

Cinema Four

EXT. BROOKLYN SUBWAY STATION - GOLDEN HOUR

A foggy sunrise over Flatbush, Brooklyn.

The subway rolls into an above ground station.

ZEV (mid 20s) wearing khakis and a blazer, walks off the train and down to the street. Despite his clean look, his sneakers are worn and dirty.

At the street corner, he pauses to gather himself. He glances down at his pocket at a scrap of paper with scribbled directions.

Checking the cross streets once more, he heads off.

INT. THEATRE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The movie theatre CREW is sprawled across the management office, dejected after a long and grueling meeting.

ALAN (60s) the owner of Cinema Four, cigarette in hand, with brandy nearby, has his head down at his desk scribbling into an accounting notebook. He's a tired looking man, with worn features from years of keeping the theatre afloat.

Behind Alan is a large spread of old photos and newspaper clippings from the theatre's heyday.

The crew are wearing vintage tweed uniforms; each crew member has their own twist on the outfit pertaining to their personality. All of them have some sort of red neck accessory (scarf, tie, pocket square, etc):

JIMMY (early 30s) is the theatre's manager. Short, glasses, receding hairline, with a whiney speaking voice. He sits closest to Alan, with a clipboard and street-cart coffee.

MARY (early 30s) is the theatre's curator. Bohemian and militantly liberal. Covered with tasteful poke and stick tattoos.

CONNIE (early 20s) Asian American. Airy, floaty, and a sweetheart. Keeping her hair up with a bandana, she's the only one sitting on a stool, legs crossed.

ROBERT (late 20s) derives his look and demeanor from his heroes Andrei Tarkovsky and Peter Bogdanovich. A filmmaker himself, with no credits, he wears a neck scarf and sunglasses.

WARREN (late 20s) is a rotund metrosexual man with a buzz cut, he sits next to Robert with a Diet Coke in hand and an empty one to his left.

CHARLOTTE (mid 20s) is the theatre's projectionist. She stands away from the table, against the wall with one leg up. Tall with long brown hair, she has an air of sophistication lacking in the rest of the group.

CONNIE
(child-like excitement)
I've got it!
(pause)
Why don't we just, rope it off?

There's a moment where the idea hangs.

JIMMY
Connie, if you rope it off, the
second row *becomes* the first row.

MARY
Our problem isn't the construct of
the front row. We're talking about
distance.

JIMMY
(throws his arms out in
complaint)
Distance is a construct. It's
completely relative to your
perspective of the 3-D world.
Robert...

Robert is unresponsive.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
(snapping)
Hey, Robert...You with us? We need
you.

Warren, who is sitting beside Robert, nudges him subtly.

ROBERT
The devil's in the details, but so
is salvation.

Robert gets out of his chair and saunters to Jimmy, who hands him a letter from Alan's desk.

Robert scans it, then glances at Jimmy. He offers the letter back to Jimmy.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
I'm not allowed.

The letter has "confidential" stamped on it.

JIMMY
(snatching the letter)
Screw it - "The Brooklyn Borough
Small Claims Court has ruled in
favor of the plaintiff. Cinema Four
LLC must pay \$1,607 dollars and 39
cents to the Levine family for
injuries sustained during the
Berlin Alexanderplatz movie
marathon."
(skimming)
"rampant negligence..." "past
trauma..."
(finding the important
part)
"Damages cover the purchase of nine
AirFlow Max neck braces and \$75
dollars per person in pain and
suffering."

Robert sighs deeply.

ROBERT
(to Mary)
Wasn't this during Satantango?

MARY
It was a double feature.

JIMMY
How did nobody notice, for twenty
five straight hours,
nine...litigious... individuals?
(glaring at Charlotte)
Charlotte! You didn't think that
was a touch strange? An empty
theatre and a packed first row?

CHARLOTTE
(quick retort)
It's a free country!

JIMMY
At least alert The General!

CHARLOTTE
Don't even try to bring this down
on me!

(MORE)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
The General thinks he's in
Guadalcanal with Sean Penn. You run
this place, own up!

ALAN
(to Jimmy)
She's right.

JIMMY
(to Charlotte)
You two are the only ones in the
screening room, that's all I'm
saying. I need you to do better.

CHARLOTTE
So now I work the projection booth
and security? Does it come with a
raise?

JIMMY
Connie, can you go find The General
please? He should be here to defend
himself.

Connie gets off her stool and exits the office.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Connie walks quickly through the lobby.

Zev is peering through the glass entrance doors and sees her.
He knocks politely to get her attention.

Connie sees Zev and approaches the door. She takes a quick
glance at her watch - 8:57am.

She pulls a blind from above the door which reads "CLOSED" to
the outside.

She quickly walks away from the door, paying no mind to what
Zev was there for.

INT. THEATRE OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Alan puts his pencil down and looks up at his staff. The
crew, including Jimmy, turn and wait for him to say
something. Alan takes a moment, wiping his mouth with his
hand, in hesitation of delivering bad news.

ALAN
You know how much this hurts me...

WARREN

Rip the band-aid! Rip it off!

ALAN

Covering the neck braces comes out to \$68 for each of you for the next six weeks.

The room falls silent.

MARY

What about pain and suffering?

JIMMY

Jesus Christ, Mary, we're all suffering!

