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**LAND'S END**

Written by  
Alan Kim

**ENGLISH**

version 5.2

alankimohio@gmail.com

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LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 (reaching for purse)  
 [Same old, I suppose. It's getting  
 so warm these days, no?]

HUGO  
 [Yes, I can't remember the last  
 time it rained.]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 (counting cash)  
 [Ay. All I've been doing is praying  
 for a good harvest this year.]

A beat.

HUGO  
 (chuckles)  
 [How is she feeling?]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [She's getting better. Just been  
 sleeping at home all day. What can  
 I say--]

She HANDS Hugo \$1.85.

LILIANA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [--Maybe she's just pretending to  
 be sick to get her old lady to work  
 for her instead.]

Hugo CHUCKLES. The lady PLACES her hands on Hugo's shoulders  
 with a look of concern.

LILIANA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [Mijo you're losing weight. Are you  
 eating enough?]

HUGO  
 [Really? I think I'm eating fine.]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [No, no. You're as thin as twig.]

Hugo INSPECTS his arms. She TURNS around--

LILIANA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [Let me get you something for you  
 to take home--]

HUGO  
 [No señora, it's really ok--]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [--I made them fresh last night.]

The woman DISAPPEARS into the shop, as a younger Hispanic boy ARRIVES on a bike. This is **PABLO (14)**. He, too, PARKS his bike in fashion.

PABLO  
 (out of breath)  
 [Ay, I thought I'd beat you today.]

Hugo APPROACHES.

HUGO  
 [I'm surprised. You're usually not this slow.]

PABLO  
 [We should switch routes from now on.]

HUGO  
 [Maybe, if you come out more often.]

The two EMBRACE and Hugo gives a brotherly PAT on his back.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 (hands on his shoulders)  
 [How's school, huh? You're not causing too much trouble?]

PABLO  
 (shyly)  
 [Eh, it's ok.]

HUGO  
 (stepping back)  
 [No? I thought that girl you liked was in your English class?]

PABLO  
 [She moved out of town.]

HUGO  
 [Seriously?]

PABLO  
 [Most of us aren't in a ten-year-long relationship like you.]

Hugo CHUCKLES. A beat.

PABLO (CONT'D)  
 [Are you sad about Liliana?]

HUGO  
 [Sad? No... just surprised I guess.  
 She never gets sick, not even a  
 cold usually.]

Pablo NODS and GLANCES AWAY, confused. Hugo doesn't notice  
 and continues--

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [You get any new reading  
 assignments? Hopefully not a  
 romantic novel. That'd be bad  
 timing.]

PABLO  
 [Oh the books...]

HUGO  
 [If you're reading them.]

PABLO  
 (hesitating)  
 [It's ok.]

HUGO  
 [Still don't like reading?]

PABLO  
 [Eh. We're reading the mice book by  
 John Frankenstein.]

HUGO  
 [John Frankenstein?]

Hugo TILTS his head, confused. And then--

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [You mean John Steinbeck.]

PABLO  
 [Oh yeah, Steinbeck.]

Hugo LAUGHS, as the woman SHUFFLES out of the shop HOLDING a  
 large JAR OF COOKED BEANS. Hugo NOTICING the jar--

HUGO  
 [My goodness señora, this is so  
 much.]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [This is what I'm saying Hugo. His  
 sister had the same reaction.]

The woman GLARES at Pablo, her son.

LILIANA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [What did Liliana tell you? It's  
 Steinbeck, for goodness' sake!]

She TURNS to Hugo with a SMILE and FORCE-HANDS him the heavy jar.

LILIANA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 (slightly out of breath)  
 [Tell your mother I say hi. I made  
 extra, so you go home and share it  
 with your family.]

HUGO  
 [Ay you're too kind.]

Pablo WALKS INTO the shop.

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [No. But be sure to come back with  
 the jar.]

HUGO  
 [I will. Thank you.]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [Of course.]

HUGO  
 [Maybe I'll stop by this evening to  
 see how she's doing. Or you think  
 she'll be too tired?]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [Oh yes, yes. You should surprise  
 her. I'm sure she'll like that.  
 It's about time she got out of bed.  
 (softer voice)  
 And it'll be good for you two to be  
 together. Time is so precious these  
 days, no?]

HUGO  
 (chuckling)  
 [Bueno, I'll see you later then.]

Hugo GLANCES at his WATCH. He's late.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [I've gotta get going.]

Pablo WALKS OUT of the shop eating a CANDY BAR.

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [Ok, get home safe.  
 (pointing at the jar)  
 And be careful with that.]

HUGO  
 (stepping away)  
 [I will. See you later.]

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
 [Adiós, Hugo.]

Hugo WALKS AWAY, toward his bike.

HUGO  
 [See you around Pablo.]

Pablo WAVES back. Hugo RIDES OFF.

CUT TO:

4 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - LATER

4

An open hallway.

Hugo PULLS OUT a STACK OF PAPER from his briefcase and SLAMS it down on a wooden DESK. A Caucasian man, dressed in a SUIT, is SITTING DOWN across the desk. This is the **COMMISSIONER (30)**, who has a warm and playful personality. He OBSERVES Hugo, amused. Hugo also SETS DOWN a \$50 BILL atop the stack.

COMMISSIONER  
 You know submissions just opened,  
 right?

HUGO  
 (proudly)  
 I know.

CU of a SIGN on the desk: "**23RD ANNUAL SALINAS WRITING COMPETITION**"

COMMISSIONER  
 Well you're the first one here, and  
 I'm not surprised.

Hugo proudly SMILES. The commissioner TAKES Hugo's story and \$50. He RIFFLES through the pages.

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
 How long is this?

HUGO  
 190.

COMMISSIONER  
Pages?

Hugo NODS.

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
You do realize the limit for entry  
is 100 pages.

HUGO  
What? It's 200. It said 200 on the  
application.

The commissioner HOLDS UP the ENTRY FORM.

COMMISSIONER  
100.

Hugo is beat. He can't believe he's missed this. The  
commissioner RETURNS Hugo's story--

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
You've got until we close  
submissions.

Hugo relentlessly TAKES his work back. The commissioner also  
HANDS him the \$50.

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
6 o'clock.

Adrenaline pumps through Hugo's veins.

HUGO  
Keep it. I'll be back.

Hugo RUNS off. The commissioner CHUCKLES and hangs onto the  
cash. A female **ASSISTANT (30)** APPROACHES the commissioner.

ASSISTANT  
A submission already?

COMMISSIONER  
Not yet. It's too long.

They WATCH Hugo sprint down the hallway.

ASSISTANT  
How long was it?

COMMISSIONER  
That was Hugo.

ASSISTANT  
(chuckling)  
Oh.

5 INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - LATER

5

SQUEAK - as Hugo ENTERS through the front door. Inside, it's a cramped space. His little sisters **ISABEL (11)** and **MARIA (9)** PRANCE around the COUCH, PLAYING with their DOLLS loudly, while **HUGO'S MOTHER (40)** sits on a small DINNER TABLE holding a WALL-MOUNTED PHONE up against her ear.

HUGO'S MOTHER (O.S.)

(accent)

Mr. Campbell, I thought I had told you that I will not be able to work overtime. I left a note at your office last week when--

Hugo's mother is CUT OFF from the other end. She GLANCES UP at Hugo and they exchange a small SMILE. She NOTICES the jar of beans. Hugo SETS the jar and \$1.85 down on the KITCHEN COUNTER. Maria frantically RUNS over, holding an 11 x 14 DRAWING. She STICKS it out with both hands.

MARIA

[Look what I made!]

MARIA'S DRAWING: a scribbly, colorful drawing of a blue sky, farmland, and a tiny brown square in the center.

HUGO

[Wow, what is this?]

Maria PEEKS over the edge of the paper.

MARIA

[It's a nature drawing I made for school.

(pointing at the center)

See? This is our house!]

HUGO

[This little thing is our house?]

MARIA

[Yeah.]

Hugo WALKS AWAY and lightly TOUCHES her head--

HUGO

[I love it, Mari.]

Maria GIGGLES, as Hugo ENTERS his bedroom.

6

## INT. HUGO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

6

A small and messy room, just barely able to fit a SINGLE BED and SMALL DESK. Sheets of PAPER are scattered on his bed, but dozens of BOOKS are NEATLY STACKED against the wall.

Hugo PULLS OUT his story from his briefcase and SETS it down on his desk. He SIGHS. He's got work to do. He TURNS and LOOKS through his bedroom door-- his stressed mother amid the chaos of the little girls.

CONTINUOUS:

HUGO'S MOTHER (O.S.)

I understand. For the future, can you let me know in advance? I have two young daughters that I need to take care of, and I can't--

Hugo TURNS back around. He's spinning inside. He's got a few hours to cut down his story, but he's got a real job to attend to. Hugo SPREADS OUT the papers across his desk, thinking of parts to omit.

HUGO'S MOTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

All right then. I will be there. Goodbye. [Isabel. Maria. We need to get going. Go get your things.]

Hugo nervously LOOKS back. He GLANCES at a black hat hanging from a WALL HOOK. His WORK HAT. It has a logo of "**Antonio's Restaurant**". His mother ENTERS. He STANDS UP, casually RETRIEVING and PUTTING on his hat, as if he's about to go to work.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

[What's with the beans?]

HUGO

[From Liliana's mother.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[Ay, that woman is always so kind to us.]

Hugo TURNS away and ORGANIZES his papers back into a STACK.

HUGO

[She says hi.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[I'll make some extra dinner tonight and you can take it to her tomorrow.]

The chaos continues beyond the room.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 (sternly)  
 [We're leaving now!]

She NOTICES the papers, over Hugo's shoulders.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [I thought I told you enough with  
 the writing. You have a real job  
 now, papi. No distractions.]

HUGO  
 [I wash dishes, Mamá.]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [And then you'll become a cook. And  
 then a manager. You're not a  
 student anymore, Hugo.]

Hugo FACES his mother.

HUGO  
 [It's just my old work, don't  
 worry.]

Hugo's mother APPROACHES and KISSES him on the forehead.

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [Don't be late for work.]

Hugo NODS. As his mother EXITS the room--

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [And wear a helmet, or I'm getting  
 rid of that bike of yours.]

Hugo TURNS around and LOOKS at his work. As his mother and  
 sisters EXIT the house, we hear the door SLAM SHUT-- Hugo  
 TAKES OFF his hat and RUNS to the wall mounted phone.

7           **INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

7

Hugo quickly DIALS a number.

CUT TO:

8           **INT. HUGO'S BEDROOM - LATER**

8

Hugo sits at his desk, hastily ORGANIZING his work. He FLIPS  
 through his notepad for ideas. As we see him REVISE his  
 story, we hear the phone call that occurred just a moment  
 ago.

HUGO (O.S.)  
 Good morning, Boss. I am not  
 feeling very well this morning...  
 Yes, bad fever and shivers. I will  
 work extra when I come back.

CU of his watch. It's a VINTAGE WATCH. The time TICKS on.

CUT TO:

9 INT. ELISE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

9

A lean, blonde (long hair) teenager ZIPS UP a large suitcase in her small but clean bedroom. This is **ELISE (18)**. She HOLDS her last belonging-- a brown SKETCHBOOK with "**ELISE**" on the cover. From beyond the room--

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 Dinner's ready!

Elise doesn't react much. She seems generally quite weak and fed-up. We will soon find out why.

CUT TO:

10 INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

10

It's Elise, **ELISE'S MOTHER (55)**, and **ELISE'S FATHER (60)** at the table.

Elise unenthusiastically EATS small bits of MASHED POTATO with a FORK. The mother is the eccentric type, while the father is kind. At first, at least.

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 I just can't believe our baby girl  
 is going off to college!

Elise's father SETS DOWN a CAN OF BEER on the table, as he TAKES his seat. He's in good spirits.

ELISE'S FATHER  
 Your friend's picking you up at 10?

Elise NODS.

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 All of my friends tell me how  
 talented you are, hon. With your  
 artwork and sketches and colors and  
 just everything, baby. I am just so  
 excited for you!

ELISE  
 (awkwardly)  
 Thanks, Mom.

ELISE'S FATHER  
 Be sure to eat enough and get some exercise every now and again. Make sure you go to class. Don't stress yourself out too much, ok? And the boys, be especially careful of the boys.

Elise BLUSHES. Elise's mother frantically LAUGHS.

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 Oh, Brian stop it! You know how popular our Elise is gonna be in college. All the boys are gonna fall for you, hon.

ELISE'S FATHER  
 I'm just saying make good decisions and have fun. You should be proud of yourself. You're the first in the family, so you're gonna have to tell us what it's like.

ELISE  
 I will. Thanks, Dad.

ELISE'S FATHER  
 (sincerely)  
 And make sure you give your old man a call every now and again.

ELISE  
 (smiling)  
 I will.

Elise's father CRACKS OPEN his beer and takes a SWIG. Elise's smile FADES. To her, this is goodbye to the father she loves for a long time.

CUT TO:

11 INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

11

Elise's parents are heavily INTOXICATED. Her father, especially. He's a different person.

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 (slurred)  
 Of course she's going to move out, are you kiddin'?  
 (MORE)

ELISE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I've got no doubt she'll go  
somewhere like Chicago or LA or New  
York. You're gonna be so glam, hon.

Elise grows even more anxious as she watches her parents get  
more and more inebriated. On the dinner table-- 8 EMPTY CANS  
of beer. Her father takes another SWIG.

ELISE'S FATHER

(obnoxiously)

New York? She's going for art for  
god's sake! Ok? It's art. Maybe  
it'd be a different story if she's  
studying something useful. No way  
she makes enough money to move  
someplace like that. New York--  
give me a break.

(at Elise, sarcastically)

But it's all about passion these  
days, isn't it?

Elise LOOKS at her father. She's beat.

ELISE

I don't know.

Elise's father takes another SWIG.

ELISE (CONT'D)

I mean if I do well in school, I  
may be able to get my art into  
galleries.

Elise's father EXAMINES the can of beer.

ELISE (CONT'D)

I don't think I'd want to  
come back here, since there  
isn't much of an opportunity  
for me to take my art  
anywhere.

ELISE'S FATHER

(to his wife)

They didn't have anything  
stronger than this? Tastes  
like water.

ELISE (CONT'D)

So yeah it depends on how I do--

ELISE'S FATHER

I think you're gonna come back.

ELISE'S MOTHER

Don't listen to him, hon. You're  
gonna be so glam. I know it. New  
York Ci--

ELISE'S FATHER

Your mother doesn't know what she's  
talking about.

(MORE)

ELISE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Look, it's a simple matter of probability, you know? All I'm saying is that the probalistic-- probability of her coming back-- to this town-- she's gonna come back.

ELISE

I'm gonna go finish packing up.

As Elise attempts to STAND UP--

ELISE'S FATHER

Where you goin'? I'm saying it's a high probability.

ELISE

Yeah I get that. I still have a lot left to pack.

