

DRAMA.
by
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INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

EDWIN CHUTE, 17, a lithe, severe boy, with a shock of bleach blonde in his parted black hair, walks down the crowded hall.

His gate transforms into a modern dance. He peels off his tech vest revealing a black leotard. He throws a burst of white confetti as he spins elegantly down the hall.

EDWIN (V.O.)
To know my life, is to know my art.

After a few moments of glory, a pack of FOOTBALL PLAYERS tackle him. Students walk past the beating, indifferent.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This story begins in April 2004
because everyone loves a good period
piece.

EDWIN'S HEADSHOT ZOOMS onto screen: fist on chin, eyebrow raised, slicked back hair. It flips over revealing his CV.

INSERT: THE TEMPEST.....2004

-- Edwin performs in "The Tempest." Emotional, he lifts his arms to the sound of THUNDER. The AUDIENCE starts, uncomfortably shocked. RAINFALL! As the stage floods, the first few rows evacuate. Chaos.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The audience cried for rain. I gave
them rain.

-- Edwin is oblivious as rain pours down his face, lost in the moment of glory.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Oh that I could forget my Brechtian
Semester... translations, I thought,
were for the weak.

INSERT: THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE.....2005

-- Edwin performs in a solemn production of THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE. Edwin is the only one speaking in German. He holds a DRAMA GIRL in his arms.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
"Wenn der Krieg vorbei
ist, werde ich nach
Hause gekommen.
Sicherlich ist es nicht
zu lang für meine
Braut."

SUBTITLES
"When the war is over,
I'll come home. Surely
it's not too long for my
betrothed..."

DRAMA GIRL

"I will wait for you!"

-- The AUDIENCE, a few scattered parents, most asleep.

EDWIN (V.O.)

It wasn't until I performed a 36
hour reenactment of the entire O.J.
Simpson trial that I realized I might
have "it." My research was extensive.

INSERT: THE GLOVE DOESN'T FIT.....2006

-- Edwin takes notes watching the O.J. SIMPSON TRIAL.

-- Edwin, in his room putting on a pantsuit and wig.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The moment I put on Marcia Clark's
pantsuit, I *knew* what it was to be a
high powered female attorney in mid-
1990s Los Angeles.

-- Edwin, in the quad, dressed as Marcia Clark, gives a speech
about the famous leather glove. He's surrounded by a VAST
AUDIENCE OF EMPTY FOLDING CHAIRS, clearly rented.

-- There's three people there: A BLONDE GIRL we'll soon know
as Deborahay, clapping wildly, and Edwin's CONFUSED BLUE-COLLAR
PARENTS, clapping, eager to get home.

-- As Edwin bows, his FATHER gets up and leaves. His MOTHER
scurries out too, still clapping. Edwin's face falls.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"The Glove Doesn't Fit" was a
sensation. And for a moment I thought
I knew what it meant to be a star...

-- Edwin being interviewed after the show by a LOCAL TV
REPORTER. SUBTITLE: "High School Student Re-Enacts O.J.
Trial. Not a School Assignment."

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...I was dead wrong.

In the BG, two SOPHOMORE BOYS hump the air behind Edwin and
the reporter. Edwin smiles gleefully, oblivious.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

DEBORAY, 16, frizzy hair, loose floral leggings, delivers a
monologue. She has braces with black and orange rubber bands
(prepping for Halloween).

DEBORAY
(perfect Southern
accent)

I guess you didn't know what Uncle
Ted did to me, Mama. Or was it that
you didn't care?

Reveal Edwin mouthing the words to the monologue. He has a
shiner from his beating earlier, but still wears his leotard.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

Because when I was on my back out in
that corn field crying my little
heart out, you know what I heard?
Your laughter. What were you laughing
at, Mama?! Oh those summer nights
out in the corn field could burn
through your soul like a volcano!

(crying now)

But your laughter, Mama. That's
what will stick with me longest.
I'll remeber that laugh when the
flames are lickin' me up in hell or
someplace worse.

Deboray holds the beat.

EDWIN

I love it, okay, it needs a ton of
work, but I love it.

Deboray looks at Edwin with desire as he coaches her.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Edwin and Deboray walk and talk on the way to Drama.

DEBORAY

So I guess this means we're like
official, or whatever?

EDWIN

Official what?

DEBORAY

Edwin. Boyfriend-girlfriend. We
hang out all the time. We have all
the same interests... and it's not
like I'm trying to climb the social
ladder or something, I know you're
more popular than me--

EDWIN

--Deboray--

DEBORAY

-It's true. I mean. You're like...
a star.

The BELL RINGS. They walk a little faster. She opens the door to Drama.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

You could be the next Meryl Streep.

Edwin stops in his tracks.

EDWIN

My cape.

DEBORAY

I'll vamp.

Deboray kisses him on the cheek and disappears into the theater. Edwin runs to his locker.

INT. THEATER - 7TH PERIOD DRAMA - DAY

The main event. Drama class is huge, maybe 60 KIDS (16-18), all pretty freaky. Class hasn't started and the kids are catching up from summer vacation, flirting, dancing, etc.

An electric hush befalls the crowd as Deboray enters. Edwin must be close by. Deboray sweeps the aisle with a broom as the students watch and whisper.

Edwin slowly enters from the back of the theater. He wears a 20-FOOT-LONG CAPE. The Drama class erupts with APPLAUSE.

EDWIN (V.O.)

By the fall of 2007 I had not yet
broken through to the mainstream...
but in the hallowed halls of Drama...
I was king.

Edwin takes the stage. He angles his black eye into the spotlight.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Today, I suffered for my art. As I
know all of you have at one time or
another.

The DRAMA FREAKS in the audience nod, moved.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

I've been called "martyr." "Hero."
(MORE)

EDWIN (CONT'D)

But I am nothing, *nothing* without the continued support of my peers -- no -- my *family* in the Advanced Drama community. 'Twas Chekhov who said--

K-NO (O.S.)

-Edwin! My man, takin' the stage, I like it.

KEVIN NOBLE (K-NO for short), 28, Drama teacher, failing at a 90's bad-boy look, walks on stage.

STANDING OVATION from the audience. K-No holds his heart.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Please... please...

K-No nods to Edwin, telling him to get lost. Edwin takes a seat next to Deborahay, smoldering.

K-NO (CONT'D)

All right class, settle down. For those of you that don't know me, my name is Kevin Noble, or as my friends call me...

The class, giddy with excitement, screams!

CLASS

K-NO!

He leads them in a chant, clapping over his head.

K-NO

K-No K-No, K-No K-No K-No.

K-No grabs a wireless mic. He does a rap. It's horrifying, but this is the highlight of the students' lives. Not Edwin's. He watches with subtle contempt.

K-NO (CONT'D)

My name is K-No and I like to rhyme. Take a look at the clock, it's Drama time. The play this fall is "Death of a Salesman," and I smoke tons a weed so you betta call a bailsman -- OOOOOOOOPSSSSS! What I meant to say is... our play this fall is "Death of a Salesman," about my boy Willy, goin' through a tailspin. But the story takes place in old 1940, back in the day when no one got horny, and I'm thinkin' to myself, "this

(MORE)

K-NO (CONT'D)
 shiz gotta crack." SO I'MMA SET
 THIS BITCH IN WARTIME IRAQ!

The red curtain bursts open to reveal the set for "Death of a Salesman: Iraq." Willy Loman's house is a shed with rusting corrugated walls. Machine guns everywhere.

The crowd goes wild. Edwin and Deborah shriek and freak out like they're at a Spice Girls concert.

K-NO (CONT'D)
 And I know what you're thinking: I
 promise, no pyrotechnics. Sarah's
 lucky her hair grew back over the
 summer.

SARAH, sitting in the front row, obviously wearing wig.

SARAH
 Yeah, thank God it grew back, right
 guys?

K-NO
 Now remember, auditions are just
 about showing me what you bring to
 the table, they don't have to be
 perfect.

Edwin rolls his eyes. K-No picks a name off his roster.

K-NO (CONT'D)
 All right, I'm going random with...
 Sarah Jacobson!

The audience CLAPS. Sarah, the girl with the ill-fitting wig, gets up.

DRAMA FREAK
 Let's go, Sarah!

SARAH'S AUDITION

Sarah sings a ragtimey song which causes her to shake her head back and fourth energetically, shifting her wig around.

SARAH
 (singing)
 "I've had betta! I've had worse,
 now! But all that I need, is a little
 love on that gravy train! A little
 love now, baby, a little care... put
 on your gloves dear, it's too much
 to bear, HEY!

A rattling at the back of the stage. Sarah jumps.

JACK O'NEILL, high school student, gorgeous, indefinable charm, smart but plays dumb. He opens the STAGE DOOR. He walks onto stage nervously clutching his schedule.

Sarah falls in love with him in that instant.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hi.

AUDIENCE

The audience stares blinking at Jack. This is the best looking person that has ever set foot in Drama.

Edwin watches as the class reacts to him. Deborah looks to Edwin. It's tense.

JACK

Is this...
(looking at schedule)
"Elective"?

K-NO

(to Jack)
You're joking, right?

Scattered nervous laughs from the audience.

JACK

No?

K-NO

I'm just messing with you, you're in
Drama. Take a seat and get ready
for the ride of your life.

Jack heads toward the audience. Edwin straightens as Jack takes a seat next to them.

SARAH

Am I done?

K-NO

Let's hear it for Sarah.

The audience CLAPS as Sarah takes her seat. K-NO looks at his roster.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Is everyone ready for a little...
Edwin Chute?

The class CHEERS. Edwin takes the stage.

DRAMA FREAK

Let's go, Edwin!

Deboray offers a brace-faced "thumbs up." Edwin loosens up.

EDWIN

(exaggerated Brooklyn
accent)

You hurt me, Linda. You told me I
couldn't be a salesman no more.
Told me I wasn't good enough to tie
my own damn shoes. And now what am
I? Nothin'! All because of you and
this damn dream. Well fuck this
dream!

Edwin breaks a break-away bottle against a small table,
clutching the neck of the bottle, shoving it toward "Linda."
The audience GASPS. K-No rests his forehead in his palm.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Being a salesman's just about the
only thing I got in my life. And if
you want to stand in the way of
that... well, I'll kill ya', dammit,
I'll kill ya' and then I'll kill
myself!

Deboray's electrified by Edwin's edgy performance.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

But I'll never forget what it was
like bein' a salesman. Bein' a
salesman is about the only good thing
I've done with my life.

K-No takes a deep breath and checks his watch. He applauds.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Wait, I'm not done.

K-NO

Let's hear it for Edwin!

The rest of the class APPLAUDS for Edwin. Edwin sits down,
defeated.

K-NO (CONT'D)

So, was any of that from the actual
play?

EDWIN

It's an interpretive performance.

K-NO

Yeahhh...no.

Edwin, hurt as the audience LAUGHS at K-No's classic "yeah...no" dismissal. K-No turns his attention to Jack.

K-NO (CONT'D)

(to Jack)

Why don't you give it a shot?

JACK

Oh, I've never acted before.

K-NO

Get up here.

JACK

Aw, no, I don't have anything.

K-NO

That's okay, we'll wing it. Come on.

Jack nervously takes the stage. K-No leads an encouraging APPLAUSE.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Where you from, Jack?

JACK

Fayetteville.

K-NO

No accent.

JACK

Watch a lot of TV, I guess.

K-NO

You live with your mom or your dad?
Or both?

Jack looks blankly at the audience, uncomfortable.

JACK

Mom.

K-NO

Okay. I think I get it. So why don't you just uh, tell me... what you had for breakfast.

JACK

Uh. Well.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

I had Pop Tarts... and I put maple syrup on the Pop Tarts. I guess I like sweet stuff. And my mom, you know my mom isn't really getting along with my step dad. So she's uh, she's taking a lot of stuff? Just to keep, you know, from going crazy?

Jack looks up at K-No, emotional. Everyone in the room is enthralled.

K-NO

Go on.

JACK

I don't want to.

K-NO

The only way out of the pain is through it.

Jack doesn't want to finish.

JACK

So my mom comes into the kitchen--

K-NO

-Don't tell me:
(pointing to audience)
Tell them.

Jack reluctantly looks out at the audience, raw.

JACK

My mom's in this like, daze, and I'm eating my Pop Tart mush, and she grabs me real hard and she's like "Jackie. Your father would be so proud of you. I want you to know that." And I guess I realized... my dad's not here. And he's not going to be.

