JIMMY
A party? Whose?

DANNY
I don’t know, some kid is having a keg on Friday.

JIMMY
Oh I heard about that. You’re going?

DANNY
Hell yeah, Erica will be there.

JIMMY
So you think that by talking to her when she’s drunk, she’ll be more likely to fall for you.

DANNY
Pretty much, yeah.

JIMMY
You’re probably right, I’d have to be drunk to fall for you too.

DANNY
You bitch, I don’t see you getting on any girls either.

JIMMY
Hello? Waste of my time. Like any of these girls could even do it for me.

DANNY
Listen to you, you really are gay, aren’t you?

JIMMY
Shut up, I am not. It’s just that these ugly dogs can’t live up to my standards.

DANNY
Yeah sure, you homo.

JIMMY
Give it up, I can get any girl I want way faster than you.

DANNY
I’ll believe that when I see it.

JIMMY
You care to put a little money on it, big boy?
DANNY
Sure, how much?

JIMMY
Ten bucks says I kiss a girl at that party before you do.

DANNY
You’re so on.

They shake hands, then turn and walk down the hallway.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 33—INT.—PARTY
A typical high school party is going on. A keg is the kitchen, and kids are doing keg stands. In the backyard, the stoners are smoking weed. In the bathroom, a kid is throwing up. Upstairs, some kids are fooling around in a bedroom. Jimmy and Danny are just walking in.

DANNY
Ok dude. Ten bucks, and you have to have a witness.

JIMMY
I know, I know. Good luck, you’ll need it.

DANNY
Get lost.

Jimmy walks into the kitchen, gets a cup of beer, and then heads down a hallway. He pokes his head into a room, and sees Erica talking to two of her friends.

ERICA
Oh my gosh, Danny, you made it!

JIMMY
Uh, Erica, I’m....

ERICA
Wasted? Me too. Oh my God, I’ve had like three beers, I’m like dizzy and stuff, this is sooo fun.

JIMMY
No I’m not wasted. I was going to tell you...

ERICA
Well you need to drink faster don’t you? Doesn’t he? [girls nod] Chug that beer mister.
JIMMY
No really, I don’t want…

ERICA
Chug, Chug, Chug, Chug…

JIMMY
Ok, whatever.

*Jimmy chugs the beer, but he makes a face which shows how much he hates it.*

JIMMY
That was nasty. I think I might puke.

TWO GIRLS
Gross. Erica, we’re going outside to smoke a cigarette, do you want to come?

ERICA
I’ll meet you out there in a minute.

*The two girls exit.*

ERICA
Are you like wasted now too?

JIMMY
Well, uh…

ERICA
Listen Danny, I have to tell you something, but have to promise that you’ll keep it a secret.

JIMMY
Sure, what is it?

ERICA
I really like you. [she puts her arms around his neck] And I know you like me too, I mean, like you stare at me all the time in class and stuff, so I know you like me. But I um, like accidentally kissed your brother once, and I don’t want it to be weird between you two or anything, you know?

*At this point, Danny is walking down the hallway, and as he passes the doorway, he stops. Erica has been confusing the two all along, and Jimmy sees Danny come in out of the corner of his eye.*
JIMMY
Well Erica, why don’t you close your eyes, and Danny will give you what you really want.

ERICA
This will be a secret right, you won’t tell your brother?

JIMMY
Just close your eyes.

Erica closes her eyes, and Jimmy quickly grabs Danny, pulls him over, and forces him to kiss Erica. When they finally pull away, Erica sees both of them together.

ERICA
Oh my God! Jimmy, what are you doing here?

JIMMY
Oh, I uh, just walked in.

ERICA
Um, it’s not what it seems. Danny and I were just...

JIMMY
It’s ok, you don’t have to say anything.

ERICA
But I do. Listen, Jimmy, you’re a nice guy, but there’s just nothing between us, and I like really like your brother, you know, like like.

DANNY
What is going on here?

ERICA
I’m sorry Jimmy.

DANNY
What?

ERICA
Not you.

JIMMY
Sorry to bother you guys, I’ll leave.
ERICA
I thought you were wearing a dark shirt.

DANNY
Um, no, I’ve been wearing this all night.

JIMMY
No, I’m wearing the dark shirt, you must be really drunk Erica, are you ok?

ERICA
I’m am sooo drunk, I don’t know what I’m really saying.

JIMMY
Well maybe you should lie down on that couch over there. [he winks at Danny] Danny, you take care of her, ok. Don’t let her have any more to drink.

DANNY
Why did you do that?

ERICA
Danny come here.

JIMMY
Don’t worry about it. Just come find me when you’re ready to go, ok?

DANNY
Dude, I owe you big time.

JIMMY
We’ll talk about it later.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 34—MONTAGE

We now have a montage of scenes, as the boys progress through high school. We see them playing sports, taking girls to dances, doing schoolwork, etc... progressing up to their senior year in high school. It is now 3 years later. Danny walks in the house wearing a fast food restaurant uniform, he now works. Jimmy is in the living room, reading over some papers. Although twins, they are now easy to tell apart, Danny is very muscular, a true athlete, and Jimmy is slim, and is now wearing glasses.

DANNY
Hey man, I’m home.

JIMMY
How was work?
DANNY
As usual, it blows.

JIMMY
Tell me about it

DANNY
Well first, this old lady comes in and asks for a....

JIMMY
Dude, I was being sarcastic, I don't really care what happened.

DANNY
I love you too, jerk. Where's Mom?

JIMMY
At good old Ronnie boy's again.

DANNY
Surprise. What are you reading?

JIMMY
This letter from a college.

DANNY
Really? Which one?

JIMMY
Penn State.

DANNY
Wow, they have an awesome football program.

JIMMY
Who cares about football? I'm checking on their pre-med programs.

DANNY
Did anything come for me today?

JIMMY
Yeah, you got a couple of letters from some small schools I've never heard of.

Danny rushes into the kitchen and grabs the letters.
DANNY
Robert Morris, Liberty, Hofstra? Where the hell is Hofstra?

JIMMY
New Jersey.

DANNY
I’m sick of these tiny-ass schools sending me this stuff, I want to play Division one football.

JIMMY
How many schools did you send highlight tapes to?

DANNY
Seven.

JIMMY
And how many have you heard from?

DANNY
Shut up. It takes time.