ALAN

No, no, he's right. You've all done enough keeping us afloat.

MARY

(to Alan, kindly)

We share in losses AND we share in the profit. When things pick back up, you'll be stuffing our envelopes.

JIMMY

This place hasn't turned a profit in 15 years.

Connie comes back into the room, followed by Zev, who has his hands zip-tied behind his back. THE GENERAL follows closely into the office after him.

THE GENERAL, a middle aged man dressed in a commander's uniform, studded with military accolades. Years of chain smoking has left his voice permanently raspy. He is clearly insane.

THE GENERAL

I found him creepin' around outside.

ZEV

(sheepish)

I -

CHARLOTTE

Oh so he sees a customer standing outside six minutes before we open and he's got a guy in shackles? Great.

THE GENERAL
 (to Zev, a whisper audible
 to all)
 She's about as dry as a new nun's
 nest.

There's a silence as the group examines Zev.

ZEV
 I'm here for the concession stand
 job. Or Zaidenberg told my mother I
 should stop by.
 (timid)
 He said Alan would be expecting
 me...

Alan's eyes light up. He stands to greet Zev warmly.

ALAN
 That would be me son. Come on in.

Alan walks over and warmly greets with him an outstretched
 hand, which cannot be reciprocated by Zev who is still
 detained.

ALAN (CONT'D)
 (to The General)
 Free this man.

The General begrudgingly cuts the zip-tie with an army knife.

THE GENERAL
 (muttering)
 Big mistake. Big. Huge.

WARREN & CONNIE
 (in unison)
Pretty Woman!

Warren and Connie giggle.

JIMMY
 (to Zev)
 You ever work in a movie theatre?

ZEV
 No. I used to work for my uncle,
 but he recently went under.

WARREN
 He has experience with failing
 business, seems like a perfect fit.

JIMMY
(ignoring Warren)
Ever work with food?

ZEV
A few summers ago, I was a delivery
driver for Nathan's in Brighton.

WARREN
You're replacing *Isaac* with a guy
who drove around in a hot dog
shaped truck?

MARY
I kind of agree with that.

JIMMY
(to the crew)
But we don't know when he's coming
back or if he'll ever even walk
again.

MARY
What are you some kinda ableist
now? You can sell Sour Patch
sitting down.

ROBERT
That's Oscar Meyer, not Nathan's.
Nathan's is just a regular truck.

The group looks at Zev for the truth.

ALAN
(to Zev)
Well?

ZEV
He's right, it's just a painted U-
Haul.

Mary begrudgingly accepts this information.

JIMMY
(to Alan)
What do you figure this does for
the payments?

Alan thinks for a moment.

ALAN
Probably gets you down to about 18,
17 a person.

Jimmy takes this as a strong point for Zev's employment.

ALAN (CONT'D)

(to Zev)

You'll learn that we're a very democratic bunch, so I say we put this issue to vote, shall we? All in favor of - what's your name son?

ZEV

Zev Stern.

ALAN

All in favor of Zev here to join us, say I.

JIMMY

(unenthusiastic)

I.

WARREN

(lukewarm)

I.

MARY

Nay, for nepotism.

CHARLOTTE

(doesn't care)

I.

CONNIE

(sweetly)

I.

WARREN

(shaking Robert)

Robert.

ROBERT

I, abstain.

ALAN

And the "I's" have it.

(shaking Zev's hand)

Welcome to Cinema Four.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - NEXT DAY

It's been a slow afternoon at Cinema Four with not a single customer in sight. Zev is at the helm of the concession stand for his first day on the job.

The theatre lobby sits unchanged from a 1990s renovation. Tough times have left upkeep an unmet priority and it's become quite clear. The shabby carpets and peeling wallpaper are the first of many indicators of a theatre in decay.

On one end is a glass concession counter, in the center a circular lounge, and at the far end, a velvet couch that's survived since the theatre's opening in the 1940s. A hallway extends to the screening room, and a set of stairs leads to the balcony and projection booth.

Robert and Warren come as a pair behind the concession stand without acknowledging Zev's existence and pour themselves sodas.

WARREN

He was drunk on set. I won't stand for that on my crew. He's a bastard and a filthy drunk.

ROBERT

He's been sober for 25 years; he's the best technician in town.

WARREN

How could you tell? You're constantly in outer space!

ROBERT

Yeah so were The Beatles, but you never saw their crew stumbling around turning up the amps to 11. You just think he's a homophobe.

WARREN

He was reading a John Ford biography. He likes John Wayne, who played Genghis Khan for Christ's sake!

ROBERT

So what? Maybe he think's they're cute.

WARREN

The Searchers is practically genocidal. How can he shoot our movie toting a 1950s vision of masculinity?

Mary comes into the theatre with a large brown paper bag filled with lunches.

Jimmy exits Alan's office and walks towards the Mary. Mary hands out subs to Warren, Jimmy, Robert, and Connie.

WARREN (CONT'D)

Did you remember, no vinaigrette?

MARY

(to Warren)

Of course.

(to Connie)

Connie, sweetie, I texted you and you never replied. They were all out of tofurky and I knew you wouldn't eat cold cuts, so here's some French bread.

CONNIE

Wee wee.

Jimmy takes a couple of bites and scurries over toward Zev.

JIMMY

Sorry, pal, where were we?

