

PALATE CLEANSER

Written by

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Based on Palate Cleanser, a short film

INT. VOID

A dark and open infinite plane. Suspended by his limbs like a puppet is LEWIS, 30, an awkward family man. He is INTUBATED with a tube that stretches to the sky. PONCE, 40's, approaches him. BLOOD drips from his shrouded face onto Lewis as his voice BOOMS from the heavens.

PONCE (O.S)
Well, hey buddy.

INT. SUPPORT GROUP - MORNING

Lewis awakes, sitting among a circle of sniffing PARENTS. A SOCIAL WORKER mediates. They all listen to PATRICE, who wears a BALD CAP.

PATRICE (O.S.)
It's just unfair. Why should she lose hers and I'm stuck with my whole head? I mean, she's 14 for goodness sake. So I... shaved my head. You know to - to help her not feel so alone? And I was happy I did, but now my husband's... well, losing his attraction to me. But he doesn't have any hair to begin with! How's that fair to us? Trying to support my baby is ruining my marriage and I can't make it grow back fast enough.

SOCIAL WORKER
Patrice, thank you for sharing. That sounds incredibly difficult. Each parent processes this in their own way. Bart, do you... think you might share today?

A few parents pull from HEALTH-CO branded TISSUES. Lewis looks at Patrice and back to the Social Worker.

LEWIS
No.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

ISLA, 20s, wears a SURGICAL BOOT and RUBBER GLOVES. She washes DISHES. KAL (5 and she's battling cancer) sits at a small dinner TABLE. Lewis enters and kisses Isla.

ISLA
How was the group?

LEWIS
Eh, Patrice took over again.

Lewis kisses the head of Kal, who eats oatmeal.

ISLA
You should start sharing before Patrice. You know she likes to one-up everyone.

KAL
Who's Patrice?

ISLA
Someone who puts on a bald cap and makes up stories about her ex-husband.

Isla struggles to breathe and leans on the sink.

LEWIS
(rushing to her)
I can do the dishes. Go and relax.

ISLA
She cannot be late for her appointment. Plus, I want to do them.

Lewis searches her PURSE.

LEWIS
Where's your inhaler?

Isla waives him off.

ISLA
I've only got one puff left so I'm saving it for a rainy day.

INT. BUS - MORNING

Lewis holds Kal, who VOMITS on his shoulder and begins to cry. People on the bus move away from the two. Lewis uses a HANDKERCHIEF to wipe her mouth.

LEWIS

It's okay, sweetie. I know.

One man GLARES at Lewis, who glares right back.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MORNING

Lewis sits on a STRETCHER with Kal on his lap. DR COUCH, 50s, walks in. He wears a HEALTH-CO STETHOSCOPE.

DR COUCH

Good morning. Dr. Couch. Who have we here?

LEWIS

Kal's been fighting leukemia for near a year. But in the last few weeks, her appetite is nearly non-existent. She's lost five pounds this month.

DR COUCH

We can't have that can we? I have just the thing in mind.

Dr. Couch pulls a LOLLIPOP out of a drawer and hands it to Kal, who is delighted. A CLERK opens the door, writing on a clipboard.

CLERK

I'm so sorry to interrupt! Mr. Lewis, just have to verify some information. It won't take but a minute. Do you have a new plan we can put on file?

LEWIS

Actually I'm still waiting. I got laid off, so I'm kind of in between plans right now.

CLERK

Not a problem, not a problem. We take direct payments too.

LEWIS

I - I uh... I can definitely get that
to you next week?

Dr. Couch takes the lollipop away from Kal. He and the clerk
laugh as they exit.

KAL

(weakly)

Daddy, what just happened?

Lewis sighs. He takes a lollipop from the drawer and hands it
to Kal. She snuffles as she unwraps it.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lewis massages Isla's leg. Her boot sits to the side.

ISLA

God, that feels good. How'd it go?

LEWIS

They laughed us out.

Isla pulls her leg and exclaims in pain.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

We really need to get this leg
looked at.

ISLA

You know why we can't.

LEWIS

Yeah, but maybe we could rob them?

Isla points her fingers like a gun.

ISLA

Put the x-ray IN THE BAG!

(then)

Oh, here's the list of top secret
informants, by the way.

Isla passes Lewis a piece of paper as she puts her boot on.

LEWIS

A list of suspects, eh?

Lewis puts on a ridiculous French accent.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
I will question each and every one
of them, and bring them to justice!

Isla cracks a smirk.

ISLA
Don't forget your resume. Go get
'em, detective.

CUE MONTAGE - VARIOUS

- Lewis has coffee with a WEALTHY MAN, but spills coffee in his lap.
- Lewis rides the bus.
- Lewis gets thrown out of a bar.
- Lewis walks on the sidewalk.
- Lewis walks into a daycare. A BABYSITTER points at a sign that says "no mustaches".

END MONTAGE

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Lewis crosses off his list. One remains: Matt's Car Wash.
Lewis isn't thrilled.

EXT. CAR WASH - DAY

GIUSEPPE, 40s with a thick European accent, polishes a CAR
with a RAG. Lewis walks up and clears his throat.

GIUSEPPE
Apologies sir, just touching up
this- Bart?

LEWIS
Giuseppe? When did you start
working here?

GIUSEPPE
Ah, you know. I get laid off, and I
move on to- how do you say? Bigger
and better?

LEWIS

No kidding. Look, I need a job.
Bad. I've been searching for weeks.

GIUSEPPE

Oh my friend, we just hire my
cousin, Flavio.

FLAVIO (30's, Polo shirt, chest hair for days) waves from
across room.

GIUSEPPE (CONT'D)

We have no room here.

Giuseppe drops the rag into a HEALTH-CO BUCKET.

LEWIS

I'd have better luck getting a job
at Health-Co at this point.

Giuseppe looks at the bucket.

GIUSEPPE

You know, my friend works in the
sales department.

LEWIS

Is there a way your friend could
get me in?

GIUSEPPE

Oh, I no sure. He graduate, how you
say, cum louder?

LEWIS

Magna Cum Laude? Well, I got second
place in my high school spelling
bee.

GIUSEPPE

You still had spelling bee in high
school? American education... I
will ask.

He squeezes fluid out of the rag, and returns to his work.
Flavio waves at Lewis again.

INT. SPEAKEASY - EVENING

Lewis sits with BEN, 30's, his older brother. They drink
beer, with several empty BOTTLES on the table.

BEN

You know Health-Co is the closest thing to hell, right?

LEWIS

It's just stories, Ben.

BEN

Nah man, I had a friend who used to work there. Told me all kinds of shit.

LEWIS

They have the best healthcare plans of any employer in the state.

BEN

Even Adam got baited with a friggin' apple. They actively lobby against human rights, and that's not the worst part. The "Head of Sales" is a demon who manipulates people into whatever she wants. Half of the interviews she has are jokes, like a kid picking wings off a butterfly.

LEWIS

C'mon man, I might actually have a chance.

BEN

That's what she wants you to think. Notice how no one has Health-Co on their resume? I wonder why? That's because they don't let people go. They kill them. Then, they take 'em to their underground lair, and do fucked up experiments on them, like swapping out their legs for more arms, and other scary shit.

Lewis downs the last of his beer.

EXT. HEALTH-CO - MORNING

Lewis stands on the steps of the behemoth of a building. He holds a BRIEFCASE.

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - MORNING

Soft jazz plays in the elevator.

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

The elevator doors open.

INT. HEALTH-CO - WAITING ROOM - MORNING

Lewis walks into a vast room with blue walls. There are several seats, all empty. An older woman, CONRAD, stands behind a PODIUM, CROCHETING.

LEWIS

Good morning. I'm here to see...
 (looks at sticky note)
 Ms. Goodwin. My name's-

CONRAD

Bart Lewis. We know.

An awkward beat.

LEWIS

Appointment's at noon.

CONRAD

Noon-ish. We'll come fetch you.

Lewis sits in an old leather CHAIR. He looks again at the sticky note before placing it in his wallet. His finger brushes against a picture of Kal. He pulls out the photo, hair still on her head.

INT. HEALTH-CO - WAITING ROOM - NOON-ISH

A CHIME from the grandfather clock alerts NOON. He places the picture in his coat, stands, and walks to a FIREPLACE. Above it sits a single CANVAS, carrying red splatter art, resembling blood.

CONRAD

Mr. Lewis.

Lewis follows Conrad to the podium, and spots a crocheted CROSS.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Did you place your order with the kitchen?

LEWIS

(holding up his briefcase)
 Actually, I brought my own.

CONRAD

Did you pack a juice box, too, or would you like a drink while you wait?

LEWIS

(joking)

Oh, a neat bourbon could ease the nerves, haha.

Conrad smirks, and pours a hefty glass of BOURBON. Lewis takes it with hesitation.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - NOON

JESSICA, 40s, SOBS in front of large mahogany DESK.

JESSICA

Ple- please! I'm sorry. I promise I'll hit quota next quarter!

GOODWIN, the head of sales, has her back to Jessica as she digs through a CABINET. She wears a NAVY PANTSUIT, complimenting her golden hair. Goodwin turns around, holding an ancient pair of PLIERS.

GOODWIN

I know you will.

She sits behind the desk, laying the pliers next to an INTERCOM TELEPHONE.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

That's why I'm going to let YOU choose.

Snot runs down Jessica's face.

JESSICA

But- but-

GOODWIN

I'd recommend one in the back. Less noticeable when pitching to a new client.

JESSICA

I mostly chew ice with my right side. So... my left molar?

GOODWIN

Top or bottom?

JESSICA

I- I don't-

GOODWIN

Let's go top.

Goodwin takes the pliers, and slowly inserts them into the mouth of Jessica, who cries harder.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Try to slow down. You don't want to swallow it.

Goodwin starts to twist her wrist as Jessica HOWLS.

INT. HEALTH-CO - WAITING ROOM - NOON

A SCREAM from down the hall. Conrad smiles on at Lewis, who grows nervous. An INTERCOM on the podium CRACKLES.

GOODWIN (OVER INTERCOM)

Send him in.

Conrad eyes the full glass. Lewis downs the bourbon, and lets out an awkward cough. Conrad takes his glass and escorts him down the hall. She opens the doors to Goodwin's office, and ushers Lewis in.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - NOON

Goodwin sits behind her desk scribbling on a NOTEPAD. She gives him a look. Not a smile. Not really welcoming. Just acknowledging. To the right of the desk is a BLANK CANVAS on an EASEL. Behind that, a TERRARIUM with a SNAKE inside.

A SMALL WOODEN CHAIR sits in front of the desk. It is pathetic, especially in this large room.

GOODWIN

Mr. Lewis, have a seat.

Lewis sits down in the chair and spots a TOOTH on her desk. Goodwin grabs the tooth and drops it into a drawer in her desk, revealing an OLD FLINTLOCK PISTOL.

LEWIS

Very nice to-

GOODWIN

What makes you qualified to work here?

LEWIS

Did you get my resume?

Lewis unlatches and opens his briefcase.

GOODWIN

I did.

Lewis re-locks the latch.

LEWIS

Well, I did 3 years at House of
Yum, year and a half at Bean
Waters, and a good run at Cream On.

Goodwin gives him a look. Cream on?

LEWIS (CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

Ice cream shop geared towards
people who are lactose intolerant...
but the owner thought lactose was a
preservative. So he said "Yeah it's
all natural. I don't put that
lactose crap-stuff in my cream!" He
got sued pretty fast once people
figured that out.

GOODWIN

And what was your position there?

LEWIS

The uh... owner.

The door opens and Conrad enters, holding a PLATTER.

GOODWIN

12:05?

CONRAD

12:05.

Conrad places the platter before her. RUSTIC TOAST, GHERKINS,
and a POT OF CAVIAR. A BOWL OF SOUP. A SLICE OF RED VELVET
CAKE and CUTLERY.

Lewis looks at the display of food. She can't eat it all...
Conrad exits swiftly as Goodwin picks up a SPOON.

GOODWIN

(to herself)

I love fava bean soup.

She starts to enjoy her soup.

Lewis unclasps his briefcase and withdraws a sad EGG SALAD SANDWICH. The thing is contained in plastic wrap. He brings it to his face for a SQUISHY bite.

Goodwin raises an eyebrow at its soggy texture.

LEWIS
(with a mouthful)
Egg thalad.

He swallows his bite.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Does this position offer benefits?

GOODWIN
(waving a finger)
No work talk during this part.

LEWIS
Oh. Okay.

GOODWIN
Is there any relish?
(off his head shake)
You really ought to try it.