JIMMY
None.

DANNY
Shut up.

JIMMY
Listen, I’m not trying to be mean. Let’s just be realistic. If you go to one of these small schools, you’ll get to play a lot more.

DANNY
These small schools don’t give out athletic scholarships, and we can’t afford to go to any of them.

JIMMY
You can make it work. Just be patient.

DANNY
So what do you think you’re going to do?

JIMMY
Well I really want to go to John’s Hopkins. But part of me says to stay here in case anything happens to Mom.
DANNY
What do you mean stay here? And go to State U?

JIMMY
Yeah, I mean they do have a Biology program, and I’ll get a full ride academic scholarship.

DANNY
You can’t stay here just for Mom.

JIMMY
Somebody has to. And you’re going to play football somewhere, so I’ll do it.

DANNY
Listen to me, you can’t let Mom influence your decision. What has she done for us? She’s either stoned, drunk, or over at Ron’s getting screwed. She’s probably all three at once most of the time.

JIMMY
That’s my point, she’s in trouble, and I want to be here if something happens.

DANNY
Look, Allison is still in town....

JIMMY
Allison and Mom haven’t spoken in three years. And speaking of Allison, that’s another reason to stay, to be with her and little Mikey.

DANNY
You sound like you’ve made up your mind.

JIMMY
I have. That’s why I’m filling out this form to let Penn State know I’m no longer interested.

DANNY
Maybe I could go there as you and walk on the football team.

JIMMY
You’re too ugly to pass for me.

DANNY
You got that backwards.
JIMMY
You know that’s not true. Remember back freshman year when Erica Brady thought I was you?

DANNY
And then I started making out with her at that party. That was classic.

JIMMY
And then at school the next week, she dumped your ass because she realized that I was the better looking of the two of us.

DANNY
You’re nuts. I dumped her because she was a psycho obsessive compulsive bitch. Still is, I might add.

JIMMY
That’s one thing I’ll miss about high school, laughing at people like Erica. I wonder where she’s going to school?

DANNY
She’s going to North Carolina to be a cheerleader.

JIMMY
That won’t last. She’ll gain 30 pounds when she goes to college, and she’ll end up back here a fat, stupid cow.

DANNY
Man, you’re harsh.

JIMMY
I just tell it like it is. You’ll see.

DANNY
Whatever dude.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 35—INT.—RON’S HOUSE
Cindy is at Ron’s house, and she is obviously high, as she usually is. Ron is sitting at his desk in his home office, trying to get some work done.

CINDY
Come on baby, when are you going to get done with that stuff?

RON
I told you already, I have to go over my client’s file by tomorrow.
CINDY
Oh, you can do that at work tomorrow, let’s go upstairs.

RON
You can go upstairs. In fact, that’s a good idea. Why don’t you go upstairs so I can get this work done?

CINDY
Are you trying to get me out of the way?

RON
Yes, so go.

CINDY
You are no fun anymore.

RON
Not when I’m trying to do work.

CINDY
Work, work, work, all you ever seem to have time to do these days.

RON
I know it’s a novel idea for you, you should try it sometime.

CINDY
Ah! I worked very hard, I raised three children.

RON
Yeah, and look how they turned out.

CINDY
You asshole! Don’t ever talk about my children that way.

RON
What? Am I wrong?

CINDY
Yes, you’re wrong. My boys are wonderful, they’re smart, and athletic....

RON
And gay.

CINDY
Stop it! I don’t have to sit around and listen to this.
RON
Why don’t you leave then?

CINDY
I am, I’m leaving Ron, and don’t you try to stop me.

RON
Don’t you worry about that.

Cindy turns and leaves the room, slamming the door. Ron grins, and then goes back to work.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 36—EXT.—PAYNE FRONT YARD
The twins are driving home from school, and they pull up into the driveway. Danny jumps out and runs to the mailbox, and begins flipping through all the mail.

JIMMY
Anything good in there today?

DANNY
No, no, no, West Virginia. Hey, they’re in a big conference. Maybe this is the scholarship I’ve been waiting for.

JIMMY
What’s that other one you’re holding?

DANNY
Oh, um, Temple.

JIMMY
I think Temple is a good school.

DANNY
Maybe. But West Virginia, this is it! It has to be.

JIMMY
Well let’s go inside to look at it.

DANNY
I’m feeling it. I tell you, I know I’m holding a scholarship offer in my hand.

JIMMY
So hurry up and come in so we can look at it.
FADE TO INSIDE HOUSE

Danny and Jimmy are now sitting at the kitchen table. Danny is reading the letter.

DANNY

Dear Mr. Payne. Thank you for sending your videotape to the football program at West Virginia. We are very impressed with your ability. We would like to invite you to try out as a walk on for Mountaineer football. We look forward to seeing you this fall.
Signed, Don Nehlen, head football coach.

JIMMY

That sucks.

DANNY

Damn! Why doesn’t anybody think I can play football?

JIMMY

Nobody thinks that, you’re awesome.

DANNY

Then why don’t I have any scholarships?

JIMMY

You still have three letters here, why don’t you open them?

DANNY

Because they all say the same thing, you are a good player, but sorry, not good enough for Division one.

JIMMY

Open this one.

DANNY

What is it?

JIMMY

Temple.

DANNY

I didn’t even send a tape to Temple. [he opens the letter]

Dear Mr. Payne...After seeing you play in your state all-star game, we were impressed by your skill. We think you have what it takes to be a part of the Owl football program.

I am pleased to offer you a full athletic scholarship to play for the Temple Owls.

Congratulations...A full ride, they’re offering me a full ride!
JIMMY
You did it! You did it!

*The boys hug each other, still screaming and cheering. Cindy walks into the kitchen.*

CINDY
What in the world is all this noise?

DANNY
I got a scholarship!

CINDY
Oh honey, that's terrific, I knew you would. What school?

DANNY
Temple.

CINDY
Temple? That's a black school.

JIMMY
What?

CINDY
That school is just for blacks.

DANNY
No it's not.

CINDY
Yes it is. It's where Bill Cosby went to school.

JIMMY
Just because Bill Cosby went there doesn't mean it's just for blacks.

CINDY
I don't want you going to an all black school.

DANNY
Mom, what's the matter with you? This is a full scholarship. We don't have to pay a thing. I don't care what school it is. As long as I can play football, I'm going.