Jack is crying, but appears comfortable, like he's not on stage.

JACK (CONT'D)

And this woman, who I barely know anymore, is like... all I have. It's stupid but... I never knew how alone I really am. How alone... we all are... I guess.

Jack stares at the audience as they all think about how sad and lonely they are.

Edwin glares at Deborah as she wipes a tear. Sarah stands up and claps. The audience APPLAUDS. K-No wipes tears from his face.

K-NO

Now that's an audition.

Off Edwin, the blood draining from his face.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Edwin charges through the hall, his cape whipping behind him, snapping students in the face. Deborah hurries behind.

DRAMA FREAK

He wasn't that good.

EDWIN

Are you really that dense?

DEBORAY

Why are you jumping down my throat?

EDWIN

The honesty? The emotion? Oh God, Deborah, is he good-looking too? Nevermind, don't tell me, I don't wanna know.

Edwin lights a clove cigarette as he charges toward the EXIT.

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - BACK PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Edwin heads to his car, a beat-up Pontiac. Deborah follows. He leans against the car and hands Deborah his cigarette and lights another one.

EDWIN

I'm screwed.

DEBORAY

You're not screwed.

EDWIN

That part is all I have.

DEBORAY

What about me?

EDWIN

All I have besides you.

Edwin holds her hand.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

This is my crossover role, Debo. My chance to break through to the mainstream.

DEBORAY

You'll get the part.

No response. Deboray puts out her clove.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

I have to go to office hours. So just... take all the time you need, okay? See you tomorrow.

Deboray starts to leave.

EDWIN

Hey. What about our pre-casting day ritual?

DEBORAY

I thought you forgot.

Edwin smiles dashingly and presents two sleeping bags.

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - BACK PARKING LOT - NIGHT

MONTAGE (MOS): Deboray and Edwin have a slumber party at the back entrance of the school.

-- Edwin dances beautifully to an Alicia Keys jam as Deboray watches proudly, sitting on her sleeping bag.

-- Deboray takes a turn dancing as Edwin watches, giving notes.

-- Edwin and Deboray play the game where they put cards with celebrity names on their foreheads and try to guess who they are supposed to be. They realize they're both Melissa Leo. They laugh and laugh.

-- Edwin reads "Richard III" to Deboray while she rests her head in his lap.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

As dawn breaks, the JANITOR unlocks the entrance to the school. Edwin and Deboray walk down the hall dramatically. The cast list for "Death of a Salesman: Iraq" is posted at the other end.

Edwin stops Deboray.

EDWIN
Promise me. That whatever happens,
you'll still have faith in my career.

DEBORAY
I promise.

They approach the cast list. Deborahay screams!

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
I'm playing Linda! Oh my God, I'm
Linda!

Edwin's face freezes in terror.

INSERT: "Willy Loman.....Jack O'Neill"

Edwin looks below.

INSERT: "Biff Loman.....Edwin Chute"

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
Edwin, Biff is like, one of the best
parts.

But Edwin can't hear her. He wavers. His breath shortens.

EDWIN
This can't be happening...

Edwin looks like he's about to faint. Deborahay holds onto
him. He rears his head back and ROARS.

He charges down the hall. Deborahay follows.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Where is K-NO?!

INT. K-NO'S CLOSET-LIKE OFFICE - DAY

Edwin barges in and turns on the light. The office is empty.

EDWIN
AH!

Edwin falls to his knees, cries desperately.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Jack walks down the hall calmly. He passes the cast list
without looking at it. His voice comes in.

JACK (V.O.)
I guess you could say I've never
acted before...

Jack comes back to the cast list. He looks at his name. He's not excited, but *satisfied*.

JACK'S DECEPTION MONTAGE

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Unless you call playing Gavroche in the touring company of "Les Miserables" for six years *acting*.

-- YOUNG JACK, 11, performs in tattered clothing in an amazing professional stage production of "Les Miserables."

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 See, ever since I was born, I've had this thing where... I'm really good at stuff?

-- Show Young Jack scoring a touchdown in flag football.

-- Young Jack shoots basket after basket, nothing but net.

-- Young Jack does a floor routine in a pro gymnastics gym.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And sometimes... it gets kinda boring.

-- Arts and crafts, a bored Young Jack finishes a bird MANSION while his peers struggle to complete mere bird *houses*.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 So I like to mess with people.

-- Night. Series of shots: Young Jack breaks into the arts and crafts studio. He surveys the table full of birdhouses. He rigs all of the other bird houses with EXPLOSIVES.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Just to like, see what people will do.

-- The next day, Young Jack watches as kids eagerly pick up their bird houses. A maniacal smile on his face.

-- A HAPPY KID and his MOM watch as a bird lands in their brand new bird house. As the bird peeks in to get the food, the bird house EXPLODES! The mom covers the kid's eyes as he cries helplessly.

-- Birdhouse after birdhouse explodes.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 It's not that I'm a bad guy or liar.

-- Young Jack sits on his bed, listening with satisfaction as EXPLOSIONS ring through the neighborhood.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It's that sometimes the truth is
like... *whatever*.

-- Present day Jack continues walking down the hall, unfazed. A few DRAMA FREAKS pass, congratulating Jack on the part.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And *people* are like... yuck.
Especially those Drama Freaks who
think they're special and shit?
Yeah, they're going down.

END MONTAGE

EXT. K-NO'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Edwin and Deborah peer into K-No's garden apartment complex from behind a fence.

EDWIN
As if Jack O'Neill could memorize a
line to save his life. As if he
knows the first thing about North
Brooklyn accents.

Edwin starts to climb the fence.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Gimme a boost.

DEBORAY
Edwin, this is so illegal.

EDWIN
So is under-aged drinking, Deborah,
but that didn't stop you from giving
a lap dance to every boy at the "Much
Ado" cast party.

DEBORAY
I'm allergic to rum, what's with
you?

EDWIN
Look, if you want to be my girlfriend,
you're gonna have to get involved in
some illegal stuff. I don't make
the rules. Now, help me.

DEBORAY

So now we have this, like, conditional relationship?

EDWIN

I'm sorry, I love you unconditionally, just give me a boost.

She gives him the boost. Edwin climbs the fence.

DEBORAY

That's it, I'm out.

She leaves.

EDWIN

Debo! Dammit.

Edwin continues to climb the fence without her.

EXT. K-NO'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - COURTYARD - DAY

Edwin watches from behind a bush as K-No walks through the courtyard. Edwin's agitation grows until he bursts up from behind the bush and charges for him!

EDWIN

Hey bitch, what's going on, bitch?!

K-No immediately restrains Edwin.

K-NO

Hey hey hey. Edwin. How did you find my house?

EDWIN

You've forgotten about the fall quarter pizza party already? He's changed you. He changed everything!

Edwin breaks down. K-No pats Edwin on the back.

K-NO

Here, come here...

K-No puts an arm around Edwin and brings him toward the apartment.

INT. K-NO'S APARTMENT - DAY

Edwin clutches a wool blanket over his head. He won't look at K-No sitting across from him in his dark apartment, filled with garage sale furniture and scrawled plans for "Death of a Salesman: Iraq."

EDWIN
I'm dying, K-No. Slowly. Ever since
I lost the role the days and nights
are blurring together.

K-NO
Edwin, it's been an hour.

EDWIN
Oh, is that all? Then why is my
hair falling out?

Edwin tries to pull a small clump of hair from his head. He
gets a couple strands. K-No grimaces.

K-NO
I gave you a great role. Biff is
all about honesty. I want to see
that side of you.

EDWIN
It's not the lead.

K-NO
Why does it have to be the lead?

EDWIN
Because...

Edwin looks up at K-No, desperation welling in his eyes.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
I thought I was your favorite.

K-NO
Edwin...

EDWIN
Please.

K-No puts his arm on Edwin's shoulder.

K-NO
You've had so many great moments.
This is Jack's moment. Let him have
it.

Edwin stares off listlessly. K-No opens the door.

K-NO (CONT'D)
Listen. I'll make you Jack's
understudy, but that's all I can do.

EDWIN
Some consolation prize.

K-NO
 What do we say in Drama? "Love the
 art within yourself, not your *self*
 within the art."

Edwin scoffs and stomps out.

INT. EDWIN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Edwin SLAMS the door to find his mother, Cynthia, on her way out. He makes his way up the stairs.

CYNTHIA
 What are you doing home?

EDWIN
 I'm taking an STD day.

CYNTHIA
 What the hell?

EDWIN
 Sick Till Drama. Call it in.

INT. EDWIN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Edwin stares angrily at a picture frame.

INSERT: A Drama Class Photo. CLOSE ON K-No and Edwin's happy faces at the center.

Edwin picks up a ceramic human skull from his desk and SLAMS it against the glass.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - POOL - DAY

It's the swimming unit in P.E. The wall is lined with awkward teenage bodies. Jack struts before them as they gawk at his body, mature and ripped.

He goes to the back of the line to join Deborah, who's wearing a one-piece with a picture of mermaid on the front. She shivers, pale. Jack nods his head at her. She glances back at him, nervous.

He smirks.

It's too much for Deborah. She jumps into the pool before Coach Donaldson is done taking role.

COACH DONALDSON
 Deborah Hall!

Jack looks into the pool, amused and intrigued.

INT. COVERED EATING AREA - DAY

Deboray, damp hair, sits with the Drama Kids in a corner of the cafeteria.

SARAH

I don't get it: you're either together or you're not.

DEBORAY

It's complicated.

Deboray looks up to see Jack approaching with his lunch tray piled high with crabs.

JACK

Hey, Deborah, right?

Jack takes a seat right next to her. The Drama Kids watch them eagerly.

JACK (CONT'D)

I'm starving.

Deboray watches jack tear into a PBJ.

DEBORAY

Debor-ay actually. It's French... sounding. So your audition was pretty tight, or whatever.

JACK

Oh, thanks. I guess you're playing my wife, right?

DEBORAY

Yeah.
(awkward chuckle)
Random.

JACK

And that little Eddie kid is my son?

DEBORAY

Edwin, yeah.

JACK

(taking PBJ bite)
He's a homo, right?

Deboray forces a laugh.

DEBORAY

Ohh no.

(MORE)

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

Let me tell you, it'd be easier if
he were, but no, he's straight as
they come.

Jack considers this.

JACK

So you two are like... dating?

Sarah butts in.

SARAH

It's complicated.

JACK

Oh?

Deboray rolls her eyes.

DEBORAY

We have this "are they" or "aren't
they" thing happening right now,
whatever, it's boring.

JACK

No it's not.

DEBORAY

Oh. Wow. Thanks.

JACK

For what?

GEORGE "VOCTORY" THOMAS, heavy linebacker, approaches Jack
with a towering tray of food. He nods and Jack replies with
a nod. Deboray watches Jack leave with George.

JACK (CONT'D)

Peace out, D.

Deboray's eyes widen when Jack's out of view.

DEBORAY

(to Drama Kids)

Wait, was that to me? Am I "D"?

SARAH

Ohmigod, you're "D"!

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - BACK PARKING LOT - DAY

K-NO'S CAR

K-No lays down in the back of his covered truck smoking a joint and reading "Death of a Salesman."

INT. THEATER - 7TH PERIOD DRAMA - DAY

K-No eats red vines in the back of the theater during the beginning-of-class announcements. Deborah addresses the rowdy class. Edwin watches her in the audience with pride.

DEBORAY

...And K-No is seriously going to harass you if you don't get enough tech hours.

Drama Kids laugh. K-No smirks and wags his finger at them.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

All right, and this is just random, but it's a new thing: I'm gonna start going by "D."

Deborah acts demure as students WOO and APPLAUD.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

It's no big deal.

She giggles.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

Now, Edwin wants to make an announcement about this year's Dance-A-Thon...

Edwin Edwin summersaults onto stage. A few impressed cheers.

EDWIN

Ladies and gentlemen, it's Dance-A-Thon season, and for the shy among us--

-Jack enters from the back of the theater. Edwin's face falls. Jack's carrying DOZENS OF BALLOONS and a bouquet of flowers. It's his birthday. K-No immediately catches on.

K-NO

(singing)

"Happy Birthday to you... happy birthday to you..."

The rest of the class sings along. They're beside themselves with excitement.

EVERYONE

(signing)

"Happy Birthday dear Jack... happy birthday to you!"