She pulls out a wet GHERKIN. Lewis reluctantly takes the green finger. She waits. He pushes it in the sandwich. Egg mixture seeps out. Lewis takes a CRUNCHIER squishy bite, and mouths it around. Saving face, he nods.

She nods with him as she brushes toast with the fish bubbles. She takes a CRUNCHY bite. They eat together in near perfect silence. Goodwin pats her mouth with a NAPKIN as Lewis finishes his last bite. She pushes her platter aside.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
So you are Health-Co's next medical sales rep?

LEWIS
Yes, ma'am.

GOODWIN
Your "credentials" say otherwise. No sales experience. No hospital or medical experience. Feel free to grab another bourbon on your way out.

Lewis unlocks himself from the chair and starts to leave. He pauses after a few steps, and turns around.

LEWIS

Did you know that chemotherapy can make kids lose their taste? They get put on feeding tubes to get their weight up. That's how my daughter eats.

GOODWIN

That's your strategy? I have a sick kid?

LEWIS

Got a reeeal sad picture of her too.

Lewis pulls the photo out of his coat and hands it to her. Goodwin nods. It is real sad.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

That was a week before she was diagnosed. She can hardly stay awake for pictures anymore.

GOODWIN

No shame. Alright, why not?
(pressing the intercom)
Cancel my next appointment and send in our good friend, Mr. Ponce.

The office door opens. In enters PONCE, 40s. He's wearing a nice suit and has striking charisma.

PONCE

Ms. Goodwin, how we doing?

She gives him a courtesy smile. Ponce looks Lewis up and down before extending a hand.

PONCE (CONT'D)

Keith Ponce.

LEWIS

Bart Lewis.

GOODWIN

Mr. Ponce, how was your lunch?

PONCE

Wonderful, as always. Scott and I went to Drelle's. They got this new dairy-free ice cream. Apparently they take the lactose out.

GOODWIN
How about that? Mr. Lewis is an ice
cream expert himself.

PONCE
(to Lewis)
That so?

LEWIS
Oh, I wouldn't say EXPERT but-

GOODWIN
Nonsense. He owned his very own
business. What was it called?

A beat.

LEWIS
Cream On.

PONCE
Must've been real smooth.

LEWIS
Except for the Rocky Road, haha.

Ponce realizes it was a joke and forces a chuckle.

GOODWIN
Mr. Lewis will be joining us as a
sales intern.

Lewis looks at Goodwin.

PONCE
(a big grin)
Well, how about that?

GOODWIN
And shadowing you.

Ponce's grin flips upside down.

LEWIS
Oh wow.

PONCE
You're serious?

GOODWIN
Extremely.

Ponce flashes a feigned grin to Lewis, who can hardly contain his joy. A devious smirk grows on Goodwin's face.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Isla answers the phone.

ISLA
Hello? Oh hey, hon! How'd it go?
(a beat)
You don't say? Bart Lewis, a
partially employed man? I'm so
proud!

She hangs up and rushes to a COOKIE CAKE, reading "WHO NEEDS A JOB?" in frosting. She tosses the "WHO NEEDS" in to the trash, and shapes the "?" into a "!". It now reads, "A JOB!"

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

Lewis, Isla, and Kal eat cookie cake.

KAL
What's a meh- a med- a-

ISLA
Medical.

KAL
Medical sales rep?

LEWIS
Great question. I think I sell
people hospital stuff.

KAL
Like my boo-boo bandage?

Kal points to a covered PORT on her right upper chest.

LEWIS
Just like that.

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - MORNING

The elevator plays its same jazzy tune. Lewis, dressed in the same suit from yesterday, holds a piece of cookie cake.

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - MORNING

Lewis steps out amid a BUSY sales department. Salesman rush around in business attire. Lewis attempts to stop someone.

LEWIS

Excuse me.

The busy bees keep buzzing.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

Do you know where-

Ponce claps Lewis on the shoulder and guides him.

PONCE

Hey, sport.

Ponce notices Lewis's attire hasn't changed. Lewis hands him the cookie cake.

LEWIS

I've got a sweet tooth. Thought maybe you do, too.

PONCE

Isn't that... sweet.

Ponce tosses the cake in the trash and opens his office.

PONCE (CONT'D)

Gotta grab my keys.

INT. HEALTH-CO - PONCE'S OFFICE - MORNING

The sizable space houses a sleek WOODEN DESK. Walls, lined with etched wood, wrap around in a uniform fashion. A dim LAMP in the corner offers the only source of light. Ponce reaches into a JACKET and retrieves KEYS. Lewis admires the office before landing his eyes on another BLOODY CANVAS.

LEWIS

Wow.

PONCE

What?

(off the canvas)

Oh. This was Mr. Calahan. He could sell shoes to an amputee.

LEWIS

You guys really like red paintings here, huh?

They head out as Lewis's eyes linger on the blood.

INT. PONCE'S CAR - MORNING [DRIVING]

Ponce wears sunglasses, his arm resting on his door's window.

PONCE

You ever see your shadow?

LEWIS

What? Yeah. Like my-

PONCE

Yeah the dark thing that sticks to you. That's what I want you to be. The shadow is always there, always watching. What does the shadow not do?

Lewis thinks.

LEWIS

Talk.

Ponce snaps his fingers.

PONCE

Exactly. Be invisible.

PONCE (CONT'D)

We're going to an important client's home. Let's just say he's big in politics. High up on the food chain. Wife's a bit of a hypochondriac.

EXT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - DAY

SFX. DOORBELL

Ponce releases the doorbell of a large, wealthy home. Lewis glances around, and gets his sleeve caught on a ROSE BUSH.

LADY LEBLANC, 40s, rich and daft, answers.

LADY LEBLANC

Muffin?

(seeing Ponce)

Oh, Mr. Ponce! Sorry, I've been missing one of my flock and hoping she comes back soon. Little orange one who can't meow to save her life. How are you?

She kisses both sides of his face like the French do. Lewis tries to calmly pull his sleeve back.

PONCE

Lady LeBlanc, I'm fantastic. Is the gentleman home?

LADY LEBLANC

He sure is! Just finishing up something upstairs. Come in for a drink while you wait?

PONCE

That'd be lovely.

Lewis CANNOT free himself.

LADY LEBLANC

Who is this man stuck in my bush?

PONCE

(through gritted teeth)
This is my subtle shadow, Mr. Lewis.

LEWIS

It came at me first, haha.

Lady LeBlanc helps him, leaving a tear in his sleeve.

LADY LEBLANC

Don't worry about that, I'll have Claire sew it up for you.

She takes his jacket. Ponce gestures for Lewis to walk in.

INT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lewis and Ponce sit on a large couch, while Lady LeBlanc fetches a TEAPOT. The couch sinks where Ponce and Lewis sit, limiting mobility.

PONCE

You sure do know how to keep a home, Lady.

LADY LEBLANC (O.S.)

I sure try! I wish I could say it was all me, but the servants do most of it.

A fluffy CAT walks into the room.

LEWIS

Oh, you've got cats.

Ponce taps his shoulder, and gives him a look. He "zips" his lips. Lady LeBlanc walks back into the room.

LADY LEBLANC

Oh did Pumpkin come to say hello?

"Pumpkin" jumps onto Lewis lap, sinking him slightly farther into the couch.

LEWIS

(stuttering)

It's just that I'm allergic-

Ponce CLEARS his throat. The cat makes its home in Lewis lap. Lady LeBlanc pours three CUPS of tea, and passes them out.

PONCE

What's new in the life of Lady LeBlanc?

LADY LEBLANC

Oh just last week we looked at a fifth home in um..

(shouting)

Honey! Where is our new house going to be?

A thick voice comes from upstairs.

SENATOR LEBLANC (O.S.)

The Bahamas!

LADY LEBLANC

The Bahamas.

She sips her tea.

LADY LEBLANC (CONT'D)

How's the honey and the bunny?

PONCE

Melinda's looking pretty good, considering. Our daughter is off on her tour of the Big Apple.

LADY LEBLANC

You ever think of her coming to work with you?

PONCE
 (immediately)
 No.
 (recovering)
 I mean, I just think she can do
 better.

LADY LEBLANC
 Mmm. And what about you, bush man?
 What's the family?

The cat is rubbing itself all over Lewis, who stifles a
 SNEEZE. Lady Leblanc retracts.

LADY LEBLANC (CONT'D)
 Are you ILL?

LEWIS
 Oh no, it's--

Lewis touches his hand to his nose. A drop of BLOOD. His nose
 begins to LEAK blood, some falling on Pumpkin. Lady LeBlanc
 rescues her cat, a bloody STREAK on her dress.

Lady LeBlanc begins to GAG, dropping her cat to disrobe
 offscreen.

LADY LEBLANC (O.S)
 How dare you come into my house
 with your DISEASE. Get out!

Lewis shields his eyes as clothing flies at him.

LEWIS
 (holding his nose)
 Can I have my jacket back?

LADY LEBLANC (O.S)
 OUT!

A shoes SMACKS into Lewis's head.

EXT. BIG HOLE GOLF COURSE - DAY

Lewis and Ponce stand by the car. Ponce is now in golfing
 attire. Lewis puts a bloody handkerchief in his pocket.

LEWIS
 How was I supposed to know she'd
 have cats?

PONCE
 Just shoo the damn thing.

Ponce shuts the trunk with GOLF CLUBS on his shoulder.

PONCE (CONT'D)
It's golf. You aren't even golfing.
You aren't the caddy. Not the cart
girl. You're just-

LEWIS
The shadow, I get it. I can't mess
this one up.

Ponce sighs loudly with skepticism.

EXT. BIG HOLE GOLF COURSE - HOLE 3 - DAY

BIG DAVE, the owner of the course, sits with three BUDDIES
puffing CIGARS. Ponce lines up a shot. Lewis declines a drink
from a CART GIRL. Ponce hits the ball and Big Dave WHISTLES.

BIG DAVE
Lemme show you how it's done, big
fella.

Big Dave hits a ball.

PONCE
There's a reason your name's on the
course.

BIG DAVE
That's because I killed the last
guy who owned it.

Everyone gets SILENT, before Big Dave lets out a laugh,
follows by his buddies.

EXT. BIG HOLE GOLF COURSE - HOLE 8 - DAY

Lewis has sweat stains on his shirt. One of the Buddies hits
a ball as Big Dave pulls the cigar from his mouth.

BIG DAVE
(to Lewis)
How 'bout you, guy? You play?

LEWIS
Oh, no, thank you.

BIG DAVE
Come onnn.

PONCE

Mr. Lewis is shadowing me for the day. He doesn't golf.

BIG DAVE

Well, let's change that, Mr. Lewis.

Big Dave offers his club to Lewis.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

Show my holes a little love now.

A beat. Ponce looks at Lewis.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

I won't take no for an answer.

The buddies start to cheer Lewis on, who can't resist the peer pressure.

LEWIS

I guess just the one.

Ponce glares, frustrated. Lewis gets a feel for the club.

BIG DAVE

Bend your knees just a bit. Drive that puppy out.

Lewis lines up the shot, and exhales. On the backswing, it flies out of his hands and hits Big Dave in the nose.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

MOTHERFUCKER!

Big Dave falls. His cigar drops from his mouth, and starts a small FIRE next to him, which he rolls into. The buddies panic while Ponce watches and accepts defeat. The Cart Girl rushes over with a FIRE EXTINGUISHER and BLASTS Big Dave.

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - DAY

Ponce walks into his office and SLAMS the door shut. Lewis stands there awkwardly with his pit stains. Conrad walks up.

CONRAD

First day seems to be treating you well.

LEWIS

So well.

CONRAD

Ms. Goodwin wanted you to have
this.

She hands him a COUPON.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

The foie gras is exceptional.

INT. SWEET LIFE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Lewis, Isla, and Kal sit at a table in a fancy restaurant.
Other Health-Co employees dine with their families.

ISLA

I don't know the last time I was
somewhere this fancy.

(whispering)

How are we going to pay for this?

LEWIS

I took out a loan so we could surf
and turf. Thought it'd be worth it.

Isla is not amused.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

Work gave me a coupon.

KAL

What's surf and turf?

ISLA

Steak and lobster, sweetie.

A SERVER, a French accent and a bow tie, comes to the table.

SERVER

Good evening madame, monsieur, and
small madame. Can I start you with
any hors d'oeuvres? Perhaps a
bottle of our cabernet?

LEWIS

What can this get us?

He flashes the coupon.

SERVER

Whatever you would like.

LEWIS

Oh? Full boat. What do you have?

SERVER

Also, whatever you would like. Our kitchen is very well trained.

KAL

Can we get bread?

SERVER

At once, small madame.