JIMMY
Since when did you become so racist?
CINDY
I’m not racist. But when you’re the only white kid around, you’ll find that they will be racist towards you.

JIMMY
Mom, you don’t know what you’re talking about.

DANNY
Mom, you know we can’t afford to pay for college anyway. And this way, we’re all happy. It’s free, I’m playing football, and I get to get away from Jimmy! It’s perfect.

CINDY
If you’re sure about this, then go ahead, but I have a funny feeling about it.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 37—EXT.—HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION
The twins graduate, we have a brief scene of the graduates on stage, receiving their diplomas, etc... graduation scenes, no dialogue. We then cut to several hours later, workers are putting the chairs away, breaking down the stage. The twins are still there, in their graduation robes, talking to Allison, who is with her son, Michael.

ALLISON
So the big day has finally come, you two are off to college.

DANNY
It’s about time, I can’t wait to get out of this town.

JIMMY
I’ll bet. I’ll still be here, oh boy.

DANNY
That’s your own fault, you could’ve gone away.

ALLISON
I think it’s very noble what you did Jimmy, even though you did it for the wrong person.

JIMMY
Mom needs someone to watch out for her, and I don’t trust Ron at all, so I guess it will be me.

DANNY
Well you can come watch me play ball on the weekends.

JIMMY
I will, and so is Allison.
ALLISON
Oh, I'd love to, but I work all weekend, I could never get away.

JIMMY
We'll alternate weekends. I go one week, then you do, and I'll stay here and take care of Michael.

ALLISON
That sounds like a plan.

DANNY
Sweet. Well, it's about party time, we need to get our drink on!

ALLISON
You guys be careful, ok?

JIMMY
Thanks Mom.

ALLISON
Don't ever compare me to her.

DANNY
There's no comparison.

ALLISON
Does she ever ask about me?

JIMMY
She doesn't ask about anything.

DANNY
I'm sure she misses you, maybe you should try calling sometime.

ALLISON
I can't do it. I'm living through hell every day because of her, I want nothing to do with her.

JIMMY
We'll work it out together, don't worry.

ALLISON
Sure thing. You guys have fun tonight, I'll talk to you later.

The three have a group hug. FADE OUT.
SCENE 38—INT.—BANK

It is the day the boys go off to college, and Cindy takes them to a bank.

CINDY
This will just take a few minutes. I’m going to fix your accounts so you’ll be able to get the money your father put in here for you years ago.

DANNY
How much money is there?

CINDY
Probably several thousand dollars. We started saving for you boys a long time ago.

JIMMY
Cool. I can get a new outfit, these clothes just don’t cut it anymore.

DANNY
Oh give it up. It’s not the clothes, it’s the man.

JIMMY
Shut up. Mr. I’ll wear jeans and a t-shirt for the rest of my life, very sophisticated.

DANNY
Ok turtleneck sweater-man. Make sure your shoes, socks, belt, and underwear all match, because we know that’s what girls really want.

JIMMY
Listen, just because I know how to dress doesn’t mean you can…

CINDY
Would you two please stop? Go sit down over there, and I’ll take care of this myself.

BANK TELLER
How can I help you today?

CINDY
Yes. I’d like to take my two sons accounts, and make sure that I’m an authorized user on them.

BANK TELLER
You want to have access to your son’s accounts?

CINDY
Yes. You know, so I can put money in it for them, and stuff like that.
BANK TELLER
Yes, ma’am. Do you have the account numbers?

CINDY
Certainly.

The teller takes the account numbers from Cindy, and begins punching in numbers on the computer. Suddenly, her eyes open wide.

BANK TELLER
Wow!

CINDY
What is it?

BANK TELLER
I’m sorry. It’s just that there’s a lot of money in here for a kid.

CINDY
We’ve been saving for a long time.

BANK TELLER
I guess. Now to have full access to the account, I need a signature from both you and your sons.

CINDY
They have to sign it?

BANK TELLER
That’s correct.

CINDY
Ok. Jimmy, come here for a minute please.

JIMMY
What’s up?

CINDY
Would you sign this paper please?

JIMMY
What’s it for?

CINDY
So you can withdraw this money with your ATM card.
BANK TELLER
Actually…

_Cindy turns and glares at the teller, and she stops talking immediately._

JIMMY
I thought I could do that already.

CINDY
Oh well, this is for a special second account your father had set up for you.

JIMMY
So we have more money?

CINDY
That’s right.

JIMMY
How much?

BANK TELLER
This account has 15 thousand dollars in it.

JIMMY
15 thousand dollars!

CINDY
Shhh. No one else needs to know about our finances.

JIMMY
Sorry. Oh my God!

_He signs the form._

CINDY
Tell your brother to come over here please.

DANNY
What’s going on?

CINDY
Just sign this like Jimmy did.

DANNY
Oh, sure.
He signs the form.

CINDY
Thank you dear. You may sit down again.

BANK TELLER
Is there anything else you need today?

CINDY
Yes. I’d like to withdraw 250 dollars from each account, so I can give my boys a nice dinner before they go off to college.

BANK TELLER
Must be one nice restaurant.

CINDY
Yes, it is.

The teller counts out the money, and hands it to Cindy.

CINDY
Thank you very much, have a nice day. Let’s go guys, time to eat.

All three exit.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 39—INT.—COLLEGE DORMITORY
At Temple University, Danny is walking down the hallway looking for his new room. Jimmy is following behind, carrying some boxes, and Cindy is behind him. Danny stops in front of a door.

DANNY
414. This is it.

JIMMY
Thank God. You think we walked enough stairs?

DANNY
It’s about time you got some exercise.

CINDY
Well aren’t you going to open the door?
Danny opens the door, and a large, muscular African-American is sitting at a desk.

DANNY
Hi there.

JAMAR
Are you Danny?

DANNY
That's me.

JAMAR
Jamar Nadel. How you doing?

DANNY
Good. This is my brother Jimmy, and my mom Cindy.

JIMMY
How do you do? [shakes hands with Jamar]

CINDY
Hi.

JAMAR
So what position do you play?

DANNY
Tailback. You?

JAMAR
Guard. So I guess I'll be protecting you.

DANNY
It's nice to know that people your size are looking out for me.