Off Edwin's smoldering face. The cheers, deafening.

LATER

Edwin, Deborahay, Sarah and Jack rehearse a scene. Sarah wears a boy's wig, playing Biff's brother, "Happy." K-No paces in front of the stage.

Everyone is reading from their scripts except Jack.

JACK

"Go back to the West, Biff, be a cowboy, be happy!"

DRAMA FREAK

"Willy, he was just saying..."

JACK

"I head what he said!"

SARAH

(in a mock "boy voice")

"Hey, Pop, come on now!"

JACK

"Why do you always insult me?"

EDWIN

(thick Brooklyn accent)

"I didn't say a word! Did I say a word?"

DEBORAY

"He didn't say anything, Willy!"

K-No raises a hand in the air.

K-NO

And hold.

The cast freezes.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Not bad, not bad.

EDWIN

Don't you think it's a little weird that me, Deborahay, and Sarah are doing a Brooklyn accent and Jack isn't? You do have a Brooklyn accent, right?

K-NO
Edwin, cool it. Jack, we're gonna
work on your monologue. You guys,
clear the stage.

EDWIN
Give extra time to the tardy kid,
that makes sense.

As Edwin leaves, Jack SMACKS him hard on the ass.

JACK
Nice work up there, dude.

He winks. Edwin looks back at him, dumbfounded. Jack moves
on.

K-NO
(to Jack)
I want to get you to open up a bit...

BACKSTAGE

Edwin peers behind the curtain watching K-No and Jack
rehearse. He is transfixed.

K-No touches Jack's back and helps him SCREAM with everything
he has. K-No laughs and pats Jack on the shoulder.

K-NO (CONT'D)
Good, good, just like that.

Jack is loosening up. They continue the exercise, laughing,
smiling, working together.

Edwin's sullen face as Deborahay clutches his elbow lovingly.

EDWIN
He stole my part. My mentor. My
audience.

DEBORAY
He didn't steal me.

Edwin kisses Deborahay's forehead.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
So what do you think of "D"? I just
think I'm a one-letter girl. And
I'm ready for a change--

EDWIN
-I need your help with something.

DEBORAY

Anything.

EDWIN

We need to destroy Jack O'Neill.

EXT. CREEKSIDE TRAIL - DAY

Jack walks home next to a quiet creek listlessly clutching his backpack.

EDWIN (V.O.)

Step one. Research.

Edwin emerges coolly from behind a tree several yards away. Jack starts.

JACK

What the fuck?

EDWIN

I wanted to give you something.

JACK

Have you been following me?

EDWIN

Only a little bit. And then I ran ahead. A small piece of advice: don't wear such a strong cologne.

Jack smiles at Edwin. He looks him up and down, then winks.

Edwin looks behind him, confused. Flustered, he hands over a cassette tape.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Here. It goes over the distinctions between North B.K. and South B.K. speech patterns. There's a big difference, it's hard to nail.

JACK

I thought K-No said the play takes place in Iraq.

EDWIN

You'd be surprised how much arabic dialects have influenced the North Brooklyn--

JACK

-Whatever man, thanks.

Jack takes the tape and starts to leave. Edwin takes out a small notebook.

EDWIN

Wait. I thought we could work on it together. I don't know. Get to know each other.

Jack studies Edwin, intrigued. Keeps walking.

JACK

Not today, I got homework.

EDWIN

That's cool, I have homework too.

Edwin follows.

JACK

Why do you want to hang out with me so bad?

EDWIN

Why do you want to not hang out with me so bad?

Jack stops and stares right at him.

JACK

Cause I have an hour till my mom gets home and I was gonna jerk off.

Edwin freezes, stunned.

JACK (CONT'D)

You wanna jerk off with me?

Edwin's eyes widen. He crushes the tiny notebook in his hand. Jack bursts out laughing.

JACK (CONT'D)

I'm just messing with you, man.
Yeah, let's do the stupid accent tape.

Jack puts his arm around Edwin, laughing. Edwin nervously laughs along. They walk off.

EXT. RANCHO FELIZ TRAILER PARK - DUSK

Edwin and Jack arrive at the entrance of Jack's trailer park. Edwin stops, taking in the run-down park.

EDWIN

It's... nice.

JACK

It sucks.

INT. JACK'S TRAILER - DUSK

Jack and Edwin enter. Jack's bed is in the living room/kitchen, glow-in-the dark stickers above it. Pots and pans are stacked nearly to the ceiling. Jack lays in bed as Edwin puts the tape in a crappy boom box above the TV.

EDWIN

Ready?

JACK

Sure.

Edwin sits upright on the foot of the bed as a MALE VOICE comes in, teaching a North Brooklyn dialect.

ACCENT TAPE

Repeat after me: "Boy you gotta lotta nerve."

EDWIN

"Boy you gotta lotta nerve."

Jack watches Edwin curiously. Is this guy for real?

LATER - NIGHT

Darkness ascends as Jack rests on his side facing away from Edwin. Edwin paces, emphatically practicing the accent.

ACCENT TAPE

"You're a good-for-nothin' schmeboygah, s'what you are."

EDWIN

"You're a good-for-nothin' schmeboygah, s'what you are."

JACK

I think this has to be the saddest time of the day. When it first starts to get dark. And all the TV shows go from cartoons to re-runs of "Mama's Family."

Edwin turns off the tape and fumbles to grab his notebook.

EDWIN

Talk to me about that.

JACK

Nothing, it's just...

EDWIN

What, it's just what?

Edwin reaches to turn on the light.

JACK

Don't.

Edwin stops.

JACK (CONT'D)

Coach Donaldson told me I have to introduce the football team at the homecoming rally tomorrow, and the thing is, I don't even like those guys. It's just... not me. I think I should quit football. I really like the play.

EDWIN

Are you crazy? No! Do it all.

JACK

Really?

Edwin nods emphatically, making notes.

JACK (CONT'D)

(re: notebook)

What's that?

EDWIN

It's nothing.

Jack gets up and grabs the notebook.

JACK

"Product of neglect," what is this?

Edwin snatches at the notebook. Jack pulls it up above his body. As Edwin reaches for it, Jack pulls it higher and higher, Edwin's body moving closer and closer to his.

He whispers in Edwin's ear.

JACK (CONT'D)

I felt that.

Edwin recoils.

EDWIN

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

Edwin looks away. Jack smiles.

JACK
Is there something you want?

EDWIN
Don't be ridiculous.

Jack lifts his shirt, showing Edwin his toned stomach. Edwin glances, then looks away. Jack laughs.

JACK
I'm just messing with you.

EDWIN
You're being weird.

Jack lifts Edwin's shirt. Edwin pulls away.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Stop.

JACK
Shh...

Edwin looks into Jack's eyes. Is he serious about this? Jack smiles and pushes Edwin onto the bed and kisses him voraciously.

Jack gets rough with Edwin and starts yanking off his shirt. Edwin plays along, getting into it.

Jack straddles him and SLAPS him hard across the face. Edwin looks back at Jack, confused. Jack kisses him, hard, too hard, then slaps him again.

Edwin tries to free himself. Jack doesn't stop.

Edwin's hand looks for something to defend himself with. He finds an old aluminum holiday cookie tin and SLAMS it on the side of Jack's face. Jack rears off Edwin.

JACK (CONT'D)
AH! Fuck!

Jack holds his head and laughs.

JACK (CONT'D)
Come on, man, relax.

EDWIN
Are you insane?

JACK
What's the big deal, that's what you wanted.

EDWIN
Of course it wasn't.

JACK
Yeah, well, I didn't want it either.

EDWIN
I'm sure.

JACK
Just get out.

Edwin charges to the boom box, struggling to take out the accent tape. It won't come out. He grabs the whole boom box and walks out the door, the cord dragging behind him.

EDWIN
I'm taking this.

JACK
Whatever.

Jack slams the door. He watches Edwin leave curiously. His eyes narrow on him.

Laughter from the BATHROOM. Two HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS burst out of the bathroom, piercings, midriff tanks, too much lip-liner.

They pounce onto Jack, giggling, kissing him.

SHORT-HAIRED GIRL
That's why you wanted to use my mom's trailer?

JACK
And this...

Jack pushes her head into his crotch and makes out with the BLONDE GIRL.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Edwin walks through the maze of trailers. He touches his lip and tastes a small dot of blood. He's confused, dazed.

Deboray emerges from behind a trailer wearing all black with a black beanie.

DEBORAY
Oh thank God. I lost you guys, I've been wandering around for an hour, I looked in someone's window and they had like 200 rats, I'm so scared--

Edwin looks up, sudden clarity coming to him.

EDWIN

-We got him.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Step two. Expose. It turns out
Jack has a little secret.

SERIES OF SCENES: EL CAMINO HIGH'S MOST INFAMOUS HOMOPHOBES

INT. LEADERSHIP CLASSROOM - DAY

MRS. CEDARBLADE (early 30s) addresses the large leadership class. "Spring Dance Themes," written on the board.

EDWIN (V.O.)

If we tell the world, he will
immediately become a social target
and be forced to quit Drama.

Edwin sits next to oafish linebacker George "Victory" Thomas.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

George "Victory" Thomas, one of El
Camino High's most infamous
homophobes.

Edwin's hand shoots up.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Mrs. Cedarblade, I have suggested
"Moulin Rouge" for four years in a
row and you have not so much as listed
it on the whiteboard--

-George's fist comes ramming into the side of Edwin's head, knocking him to the ground. George stands up and growls like a gorilla, threatening the whole class.

GEORGE

No gay themes! You hear me? NO GAY
THEMES!

The class is terrified, except for Mrs. Cedarblade, who is breathless and titillated by George's outburst.

INT. SOCIAL ISSUES CLASSROOM - DAY

MR. BENALI, 40s, a guidance counselor with one earring and grey hair with highlights, writes the word "HOMOPHOBIA" on the whiteboard.

EDWIN (V.O.)

United Arab Emirates Exchange student
and championship rower, Rishanthony
Fahad.

Edwin looks next to him at the domineering RISHANTHONY FAHAD, 17, a toothpick sticks out from his teeth.

MR. BENALI

Now what would you say if I told you that I am a homosexual?

Fear fills Rishanthony's eyes.

MR. BENALI (CONT'D)

Hm? Would you run and hide? Would you--

-He is cut off by Rishanthony, who moves like lightning to pin Mr. Benali to the whiteboard by his neck. Rishanthony gets in his face.

RISHANTHONY

I clean my teeth with bones of faggot!

He spits the toothpick in Mr. Benali's face. Mr. Benali sprays Rishanthony with pepper spray.

RISHANTHONY (CONT'D)

ARGHHH!!!!

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

A line of UNIFORMED P.E. STUDENTS stand with their backs to the gymnasium wall.

EDWIN (V.O.)

And finally, Coach Donaldson.

COACH DONALDSON

All right, we're gonna do things a little bit different today. I'm picking the teams. Edwin, Donovan, Bruce, Patrick...

Reveal Edwin, DONOVAN, BRUCE, AND PATRICK, all 17, the most awkward and feminine kids in the class. They cower against the wall.

COACH DONALDSON (CONT'D)

You're on your own team. Everyone else, you're on my team!

Coach Donaldson takes out a crate of pine cones.

COACH DONALDSON (CONT'D)

Now, instead of dodge balls, we're gonna use pine cones, and I don't want to hear any whining about it from you ladies!

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

Edwin, Donovan, Bruce, and Patrick all run as fast as they can as the class of ANGRY P.E. STUDENTS lead by Coach Donaldson chase them in the distance like a pack of raptors wielding pine cones.

Donovan is the first to be knocked down by a pine cone.

A look of panic on Edwin's face.

EDWIN (V.O.)

Jack O'Neill may think he's strong enough for the theater. But he will be destroyed.

END SERIES OF SCENES

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Edwin and Deborah sit on his bed. Behind him is an elaborate web of plans -- pictures of Jack, Rishanthony, George, and Coach Donaldson. Deborah looks at Edwin, concerned.

EDWIN

Step three. Reclaim glory and restore balance of high school theater for generations to come.

Edwin points to a picture of himself holding an Oscar.

DEBORAH

Hell no.

EDWIN

What are you talking about, you said you were in?

DEBORAH

Edwin, this is certifiably not cool. Jack's probably confused, if he wants to keep it a secret, let him keep it a secret. I mean, this doesn't even have anything to do with acting.