ELISE'S FATHER

We're talking, Elise. Sit down.

ELISE

I'm just gonna finish packing up. She's gonna be here--

ELISE'S FATHER

We're in the middle of having a conversation. Sit down!

Elise slowly SITS DOWN. Her mother CHEWS her food LOUDLY. Her father takes another SWIG.

ELISE'S MOTHER

Honey you grilled this chicken so good, I can't stop eating it.

ELISE'S FATHER

Don't be so arrogant, Elise.

ELISE

I'm not. I was just responding to what you asked--

ELISE'S FATHER

That's arrogant. It's fucking arrogant.

ELISE'S MOTHER

There's no harm in being confident, hon. Confidence is a good thing.

Elise's father SCOFFS and TOSSES his UTENSILS onto his PLATE and GETS UP. He GRUNTS loudly.

ELISE'S FATHER  
 (pointing at beer)  
 For fuck's sake, do we have  
 anything other than this?

Elise SINKS into her seat.

CUT TO:

12

**INT. ELISE'S BEDROOM - LATER**

12

Around 10pm.

Elise SITS on her BED, SKETCHING an abstract DRAWING OF A FOREST. She RECEIVES a CALL. It's her friend "GABBY".

ELISE  
 Hey, you on your way?

GABBY (O.S.)  
 Hey. Sorry, something came up. My--  
 god, you wouldn't believe it. My ex  
 just called me and-- I don't know  
 since I'm leaving-- I guess...  
 yeah. I'm sorry.

ELISE  
 (beat)  
 Oh.

GABBY (O.S.)  
 I could come by tomorrow morning,  
 though. Is that ok? We could get  
 there early, I mean it's only like  
 an hour drive.

ELISE  
 Uh, yeah. No it's ok. I'll just  
 take the bus tonight.

GABBY (O.S.)  
 You sure? I'm pretty sure they have  
 move-in slots before noon. We can  
 make it by early afternoon and  
 start unpacking--

ELISE  
 No it's fine. Really, it's-- thanks  
 for letting me know.

CUT TO:

13 INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

13

Elise OPENS her bedroom door. Elise's father is PASSED OUT on the couch. A few EMPTY CANS of beer scattered around him. The TV is ON-- the only source of light. In another room, we hear MUFFLED LAUGHTER from her mother. Elise TAKES her suitcase, SETTING it by the front door. She TIPTOES closer to the muffled laughter and slowly ENTERS the room.

14 INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

14

Sitting on the bed, Elise's mother SIPS on a GLASS OF WINE. She's on the PHONE (iPhone 3G) with her friends. Her laughing SUBSIDES.

ELISE'S MOTHER

Hang on. Hang on a sec.

She COVERS the phone.

ELISE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Hey hon, you heading out?

ELISE

She just got here.

ELISE'S MOTHER

Hang on, ladies. I'll be back in a sec.

She sets the phone down and SKIPS over to Elise.

ELISE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I've been calling the girls every night with this new group call thing. It's just been so glam.

Elise's mother HUGS Elise.

ELISE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Ok, hon. Be safe out there. Try not to be stupid. Good decisions, ok? And try to be home by midnight... I'll allow 1 AM.

ELISE

(beat)

I'm leaving for college, Mom.

A beat.

ELISE'S MOTHER

Oh, of course!

Another HUG.

ELISE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 Ok ok. You go out there and be the  
 best that you can be. Ok?

ELISE  
 (stepping back)  
 I'll see you later.

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 The best that you can be.

Elise OPENS the door to exit.

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 Ok. Bye bye, honey. Mwah.

Elise's mother SKIPS back to her phone.

ELISE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 Ok, I'm back. I'm back. What'd I  
 miss?

Elise SHUTS the door.

15            **INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

15

Muffled laughter continues in the room. Elise WALKS over to  
 the front door and SWINGS on her BACKPACK. She LOOKS at her  
 sleeping father. After some HESITATION, she musters up the  
 courage to say her final goodbye.

She cautiously APPROACHES her father and SHAKES him awake. He  
 GRUNTS, confused.

ELISE  
 (whisper)  
 Dad.

He GRUNTS again, SQUINTING at the television.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 Dad.

He LOOKS at Elise.

ELISE'S FATHER  
 (croaky)  
 Yeah.

ELISE  
 I'm leaving now. For college.

ELISE'S FATHER  
 Mmhmm.

ELISE  
I just wanted to say goodbye.

He MUMBLES something.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
Hm?

He MUMBLES again.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
I don't know what you're--

ELISE'S FATHER  
(barely audible)  
Get me a drink.

Elise is beat.

ELISE'S FATHER (CONT'D)  
Get me a drink. In the fridge.

He DRIFTS OFF back to sleep. Elise's eyes SWELL.

CUT TO:

16      **EXT. ELISE'S HOUSE - LATER**      16

A SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD with small homes. In the middle of the street-- Elise DRAGS her suitcase. She WIPES away her TEARS.

CUT TO:

17      **INT. MUSIC ROOM - MORNING**      17

Seoul, South Korea.

**YOON [김윤호] (21)** PLAYS Rachmaninoff's Prelude in C Sharp Minor on a Steinway PIANO. He plays elegantly. Despite the SHEET MUSIC perfectly spread out on the music desk, Yoon plays by feel, by memory.

PACING beside him, a male piano **INSTRUCTOR (33)** NODS his head while keeping his EYES CLOSED. Suddenly, a wrong note. The instructor FREEZE and WINCES.

Yoon goes back a few bars and tries again. Another mistake - the same one. The instructor's patience is being tested.

Yoon goes back, this time, SCANNING the sheet music in front of him. He tries again, this time more carefully. He makes it through, now playing by feel again.

The instructor TURNS around back to his original posture, just as-- another mistake. The instructor SIGHS, annoyed, and TURNS to Yoon--

INSTRUCTOR  
[Hey hey hey. That's enough.]

Yoon PULLS his hands away from the keys. He SIGHS, knowing what's about to come. The instructor STARES at him.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)  
[Hey.]

Yoon TURNS toward the instructor.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)  
[What is this? You said you had practiced this part, yet you're playing like this.]

Yoon LOOKS DOWN.

YOON  
[I'll continue to work on this part. I've spent the past week--]

INSTRUCTOR  
[You have a competition in two weeks. Two weeks, you understand? If you don't regain your focus, you're really...]

The instructor lets out a big SIGH.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)  
[This is a problem.]

YOON  
[I understand.]

The instructor SIGHS, this time more softly.

INSTRUCTOR  
[Sorry, I'm a little...  
(chuckling)  
I guess I'm just nervous.]

The instructor relents--

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)  
[What am I supposed to do? Your parents said they'll find you another instructor if you don't do well. But I guess-- I'm sure you're more nervous than I am.]

YOON  
[It's ok. I've learned a lot from you. I'll keep practicing.]

INSTRUCTOR  
[I mean I know you can play it, that's the thing. I've never seen you mess this up.]

YOON  
[I can play it. I just need to fix up this small bit.]

INSTRUCTOR  
[OK.  
(a big sigh)  
Look, just make sure you don't slack off. I'm saying don't get too comfortable. You're not a child prodigy anymore. You're just an adult.]

YOON  
(chuckles)  
[Got it.]

INSTRUCTOR  
[I'm not usually this hard on my students, but then again they haven't won as much as you have.]

Yoon humbly NODS.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)  
[I'm gonna run out and get some coffee. I'll let you keep practicing. You want anything?]

YOON  
[I'm ok.]

The instructor NODS and REACHES into his briefcase. He PULLS OUT a thin WALLET.

INSTRUCTOR  
[Hey, at least you actually enjoy playing piano. The other students only play because their parents make them. But with you, it's the opposite. You had to convince your parents to pursue piano, so I've heard?]

YOON  
[This is all I'm good at.]

INSTRUCTOR  
 (chuckles)  
 [All right. Let's continue when I  
 get back?]

Yoon NODS.

The instructor EXITS the room. Yoon picks it back up from the same bar and begins PLAYING - this time, to perfection. But after a few bars, something comes over him. Slowly, his fingers DRIFT OFF and land at a G MAJOR.

And then-- a new melody ["hills" by Leila Mohaddes]. He eases up. This one he knows by heart. He's no longer performing another's composition. This one's his own.

As the melody repeats, we--

L CUT TO:

18 INT. CAFE - LATER

18

Yoon and his friend Jay [이제혁] (21) sit inside a relatively empty, yet chic cafe. Soft classical music plays in the background. Jay is a plump, studious-looking college student. He's the introverted-type who really only feels comfortable around Yoon.

In front of Jay is a tall LATTE WITH EXTRA WHIPPED CREAM. Yoon SIPS on a clean ICED AMERICANO--

JAY  
 [Anyway, what I'm saying is that you're really lucky. All my friends think you're like some mysterious genius. Damn, I should've learned piano when I was younger. Now I guess I'll do what everyone else does: graduate from Seoul National, get a corporate job, get married, have kids... and die.]

YOON  
 [Well if you put it like that.]

JAY  
 [Maybe I should start a company.]

YOON  
 [Yeah? What kind of company?]

A beat. Jay ponders.

JAY

[I don't know. I'm not even that creative. I guess it's just the idea of starting one.]

A beat. Yoon NODS.

YOON

[I can understand that.]

Jay takes a big BITE out of the whipped cream.

YOON (CONT'D)

[I may go to Germany next year to do more advanced training.]

JAY

(mouthful)

[Germany?]

YOON

[Probably not, but maybe. There's an instructor there who I've been in contact with. He's trained over a dozen concert pianists.]

JAY

[Wow...]

Yoon takes a SIP. Jay LOOKS DOWN, a little discouraged. Yoon's living in a different world.

YOON

[I just need to convince my parents.]

JAY

[Oh they don't know?]

Yoon SHAKES [NODS] his head.

JAY (CONT'D)

[Well, they were fine with you skipping college for piano, so they'll support you, don't you think? You don't have to go to med school anymore.]

YOON

(sighs)

[I don't know.]

Jay STUDIES Yoon.

JAY  
 [Like I said, you're lucky. You've got rich doctor parents, what can't you do?]

Yoon doesn't react. And then-- Jay's PHONE (iPhone 14) RINGS. It's a FaceTime call from **JAY'S MOTHER (50)**.

Jay ANSWERS. A kind woman's face fills the screen. She's outdoors, wearing a SUN VISOR. Jay speaks informally.

JAY (CONT'D)  
 [Hey Mom, what's up?]

JAY'S MOTHER  
 (friendly)  
 [My son, what are you up to?]

JAY  
 [Just at the cafe with Yoon.]

He TURNS the camera toward Yoon.

Yoon awkwardly BOWS his head and--

YOON  
 (formally)  
 [Hello.]

The mother lights up.

JAY'S MOTHER  
 (gasping)  
 [Oh Yoon, it's been so long! How are you?]

YOON  
 (shyly)  
 [I'm all right.]

JAY'S MOTHER  
 [I see. It's so great that you and my son meet so regularly. Every Sunday at 1pm - it slipped my mind.]

Jay FLIPS the camera back.

JAY  
 [Mom, apparently Yoon's going to Germany for piano.]

Yoon tenses up. He'd rather avoid the attention.

JAY'S MOTHER

[Oh my goodness, Germany! Wow Yoon,  
I always knew you'd be successful.]

JAY

[He says he's close to becoming a  
concert pianist.]

JAY'S MOTHER

[Ay, you're going places, Yoon.  
Meanwhile, I'm still waiting for my  
son to get a good job.]

JAY

(scoffing)

[Mom, I'm-- I'm going to start a  
company.]

JAY'S MOTHER

[Company? Yeah right, what  
company?]

JAY

[I'm-- I'm thinking about it-- I'll  
tell you more later.]

JAY'S MOTHER

[My son, you should join a large  
company, instead. A start up is  
too--]

JAY

[Ok Mom. Anyway, let's talk more  
later.]

JAY'S MOTHER

[Ok, ok. I'll see you later. Yoon,  
it was nice to see your face.]

Yoon LEANS OVER so she can hear--

YOON

[Goodbye.]

JAY

(whispering)

[Ok, see you later.]

JAY'S MOTHER

[Ok. I love you, son.]

JAY

(waving at the screen)

[I love you, Mom.]

Yoon STUDIES Jay. Something about him tells us he longs for the relationship Jay has with his parents.

CUT TO:

19

**INT. HIGH SCHOOL - EVENING**

19

A Caucasian **BOY (19)** and his **PARENTS (40s)** stand at the desk, across from the commissioner, who **HOLDS** a stack of **PAPER**. The boy, dressed in a full **SUIT**, is the typical single child who receives parental adulation on a daily basis. The commissioner **STANDS UP**.

COMMISSIONER  
(reaching out hand)  
Thank you. We'll be in touch.

The boy eagerly **SHAKES** the commissioner's hand.

BOY'S MOTHER  
Thank you, commissioner. Please  
make sure our boy gets published.

COMMISSIONER  
Not up to me, but will do my best,  
ma'am.

The boy's father **SHAKES** the commissioner's hand.

BOY'S FATHER  
Thank you.

The commissioner **NODS** and **SITS** back down. As they **WALK AWAY**, he **SIGHS**, exhausted. He **PLACES** the last stack of paper inside a large **WHITE ENVELOPE** and **ADDS** it to a tall **STACK** of submissions. From afar, Hugo comes **RUNNING**.

As Hugo passes the young boy, the boy **URNS** back and **STUDIES** him, competitively. The commissioner **GLANCES** at Hugo and **SMILES**.

Hugo hastily arrives and **HANDS** him his story. The commissioner **GLANCES** at his **WATCH**.

HUGO  
I'm not too late, am I?

COMMISSIONER  
You're a minute late.

Hugo catches his breath.

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
Good thing we're friends, though.

The commissioner TAKES Hugo's story and RIFFLES through the pages.

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
I was getting nervous for you.  
Didn't think you'd make it on time.  
Is this 100 pages?

Hugo NODS, BREATHING LOUDLY.

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
Ok. What's the story about?

Hugo is in a trance. He STARES at a GOLDEN ENVELOPE on the desk.

HUGO  
(pointing)  
It's shinier than I imagined.

The commissioner GLANCES up and over at the envelope. He CHUCKLES.

COMMISSIONER  
Look, there's no need to check the mail every day. The panel's gonna need at least a few weeks to decide the winner.

HUGO  
Is it still the same 5 judges?

COMMISSIONER  
Yeah.

Hugo continues to STARE at the envelope, longingly.

COMMISSIONER (CONT'D)  
So, your story. You've been working on it for about a year now. What's it about? Another fantasy?

HUGO  
It's about a father.

COMMISSIONER  
Father?

HUGO  
(nodding)  
A family man.

COMMISSIONER  
Hmm.

HUGO  
It's been around 9 months right?

The commissioner ponders for a moment.

COMMISSIONER  
(chuckling)  
Oh right. Yes. She'll go into labor  
at any moment now.