CINDY
Danny, I'm going to get the rest of the boxes out of the car, Jimmy, come with me please.

Cindy and Jimmy walk out of the door, and back down the hallway.

CINDY
I knew it. I knew it, I knew it, I knew it.

JIMMY
What?
CINDY
I told him it was all blacks here.

JIMMY
Who cares? He seemed really nice.

CINDY
You can’t tell how nice a person is just by talking to them for a minute.

JIMMY
You can’t tell if they’re bad people either.

CINDY
Precisely. He may turn out to be some gangster or something.

JIMMY
Mom, you’re awful! Can’t you be happy for Danny for once? He’s getting to play football, all he wants to do. He’ll be fine here, and Jamar will be a nice guy, and we’ll all be happy, ok?

CINDY
I wish I could be as positive as you.

JIMMY
Yeah, I wonder where I got it, not from you, that’s for sure.

CINDY
Not from your father either.

JIMMY
I’m just special, you should be grateful to have a son like me.

CINDY
I’d be grateful if we could hurry up and get out of this ghetto and back to society, I need a drink.

JIMMY [mumbling]
You always need a drink.

FADE OUT.
SCENE 40—INT—COLLEGE DORMITORY

Jimmy and Cindy are now at State University, which is where Jimmy will live. They are standing in his new room, which is completely bare.

JIMMY
Oh my! I'm going to have to do some work on this place.

CINDY
A few posters, a little carpeting, and it'll feel like home.

JIMMY
I don't want to do anything until my roommate gets here.

CINDY
What's his name again?

JIMMY
Brian. Brian White.

CINDY
Well that's a much better name than your brother's roommate.

JIMMY
Stop. I'm sick of hearing about it.

CINDY
All right. Well I am dying to get home, do you need me for anything else?

JIMMY
No, go home.

CINDY
Don't forget to call your mother.

JIMMY
I won't. I'll be home in two weeks, for Labor Day.

CINDY
Take care honey.

JIMMY
Bye.

Cindy exits. Jimmy begins unpacking all of his boxes.

FADE OUT.
SCENE 41—INT.—ALLISON’S APARTMENT.

Allison is talking on the phone in her apartment, which is very small, and very plain. There’s no television, only a small radio playing in the background.

ALLISON
That’s great. So he’s a nice guy? Good. And how are your classes? Those sound hard. Yeah, Danny called yesterday. He said it’s hard, but he thinks he’s doing ok. No, he’s sleeping. Yeah, well, I’m a little behind on a couple of my payments...I had to take Michael to the Doctor. No, no, no...I don’t need any of your money. Where did you get money anyway? I spent all of mine at the hospital, since I had no help from anyone. Oh well. No, I’m fine, you go out, it’s college, party hard. I’ve got to get going anyway. Love you, bye.

She hangs up, then goes to the kitchen to wash some dishes. After a moment, there’s a knock at the door. She looks through the peephole, then opens the door. Standing there is her landlord, Craig Watson, a disheveled, mullet-haired man in his mid-thirties.

ALLISON
Hi Craig, how are you?

CRAIG
Fine. Mind if I come in for a minute?

ALLISON
Not at all.

CRAIG
Now Allison, I’ve been pretty patient with you over the years, I don’t kick up much fuss if you’re a few days late with your rent, but it’s been a couple of weeks now.

ALLISON
I know. I’m sorry, I had to take my son to the Doctor, and I don’t have any insurance, so...

CRAIG
Hey. I don’t care about the excuses, but I need the money soon. How soon can I get it?

ALLISON
I can have it in about another week.

CRAIG
One week. I’ll be back.
He exits. Allison walks to the kitchen table, grabs her checkbook, and looks inside. In the ledger, we see she has 14 dollars in her account. She sits down, sighs, and puts her head in her hands.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 42—EXT.—FOOTBALL FIELD  
Danny is at football practice. He is going through the drills, working hard. During one of the drills, Danny is running the ball through the line, and he is tackled at his legs, and a huge pileup falls on him. As everyone rolls off the pile, we hear Danny yelling.

DANNY  
Oh God! Oh, Oh, my leg! Oh no!

COACH  
What is it Danny? Where does it hurt?

DANNY  
My knee.

TRAINER  
Let’s get a stretcher out here.

COACH  
Danny, you hang in there, you’ll be ok, you hear me? Get to the locker room and relax, and I’ll see you after practice.

Trainers get Danny onto a golf cart, then drive him to locker room.

CUT TO INSIDE LOCKER ROOM.

TRAINER  
Danny, we’ll have to get x-rays to be sure, but it looks like you’ve torn your ACL ligament, and your MCL is damaged as well.

DANNY  
How long will I be out?

TRAINER  
If it’s torn, you have to have surgery to repair it, and you’re done for this year.

DANNY  
The whole year! The season hasn’t even started yet!
TRAINER
The best thing to do is to have the surgery as soon as possible, then you can start rehab, and by next spring, you’ll be able to start practicing with the team again.

DANNY
I’ve been here a week and a half, and my season is already over.

TRAINER
I’m sorry Danny. We’ve got some crutches for you to use right now, and here’s some medicine to take the pain away. Call your family, and we’ll see what they say about the surgery. We’ll talk to you tomorrow.

Danny stands up with the crutches, and hobbles out of the room.

CUT TO OUTSIDE DORMITORY

As Danny gets to his dormitory, he tries to open the door, while still on the crutches, and holding his backpack. His backpack begins sliding off, and when he tries to catch it, he drops one of his crutches, and the door closes. An African-American girl, LeShanda, approaches.

LESHANDA
Need some help?

DANNY
No, I got it.

LESHANDA
Don’t be silly, I can help you.

She picks up the crutch, hands it to him, and then opens the door for him.

DANNY
Thank you very much.

LESHANDA
Ain’t no thang. What happened to you?

DANNY
I tore up my knee at football practice.

LESHANDA
For real? You play football?

DANNY
I did. I don’t think I will anymore.
LESHANDA
I’m so sorry to hear that. Well let me help you get up to your room.

DANNY
You don’t have to do that.

LESHANDA
I want to do that.

DANNY
My name’s Danny by the way.

LESHANDA
I’m LeShanda.

DANNY
Thank you again, LeShanda.

LESHANDA
No problem.

They go into the elevator.

DANNY
So what year are you?