ZEV

Press the cup against the metal and the soda comes out.

ALAN (O.S)

(from across the lobby)

Jimmy!

JIMMY

Hey Mary, do you mind?

Mary walks behind the counter to join Zev. She picks up where Jimmy left off.

MARY

Okay... So, you've got your fountain, snacks, popcorn, pump, napkins, straws, and miscellaneous. And we're cash only, but giving our fair share to the Uncle Sam is a pillar of what it means to work at Cinema Four. So, don't lose the receipts.

ZEV

(serious)

Understood.

MARY

Also, we have a strict no outside snacks or beverage policy. Before each showing, we search a few patrons at random.

(low voice)

Between you and me, it's always the seniors, but we don't want to seem ageist.

Mary opens a cabinet under the stand revealing an assortment of snacks in a basket labelled "contraband".

MARY (CONT'D)

After the show they can pick up whatever we confiscate, but they almost always forget. After a week, we put the good ones back up for sale.

Zev ruffles through the bin.

Two OLD GRANNIES walk into the theatre. Mary glances at them.

MARY (CONT'D)

(chuckling)

You know, when I picked *Salò*, I never thought we'd pack the house with golden girls.

ZEV

(lying)

I know exactly what you mean.

Zev watches Mary go over to the ticket counter to meet the old ladies. He surveys the lobby. Connie and Warren stand by the velvet rope separating the lobby from the screening rooms.

The two women approach Connie. GRANNY #1 has a tote bag that clearly has a bottle of soda and some snacks in it. GRANNY #2 has a walker with an IV drip. They hand their tickets to Connie, Warren stands by.

CONNIE

(to Granny #1)

Hi ladies, can I see some tickets?

Granny #1 has the tickets for the two of them. She hands them to Connie.

GRANNY #1

The theatre sent me these, for my birthday.

CONNIE
 Well happy birthday!
 (looking at the ticket, it
 has a "x" marked on it)
 Oop! Looks like I'm going have to
 conduct a snack search.

GRANNY #1
 What?

CONNIE
 Do you consent to be searched by
 this gentleman here?

GRANNY #1
 Don't you dare touch me with your
 thorns.

WARREN
 Thorns ma'am?

GRANNY #2
 Horns, thorns! We don't want you
 hopped up looking for something
 sweet.
 (gesturing to Connie)
 She can do it.

Warren shoots a glance to Connie.

WARREN
 Actually ma'am, I... enjoy men.
 She...
 (gesturing to Connie)
 enjoys men *and* women. So
 technically, she'd be the thorny
 one.

The grannies are visibly confused. Connie sees the situation
 getting sticky and quickly shuts it down.

CONNIE
 Never mind! Enjoy the movie ladies.
 And happy birthday!

The grannies walk past them into the screening room.

Over at the concession counter, two INDIE TEENS are waiting.
 Zev, engrossed by Connie's interaction, does not notice them
 approach.

TEEN #1
 Hey bozo, wake up.

ZEV

Oh, sorry. Welcome to uh... Cinema
Four, what can I get for you?

TEEN #1

Cokes and licorice for both of us.

ZEV

Sure thing, uh, we've got Red Vines
is that cool?

TEEN #1

Sure.

Zev rings them up.

ZEV

That'll be \$18.84.

The teens pay, take their snacks, and walk away.

Zev sees the rest of the crew including Jimmy gathered off to
the side on the velvet couch eating their sandwiches
together.

MARY

I just don't know what we're going
to do.

JIMMY

We did fine, seven tickets for a
Tuesday evening. What do you want,
a full house?

CONNIE

Two of them were comped. Birthday
tickets.

JIMMY

Shit, Connie, we stopped the
birthday tickets years ago.

Zev watches them chat, feeling alienated by himself at the
stand. He looks down below the counter at a ziplock bagged
PB&J.

He throws on his jacket and sticks the sandwich in his
pocket.

He approaches the crew.

ZEV

Hey Jimmy, mind if I take my break
now?

JIMMY
 (mouthful of sandwich)
 Sure, go ahead.

Zev walks away from the crew and exits the theatre to the street.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - MOMENTS LATER

The grannies are watching the movie. The granny with the IV drip removes tube from her arm and puts it in her drink.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - LATER

There is a calmness in the lobby.

Zev is at the stand, elbows on the counter, coming to terms with the slow pace of his new workplace. He's within earshot of Robert and Warren, who are huddled around a payphone.

WARREN
 Hello? Hi Mr. Galowitz thanks for
 joining the line - no we were just
 talking shop, we're ready when you
 are.
 (listening)
 Uh huh. Okay. Here's Robert.

Warren nudges Robert. Robert doesn't take the phone.

ROBERT
 (whispering)
 Talk me up!

WARREN
 (a touch frantic)
 Robert, Robert, he's a great guy,
 he's the next big thing, what else
 can you say?
 (away from the receiver to
 Robert)
 What else can I say?

Robert snatches the phone.

ROBERT
 Hello? Mr. Galowitz?
 (pause)
 Yes, yes. Just to warn you - it's
 very literary - very expressive - a
 bit nebulous, so it can hard to
 describe.
 (MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

It's about a kid who grew up in New Jersey. He's spent his entire life looking across the Hudson at the Manhattan skyline.

Warren pulls the phone in-between them.

WARREN

So close, yet so far.