HUGO  
How does it feel? To be a father?

COMMISSIONER  
(in realization)  
Is this what your story's based on?

HUGO  
Some of it.

COMMISSIONER  
(laughs)  
I should get some credit then, no?

HUGO  
If I get published, you can have  
all the credit you want, Mr. B.

COMMISSIONER  
(chuckling)  
Ok, fair enough. I'll get this to  
the panel.

Hugo SMILES. The commissioner PLACES his story in a white envelope and ADDS it to the stack of other submissions. Hugo's smile FADES as he sees the sheer number of other writers he's competing against.

CUT TO:

20

**EXT. LILIANA'S HOUSE - LATER**

20

Hugo RIDES up to the edge of the driveway and lets his bike FALL onto the grass. He SPEED-WALKS up to the front porch, FIXING his hair. He CLEARS his throat and KNOCKS.

After a moment, the door OPENS. As the door opens, we faintly hear--

CONTINUOUS:

LILIANA'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
[What do you mean you studied,  
papi? A "C" is not acceptable.]

PABLO (O.S.)  
 [Mamá, I don't know what happened.  
 I swear I studied!]

LILIANA'S FATHER (O.S.)  
 [You should have asked your sister  
 for help if you didn't understand.  
 You know how well she did in  
 school.]

The door SWINGS OPEN to reveal-- **LILIANA (19)**, a beautiful Hispanic female. Hugo's eyes LIGHT UP.

HUGO  
 (surprised)  
 [Liliana!]

Liliana SQUEEZES past the door and SHUTS it quickly. She tightly HUGS Hugo.

Oxytocin fires through Hugo's veins. They PULL BACK.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [I thought you were sick.]

LILIANA  
 [Did you submit your story?]

HUGO  
 (caught off guard,  
 stammering)  
 [Yeah.]

Liliana SMILES and TAKES Hugo's hand.

LILIANA  
 [Pablo's in trouble again.]

As she PULLS him--

HUGO  
 [So you're all fine now?]

LILIANA  
 (chuckling)  
 [It was just a cold. C'mon!]

They RUN away from the house, toward the street.

CUT TO:

Hugo and Liliana are lost in their own world, at sunset, alone together, PRANCING through the tall grass.

It's hard to downplay the romanticism between the two. They HOLD both of each other's hands, SWINGING around, LAUGHING in pure joy.

LILIANA

[I had a dream about you last night.]

HUGO

[Really?]

LILIANA

[The world stopped spinning and I heard this voice. It was like a narrator. He said that time would start moving again once you finished writing a hundred books.]

HUGO

(baffled)

[A hundred books?]

LILIANA

[Yeah, I think it was an omen. The time.]

HUGO

[You sure you only had a cold?]

They STOP moving.

LILIANA

[Seriously...]

Liliana gets CLOSE and lightly SLAPS Hugo's chest with both of her hands--

LILIANA (CONT'D)

(playfully)

[Hugo Salazar! Author of the Year!]

HUGO

(laughing)

[What is with you?]

Liliana's OUT OF BREATH from the prancing.

LILIANA

[It was an omen.]

Hugo CHUCKLES.

LILIANA (CONT'D)

[Really, it was an omen.]

HUGO  
 (relenting)  
 [Ok fine. It was an omen. Is that  
 what you wanna hear?]

Liliana HUGS Hugo.

LILIANA  
 [I missed you.]

HUGO  
 (caught off guard)  
 [I missed you t--]

Liliana suddenly KISSES Hugo's cheek and PULLS AWAY, LOOKING at Hugo facetiously. And then-- Liliana DARTS away, laughing. Hugo CHASES after her: the girl he's loved since elementary school.

CUT TO:

22 **EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE - DAY**

22

Hugo RIDES up to the front porch and PARKS his bike in fashion. He eagerly CHECKS the MAILBOX-- nothing. Mild disappointment. Before he enters the house, he remembers to do one thing.

He STEPS AROUND the side of the house and PICKS UP his HELMET on the dirt. He PUTS IT ON, then PAUSES before entering. He GLANCES again at the mailbox. He PULLS OUT his notepad from his pocket and WRITES.

HUGO (V.O.)  
 ["The farmer gazes up at the  
 scorching sun, wondering when the  
 rain will come and quench his  
 crumbly soil."]

23 **INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

23

Hugo STEPS IN and NOTICES his mother, SLEEPING on the couch. It's a rare sight, but her recent workload is taking its toll. Hugo TAKES OFF his helmet and quietly APPROACHES. He EXAMINES the scattered CHANGE on the dinner table and the DIRTY DISHES lying around. His sisters are probably off playing with their friends - it's the weekend after all.

Hugo feels sympathy for his mother. He begins CLEANING up the house.

CUT TO:

24 INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

24

Elise sits in a sparse lecture hall, listening to a black **PROFESSOR (40)** lecture about contemporary art.

CONTINUOUS:

PROFESSOR

(passionately)

And this notion, of course, of this experimentation being borne out of economic urgency, of the New Age, is the principal thesis that exists at the core of what Jameson says. Right? This entire chapter is centered around this idea. So in a few weeks, you'll see how all of this ties together as we study Sherman. Salazar. Wool. We'll look at how exactly their work is a reflection of this historical context.

Elise **SLOUCHES** in her seat, bored out of her mind. She looks different. The innocence that we once saw in her seems to have left her long ago. She's got **BAGGY EYES** (hungover), wears heavy **EYELINER**, and has **FRIZZY HAIR**. She **FIDGETS** with her **PENCIL** and **LOOKS AROUND** the room. Fed-up, she **GETS UP** and **LEAVES** the lecture hall in style. The professor **NOTICES**.

FADE OUT SOUND:

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)

All right, now given next week's exam, I'll be holding office hours tomorrow and Thursday after class...

CUT TO:

25 EXT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

25

A **CIGARETTE BUD** hits the concrete, and Elise **STEPS** down on it. She **LIGHTS** another and takes a long **DRAG**. As she **PEOPLE-WATCHES**, a young female **STUDENT (19)** comes **RUNNING** out of the building, in **TEARS**. She **STARES** worriedly at her **PHONE** and **SITS** on a **BENCH**, close to Elise. Elise **STUDIES** her.

After some sobbing, the student **CATCHES** Elise's gaze.

ELISE

You fail an exam or somethin'?

The student **SHAKES** her head.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
D'your dog die?

She SHAKES her head.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
D'your boyfriend break up with you?

The student FREEZES.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
Ah. Your girlfriend broke up with  
you.

The student begins to SOB HARDER. It's the top of the hour--  
students begin POURING out of the building. Elise APPROACHES  
the girl. She STICKS OUT her cigarette.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
Want a smoke?

The student STUDIES the lit cigarette.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
(looking up and squinting  
at the sky)  
It'll make all your problems go  
away.

The student SCOFFS and SCAMPERS off.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
(shrugs)  
Freshman.

From a distance, the professor APPROACHES with a small  
BRIEFCASE.

PROFESSOR  
Elise.

Elise takes another DRAG and GLANCES at the professor  
nonchalantly. The THROWS the cigarette bud on the ground and  
STEPS on it.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
Hey.

ELISE  
(smiling)  
Hi.

PROFESSOR  
I saw you leave early.

ELISE  
Just needed some air.

PROFESSOR  
Oh yeah. That's no problem. I just wanted to check to make sure everything was ok. Your grades have been dropping for a few weeks now.

ELISE  
(nodding)  
I know, it's unfortunate.

A beat. The professor studies Elise.

PROFESSOR  
Um, have you been doing the readings?

ELISE  
(chuckling)  
No, I can't afford that.

The professor TILTS her head.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. I just figured this is my last core class and I could get by without having to buy all of these books.

PROFESSOR  
(nods)  
No, yeah. I totally get it. I just - I want to make sure you don't fall behind.

ELISE  
I'll be fine, professor. I come to pretty much every lecture.

The professor NODS and SIGHS.

PROFESSOR  
Ok. Well...

She PULLS OUT a small ORANGE BOOK from her briefcase.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
Then take this.

Elise is taken aback.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
I would regret things if you didn't at least give this one a read.

Elise remains silent.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
It's really worth it.

Elise slowly TAKES the book and EXAMINES it. The professor SMILES.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
I'll see you next week.

The professor WALKS AWAY.

ELISE  
(glancing up)  
Thanks...

Elise continues studying the book. We catch a glimpse of the title: "**Only Words**".

CUT TO:

26

**INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT**

26

It's a dark room, illuminated by a few NEON STRING LIGHTS. Early 2000s indie music plays in the background. Next to the DESK LAMP-- the orange book. Some ASH resting atop the front cover.

A CU of a cigarette slowly entering the frame, hovering over the front cover. A finger TAPS the cigarette, and the ash FALLS.

We get a wider view. It's Elise smoking the cigarette, accompanied by a small bottle of VODKA. She's with her Asian roommate **BETH (20)**. Her poison is BEER. They are far from sober. Beth lies down on a single BED, while Elise sits on a desk CHAIR.

BETH  
Here's a question. How bad could a  
10-year old be to send her back.  
Like what could I have possibly  
done for three couples to say,  
"she's a shit kid. Let's send her  
back."

Elise is dazed. She can barely keep her concentration.

BETH (CONT'D)  
It was a fucking joke.

ELISE  
Did you ever think about finding  
your real parents?

BETH  
 (laughs)  
 Why is that like the most common  
 question I get?

ELISE  
 Just wondering, I guess.

BETH  
 Fair enough... I don't know. I  
 think I just-- I guess I just don't  
 fucking care anymore.

ELISE  
 I feel that.

BETH  
 Like, ok. Sorry that I was a  
 nuisance. Sorry I was just a kid  
 like everyone else. Sorry you  
 couldn't adopt the perfect child.

ELISE  
 Well, it's not like it's your fault  
 or that it was in your control.

BETH  
 Yeah tell me about it. Why do you  
 think I left so young?

They both take a SWIG of their drinks.

ELISE  
 You ever think it's a good thing  
 you didn't have parents growing up?  
 You could just do things your own  
 way, you know?

BETH  
 Maybe. I don't know, I just don't  
 fucking think about it anymore.

Elise NODS, still very far from sober. Suddenly-- a CALL from  
 "MOTHER". Elise DECLINES the call.

BETH (CONT'D)  
 You know, I've never seen you call  
 your parents. Like, not a single  
 time.

ELISE  
 It's complicated.

BETH  
 How complicated could it be? You  
 pick up your phone. That's it.

ELISE  
I don't think they really care.

Beth takes a SIP of her drink and RIFFLES through Elise's sketchbook.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
It's just dysfunctional. My family.  
I'm that girl, you know?

BETH  
(shaking her head)  
I don't get it. I see them call  
you, so obviously they do care.  
I've just never seen you pick up.

ELISE  
I don't know.

BETH  
We've been roomies for two years,  
Elise. You must have at least  
talked to them a few times.

A long pause. Beth EXAMINES a DRAWING OF AN ELEPHANT from the sketchbook.

BETH (CONT'D)  
This one's nice.

ELISE  
You know elephants stay with their  
young the longest.

BETH  
You know what? Maybe I should be a  
photographer for National  
Geographic. That'd be pretty sick.

ELISE  
They feed them, migrate with them,  
love them. It's a family, the whole  
deal.

BETH  
(yawning)  
Elephants. Really?

ELISE  
I guess sometimes I wonder if they  
can choose to leave their parents.  
You know, like voluntarily.

BETH  
(more slowly)  
I think it's a scam.  
(MORE)

BETH (CONT'D)  
 They probably use special effects.  
 I'd never get that close to the  
 lions and shit.

Elise STARES at her bottle of vodka.

ELISE  
 I wonder what kind of parent I  
 would be...

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

27 INT. ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

27

Her father sits on the couch beside Elise as he STRUMS a GUITAR. He provides instruction in the kindest way possible.

ELISE (V.O.)  
 I mean if I ever decided to have  
 kids. I can't tell if I'd be more  
 excited...

CUT TO:

28 INT. ELISE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

28

Her father YELLS inaudibly and THROWS a WHISKEY GLASS across the living room-- SHATTER.

ELISE (V.O.)  
 ...or terrified.

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK.

29 INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

29

Elise stares at the small bottle of vodka and GLANCES up at Beth.

She's fallen asleep. Elise SIGHS. And then-- another CALL from her mother. She lets it BUZZ on the table, beside the orange book.

CUT TO:

30

**EXT. MUSIC HALL - NIGHT**

30

Dressed in expensive business professional, **YOON'S MOTHER (50)** and **YOON'S FATHER (52)** PACE down the steps of a music hall. They seem restless. Yoon FOLLOWS close behind, CARRYING a SMALL TROPHY and a LEI around his neck. The piano competition has just ended, and dozens of well-dressed folks EXIT the doors.

A familiar voice shouts behind him--

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

[Yoon!]

Yoon TURNS around, while his parents MARCH ONWARD. It's Jay and TWO of his university **FRIENDS (early 20s)**, dressed in business casual. Jay JOGS over.

JAY

[Man, that was one hell of a performance! You played so well, it's so impressive.]

FRIEND #1

[Big congratulations, Yoon. You are so cool.]

From a distance, Yoon's mother TURNS around. She STARES impatiently at Yoon.

FRIEND #2

[This was my first time coming to one of these, and you really blew me away. Congratulations.]

Yoon is grateful, yet he's got other things on his mind, namely his disappointed parents.

YOON

(shyly)  
[Oh, thanks. Thanks for coming tonight.]

JAY

[Hey what do you say we go grab some drinks to celebrate?]

From afar--

YOON'S MOTHER

(calmly)  
[Yoon.]

Yoon TURNS around.

YOON'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [Your father's waiting for us.]

Yoon TURNS back to the group.

YOON  
 [Another time might be better.]

JAY  
 (sympathetically)  
 [Yeah, yeah. No problem. Next  
 time.]

Yoon forces a SMILE at the group and WALKS AWAY. The mother also TURNS around and continues WALKING. As Yoon CATCHES UP to his mother, she mutters just loud enough for Yoon to hear-

YOON'S MOTHER  
 [What the hell do they think is so impressive about second place? Let alone how much better the winner was. This was nothing more than a participation trophy.]

Yoon CATCHES UP, just in sight of his mother.

YOON  
 [Mother, this isn't a huge deal. It's not even an official competition. The one in three weeks is the important one, and I'll be ready for--]

The mother TURNS around, face-to-face with Yoon. There's fire in her eyes. Yoon HALTS.

YOON'S MOTHER  
 [What did you say? "Not a huge deal"?)

She HUFFS.

YOON'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [Any competition, big or small, matters. You made two mistakes tonight. Two. The audience may not have noticed it, but I did. They were so bad, my ears fucking hurt. You should have been disqualified for that.]

YOON  
 [Mother, I--]

YOON'S MOTHER

[If you're not going to take this seriously, then just call it quits and go to med school.]

She **TURNS** around and keeps **WALKING**.