The Server leaves. Isla plants a kiss on Lewis's cheek. This makes him blush and turn his head. A few tables down, he sees Ponce sitting with his wife.

LEWIS

Oh, crap.

ISLA

What is it?

LEWIS

Don't look, but that's the salesman I shadowed today.

Isla makes it very obvious she is looking.

ISLA

Him?

LEWIS

Yes!

Ponce takes a sip of wine, and meets eyes with Lewis. A look of disdain. Ponce is with his wife, MELINDA, 40s.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

He definitely saw us.

ISLA

What's wrong with that?

LEWIS

No, it's just that - oh God. He's coming over.

Lewis covers his face.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

Quick, say something funny.

ISLA

What's happening?

Lewis forcibly laughs. Ponce is right next to him.

PONCE

Sorry to interrupt. You must be Mr.
Lewis' lovely family. My wife...
would like for you to join us.

He gestures to their table. Melinda waves.

LEWIS

We wouldn't want to intrude-

ISLA

That would be lovely!

INT. SWEET LIFE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Lewis, Isla, Ponce, and Melinda sip wine. Kal sips juice.

MELINDA

How's that focaccia?

KAL

(mouthful of bread)
Delicious.

MELINDA

(to Lewis)
Keith tells me you're shadowing
him?

Lewis looks at Ponce before responding.

LEWIS

Something like that.

ISLA

We're so proud of him! We're really
hoping Mr. Ponce here can show him
some tricks of the trade.

PONCE

Ah, I don't know about that.

KAL

You know tricks?

Ponce perks up at the question.

PONCE

Actually, I have a few. But you're
gonna have to take that out from
behind your ear first.

He pulls a QUARTER from behind her ear. Kal erupts with joy.

KAL

How did you do that!?

PONCE

A magician never reveal his secrets.

Ponce sips his glass.

PONCE (CONT'D)

You should eat more, growing kid like you.

KAL

Oh, I can't eat very much. Cause of the cancer.

A quiet beat.

MELINDA

How about that? I had something like that myself.

Melinda pulls at her collar to reveal a PORT.

MELINDA (CONT'D)

Takes a special kind of strong.

Ponce and Melinda share a look with their eyes. Ponce reflects heavily as he takes another pull from his glass, eyes fixed on Lewis.

INT. SWEET LIFE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Everyone is nearly finished with their food. Isla tries to get Kal to eat more.

LEWIS

This was amazing.

Isla groans from a full belly.

PONCE

(chuckling)

The lamb never disappoints.

The Server places the check down. Lewis pulls out his coupon. Ponce stops him, and places some cash.

PONCE (CONT'D)

I got it.

EXT. SWEET LIFE RESTAURANT - EVENING

Lewis and Ponce wait on the others.

LEWIS

I really appreciate it.

Lewis hands the coupon to Ponce, who pushes it away.

PONCE

My daughter's all grown up and gone, and Melinda's cancer stopped years ago. I get the struggle. Save it for next time. Family's gotta eat.

Lewis puts the coupon away and shakes Ponce's hand.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - EVENING

Goodwin's empty eyes watch her snake slither in the terrarium. Goodwin opens a CARDBOARD BOX and pulls out a RAT. She opens the terrarium and places it inside. The snake's tongue FLICKS. Goodwin watches the rat get devoured. A heavy THUD, follow by a few SQUEAKS.

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - EVENING

Goodwin presses a button. The doors shut.

EXT. HEALTH-CO - EVENING

The light of the elevator is visible from the outside. It descends as more of the building becomes visible. Old COBBLESTONE walls, partially covered in MOSS. The building seems to get older and more sinister towards the pinnacle, where BATS SCATTER as it begins to RAIN.

INT. COMPANY GARAGE - EVENING

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

Goodwin approaches a BLACK CAR with a CHAUFFEUR, large and professional. The Chauffeur opens her door.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A needle of a RECORD PLAYER comes down on a RECORD. Soft lonely JAZZ fills the space. The place is humble, small enough for one person. Rain PATTERS on the window.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Goodwin poaches an EGG, and places it on some TOAST. The yolk starts to leak. She eats at her lone TABLE. She doesn't seem sad but she's not happy.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - OFFICE - NIGHT

Goodwin sticks a NEEDLE in her arm and draws BLOOD using a SYRINGE. She empties the syringe on a PALETTE, and dips a PAINTBRUSH. She methodically paints blood on a CANVAS. A PICTURE of Goodwin and her PREGNANT WIFE sit in the corner.

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - MORNING

Lewis stands in the elevator, which plays its usual tune.

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - MORNING

Ponce waits outside his office in golfing attire, sipping coffee. He smiles at Lewis.

PONCE

Good morning, brother. Today, we're learning a new skill.

LEWIS

(pre-lap)

Do I have to wear the hat?

EXT. BIG HOLE GOLF COURSE - MORNING

Ponce and Lewis stand on the course. Lewis is dressed in Ponce's spare golfing outfit.

PONCE

No, but it makes you feel like a rich pompous asshole. And it keeps the sun out of your eye.

LEWIS

Eh, when in golf.

PONCE

Let's see your form.

Lewis grabs a golf CLUB and squats awkwardly. Ponce adjusts Lewis's posture.

PONCE (CONT'D)

Square those shoulders, and switch your hands. Twist your trunk while you drive the ball out.

Lewis hits the ball. It flies some distance.

LEWIS

I think that's the best shot I've hit.

PONCE

How many times have you played?

LEWIS

If you don't count yesterday, this is my first time.

Ponce checks his watch.

PONCE

Ball-Dold can wait. Let's have a friendly little competition. Loser goes down to production first.

LEWIS

What?

PONCE

You'll find out soon enough.

CUE MONTAGE - GOLFING

-Lewis and Ponce hit golf balls.

-The two ride in a cart sipping beers.

-Lewis hits a ball too far and Ponce's face shows it.

-Lewis gives multiple attempts hitting a ball out of the sand while Ponce chuckles.

-Ponce hits a hole-in-one.

-Lewis putts in a ball, and Ponce gives him a high five.

END MONTAGE

EXT. BIG HOLE GOLF COURSE - DAY

Lewis and Ponce wipe sweat and catch their breath.

LEWIS

This is the most fun I've had in a while.

PONCE

Happy to hand yours to you any time.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

Hey! HEY!

Ponce drops his beer and grabs Lewis.

PONCE

We gotta go!

Lewis BOLTS with Ponce. The Cart Girl drives a cart, toting Big Dave, who wields a SHOTGUN. The cart stops, and Big Dave gets out. A large BANDAGE covers his nose. He hobbles towards the duo, who are very far away.

BIG DAVE

You ain't welcome near my holes no more! Come here ever again, and I'll put a hole in YOU!

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - DAY

Ponce and Lewis walk in with smiles on their faces. Goodwin stands waiting for them.

PONCE

Ms. Goodwin, how we doing?

GOODWIN

That depends. Mr. Lewis, how is your second day going?

LEWIS

Pretty swell so far. Learning how to take clients golfing.

Ponce nervously pulls on his collar.

GOODWIN

(to Ponce)

Hmm.

(to Lewis)

Head down to production.

(MORE)

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

No sense in slow rolling this one.
 (to Ponce)
 Ball-Dold. One hour.

She walks off. Ponce sighs.

PONCE

Go to the first floor, and take
 your second left, and next right.
 You want a smiley face sticker.

LEWIS

Okay...

INT. HEALTH-CO - PRODUCTION - DAY

A CLIPBOARD LADY sits behind a desk, chewing GUM. Lewis walks up, and she briefly looks up.

CLIPBOARD LADY

New face. Name?

LEWIS

Lewis, Bart. That's backwards. I
 didn't know if it's by last name.

CLIPBOARD LADY

Bay 4.

He walks to -

INT. HEALTH-CO - MEDICAL BAY - DAY

A STRETCHER sits in the middle of the room, with a metal MEDICAL TRAY, and a STOCK CART next to it. Lewis sits on the stretcher and waits. CARL, a large hulk of a man in scrubs, walks in with a CATHETER KIT.

Carl begins to open the kit, placing it on the tray. Without breaking his eye-line, he begins his initial assessment.

CARL

Name and zodiac sign?

LEWIS

Bart Lewis. I don't know my sign.

CARL

Bet you're a Pisces. Any recent surgeries?

LEWIS

No.

CARL

Any medical problems?

LEWIS

Compressed vertebrae in my back but that's old.

CARL

This is a coude catheter. Some guys get swollen prostates, and normal foleys can't get through. This guy's got some curve, to get over those puffy prosties.

LEWIS

Makes sense, I guess.

CARL

Takes your pants off and lie down.

LEWIS

Oh... I don't need a catheter. I'm peeing just fine, but thank you.

CARL

You can't get your sticker until the demonstration is complete.

Carl has a SHEET OF SMILEY STICKERS in his pocket. Lewis lets out a big sigh and starts to unbutton his pants. Carl cracks his large, hairy knuckles as he reaches for STERILE GLOVES. He pulls out a lubricated catheter.

INT. HEALTH-CO - PRODUCTION - DAY

SHOUTS of pain echo as a man's urethra is stretched. Lewis walks to the elevator, adjusting his pants. He carries the used catheter in his hand. His lapel sports a smiley sticker.

Ponce stands with the Clipboard Lady, and chuckles at Lewis, who storms off.

INT. PONCE'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING]

Lewis sits in the passenger seat, examining the catheter.

PONCE

Will you put that thing away?

LEWIS
Where? In the glove box?

PONCE
No just - your pocket?

Lewis jams the thing into his pocket.

LEWIS
Where's yours?

PONCE
Oh, no amount of money is gonna
make it worth Carl ham fisting one
of those in me.

LEWIS
How'd you get the sticker?

A smiley faces sticker sits on Ponce's breast pocket.

PONCE
I have my ways. You been to Ball-
Dold before?

Lewis shakes his head.

PONCE (CONT'D)
Biggest retirement home in the
game. Multiple former presidents
died staying there.

LEWIS
Really?

PONCE
No, but you'd be surprised how many
sales I've made with that.

LEWIS
If they don't like the catheters,
maybe we can sell them some
pudding.

PONCE
Pudding's not medicinal.

LEWIS
Not yet.

PONCE
How'd you manage this intern spot?
What'd you bring to your lunch
interview with Goodwin?

LEWIS
All I had was an egg salad sandwich.

PONCE
Egg salad?

LEWIS
No crusts. Not too bad.

PONCE
No crusts? Lewis, come on man!
You're telling me you went into the
HEAD OF SALES'S office with a
goddamn soggy egg salad sandwich?

LEWIS
It wasn't that soggy.

PONCE
You even have experience selling things?

LEWIS
I used to help people find the right ice cream for the occasion.

PONCE
Jesus, you really are the DEI hire.
Look, I'm not trying to be harsh,
but stay out of the way and let me do the talking, alright?

Before Lewis can respond, Ponce turns on the radio.

INT. BALL-DOLD RETIREMENT HOME - COMMON SPACE - DAY

A dozen or so RESIDENTS linger in the public space. Three STAFF MEMBERS assist the residents. Two play chess. One uses a WALKER. A handful sit supinated in RECLINERS. JERRY, a decrepit and bed-bound war veteran, intermittently calls out.

JERRY (O.S.)
I gotta wee!

Lewis and Ponce walk through the front door. They approach a BALL-DOLD NURSE, who feeds PUDDING to a patient.

LEWIS
(muttering)
We can't sell them pudding.

JERRY (O.S.)
I STILL have to wee!

PONCE
Hello, ma'am. We're here from-

BALL-DOLD NURSE
You can put it with the other
church flyers on the front desk.

LEWIS
We're not Mormons, we're Health-Co
representatives.

PONCE
What my assistant is trying to say
is we have something that will make
your job easier.

Lewis is in disbelief. His assistant?

JERRY (O.S.)
(groaning)
Full of it! I'm full of it!

BALL-DOLD NURSE
(chuckling with doubt)
And what's that?

PONCE
It's a catheter.

BALL-DOLD NURSE
What's new there? We've got tons.

PONCE
This is a - uh - special type of..
um..

LEWIS
These are different from your usual
catheter, in that it-

PONCE
(interrupting)
Would you excuse us?

Ponce aggressively leads Lewis to the-

INT. BALL-DOLD RETIREMENT HOME - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

A NAKED MAN washes his hands in one of several sinks. Ponce
slams Lewis into the bathroom.

PONCE

What did I say before? You stay out of the way and I do the talking, neither of which you are doing!

LEWIS

Sorry, I just thought-

PONCE

Oh, does the ice cream salesman wanna give me some advice? I got some advice for you: why don't you go wash up next to Lady MacBeth there.