ROBERT

Exactly. The only time his parents ever let him go into the city was on a school field trip, to the Met, in the late 90s. And that's the New York he fell in love with, the one from the 90s. And so he grows up, spending every day, every waking moment, fantasizing about the city. Then he gets a little older, he gets to be more independent, and his parents agree to let him go into the city.

WARREN

On the bus.

ROBERT

On the bus, that's right. He gets there and hates it. Nothing's right, it's full of chain restaurants, it looks like a shit version of Disneyland. So he's sad, horribly sad, and he sets out to document the end of the city, capture those last gleaming images of authenticity.

WARREN

And then it becomes like a documentary. It's an entirely new type of movie, not completely fiction, not completely documentary.

ROBERT

(to Warren)

I could've said it better myself.

(in receiver)

It's not even about characters, really. It's about motion, movement, sensation. Have you seen *Koyaanisqatsi*?

Robert looks confused.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Hello?

WARREN

Mr. Galowitz? It's Warren now.

(listening)

What do you mean he has no credits?

Yes, we discussed this; he's up and coming.

(putting the receiver to
his chest)

He doesn't wanna invest, you're an unknown. It's too risky!

Robert furiously grabs the phone.

ROBERT

Do you know why you're going nowhere in life? Because you've got no imagination. This is like 1966 and you've got an Italian kid on the line by the name of Marty Scorsese - ever heard of him - and you "just don't see it working out". Congratulations you've played yourself.

Robert hangs up the phone emphatically. A beat of silence.

WARREN

(whispering)

He's the new president of Miramax.

EXT. THEATRE - AN HOUR LATER

Zev walks out of the theatre. He looks through the glass doors back into the lobby. The crew are by the concession stand chatting jovially. Alan walks over to Jimmy on his way out and says something to him. Jimmy nods. Charlotte walks by them and Zev opens the door for her.

CHARLOTTE

Thanks, have a good night.

ZEV

You too.

She walks down the street.

Zev begins to walk away from the theatre toward the subway.

Jimmy pokes his head out of theatre doors.

JIMMY

Hey, Zev!

Zev turns.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

You got five? Come, let's get your uniform fitted. He's right across the street.

INT. TAILOR SHOP - MINUTES LATER

Zev is on an elevated platform in front of a triple mirror getting measured by a TAILOR.

Jimmy is watching silently over his shoulder as the tailor continues measuring.

The tailor disappears to the back room. It's just Zev and Jimmy, staring him down.

The tailor comes back with a tweed jacket.

Zev's outfit is revealed, showing his red tie and concession stand hat.

Jimmy smiles at Zev, who blushes. He turns and steps down. Jimmy shakes his hand.

JIMMY

Welcome to Cinema Four.

EXT. TAILOR SHOP - LATER

Zev and Jimmy are outside, the crew comes out of the theatre across the way.

Jimmy and Zev walk across to meet them

ROBERT

Lookin' sharp.

ZEV

(sheepish)

Thanks.

MARY

We're heading off.

The crew heads off, Zev stays standing outside the theatre.

They stop, realizing he's not there.

MARY (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

ZEV
I don't know.

MARY
Well, c'mon then! And sorry about
the nay.

Zev comes to the group and they walk down the street.

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mary's apartment is in the trendiest section of Bushwick,
Brooklyn.

The group is seated across the living room, on the couch or
on the floor. On the coffee table in the middle are Chinese
take-out boxes. None of them have food yet.

MARY
Zev, it's tradition in these
outings that someone say a few
words. Either to honor our
privileges or take pause to mourn
an act of injustice or just be
grateful we're alive. And as the
newest member of our group, I ask
if you could do tonight's honor.

ZEV
(blushing)
Let me think for a second...
(to Mary)
Could the other girl not make it?

MARY
What other girl?

ROBERT
He's stalling. I did the same
thing.

ZEV
The brunette on the other side of
the office.

JIMMY
 (dismissive)
 Oh Charlotte? She's the
 projectionist.

MARY
 She's on the other side of the
 river, if you catch my drift.

ZEV
 Is something wrong with her?

WARREN
 (chiming in)
 Let's just say she orders her sushi
 one piece at a time.

MARY
 No, we used to invite her, but
 she'd never come. She's just a
 Manhattan girl, there's nothing bad
 about that per se. Not everyone
 wants to be authentic.

JIMMY
 Speak for yourself. She cost us
 some serious cash. She's
 practically devastated Zev's first
 check.

ZEV
 Huh?

JIMMY
 Heads down everyone.

The rest of the group close their eyes and bow their heads.
 Zev looks at this and closes his eyes as well.

ZEV
 (singing softly)
 Shalom aleichem, malachei
 hashareit, malachei elyon, mimelech
 malchei ham'lachim, hakadosh baruch
 hu. Boachem l'shalom, malachei
 hashalom, malachei elyon, mimelech
 malchei ham'lachim, hakadosh baruch
 hu. Bar'chuni l'shalom, malachei -

THE GROUP
 (ending the prayer short)
 Ahmen.

Zev opens his eyes in surprise, having only done half the prayer.

CONNIE

(exhale, deeply moved)

Wow, that was special... What was it?

ZEV

My torah portion, what I can remember at least. It's been years since my Hebrew school days, I don't keep up much with it now.

MARY

What does it mean?