YOON'S MOTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

[This is so fucking embarrassing. Your father and I had to reschedule two operations for this. What the hell is this?]

Yoon holds his trophy a little **LIGHTER**. Forlorn, he continues to follow.

CUT TO:

31 **EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS**

31

Along a busy sidewalk, a black Mercedes-Benz S Class **SEDAN** **PULLS UP**. Yoon's mother arrives first, **OPENING** the front passenger door. Yoon then **OPENS** the back seat door--

YOON'S MOTHER

[I'm firing Instructor Lee. Practice on your own until we find you a new teacher.]

YOON

[What about the German instructor I told you ab--]

YOON'S MOTHER

[Hurry up and sit down. We're going home.]

Yoon **TAKES** his seat. As the mother is about to sit down, we hear from a distance--

JAY (O.S.)

[Congratulations again, Yoon!]

Jay and the two friends **WAVE** from a distance. The mother **TURNS** to see who dares adulate her son. Yoon **CRINGES** - bad timing. He **STICKS** his right hand out and forces a **WAVE** back. The mother glares at Yoon's friends and **HUFFS**.

Without looking, she quickly **SLAMS** the back seat door **SHUT**, **SMASHING** Yoon's right hand--

YOON  
 (screaming in pain)  
 [AHHH!!!]

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

32

**INT. YOON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

32

The room is dark and minimal, illuminated by a single LAPTOP screen. Yoon slouches in his desk chair, struggling to WRITE on a HEFTY BOOK with a black PEN. A SCARRED HAND. He WINCES, as he awkwardly moves his entire arm to write.

Scattered across his desk are several other books: "**MCAT REVIEW**".

Depressed is an understatement. For Yoon, it feels as though he's lost a whole arm. He DRIFTS OFF, blinking more slowly, yet the only thing preventing him from falling asleep is the focus required to simply circle a multiple choice answer.

And then-- the bedroom door OPENS behind Yoon. A streak of WARM LIGHT fills the room. It's **YOON'S BROTHER #1 (29)**. Yoon's expression doesn't change much. We remain fixed on Yoon's face--

YOON'S BROTHER #1 (O.S.)  
 (informal Korean)  
 [You sure you're not coming out to dinner with us? The reservation's still for five.]

Yoon lets out a weak SIGH.

YOON  
 [I need to study.]

YOON'S BROTHER #1 (O.S.)  
 [Ok. Well it's a little inappropriate to ask for takeout at this restaurant, so you can have the frozen dumplings in the freezer.]

The door SHUTS. Yoon TILTS his head up at the ceiling and SIGHS. He regains some energy. He GLANCES down at his hand, reminded of the fact that he'll never be able to perform again. He GLANCES up at his computer screen, in split screen. On the LEFT half of the screen:

"

MCAT PRACTICE EXAM RESULTS -- SUMMARY

[7.15.22] PRACTICE TEST - SCORE: 523

[7.28.22] PRACTICE TEST - SCORE: 522

[8.06.22] PRACTICE TEST - SCORE: 524

[8.27.22] PRACTICE TEST - SCORE: 525

[9.20.22] PRACTICE TEST - SCORE: 525

"

On the RIGHT half of the screen:

"

TOP U.S. MEDICAL SCHOOL AVERAGE MCAT SCORES

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL: 519

STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE: 518

UCSF SCHOOL OF MEDICINE: 518

YALE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE: 520

NYU GROSSMAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE: 521

"

Yoon GLANCES between the two browsers and SIGHS. Medical school appears to be inevitable.

He SLOUCHES even more, staring down at his desk with a blank expression. We faintly hear the SOUND of a car ENGINE start and DRIVE AWAY. Then suddenly-- a realization. He LOOKS UP at the computer screen. Something tells us he's formulated a plan. There's hope in his eyes.

CUT TO:

33

**INT. MANSION - LATER**

33

It's a modern, MINIMALIST mansion. A cold mansion. A perfect reflection of his parents' taste.

The house is dark, illuminated only by the moonlight that strikes through the windows. Yoon slowly makes his way DOWN the staircase, finally comfortable enough to leave his room.

**KITCHEN:**

The freezer door OPENS, revealing an unopened pack of Bibigo DUMPLINGS. Yoon TAKES it and SHUTS the door.

**LIVING ROOM:**

Yoon slowly WALKS over to a GRAND PIANO, RESTING the frozen pack of dumplings on his scarred hand. He SITS down on the PIANO BENCH and SETS the dumplings beside him on the bench. He LIFTS the key lid, revealing the pristine piano keys that haven't been touched in months. He RESTS his hands on the keys

A WIDE SHOT of Yoon. He PRESSES DOWN on a single note (G MAJOR).

CUT TO:

34

**INT. RESTAURANT KITCHEN - EVENING**

34

Antonio's Restaurant. In the back--

Hugo wears long green DISHWASHING GLOVES, sluggishly CLEANING a stack of marinara-stained DISHES, one by one. Leaning over a stainless steel commercial SINK, he SCRUBS hard with a worn-out yellow SPONGE. He's restless. He's upset. He GLANCES over at a NEWSPAPER beside him:

"

SALINAS TRIBUNE

23rd Annual Salinas Writing Competition

WINNER: Benjamin Mulford (Headshot of a young white boy with an smug grin)

"

A Caucasian WAITRESS (17) ADDS five dishes to the stack-- CLATTER. Hugo GLANCES at the dirty dishes and SIGHS, WIPING his SWEAT from his brows.

A short Caucasian boy APPROACHES. This is TONY (19). Carrying two PLATES of fresh SPAGHETTI, he SKIRTS over to Hugo while annoyingly TAP DANCING.

TONY

Ba-da-ba-da-ba-da-ba--

Tony lightly BUMPS Hugo's rear. Hugo HALF-GLANCES and SIGHS, continuing his work.

TONY (CONT'D)

(mockingly)

Necesario más platos amigo.

Tony SNICKERS. He gets closer.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 Más rápido, monsieur Hugo.

Hugo ignores. Tony WALKS AWAY, CHUCKLING under his breath. On the other side of the kitchen, the Caucasian owner **ANTONIO (62)** prepares the food along a gas stove. He GLANCES over at Hugo.

Hugo STACKS the clean dishes on a RACK to dry off. Tony RETURNS with two dirty dishes-- CLATTER onto the stack. Tony STUDIES Hugo with a mischievous GRIN.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 Now here's a question. Why is it that it's always you Mexicans cleaning the dishes. Du'nt matter if it's Italian, Irish, American... hell even Chinese.

Hugo GLANCES at Tony, seemingly unbothered. This motivates Tony.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 I guess it's genetic or something.

ANTONIO  
 (sternly)  
 Tony.

Tony GLANCES over, nonchalantly.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)  
 (pointing at the food)  
 Let's go.

TONY  
 (facetiously)  
 Yezboss.

As Tony LEAVES, Hugo SHAKES his head - pure nuisance - CLEANING the last dish in the stack. Carrying two more plates of pasta, Tony TAP DANCES toward Hugo again.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 Ba-da-ba-da-ba-da...

CHUCKLING, Tony STUDIES Hugo and WALKS OUT into the dining area. Hugo takes a big SIGH as he TAKES OFF his gloves. No more dirty dishes, for now at least. He REACHES into his pocket and PULLS OUT his notepad. He writes--

HUGO (V.O.)  
 ["Chef, there's a pest in the kitchen!"]

And then-- CLACK. Two more dirty dishes. Tony FIXATES on the notepad.

TONY  
Ohhhh. What's this amigo?

Hugo snaps the notepad SHUT.

TONY (CONT'D)  
A little diary, I see?  
(grinning)  
C'mon now, I can keep a secret.

Hugo TURNS away, and-- Tony REACHES and GRABS onto the notepad.

TONY (CONT'D)  
You can show me, it's ok--

Hugo is startled. No one has ever touched his notepad before. This is crossing the line. By instinct, Hugo puts his hand on Tony's neck and PUSHES him away.

HUGO  
[What are you doing?]

Tony is infuriated. He RUBS his neck and--

TONY  
Don't touch me, you beaner fuck!

Tony CHARGES at Hugo, PUSHING him hard against the sink. Hugo HANGS ONTO his notepad. Tony GRABS the collar of Hugo's shirt.

ANTONIO (O.S.)  
(from a distance)  
Hey hey hey!

TONY  
Don't ever fucking touch me again!  
I swear to God I'll beat your ass  
and send you back to--

Antonio RUSHES over and BREAKS them up. He firmly GRABS onto their shoulders.

TONY (CONT'D)	ANTONIO
--fucking wherever in Mexico	(NY accent)
you're from!	Calm down. Calm down!

Tony SPITS toward Hugo. Antonio PUSHES Tony away.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)  
Hey!

TONY  
This beaner hit me in the face!

ANTONIO  
(calmly)  
Be quiet.

TONY  
He hit me in the face, god damn it!

ANTONIO  
I said quiet! You're done for the  
night. Go home. Go. Home.

Tony STAMMERS and violently TURNS his body and WALKS AWAY. He  
removes his BLACK CAP and SLAMS it on the ground.

TONY  
Motherfucker!

Antonio is fed up. He looks at Hugo.

HUGO  
He grabbed me first.

ANTONIO  
You too. That's enough.

HUGO  
I didn't hit him. I pushed.

ANTONIO  
(passive aggressively)  
I understand that, Hugo. I saw the  
whole thing. Now calm down.

Hugo takes a deep breath.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)  
But now I have to explain to the  
guests what all this commotion is  
about, hmm?

Antonio stares at Hugo with WIDE EYES.

HUGO  
I apologize.

ANTONIO  
You're locking up for the night,  
you hear me?

Hugo relentlessly NODS. Antonio RELEASES his grip and RETURNS  
to the stove. Hugo SIGHS, READJUSTING his shirt.

He LOOKS DOWN at his precious notepad, gripped tightly in his hands. He PUTS it back into his pocket.

CUT TO:

35

**EXT. ANTONIO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT - LATER**

35

Hugo EXITS the BACK ENTRANCE, REMOVING his BLACK CAP. He FIXES his hair. As he WALKS toward his bike--

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)  
(deep voice)  
[Author of the year!]

Hugo, startled, GLANCES over. It's Liliana.

HUGO  
[Ay, you scared me.]

Liliana APPROACHES with her hands BEHIND her back, CHUCKLING.

LILIANA  
[You always get so scared.]

HUGO  
[What are you doing here?]

She gets close, keeping her eye contact. Hugo grows tense.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
[What? You're scaring me.]

LILIANA  
[Hmm. You really don't have a clue,  
huh?]

HUGO  
[What?]

Liliana PULLS her hands out from behind, revealing a SMALL GIFT. Hugo CHUCKLES--

LILIANA  
(softly singing)  
[Happy Birthday to you...]

Hugo eases up.

LILIANA (CONT'D)  
[You're getting old, amor.]

HUGO  
[Only because you're here to remind  
me.]

Hugo HUGS Liliana. PULLING AWAY, he LOOKS DOWN at the gift.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
[You didn't have to get me  
anything.]

LILIANA  
(hastily)  
[I always get you something. Just  
open it.]

Hugo chuckles and TAKES the gift, just as--

RUSTLING nearby. Hugo and Liliana GLANCE over-- it's Tony,  
accompanied by his Caucasian friends **ASH (18)** and **CHAZ (20)**.

TONY  
Huh huh huh. Didn't know you had a  
girlfriend, amigo.

Liliana needs no explanation. She can read the situation.

TONY (CONT'D)  
She know about your little fuck-up  
today?

Hugo keeps his eyes on Tony.

HUGO  
[Go back home.]

LILIANA  
[Is this what I think it is?]

HUGO  
[Amor.  
(handing her back the  
gift)  
Go back home. You're not far.]

Liliana RUNS away with a look of determination. Ash and Chaz  
SURROUND Hugo, while Tony stays face-to-face. Tony CHUCKLES.

TONY  
Thought she'd stick around to  
protect you.

Hugo prepares for what's about to come.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Like I said. I'm gonna beat your  
ass and send you back to wherever  
the fuck you're from. Faaar away.

The three slowly CLOSE IN on Hugo when suddenly--

HUGO  
 (screams)  
 Wait!

Hugo STICKS OUT his hand. The three PAUSE, confused. Hugo REACHED into his pocket and PULLS OUT his notepad. He WRITES-

HUGO (V.O.)  
 ["Claustrophobic, he stands in the rain. Gasping for air, it begins to hail. He smiles."]

And then-- Tony TACKLES Hugo onto the dirt. Miraculously, Hugo HANGS ONTO his notepad. The three begin PUMMELING Hugo, KICKING him all over. Hugo CLENCHES the notepad. After many blows, he's had enough.

Hugo LAUNCHES up to TACKLE Tony. Ash and Chaz try to PULL him off, but Hugo SHAKES them off. He manages to land a few PUNCHES before Ash YANKS him off. Tony's got BLOOD running down his nose. He checks with his fingers. He's bewildered.

TONY  
 (laughing)  
 You motherfucker.

As Ash and Chaz KICK Hugo, Tony WADDLES over and joins. Hugo tries his best to protect himself in a FETAL POSITION. But Tony's not satisfied. He MOUNTS onto Hugo's torso and PUNCHES him in the face. Hard.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 (out of breath)  
 Learn your lesson, boy. Don't ever-

PUNCH.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 Fucking--

PUNCH.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 Touch me--

PUNCH. As Hugo's head LANDS on its side. He CLENCHES onto his notepad. A CU of his WATCH. The ticking intensifies.

TONY (CONT'D)  
 Again--

As Tony WINDS UP for another blow--

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
 (yelling)  
 Stop!!!

Tony, holding his BLOODY FIST up, TURNS his head. Hugo is barely conscious. He manages to TURN his head. He SMILES.

It's Pablo. He stands with his feet wide apart, carrying a long RIFLE. His eyes are eerily wide. His heart is pounding. He looks psychotic. Purposely psychotic. He tries his best to hide his TREMBLING.

Liliana RUNS up and joins her brother. She's out of breath. She GLANCES at Hugo, who's stupidly smiling. She GLARES at the boys.

Tony and the boys put their HANDS UP and slowly STEP AWAY from Hugo.

TONY  
 (tense)  
 All right now.

LILIANA  
 [Point it, Pablo.]

Pablo GULPS.

LILIANA (CONT'D)  
 [Point it, damn it.]

He fiercely POINTS the rifle at Tony.

TONY  
 Woah woah woah, ok ok ok. It's all right. Just calm down.

LILIANA  
 (keeping her eyes on Tony)  
 Shoot the short one.

Pablo GLANCES at Liliana, fearfully. The boys hold their breath. Hugo relaxes, amused.

LILIANA (CONT'D)  
 Shoot him!

Pablo PLACES his cheek on the rifle, looking down the sight.