EDWIN

It has everything to do with acting. Everyone thinks Jack's this honest, authentic, natural actor. Well guess what, he has a secret life. Not such a good actor anymore.

DEBORAH

Actually, I think that makes him a better actor.

EDWIN
So you're falling under his spell
too?

DEBORAY
Come on, Edwin, you know how I feel
about you...

She watches him draw horns on Jack's picture.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
Can I ask you a question?

Edwin grunts.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
The kiss. It seemed like... I don't
know, was it that bad?

Edwin pauses.

EDWIN
I thought we agreed it wasn't cheating
if it was part of the plan.

It's sinking in for Deborah: Edwin liked the kiss.

DEBORAY
No, right, totally. I forgot.

Eye contact between them.

EDWIN
So are you in or are you out?

Deborah takes a deep breath, considering.

EXT. STREET NEXT TO TRAILER PARK - DAWN

Jack walks to football practice. A truck follows close
behind, blasting "Eye of the Tiger."

Jack turns to see K-No driving, trying to make him laugh.

I/E. K-NO'S TRUCK - DAWN

Jack rides in the front seat.

K-NO
You know, I've been the new kid too.

Jack doesn't answer, he just looks forward uncomfortably.

K-NO (CONT'D)
I've been poor too. Shit, I am poor.

JACK
I'm not poor.

K-NO
No, I know, sorry.

Jack eyes a (marijuana) roach in K-No's ash tray. K-No closes it fast.

K-NO (CONT'D)
Sorry.

Awkward silence. Jack looks out the window.

K-NO (CONT'D)
I'm sorry if this seems weird, I just... you're a really talented kid and I don't want anything stupid to get in your way. So if you need to get to school early for football practice... it's on my way. Here.

K-No hands Jack a book. "Respect for Acting" by Uta Jagen.

JACK
Wow, thanks.

Jack flips through the book. K-No looks on, proud.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Jack walks down the hall reading "Respect for Acting." He looks up and sees Deborah walking toward him. Deborah sees him too and her eyes widen. She runs the other way. Jack follows her.

JACK
Wait!

Jack turns the corner and finds the hallway filled with STUDENTS, no Deborah. He keeps walking and sees her, silently standing in a door frame, eyes wide.

JACK (CONT'D)
Are you avoiding me?

DEBORAH
Why would I be avoiding you?

JACK
No reason, I guess.

Deborah rolls her eyes.

DEBORAY
No reason. I'm sure.

JACK
Wait. What did you hear?

DEBORAY
Nothing.

Deboray heads down the hallway. Jack follows.

JACK
Then why are you acting weird?

Deboray doesn't answer. She heads into...

INT. ROOM 131 - "BACKSTAGE" CLASSROOM - DAY

Costumes strewn everywhere and graffiti on the walls saying things like "MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING 2002, REPRESENT!" and couches that look like they smell weird. Deboray hurries in and starts folding costumes. Jack follows.

JACK
This is about Edwin.

Deboray stops folding and looks at Jack, miffed.

DEBORAY
You mean my *boyfriend*? No.

JACK
So Edwin told you about the hook-up.

Deboray hesitates.

JACK (CONT'D)
It's okay. You *should* be mad at me.
I don't know what came over me.

DEBORAY
I don't want to talk about it. And frankly, I'm not even sure where Edwin and I stand, so do whatever you want.

JACK
Can I please just talk to you about something? Please.

Deboray sighs. Then sits on the couch and gestures for Jack to do the same. He does.

JACK (CONT'D)

Thank you. It's just... my whole life has been this like... show. My parents were always saying: "look what Jack can do, come on, Jack." And ever since I got here, everyone's been so nice to me, and I feel like I don't have to put on a show. I can just be myself. But I'm scared because... I think I might be gay, Deborah.

Jack hugs Deborah deeply. She titillated and confused by the attention. He looks into her eyes.

JACK (CONT'D)

But the thing is, I need to be sure.

Deborah's all ears.

JACK (CONT'D)

You say you and Edwin... you're not together anymore?

Deborah nods, in awe of being this close to Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)

I guess I was wondering... can I kiss you? To see?

It's impossible for her to cover her smile.

DEBORAY

Me?

JACK

Yeah.

DEBORAY

Really?

JACK

You're beautiful. If I don't feel anything when I kiss you, then I'll know, right?

Deborah is giddy, but hesitant.

JACK (CONT'D)

Please?

DEBORAY

And you won't tell Edwin?

Jack shakes his head. Deborah bites her lip.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

Okay.

Jack leads in and kisses Deborahay softly. They continue to make out. As they get more into it, Jack stops suddenly.

JACK

Oh my God. I'm gay. I'm totally gay. Thank you.

Jack bounds out the door. Deborahay sinks into the couch.

HALLWAY

Now it's *Jack* that can't contain his smile. He laughs to himself as he joins his FOOTBALL FRIENDS.

GEORGE

What's so funny?

JACK

Just people, man. *People.*

Detestable arrogance in his eyes as they walk down the hall.

INT. BATHROOM STALL - DAY

Edwin stands before Deborahay, who is bitterly resigned.

EDWIN

Arms up.

Edwin lifts her shirt revealing a SMALL RECORDING DEVICE taped to her stomach.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

And you're sure you got it?

DEBORAY

Yes, Edwin, I got it.

EDWIN

Why do you look so sad?

DEBORAY

I think we need to go on a break.

EDWIN

I don't see what that would accomplish. We have way more work to do.

Deborahay sighs. Edwin removes the recording device.

DEBORAY
I'm taking an STD day.

Deboray exits.

EDWIN
What about the homecoming rally?

DEBORAY
(looking over her
shoulder)
Screw the homecoming rally!

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH GYMNASIUM - HOMECOMING RALLY - DAY

A raucous HIGH SCHOOL AUDIENCE fills the rafters. Jack, in his football uniform, nervously goes over his speech next to the stage.

Above him, harnessed to the beams of the gymnasium, is Edwin. He wires his iPod to a speaker hanging from the beam. He gazes down at the drama kids, huddled around K-No.

K-NO
1. 2. 3.

DRAMA KIDS
Go Jack!

Jack smiles and waves at the Drama Kids and K-No.

The lights fade and the crowd begins to quiet. Deboray sneaks into the auditorium late. Edwin smiles when he sees that she's carrying a BASKET OF PINE CONES.

Edwin watches her surreptitiously leave the basket of pine cones at the feet of infamous homophobe Rishanthony Fahad, sitting in the front row.

Deboray looks up at Edwin. He gives a "thumbs up." She shakes her head and sits.

Rishanthony looks to his feet and grabs a pine cone curiously, clutching it like a weapon. Edwin smiles maniacally.

The crowd cheers as the FOOTBALL TEAM jogs onto stage and Jack O'Neill heads to the mic. An unseen ANNOUNCER's voice blares over the loudspeakers.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Let's hear it for the El Camino
Braves! And star quarterback, Jack
O'Neill. Jack transferred to El
Camino from Calsitor High School.
(MORE)

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 He's already gained a reputation for
 joining football AND Drama -- Talk
 about charisma. Give it up for
 JJJaaaaack O'Neeeeeeiiiiiiiill!

The crowd goes wild as the lights come up on Jack. Deborahay puts her hands over her ears, not wanting to witness what's about to happen. Jack looks down at his speech.

INSERT: Jack's speech is covered in detailed notation. He's really worked on this.

JACK
 Let's hear it for the El Camino
 Braves!

Yeah!

JACK (CONT'D)
 Let me tell you, being quarterback
 this season has been a lot of fun.
 But when I transferred to El Camino,
 I wasn't sure if I would fit in and
 make friends.

TEACHERS on the sidelines nod with recognition. Above, Edwin presses "PLAY" on the iPod. Jack's voice comes in on the speakers, loud, interrupting his speech.

JACK RECORDING
 "Everyone's been so nice to me, and
 I feel like I don't have to put on a
 show."

The audience looks around curiously, wondering if this is part of the speech. Jack recognizes the conversation immediately. His eyes widen.

JACK RECORDING (CONT'D)
 "I can just be myself. But I'm scared
 because... I think I might be gay,
 gay, gay, gay, gay, gay, gay, gay,
 gay, gay, gay, gay, gay, gay"--

-Rishanthony gets up and screams.

RISHANTHONY
 Make it stop!

Edwin smiles hugely, he has Jack right where he wants him. He stops the iPod. Jack is dumbstruck, silent.

K-No, saving Jack, gives him a standing ovation. He implores the rest of Drama to do the same. They do.

Jack takes the mic apprehensively.

JACK
Thanks, guys, thank you.

Jack takes a deep breath. Edwin looks to Rishanthony.

EDWIN
Come on, throw the pine cone... throw
the pine cone...

But he doesn't, his head is buried in his hands.

JACK
I'm not going to stand here and lie
to you. It's true. But it doesn't
change anything. Being an El Camino
Brave is about having courage.
Courage not only to be yourself, but
courage to fight for who you are.

A few football players nod behind Jack. Edwin sneers watching
the audience become touched, inspired.

JACK (CONT'D)
And that's what I'm going to do. My
name is Jack O'Neill. I'm an athlete.
An actor. And I'm gay. But above
all else, I am an El Camino Brave!

The crowd goes wild! Standing O. Rishanthony HURLS A PINE
CONE at Jack.

JACK'S POV: A pine cone barreling toward his face.

Jack snatches it effortlessly before it hits. More CHEERS.

Edwin watches a few FOOTBALL PLAYERS tackle Rishanthony.
Then the Drama Kids rushing the stage, hugging Jack, lifting
him on their shoulders. Edwin sneers.

INT. THEATER - 7TH PERIOD DRAMA - DAY

Drama students lay on the stage doing a "relaxation" exercise
lead by K-No. He walks around the kids, stepping over their
bodies.

K-NO
Feel the sand between your toes...
on your fingertips... the small of
your back...

Jack and Deboray are laying next to each other.

DEBORAY
 (soft whisper)
 I'm so sorry.

Jack turns over and smiles at her.

JACK
 (whisper)
 It's okay. I know it wasn't your
 fault.

Jack winks at Deborahay. She's touched by his understanding.

A loud CLANK at the back of the door as Edwin enters, late.

EDWIN
 Let me guess. "Relaxation Day"? We
 open in a week!

K-No deliberately rolls his eyes for the benefit of the class.
 They chuckle.

K-NO
 Switch to decaf, am I right?

Edwin notices Deborahay chuckling.

EDWIN
 (to Deborahay)
 So now you're taking everyone's side
 except for mine.

K-NO
 Come on, Edwin, lay down and relax.
 Today, we're following Jack's
 courageous spirit and having a day
 of healing for our souls. It's gonna
 help the play.

Edwin looks at K-No with disgust.

EDWIN
 Well, while you're busy "healing
 your souls" and wallowing in a
 cesspool of adolescent narcissism,
 there is a certain "Act Two Scene
 Four" that remains tragically under-
 rehearsed.

Jack sits up.

JACK
 Ohmigod, Edwin, come on, relax.

EDWIN

I refuse to stand by and let this play suffer because you're too busy using your sexuality to undermine me and everyone else in Drama!

JACK

Undermine you? What are you talking about?

K-NO

Edwin, do you need to take a lap and come back?

EDWIN

(to K-No)

You're pathetic.

DEBORAY

Edwin, don't.

EDWIN

You're just a loser Drama teacher who lives at home with his *parents!*

Students GASP. K-No looks around, embarrassed.

K-NO

You *know* I got my own place. That's it. Get out of my sight.

EDWIN

You're kicking me out of rehearsal?

K-NO

That's exactly what I'm doing.

EDWIN

Then you've got a walkout on your hands. Come on, guys.

No one responds.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Deboray?

The Drama kids all look to Deboray. She shakes her head, annoyed.

DEBORAY

(to Drama kids)

Brb, guys.

The Drama kids watch as Deboray leaves with Edwin.

DRAMA KIDS

(ad lib)

Be strong, D! You got it, D!

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Edwin charges out the theater, lighting a clove cigarette.
Deboray chases after him.

DEBORAY

Edwin!

EDWIN

So K-No is even more despicable than
I thought and Jack is his pathetic
butt buddy.

DEBORAY

Wait.

EDWIN

They are going down.

DEBORAY

It's over, Edwin.

EDWIN

Bullshit, that part is mine.

DEBORAY

No. I mean between us.

EDWIN

Between us, what? Do you speak
English?