LESHANDA
I’m a junior. How about you?

DANNY
Freshman.

LESHANDA
Seriously? You look older than that.

DANNY
Well thanks. So why are you still living in the dorms?

LESHANDA
I don’t. I’m just coming here to visit my friend.

DANNY
You’re boyfriend?
LESHANDA
No, my friend from high school, Kiana.

_The elevator stops, and they walk down the hall towards Danny's room._

DANNY
Oh, so do you have a boyfriend?

LESHANDA
No.

DANNY
Well I was thinking, since you were so nice to help me out here today, the least I can do is take you out to dinner.

LESHANDA
You don't have to do that.

DANNY
Would you be interested in dinner?

LESHANDA
Sure. Let me give you my number.
   [she writes down her number]

DANNY
Only one thing. I don't have a car, so do you think you could...

LESHANDA
I'll drive.

DANNY
Well thank you again, I owe you so much.

LESHANDA
Stop it. You don't owe me anything, except dinner now.

DANNY
I'll call you tonight.

LESHANDA
Good, I can't wait.

DANNY
Bye.
LESHANDA
See ya soon.

LeShanda walks down the hall and out of sight. Danny goes into his room.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 43—INT.—CLASSROOM

Jimmy, now preferring to be called Jim, is in class, a huge lecture hall filled with bored-looking students. Jim alone seems interested in what the professor has to say. The professor is Dr. Brodie Neal, late twenties to early thirties, young and hip.

DR. NEAL
So in the Anaphase stage of cell reproduction, we see the chromosomes begin to line up in a single row. And does anyone know what phase the cell goes to next?

[a long pause]

Anyone? Don’t be shy. Yes, you there in the middle, Mr…

JIM

DR. NEAL
Well Mr. Payne, can you take a shot at what phase of cell division occurs after Anaphase?

JIM
Yes sir. It’s telophase.

DR. NEAL
That’s right. And what occurs during telophase?

JIM
The cell splits into two new cells, each with it’s own set of chromosomes.

DR. NEAL
Excellent. Someone in this class has read the text, thank you Mr. Payne. If I could see you for a moment after class, please, the rest of you, I’ll see you next time.

The students hurriedly gather their things and evacuate the room, Jim goes up to the front of the room.

DR. NEAL
Yes Jim. I was very impressed with your understanding of mitosis.

JIM
Thank you Dr. Neal.
DR. NEAL
Call me Brodie, Dr. Neal makes me sound old.

JIM
Cool.

BRODIE
So anyway, I noticed you're the only kid in this class that even pays attention during lecture, and so I was wondering if you'd be interested in helping me out?

JIM
Sure, how?

BRODIE
I need an assistant to help me set up for days when we do lab experiments. Since this class is so big, I have to split the labs up into several groups, but...

JIM
I'll do it, no problem.

BRODIE
I'd need you more than just the days when you have labs, is that going to be a problem?

JIM
Not at all. I'd love to do it.

BRODIE
Would you now? Well why don't you stop by my office tomorrow afternoon, and we'll go over some the things I need you to do.

JIM
Sure, thanks a lot.

BRODIE
Thank you.

Jim turns and walks out of the classroom, a big smile on his face.

FADE OUT.
SCENE 44—EXT.—PAY PHONE

Cindy is at a pay phone in town, she looks very pale and is trembling.

CINDY
Yes, Ron Bayman please...tell him it’s Cindy Payne...Ron...how are you honey?

RON [through the phone]
Cindy, what do you want?

CINDY
I missed you, I wanted to hear your voice.

RON
Oh for God’s sake. Cindy, stop calling here, I have work to do.

CINDY
But I need help.

RON
What do you need help with?

CINDY
I ran out of heroin.

RON
Good, you need to stop taking that stuff, it’s dangerous.

CINDY
Oh come on, you’re the one who bought it for me.

RON
Yeah, that was a mistake, it won’t happen again.

CINDY
What are you saying?

RON
Look Cindy, maybe we should take a break for a while.

CINDY
What do you mean?

RON
I mean, you’re getting out of control, and I think maybe you should get some help.
CINDY
Why don’t you help me?

RON
Look, I can’t. I have a very successful business, and I can’t afford to be associated with a drug addict.

CINDY
I am not a drug addict!

RON
Whatever, I don’t have time to talk about this. I’m sorry Cindy, but I can’t help you anymore. Get some help.

He hangs up on her. Dismayed, Cindy hangs up the phone, and stumbles out of the booth. She walks down the road to an ATM machine, inserts a card, and pulls up the balance on the screen. It is Jim’s account, and it is now at seven thousand dollars, half of what it was when she took him to the bank a few weeks ago. She tries to withdraw money, but the machine says she has already taken out too much for one day. On the verge of tears, she tries another card, this one is Danny’s. It also has had several thousand dollars removed from it. She is able to withdraw five hundred dollars, and she stuffs it in her pocket.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 45—INT.—SCIENCE LABORATORY
Jim and Brodie are at a table, looking over some beakers and test tubes filled with liquids.

BRODIE
Now we have to wait 15 minutes for the solution to dissolve, you want anything to drink?

JIM
No thanks, I’m cool.

BRODIE
Well let’s at least get some music going or something. What kind of music do you like?

JIM
All kinds really, pop, rock, rap...

BRODIE
Do you like Tori Amos?
JIM
I love Tori Amos!

BRODIE
Me too. Tell me, what do you think about Madonna?

JIM
Ah, she’s my girlfriend!

BRODIE
Wait in line buddy. Ok final question...beer or Zima?

JIM
Uh, Zima of course.

BRODIE
I knew it!

JIM
What?

BRODIE
Come on, you’re gay, right?

JIM
No! I’m not gay.

BRODIE
It’s ok man, you’re not in high school anymore. You can come out of that closet now...

JIM
I’m not gay.

BRODIE
Look Jim, I shouldn’t assume so much, but let’s look at this for a minute. You’re well dressed, you’re clothes actually match, how many guys do that every day?

JIM
Lots of them.

BRODIE
You like gay icons, Madonna, Tori, you’re probably a virgin...

JIM
So what?
BRODIE

Ok look. I was a lot like you, it's hard to first come to terms with it, but college is the place to do it. You’re not under your parent's rule anymore. You'll find so many diverse people here, it’s natural for you to try new things and become comfortable with who you are. I did it, and it was the best decision of my life.