He points at the naked man, still trying to get that spot.

PONCE (CONT'D)

Once you're done, come back out and observe.

Ponce exits in a huff. Lewis walks next to the naked man, and angrily washes his hands.

LEWIS

What is his issue? I'm the one who got a surprise urethral stretching!

NAKED MAN

I killed my best friend. He had the most beautiful wife, and I couldn't stop thinking about her. We went off to war together, and I shot him straight in the back. Made it look believable. Got back home to find out his wife had hung herself over missing him. So I ended up raising his kid. He's who put me in this prison. Ain't life funny?

Lewis looks at the man, trying to find a response. He reaches into his pocket, and withdraws the catheter.

INT. BALL-DOLD RETIREMENT HOME - COMMON SPACE - DAY

BALL-DOLD NURSE

I just don't understand how you expect me to know.

JERRY

Please, God! I gotta piss so bad!

PONCE

Well it -- uh, just helps to go in easier.

BALL-DOLD NURSE

Yeah, I got that. How?

JERRY

(grabbing his belly)

I'm gonna pop, for Christ's sake!
Someone help me. Oh it hurts, oh!

Lewis POWER WALKS past Ponce, the catheter bouncing in his hand. Lewis approaches Jerry. Jerry wears a DIAPER that is hanging on by a thread. Lewis opens the diaper.

LEWIS

This won't feel great.

JERRY

Oh, please I gotta go bad!

Lewis begins to place the catheter in Jerry, who groans. The Ball-Dold Nurse approaches, her eyes in shock. Ponce shares a similar expression.

LEWIS

These are coudes. They're shaped different, so that it's easier to go around swollen prostates, which I'm assuming our friend here has?

BALL-DOLD NURSE

Yes, actually. We've tried cathing him five times today with no success. He's probably full.

JERRY

Ahhhh!

Urine pours out of the catheter. The Ball-Dold Nurse places a BEDPAN to catch the urine.

BALL-DOLD NURSE

It went so fast, too... I've heard of coudes but this place has never invested in them. Half of the residents here have that same issue.

JERRY

(falling asleep)

Oh sweet Mother Mary, that feels so good. Oh thank you, thank...

Jerry begins to SNORE. Lewis looks from the patient to Ponce, whose face is a combination of pride and saddened FEAR.

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - DAY

A large LEMON CAKE sits in the space. Members of the department chat and eat. Goodwin blows a paper PARTY HORN.

GOODWIN

Can you believe it, Sales? When was the last time we had an intern procure an account?

JESSICA

23 years ago!

GOODWIN

Rhetorical, Jessica. Ball-Dold is signing a five-year contract for Health-Co Coude Catheters, thanks to Mr. Lewis's questionable scope of practice.

She CLINKS her fork gently into her plate. The department members echo her in a CLINKING APPLAUSE. Conrad places a PARTY HAT on Lewis, who stands eating a slice of cake.

CONRAD

Goodwin's office. Five minutes.

LEWIS

Yes ma'am. Where's Ponce?

Conrad walks off.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lewis enters the room, party hat still on. Goodwin sits behind her desk. Ponce stands before her.

LEWIS

Hey, Mr. Ponce. Was wondering where you were.

(to Goodwin)

You wanted to see me?

GOODWIN

I did. It sounds like you've had quite the day.

LEWIS

We definitely did. First time for everything I guess.

GOODWIN

It's a great day for firsts. Isn't that right, Mr. Ponce.

PONCE

(solemnly)

Sure is.

Goodwin opens THAT drawer, and withdraws the flintlock pistol. She approaches Lewis, and slaps the gun into him.

GOODWIN

Shoot Mr. Ponce, right below the knot of his tie.

Cold silence fills the room.

LEWIS

Shoot? Shoot Mr. Ponce? What does that mean?

GOODWIN

(to Ponce)

I think he needs a little motivation.

(back to Lewis)

You get a company car. Continuous royalties from sales, like the one you made today. Not to mention premium healthcare coverage. Next day referrals to the best pediatric oncologists.

Lewis begins to tremble.

LEWIS

Wh- what?

(to Ponce)

Why aren't you saying anything?

PONCE

When I came here, years ago, I was broke. Starving. My wife just got diagnosed, like your daughter. I didn't know what to do. I had no where to go. So I came here. Ms. Goodwin gave me a job after hearing about my wife. Melinda started getting treatment. Things were looking up.

(MORE)

PONCE (CONT'D)

She helped me save my family and I'd have given anything for that. And all I had to do was shoot Mr. Calahan... That little girl needs you, big guy.

Ponce tilts his head up and closes his eyes.

LEWIS

But can't we just - isn't there another way? He can just go home and-

GOODWIN

No.

Goodwin raises Lewis's shaking hands, pointing the gun.

LEWIS

But - but, I-

GOODWIN

I'm handing you a lifeline to save your daughter. Do you want it, or not?

Lewis grimaces. He points the gun at Ponce, closes his eyes, and brings himself to squeeze the trigger. CLICK. Lewis breathes a sigh of relief, believing he's passed "the test."

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Ah, forgot to cock it.

Goodwin reaches, and cocks the pistol. Lewis looks at her in defeat. His eyes wander back to Ponce, who is having a hard time keeping his peace. Lewis sighs, sweat rolling down his brow. Shakily, he aims the gun.

Ponce lets out a long exhale. Smoke EXPLODES out the gun. Ponce reaches for his mouth as red spills down his shirt. He lets out two gurgling coughs before collapsing, revealing the canvas behind him, now "painted."

Goodwin eyes the canvas with admiration, running her finger on the border.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

This is going to look incredible in your office. You'll start Monday.

Lewis pours sweat, his eyes wide in horror.

INT. BUS - DAY

Lewis sits, stuck in a thousand-yard-stare.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lewis shuts the door behind him. He walks past his bedroom, where Isla naps, and walks to his daughter's room.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KAL'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Half a dozen WIGS sit on MANNEQUIN HEADS atop a VANITY. In a TWIN BED rests a bare-headed Kal. Lewis crawls into the small bed, his shoes still on. He cradles her head and drifts off.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KAL'S ROOM - EVENING

Lewis wakes to the sound of cooking from the kitchen, an indentation of his daughter's body next to him.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

He wanders in to see Isla stirring a pot. At the small dining table sits Kal. She wears her favorite BLACK WIG.

ISLA
Dinner's almost ready.

Lewis stumbles into her arms.

ISLA (CONT'D)
(seeing his defeated face)
Oh hon... Didn't work out?

KAL
You look tired.

LEWIS
I start Monday.

Isla's jaw drops.

ISLA
Mr. Bart Lewis? Did you come home
with a full-time job?

Isla pulls him in for a congratulatory kiss.

KAL
Does this mean I can go get another
hair?

LEWIS
(sitting next to her)
After my first paycheck, I'll get
you two hairs.

KAL
(giggling)
Two hairs?

Isla laughs and tends to the pot. Kal scratches at a bloody spot on Lewis's sleeve.

KAL (CONT'D)
What's that?

Lewis looks at her finger, dried blood caked under her fingernail. She nearly puts her finger in her mouth before Lewis picks her up and sprints to the bathroom.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lewis rubs at Kal's hand under the tap. Isla walks in.

ISLA
Is that blood?

Lewis nervously turns to Isla, who approaches like she's caught him red-handed. She looks at his shoe, a bloody smear on it. The sink runs on.

ISLA (CONT'D)
(comforting)
You had another nosebleed.

LEWIS
(lying)
Yes. My allergies have been
terrible.

Isla turns the sink off.

EXT. EASTER FAIR - DAY - MONTAGE

-Kal and other children search for eggs. Isla helps Kal, while Lewis looks over his shoulder.

-Lewis sees two MEN IN SUITS and sunglasses. He pretends not to notice them.

-Kal pulls out a brightly colored EGG from under a rock.

-Lewis buys ICE CREAM. The two men in suits are just behind him in line. Lewis sweats.

-Lewis and his family eat their ice cream at a BENCH.

-The two men in suits walk towards Lewis, each holding an ICE CREAM CONE.

-As Lewis's paranoia grows and grow, the two men get closer UNTIL-

-They walk past him to their TODDLER, who happily runs to them. The family walks home together sharing jokes.

-Lewis exhales and turns to his wife and daughter, each with ice cream MUSTACHES.

END MONTAGE

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - MORNING

Lewis' attire has not improved, and he hauls his usual briefcase. The elevator STOPS prematurely and opens.

INT. HEALTH-CO - HUMAN RESOURCES - MORNING

Lewis walks in on AMY and HUGO smoking in their respective office doorframes. They exchange confused looks.

HUGO
Who the hell is he?

AMY
Who the hell are you?

LEWIS
I'm Lewis, the new hire.

HUGO
(chuckling)
YOU'RE the new hire? No wonder they wanted you to come here first.

LEWIS
Doesn't everyone...?

HUGO
No.

INT. HEALTH-CO - HUMAN RESOURCES EXAM ROOM - MORNING

Amy and Hugo look at Lewis like a lab specimen.

AMY

It's bothering you too, isn't it.

HUGO

Yeah.

Hugo holds out a RAZOR and SHAVING CREAM.

AMY

Is this... reflective of your wardrobe?

LEWIS

Oh I don't have a wardrobe. Just a closet.

AMY

I'll leave a few pieces for you.

INT. HEALTH-CO - HUMAN RESOURCES BATHROOM - MORNING

Lewis stands before a mirror. He lathers his face in shaving cream, and shuts off the now full sink. He dips his razor in and slowly shaves off the right side of his mustache. Rinsing the razor in the sink, he puts it to the left.

INT. HEALTH-CO - HUMAN RESOURCES BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lewis rubs his face with a towel, and reveals his freshly shaven face.

INT. HEALTH-CO - HUMAN RESOURCES - MORNING

A SUIT BAG hangs just outside the door. Lewis unzips it.

INT. HEALTH-CO - HUMAN RESOURCES - MORNING

Hugo and Amy are dipping COOKIES in MILK. Lewis approaches, wearing a well fitted GREY SUIT.

AMY

Wow, that mustache really does age.

HUGO

Eh, hairline's on the cusp. It'll balance out.

Lewis touches at his hairline.

HUGO (CONT'D)
Miles of an improvement. How do you
feel?

LEWIS
A little insecure but, other wise
GREY-t.

Amy and Hugo look at him with disappointment.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
By the way, where's my briefcase?

AMY
You won't need it.

LEWIS
My lunch was in there.

HUGO
It sure was.

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - MORNING

The elevator's jazzy tune plays. A whole new Lewis touches
his bare upper lip.

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - MORNING

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

Lewis steps out of the elevator. Conrad stands, crocheting.

LEWIS
Nice to see you again.

Conrad looks up from her yarn.

CONRAD
So nice. I'm to show you to your
office.

INT. HEALTH-CO - LEWIS'S OFFICE (FORMERLY PONCE'S) - MORNING

Conrad walks inside, trailed by Lewis.

LEWIS
This is mine?

CONRAD

Well it was Ponce's. What was his,
is now yours, between these walls,
at least.

LEWIS

It's really nice. Thank you.

CONRAD

Thank him.

Conrad looks above the desk, and Lewis follows her gaze. High against the wall lies Ponce's bloody canvas. Lewis shudders and turns his eyes away.

CONRAD (CONT'D)

Introduce him like an old friend.

She leaves. Lewis looks back to "Ponce." A beat of silence between them. Lewis examines the rest of the office. Two pieces of the wall push in to reveal a small wardrobe. Enough space for a suit or two. A cart hosts a fresh BOTTLE OF BOURBON, along with a few GLASSES.

Lewis sits in the desk. He begins to flip through a ROLODEX of drug info cards. A knock at the door. Goodwin enters.

GOODWIN

Good morning, Mr. Lewis. Who is
this?

She gestures to "Ponce."

LEWIS

This... was Mr. Ponce. He was an
excellent golf player.

GOODWIN

You do learn fast, don't you?

Lewis sits, unable to hide his guilt.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

It won't go away. That thing you're
feeling. You shot and killed
another person.

LEWIS

Am I in trouble?

GOODWIN

We're just two human beings
talking. I want you to succeed.

(MORE)

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
I'm on your side, if your brain is
telling you there are indeed sides.

Goodwin pulls a small BUSINESS CARD from her vest.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Pass me a pen?

Lewis searches the desk blindly.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Top left drawer.

Lewis opens the drawer, and pulls out a PEN. He passes it to Goodwin, who scribbles on the card and passes it back.

LEWIS
What's this?

GOODWIN
That's the time and location for
your daughter's appointment.

LEWIS
It's in 2 hours.

GOODWIN
I did say next day referrals.