DEBORAY

We're breaking up.

Edwin stops, confused.

EDWIN

You're kidding.

DEBORAY

You're immature, you're rude, and
you're selfish.

EDWIN

You think this is about me? It's
about the integrity of the stage.
What's happened to you?

DEBORAY

What's happened to you, Edwin? You used to be nice.

Edwin keeps walking, smoking.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

And you didn't care if people liked you or not, but now that Jack's here you're turning into a monster. Are you even listening to me?

EDWIN

No. Because everything you're saying is nonsense. In fact, I don't know what the hell you're talking about half the time.

Edwin stamps out his cigarette, looks Deborah up and down.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

I'm better off solo anyway.

Edwin charges off.

DEBORAY

Hey, asshole! Switch to decaf!

But it doesn't sound as cool when she says it. She looks around. A few people heard.

INT. EDWIN'S HOME - NIGHT

Edwin slams the door and heads to the LIQUOR CABINET. He takes out a bottle of whiskey and drinks a long pull.

INT. EDWIN'S HOME - EDWIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Edwin THROWS everything off of his desk: acting books, creativity crystals, scripts, all crash to the floor.

INT. EDWIN'S HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Edwin, in full women's makeup, wears his classic Meryl Streep wig and delivers lines from "Kramer Vs. Kramer" in the mirror.

EDWIN

"I'm leaving you. Ted, I'm leaving you."

FANTASY SEQUENCE

It's the famous "leaving scene" from "Kramer Vs. Kramer," only Edwin is standing in for Meryl Streep and the resemblance is uncanny.

When acting in his fantasy opposite Dustin Hoffman, Edwin is sublime.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

"I've taken \$2,000 out of our savings account because that's what I had when we got married. Here's the cleaning, here's the laundry ticket, you can pick them both up on Saturday. I'm leaving." I'm leaving...

BACK TO SCENE

Edwin grabs the bottle of whiskey and exits, drinking with a sinister smile.

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Edwin, falling over drunk and still dressed as Meryl Streep, kicks in a glass entryway panel. He reaches his hand through and opens the door.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jack's glorious face fills the screen. It's the poster for "Death of a Salesman: Iraq," behind a glass case.

Edwin covers it in pink spray paint lettering: "FAGGOT."
Edwin takes a dangerously long pull of whiskey.

JACK (V.O.)

I didn't want to fake come out to the whole school, but whatever I guess, it turned out pretty well.

JACK SUCCESS MONTAGE

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

See, now it's like *okay* for people to start a club about me.

-- Show Jack walking through the hall, a group of people wearing t-shirts that say "I'm With Jack," wave at him excitedly. Jack waves back.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And it's cool cause sometimes people will try to pick a fight with me...

-- Jack walks home near the football field and out of no where, Rishanthony Fahad jumps him and tackles him.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 And I get to beat them within an
 inch of their life and it's okay
 because they were the ones hate crime-
 ing me first, you know?

-- Jack easily overtakes Rishanthony and starts beating him
 mercilessly. Jack's eyes are distant, vicious, as he beats
 on Rishanthony.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Plus, I get way better pussy.

-- Jack makes out with a HOT GIRL under the rafters. She
 stops making out with him for a second.

HOT GIRL
 I can't believe I'm making out with
 a gay guy. You're sure you don't
 mind?

Jack shakes his head. They continue kissing. Jack feels
 her underneath her skirt. She gets into it for a second,
 then stops.

HOT GIRL (CONT'D)
 Wait... what are you doing?

JACK
 Do you want to have sex?

She looks at him, confused.

JACK (CONT'D)
 I never knew I could feel this way
 about a woman. What if this is what
 love is?

It's as if the Hot Girl's very dreams are coming true.

HOT GIRL
 Oh my God...

She tackles him, straddling him and kissing him all over.

JACK (V.O.)
 It doesn't get any better than this.

END MONTAGE

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAWN

Morning light pours over Edwin's sleeping face. A RATTLING
 at the other end of the hall as the Janitor enters. Edwin
 starts to wake up with the ache of a brutal hangover.

He sees the spray paint at his feet. He looks at himself in drag in the reflection of the glass, the word "faggot" spray-painted above. He takes off his wig, wipes off his lipstick, the error of his ways starting to sink in.

JANITOR

Hey!

Edwin sees the Janitor at the far end of the hall and takes off running.

HALLWAY

Edwin rounds the corner, looking for refuge. He sees the theater doors and enters.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH SCHOOL - THEATER - DAY

Edwin's face falls to see Jack rehearsing with K-No one-on-one. K-No shows off, attempting to roll his hat across his arms and onto his head.

K-NO

Seen this one?

He tries again, almost gets it.

K-NO (CONT'D)

I was better at it in New York.

He tries again, Jack looks bored.

K-NO (CONT'D)

You should have seen me back in New York -- double mohawk, piercings, the works. Crazy landlady. "K-No! K-No! Take out trash! This not roach motel!" And then the subway. So dangerous, I couldn't even believe it. Broadway. 5th Avenue. Times Square. Showbiz. It's all there. You're a New York guy, I can tell. I'd be happy to introduce you to some of my friends out there, they're doing big things. Really big things.

JACK

(feigned interest)

Wow.

Edwin is crushed. He calls from the back of the theater.

EDWIN

One-on-one rehearsal?

(MORE)

EDWIN (CONT'D)
That used to be a prize for getting
extra tech hours, now I see you're
giving them out like candy.

K-NO
Out.

Edwin approaches Jack, studies his face.

EDWIN
What does he have? Really?

K-NO
I'll see you in 7th period.

EDWIN
Is it talent? Tell me.

K-No shakes his head. Edwin narrows his eyes.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
You're in love with him, aren't you?

K-No scoffs.

K-NO
Get out or I'll call the principal.

EDWIN
No.
(to Jack)
Why aren't you saying anything?

JACK
You're crazy.

Edwin breaks a breakaway bottle on a small table.

EDWIN
Say that again.

K-No gasps, runs out. He bumps into the principal, MRS.
DOHERTY, 50s, with the janitor.

JANITOR
That's him.

MRS. DOHERTY
(to Edwin)
Drop it!

Edwin struggles with the janitor for the spray paint. K-No
rips Edwin from the janitor and drags him out, kicking and
screaming.

A dark smile grows on Jack's face as Edwin is dragged out kicking and screaming.

Jack picks up K-No's hat and does the hat trick flawlessly, tossing the hat in the air, rolling down his arms, and landing it on his head.

INT. EL CAMINO HIGH - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Edwin sits before the principal, sullen. K-No sits next to him. The principal looks at a photo of Edwin's "Faggot" graffiti.

MRS. DOHERTY

Are you sorry for what you did?

Edwin is vacant.

K-NO

Edwin.

Edwin stares at the trophy case behind Mrs. Doherty.

K-NO (CONT'D)

She wants to know if you're sorry.

Edwin looks up at her.

EDWIN

I don't know what happened.

MRS. DOHERTY

Well, you attacked one of your fellow students after tagging his picture with a hate crime.

EDWIN

He was put here to belittle me. It doesn't matter what I do, he'll always make me look like an asshole.

MRS. DOHERTY

I'm afraid you didn't need his help for that, Edwin.

Sadness wells in Edwin's eyes.

EDWIN

What's my punishment?

MRS. DOHERTY

This is a criminal hate crime, we're talking expulsion here. I'm tempted to call the police.

K-NO

Mrs. Doherty, can I suggest that this was not a "hate crime," as much as a "self-hate crime."

K-No nods knowingly to her. She looks to Edwin.

EDWIN

Can I be honest, Principal Doherty?

MRS. DOHERTY

Please.

EDWIN

Kevin Noble's production of "Death of a Salesman: *Iraq*" is an embarrassment to the Miller estate and should be shut down immediately, or as I've suggested time and time again, be directed by me, a true Millerian scholar--

MRS. DOHERTY

-Pipe down, Edwin. You have a serious discipline problem. Now I've turned a blind eye to your flamboyant and distracting performances in the past, but that ends today.

Mrs. Doherty takes a long look at Edwin.

MRS. DOHERTY (CONT'D)

I'm taking what Mr. Noble said into consideration. Suspension. Two weeks. And if you do not apologize to Jack, in front of Mr. Noble and the rest of your classmates who are, frankly, terrified of you, you'll be forced to withdraw from the show. Let me tell you now, we will not tolerate any disruptive behavior out of you from this moment on.

Edwin looks back at her listlessly.

MRS. DOHERTY (CONT'D)

Is that understood?

EDWIN

K-No smoked marijuana in the girl's bathroom at In-N-Out.

K-NO

Jesus Christ, Edwin.

Mrs. Doherty shakes her head, fed up.

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH - DAY

Edwin exits the school trying to light a clove, K-No follows.

K-NO

Why'd you throw me under the bus
like that?

EDWIN

What do I care?

K-NO

I thought we were friends.

EDWIN

We're not friends, you're supposed
to be my teacher.

The clove won't light, he throws it on the ground.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Dammit.

K-NO

I know what this is about. Edwin...
you'll find someone your own age,
you have to believe me.

Edwin stops and looks at K-No.

EDWIN

That's what you think this is about?

K-NO

You think that because I cast Jack
as Willy, he's stolen me away from
you and now you're taking it out on
him. Come on, I was young once. Oh
man, I remember, I had the biggest
crush on my biology teacher for like
two years and this one time, I finally
built up the courage to tell him...
and then he acted all weird and made
me go to his church with him. In my
stupidity I thought it was a date,
but he was trying to fix me.
Actually, in retrospect it might
have been more of a date than I
realized. The point is, we don't
need fixing. I hope you know that.

Edwin looks off in the distance to see Deborah and Jack
laughing inside her parked station wagon. He takes it in.

EDWIN
I don't have anybody.

K-NO
I'm saying you do.

EDWIN
No. I don't. I'm nothing like you.
Or Jack. Or anyone at this stupid
school. I don't have any friends
and that's how it's supposed to be.

He starts to leave.

K-NO
Edwin!

EDWIN
(over the shoulder)
I'm not apologizing to anyone!

K-NO
Then you're out of the show.

EDWIN
Fuck your stupid show.

K-No watches Edwin leave, passing Deborah's station wagon.

I/E. DEBO'S STATION WAGON - DAY

Deborah and Jack eat chicken nuggets with the radio on,
laughing. Deborah looks out and notices K-No entering the
theater.

DEBORAY
Would you ever do it with K-No?

JACK
Oh God...

DEBORAY
Is that bad?

JACK
I don't know, he's our teacher, it's
weird.

DEBORAY
He's cute though, in a bad-boy kinda
way. I bet he has so many boyfriends.

JACK
Would you?

DEBORAY
 No way... it's like... so illegal.
 But it'd probably make me the star
 of like every play ever.

Jack flashes a sinister smile.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
 You're serious.

Jack shrugs coyly.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
 You're so bad.

They laugh.

INT. EDWIN'S HOUSE - DAY

Edwin, sullen, enters. Cynthia sits on the couch looking at him expectantly.

CYNTHIA
 I have never been so furious.

EDWIN
 I'm going to bed.

CYNTHIA
 It's 9:30 in the morning.

EDWIN
 I'm depressed.

CYNTHIA
 Don't gimme that bologna.

EDWIN
 Can we please talk about it later?

Edwin heads up the stairs.

CYNTHIA
 Mrs. Doherty gave me an earful. She
 said your behavior is out of control.
 And that poor poor gay boy. I'm so
 disappointed in you.

EDWIN
 Join the club.

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - DAY

Edwin blares the "Les Miserables" soundtrack.

INTERCUT/HALLWAY OUTSIDE EDWIN'S ROOM

Cynthia bangs on Edwin's door.

CYNTHIA
We are talking about this, young
man.

EDWIN
I said leave me alone.

CYNTHIA
Why can't we have a conversation?

Cynthia's pleading voice gets to Edwin. He collapses on his bed and pulls the covers over his head.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
Well?

She waits, arms crossed, her concern growing.

Edwin peeks up from underneath the covers.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
You know you can tell me anything...

Edwin stares at the door, willing himself to say something, but too ashamed.

Cynthia throws up her arms, defeated.

CYNTHIA (CONT'D)
All right. Then I guess I'll leave
you alone.

She leaves.

EDWIN'S ROOM

Edwin listens to her footsteps fade away.

EDWIN
Wait, Mom!

Edwin rushes out of bed, finally ready to talk.