JIM

So you’re gay?

BRODIE

Absolutely.

JIM

Well all right, you’ve got me. I’ve known that I was gay since I was eight years old, but you’re the first person I’ve ever told. My brother doesn’t even know.

BRODIE

Why have you been hiding from yourself for so long?

JIM

My Dad...he’s always yelled at me if I wanted to play house, or take ballet lessons, I always had to play football, be macho.

BRODIE

And you’ve been miserable, haven’t you? Felt like you could never open up to anybody? I’ve been there. I can help you.

JIM

I’d like that.

Brodie puts his arm around Jim, and leads him through the door.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 46—INT.—BRODIES' OFFICE

Jim and Brodie are standing inside his office, face to face, very close.

BRODIE

Are you sure you’re ready for this?

JIM

Yeah, I’m so ready for this.
BRODIE
Ok, I'm going to grab something out of the other room, but I want to see that beautiful body of yours when I get back.

_Brodie opens the door to a little storage room and goes inside. Jim decides to take off all his clothes, and he is standing there naked, when the outer office door opens, and a middle-aged woman, Dr. Laura Randall, walks in._

DR. RANDALL
Brodie, I have a quick question. I... Oh my God! What are you doing?

JIM
Uhh... I uhh...

BRODIE
What's that Laura... Good Lord! What are you doing?

JIM
You said you wanted to...

BRODIE
I said what? Why are you naked?

DR. RANDALL
Who are you? I'm calling the police.

JIM
What? Brodie, tell her...

BRODIE
Tell her what? I step out of the room for a minute, and you take your clothes off? What were planning to do?

JIM
But you said....

BRODIE
I said I'd be right back, I thought we were meeting to discuss the lab for tomorrow.

DR. RANDALL
Dr. Neal, who is this pervert? I'm reporting him to the Dean's office.

BRODIE
Jim Payne.
JIM
Come on, why are you doing this to me? Brodie, please!

BRODIE
Get out of here kid, I don’t want to see you anywhere near me.

_Jim, tears pouring down his cheeks, grabs his clothes, and runs out of the room._

FADE OUT.

SCENE 47—INT.—PAYNE HOUSE
Cindy is in the living room, shooting heroin. Drug paraphernalia is all over the room, and Cindy is in a nightgown, obviously in her own world. The phone rings.

CINDY
Hello...Ed? Ed who? My husband Ed? Yeah, I have a husband Ed, he’s in jail. You’re Ed, my husband? How are you honey? No, I’m fine, why? You’re out of jail? Where are you? No, I can’t...because I have plans, that’s why. I’ll have Jimmy pick you up. Oh, stop it, he’ll be there in about an hour. Bye.

_Cindy hangs up, then picks the phone back up, and dials a number. We have a split screen, with Jim reading a letter, crying, when the phone rings._

JIM
Hello.

CINDY
Jimmy, it’s Mom.

JIM
Mom, I have some bad news.

CINDY
So do I dear, you’re father is out of jail.

JIM
Dad? He’s out?

CINDY
Yes, and he needs someone to pick him up, could you go get him please?

JIM
Go get him? The prison is like three hours from here.
CINDY
Jimmy, be a sweetheart. I can’t go, I am so busy right now.

JIM
Busy, doing what?

CINDY
Now Jimmy, listen to your mother. Be a dear and go get your father.

JIM
Do you want to hear about what happened to me?

CINDY
Of course, you can tell me about it when you bring your father home.

JIM
But…

CINDY
Thank you so much honey, I’ll see you soon. Bye.

She hangs up, and Jim, stunned, drops the phone. He sets the paper down, and a close up on it shows that it is from the university, and he is being expelled from school.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 48—EXT.—PAWN SHOP
Allison is walking out of a pawn shop, counting the money she has just collected. She is looking thin and frail, obviously she has not been eating much lately. She walks down the streets, and back to her apartment. Inside, we see that it is almost completely bare, she has sold her radio, her kitchen table, her couch. The walls are bare, and all that’s left is a bed and a few blankets. She goes into the bedroom, where her child Michael is sleeping. She strokes his hair and admires how cute the child is. Suddenly, there is a knock at the door.

ALLISON
Craig! Hi, I was getting ready to stop by.

CRAIG
I bet. So you have some money for me or what?

ALLISON
Yes, of course. Here.

She hands him a handful of bills. He counts them all.
CRAIG
This is only a hundred twenty-five.

ALLISON
I know, that’s all I have right now. Look, I’ve sold everything I own, it’s just I have so many bills to pay.

CRAIG
Shut up! I’m sick of hearing about your sob story. Now we have to work something out here. [he walks up very close to her] Maybe you can work for me a little bit.

ALLISON [backing up]
What do you mean?

CRAIG
Don’t play dumb bitch. You know what I want from you.

ALLISON
No. No, I can’t.

CRAIG
What do you mean you can’t?

ALLISON
I won’t do that to myself.

CRAIG
You act like you’re so good. But look at yourself. You’re a single mother, with no money, I know you put out, or else that kid wouldn’t be here in the first place.

ALLISON
You are so rude. You know nothing about me, and for you to just assume that…

CRAIG [he slaps her]
Enough! Now stop playing these little games, and let’s get down to business.

He grabs her and tries to kiss her. She pulls away and kicks him in the groin. He falls to the ground in agony.

CRAIG
You whore! Get out! You’re done here, evicted! Out now!

Allison grabs Michael, and throws what little clothes she has left into a small bag, and walks out. Craig remains on the ground in pain.

FADE OUT.
SCENE 49—EXT.—PHILADELPHIA

Danny and LeShanda are walking inside to a restaurant. Danny is still on crutches.

DANNY
What is this place?

LESHANDA
It’s called Mr. Willie’s BBQ. It’s where everybody comes for some real food.

DANNY
It looks like a house.

LESHANDA
It is. Willie, the owner, lives upstairs, and he runs a restaurant downstairs.

DANNY
Interesting.

LESHANDA
It’s good. You’ll like it.

They enter. Inside, on the wall is a huge picture of Malcolm X. There are about six booths inside, and half are filled, all with African-Americans. They all give a funny look to Danny.

LESHANDA
Come on, let’s sit down.

DANNY
I’m not so sure I’m welcome here.