Lewis is dumb-struck.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
I'll expect you ready to hit the
ground running tomorrow.
(then)
One more thing.

She pulls out KEYS with a numbered tag on them.

INT. HEALTH-CO - PARKING GARAGE - MORNING

He looks at a slot numbered to match the key. He looks around: all identical black sedans. Lewis fits the key into its door with a CLICK and sits inside.

INT. LEWIS'S CAR - MORNING [DRIVING]

Lewis drives with both hands on the steering wheel.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - - MORNING

Isla helps Kal read a book while they both lay on the couch.

KAL
Mr. Frog re- real-

Realized- KAL (CONT'D) ISLA
Realized.

KAL (CONT'D)
Money could not replace time.

The front door unlocks and Lewis hastens in.

LEWIS
I have a surprise!

Isla comes forward and touches Lewis's face.

ISLA
What did they do to you?

KAL
(scared)
What happened to Daddy's face!?

INT. SINCLAIR'S CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - CONSULT ROOM - DAY

Isla puppeteers a SKELETON's jaw.

ISLA
Even though I'm dead, I've got a
BONE to pick with you.

Kal giggles and hides in Lewis's jacket.

LEWIS
That's a scary boner.

Isla drops the facade and gives him a look of concern.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
I heard it after it came out of my
mouth.

KAL
Daddy, what's a bo-

The door opens. DR FRANKS, 40s-60s, good with kids, enters with a clipboard. The family perks up.

DR FRANKS
 Hello all, I'm Dr. Franks.
 (to Kal)
 You must be the lady of the hour.

Kal opens up slightly.

KAL
 Sometimes.

Dr. Franks giggles.

DR FRANKS
 Well, my dear, I'm looking at your
 labs. I think we definitely have a
 plan.
 (to Lewis)
 Insurance has already pre-approved.
 We can start first thing tomorrow.

LEWIS
 You mean. We can... she can finally
 get better?

Isla puts her hand on Lewis's shoulder.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KAL'S ROOM - DAY

Lewis carries a sleeping Kal to bed, and tucks her in.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lewis and Isla hold hands on the couch.

ISLA
 I really don't have the words.
 Splendor doesn't even begin to
 describe how I'm feeling.

LEWIS
 It's that easy. Stupid insurance is
 all we needed.

ISLA
 It is one of the nation's best
 plans.

LEWIS
 Yeah but... what does that even
 mean?

(MORE)

LEWIS (CONT'D)

We have a series of numbers we hand to the clerk and then we just get fully covered, unlimited treatment for our daughter? Doesn't that seem a little... weird? Shouldn't every kid just have that?

ISLA

I was going to ask. How did you schedule her appointment with it being your first day? I didn't even think it'd kick in for another month.

LEWIS

My boss, Ms. Goodwin, actually booked it for us.

ISLA

Well, we have to have her over for dinner!

Lewis gulps.

ISLA (CONT'D)

And Mr. Ponce too! He was so kind at dinner the other night.

LEWIS

(nervous)

Yeah. That'd be great.

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

Lewis, a few drinks deep, sees Ben. They hug and Ben takes in Lewis's new appearance.

BEN

Dude, what kind of Corporate Fairy Godmother makeover did they give you?

LEWIS

I think it's just the mustache.

BEN

Maybe I should chop mine off too, geez... So? How is it?

LEWIS

It's... they already got Kal in for treatment. Like I said, best plans in the state.

BEN

I couldn't be happier for you, but you know I'm asking about the other parts. Was I wrong?

LEWIS

Best job I've ever had. But hey, drinks are on me now.

Lewis slides Ben a beer. Ben skeptically takes a swig.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Goodwin scribbles notes. Her intercom SCRATCHES with static.

CONRAD (OVER INTERCOM)

August wants to see you.

Goodwin presses the intercom.

GOODWIN

Tell him I'll be up when I'm finished.

CONRAD (OVER INTERCOM)

He's here.

Goodwin massages her temple before pressing the intercom.

GOODWIN

Alright, then.

The doors open. AUGUST, 30s-40s, a behemoth in a suit, enters. He eats a whole PIE. Crumbs stick in his beard.

AUGUST

You know why I'm here?

GOODWIN

I can imagine, but I'd hate to take away the opportunity for you to hear yourself talk.

August sets his pie down long enough to take out a BOTTLE of OXYCODONE, and pops a pill in his mouth, crunching it.

AUGUST

What happened to Ponce?

GOODWIN

We replaced him.

AUGUST

No, don't use "we" here.

GOODWIN

He was a procrastinator who favored golfing over working.

AUGUST

He was our top salesman.

GOODWIN

And I hired someone for half the salary who already sold a five-year contract for coude catheters to Ball-Dold during his internship.

AUGUST

Lemme guess. Sick kid?

(off her look)

You can't run a sales department with stray cats. Momma won't like this.

GOODWIN

Momma is busy enough dealing with other things, and shouldn't be bothered with this.

AUGUST

I bet you'd like that.

August grabs his pie and leaves. Goodwin begins to draw a stick figure stabbing another. Her intercom CRACKLES once again. Goodwin presses it before a message comes through.

GOODWIN

Tell my brother to go kick rocks.

CONRAD (OVER INTERCOM)

It's Mr. Lewis.

GOODWIN

(sighing)

Fine. Sure.

Lewis enters.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Good morning.

LEWIS

It is. In a couple of hours, my girl is going to start chemo. Because of you. Thank you.

GOODWIN

Thank yourself. I didn't shove a catheter in that demented old man.

LEWIS

My wife wanted to... invite you over for dinner.

Goodwin's eyes look up from her notepad.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

As a thank you.

Goodwin hasn't had a moment of sincerity in years. This hits.

GOODWIN

Okay.

LEWIS

We're having shepherd's pie Wednesday.

GOODWIN

I'll grab a bottle of red.

LEWIS

See you at six.

Lewis exits. Goodwin shakes her head, still trying to understand being a recipient of kindness.

INT. HEALTH-CO - LEWIS'S OFFICE - DAY

Lewis shuts his door and paces before looking up at "Ponce."

LEWIS

Thank you. And I'm sorry.

He opens the wardrobe in the corner, and a FULL BODY MIRROR is on one of the doors. Lewis adjusts his tie.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

Isla sets the table. A KNOCK at the door. Lewis rushes to answer but Isla beats him to it. Goodwin stands in the doorway with a BOTTLE of WINE.

ISLA

You must be Ms. Goodwin!

Isla hugs Goodwin, who doesn't reciprocate. Goodwin holds up the bottle.

GOODWIN
I brought a suitable pairing.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Lewis, Isla, Kal and Goodwin sit around the small dinner table as they eat. Goodwin has yet to take a bite, as she keenly watches Kal, who has mashed potatoes on her chin.

KAL
Try a bite, Miss Good!

Goodwin nearly cracks a smile, and takes a bite. Lewis watches, nervous about Goodwin's unpredictable nature.

GOODWIN
Exquisite. Did you cook this yourself?

KAL
(laughing)
No! My mom made this.

Goodwin's eyes shift to Isla.

GOODWIN
This is wonderful. Thank you.

ISLA
Of course! Such a shame Ponce didn't make it.

Goodwin cocks her head to Lewis, who scrambles to find words.

LEWIS
Must've been busy with his family.

He takes a big pull of wine, and Isla sips hers.

ISLA
Such a great pairing. So Ms. Goodwin - haha, so formal!

GOODWIN
You can call me Lyanna.

ISLA
Lyanna. That's nice. Do you have a family of your own?

Goodwin pauses.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - DAY - FLASHBACK

CUE MONTAGE

-Goodwin eats dinner across from PRISCILLA, 20s, her pregnant wife. They feed each other.

-Goodwin flings some food onto Priscilla's cheek. Priscilla runs her finger in the mess and draws on Goodwin's face. - Priscilla turns the RADIO on.

-The two dance in the kitchen as they pull closer.

-Goodwin runs her hand down to Priscilla's pregnant belly.

-Goodwin and Priscilla lean in for a kiss.

END MONTAGE

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - EVENING

Goodwin snaps herself back.

GOODWIN
No. Just myself.

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - MORNING

Lewis walks towards his office with a steaming MUG, nodding to other employees who chat and move about the office.

INT. HEALTH-CO - LEWIS'S OFFICE - MORNING

Lewis stands sipping his coffee. He looks up at "Ponce" and raises his cup in solemnity before walking to his desk. On it sits a FOLDER, which he opens and reads.

LEWIS
Oh, crap.

EXT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - MORNING

Lewis takes a deep breath before approaching the door. He knocks. Lewis glances at the perfect FLOWER BEDS in the yard. Lady Leblanc opens the door and looks Lewis up and down.

LADY LEBLANC
Can I help you?

LEWIS
 Good morning, ma'am. Bart Lewis,
 from Health-Co.

LADY LEBLANC
 Nice to meet you, I'm Lady LeBlanc.

LEWIS
 We've actually met. Last week.

She doesn't recognize him.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
 I bled on your cat.

LADY LEBLANC
 (clutching her pearls)
 The leper!

LEWIS
 I owe you an apology, Lady LeBlanc.
 I'm allergic to cats and I didn't
 want to interrupt.

LADY LEBLANC
 And where is it? This apology?

Lewis sucks it up.

LEWIS
 I'm so sorry.

Lady LeBlanc plays with her necklace, considering.

LADY LEBLANC
 Come in.

August stands on the opposite side of the street, watching
 Lewis. An orange CAT starts rubbing on August's legs. He
 hates it. It lets out a mangled meow.

INT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Lewis sits on the couch, sinking into its deep cushions. Lady
 LeBlanc sips TEA on a couch across from him with her cats.
 They lash their tails and PURR.

LADY LEBLANC
 What are you doing here?

LEWIS
 I came to talk to your husband
 about medications.

(MORE)

LEWIS (CONT'D)
(off her furrowed brow)
And of course to— to apologize.

LADY LEBLANC
I'm what they call immuno-
circumsized.

LEWIS
Oh. I had no idea.

She takes a sip of her tea.

LADY LEBLANC
Something autoimmune. I don't know
what, but at night, I get really
hot, and during the day, my joints
ache.

LEWIS
That's just... terrible.

LADY LEBLANC
So you see why I'm wary of someone
coming in and getting me sick!
That'd just do me in.

Lewis thinks. Consideration in his face. Hesitation, followed
by acceptance. He pulls out the photo of Kal.

LEWIS
This is my daughter. She's five.

Lewis hands the photo to Lady LeBlanc.

LADY LEBLANC
She's adorable. Such pretty hair!

LEWIS
It's gone now.

Lady LeBlanc gasps.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
She's got cancer.

LADY LEBLANC
Oh my goodness... I'm a cancer.

LEWIS
I have to make sure no one around
her is sick. Trust me, it was just
allergies and a dry nose.

Lady LeBlanc sniffles, and reaches towards a TISSUE BOX. She pats her eyes dry. Lewis puts the picture back in his pocket.

LADY LEBLANC
You said you wanted to speak to my
husband, right?

LEWIS
That's the job.

LADY LEBLANC
I'll be right back.

EXT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - MORNING

August looks through BINOCULARS into the house. The cat continues to rub against him, meowing as he pushes it away with his leg. It persists and he puts his binoculars away.

August lifts the cat, pets it, and smiles. The cat releases another mangled meow. His smile turns into a psychotic open-eyed glare. He squeezes the cat, now screeching, as the camera turns towards the house. The cat's muffled screeches halt with a CRACK.

INT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - MORNING

One of the cats hops off the couch, approaching Lewis. Lewis holds out a finger.

LEWIS
Don't you dare.

SENATOR LEBLANC, 50s, comes down the staircase.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Senator LeBlanc?

SENATOR LEBLANC
Where's Ponce?

LEWIS
Change in staffing.

Lady LeBlanc steps in.

LADY LEBLANC
His daughter has cancer.

SENATOR LEBLANC
 (couldn't give a shit)
 That's awful. Sweetheart, pictures
 are soon. Wear your mother's
 necklace?

LADY LEBLANC
 Ooh, the one that goes with the
 silk dress hand made by adolescent
 monks imported from Taiwan?

SENATOR LEBLANC
 That's the one.

Lady LeBlanc kisses his cheek and runs up stairs.

EXT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - BACKYARD - MORNING

The Senator lights a CIGARETTE.

SENATOR LEBLANC
 Sorry to hear about your kid.

LEWIS
 Thanks, I--

SENATOR LEBLANC
 Now that we're past exposition, I
 need something. Something spicy.

LEWIS
 I can do spicy.

SENATOR LEBLANC
 I need some vitamin K.

Lewis stares.