ZEV

Um, something like, "Peace be to you, ministering angels, messengers of the Most High, the supreme Sovereign, the Holy, and the Blessed One." More or less.

JIMMY

So you're from Israel? We're really sorry about all that. I couldn't imagine.

CONNIE

Yeah.

ZEV

Oh... no. It's fine. My family's been here for generations. My great, great grandfather was the accountant for the Mayflower.

WARREN

(impressed)

So you're a real Brooklyn guy.

JIMMY

You don't really talk like one.

ZEV

There were all types of kids in the neighborhood, so I never really picked it up.

MARY

Gentrifiers.

JIMMY

You must love *The Lords of Flatbush*.

ZEV

Is that show about Brooklyn? My parents were pretty strict with the TV...

MARY

(pointing to one of the Chinese boxes)
Con, can you pass that?

She passes Mary the box. Mary takes hold of it and looks at the top, which has "LG BT" is written on on it.

ZEV

(hesitant)

If... you're ever free on a Friday night, my family does a dinner. You'd probably like my dad, he's the real Brooklyn guy you're thinking of.

CONNIE

We'd love that.

The group agrees.

MARY

(showing it to the group)
This is what I like to see. Small businesses standing up and aligning themselves with what is right and putting ideals above profit.

Jimmy is opening various boxes on the table looking for a specific dish.

WARREN

Does anyone have the large beef teriyaki?

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Zev is standing in the living room next to a record player with Robert, Warren, and Connie.

ROBERT

Stop stop stop. What you're saying to me is, you haven't seen *The Godfather*?

ZEV

I think I've seen it, but it was probably a few years ago. I remember the horse's head and guy with the cheeks -

ROBERT

(laughing)
And who's he?

ZEV

The Godfather. I'm not sure of who though, do we ever find that out?

ROBERT

No it's a big secret. What's the Godfather's name?

ZEV

I can't remember. Something with a "D"? Donald maybe?

ROBERT

Yes, Don! Are you sure you haven't seen it recently? And who's his son?

ZEV

His son in the movie or real life?

ROBERT

In real life, Marlin Brando yeah. No, in the movie!

ZEV

He wasn't really in the movie much I think.

ROBERT

You have to watch Part 2 for that.

ZEV

There's two of them?

Warren and Connie are giggling.

ROBERT

Three, if you can believe it.

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

Mary is washing plates. Zev walks in with utensils and cups and brings them to the sink.

MARY

Oh my gosh, you totally don't have to do that, I'll clean up the living room when everyone heads home.

ZEV

No worries, I'd like to help. I didn't give you any money for the food or the beers.

MARY

It's my treat.

ZEV

Thanks.

MARY

We do this all the time, you should come again.

ZEV

I'd like that.

He smiles, Mary reciprocates.

MUSIC grows from the living room.

WARREN (O.S.)

Get in here!

Mary puts down her dishes and heads out, pulling Zev with her. Camera remains in the kitchen as we hear jovial dancing.

FADE TO:

INT. THEATER LOBBY - SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER

On a quiet night in the theater, Zev stands behind the concessions organizing a Mrs. Fields cookie display. He is clearly more comfortable at his post.

Jimmy comes in and does his rounds, eventually getting to Zev.

ZEV

(lifting the bin to Jimmy)
Contraband's running low.

JIMMY

Tell Connie to up the searches.
I'll run to the bodega.

Jimmy turns away.

ZEV

Hey Jim -
 (he turns back to Zev)
 What's this movie all about? I
 can't understand a word.

JIMMY

You've never seen *Breathless*? Go
 catch the ending! It's incredible.

Jimmy heads to the exit.

Zev smiles and goes to pull a grey box out from behind the register, opens it up to double check its contents, then closes and locks it, slipping the key into his pocket. He picks up the box, labeled CONCESSIONS, and quickly walks it over to a slot underneath the ticket booth.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - MOMENTS LATER

A crowd of about 20 PEOPLE sit in the dark theater, a mix of geriatrics who consider Alain Delon a contemporary and college-aged kids trying to impress their peers. A crevice of light spills in from the opening of the door to the lobby as Zev slips in. He walks a couple rows in, both completely empty, and takes an aisle seat.

Zev's face is transfixed as the final notes of *Breathless*--featuring NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE--play. Zev remains glued as the house lights drift on and the rest of the audience starts to shuffle out. Dazed, he looks around at the crowd, mumbling inaudibly.

The last of the audience shuffles out, and the overhead lights burst on. Soon a voice is heard over the intercom.

CHARLOTTE (O.S)

Thank you for coming to Cinema
 Four. Please make your way to the
 exit, as the film has concluded.
 Enjoy the rest of your evening, and
 please come back again soon.

Zev gets out of his seat, and paces to the middle of the auditorium, looking up in the direction of the projection booth.

CHARLOTTE (O.S) (CONT'D)

Oh!
 (small laugh)
 (MORE)

CHARLOTTE (O.S) (CONT'D)
 I was starting to worry we had
 another cadaver on our hands.
 Shawn, right?

ZEV
 Zev!

CHARLOTTE (O.S)
 I can hardly hear you. Come on up!

Zev points, looking for affirmation, in the direction of the exit.