The boys SCURRY off in all directions. Pablo lets out a SIGH of relief. Liliana SNATCHES the rifle away from him and WALKS toward Hugo. Pablo goes DOWN on all fours, frantically PANTING and MOANING. Liliana SETS the rifle down beside Hugo.

LILIANA (CONT'D)  
 (concerned)  
 [Ay, Hugo. What is this?]

Liliana examines Hugo's SWOLLEN CHEEK. Hugo calmly SMILES.

HUGO  
 [He wasn't actually going to, was he?]

LILIANA  
 [Shut up. It wasn't loaded. We need to put ice on this.]

Hugo LOOKS UP at the sky.

HUGO  
 [Some hail would be nice.]

LILIANA  
 [I said shut up, stupid.]

FADE OUT SOUND.

Hugo continues to stare and SMILE up at the sky.

CUT TO:

36

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

36

Elise is drunk. She STRUTS down a steep street, SMOKING a cigarette. She carries with her the ORANGE BOOK. She LOOKS DOWN at it and SCOFFS. Her phone RINGS. After a long pause, she PICKS UP.

ELISE  
 (obnoxiously, slurred)  
 Hello, Mother.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 Oh my God, Elise!

ELISE  
 Yes it is me, Mother.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 It's been so long, hon. You must have been so busy with your work!

ELISE  
 (sarcastically)  
 I've been really, really busy.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 I miss you so much, hon. I was just  
 calling to see if you'd be able to  
 come and visit for your father's  
 birthday.

ELISE  
 (scoffs)  
 Dad's birthday?

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 We're having the neighbors over  
 tomorrow. You think you can make it  
 by 5?

Elise SHAKES her head.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 We'd be really happy to see you.  
 It's been too long, hon.

An idea strikes.

ELISE  
 You know what, Mom? I actually  
 can't. I can't come home. You wanna  
 know why? It's because I'm in a big  
 city now.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 What?

ELISE  
 Yeah. I made it, Mom. I'm in  
 fucking-- fucking New York now. I'm  
 in-- I'm in fucking New York City  
 now, you hear me?

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 What? When-- since when did you--

ELISE  
 And be sure to tell Dad too. Tell  
 him he was wrong. He was wrong  
 about everything. He said I was  
 studying something stupid, that I'd  
 just come right back home. Well  
 surprise surprise, I...

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 Elise, honey. You sound so upset.  
 What's going on?--

ELISE  
 I won't see you or dad for a while,  
 so don't bother calling me anymore.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 Wait a sec, Elise. You didn't have-

Elise HANGS UP the phone. She BLOCKS both her mother and father's phone number. She continues WALKING through the night.

37

**EXT. LAUNDROMAT - LATER**

37

Elise STRUTS down a different street, trying to LIGHT her cigarette. The lighter, however, won't spark a flame. Agitated, she keeps FLICKING the lighter, until she hears CRYING nearby.

Standing outside of a laundromat is a young Asian **BOY (8)**, CRYING loudly. Elise approaches out of concern.

ELISE  
 Hey, you ok?

The boy continues to SOB.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 (kneeling down)  
 Hey. It's ok. It's ok.

As Elise PATS him on the back, she GLANCES around the area. The boy CALMS DOWN.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 Are you lost? Where are your parents?

The boy is silent. He SNIFFLES.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 Do you know where your parents are?

Another wave of tears. The boy begins to SOB.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 Ok ok...  
 (glancing inside  
 laundromat)  
 Let's go inside for now, yeah?

WIDE SHOT: Elise TAKES his hand and gently PULLS him along into the empty laundromat.

CUT TO:

38

**INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT - LATER**

38

Elise sits in a CHAIR, READING the orange book. The little boy sits beside her - feet DANGLING from the chair. His tears are long gone, and he quietly OBSERVES Elise.

ELISE

So you're just gonna sit there and stare at me all night?

Elise TURNS to the little boy. He keeps his stare and ultimately GLANCES down at the book.

ELISE (CONT'D)

What? You wanna read?

Elise CLOSES the book to reveal the front cover ("Only Words") with a large BLACK BURN MARK just over the author's name. She HANDS it to him. The little boy POINTS at the dark spot.

ELISE (CONT'D)

Yeah, I know. It's pretty bad. It's not even mine.

The boy simply stares at Elise, curiously.

ELISE (CONT'D)

They're from cigarettes. You know...

(gesturing)

Like smoking...

The boy reveals no response.

ELISE (CONT'D)

No? Ok...

She PULLS the book back and GLANCES to the side. Beside her, a small STACK of MAGAZINES and PENCILS. She GRABS a magazine and pencil.

ELISE (CONT'D)

You wanna see something cool?

The little boy simply stares with WIDE EYES.

ELISE (CONT'D)

Hmm. Let's see. A little boy lost in the streets. Refuses to speak a word.

(smiling)

But as cute as can be.

The little boy POINTS at the pencil.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
What, you wanna draw? Here.

She HANDS him the pencil and magazine, but he's only interested in the pencil. He TAKES the pencil with a SMILE. He HOLDS the pencil and joyfully WAVES it around in the air.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
That's an... interesting way to draw.

Elise continues to STUDY the little boy.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
Or-- Oh... you're like a conductor.  
Is that what you're doing?

The little boy WAVES the pencil around, GLANCING at Elise for validation.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
(nodding)  
Ok...

She GRABS another pencil beside her and FLIPS through the magazine to a BLANK PAGE.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
Mr. Conductor. Ok.

She begins to DRAW.

CUT TO:

39 INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT - LATER

39

Elise remains in her seat, still DRAWING. She's sobered up, now completely wired in. She GLANCES beside her-- the little boy SLEEPS in his chair. She takes a GLANCE out of the WINDOW behind her, then at a CLOCK hanging from the wall: **3:50**.

CUT TO:

40 INT. LAUNDROMAT - DAWN - LATER

40

Even though the whole night has passed, Elise seems to be completely awake. She's almost done with the drawing. Beside her, the little boy sits in his chair, also completely AWAKE. He FIDDLES with his pencil. We do not see her drawing.

ELISE  
You know I also got lost. Once,  
when I was around your age.

The boy continues his fiddling. Elise continues to sketch.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 It was a carnival where I grew up.  
 I wasn't lost for long, probably  
 only about half an hour. And then  
 my parents finally showed up, just  
 bawling.  
 (laughing)  
 My dad especially. That was my  
 first time seeing him cry.

The boy seems to be in his own world.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 You sure you don't have their phone  
 number?

No response from the boy. Elise SIGHS, GLANCING at the clock:  
**6:30.**

CUT TO:

41 INT. MANSION - MORNING

41

Yoon's mother furiously PACES in the living room. She HOLDS  
 up an open LETTER. She STOPS moving and LOOKS up at the  
 STAIRCASE--

YOON'S MOTHER  
 (furiously)  
 [Hurry up and get down here!]

She continues to PACE, READING the letter. Yoon's two older  
 brothers [YOON'S BROTHER #2 (26)] COME DOWN the steps, still  
 wearing their PAJAMAS. They YAWN and RUN their eyes. The  
 mother GLANCES.

YOON'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [Where's Yoon?]

YOON'S BROTHER #1  
 [What's the reason for all this  
 commotion so early in the morning?]

YOON'S MOTHER  
 [It's an emergency. Hurry up and  
 sit down.]

As the brothers SIT on the COUCH. Another scream--

YOON'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [Yoon!]

The brothers WINCE. And then-- Yoon's father STEPS OUT into the living from another room. He wears a DRESS SHIRT and TIE, CARRYING a WHITE COAT.

YOON'S FATHER  
[Please stop screaming.]

The mother GLANCES over and HUFFS. The brothers quickly STAND up and BOW down to their father--

YOON'S BROTHERS  
(simultaneously)  
[Good Morning.]

The father doesn't acknowledge and SITS down in a CHAIR. His chair. FOOTSTEPS. The mother looks up-- It's Yoon, also YAWNING and RUBBING his eyes.

YOON'S MOTHER  
[Why are you coming down so late?  
Hurry up and sit down.]

Yoon continues at his SLOW PACE. *Here we go again.* As he STEPS OFF the stair case, he LOOKS UP and notices the grand piano. It's covered up in heavy-duty MOVING PADS with a ROPE tied around it. He PAUSES, STARING at the piano.

YOON'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
[I said hurry up!]

Yoon MOVES over and SITS at the end of the couch.

YOON'S BROTHER #2  
(sarcastically)  
[Welcome everyone. Today's family meeting-- or rather, family emergency is about to begin...]

No response. The brother's smile FADES. The mother GLANCES at the paper and then at Yoon. She begins her lecture--

YOON'S MOTHER  
[Yoon. What is this?]

Yoon stares at the paper, confused.

YOON'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
[I said what is this?]

YOON'S FATHER  
[What is it?]

YOON'S MOTHER  
(scoffing)  
[His MCAT score.]

Yoon takes a DEEP BREATH, keeping a straight face.

YOON'S BROTHER #2  
[Why? Let me see.]

The mother passively HANDS him the letter. The brother STUDIES the results and--

YOON'S BROTHER #2  
(shocked)  
[499!?!]

Everyone TURNS toward him, surprised.

YOON'S BROTHER #1  
[Wait, what? Let me see.]

He SNATCHES the letter and READS it himself.

YOON'S MOTHER  
[Explain this.]

YOON'S BROTHER #1  
(bewildered)  
[Bro, this is 40th percentile.]

Yoon REACHES his hand out to his brother. He READS the letter.

"

	MCAT Score	Percentile Ranking
Total	499	41%

"

As he reads at his results, the corner of his lip slightly CREEPS UP. His plan was a success.

YOON'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
[My goodness...]

She PACES around, FANNING herself with her hand.

YOON'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
[You did this on purpose. Correct?]

YOON  
[I didn't know it would turn out like this.]

YOON'S MOTHER

(scoffs)

[How are you going to get into medical school with this? No one will accept you.]

The room is silent.

YOON

[I'll study harder and try again. But I'll have to apply in next year's cycle.]

YOON'S MOTHER

[That's going to mess up your timeline!]

The father finally speaks up.

YOON'S FATHER

[40th percentile...]

A SIGH of disappointment.

YOON'S FATHER (CONT'D)

(looking at the brothers)

[When is the application deadline?]

YOON'S BROTHER #1

[It's usually by December.]

YOON'S BROTHER #2

[Yeah there's not enough time for this cycle.]

The mother needs to sit down. She PLOPS down on the couch.

YOON'S FATHER

[Ok. Then I'll make a few calls this afternoon. We'll make a donation.]

He GLANCES at Yoon. Yoon is stunned. His plan is going astray.

YOON'S FATHER (CONT'D)

[This is what back up funds are for. It's to be used on stragglers like you.]

He GLANCES at his wife, now much more RELIEVED.

YOON'S FATHER (CONT'D)

[Can you get in touch with your connections as well?

(MORE)

YOON'S FATHER (CONT'D)  
 You mentioned that a few of your  
 colleagues now work in admissions.]

YOON'S MOTHER  
 [Yes, I'll call them today.]

YOON'S FATHER  
 [If they ask, tell them we're  
 willing to donate a million  
 dollars.]

The brothers are SHOCKED.

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (INAUDIBLE)  
 (mouthing)  
 [One million--]

Yoon is even more shocked. This is not what he had in mind.

YOON'S FATHER  
 [That should be enough.]

Yoon needs to steer the ship. This is all wrong.

YOON  
 [Father, you really don't have to  
 do that. I can study and apply  
 next--]

YOON'S FATHER  
 (sternly)  
 [You shut your mouth!]

The room freezes.

YOON'S FATHER (CONT'D)  
 [What right does an idiot like you  
 have to complain?]

Yoon LOWERS HIS HEAD in despair. His plan has failed. And  
 then-- the doorbell RINGS. The mother STANDS up and OPENS the  
 front door--

MOVER #1 (O.S.)  
 [Hello. I'm here to move the  
 piano.]

YOON'S MOTHER  
 [Yes, please come in.]

Two MOVERS (20s) ENTER the living room. They BOW down--

MOVERS  
 (simultaneously, softly)  
 [Hello.]

The brothers HALF-BOW back, as the father STARES off into the distance. Yoon GLANCES up at the movers, watching in downcast as they STEP CLOSER to the piano.

CUT TO:

42

**INT. CAFE - DAY**

42

A CU of a CLOCK on the wall. It's **1:00**. At the usual table, Jay SIPS on an iced latte with extra whipped cream. For Yoon, the iced Americano.

JAY

[Damn, so when do you leave?]

YOON

[In a few weeks.]

Yoon takes a SIP. Jay STUDIES him.

JAY

(assuringly)

[Hey. I'm sure you'll love it. I heard there's a lot of good Korean food in that area. A lot of fun things to do, too. You can speak English too, so I'm sure you'll make a lot of friends. Plus, I mean... everyone recognizes the school--]

YOON

[I don't care about any of that. I don't care about the food. I don't care about the school. I don't wanna be doctor, period. I've never wanted to be a doctor.]

JAY

[I get that, but what else are you gonna do? It was terrible what happened, and it pains me to see you like this.]

Yoon STARES at his SCARRED HAND.

JAY (CONT'D)

[But just don't forget, seriously, how lucky you are. The fact that your parents can get you into any school you want is beyond--]

A wire trips inside Yoon. He GLARES at his friend.

YOON  
[Lucky? You think I'm lucky?]

JAY  
[Look, what I'm trying to say is--]

YOON  
[Why do you keep saying that to me?]

JAY  
[What? What do you mean?]

Yoon SCOFFS, GLANCING AWAY.

JAY (CONT'D)  
[What's with you today? I'm just trying to talk to you.]

Yoon's frustration grows. He GLARES at Jay.

YOON  
[Then stop saying this bullshit about how lucky I am! I'm sick of hearing it, just speak for yourself.]

JAY  
(scoffs)  
[Hey, I'm gonna be honest with you. There are times when we talk that you sound outright ridiculous.]

Yoon lets his friend speak.

JAY (CONT'D)  
[Think about it. There are thousands of people our age who would give up a leg to come from a wealthy family. Hell not even that. Even to become a doctor. And here's me speaking for myself; I'd never be able to afford to do that. You think I could skip college to pursue something like piano? I have to live a normal life. Yet I've sat here, listening to you complain about the dumbest things. Just think for a moment. Look around you. Be grateful.]

YOON  
(scoffs)  
[Complain... I thought we were friends.]

A beat. Jay is taken aback.

YOON (CONT'D)  
 [You can be grateful about your  
 life. Let me deal with my own. I'm  
 sick of your judgement.]

Yoon STANDS UP.

JAY  
 [I'm not judging you, I'm just--]

Yoon WALKS AWAY, leaving Jay alone. His nearly FULL Americano  
 remains on the table.

JAY (CONT'D)  
 Yoon.

Yoon EXITS the shop.

CUT TO:

43 **EXT. STREET - DAY**

43

Hugo frantically PEDALS his bike. He TURNS a CORNER, pedaling  
 even harder. He's bursting with EXCITEMENT, with hope. His  
 SCARS from the fight are NEARLY HEALED.