SENATOR LEBLANC (CONT'D)
 Kettlers.

Lewis is really trying.

SENATOR LEBLANC (CONT'D)
 Can you. Get me. Some KET-A-MINE.

LEWIS
 Oh! Ketamine! Yes. I can do that.

EXT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - MORNING

Lewis walks to his car. He pulls out his rolodex of drugs and finds the file. "NOT FOR RECREATIONAL USE."

LEWIS
Ketamine...?

INT. HEALTH-CO - CFO SUITE - DAY

August binges through a BUFFET while sorting through PHOTOS of Lewis. August cracks a LOBSTER and soaks it in butter. An old ROTARY PHONE rings.

August answers, and rests it in the crook of his neck. He shovels food into his mouth as he shuffles photos.

AUGUST
Mhm. Yes? Yeah, I heard.

He ceases his chewing, mid-bite.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
He wants what?

INT. CHEMO CLINIC - DAY

Kal's port is exposed by a CHEMO NURSE.

KAL
Where's daddy?

ISLA
He's at work, my love. We'll get to see him for dinner. I know he'll be so-

Isla struggles to catch her breath.

ISLA (CONT'D)
(short of breath)
So... proud to hear how... how strong you were today.

KAL
(about to sob)
I want him here.

CHEMO NURSE
It'll be okay, little one. How about a buddy?

The Chemo nurse gives Kal a TEDDY BEAR.

CHEMO NURSE (CONT'D)
(to Isla)
Are you okay?

Isla continues to breathe heavy.

ISLA
(panting)
I'll be right back. I just need to-

Isla walks for the exit.

ISLA (CONT'D)
Get some fresh air.

INT. CHEMO CLINIC - HALL - DAY

Isla breathes deep and rapidly. A JANITOR comes to her aid.

JANITOR
You okay? I can call for help.

Isla shrugs him off. Another NURSE ASSISTANT steps in.

NURSE ASSISTANT
What's going on?

JANITOR
I don't know. She's having a real
hard time breathing. You got
asthma?

NURSE ASSISTANT
Here, let me check your vitals.

The Assistant goes for Isla's arm. Isla distances herself.

ISLA
I'm fine. I don't need help, I just
need my inhaler.

Isla pulls out a new INHALER, and takes a puff. The Janitor and Nurse Assistant step back. Isla regains her composure.

ISLA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Thank you. Sorry.

Isla walks back inside.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Goodwin sips a COFFEE and opens her desk's top right drawer. Next to the pistol sit a dozen or so TEETH. She pulls one out and examines it under a MAGNIFYING glass.

GOODWIN
Should've flossed more.

Lewis enters, and sees her examining the tooth.

LEWIS
(ignoring the tooth)
You wanted to see me.

GOODWIN
Yes.

She drops the tooth and magnifying glass.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Senator LeBlanc. Hefty account for a newbie, especially after bleeding on his wife's cat.

LEWIS
It was just an allergy to-

GOODWIN
(wagging her finger)
Aah, aah! I don't care. She's got a room temperature IQ and one too many shots of Botox.

August pulls the door open and stands in the doorway.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
You said tomorrow.

AUGUST
Did I? Whoops.

INT. HEALTH-CO - HALLS - DAY

Lewis and August walk in silence.

INT. HEALTH-CO - MOMMA'S FOYER - DAY

August turns around to stare at Lewis's neck, who's carotid is PULSING visibly. August tightens his fist.

LEWIS

You can burp if you need to. I
won't judge.

August looks at him, still silent. He releases a massive
BELCH. Lewis nods. August continues his escort.

INT. HEALTH-CO - MOMMA'S OFFICE - DAY

August leads Lewis into a regal, tight office. Behind a DESK
sits MOMMA, 50s, the eccentric matriarch of the company.
Momma plucks OLIVES from a JAR, sucking the juice off and
placing them into a BOWL.

AUGUST

Senator Leblanc's account.

MOMMA

Huh? I thought it was the black
fellow.

AUGUST

He replaced Ponce.

Momma looks at August like he's stupid.

MOMMA

Replaced? Jesus Christ of god-damn
Nazareth, are you serious? As in
made into wall art?

(to Lewis)

Well, what do you have to say for
yourself, sad boy?

LEWIS

I'm happy to be here.

MOMMA

I don't give a shit about your
feelings. What's with the Senator?

LEWIS

He asked for some...
(pulls out sticky note)
Ketamine.

MOMMA

Had to write that one down, huh?
(then)
Does no one just do coke anymore?

AUGUST

One of the stronger hallucinogenic
sedatives we make.

MOMMA

August, I couldn't care less. Give
the man black tar heroin or fucking
ibuprofen, as long as he votes for
our bill after next week's
election.

(to Lewis)

Go down to production, little
piggy.

LEWIS

Today? It's almost five.

MOMMA

Do you have somewhere to be?

Lewis pulls his daughter's picture out.

LEWIS

My girl's at chemo right now. I
just wanted to go support her and
give my wife a break.

MOMMA

Oh, God. Don't show me that
depressing stuff.

(to August)

Just get the other guy. The one
with the arm.

She mocks a disability. August pulls Lewis from the chair.

LEWIS

No, I can do it! No problem. This
is important.

Momma pushes the bowl of olives towards him. Lewis looks at
the olives, and to the others. Nothing. He slowly reaches out
to the bowl before grabbing a sucked olive. Momma watches
intently. Lewis tosses the olive in his mouth. He pauses to
spit out the pit. Momma watches, deeply satisfied.

INT. HEALTH-CO - MEDICAL BAY - DAY

Lewis sits on a stretcher talking to LISA, a new nurse. Her
PRECEPTOR watches.

LISA

Sooo, ketamine.

She reaches into her pocket to pull out a VIAL.

PRECEPTOR

Ketamine is one of the strongest dissociative sedatives out there. New laws outlawed it in the clinical setting, but that hasn't stopped Health-Co. Fines are chump change to a place like this.

LEWIS

Is it still... safe?

PRECEPTOR

I'm sure you'll be fine.
(to Lisa)
Shoulder or cheek. Just a quarter-

The Preceptor's stomach rumbles.

PRECEPTOR (CONT'D)

Oh man, not again. You got this! I believe in you!

The Preceptor runs off. Lisa fills a SYRINGE with the drug, unsure of how much to pull out.

LISA

Where is this going, Mr. Lewis?

Lewis exposes a shoulder. She injects the medication.

LEWIS

You've given this before, right?

LISA

My boss tells me I'm supposed to say "yes" but I'm actually still training. I'll be back in a bit to check on you.

She leaves the bay. Lewis begins to become sluggish. His breathing becomes slower and shallow. He begins to salivate.

Lisa re-enters the room.

LISA (CONT'D)

How we doin'?

LEWIS

(slurred)
I think I'm gonna throw up.

LISA
What?

LEWIS
(incomprehensible)
I really don't feel good.

Lisa looks at the vial.

LISA
No... no, no, no.

She looks at Lewis, who has drool rolling down his chin. Lisa begins to panic. She runs out of the room. Lewis slouches in his stupor, occasionally gurgling.

Lisa soon returns with her Preceptor, who eats TOAST.

PRECEPTOR
What the hell?

LISA
I gave him the whole vial!

PRECEPTOR
Ah, buns.

She tosses her toast and releases the brake on the stretcher.

PRECEPTOR (CONT'D)
Grab the doc and bring him to the
trauma room.

She rolls Lewis out of the bay.

INT. HEALTH-CO - TRAUMA ROOM - CONTINUOUS ONE SHOT

The Preceptor locks the stretcher in the middle of the room. Two NURSES start IVs on Lewis's arms, as two AIDES connect Lewis to CARDIAC LEADS. These connect to a small heart monitor continuously printing out waveforms on a paper spool.

A third NURSE keeps a meticulous eye on it.

DR PERONA enters. He makes his way to the head of the stretcher.

DR PERONA
What've we got, kids?

PRECEPTOR
A med error. Patient was given a
full IM dose of ketamine.

DR PERONA
We're bringing that back?

NURSE #1
We know the what, not the why.

DR PERONA
Well, he doesn't look great. Let's
do it.

An aid lays an INTUBATION ROLL and a LARYNGOSCOPE out.

DR PERONA (CONT'D)
Sedate him with another IV dose.

Another nurse hangs a BAG OF SALINE. Dr. Perona places the laryngoscope in Lewis's mouth.

DR PERONA (CONT'D)
Seven and a half please.

An aid places an ENDOTRACHEAL TUBE in Dr. Perona's hand.

DR PERONA (CONT'D)
Is he on the monitor?

TELE NURSE
Yes. Tachy.

DR PERONA
And we have meds on board?

A nurse pushes medication through Lewis's IV.

NURSE #2
They're in.

DR PERONA
In we go then.

Dr. Perona positions the ET tube in Lewis's throat, like he's slowly picking a lock.

DR PERONA (CONT'D)
There we are.

Dr. Perona pushes down on the tube, and Lewis falls through the stretcher, past the floor, and into the-

INT. VOID - CONTINUOUS

Lewis descends through a purple abyss, falling farther and farther.

Eventually he stops, suspended by a breathing tube, cardiac leads, and IV tubing. His black silhouette dangles like a puppet. A FIGURE looms in the distance.

INT. CHEMO CLINIC - DAY

The Chemo Nurse places a BANDAGE on a weak Kal's port.

CHEMO NURSE
Look who made it through.

The Chemo Nurse tries to put a LOLLIPOP in Kal's hand, but she's too weak to hold it.

ISLA
I can take it. Thank you.

Isla takes the lollipop and picks Kal up.

EXT. CHEMO CLINIC - DAY

Isla carries Kal outside, and becomes winded. Isla sets down Kal, who manages to stand.

ISLA
Just a minute baby. Momma has to...
catch her breath.

Isla places her hand on her chest, her breathing becoming more labored. She collapses face-first onto the concrete, the lollipop landing right next to her. Kal rubs her tired eyes, and looks at her mother.

KAL
Mom...?

Kal grabs the inhaler from Isla's purse, and sprays it backwards.

KAL (CONT'D)
Mommy?

INT. VOID

The Figure, his back to Lewis, pantomimes flipping through records. He raises one, and sets it on a record player, and lowers the needle. Nonchalant JAZZ fills the empty space.

Lewis hangs helplessly. The Figure approaches, face still shrouded. His voice BOOMS from every direction.

PONCE
Well, hey buddy.

Ponce takes a step forward. His face is still covered in shadow. Familiar blood stains trail down his shirt.

PONCE (CONT'D)
Fancy seeing you here. Mind if I
pull up a chair?

From nowhere, Ponce pulls a chair, and sits next to Lewis.

PONCE (CONT'D)
I'm happy for you. New job. Nicer
clothes. They even got rid of that
caterpillar on your lip. How about
that?

Ponce leans forward into a streak of light, revealing his mangled shot face. Lewis stirs at this. Ponce runs a finger from Lewis's thigh and stops at his abdomen.

PONCE (CONT'D)
You wouldn't mind if I have a look,
would you? I won't take anything.
Promise.

Ponce angles his hand and pierces Lewis's abdomen. Blood GUSHES out as Lewis's screams through his breathing tube.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - DAY

Goodwin looks at a picture of her wife. She lets out a deep sigh, and pulls out a BOTTLE OF GIN and a GLASS. She pours a finger's worth.

CONRAD (OVER INTERCOM)
You've got a call on holding.
Something meant for Mr. Lewis.

Goodwin downs her gin, presses the phone, and picks up the receiver.

GOODWIN
Health-Co, head of sales speaking.
(a beat)
He's occupied with meetings at the
moment. Can I take a message?
(another beat)
Which hospital?

She quickly hangs up with a CLICK.

INT. HEALTH-CO - PRODUCTION - DAY

Goodwin approaches the Clipboard Lady. The Clipboard Lady straightens up at the sight of Goodwin.

GOODWIN
Where's Lewis?

The Clipboard Lady gets up to escort her.

INT. HEALTH-CO - TRAUMA ROOM - DAY

Lewis lies intubated, the VENTILATOR whirring with each breath. Goodwin paces in frustration.

GOODWIN
God dammit. God dammit!

She pauses the IV infusion. Droplets in the tubings chamber cease. Goodwin leans in to Lewis's ear.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Wake up.

Goodwin rushes out of the room.

INT. GOODWIN'S CAR - DAY [DRIVING]

Goodwin speeds down the road. She shuts the radio off, and adjusts her rear view mirror.

INT. GOODWIN'S CAR - FLASHBACK - DAY [DRIVING]

Goodwin adjusts her rear view mirror. Priscilla lies across the backseat, groaning in LABOR.