CHARLOTTE (O.S) (CONT'D)
 Yeah, that way.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

The projection booth is cramped with old boxes that look like they haven't been stirred since the silent era. Green-walled and cavernous, the back consists entirely of projection equipment and the front has only a small desk atop which sits a lamp--the room's only light source--and various papers. On the wall surrounding the desk are movie schedules and various notes left from technicians and former projectionists.

After a knock on the door, Charlotte opens it and welcomes Zev in as if it were her home.

CHARLOTTE
 Welcome! Come in! Don't mind the
 mess...

Charlotte is cleaning items off the tables to tidy-up.

ZEV
 Sorry it took me a second... it's
 like dungeon of darkness coming up
 here.

CHARLOTTE
 Those lamps died years ago. It's a
 miracle I've never taken a tumble.

ZEV
 I'd catch you, but I'm not very
 strong.

CHARLOTTE
 (smiles)
 My sincerest apologies, I never
 formally introduced myself.
 (extending her hand)
 (MORE)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Charlotte Ladue. Head
projectionist.

ZEV
(extending his hand)
Zev Stern.
(they shake)
I didn't even realize there were
seats up here.

CHARLOTTE
It's overflow for the orchestra,
which has actually only happened
when the basement flooded.

Charlotte unloads the reel from the projector. She shows Zev.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Isn't she a beauty?

She lets him take a hold of it.

ZEV
Wow... I just barely caught the
ending. What did he do? Seemed
dramatic, he was stumbling for a
while.

CHARLOTTE
You've never seen *Breathless*?

ZEV
I didn't even know it existed until
about fifteen minutes ago.

CHARLOTTE
You're doing your life a disservice
if you've never heard of Godard.

ZEV
I haven't seen that one either. I
like movies, but I haven't seen any
of the ones you guys show here. A
couple of years ago I saw
Reception, which you probably
showed. I don't remember much
besides the buildings went like
this.
(making a bridge with his
hands)

CHARLOTTE
(being sweet)
Inception I think is what it was if
I'm remembering correctly. We've
never run it but Mary loves
Memento. She's the curator, black
hair...

ZEV
Yeah, she invited me to her
apartment with some of the others.
They're very nice.

Charlotte grins. Theres a short silence.

ZEV (CONT'D)
I asked about you.

CHARLOTTE
Oh really?

ZEV
They said something about sushi?

CHARLOTTE
Mary thinks if you don't spend
summers sweating in your studio
next to the L train, you're somehow
missing out.
(switching the subject)
Anyway, you should try to catch
this from the beginning, we're
running it again tomorrow morning.

ZEV
I'd like that a lot.

EXT. THEATRE - MOMENTS LATER

Zev and Charlotte exit the theatre together. She locks up.
Zev starts to walk away from the theatre.

ZEV
Are you headed this way?

CHARLOTTE
Oh, I'm waiting for my car...

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Taking the train out all the way to
the west side would take hours,
it's just not worth it.

Zev shows some surprise.

ZEV

You come all the way to Flatbush
for this?

CHARLOTTE

You'd be surprised, there are so
few art house theaters still
standing. I'd go practically
anywhere to find a booth.

(looks up at the showcase
bill)

It's really special Alan can keep
this old bag alive.

There's a short silence.

ZEV

So you grew up in the city?

CHARLOTTE

Pretty much, I'm from Short Hills,
and then moved into the city after
school.

A black Mercedes rounds the corner at the end of the street,
headed towards the theatre. As Charlotte heads to the car,
Zev follows to open the door for her.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

If you liked *Breathless* you should
check out *Vivre sa vie*. It's my
favorite.

ZEV

Viv-ra say vee?

CHARLOTTE

"My Life to Live."

ZEV

I'd like to think so.

Charlotte smiles, and takes a seat.

CHARLOTTE

Goodnight, it was nice to formally
meet you. Stop by the booth
anytime; I mean it.

Zev closes the door.

The car takes off down the road. Zev watches it for a second, then turns and walks down the empty street.

INT. ZEV'S ROOM - LATER

Vivre sa vie is playing on Zev's TV. He looks befuddled, but intrigued.

FADE TO:

INT. THEATER LOBBY - A FEW NIGHTS LATER

Zev is back behind the counter placing a few new boxes of snacks under the glass. Warren is laying on the lobby couch reading through a script. Connie walks up to the counter.

CONNIE

We gotta get going to set up before Mary gets home. We're meeting Jimmy at Party City.

ZEV

You can go ahead, I don't think I'm up to hang tonight.

CONNIE

What?! You have to! It's her birthday! It's going to be a surprise.

(leaning in a little)

We got her a cake.

ZEV

Oh, well -

WARREN

(still reading)

You can't miss a birthday.

ZEV

I don't have a gift or anything.

WARREN

Volunteer for the photo wall.

ZEV

(slightly disappointed)

Alright... I'll pitch in for supplies. I gotta close out, I'll meet you at the train.

CONNIE
 (smiling)
 Okay!

Connie turns towards Warren and the two walk towards their cubbies together. Zev watches them walk away for a moment then grabs a large soda cup and a box of Finnish Fish. He fills the cup up with soda, puts a lid on, looking around to see if anyone is watching. Assured the coast is clear, he slips out from behind the counter and heads up the stairs to the projection room.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

Zev is standing in the dark, narrow hall on the balcony, outside of the projection room--lit only by the light of the movie screen--takes a deep breath, and TAPS on the door. He waits a second, then, when there's no answer, KNOCKS a little more forcibly.