COMMISSIONER (O.S.)  
 (over the phone)  
 Hey Hugo. I'm calling to let you  
 know that the panel is  
 reconsidering all entries. The  
 winner was caught for plagiarism.  
 Can you believe that? Anyway,  
 they'll be in touch soon.

CUT TO:

44 **INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER**

44

Hugo SPRINTS through the hallway. He ARRIVES at the desk,  
 only to find that the commissioner is not there. It's the  
 female assistant instead.

ASSISTANT  
 Oh. Hi Hugo.

HUGO  
 Hi.

ASSISTANT  
 Brian's wife just went into labor.

HUGO  
(catching his breath)  
Oh... wait what!?

ASSISTANT  
(smiling)  
It's happening.

HUGO  
(stammering)  
Wow. That's exciting.

ASSISTANT  
So I'm guessing you heard the news?

HUGO  
Yeah I just wanted to check to make sure there wasn't anything else I needed to do. I didn't know if I should--

ASSISTANT  
(assuringly)  
You're all good, Hugo. Don't worry. They'll have a decision soon.

Hugo SETTLES and SMILES.

HUGO  
It's really happening...

CUT TO:

45

**EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY**

45

Atop a hill, a view of the FARMLAND.

Under a large TREE, Hugo and Liliana comfortably sit on a PICNIC BLANKET and eat GRAPES. Hugo's bike is leaned over against the side of the tree. They LOOK OUT over the land.

LILIANA  
[We've come up here so many times throughout the years.]

Hugo MUNCHES on a grape.

HUGO  
[Since we were kids.]

Liliana SMILES. A lot seems to be on her mind.

LILIANA  
[It's just as beautiful now as the first time we came here.]

Hugo SMILES.

LILIANA (CONT'D)  
 [There's this forest I've heard of  
 by the ocean. I've heard it's  
 beautiful. Even more so than this.]

HUGO  
 [We've never been to the ocean.]

Liliana TURNS to Hugo and SMILES. Hugo STOPS munching. With a mouth FULL of grapes, he SMILES back. He watches the wind FLOW through her hair. He's completely CHARMED by her beauty. Looking at Hugo--

LILIANA  
 [I'd like to go there someday.]

HUGO  
 [Sounds like the perfect place for  
 something special.]

LILIANA  
 [Yeah?]

Hugo SMILES and TAKES Liliana's LEFT HAND. He CARESSES her RING FINGER. After an exchange of smiles, Liliana TURNS back toward the view.

HUGO  
 [Is it far from here?]

LILIANA  
 [I've heard you follow the road to  
 the highway, then northwest for 50  
 miles.]

HUGO  
 [You'd need a car for that.]

Liliana SMILES. Hugo keeps MUNCHING away. She TURNS and--

LILIANA  
 [So anyway, where were we?]

As Hugo REACHES for his new NAVY NOTEPAD--

HUGO  
 [Mm. The fields.]

As Hugo OPENS his notepad, Liliana STUDIES Hugo.

LILIANA  
 [So if you win... what happens  
 next?]

HUGO  
 (glancing up)  
 [The competition?  
 (chuckles)  
 I don't know.]

LILIANA  
 [A hundred books?]

HUGO  
 (laughing)  
 [You have another dream?]

A beat.

LILIANA  
 (smiles wistfully)  
 [Ok, let's hear it.]

Liliana SCOTS closer to Hugo. He READS from the notepad--

HUGO  
 [The drought worsens until  
 everything green fades away.  
 Generations after the next, we  
 forget what it means, 'green'.]

Liliana MUNCHES on a grape.

LILIANA  
 [Mmm. I like that.]

HUGO  
 (unsure)  
 [Yeah?]

LILIANA  
 [The children blankly stare at the  
 old man, trying his best to explain  
 what the dust field used to be.]

HUGO  
 (nodding)  
 [Mmm.]

He WRITES in his notepad. Liliana STUDIES Hugo in his element. This is what he loves. This is who he is. He MANEUVERS his tiny pencil between the CRISP PAGES.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [My ideas are like a never-ending  
 stream ever since you got me this.]

Liliana's smile FADES. Something about her look is bittersweet, as if she has something to tell Hugo.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [Oh, what about--  
 (pondering)  
 No, that's a terrible idea.]

Hugo PONDERS in his own head. A look of subtle WORRY CASTS onto Hugo's face.

LILIANA  
 [Hugo.]

HUGO  
 [Yeah?]

LILIANA  
 [So you know how much I enjoyed school?]

HUGO  
 [Of course, you were top of your class.]

Hugo GAZES past Liliana, still in his own head.

LILIANA  
 [So I've been thinking about this for a while. And a few months ago-- what's wrong?]

A beat.

HUGO  
 [I just-- I don't know what I'll do.]

Hugo LOOKS at Liliana.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [It's less of what happens if I win, but.. what if I don't? I mean what if I never get anything published? What if writing's just been a waste of time.]

Liliana STUDIES him sympathetically.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [What if-- I don't know. What if nothing really happens in my life.]

LILIANA  
 (sympathetically)  
 [Hugo...]

HUGO  
 (sighs)  
 [Ah sorry. I'm just...]

Hugo SHAKES his head and SIGHS.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [Anyways, sorry. What were you saying?]

A beat: Liliana looks as if she's about to offer words of encouragement, but she's distracted by her own thoughts. She veers in a different direction.

LILIANA  
 (smiles)  
 [I was just thinking of tutoring Pablo more seriously.]

HUGO  
 [Tutoring Pablo? Wow, that's great.]

Liliana forces another SMILE.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [He'll learn a lot from you. Definitely.]

Hugo LOOKS at his notepad.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [He's lucky to have you as his sister.]

LILIANA  
 [Amor.]

Hugo GLANCES up. Liliana HUGS him. A tighter one than usual. Squeezing him, Liliana's eyes begin to TEAR UP.

LILIANA (CONT'D)  
 [I love you. You know that?]

HUGO  
 [Of course, I love you too.]

CUT TO:

Hugo RIDES up to the front door on his bike with his cross-body bag. He GETS OFF quickly to CHECK the mailbox-- nothing. He SIGHS, but maintains a good spirit. He ENTERS the house.

47 INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

47

Hugo's mother does her BOOKKEEPING on the dinner table. We hear the girls playing in the other room. As Hugo SHUTS the front door--

HUGO'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
(frustrated)  
[Where in the world did this go?]

She GRUNTS, COUNTING CASH.

HUGO  
(chuckling)  
[Pablo finally beat me today.]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
[Where did it go?]

She SWIVELS around.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
[We're 50 dollars short. Do you have it?]

HUGO  
[What?]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
[We're missing 50 dollars. Did you take it?]

HUGO  
(stammers)  
[Uh...]

She GLANCES at her WATCH and STANDS UP.

HUGO'S MOTHER  
[Ay, we're gonna be late. Let's go girls!]

HUGO  
[Why? Do you need the money for--]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
[My boss probably mixed up the paycheck. That old fool.]

Hugo forces a SMILE. The mother FREEZES. Her frustration begins to point at Hugo.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
[Where's your helmet?]

HUGO  
 (glancing around  
 awkwardly)  
 [Oh...  
 (nervous chuckle)  
 I forgot today--]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [How many times do I need to tell  
 you, Hugo? Wear a helmet!]

Hugo LOWERS his head.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [How have you not learned your  
 lesson after messing up your face?  
 You're gonna fall again without a  
 helmet and the same thing's gonna  
 happen.]

HUGO  
 [I'll wear it, Mamá.]

Hugo slowly WALKS toward his room.

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 (scoffing)  
 [See, that's what you always say.  
 They're only words, Hugo. Only  
 words.]

As Hugo ENTERS his room--

HUGO'S MOTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 [Actually do it for once.]

48

**INT. HUGO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

48

Hugo TAKES OFF his bag and SETS it down on his desk. He PUTS ON his work hat and GLANCES at his helmet, resting by his bed. Outside, we hear his mother and girls EXIT the house.

Hugo SIGHS and WALKS AWAY, TAKING his helmet with him. We stay in the room as Hugo walks away. As we hear the front door SHUT, we PUSH IN on his desk. STICKING OUT from a stack of PAPERS and FOLDERS is an ENTRY FORM to the writing competition:

"

23rd Annual Salinas Writing Competition.

ENTRY FEE: \$50

"

CUT TO:

49 INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

49

Elise sits at her DESK, much more organized now. She looks better and wears GLASSES. She READS the orange book.

It's just her in the room. Beth's side is MESSY. Her side, NEAT. She GLANCES UP from the book.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

50 INT. LAUNDROMAT - MORNING

50

Elise finishes her drawing, CONTENT. The little boy curiously EXAMINES the drawing.

ELISE

(sighs)

What do you think?

The boy SMILES.

ELISE (CONT'D)

I know. It could use a little touching up, but I think this is you.

The boy excitedly SWINGS his feet.

ELISE (CONT'D)

(chuckling)

You know this is my first time drawing something for another person. It's always been... I don't know, I've always kept them for myself.

Elise SMILES at the boy and PREPARES to TEAR OFF the page from the magazine.

ELISE (CONT'D)

All right, well this is for you to keep--

Suddenly, the boy SCREAMS. He's LOOKING OUT of the window behind Elise. He quickly STANDS up and goes RUNNING out of the door. Elise, shocked, STANDS up and TURNS around. Through the window, she WATCHES the boy RUN across the street.

Across the street, we see an **ASIAN COUPLE (late 30s)** TURN AROUND and OBSERVE the SOBBING boy, as he RUNS toward them with OPEN ARMS.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 (smiling, to herself)  
 And... here come the tears.

But her smile doesn't last long. As the boy approaches the couple, they don't move an inch. They simply stand and WAIT for him to arrive. Finally, the boy LATCHES onto his mother's leg in desperation. The mother simply stands straight, GLANCING away and SCOFFING. Elise's smile FADES away completely.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 (frowning)  
 Pick up your kid.

The little boy's mother LOOKS DOWN and begins to YELL at him (inaudible). Elise is livid.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 What the fu-- pick up your son!

The parents WALK AWAY and the little boy FOLLOWS, WIPING AWAY his tears. In the laundromat, Elise is bewildered. She's FURIOUS and can't help her own TEARS.

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK.

51 INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

51

Elise LOOKS DOWN at her book, as she CLOSES it. The BURN MARK from the ashes still remains. Her breathing INTENSIFIES. Something's on her mind.

And then-- she REACHES for her phone and DIALS a number. The phone rings. Elise's mother picks up. But we don't hear the usual character in her voice. This time, it's a WEAKER VOICE.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 Hello?

ELISE  
 Hi, Mom.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 Elise?

ELISE  
 (smiling)  
 Hey.

(MORE)

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 I just wanted to call to see how  
 you're doing. I-- I know the last  
 time we talked--

Suddenly, Elise's mother begins to SOB over the phone. Elise  
 SITS UP in her CHAIR.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 Mom. You ok?

The sobbing continues.

ELISE (CONT'D)  
 What's going on?

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 (choked up)  
 It's your father, honey.

Elise freezes.

ELISE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 He's had a stroke.

TEARS begin to FLOOD Elise's eyes.

ELISE  
 What?

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 (sobbing)  
 He was about to board his flight--  
 God, I told him not to go-- that  
 you'd eventually call...

ELISE  
 (panicking)  
 Wait why? Go where?

ELISE'S MOTHER  
 (sobbing)  
 To come find you, hon. In New York.

Elise is overwhelmed by GUILT.

ELISE  
 I'm not in New York, Mom. God, I--  
 I'm here, Mom. I'm here.

Elise SETS ASIDE her phone and CRIES in guilt.

CUT TO:

52

**INT. CAFE - DAY**

52

Yoon sits ALONE at the usual table with the usual drink. He GLANCES at his phone-- **1:22pm**. He OPENS his TEXT THREAD with Jay and PAUSES. It's fine, he's probably just late. Yoon LOCKS his phone and SETS it aside. He SIGHS and takes a SIP. Glancing up, he OBSERVES the passing STRANGERS outside the window.

**- LATER**

A few drops remain inside Yoon's cup. He CHECKS his phone-- **2:55pm**. He SIGHS. And then-- a TEXT MESSAGE. Yoon takes a QUICK GLANCE, only to realize it's his mother--

YOON'S MOTHER (V.O.)

[A procedure came up last minute,  
so I won't be able to drop you off  
at the airport tomorrow. Take the  
taxi.]

Yoon SIGHS and STANDS UP. He heads toward the exit.

And then-- two UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ENTER the door. The same friends he saw at the music hall several months ago. They don't notice him and GLANCE at the MENU. Friend #1 is on the phone.

WORKER (O.S.)

[Welcome in.]

FRIEND #1

[Yeah we just got here. We'll order  
for you, what do you want?]

FRIEND #2

[There are so many options. Hey ask  
Jay what's good here.]

Yoon LOWERS his head and PASSES by.

FRIEND #1 (O.S.)

[Any recommendations? Iced latte?  
Extra whipped cream?  
(chuckling)  
Ok.]

HURT, Yoon EXITS the shop.

CUT TO:

53 INT. YOON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

53

The room is dark as usual, lit up by a single computer screen. At his desk, Yoon awkwardly moves his right arm, WRITING something. On the computer screen, we see his FLIGHT ITINERARY:

"

2023년 07월 28일 (금) ICN 서울/인천 -> SFO 샌프란시스코

KE011 ICN 16:00 -> SFO 09:40

"

We get a closer look at what he's doing-- it's FIVE SHEETS of a handwritten piano COMPOSITION. [Matching "hills"]. He works on the last page, filling in the last bar with his PEN.

He writes the last NOTE, taking a deep, solemn SIGH. He GATHERS the sheets and neatly FOLDS them together into thirds. He SLIDES the composition into an ENVELOPE and SEALS it. On the envelope, he WRITES:

["Yoon Kim"]

He SETS the envelope in the center of his desk. He STARES at it with no color in his eyes. He is eerily emotionless, not blinking once. Slowly, his eyes begin to SWELL.

Slowly, he OPENS his desk DRAWER-- a JUMP ROPE. It's been tied into a DIY NOOSE. He GRABS it and STANDS up.

Without hesitation, he DRAGS his desk CHAIR back and sets it in the center of the room. He STEPS ONTO the chair and STARES at the jump rope, lifelessly held in his hand. His SCARRED hand. He SIGHS, as a single TEAR trickles down his cheek. His hands are TREMBLING. Another SIGH, this time with determination. He GLANCES up at the ceiling and LIFTS the rope as--

CUT TO: WIDE SHOT

The door SWINGS OPEN. The door is OUT OF FRAME, but we can see the WARM LIGHT CAST into the room. Yoon SWIVELS his head toward the door, moving nothing else.

CUT TO:

54 EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE - EVENING

54

Hugo RIDES his bike up to the front door. He PARKS the bike, using its KICKSTAND, and keeps his HELMET on.