GOODWIN
Breathe with me, okay?

Goodwin paces out breaths. Priscilla tries to follow but cries out in pain.

PRISCILLA
Agh, I can't! I can't!

Goodwin reaches her hand in the back, and squeezes Priscilla's. Priscilla SCREAMS and tightens her grip. Goodwin presses harder on the gas.

INT. VOID

Ponce forages in Lewis's abdomen while Lewis writhes.

PONCE

You know, I gotta be honest. Is
this a safe space?

Ponce pauses his digging. Lewis pleads with his eyes.

PONCE (CONT'D)

I don't miss my wife. Not a bit. I
don't miss working. I don't miss
sleeping.

Ponce resumes his digging. Lewis lets out another groan as
bullets of sweat shoot down his face.

PONCE (CONT'D)

But more than anything in the
world, I miss eating. I wanna see
what you had for lunch.

INT. HEALTH-CO - TRAUMA ROOM - DAY

Lewis's finger twitches.

INT. VOID

Lewis continues to writhe his body as Ponce digs.

PONCE

You should come here too. I saw you
come into that office all stressed
and baggy-eyed. We could be
friends. We could do nothing
together, forever.

Ponce reaches DEEP, and pulls out Lewis's STOMACH.

INT. HEALTH-CO - TRAUMA ROOM - DAY

Lewis's hand weakly comes to grip his breathing tube.

INT. VOID

Ponce examines Lewis's stomach.

PONCE
 What's in here? Steak dinner? Pot
 pie? Egg salad?

Ponce fidgets, trying to open the stomach.

Lewis's body jerks upwards, pulled by his lines. The jazz is halted by a RECORD SCRATCH. Ponce drops Lewis's stomach and stands. Lewis's body jerks once more. The two share a look.

PONCE (CONT'D)
 Please don't go. It's so lonely
 down here.

Lewis looks at Ponce with adrenaline-ridden confusion. His body jerks a final time as Ponce watches him ascend.

PONCE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Pleeeeease!!!

INT. HEALTH-CO - TRAUMA ROOM - DAY

Lewis YANKS the tube out of his throat, coughing and gasping for air. Saliva and phlegm string from his mouth to the breathing tube clenched in his hand. He rolls off the stretcher, hitting the floor with a THUD.

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - DAY

The usual jazz plays. Lewis wears only a hospital gown. His sunken eyes show his exhaustion. An ELDERLY WOMAN stands in the corner of the elevator, some files in her hand. She leans as far as possible away from him.

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

The elevator doors open. The woman hurries off. Another person enters the elevator, but quickly retreats at the sight of Lewis. The doors shut.

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - DAY

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

The elevator opens. Lewis staggers out. He notices a plate of JELLY DONUTS, and crudely grabs one.

INT. HEALTH-CO - LEWIS'S OFFICE - DAY

Donut-in-mouth, Lewis heads to the hidden closet, opens it, and changes into a suit. He notices a note on his desk, and reads it. The jelly donut drops to the floor with a SPLAT.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Several patients sit in chairs, awaiting treatment. One man walks with a SALINE BAG hanging on a POLE on wheels. Lewis rushes in, and slams his hands on the counter. He hits a SERVICE BELL rapidly. A SECRETARY greets him with a monotonous voice.

SECRETARY

Need to check in?

LEWIS

Where is my wife? She's here!

SECRETARY

What's her name?

LEWIS

Isla Lewis. Is she okay?

The Secretary combs through a list of papers. Lewis paces anxiously. She stops, reading a file. The Secretary looks at Lewis with sympathetic eyes.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - HALL - DAY

Lewis is lead by DR GREEN, in his 40s.

DR GREEN

Your wife's condition has-

LEWIS

Are we almost there?

DR GREEN

Something I think you should understand is-

LEWIS

I'm listening - I just - I need to see her.

Dr. Green grabs Lewis by the shoulders and pauses their walk.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - ACUTE AREA - DAY

Lewis stands outside his wife's room. Several staff members exit. Lewis walks through them and into-

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - TRAUMA BAY - CONTINUOUS

Equipment and plastic wrappers litter the floor. Syringes, tubing, used gloves. Lewis sees this display of efforts. He looks to the STRETCHER in the center of the room. Isla's pale corpse is covered by a modest sheet. Lewis's jaw quivers as he walks to her. Dr. Green stands behind him, hands folded.

DR GREEN

We did everything we could. My team worked on her for a very long time.

LEWIS

So work longer.

DR GREEN

She had a pulmonary embolism, likely from her recent surgery.

Isla's booted leg peaks out from under the sheet.

DR GREEN (CONT'D)

She had a very long time without oxygen. I'm so, so sorry.

Lewis desperately pulls out his WALLET, and shuffles through some cards.

LEWIS

I have some of the best insurance in the country. You can save her.

Dr. Green places his hand on Lewis's wrist.

LEWIS (CONT'D)

I need you to save her.

DR GREEN

Please take all the time you need. One of our nurses is looking after your daughter.

Lewis drops his wallet, and turns back to Isla. His hand caresses her cheek, and holds her hand. Lewis weeps quietly onto Isla's sheet. In the corner sits Goodwin, silently spectating.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - WAITING ROOM - FLASHBACK

Goodwin paces anxiously. Dr. Green comes to her.

GOODWIN

How is she?

Dr. Green shakes his head.

DR GREEN

The OB floor wouldn't take her, so we tried to deliver down here.

GOODWIN

What? Why?

DR GREEN

She's uninsured.

GOODWIN

Are you daft? She's my wife. I have the best insurance you can find.

Goodwin tries to walk past Dr. Green, who stops her with a hand on the shoulder.

DR GREEN

You don't listen to the news, do you? Legally, the two of you can't be married. So, on paper, she's uninsured.

A look of disgust in Goodwin's eye.

GOODWIN

You're disgusting. I'm taking her somewhere else.

DR GREEN

That's not all...

GOODWIN

I don't live under a rock. I know the baby's dead. Save me your pity.

DR GREEN

Your wife didn't make it either. I'm terribly sorry.

Goodwin's eyes gloss over. A couple deep breaths. Goodwin lunges at Dr Green, sending them both to the ground. She gets a fistful of his hair as she SLAMS his head into the floor. Multiple staff members rush to pull the feral Goodwin.

Goodwin lets out a bloodcurdling SCREAM that echoes through the halls of the hospital.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - TRAUMA BAY - DAY

Goodwin exhales as she watches Lewis mourn.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

A CASKET sits in the bottom of a grave. Lewis, Kal, and Ben stand in black attire. No one says a word. Lewis grabs a fistful of dirt and tosses it into the grave. Kal grabs a small amount and tosses it in. They gradually fill the grave with their hands, and Ben joins in.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lewis, Kal, and Ben enter. They all wear black. Momma sits on the couch, eating PICKLES. Goodwin stands by the window.

LEWIS

What are you doing in my home?

MOMMA

These pickles are... disappointing.

BEN

Bart, who are these people?

MOMMA

Ah-ah-ah! Not your turn to talk.

(acknowledging Kal)

So this is who you're doing it all for.

(to Goodwin)

Put her down for a nap.

Goodwin, head tucked in shame, goes for Kal's hand. Ben tries to stop her. August emerges from behind them and covers Ben's head in a PLASTIC BAG, suffocating him. Goodwin takes Kal to her bedroom.

MOMMA (CONT'D)

So dramatic. Senator LeBlanc is going to win re-election in about an hour, and you need to be there with party favors. My daughter will babysit yours until it's done.

Momma pulls out a BRIEFCASE. Ben kicks as he struggles.

LEWIS
I'm not doing shit if Ben dies.

MOMMA
Ben?

She looks at Ben, who is loosing consciousness.

MOMMA (CONT'D)
Ah, Ben.

Momma snaps her fingers. August uncovers Ben's head, who gasps on the ground. Momma steps over him as she leaves.

MOMMA (CONT'D)
(heading out the door)
One hour!

PRE-LAP: A woman CHEERS.

INT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - EVENING

MUSIC plays. Lady LeBlanc rushes to kiss Senator LeBlanc. Several PARTY GUESTS dance and raise their glasses.

EXT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE/INT. LEWIS'S CAR - EVENING

Lewis is PISSED. The briefcase sits in the passenger seat.

INT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - EVENING

Senator LeBlanc and the party guests drink and chatter. The Senator turns around and spills a drink on Lewis's shirt.

SENATOR LEBLANC
(drunk)
Woah, hey there, weary traveler.
Have you goods? For me?

LEWIS
Sure do.

Lady LeBlanc runs over to put a CIGAR in the Senator's mouth.

SENATOR LEBLANC
(chuckling)
Love you, baby.
(to Lewis)
Out here.

The Senator gestures to the back door.

EXT. LEBLANC RESIDENCE - EVENING

The Senator, Lewis, and a Bodyguard stand outside.

SENATOR LEBLANC

Ah man. It's one thing to win something. It's another for people to choose you to win it.

LEWIS

I can only imagine.

SENATOR LEBLANC

Alright, let's see the goodies.

The Senator opens the briefcase.

SENATOR LEBLANC (CONT'D)

Baby, baby, baby. Hey, why you look so glum?

Lewis searches for words.

SENATOR LEBLANC (CONT'D)

You didn't vote for me. You wanted that socialist dirtbag didn't you?

The Bodyguard steps closer.

LEWIS

It's not that. I didn't even vote. I've been... busy.

SENATOR LEBLANC

Too busy to vote? That's worse than voting against me.

(off Lewis opening his mouth to speak)

I couldn't give a shit. Tell your boss I'm keeping my word. No healthcare for those foreign freeloaders. Not while I'm here. The bill is DOA.

The Senator pulls a BAGGY from the briefcase and tucks it into Lewis's pocket.

SENATOR LEBLANC (CONT'D)

Cheer up, buttercup. We won. Come do a round.

LEWIS

I oughta get going. Gotta get back to my kid. If that's alright.

Lady LeBlanc joins them with a jacket in her hand.

LADY LEBLANC
Oh, Mr. Lewis? I just remembered-

She hands Lewis his old jacket.

LADY LEBLANC (CONT'D)
Our maid fixed this up, though it
does seem your style has improved
since-

LEWIS
(walking away)
Thanks.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Lewis analyzes FLOWERS. He grabs a bouquet. He turns around and bumps into a cart pushed by Melinda, Ponce's wife. Her cart has GLOVES, DUCT TAPE, and FACEMASKS. She scowls at him. The two keep stepping to the same side, trying to pass.

<p>LEWIS Ope. Sorry. I'll just. I'll go left and-</p>	<p>MELINDA Excuse me. Just gonna- if you could. I'm in a hurry. I have to-</p>
---	--

Melinda PUSHES past him with her cart. Lewis falls into the flower stand.

INT. LEWIS'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lewis enters with the flowers to find Goodwin and Kal making ANTS ON A LOG. Kal runs to Lewis and they embrace. He lifts her. Lewis's eyes are locked on Goodwin.

KAL
Who are the flowers for?

LEWIS
For you, baby.

Goodwin takes the flowers and trims the stems with SCISSORS.

GOODWIN
These are nice. I think she would
have liked them.

LEWIS
Why are you still here?

GOODWIN

That's not very host-like of you.

Lewis holds his gaze, his body tense.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

My brother should've stayed behind,
but Momma insisted. He refuses to
control his temper.

She places the flowers in a glass and rubs at her neck.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

Still going to physical therapy for
his last tantrum.

(then)

You should have had your time to
grieve, uninterrupted. I'm sorry.

Goodwin leaves as Kal falls asleep in Lewis's grasp.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - OFFICE - NIGHT

Goodwin sits and rubs her temples. Her canvas sits before her, nearly finished. A perfect blood spatter. She draws more blood from herself with a syringe, and gets to touching up its edges. A knock at the front door. Goodwin turns her head.

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

Ben join Lewis, who is already drunk.

BEN

Sorry for the holdup. I lost track
of time. Still pretty shaken from
earlier.

LEWIS

Sorry.

BEN

No, man, I'm sorry. You're going
through this scary ass job, all
while Isla... Wait, who's watching
Kal?

LEWIS

She's fine. Sleeping.

BEN

Do you think we should at least
drink there? I mean, your kid has-

LEWIS
Cancer? Oh man, I had no clue.
Thank you doctor.

BEN
I'm just trying-

LEWIS
Trying to tell me how to be a dad?
I wanted to vent to my brother.
Thank him for being there for me
when I had to bury my wife while my
five-year-old watched. Maybe tell
him how horrifying the last week
was. "How was work, Bart? Did you
make any new friends?" Actually, I
did. The guy who trained me, and
whose job I took over. And you
wanna know what I had to do to get
it? You wanna know the best part?