The door opens a little, revealing Charlotte, who playfully but sternly motions for him to be quiet.

CHARLOTTE
 (whispering)
 I'm not supposed to open the door.

ZEV
 (whispering)
 You're doing great, I just wanted to bring you some snacks.

CHARLOTTE
 Thank you.

Charlotte grabs the soda and candy from Zev while trying to keep the door barely cracked. She lets the door fall, but Zev catches it.

ZEV
 (not whispering)
 I watched Vivra say vee!

CHARLOTTE
 (slightly irritated)
 Shhh! That's great. I have to get back.

Charlotte ushers the door closed.

ZEV
 (enthusiastic)
 Okay, bye!

With the door shut in his face, Zev makes a big smile and heads down the stairs.

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

All the lights are off. There was a make-shift attempt at decorating. The group is sprawled across the living room in various hiding spots.

Zev and Connie are crouched down behind the couch. Behind them, on the wall, are a set of photographs. They are of male's thighs and penises. Zev is examining them with Connie as they await Mary's arrival. They are speaking in low voices.

CONNIE

Mary's really done a wonderful job with these.

ZEV

She took these?

Jimmy scoots over to them from his spot.

JIMMY

I came up with the idea.

CONNIE

It was brilliant.

JIMMY

(whispering)

When's the last time you went to the Met and saw a room full of Richards? Never. And when you finally see David, he's got the pecker of a school boy. I'm no art historian but I'd be real surprised if Michelangelo's ever painted flat-chested woman.

ZEV

I've been to the Met on a middle school trip, I remember they had these little turkey sandwiches that we got for free.

JIMMY

If we want to get past the way bodies are objectified in society we need to destroy the phallic fallacy.

ZEV

Where does Mary find her subjects?

CONNIE

Friends and family mostly. That's Jimmy and... that's Robert. She'll probably ask you at one point or another, once you're more comfortable.

Mary puts her key into the door and unlocks it.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Ooh shh! She's coming!

Mary comes into the living room and flips the lights on.

JIMMY, ZEV, CONNIE, WARREN, ROBERT

Surprise!

The group blows KAZOOS and POPs confetti. Mary jumps with surprise and glee.

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Mary is sitting on the floor with a slice of cake, a sash around her which says "birthday bitch" and a birthday tiara. Warren is next to her wearing New Years Eve style glasses that spell out "WH OO RE". Robert and Jimmy have some tassels and other birthday gear. Zev is listening to the group discuss as he picks at his slice of cake.

MARY

(mouthful of cake)

All I'm trying to say is that in a profit-driven society, your brain doesn't get a chance to ponder the bigger questions of existence. If we equalized society, then we could be free to come into ourselves and create real art.

JIMMY

Nope, I'm sorry, I just don't buy it. Where would art be without the oppressor? It's our most potent medium for protest and expressing dissent against mainstream ideology. What'd Keith Haring be up to if there was no drug epidemic amongst the urban poor?

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Art is a response to pain and in your fantasy world of equality, there's none of it. And when there's no pain, there's no gain.

WARREN

Nobody's ever said such a stupid thing in their lives. You can gain quite a lot from no pain.

ROBERT

Back in the Soviet Union, everyone was completely equal across race and religion. It freed their minds. It really did. They weren't consumed by money and power and fame. The mind is able to wander without the burden of thoughts that come along under a capitalist regime. That free-thinking environment produced Andrei Tarkovsky, the greatest poet to ever walk this earth. He didn't make movies to become some Hollywood fat cat, he just lived to love and loved to live - and who can blame a guy for wanting that.

JIMMY

What a crock of shit. The only thing they were looking for in the "zone" was a god damn Chase Bank.

MARY

You know what, I don't want to say it - it's disgusting, but it's obvious and it's true, and it's my obligation.

(a pause)

Art is, and has always been, driven by the masculine ego. "Art is beauty, beauty is art." It's been like that from the start. There's no scientific reason why men should crave thick bottoms and slim waists.

MARY (CONT'D)

If it was never perpetrated as the "ideal," maybe the world wouldn't be so twisted.

ZEV

Does anyone want more cake?

MARY

When we were hunting and gathering, which men got their pick'ins first? The strongest. But as we developed into modern society, us girls became a bit more discerning. The weakest guy in the room could have his pick if he was a poet or a painter or a scholar.

WARREN

It's like why attractive men are never funny. It's either the short ones or the fat ones or the Jewish ones.

MARY

All I know is regardless of the "-ism", art was developed by the male ego vying for the attraction of a woman. Us females need not make art, we just have to wait around with a low cut shirt.

WARREN

Explains Van Gogh. Poor guy wasn't revered until 100 years later. He was so horned up by the end of it all, he chopped his ear off just to feel something.

They nod in agreement. "That's true," "yeah."

MARY

At the end of the day when the roosters come to roost, the hard truth is that a man sees a female artist and thinks, "wow, we're going to have so much to talk about after sex". And a woman sees a male artist and thinks, "wow we're going to have so much to talk about during dinner."

(eating a mouthful of
cake)

And that's the fuckin' problem.

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT, FOYER - LATER

It is later in the evening. Warren is grabbing his coat. Zev is passing through from the kitchen.