HALLWAY

Edwin opens the door, but she's gone. He stares down the empty hallway, all alone.

INT. K-NO'S CLOSET-LIKE OFFICE - DAY

After school. K-No smokes a joint and reads "Death of a Salesman" in his narrow, cluttered office. A knock at the door. He sits up with a start.

K-NO

One sec.

He puts out the joint and burns a sage bundle. Jack, in football jersey, opens the door. A chair blocks it.

JACK

Hey.

(coy smile)

What's that smell?

K-No moves the chair and opens the door.

K-NO

It's just sage.

JACK

So... can I have a ride home?

K-NO

(a little too excited)

Yeah.

JACK

Cool.

Jack holds eye contact too long. K-No breaks it.

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - DAY

On Edwin's computer screen: "Leave It At The Door: A Memoir By Edwin Chute." Edwin starts typing.

EDWIN (V.O.)

"If only I'd been born in a time
when the integrity of the stage meant
something."

Edwin deletes what he wrote and goes online, his cursor blinking in the Google window.

He types: "JACK O'NEILL".

Article after article filled with accolades about Jack.

Until he finds a high school newspaper article: "DEMOTED: JACK O'NEILL LOSES GOLDEN TOUCH." Edwin's eyes light up. He writes down the byline:

"BECKA VARNEY."

INT. K-NO'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jack lets out a large cloud of smoke and passes a joint to K-No. They sit on K-No's ripped couch, patched with duct tape.

JACK

Toy boat, Toy Boat, Toy Boat, Taboy,
Taboyt...Toy...Boat-- I can't do it!

K-No laughs. He takes a huge hit and exhales it. Jack studies K-No's face and neck. K-No looks at him strangely.

JACK (CONT'D)

You know what would be funny? If instead of *Salesman* we did a play that just had me in it.

K-NO

Yeah that would be... funny.

JACK

It'd be cool though, right?

K-NO

Well yeah, I mean, we all want to be the star of our own play. But I think it's better to be part of something bigger than you, you know? Hey, can we just drop the whole teacher-student thing for a second here?

Jack cracks up.

K-NO (CONT'D)

What's funny?

JACK

I think that already happened.

K-NO

Oh yeah.

They both laugh.

K-NO (CONT'D)

No, I'm serious, stop laughing.

Jack notices K-No can't take his eyes off him. He scoots closer.

K-NO (CONT'D)

I know I'm just supposed to be the Drama teacher. But it's hard with you because you remind me so much of me. Only more... I don't know, *must more*. I know it's my job to shape you guys, but... you barely need it. I'm sorry. I'm making you totally uncomfortable.

Jack laughs to put him at ease, touches him arm.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Your audition was just so raw... I guess I related to it. Feeling alone. Isolated.

Jack massages K-No's shoulder. K-No holds his hand. They both freeze.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Don't.

JACK

Why?

K-No looks down. Jack kisses his cheek. K-No pulls his face away and looks in the other direction.

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - DAY

Edwin lays in bed, depressed. A knock at the door.

EDWIN

Come in.

Cynthia enters.

CYNTHIA

I'm going on a few errands. You'll be okay here?

Edwin nods. Cynthia exits. Edwin gets out of bed, fully clothed.

EXT. CALSITOR HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Edwin drives up to a large, beautiful private high school.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Edwin sits in the bleachers watching FOOTBALL PRACTICE. A few yards away, BECKA VARNEY, 17, gorgeous, ambitious, takes notes as she watches practice. She looks at Edwin.

He goes over to her.

EDWIN
Who do you have your eye on?

BECKA
The Twins, obviously.

Edwin sees TWO ENORMOUS WALRUS-LOOKING identical twin football players. They bump their stomachs together and let out guttural roars.

EDWIN
Breathtaking.

Becka chuckles.

BECKA
Becka Varney, Editor, "Calsitor Times, Jr. Edition".

EDWIN
Edwin Chute, Most Likely To Win An Oscar, "El Camino High Yearbook".

BECKA
How'd you find my number?

EDWIN
I followed your mom into a grocery store and replaced her cell phone with a similarly shaped bathroom tile.

He gives her the cell phone.

EDWIN (CONT'D)
Forgive me.

Becka studies him.

BECKA
"The Glove Doesn't Fit".

EDWIN
You know it?

BECKA
Are you kidding? My whole staff watched you on the 5 o'clock news. You're hilarious.

EDWIN

You wouldn't have laughed if you'd been there. The moment I put the glove on you could hear a pin drop. The audience, electrified -- my soul, on fire.

BECKA

Why'd you call me?

EDWIN

What if I told you that the entire institution of high school theater is about to go up in flames?

BECKA

I'm on deadline.

She gets up.

EDWIN

Wait. It's about Jack O'Neill.

She turns to him curiously.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Edwin and Becka both drink milkshakes. Edwin has the "JACK O'NEILL LOSES GOLDEN TOUCH" article spread on the table, studying it.

BECKA

He broke up with me after I wrote that article. I don't blame him. It was vicious. My insults got sloppy, usually they're pretty Shakespearian. It's the only reason I didn't win the Student Pulitzer that year.

EDWIN

Why'd he transfer.

BECKA

When the Twins took his title he went berserk. Allegedly, my friend Marsha saw him grab a seagull out of the air and rip off its head. And he went to science class the next period and he didn't even wipe off the blood. His parents sent him to the psycho ward for like a year. All because the Twins beat him. He's more afraid of losing than anyone I've met.

EDWIN

Why El Camino?

BECKA

Are you kidding? Lowest performing Division One team in the state? He wants to be the hero. The star. The story writes itself.

EDWIN

I have to get him out of this play.

BECKA

It's high school theater, who cares?

EDWIN

Have you ever met anyone exactly like you... only better in every single way?

They share intense eye contact.

BECKA

Get rid of him.

She packs up her things.

BECKA (CONT'D)

Can I give you a performance note? 36 hours is too long for a play. Give the audience what it wants and forget about yourself. And by the way... we never met.

Edwin watches her go.

INT. K-NO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

K-No looks off into space, desperate, terrified.

JACK (O.S.)

K? K...

Jack's on the other side of the bed, working on the "Salesman" script. He crosses out every line except his own. A few lines by other characters have their names crossed out and "Willy" written in.

JACK (CONT'D)

Are you mad?

K-NO

Confused. Alive. Scared to death.

K-No turns over to meet Jack's eyes.

K-NO (CONT'D)
How are you taking all of this?

JACK
I want to talk about the play. I
have some ideas.

Jack shows K-No the script.

K-NO
Is this a joke?

No response.

K-NO (CONT'D)
We can't cut out everyone else's
lines.

Jack just looks at him, unblinking.

JACK
Hm.

K-No's worried.

EXT. SIDE STREET BEHIND FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

K-No drops Jack off at a football practice.

K-NO
Let me look at your eyes.

Jack laughs, opens his eyes to K-No.

K-NO (CONT'D)
You still look stoned.

JACK
Will you relax? Nothing's going to
happen, it's just practice.

K-No tries to relax.

K-NO
Are you coming to cast bonding
tomorrow night?

JACK
If you're lucky.

Jack smiles coyly. It makes K-No giddy.

K-NO
Don't look at me like that in public.
(MORE)

K-NO (CONT'D)

We shouldn't be seen together outside of school... ugh, but I can't make you miss cast bonding, I would hate myself. Just... be cool, okay?

Jack kisses him on the cheek and exits. K-No watches him go. He rests his forehead on the steering wheel.

EXT. SIDE STREET NEXT TO FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Jack walks toward the football field. Deborahay, carrying her backpack, joins him.

DEBORAY

Hey, stranger.

JACK

What are you doing here?

DEBORAY

I came to watch.

JACK

Practice?

DEBORAY

I know. I'm a stalker. Since I broke up with Edwin I have like a lot more free time on my hands, it's totally embarrassing. Ah, I'm babbling. It's just cool to like... be friends with someone who's not like... totally manipulative and just, we. Why are you smiling.

JACK

No reason.

DEBORAY

Shut up. Something totally happened.

JACK

If I tell you this, you have to promise never to tell anyone.

Deborahay's face screams OMG.

JACK (CONT'D)

Okay. Remember what we talked about the other day? About K-No? Well...

Deborahay's face falls as she listens to Jack's story. All we hear is the FOG OF CONFUSION and betrayal hissing into her brain.

EXT. IN-N-OUT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The shrill SCREAMING and CHEERING of Drama Students. K-No fans a stack of one dollar bills.

K-NO
 We got some cast bonding in style.
 All you little kiddies upgrade to
 Animal Style on me!

Deboray watches in disgust as K-No cackles. The Drama Kids rush up to him and yank bills.

K-NO (CONT'D)
 Deboray, you wanna come in?

Deboray reluctantly goes in.

INT. IN-N-OUT - NIGHT

The place is bustling with Drama kids. K-No plops a plate of fries in front of Deboray and sits next to her. She shrinks, disgusted.

K-NO
 Most embarrassing moment, go.

TAMMY, a popular girl with a deep voice goes first.

TAMMY
 Oh my God, so many. How about the
 time I'm hooking up with Benji
 Costello and my mom calls and I like
 fully sit on the speakerphone and my
 mom is like thoroughly having a
 conversation with my ass about how
 she can't pick me up from swim
 practice tomorrow oh my God.

Deboray sees K-No text Jack:

"Game over? :)"

Deboray looks K-No dead on.

K-NO
 Yes?

She rolls her eyes.

K-NO (CONT'D)
 Okay, my most embarrassing moment...
 I'm twelve years old.
 (MORE)

K-NO (CONT'D)

And I'm at this super conservative Catholic boys school, right? So me and my friend Spence are smoking pot behind what else... the Drama building!

Scattered laughs and omgs of recognition from the kids. Deboray sighs heavily and looks out the window.

She's surprised, almost happy, to see Edwin standing outside the In-N-Out.

EXT. IN-N-OUT - NIGHT

Edwin stands forlornly watching the Deboray and the Drama Kids. He puts his hand on the window.

INT. IN-N-OUT - BY THE SODA FOUNTAINS - NIGHT

K-No gets a refill of DC as Deboray fills up her iced tea. She piles lemons onto a napkin.

Edwin looms outside.

K-No playfully hip-bumps Deboray. She's angry, but tries to hide it.

DEBORAY

I'm like obsessed with iced tea and lemons today.

K-NO

I'm obsessed with your hair today.

Deboray shudders.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Did you see Edwin out there? Gag me.

She doesn't answer. She piles more lemons on her napkin.

K-NO (CONT'D)

Come on, where's that Debo smile that won't quit?

DEBORAY

Yeah. I'll keep looking for that.

She exits. K-No watches her go, a little confused.

EXT. IN-N-OUT - NIGHT

Edwin stands at the railing, looking out into the parking lot. Deborahay comes outside with her iced tea, plopping her lemon napkin on the railing.

DEBORAY

Got a clove?

Edwin nods. He lights her a clove cigarette, then lights one for himself.

Edwin turns to face the happy castmates inside.

EDWIN

Look at them. They hate me.

DEBORAY

You kinda deserve it.

EDWIN

You know about the--

DEBORAY

-Hate crime? Yeah. Everyone does. The janitor took it down before anyone saw it, but you better believe K-No blabbed about it.

EDWIN

To everyone?

DEBORAY

Just the inner-circle.

EDWIN

Are you still mad at me?

She takes a drag of her cigarette and looks at him.

DEBORAY

I don't know what I thought we would be. But it wasn't this.

She puts out her cigarette and starts to leave.

EDWIN

I know I've ignored you, and been mean to you, and been a really horrible, pathetic boyfriend... but... you're the only one who can stand me. The only person in the world I even like. I need you.

DEBORAY

You used me.

EDWIN

I know. I won't anymore. I promise.

Edwin sees a PICK-UP TRUCK filled with Football Players driving into the parking lot. Jack in the front seat.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Will you consider it?

Edwin can't look at her, tears in his eyes. Deboray sees Jack approach.

DEBORAY

You better go.

Deboray heads into the In-N-Out.

Jack gives Edwin the evil eye as he approaches.

JACK

What are you crying about, *faggot*?

Jack SLAPS Edwin.

JACK (CONT'D)

You gonna hate crime me again?

Jack slaps him again, Edwin is defenseless.

EDWIN

Leave me alone!

JACK

You're the one who followed me here.

EDWIN

I got here first.