BEN
You're scaring me.

LEWIS
(whispering)
I shot him in the mouth. Listened
to him choke on his own teeth.

Lewis drinks Ben's beer.

BEN
We should tell someone.

LEWIS
Who should we tell, Ben? Should I
write a novel? Maybe I can turn it
into a one-man show and tour the
country before they put me in jail.

BEN
Dude, I just want to help.

LEWIS
I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP!

Everyone in the speakeasy looks at them.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
There's no way out. It's done.

Lewis grabs his keys and stumbles out. One of the spectators
is Melinda. She downs her drink.

BARTENDER
'Nother round, Mel?

She stands and gets ready to leave.

MELINDA
I stayed here for quite a while
tonight. Closed the bar out. You
even gave me a ride back home.

BARTENDER
(catching on)
I did. You were very thirsty.

She points to her head. The Bartender mimics her.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

Goodwin cracks the office door. She walks to the front and
looks through a peep-hole: August. She cracks the door, the
CHAIN-LOCK still in place.

GOODWIN
What?

AUGUST
Need to talk.

Goodwin groans before unlocking and opening it. August walks
past her. He looks around her home.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
(CONT'D)
This is depressing. You call this
moving on?

GOODWIN
Ironic coming from someone who's
assaulted all his therapists.

AUGUST
The case was thrown out.

GOODWIN
Good lawyers do that.

AUGUST
We need to nix the new guy.

GOODWIN
The new guy that just secured the
Senator's vote?

AUGUST

He's not gonna keep quiet.
Should've finished the brother.

GOODWIN

Fresh off his wife's funeral, and
he still got the job done. He's a
closer.

August pulls out his Oxycodone bottle, and pops a pill into
his mouth. He walks to her FRIDGE and searches for a drink.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

(sarcastic)

Please, help yourself.

Turning to the sink, he fills a GLASS with water.

AUGUST

Closer or not, I'm telling Momma.
She has her doubts too. Better
start interviewing.

August notices the bloody painting through a cracked door.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

What the hell is tha-

He starts to choke on his pill. He reaches for his throat,
indicating to Goodwin.

GOODWIN

I've never been that great at
charades. You want... a necklace?
No... Your tie is cheap and doesn't
match your suit? Oh! You want me to
save you? Should I? I don't know.
Your office is pretty nice.

August drops to the ground with a THUD.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

I wonder how different this felt
from the guy you choked today.
Choking from the inside versus the
outside. Momma would be a wreck if
you died, you being the favorite.
Okay, fine. Say please.

August mouths a "please."

GOODWIN (CONT'D)

That's a good dog.

She tries to hoist him up.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
I can't lift you myself. Get your
ass UP!

He raises up, saliva running down his chin. Goodwin hits him in the back with her fist. Nothing. She hits him twice more with no effect. His lips are BLUE as the veins in his forehead bound and swell. Goodwin turns August towards the counter, pressing his chest against it. She throws her whole body into him through her shoulder.

A blue pill SHOOTs across the room and rolls across the floor. August INHALES and coughs. He's too proud to thank anyone, but his eyes can't hide it. He briskly walks out. Goodwin turns the sink off.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Melinda checks her watch and hastens her walk.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Goodwin notices her office door is open.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Melinda puts on GLOVES and a FACEMASK.

INT. GOODWIN'S HOME - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Goodwin takes her canvas, and wraps it in paper.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Melinda reaches under a BENCH and pulls out a PISTOL attached with DUCT TAPE.

EXT. GOODWIN'S HOME - NIGHT

Melinda crosses the street to Goodwin's home. She COCKS the pistol. August steps out of the front door, still catching his breath. She raises the gun. August turns to see Melinda.

AUGUST
Hi...

A tense beat.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
 You want money? I'm the richest man
 you'll find. I'm a Goodwin.

Melinda tightens her grip on her gun.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
 How's a thousand dollars sound?
 Right now?

August reaches for his coat pocket. Melinda shoots him in the head. August's eyes roll back as he tumbles down. Blood drips from Goodwin's door, like the canvases. Melinda sprints away. Goodwin steps out with a GUN and looks down at her brother.

INT. LEWIS'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

An alarm BUZZES. Lewis's arm flails trying to silence it, knocking over a BOTTLE of LIQUOR.

INT. LEWIS'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MORNING

Lewis turns the SHOWER on.

INT. LEWIS'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Lewis drinks JUICE from the carton while Kal eats cereal.

INT. LEWIS'S GARAGE - MORNING

Lewis, dressed for work, helps Kal into the car.

INT. HEALTH-CO - MOMMA'S OFFICE - MORNING

Momma screams and trashes her office. She throws anything and everything. Goodwin ducks anything coming her way.

GOODWIN
 Momma.

Momma pulls down a BOOKCASE.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
 Momma!

Momma flips her desk. Goodwin steps to her and slaps her across the face. Momma pauses her tirade.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
 Mother. The board is voting in
 fifteen minutes.

MOMMA
 I don't give a bloody goddamn about
 the board. How could you talk about
 the board right now? August is-

GOODWIN
 Dead. Right now, he can't help us,
 but we need to focus. We don't have
 the majority without him.

MOMMA	GOODWIN (CONT'D)
I have lost everything! I bet	No. No, no. How could you say
you're happy about it, too.	that?

MOMMA (CONT'D)
 No more big brother to be in your
 way. That's it isn't it? I bet you
 hired the spineless coward who shot
 him!

Momma sweeps her hair behind her ear.

MOMMA (CONT'D)
 We're doing a full sweep after I
 talk with the board.

GOODWIN
 (shocked)
 A full sweep? The whole house?

MOMMA
 Down to the last body. It's too
 dangerous to leave this house up
 and running.

GOODWIN
 Does that include me?

MOMMA
 We'll see what the board says.
 (then)
 It should've been you.

Momma walks out. Goodwin holds back tears.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - MORNING

A tear drop falls on a POLAROID of Goodwin and August.
 Goodwin shelves the photo and walks to the terrarium.

GOODWIN
Come on out, sweet pea.

She takes the snake out.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Sometimes I envy you.

The snake crawls up and around her neck. Goodwin "hugs" her back. The snake looks up to the canvas above Goodwin's desk. Goodwin looks at the canvas, then her snake.

GOODWIN (CONT'D)
Today it is.

INT. HEALTH-CO - GOODWIN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Wrapping paper sits, crumpled in the trash. Goodwin's home painted canvas hangs above her desk.

INT. HEALTH-CO - DAYCARE - MORNING

Kal nervously clutches her teddy bear.

LEWIS
I'll come get you after work, okay?

KAL
(tearing up)
I miss mommy.

Lewis crouches down.

LEWIS
I miss her, too. A whole lot. She was a perfect mom. Wasn't she?

KAL
Yeah.

LEWIS
Don't you think she'd want to see how brave you are?

KAL
Are you going to leave me, too?

LEWIS
No, baby. We can't get you to the doctor if I don't work. I'm doing this so you can stay with me.

KAL

And if I don't go to the doctor,
does that mean I go with mommy?

Lewis is stunned.

LEWIS

I love you. We'll get through this.
Together. I'm coming back, okay?

KAL

Promise?

She extends a pinky. Lewis wraps his pinky around hers.

LEWIS

Promise.

Goodwin watches from a distance.

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - MORNING

Lewis walks into an empty sales department and checks his watch. Shrugging it off, he grabs a DONUT.

INT. HEALTH-CO - LEWIS'S OFFICE - MORNING

Lewis swaps his donut for a glass of bourbon, and downs a few. He sits, face in palm. A knock before Goodwin enters.

GOODWIN

Liquid breakfast?

LEWIS

Gotta get the charisma from
somewhere.

GOODWIN

I saw you drop off Kal. She's lucky
to have you. Which is why I think
you should take her and leave.

LEWIS

Leave? As in have the day off? I'm
fine.

GOODWIN

I was sent here to take you
upstairs for an evaluation with
Momma. But I think you belong
somewhere else entirely. This isn't
the place for you.

LEWIS

If I don't have this job, I don't have a house, I can't pay bills, I don't have treatment for Kal. I won't have a family anymore.

GOODWIN

We can figure something out.

LEWIS

I went and locked in your political puppet an hour after Isla's funeral. I'd think I'd be in good standing. I'll go talk to her. Kiss the ring and all that.

Lewis leaves his office as Goodwin follows.

INT. HEALTH-CO - SALES - CONTINUOUS

Lewis heads towards the elevator.

GOODWIN

It's a bad idea.

LEWIS

Oh, is it? Is that because I'm going to get fired, or because I'll get moved somewhere you won't be able to control me anymore?

GOODWIN

You haven't even been here a month.

LEWIS

And I've accomplished more in that time than some have in a year.

Lewis steps into the elevator. Goodwin stands just outside.

GOODWIN

Some things are more important than a job.

LEWIS

What's more important than food on the table?

The elevator doors close.

INT. HEALTH-CO - ELEVATOR - MORNING

Lewis stands alone in the elevator. The elevator's jazz grows louder. Twinges move through his body. It's almost like he's... dancing. The music builds, and just before he fully commits, Lewis opens the elevator door with his bare hands and steps out into:

INT. LIMINAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Lewis dances his way through an entirely white liminal space, his movement graceful. The growing jazz number fills the area. His movements switch back and forth from small and graceful to trembling and jerky, almost like something is possessing him.

His movements grow twitchier. Veins bulge from his neck. He tries to close his eyes, but can't yet. Lewis accepts this. Maybe he is stuck here, in this dance forever. This brings a calmness over him.

CUE MONTAGE - VARIOUS

-Isla cooks a roast dinner.

-Kal, with all her hair, runs to Lewis, who scoops her up.

-Isla and Lewis gaze into each other's eyes over candlelight.

-Lewis continues to spin in the liminal space.

-Isla attempts poorly at charades while Lewis and Kal wheeze through laughter.

-Isla and Lewis lean in to each other for a kiss over candlelight.

-Lewis continues to spin and spin, his eyes remaining closed.

-Lewis and Isla's lips grow even closer, almost touching.

-Kal's hand grabs the rope of the CANCER BELL, and swings it forward.

SFX. ELEVATOR BELL

END MONTAGE

INT. HEALTH-CO - MOMMA'S FOYER - MORNING

The elevator door opens. Lewis hangs in the frame of the door, sweating. Lewis exits the elevator. Several JANITORS MOP the floor. Each Janitor is large and strong.

LEWIS
Hey, is Momma in?

The Janitors stop at once. They all turn to the office door.

JANITOR 1
She's waiting for you.

A Janitor wrings out RED water from his mop into a bucket. Lewis walks, nearly slipping on the floor. A Janitor catches him by the arm.

LEWIS
Woah, thanks.

A Janitor places a CAUTION: WET FLOOR SIGN. Lewis proceeds into the office.

INT. HEALTH-CO - MOMMA'S OFFICE - MORNING

Momma blows her nose into a tissue and tosses it into a BIN full of tissues. Her makeup is running.

MOMMA
There's the sad boy.

LEWIS
I heard you wanted to talk to me.

MOMMA
Let's talk with you standing right over there.

Momma gestures to a blank CANVAS. Lewis's smile fades into slight confusion. His eyes flick between Momma to the blank canvas.

LEWIS
There?

MOMMA
Mhm. In front of that.

LEWIS
Right...
(realizing)
In front of that.

Momma pats her eyes with a tissue. Lewis turns and sprints out of the room.

INT. HEALTH-CO - MOMMA'S FOYER - DAY

Lewis runs and slips on a wet spot on the floor. One janitor grabs him. Lewis punches him in the face, and flees. The janitors chase after him. Momma enters the doorway, a PISTOL in her hand, watching the men subdue Lewis.

The janitors each carry Lewis by a limb. Lewis kicks one of them in the chest. Another janitor brings his elbow down on Lewis's arm with a CRACK, splintering blood and bone. Lewis SHOUTS as another one gags him with his own tie.

The cluster of men enter the office. Momma shuts the door. Muffled groans and cries carry through the wall before a GUNSHOT leads us into silence.

CUT TO BLACK.

SFX. LAUGH TRACK

INT./EXT GOODWIN'S CAR - DIRT ROAD - DAY [DRIVING]

Goodwin turns the radio down, stifling the laugh track. She adjusts the rear view mirror to reveal Kal in the backseat.

GOODWIN

How're you doing, sweet pea?

KAL

I'm hungry. Where are we going?

Goodwin searches for an answer. Her eyes return to the road. She turns the radio's volume up, presses the gas, and leaves a trail of dust.

CUT TO BLACK.