LESHANDA
Don’t be crazy. You’re fine.

DANNY
Well I doubt too many white people come in here.

LESHANDA
Too many white people don’t come to school around here either.

DANNY
Good point.
LESHANDA
I don’t care if you’re black or white. You’re cute, and I felt so sorry for you when I saw you trying to get into your dorm that day. I wanted to meet you.

DANNY
So you’re just here because you feel sorry for me?

LESHANDA
No, that’s not what I meant. I felt sorry for you when I first met you, but now, I know what a nice guy you are, and I’m glad I’m here with you.

DANNY
Fair enough. Let’s eat. What do you recommend?

FADE OUT.

SCENE 50—EXT.—PRISON
Jim is standing outside the gate to the prison, next to his car. Ed walks out through the gate, and looks at Jim. Both sort of stare at each other for a moment, before finally, Ed speaks.

ED
Jimmy? Thanks for coming.

JIM
Sure. I didn’t have much choice.

ED
Well are you ready to hit the road?

JIM
Yeah, let’s go.

They climb into the car, and pull away.

CUT TO INSIDE CAR.

ED
So what’s been happening son?

JIM
Nothing.
ED
How's college?

JIM
I don't know.

ED
Been to any good parties?

JIM
Dad! Look, I haven't seen you in nearly four years, you don't have play catch up in the first five minutes.

ED
Wow, Jim, you got a little attitude there, it's about time you hardened up.

Jim shakes his head and sighs, and continues driving.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 51—INT.—GAS STATION
Jim and Ed are inside a gas station. Jim is at the ATM machine, trying to get money. Ed is buying a bottle of whiskey, and some potato chips. Jim punches in his number on the ATM, and tries to withdraw some money. The machine beeps and the screen says he has overdrawn from his account. He hits the balance button, and on the screen it shows that all of his money is gone. He has nothing in the account.

JIM
What in the hell?

ED
What's going on Jim?

JIM
This machine is messed up, it won't let me take any money out.

ED [coming over to look at it]
You don't have money in there son.

JIM
That's wrong though. I should have like thousands of dollars in there.

ED
You're mother probably took it to buy some damn drugs.
JIM
You think so?

ED
Jim, your mother has been taking money from me for years, it wouldn’t surprise me in the least if she were now taking yours too.

JIM
I can’t believe it.

ED
We’ll straighten it out in the morning. Let’s get going, we need to stop at a hotel for the night.

JIM
You don’t want to drive straight back?

ED
Hell no. Look, it’s starting to rain pretty hard out there. Let’s find a room, and we’ll drink this whiskey, and we’ll go home tomorrow morning.

JIM
Ok, let’s go.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 52—INT.—MOTEL ROOM
Jim and Ed are sitting on a single bed, the television is on, and Ed is holding the bottle of whiskey, which is now only half full.

ED
Here son, take a swig of this.

JIM [taking a drink]
Oh, this stuff is horrible! How can you drink this.

ED
Damn Jim! I thought you’d be a man by now, why are you still being such a little priss?

JIM
Dad, don’t start.

ED
Now wait. I’m serious Jim. You were always different than your brother, and I couldn’t figure it out. Why were you always like that?
JIM
Because I’m gay!

ED
Don’t give me that, I want to know when you...

JIM
Dad! I’m gay. I really am.

ED
Jim, stop it! You’re not really, you’re just confused.

JIM
No, you stop it. For years, you pushed me around, you made me do things I didn’t want to do. Football, baseball, fishing, I hated it all! And what’s so wrong with being gay? I can’t help how I feel, I just know that I like guys, maybe you can’t understand that, but try to understand me. All I ever wanted was a family to love, and one that would love me back. But I never got that from you, and Mom is too far gone to help anymore. Allison’s got her own problems, and Danny’s too far away now. I’m alone, Dad, and now I’ve been kicked out of school...

ED
You got kicked out of school?

JIM [sobbing]
I was naked in my professor’s office, and then another professor walked in...

ED
What in the hell...Why were you naked in a professor’s office?

JIM
He told me to...we were going to...you know.

ED
That’s sick Jim, you really are a homo.

JIM
Shut up! Damn, you always...

ED
No. You shut up, you faggot. I can’t believe that my own son...

JIM
Stop.
ED
...of all the people in this world...

JIM
Shut up.

ED
...is a faggot. A queer, you mean to tell me you were actually going to stick your penis into another man’s ass?

JIM [screaming]
Stop!

ED
And now you’re crying? Look at the little queer bawl his eyes out, you’re pathetic, you’re not really my son, you’ve got to be a mix-up at the hospital. Seriously, there’s no way that you...

Jim dives at Ed, knocking him to the ground. They begin wrestling with each other, punching one another. Jim gains the advantage, and lays several shots on Ed, before realizing what he is doing, and he suddenly stops. He stands up, and backs away.

JIM
I’m sorry Dad.

ED
Damn son, those were some pretty good shots. I didn’t think a faggot could fight like that.

Jim walks out of the room. Ed laughs for a minute, then starts to feel bad. He stands up.

ED
Jim, wait a minute, I’m sorry.

He looks out into the hallway, but Jim is nowhere to be seen. He runs outside, where it is pouring down rain. Jim’s car is at the exit, waiting to turn out of the parking lot.

ED
Jim, wait a minute, hold on!

Ed runs towards the car, and tries to open the passenger door. Jim quickly reaches over and locks the door. Ed is pounding on the window.

ED
Jim, I’m sorry. Where are you going? Come on, let me in.
Jim gives his father the middle finger, then speeds out into the busy road. Ed runs out onto the road following Jim, but the car is moving to fast and fades away. Suddenly, a car honks loudly, and brakes are squealing. Ed turns around, and a car is heading straight for him, there's no time to move.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 53—EXT.—A DIRTY ALLEY

Allison and her son are wandering through the streets, looking for someplace to stay. It is raining, and having not eaten for some time, Allison is struggling with walking. She finds a large garbage container, the type with a flap-like lid. She opens it so the lid will cover her from the rain, and her and her son collapse beneath it, cold, wet, and exhausted. From this we cut to the Payne house, where once again, Cindy is shooting heroin in her bedroom. We see her begin to sway, and everything around her begins spinning. She stumbles around for a few minutes, before passing out, and falling to the floor.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 54—INT.—MR. WILLIE'S RESTAURANT

Danny and LeShanda have just finished eating dinner. They are at the table, with empty plates and dirty dishes between them.