Jack ignores him and heads into In-N-Out.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

I know why you transferred.

This stops Jack.

JACK

You don't know anything.

EDWIN

I know you can't handle the idea that someone might be better than you at something.

JACK

Wait. Wait wait wait. You think you're better than me? I thought you were pissed cause you knew I'm better than you without even trying. Oh no...

Jack gets in Edwin's face.

JACK (CONT'D)

You're horrible. When you're on stage, people are just uncomfortable. Even your best friend thinks so.

Edwin, crushed, watches Jack head into the In-N-Out. Edwin shouts after him.

EDWIN

I hate you.

JACK

(entering)
Who gives a shit?

Jack disappears inside. Edwin watches the Drama kids rush to him, cheering, hugging him.

INT. IN-N-OUT - MEN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

K-No passes a small pipe to Jack and exhales the smoke out a tiny window.

K-NO

This isn't working, I'm still tense. I can't do it. Not tonight.

JACK

You said the play would be better with just me. You promised me.

K-NO

How would that look if I cut everyone out of the play except you?

JACK

Can't they be ghosts of Iraqi soldiers?

K-NO

That was just brainstorming.

JACK

It was a cool idea. Be honest. You know it's better.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

I'm the one who's serious about this, like, who seriously has a chance at acting, you said that.

K-NO

I can't tell them I'm cutting their lines a few days before the show.

JACK

We'll get Deboray to do it. I already told her about the idea, she thought it was cool.

K-NO

She did?

JACK

Yeah, she said she's really stressed about having to remember all her lines. Everyone is.

K-NO

But Deboray's always first off-book, why wouldn't she tell me she was having trouble?

JACK

She's feeling the distance with you. Maybe if you chose her to break the news, she'd feel, you know, more connected.

K-No looks at him, concerned.

JACK (CONT'D)

Come on...

Jack grabs his waist and shakes him, making him laugh.

K-NO

Okay, okay.

K-No removes Jack's hands from his waist, giggling.

INT. IN-N-OUT - GIRL'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Deboray splashes water on her face and looks in the mirror. The door creeps open.

Jack enters. She stands up straight.

JACK

K and I are gonna need your help with something. You'll do it, right?

DEBORAY

No, okay, I'm not your servant.

JACK

What's with the attitude?

DEBORAY

What do you think? You slept with our teacher.

JACK

Aw, babe, it's okay.

Jack comes behind her, looking in the mirror with her, caressing her hair.

JACK (CONT'D)

When people are in love, it's like, whatever... K-No's taking me to Lake Tahoe after the show. Movie marathons? Trivial Pursuit? Real champagne? Truth or dare... we were thinking you could come too.

Deboray looks back at him.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Edwin walks home from In-N-Out listlessly, alone.

A car screeches to a halt next to him. Deboray pokes her head out.

DEBORAY

K-No's turning "Salesman" into a one-man show starring Jack.

EDWIN

What the fuck?

DEBORAY

He's fucking crazy!

Edwin hops in the car.

I/E. DEBORAY'S CAR - PARKED - NIGHT

Deboray manically sips her drink. Edwin adjusts the settings on his FlipCam.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

And it's like, I'm sorry, you can't even tell the cast yourself that you're like cutting all their lines?

EDWIN

And I love how they're just like
flaunting their secret relationship
as if like none of us will notice.

DEBORAY

And like I'm sorry, I know Jack's
sooo good or whatever, but can we
please stop acting like he's this
Greek God we need to like bow down
to?

EDWIN

And can I just say the play has
nothing to do with Iraq? This is
Arthur Miller, you want to see some
real political theater, some real
Teatro Campesino, look to Luis Valdez,
look to--

DEBORAY

-It's them!

K-No's truck drives by with Jack inside. Deboray and Edwin
follow.

I/E. DEBORAY'S STATION WAGON - K-NO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Deboray and Edwin roll up. Edwin videos.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

Don't film it, Edwin.

EDWIN

This needs to go on record. They're
gonna deny it.

DEBORAY

Maybe it's none of our business.

Jack and K-No sneak into the apartment complex and out of
view.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

Oh my God...

Edwin gets out of the car.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing?

EDWIN

Lay low, I'm getting closer.

DEBORAY

Edwin, wait--

-But like a ninja, he's gone. Deboray hits the steering wheel. *Dammit!!*

INT. K-NO'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jack and K-No enter kissing.

JACK

Stop feeling bad.

K-NO

I don't.

Jack kisses K-No again.

JACK

You know they all suck, right?

K-NO

They don't suck enough to cut all their lines.

JACK

Are you kidding? Sarah? Tammy?

K-No chuckles.

K-NO

Tammy Kablammy, that was so funny when you said that.

JACK

Deboray?

K-NO

She's good!

JACK

Yeah right. She's whatever. At best.

K-No looks at Jack, admiring him.

K-NO

Can we stop talking about them, please?

Jack smiles, pushes K-No onto the bed and climbs on top of him. Across the room, the closet doors are slightly ajar.

CLOSET

A little red light burns. Edwin's vague, sinister shape behind it.

K-NO (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Come on... we can't do this.

JACK (O.S.)
Sh...

K-NO (O.S.)
No, Jack.

JACK (O.S.)
Yes, yes, yes...

I/E. DEBO'S STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Deboray waits anxiously watching the clock. It's been a while. Edwin gets into the car. She starts it.

DEBORAY
What did you get?

EDWIN
Enough.

They drive off.

EXT. EDWIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Edwin stands outside Debo's car, leaning in.

EDWIN
So remember. What are you going to say tomorrow?

DEBORAY
"Jack, you can tell K-No that the show is *not* changing. And if either of you have a problem with it, I'm telling your dirty little secret. I worked *too hard* for this role to be a part of your pathetic little game."

EDWIN
Proud of you.

Deboray winks at Edwin and drives off. He watches her go.

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Edwin lies awake in bed staring at the FlipCam on his desk...

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - DAWN

As dawn breaks, Edwin is in the same exact position, eyes open, staring at the FlipCam.

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH - DAY

A grey morning. Principal Doherty gets out of her car. She sees a NEWS VANS parked outside and approaches a NEWS ANCHOR.

MRS. DOHERTY
What the hell is this?

The News Anchor points to the school:

A PROJECTED VIDEO OF K-NO AND JACK TOGETHER, kissing, fills the front wall.

The Principal's eyes widen.

K-No pulls up to the front of the school. He panics when he sees the projection.

He peels out of the parking lot as fast as he can...

I/E. K-NO'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

K-No drives frantically, looking for a number on his cell phone.

K-NO
Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck
fuck fuck--

He calls the number and puts his phone to his ear. He sees his weed in the ash tray and tries to throw it out the window but the window's closed. He starts to cry.

K-NO (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Mom?

EXT. EL CAMINO HIGH - DAY

Jack arrives. He sees the projection and the news vans. Terror in his eyes...

I/E. EDWIN'S CAR - PARKED - DAY

Edwin wears sunglasses, watching with blank satisfaction as chaos ensues.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Deboray arrives and sees the projection, immediately realizing she's in over her head.

She notices Jack at the center of a throng of reporters. She watches him rear up and sob dramatically. She approaches, curious.

JACK

Why?!

I/E. EDWIN'S CAR - DAY

Edwin, taking off his glasses, watches in awe as Jack becomes the victim.

Deboray catches Edwin's eye. She's pissed. She heads toward him.

He speeds off.

TV NEWS CLIP

Jack is interviewed outside El Camino High.

JACK (CONT'D)

He told me he'd help me become famous.
He told me he'd help me be a star...

A LOCAL TV REPORTER speaks to camera.

LOCAL TV REPORTER

Chilling words, from innocent El Camino High School student, Jack O'Neill. Actor. Football player. Survivor.

INT. THEATER - DAY

After school. The Drama Class, despondent, laying on each other on the stage. Tammy looks at her watch.

TAMMY

The dress rehearsal would have started by now.

DEBORAY

Shut up, Tammy.

Sarah sits up, in tears.

SARAH

(to Deboray)
We're all hurting!

Darkness fills the stage. They look up. A dark figure with a giant cape.

DEBORAY

(quiet)
Edwin?

The figure comes closer. It's Jack. The cast draws back in fear. Something isn't right...

He composes himself and addresses the rest of the cast. Sarah mad-dogs Deborah.

JACK

I owe you all an explanation. I know you don't want to hear this. But it wasn't my fault. K-No... he drugged me.

Jack starts to cry. Deborah has a look of disgust. The Drama Freaks look around, not sure what to believe.

DEBORAY

Leave before I poke your eyeballs out.

Jack stops right in front of Deborah's face and looks at her without an ounce of sympathy.

JACK

You'll hear all the details tonight. In the show. But right now... I need a stage manager.

DEBORAY

I don't get it, "Salesman" is cancelled.

Jack takes out flyers for a one-man show.

INSERT FLYER: "JACK O'NEILL: MY SIDE"

Sarah rushes up to Jack and hugs him.

SARAH

I'll join you.

DEBORAY

Don't do it, Sarah.

SARAH

Look at you. Abandoning him when he needs you most.

Sarah claps, immediately in stage manager mode.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Now clear the stage, we have a show
 to rehearse.

The Drama Freaks give up the stage. Deboray gives Jack one
 last look. He flashes a dark smile.

INT. EDWIN'S HOUSE - DAY

Edwin watches the news.

NEWS

Subtitle: "DRAMA IN DRAMA!" A reporter in front of El Camino.

REPORTER (O.S.)
 I'm getting word that Jack O'Neill
 filmed and projected the video
 himself, because, he claims, no one
 in the administration would believe
 him otherwise. O'Neill is taking a
 voluntary absence from school, except,
 of course, for his highly anticipated
 one-man show tonight.

BACK TO SCENE

Edwin shakes his head, simultaneously amazed and horrified
 by Jack's deception.

SFX: DOORBELL.

He answers the door. It's Deboray. She's livid.

DEBORAY
 You *promised* you wouldn't go rogue.

EDWIN
 I did the right thing.

DEBORAY
 You projected a video of our teacher
 having sex with a minor in front of
 the whole school!

EDWIN
 You drove!

DEBORAY
 Yeah and if my mom finds out I can
 kiss summer at Cal Arts goodbye.
 You couldn't have just let me handle
 it. You needed to destroy everything.

(MORE)

DEBORAY (CONT'D)

And guess what, now "Salesman" is cancelled. Did you even realize that I was in that play?

Edwin sees Deboray's disappointment.

DEBORAY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Did you ever think that I might care if it got shut down? I did a good job in that part. It's the first good thing I've been in. My sister was gonna visit from college to see it.

EDWIN

You didn't tell me Sisanie was coming.

DEBORAY

You didn't ask. Just leave me alone. I knew I couldn't trust you.

Edwin knows he's lost her. She exits.

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - DAY

Edwin stares at the script to "Death of a Salesman," his highlighted lines for Biff... he looks above his desk at the cast photos for his previous plays:

INSERT PHOTOS: "The Tempest," "The Caucasian Chalk Circle," "The Glove Doesn't Fit." In all the pictures, Edwin looks gleeful, his arms around fellow cast-members, stage managers, and Deboray. These were fun, uncomplicated times.

Edwin puts the photos face down on his desk. He buries his face in his hands.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

The theater is PACKED with students, football players, and teachers. A few NEWS CAMERAS in back.

The drama class, lead by Deboray, walks to the front row to see several "RESERVED" seats. Sarah approaches, wearing a headset.

SARAH

Hey guys, you can't sit there, those are for the Juilliard people.

Dismayed awe on the Drama Kids' faces.

SARAH (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 You better find a seat, we go on in
 five.

As the house lights flicker, Mrs. Doherty storms in from the back of the theater, furious. She takes the stage.

MRS. DOHERTY
 Please, everyone, can I have your
 attention?

The audience doesn't settle down.

MRS. DOHERTY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 There is no show. The show has been
 canceled. This is not an authorized
 performance.

Football players BOO! The rest of the audience follows suit.

MRS. DOHERTY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 Please. This is not okay.

THE AUDIENCE BEGINS TO CHANT:

AUDIENCE
 "We Want Jack! We Want Jack!"

AUDIENCE

The lights go out on the stage and the room is completely dark. Screams of teenage anticipation.

INT. EDWIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Edwin stares at a picture of himself as Marcia Clark, his arm around Deborah... he gets an idea.