As he APPROACHES the front door, he TURNS to check the mailbox, just as-- SLAM. The bike FALLS behind him. He TURNS and STARES at the FALLEN BIKE.

And then-- inside the house, we hear YELLING.

HUGO'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
 (muffled)  
 [That idiot! I can't believe it.]  
 (LOUD GRUNT)

Hugo quickly OPENS the door and WALKS in.

55

**INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

55

Inside, Maria and Isabel SIT on the living room floor, staring up at their mother, who is FUMING and PACING around the dinner table. She holds up a HALF-SHEET OF PAPER. She GLARES at Hugo. TAKING OFF his helmet--

HUGO  
 (concerned)  
 [What happened?]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 (scoffing)  
 ['What happened?']  
 (holding up paper)  
 This. Explain this. Come here, sit down, and explain this.]

Hugo SETS his helmet down on the kitchen counter and nervously APPROACHES, now face-to-face with his mother.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [The 50 dollars. You used it for this? Hugo, are you serious?]

Hugo FREEZES. She's holding the ENTRY FORM of the writing competition.

HUGO  
 [Mamá, just let me explain. I was planning on--]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [Hugo, there's no excuse for this! How many times have I told you? Enough with the writing. All this time! I can't believe you would do this.]

HUGO  
 [It's the money I earned from work. I'll give it back.]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [Are you kidding me? The money you earned?]

She SIGHS. Dreadful SILENCE.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [I've been working double shifts for years now. Years. I told you when you finished school that we need to work together as a family. I need to earn. You need to earn. How can you be so selfish?]

HUGO  
 [Mamá, I'll give you the money. You don't have to be so upset at--]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [Fine! Then where is it? Huh? Where are you going to get 50 dollars?]

HUGO (CONT'D)  
 [I'm saying I'll pay you back once I earn it. Why are you--]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [Hugo. We can't make the payment on the house. Don't you understand? The 50 dollars you took for your damned writing contest is going to cost us our livelihood.]

Hugo STAMMERS.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
 [I've been doing everything... everything to earn enough to keep us afloat, yet you would sacrifice our family for this? For this!?!]

HUGO  
 [I didn't know. I thought we were--]

HUGO'S MOTHER  
 [Can't you just be an adult for once? What about your sisters? Can't you just be a good older brother?]

The sisters remain quiet, as they nervously OBSERVE.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

[Now I need to go to work early tomorrow and beg my boss for an advance payment. You hear me? I need to beg like a fucking dog. How could you put your mother in this situation?]

HUGO

[I'll find the money.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

(scoffing)

[Here you go again. Words, Hugo. Only words. All the time.]

Hugo is beat. His mother's right. He has no clue where he'll find \$50.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

[Listen carefully, because I'm only gonna say this once. Manage your distractions. Quit the doodling. Quit the reading. And hell, enough with Liliana. How much time are you spending with her? You both are out of school now. Be a damned adult!]

Hugo feels a sting.

HUGO

[Liliana has nothing to do with this.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[I don't care if her mother gives us food. I don't care if you've been friends since kids. She's a distraction to you, and now a problem for our family.]

HUGO

[She's my girlfriend, and she has nothing to do with--]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[Shut your mouth! I don't want to see you hanging out with that kid again. She's the one who's keeping you delusional. She's the one--]

HUGO

(yells)

[She has nothing to do with this!]

HUGO'S MOTHER

(yells)

[She has everything to do with this!]

Hugo RELENTS.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

[What does she call you? 'Author of the Year'? I mean, what the fuck is that? I thought you'd phase out of your hobby and start taking things more seriously.]

HUGO

[It's not a hobby.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[It's a hobby.]

HUGO

[No it's not. It's my work.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[It's a fucking hobby.]

HUGO

(in tears)

[It's my fucking work!]

The room goes SILENT. The mother is taken aback - Hugo's never cursed in front of her.

HUGO (CONT'D)

[You would never understand. This is my work. And you've never cared.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[Are you kidding me right now?]

HUGO

[Because for years-- for as long as I can remember, you've refused to read my work.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

[Because writing is not important, Hugo. Writing does not better this family. Writing is what you do to escape from reality and run around in fantasy land. Do you really not understand?]

HUGO

[I am trying to better this family. I also work two jobs. In the time that I have, yes, I write. I write to give us a better life.]

HUGO'S MOTHER

(baffled)

[This-- this is a problem.]

Hugo PULLS OUT his navy notepad from his pocket. He HOLDS it up.

HUGO

[Maybe if you really cared, you'd understand. Maybe if you'd ask-- just ask-- for once about my writing, I wouldn't need to constantly hide my work from you.]

Hugo's mother SCOFFS and TURNS away. She begins STACKING the PLATES on the dinner table.

HUGO'S MOTHER

[I don't even know what to say. I never thought I'd be this disappointed in you. You know--]

She TURNS toward Hugo--

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

[--Liliana might be smart, but she's stupid for encouraging your delusion.]

Hugo stays silent, boiling inside. He GRIPS his notepad tightly. Hugo's mother TURNS back toward the table.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

[Maybe we'd be having a different conversation if I had raised you better.]

Hugo's mother CARRIES the plates and WALKS past Hugo, toward the kitchen. TEARING UP, Hugo reaches his breaking point--

HUGO

[Maybe we'd be having a different conversation if you didn't leave Papá.]

She FREEZES, STARING at the dishes. Hugo doubles down, as his mother TURNS to face him.

HUGO (CONT'D)

[It's the truth. The reason why you'll never believe in me. The reason why you're always tired from work. The reason why we'll always be a dirt poor family, arguing over things that do nothing but remind us--]

She **THROWS** the plates on the ground and **SLAPS** Hugo across the face. The same side where he got punched a few weeks ago. The room goes **SILENT**. On the couch, Maria **CLINGS** onto Isabel's arm. They both stare in **SHOCK**.

Hugo slowly **URNS** his head to face his mother. A big mistake, and he knows it. He **LOOKS DOWN**.

HUGO (CONT'D)

[I shouldn't have--]

Another **SLAP**. This time, harder. Hugo's notepad **SLIPS** out of his hands and **CRASHES** onto the floor, peppered with **SHATTERED CERAMIC**.

Hugo's mother **GLARES** at him, eyes eerily **WIDE**. It's a different look. He's crossed the line. So bewildered, her eyes **SWELL**. Hugo, **CRYING**, keeps his head down.

HUGO'S MOTHER

[Take your things. Leave this house.]

Hugo stands still.

HUGO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

(choked up)

[Do I need to repeat myself?]

CUT TO:

56 **EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

56

Hugo **EXITS** the house and **LIMPS** toward his bike, knocked over from earlier. As he **GETS ON** and **RIDES** away, we see the **MAILBOX--** a **GOLDEN ENVELOPE STICKING OUT**.

CUT TO:

57 **EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER**

57

The last remnants of sunlight fade away, as Hugo **PEDALS** hard down the empty road. He **WIPES AWAY** his heavy **TEARS**.

CUT TO:

58

**EXT. LILIANA'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

58

Hugo RIDES up the dirt DRIVEWAY and gets OFF his bike, letting it FALL onto the ground. He WIPES AWAY his remaining tears and STEPS up to the front door. He KNOCKS.

The door SWINGS open-- it's Liliana's mother. NOTICING his swollen EYES--

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
(pitifully)  
[Oh, Hugo.]

Hugo SNIFFLES. She APPROACHES and HUGS him.

LILIANA'S MOTHER (CONT'D)  
[I'm so sorry. She was so hesitant  
to leave this morning.]

Hugo STOPS crying. He STEPS BACK.

HUGO  
[What?]

Liliana's mother TILTS her head, piecing it together.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
[Where's Liliana?]

She PLACES her hand over her mouth, TEARING up.

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
[She didn't tell you?]

From behind, Pablo EMERGES. With a regretful look, Pablo STICKS OUT his arm-- a LETTER. Hugo LOOKS at the letter, then at Pablo. He's beyond BAFFLED.

PABLO  
(quietly, avoiding eye  
contact)  
[Liliana left for college this  
morning. She left this for you.]

Hugo's heart SINKS. Liliana's mother CRIES--

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
[I'm so sorry, Hugo.]

She TOUCHES Hugo's shoulder, and Hugo STEPS AWAY.

HUGO  
(desperate)  
[Please-- tell me you're lying.]

Liliana's mother is heartbroken for Hugo. She slowly STEPS BACK toward the house--

LILIANA'S MOTHER  
[I'm sorry, Hugo.]

--and goes INSIDE the house. Pablo keeps his arm out, keeping his eyes DOWN.

PABLO  
[I thought you knew.]

Pablo PLACES the letter on the ground.

PABLO (CONT'D)  
[I'm sorry.]

As Pablo RETREATS into the house--

HUGO  
(weakly, looking up)  
[Pablo.]

--and SHUTS the door.

Hugo STARES at the door. His world crumbles. And it's just the beginning. He STEPS closer to the door and looks DOWN at the letter:

**"mi amor"**

Hugo breaks down, CRASHING onto the floor. He delicately HOLDS the letter, AFRAID to open it. Finally, he carefully OPENS the letter, filled with writing.

FADE OUT: SOUND

CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

59

**EXT. STREET - LATER**

59

SILENT: Hugo PEDALS slowly, CRYING hard.

CONTINUOUS:

LILIANA (V.O.)  
[Dear Hugo,--]

CUT TO:

60      **EXT. STREET - DAY**

60

SILENT: Hugo and Liliana RIDE their bikes together, side by side. The road is empty, and they LAUGH aloud.

LILIANA (V.O.)  
 [I woke up this morning thinking I was still in a dream. I brushed my teeth. Showered. Got dressed. And emptied my closet.--]

CUT TO:

61      **EXT. GRASSLAND - SUNSET**

61

SILENT - OVERHEAD SHOT: Hugo and Liliana LIE on the grass, HOLDING hands. They LAUGH.

LILIANA (V.O.)  
 [As I write this, my room is as spacious as its ever been. My heart too. Empty. The truth is,--]

CUT TO:

62      **INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - DAY**

62

SILENT: Liliana PLAYS with Maria and Isabel in the living room. Hugo LIES sideways on the floor and WATCHES Liliana, SMILING.

LILIANA (V.O.)  
 [I'm a coward. I'm the one who's scared. Always been scared. To tell you about my scholarship. To tell you that I was leaving. I tried.--]

CUT TO:

63      **EXT. LOCAL STORE - DAY**

63

SILENT: **LITTLE HUGO (10)** RUNS up to **LITTLE LILIANA (10)**, standing beside a PORTABLE NEWSPAPER STAND. He POKES her shoulder. She TURNS around, SMILES, and HUGS the him. Behind them, Liliana's mother (YOUNGER) WALKS OUT of a shop and CROUCHES. She SMILES and GREETs Little Hugo.

LILIANA (V.O.)  
 [I tried every day to tell you. But my love for you held me back.  
 (MORE)]

LILIANA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 I wanted to pretend that I'd stay  
 here with you. I'm sorry you have  
 to find out this way.--]

CUT TO:

64 **EXT. LILIANA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

64

SILENT: Hugo on the floor of the front porch. He READS the letter, CRYING.

LILIANA (V.O.)  
 [All I can say is that I'll pray to  
 see you soon.  
 (choked up)  
 I'll pray that you'll still love  
 me. I'll pray that we'll get to go  
 to that forest together.--]

SILENT: Hugo LOOKS UP in REVELATION.

CUT TO:

END MONTAGE.

65 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

65

FADE IN: SOUND

Hugo PEDALS hard down an empty street.

LILIANA (V.O.)  
 [I'll pray that one day, I'll read  
 a hundred books. Love, Liliana.]

Hugo pedals FASTER. Suddenly--

CRAAAANK! The GEARS on his bike LOCK up and Hugo goes FLYING. He CRASHES onto the concrete. Above him, a single STREET LAMP. It FLICKERS.

Hugo MOANS as he sits UP. His legs and arms are SCRATCHED up, BLOODY.

And then-- a DROP OF WATER. Then another... it begins to RAIN. Hard.

CONTINUOUS RAINING (STORM):

Hugo remains sitting in the middle of the road. He LOOKS UP at the sky and LAUGHS. His laughter FADES, as his expression becomes increasingly solemn and angry. He STANDS UP and WALKS back to his bike.

He GRABS the rear wheel and DRAGS it to the side of the road, just BENEATH the street light. He CROUCHES down to take a look.

The bike CHAIN has come OFF the GEAR, part of which is now BENT. He TAKES the chain and tries to HOOK it back onto the gear-- it SLIPS. The sound of the pouring rain INTENSIFIES.

Hugo GRUNTS, trying again-- it SLIPS.

He tries again-- it SLIPS.

Hugo ADJUSTS his position, now really focused. He tries again-- it SLIPS.

The street light continues to FLICKER. The rain is SOAKING Hugo. He tries again-- it SLIPS.

He tries again-- it SLIPS and-- SLICE! Hugo CUTS his thumb on the sharp gears. He WINCES. Blood GUSHES. And then-- the street light TURNS OFF. Hugo SQUINTS UP at the light FADE away from the bulb. Now it's just the MOONLIGHT that can aide him.

He tries again-- it SLIPS. He BREATHES HARDER.

He tries again-- it SLIPS. He BREATHES HARDER.

He tries again-- it SLIPS.

And then-- Hugo JOLTS UP. He LIFTS the bike and HURLS it over the road.

HUGO  
(screaming)  
AHHHH!

And again--

HUGO (CONT'D)  
(screaming louder)  
AHHHH!

He stands in the middle of the road. In complete darkness. In the rain. Alone. His breathing SLOWS.

He LOOKS AHEAD, eerily calm. He begins to WALK. Then he begins to RUN.

CUT TO:

A COASTAL forest. Somewhere in Northern California.

Elise WALKS through a trail, surrounded by tall trees. She walks slowly with a SOLEMN LOOK on her face. As she walks, we hear--

FADE IN SOUND: HOSPITAL BEEPING

FEMALE DOCTOR (O.S.)  
He's stable, but we don't know when he'll be conscious.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
He's just asleep, right? He'll be up in a few days, right Doc?

FEMALE DOCTOR (O.S.)  
Well, that's what we're trying to figure out, ma'am. We don't know when he'll be conscious.

ELISE (O.S.)  
So what does that mean? Are you saying he might never wake up?

FEMALE DOCTOR (O.S.)  
Well... we're not sure. Your father is currently in a coma.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
(gasping)  
My God, a coma?

FEMALE DOCTOR (O.S.)  
Yes. Unfortunately, he's had a very severe stroke. All we can do is keep him stable and monitor his condition.

ELISE'S MOTHER (O.S.)  
(sobbing)  
Oh my God. Please, God. No. Please.

FADE OUT: HOSPITAL BEEPING

Elise's expression becomes HEAVIER as she APPROACHES a CLIFF facing the ocean. Each step becomes heavier - she's nearly DRAGGING her feet. Elise seems desperate.