LESHANDA
I told you, didn’t I?

DANNY
That was the best food I have had, probably ever.

LESHANDA
So what do you want to do now?

DANNY
I don’t know. What do you want to do?

LESHANDA
Well I was thinking we could either go see a movie, or we could go for a walk, or...

DANNY
Let’s do the movie, I don’t walk so well these days.

LESHANDA
That’s fine with me. I’m going to use the Ladies room, and I’ll meet you outside, ok?
Danny stands up and walks on his crutches out the door. He goes around the corner of
the building, and waits. Four African-American men come walking from behind the
building, and they approach Danny.

MAN #1
What is this? White boy, are you lost?

MAN #2
What you doing up in our neighborhood?

DANNY
Hey guys. Just waiting for my date.

MAN #1
Your date? There’s two of you here, huh?

MAN #3
Y’all came to the wrong part of town, cracker.

DANNY
Is there a problem?

MAN #4
Damn straight there’s a problem.

MAN #1
But it’s gonna be your problem.

One man punches Danny in the stomach, another pulls the crutches away from him, he
falls to the ground. They kick him repeatedly, until he’s curled up in a little ball, barely
moving. One man leans down to him.

MAN #1
Now Whitey, why don’t you hand over your wallet?

DANNY [barely audible]
There’s not much in there.
MAN #1
You let me be the judge of that. Now where is it?

The man feels around until he finds it, pulls it out, and opens it. He pulls out a couple of dollar bills.

MAN #1
Six dollars? You only have six dollars? Boy, I'm gonna kill you just for the fact that I wasted my time for six dollars.

He pulls out a gun, cocks it, and points it down at Danny.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 55—EXT.—A HIGHWAY
Jim is driving down the highway at a very fast speed. The rain is still pouring down, and it is hard for him to see. He is crying also, which makes it worse. He is hearing the voices of people in his head.

ED
You must be some mix-up at the hospital...

CINDY
Just sign this form, so I can put money in the bank for you...

BRODIE
I want to see that body of yours when I get back...

DR. RANDALL
I'm calling the police...

DANNY
Dude, you can never get a chick...

Jim lets out a scream, and suddenly veers his car off the road, and is heading straight for a tree.

FADE OUT.

SCENE 56—VARIETY OF SHOTS
We now see a split screen with all five family members on it. Ed is standing in the middle of the road, about to be run over by a car. Allison is in an alley, starving and freezing. Cindy has overdosed on drugs, and is unconscious on her bedroom floor. Danny is being held at gunpoint, and Jim is driving head-on into a tree.
CUT TO OPENING SHOT OF CEMETARY

We are back at the beginning of the story, the windy overcast day. A small group of people are gathered around a casket, and a minister is speaking. While the minister's dialogue is exactly the same as we heard before, instead of seeing him, we now see the people who are gathered around the casket. We see a close up of Ed, and as we zoom into his eyes, we go back to him standing in the road, and the car coming right at him. He jumps, hits the hood of the car, and rolls off to the side. He stands up, looks around surprised that he's unhurt, and shrugs his shoulders.

ED
Not bad for an old man.

We now pull out from his eyes, and truck right to where Allison is standing. We zoom in on her eyes, and we see her back in the alley. She has fallen asleep, but her Michael stood up, and walked away from her. He returns with a lady holding his hand, and he shows her his mother. The woman makes a call on a cell phone, and the next thing we see is Allison in a shelter, wrapped in blankets and being given a bowl of soup. We pull out from her eyes, and we truck right and tilt down, to see Cindy sitting in a wheelchair. We zoom in on her eyes, and we see her unconscious on the floor, when Ron opens the door.

RON
Cindy, I'm back. I'm sorry baby, I was...Cindy? Oh my God! Cindy!

Ron grabs the phone, dials 911, and holds Cindy. We see her in the hospital, with doctors all around her, trying to save her. We then see a doctor talking to Ron in the hallway.

DOCTOR
She's going to be ok.

Ron sighs, and smiles. We pull out from Cindy's eyes, and truck right to see Danny, with a black eye, and several scrapes on his face. We zoom in on his eyes, and we see the man with the gun pointing it at Danny. Suddenly, LeShanda comes around the corner.

LESHANDA
What are you doing? Get away from him!

MAN #1
Girl, get out of here, this ain't your business!

LESHANDA
It is too, stay away from my boyfriend!
MAN #1
Boyfriend? Why are you with this cracker?

LESHANDA [lying over Danny to protect him]
Because he’s more man than any of you, leave him alone!

MAN #3
Yo brother, let’s beat it before the police show up.

MAN #2
Yeah man, it ain’t worth it, let’s cut out.

MAN #1
You’re lucky Whitey, next time sister here won’t be here to save your ass. Sister, you better get over this jungle love, stick to your own.

He puts the gun away, and the four men walk off. We pull away from Danny’s eyes, and we now pan to over the casket, where a picture of Jim is inside a wreath. We zoom into the eyes on the picture, and we see Jim speeding toward the tree, and we see a head-on collision. Next we see police cars, an ambulance, yellow caution tape around the car. We start to zoom in on the car, where Jim’s body is, but before we can see anything to clearly, a police officer blocks the camera with his hand. We see only black, and when we fade back in we are above the closed casket, and the group is finishing a prayer.

EVERYONE
For ever and ever, Amen.

The crowd begins to break up, and head off in different directions. Ed just turns and walks to his car. Cindy is wheeled away by an orderly, saying nothing to her other two children. Allison and Danny stick around, and walk up to the casket.

ALLISON
You know, if it was Mom or Dad, I probably wouldn’t have even cared.

DANNY
It could’ve been any of us, but it had to be the best of us.

They hug, and then turn away from the casket.

DANNY
So where are you going now?

ALLISON
I met some people at the shelter, and they’ve found a job for me, and a place to stay. What about you?
DANNY
LeShanda and I are heading back to Philly. Come visit us sometime.

ALLISON
We’ll see, it depends on Michael, and the new job, you now what I mean?

DANNY
Yeah, I understand. See you later.

ALLISON
Bye.

They walk away in different directions, and now everyone is gone, and the casket remains, Jim is still alone.

THE END.