I/E. EDWIN'S CAR - DUSK

Edwin races to school, "Salesman" script in the front seat.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DUSK

Edwin pulls into the lot, seeing crowds of people flock to the theater.

EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

Edwin sneaks into the back entrance leading backstage.

INT. BACK STAGE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Edwin enters. He starts taking out the "Salesman" costumes. He hears:

AUDIENCE

"We Want Jack! We Want Jack!"

Edwin approaches the stage. He looks through the curtain.

EDWIN'S POV: STAGE

Mrs. Doherty can't get the students' attention.

MRS. DOHERTY

Turn on the lights, please! Turn on
the lights NOW!

Scattered whispers telling people to be quiet... Deborahay looks up.

DEBORAY

Oh my God...

Edwin's eyes go wide. A spotlight hits Jack as he LOWERS INTO THE AUDIENCE ON A TRAPEZE. A hush befalls the crowd.

JACK

Love. Life. Heartbreak.

MRS. DOHERTY

Jack, come down this instant or you're expelled.

RISHANTHONY FAHAD throws a pine cone at Mrs. Doherty. It pegs her on the shoulder, bouncing off far.

MRS. DOHERTY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Jesus!

Shaken up, Mrs. Doherty flees the stage. Edwin gets back to work.

JACK

I thought I knew what pain was. I had no idea. Before I met Kevin Noble, or K-No as his lovers call him, I was just a boy eating Pop Tarts for breakfast.

Tears trickle down his face.

JACK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

That boy is dead. K-No killed him.

Jack jumps off the trapeze, doing a full flip, landing perfectly in the aisle. He approaches the stage.

JACK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 But this show, this presentation.
 It's not about death. It's about
 life. My life.

Jack nods to Sarah in the booth. She blasts a rocking karaoke jam. Jack sings, directly to audience members. Surprise, he has a fantastic voice.

JACK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 "It's about me, It's about my life,
 It's about where everything went so
 wrong..."

Jack sings in Deborahay's face.

JACK (CONT'D)
 "Oh oh oh oh..."

He gets on stage for the chorus.

JACK (CONT'D)
 "I'm a boy, just a boy, another
 forgotten mistake, I'm a boy, just a
 boy, an orphan with a half-filled
 suitcase... Just a boy... just a
 boy... just me..."

On "me," several giant posters of Jack's sad face unfurl along the back wall of the stage.

The audience CHEERS! Now *this* is a show. The JULLIARD PEOPLE chat, nodding to one another, interested.

The audience is enrapt. Deborahay looks around, disgusted to see everyone's buying this horrible act.

Edwin enters from the back of the theater and crouches next to Deborahay.

EDWIN
 We're taking back the show.

DEBORAY
 (hushed)
 Give it up. It's over.

EDWIN
 Please. This isn't about my career.
 It's about us. It's about Drama.

Edwin gives her the picture of the two of them together, him dressed as Marcia Clark. He scurries off.

Deborahay turns the photo over. A note:

INSERT NOTE: "Meet me backstage. Bring cast." Deboray looks to the stage, worried.

INT. BACK STAGE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Edwin gets dressed in full Army regalia. Deboray enters, unsure.

DEBORAY
What is this about, Edwin?

EDWIN
Your Linda has to be seen. That's all there is to it.

He presents her with her Army uniform. She considers.

The Drama Kids trickle in and see that all of their ARMY FATIGUES are laid out. Deboray sees the Drama Kids getting excited.

EDWIN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
One night only. Leave it all on the stage.

She accepts the uniform.

DEBORAY
I'm in.

Tammy and a few of the other Drama Kids approach Edwin.

TAMMY
So we're just supposed to accept that you're back in the show?

EDWIN
I know I've been selfish and I've probably upstaged every single one of you, intentionally or unintentionally. And you really have no reason to trust me. But for some people out there, this is the first and last play they will ever see in their entire life. And it's this crap? Look at that crowd. There's football players, people I've never seen before. We have to show them "Salesman." It's the best play we've ever done.

TAMMY
They're gonna boo us off the stage.

EDWIN

They're going to relate to it. Tammy. Remember when we did that scene study from "The Importance of Being Earnest" and it made you realize that your expectations in your relationship with Derrick Lee were just as hypocritical as Lady Bracknell's?

TAMMY

(remembering)

Oh my God, Derrick's in the audience. I'm in.

Edwin looks to the weary ALEX, bleached hair, braces.

EDWIN

Alex. That part in Act Two where you hit yourself in the face with your gun?

The Drama Kids chuckle, remembering. Edwin puts his arm around his shoulder.

EDWIN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Who knew you were like the Slapstick King?

Alex nods. He's in.

Sarah appears in the doorway wearing her headset.

SARAH

Get back in your seats or leave.

EDWIN

We're doing "Salesman."

SARAH

You can't pull it off. Get back in your seats.

EDWIN

We need you.

SARAH

I have 30 seconds till my next cue.

EDWIN

Then I'll make it quick. Whether you're playing my brother in "Salesman," or a goat herder in "Chalk Circle," you do it with courage.

(MORE)

EDWIN (CONT'D)

And you have the coolest, most like,
trendy hair out of all of us. We
love you.

Sarah's touched.

SARAH

Still. Jack's not gonna let us just
do the show.

EDWIN

We have to try.

Deboray holds her hands.

DEBORAY

Come on, Sarah. You're going to
engineering school, this could be
our last chance to do something
totally random and fun. We're
Seniors, we have to do this.

Sarah looks around to see the faces of supportive Drama Kids.

SARAH

We're gonna need more fog.

Edwin brings her in for a hug. They all hug.

EDWIN

"1, 2, 3,"

DRAMA KIDS

"SALESMAN!"

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Jack looks up, hearing "SALESMAN" backstage. He shakes it
off. He resumes, holding a razor to his wrist. The audience,
terrified, can't take their eyes off him.

JACK

I know what you're wondering. Is he
gonna do it? It would be so easy.

A TEACHER, worried, approaches the stage. George "Victory"
Thomas blocks him.

GEORGE

"All violence in tonight's performance
is simulated."

Jack delicately traces the razor along a vein all the way up
his arm. Someone audibly WINCES.

JACK
So fast...

Jack draws back the blade.

JACK (CONT'D)
But I can't.

The audience relaxes. Jack sees he has them in his grip.

JACK (CONT'D)
But the pain...

He brings the blade to his wrist again, this time dangerously PRESSING it on his vein. The audience GASPS, SHRIEKS.

TEACHER
Hey, come on now!

INT. BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Edwin and the Drama Kids spy backstage.

DEBORAY
He has them eating out of his hand.

EDWIN
We'll just have to be better.

Deboray nods, but she's not sure if that's possible.

INT. NONDESCRIPT BATHROOM - NIGHT

K-No rubs his face and looks in the mirror, desperate.

INT. POLICE STATION - WAITING AREA - NIGHT

K-No, pulling himself together, exits the bathroom and sits in the waiting area. He lets out a deep sigh.

OFFICER (O.S.)
Mr. Noble?

K-No looks up.

OFFICER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Right this way.

K-No leaves with the OFFICER.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Jack, nearly drawing blood. Another GASP from the audience, a few SCREAMS. A CRYING TEEN GIRL.

CRYING TEEN GIRL

Make him stop!

A RED SNIPER LASER lands on Jack's forehead. Then ANOTHER, and ANOTHER. The audience is confused.

Then the FOG starts coming. It fills the stage. Red sniper lasers are everywhere, like a light show. Jack panics. He's seen this before...

SUDDENLY, the cast, in their Army fatigues, emerges throughout the house.

They pop up from trap doors in the stage, they crawl down the aisles, they descend from the ceiling on ropes. It's magnificent. The audience CHEERS, awed by the spectacle.

Jack looks around confused, his show is getting hijacked.

Deboray's voice comes in on loudspeaker.

DEBORAY (O.S.)

"Willy, Willy, Willy..."

The cast repeats, in unison.

DRAMA KIDS

"Willy, Willy, Willy."

As Jack looks around, disoriented from the fog, the players dance around him, blocking him in a circle with their guns. They close in on him, lifting him.

JACK

Hey!

They carry him off stage.

INT. BACK STAGE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

The Drama Freaks dump Jack into the backstage dressing room. He struggles against the Freaks to get back on stage, but he's outnumbered.

He sees the audience, cheering, happy, excited for "Salesman." His face falls.

INT. THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Edwin comes forward wearing a tattered fez and tunic, an "Iraqi townsman."

EDWIN

"A play about loss. A play about sacrifice. A play about dreams."

The cast turns facing the audience.

EVERYONE
"Death of a Salesman: Iraq!"

The audience CHEERS. The Juilliard people applaud, looking at each other, impressed.

INT. BACK STAGE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Jack sees he's lost the audience. He looks to Deborah, blocking him. She shakes her head at him.

Jack gives up and storms off. Not before grabbing his CAPE.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jack charges down the hall, punching a locker on his way, the cape whipping behind him.

INT. THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

Edwin grabs Deborah off stage.

EDWIN
Do your Act Two monologue.

DEBORAY
What?

EDWIN
Trust me.

Edwin pulls Deborah on stage and hurries everyone else off.

As the fog recedes, Deborah has the entire stage to herself. She looks out into the audience and takes a deep breath. This is her moment and Edwin has given it to her.

DEBORAY
"I don't know what it is, but I can't cry. I don't understand it. It seems to me that you're just on another trip. I keep expecting you. Why did you do it? I search and search, and I just can't understand it."

The tears start coming. The Juilliard people are fascinated.

DEBORAY (CONT'D)
"I made the last payment on the house today..."

BACKSTAGE

Edwin pounds his fist in the air, she nailed it.

He turns the cast.

EDWIN

Do any of you guys want to read for
Willy?

Alex, the Slapstick King, raises his hand.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

Congratulations. It's yours.

Edwin puts the script into Alex's hands, passing a torch.

"SALESMAN" MONTAGE:

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Most artists are granted only a few
shimmering moments of glory before
they die.

-- Edwin, Deboray, Alex, and Sarah perform a scene.

ALEX

"You're just doing this out of spite,
Biff."

EDWIN (V.O.)

That night, we were granted more
glory than we knew what to do with.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

"Oh come on, Willy, what the hell am
I grabbing this dream for? What am
I doing in an office when all I want
is out there, waiting for me the
minute I say I know who I am!"

Alex lowers his script as Edwin nears tears.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

"Because. I'm a dime a dozen, and
so are you."

Deboray watches on, emotional.

EDWIN (CONT'D)

"So will you please take that phony
dream and burn it before something
happens?"

Edwin looks out into the audience, bare, the desperation of
the past few months evident. Football players, strangers,
even the Juilliard People, are disarmed by Edwin's honesty.

The audience APPLAUDS. A few CHEER.

Once Edwin gets to the wings, he leaps, giddy. Deboray and Sarah embrace him. He looks back to the audience, they're still clapping. He takes it in.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We were lifted, as if by magic.

-- "Linda's Dream," a modern dance piece where Deboray is lifted by the cast to look like she's running and tumbling through the air.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
When Willy finally died, there wasn't
a dry eye in the house.

-- "Willy's Death," Deboray, Edwin, and Sarah all cower as WILLY'S CAR CRASHES into the set, destroying it. Alex, dead, slumped over the hood.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But somehow, as the show came to an
end, I knew I was saying goodbye...

-- Curtain call, glee on Edwin's face. Some of the Seniors, about half the class, kiss the stage, a final performance tradition.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Many who came that night will tell
stories about how a fire alarm went
off and no one left because they
didn't want to miss a single moment.

-- Edwin kisses the stage. Deboray cries as she kisses the stage. She looks up at Edwin and bursts out laughing. He's crying too.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Or how they wept for four hours
straight.

-- Outside the theater, the cast leaves, hand in hand. Throngs of parents, reporters, and students crowd them.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Or how the moment Deboray Hall stepped
onto the stage they knew she would
be a star.

-- The Juilliard people crowd around Deboray, giving them their cards, patting her on the back, telling her their favorite parts of her performance. She listens, wide-eyed.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And some will say none of it ever
even happened.

-- The empty stage.

EDWIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
As for me, in one night I achieved
everything I'd ever hoped to achieve
in the theater. And finally... it
was enough.

Edwin steps onto the stage. He looks out into the empty audience, content. Even a little proud. He raises his arms to bow, but doesn't. He drops his arms, and exits simply.

FADE TO BLACK.