And then-- she TRIPS. After STUMBLING forward a few steps, she GLANCES back at the dirt ground. Something strange is sticking out. It appears to be a LEATHER STRAP. She SQUATS down and begins to DIG.

What she digs up is unusual-- a VINTAGE WATCH. She BRUSHES away the dirt, revealing the CHROME WATCH FACE. Suddenly-- a memory.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK A:

67

INT. ELISE'S HOUSE - DAY

67

Small, delicate hands hold a BOX with a WATCH inside. The watch is well-crafted, made entirely out of WOOD. The watch face, however, is not functional. In fact, the entire watch face is COLORED in and DRAWN on. Its hands, the numbers, the tick marks, all of it is drawn. In the center of the watch face, a small drawing of a PINK HELLO KITTY LOGO.

A little girl, wearing a stringed birthday hat (CONE) LOOKS UP from the watch. This is **LITTLE ELISE (9)**.

LITTLE ELISE

What is it?

CROUCHED in front of her is her father. We TILT from his torso and UP to REVEAL his face. He's a younger man with a kind face... a face that we've seen before. This is the man who knew Hugo. **This is the COMMISSIONER.**

ELISE'S FATHER

(enthusiastically)

It's the Hello Kitty watch you wanted.

Little Elise GLANCES DOWN at the watch, a bit confused.

ELISE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Now you can show it off to all your friends at school.

LITTLE ELISE

But this one looks different. Theirs is shiny.

ELISE'S FATHER

Well, this one's a special one I made just for you. See? It'll always be 7 o'clock. When you wake up for school. And when I get home from work.

Little Elise holds her gift and GLANCES AROUND awkwardly.

ELISE'S FATHER (CONT'D)

All right, now go on. Try it on.







YOON  
[I'm good. How about you?]

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.)  
[Same old I guess.]

A long pause.

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
[Are you driving right now?]

YOON  
[Yeah. Why?]

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.)  
[Oh, where you going?]

A long pause.

YOON  
[Class.]

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.)  
[I see. Everything ok at school?]

YOON  
[Yeah, it's ok.]

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.)  
[Mm.]

It's a dry, yet typical phone call.

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
[Well I was just calling to check up on you. And also-- yeah, just to tell you that you can always call me. If there's any issue, or if anything's on your mind, you can talk to me about it.]

YOON  
[I'm fine. Just busy with school.]

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.)  
[Yeah, I mean I know you and Mom and Dad left on a--]

YOON  
[Brother, you don't have to worry about me.]

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.)  
[Ok. And how's your hand? Is it all healed up?--]

YOON  
 [My hand is fine. I have to go now  
 so let's talk another time.]

Yoon has had enough with the call.

YOON'S BROTHER #2 (O.S.)  
 [Oh ok. Let's talk later then.]

YOON  
 [Bye.]

Yoon waits for the call to end. Impatient, he REACHES to tap the infotainment when--

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 (whispering)  
 [What did that fool say?]

Yoon's heart SINKS. It's an all too familiar voice. The call ENDS.

Yoon SQUEEZES the steering wheel and TEARS UP.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

81 INT. YOON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

81

Yoon STANDS on his chair, HOLDING up the JUMP ROPE. He STARES in shock at his bedroom door, now OPEN. Standing in the doorway-- his mother. She stands still, realizing what her son is attempting. But she seems unbothered, almost offended.

YOON'S MOTHER  
 (nonchalantly)  
 [What the hell is this?]

Yoon remains frozen. His mother TURNS around and WALKS away, leaving the door open. Yoon TEARS UP.

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK.

82 EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

82

Yoon PULLS INTO an empty parking lot. He GETS OUT and LOOKS AROUND. Definitely nowhere near his classes. In the distance, we see the OCEAN. Beside the parking lot, a serene FOREST.



YOON  
(screaming)  
AHHH!

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACKS.

88      **EXT. FOREST - DAY**

88

Yoon ARRIVES at a CLIFF, facing the ocean. He GAZES out at the beautiful scenery, STEPPING CLOSER to the EDGE. He LOOKS DOWN at his hand, still badly SCARRED. Another reminder that piano was taken from him. Music was taken from him.

He takes a deep BREATH and CLOSES his eyes, preparing to JUMP.

And then--

VOICE (O.S.)

Ahem.

Yoon GLANCES over to the side. From a distance, a Caucasian **WOMAN (36)** CLEARS her throat, OBSERVING Yoon. She sits on a TREE STUMP, reading a BOOK. She SMILES at him. Yoon forces a SMILE and TURNS away, catching his breath. He STEPS AWAY from the cliff and briskly WALKS away into the trees.

Now protected by the trees, Yoon RESTS his hand on a tree, LEANING over. He begins to HYPERVENTILATE and CRY. It's a breakdown.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

89      **INT. YOON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

89

Yoon PLACES the jump rope back into his desk drawer. He HYPERVENTILATES and CRIES, just as he is in the forest. A figure COVERS the doorway behind him.

YOON'S BROTHER #1

[Dinner's ready. Mom and Dad are home early, since you're leaving tomorrow.]

Yoon quickly COVERS UP his tears.

YOON

(choked up)  
[Yeah. I'll be down in a minute.]

His brother WALKS AWAY, and Yoon can't hold back his tears.

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK.

90 EXT. FOREST - DAY

90

Yoon's emotions SUBSIDE. We hear RUSTLING from afar. It's the woman. She WALKS BACK along the TRAIL, AWAY from the cliff. Yoon OBSERVES her, keeping himself HIDDEN from view. He slowly RETURNS to the cliff.

Yoon APPROACHES the cliff, but NOTICES something on the edge of the cliff, precisely where he stood just a moment ago. He gets closer-- it's a book. An ORANGE BOOK. He PICKS IT UP. Something's familiar about this. He studies the front cover. It has a BURN MARK covering up the author's name. And then-- he REMEMBERS.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

91 INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT

91

ELISE

They're from cigarettes. You know...

(gesturing)

Like smoking...

The little boy reveals no response, curiously GLANCING between this Elise and the burnt book. **The boy is Yoon.**

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK.

92 EXT. FOREST - DAY

92

Holding the book, Yoon's eyes WIDEN. He's met this woman before. He TURNS around to find the woman, but she's nowhere in sight. **The woman is Elise.**

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:



Hugo OPENS his eyes, SQUINTING at the sun. Sluggishly, he SITS UP. Taking deep BREATHES, he LOOKS AROUND. He's made it. A 50-mile voyage. A look of content in his eyes. And then-- a reminder. His smile FADES.

He REACHES into his pocket. The navy notepad. TUCKED in between the pages: Liliana's letter-- "**mi amor**".

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

97        **EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY**

97

Liliana GAZES out at the fields atop a hill. She TURNS and SMILES at Hugo. Hugo STARES at the love of his life with a mouth FULL of grapes, STUNNED.

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK.

98        **EXT. FOREST - EVENING**

98

Hugo REMOVES the letter. In between the crevasses of the notepad-- tiny, sharp PIECES OF CERAMIC.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK:

99        **INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

99

The sound of plates SHATTERING. Hugo's mother SLAPS Hugo.

HUGO'S MOTHER

[Take your things. Leave this house.]

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK.

100      **EXT. FOREST - EVENING**

100

Hugo SIGHS, GLANCING UP at his surroundings. He PULLS OUT his miniature PENCIL from his pocket and writes--

HUGO (V.O.)

["He fixates on a distant star until the world around him disappears."]



A sudden GUST OF WIND SHAKES the trees behind Hugo. He TURNS around at the trees. He TURNS back toward the ocean.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
[I will do everything I can, amor.]

Another GUST of wind. He takes another GLANCE.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
[I will be a good son, Mamá.]

Another GUST of wind.

CUT TO:

105 INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

105

Hugo's mother FLIPS through the stack of envelopes, until-- a GOLDEN ENVELOPE. She SETS the stack of envelopes aside and STUDIES the golden envelope, addressed to "Hugo Salazar" and from "Salinas Publications Co."

CUT TO:

106 EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

106

HUGO  
[I'm going to make sure I deserve  
the rest of my life. I promise.]

Another GUST of wind. Hugo stays FIXATED on the ocean.

HUGO (CONT'D)  
[No matter how long it takes. I'll  
do everything right. No matter how  
long.]

Hugo LOOKS DOWN at his watch. His VINTAGE WATCH. He takes it OFF, as he STEPS AWAY from the cliff. He LOOKS AROUND the area, WALKING down the trail. He STOPS by a tree. He SQUATS down and starts DIGGING. With his dirt-covered hands, he takes OFF his watch--

HUGO (CONT'D)  
(softly)  
[No matter how long it takes.]

He BURIES it. To him, time is of no concern anymore. To him, this is his promise.

CUT TO:

107 **EXT. FOREST - DAY**

107

**OLDER ELISE** / WOMAN (36) WALKS down the trail. We get a closer look at her face. She's certainly more aged than we've seen before, but there's something serene about her. She DIALS her phone. From afar--

CUT TO:

An OLD MAN wearing a BEIGE DRIVING CAP WALKS up the trail. This is the same gentleman we saw at the very beginning. From afar, Older Elise APPROACHES. We faintly hear her talking over the phone.

OLDER ELISE

Yeah I can be there by 6. I mean,  
it's the weekend, so it should be  
fine, right?

We stay behind the old man as Older Elise PASSES by.

OLDER ELISE (CONT'D)

(softly)

Hi.

OLD MAN

(raising his hand)

Hello.

The old man continues to STRUT forward. As Elise WALKS AWAY from us. FADING OUT--

OLDER ELISE

Oh yeah? Well he's always been good  
on the grill. Sounds good, I can  
get that.

CUT TO:

108 **EXT. FOREST - DAY**

108

Yoon STARES at his composition in revelation. KNEELING down, he PUTS his medical textbooks back INTO his backpack. He SETS the book on the ground and KEEPS his composition in his hands. He GRABS the backpack by the STRAP and STANDS UP.

YOON

(sadly)

[Mother. Father. The night you left  
me in America. The day you felt no  
remorse for losing me. It turns out  
that was the most important night  
of my life.]

He LOOKS DOWN at his scarred hand and BACK at the ocean.

YOON (CONT'D)

[I-- I was already dead. Piano was taken from me. But I'm going to live my own life. I'm going to live by my own beliefs. By my own desires. I'm going to start living again.]

Yoon LOOKS at his composition in his other hand. And then--  
Yoon LIFTS his backpack off the ground.

YOON (CONT'D)

[Farewell, Yoon.]

He SWINGS the backpack over the cliff and LETS GO. The backpack, carrying his medical textbooks, DISAPPEARS into the ocean.

CUT TO:

109

**EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS**

109

The old man stands still in the middle of the trail, OBSERVING Yoon from afar. Finally, his face is REVEALED to us-- it's a Hispanic man. He SMILES and continues to APPROACH the cliff.

Yoon SQUINTS through the strong BREEZE, out toward the ocean. He's now at peace with himself. And then-- RUSTLING nearby. Yoon TURNS around. The old man from a distance WAVES at Yoon. Yoon awkwardly HALF-BOWS back, PICKS UP the orange book, and SITS down on the tree stump.

The old man SCANS the ground, as if he's looking for something. Finally, his eyes LAND on a PATCH OF DIRT next to a tree, about 20 yards away from the cliff. He APPROACHES the spot and takes a KNEEL.

Yoon FLIPS through his composition and SETS it aside, EXAMINING the orange book that the woman (Older Elise) left behind. He GLANCES back at the old man, who is now DIGGING into the ground. Yoon TURNS back to the book and begins to FLIP through it.

The old man STOPS digging and PULLS OUT a dirt-covered VINTAGE WATCH. He BRUSHES off the dirt and SMILES at his discovery, what he left behind so long ago. **This is Hugo.**

Old Hugo REACHES INTO his JACKET POCKET and pulls out a silver WEDDING BAND. It's a small ring, as he HOLDS it between his fingers. He TEARS UP as he SMILES.

OLD HUGO

[Thank you for a timeless life, mi amor.]

He BURIES the ring and the watch back into place, where he made his promise decades ago. He STANDS UP, BRUSHING his palms, and APPROACHES the cliff.

Yoon is relaxed, READING from the orange book. He GLANCES over, as the old man APPROACHES the cliff. Hugo SQUINTS out at the ocean, wistfully SMILING, with his arms CROSSED behind his back. Yoon continues to READ.

OLD HUGO (CONT'D)  
 (looking at the ocean)  
 It's a beautiful sight, isn't it?

Yoon LOOKS UP at the old man. Hugo TURNS and slowly APPROACHES Yoon.

OLD HUGO (CONT'D)  
 I didn't think I'd recognize this place after all these years, but it all looks the same.

Yoon SMILES at the old man and returns to READING.

OLD HUGO (CONT'D)  
 What'cha reading over there?

Yoon GLANCES UP at the old man, then BACK at his book. He CLOSES the book, revealing the partly-burnt front cover: **"Only Words"**.

YOON  
 Oh. It's "Only Words".

The old man SMILES.

OLD HUGO  
 (nodding)  
 Mmm. How is it?

YOON  
 It's... nostalgic.

OLD HUGO  
 (nodding)  
 Mmm.

Yoon STANDS UP with the orange book and sheet music. He makes his way back down the trail. As he PASSES the old man--

OLD HUGO (CONT'D)  
 It's pretty special.

Yoon FACES the old man.

OLD HUGO (CONT'D)  
 (looking around)  
 This place.

YOON  
 (nodding)  
 Yes. It is.

OLD HUGO  
 (taking a few steps  
 closer)  
 What's your name, if you don't  
 mind?

YOON  
 (shyly)  
 My name is Yoon.

OLD HUGO  
 Yoon. Very nice to meet you.  
 (reaching out hand)  
 I'm Hugo.

Yoon LOOKS DOWN at Hugo's hand. He REACHES his scarred hand out and SHAKES. As they shake hands, we PUSH IN toward the orange book that Yoon is carrying. We see the BACK COVER of the book, with a BLACK AND WHITE PORTRAIT of the author and his name: "**Hugo Salazar**".

Hugo, with his wrinkles and all, SMILES at Yoon. Yoon, who we've never seen smile before, concedes a smile. A BIG, GENUINE SMILE.

**CUT TO BLACK.**

**QUEUE SONG: "HILLS"**

**ROLL MAIN CREDITS.**

MID-CREDITS SEQUENCE:

110

**EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE - DAY**

110

Hugo WALKS up to the front door and KNOCKS. He's covered in DIRT and GREASE. He's just returned from the forest.

The door OPENS-- his mother. They lock eyes momentarily, but Hugo immediately HUGS his mother. She HESITATES at first, but quickly CONCEDES to her emotions, HUGGING him back. SQUEEZING past the door, Maria and Isabel LATCH onto Hugo's legs.

CUT TO:

