwell of the Museum.

Jake follows. But at some point, he loses Tony and his friends. They have exited the stairwell without him knowing.

Jake rushes down the stairs, trying to catch up.

76D INT. BROOKLYN MUSEUM/ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ART ROOM - CONTINUOUS 76D

Jake comes out of the stairwell into the Egyptian art area. He's out of breath.

He looks in all directions, but doesn't see Tony anywhere.

76E INT. BROOKLYN MUSEUM/STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER 76E

Jake is sitting by himself in the stairwell.

He is looking straight ahead. Not sure what to do with himself.

A pack of kids in khakis rush past him. We only see their legs.

Jake watches them go.

TONY (O.S.)

Jake! Your hair looks different.

It's Tony.

Jake stands up to say hello.

JAKE

Yours looks different too.

TONY

I went to Africa to visit my dad.

JAKE

How was it?

TONY

Amazing.

JAKE

And how's your mom?

TONY

She's busy. She's a real estate agent now.

Jake laughs at the irony of the situation. Tony laughs with him, maybe realizing it for the first time.

JAKE

You could've sent me an email from Africa.

TONY

You know me. I'm not much of a writer...

Jake notices a necklace of African beads around Tony's neck.

JAKE

I love that necklace.

TONY

Thanks. They make these for tourists, they don't really wear them there. But I like it too.

JAKE

Hey, you should come meet my buddies from school.

TONY

Did you get into LaGuardia?

JAKE

I did.

TONY

That's awesome!

JAKE

There's this girl in my class, her mother is on Broadway, she can act better than anyone I know.

TONY

Gee, thanks.

JAKE

We should all go out together sometime.

TONY

Sure, but I met this girl in Kinshasa, and my heart belongs to her. Do you want to see a picture?

JAKE

Sure.

Tony pulls out his phone, and shows him pictures.

TONY

She's a really good kisser. She's going to come to visit soon.

JAKE

Cool.

TONY

And you, have you kissed anyone yet?

JAKE

No, but I've met someone.
(pause)
You'll meet him.

Tony's face lights up, grinning from ear to ear.

TONY

You know! Finally, you know!

Jake and Tony share a knowing laughter.

TONY

I'm here with a friend from Congo. Let's go find him. He's teaching me French, and I help him with his English - he says "bitchful", like... "This sculpture is so 'bitchful'".

They laugh even louder, and head down to find Tony's friends.

The stairwell is empty, and white, and filled with sunlight.

IRIS TO BLACK, and the CREDITS ROLL.