ZEV

You're headed out?

WARREN

I'm headed up for a fag on the roof.

(to the living room)

Anyone game?

JIMMY

Absolutely.

CONNIE

I don't want to smoke a full one, Robby, can we split?

ROBERT

I was going to sprinkle some of my dust for a spliff, but you're free to ride along.

Everyone besides Mary groups in the foyer. Zev turns back to Mary as the group is halfway out the door. He stops and takes his coat off.

JIMMY

You're not coming?

ZEV

I don't want leave Mary alone. It's her birthday.

MARY

No it's alright, that's sweet of you for asking. I don't have the vice privilege, not even second-hand.

Zev stares blankly at her.

MARY (CONT'D)

Take a billionaire and a man sleeping on the street. When the rich man gets stressed or tired or wants some euphoria, he can get a massage or go to Mohegan Sun. Have you ever seen a homeless person at Mohegan Sun?

ZEV

I've never been to a Mohegan Sun.

MARY

The poor man's options for a smile are dope, cigarettes, and cheap alcohol. All of which are detrimental. The rich man's "vices" are all beneficial, or at the very least, in his control. And therefore, it's completely absurd that those of us that are aware of our privilege would engage in vices reserved for those less fortunate.

ZEV

But don't we *all* drink?

MARY

Do you know how many antioxidants are in a glass of red wine?

JIMMY

It's nothing against Mary, we love her. Long before you joined us, we discussed our class prerogatives at length. She's the only one of us that has an allowance. So she gets to live in this beautiful apartment, and we can smoke cigs on the roof.

Zev looks to Mary, he's unsure.

MARY

Really, it's fine.

EXT. MARY'S APARTMENT, ROOFTOP - MINUTES LATER

The group, minus Mary, are up on the roof, smoking cigs. They are overlooking the Manhattan skyline in the distance. They sit in comfortable silence. After some time, Warren breaks the quiet.

WARREN

Do you think we'll still hangout when the theatre finally dies?

JIMMY

Probably not.

Little grins across the rest of their faces besides Zev.

ROBERT

(regarding Manhattan)
Where dreams go to die.

They sit in comfortable silence, as they stare at the shimmering eastern rim of Manhattan.

FADE TO:

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - MORNING

Zev is standing outside the theatre.

A black Mercedes pulls up and Charlotte gets out of the car.

Zev lights up as she meets him by the entrance.

ZEV

Hey!

CHARLOTTE

Oh hey -

(she smiles)

Thanks so much for the candy last night. Sorry I like hushed you away like that.

ZEV

I understand... I'm the same way at the stand; I hope I didn't disturb you.

Zev holds the door as she walks in.

CHARLOTTE

No, not at all. You said you watched *Vivre*, what'd you think?

ZEV

It was beautiful. It happened so quickly. I'd love to watch some more if you could point me in the right direction.

The two stop at the crossroads between the concessions counter and the projection booth. Charlotte turns to Zev.

CHARLOTTE

If you like French New Wave... oh, I know, *The 400 Blows*. That's essential viewing.

Zev finds the title slightly humorous.

ZEV

(with a smile)

I'm on it.

CHARLOTTE
(talking low)
Tonight's last movie ends pretty early. If you don't have anything going on, I could play it for you here. It really deserves the silver screen.

ZEV
(surprised by the offer)
I'd like that a lot. Are you sure we're allowed?

Charlotte heads to the stairs, up to the balcony.

CHARLOTTE
I'll see you later!

Zev gets behind the counter and puts on his concession stand hat.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

Later in the evening, the lobby is unusually lively. Robert is on the couch, rolling a joint. Warren and Connie are painting their nails, and Mary is in the ticket booth, counting money, with the door cracked. Jimmy and Alan talk in the office, while Zev nervously snacks on popcorn behind the counter, occasionally glancing up at the clock.

ZEV
(to Warren)
How long is *Throne of Blood*?

WARREN
Isn't it like two hours?

Zev looks at the clock.

At that moment an old, wild-haired OLD WOMAN marches out from the theater, paying no attention to the sheer amount of noise she makes as the door to the auditorium opens and then crashes behind her. She winces at the shock of the sound, but out of self concern, not fear of interrupting anyone else's viewing experience.

OLD WOMAN
Oh, thank God.

The old woman turns to Warren and Connie and gives them a crooked smile.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
Nachos, young man, with the hot
cheese sauce. Don't skimp out on me
now.

ZEV
Oh m'am, I'm sorry, we don't have
any more pump cheese. We stop
heating it up when the final film
starts.

OLD WOMAN
No pump cheese?!

ZEV
No m'am, I'm sorry. The cheese is
cold.

The old woman looks to the popcorn machine.

OLD WOMAN
(cranky)
Give me a jumbo corn.

Zev looks at the machine, which has about enough for two
small bags, left.

ZEV
It was made some time ago ma'am.
It's probably stale.

OLD WOMAN
Let me try.

ZEV
Uh... sure.

He picks her one kernel and offers it to her.

OLD WOMAN
Forget it. Hopefully the movie's
almost over anyways. You know it's
not even in English? If I wanted to
read I'd go to a library!

ZEV
I know what you mean.

OLD WOMAN
You're a sweet kid, but this place
is a dump!

The old woman looks back at Warren and Connie with a smile.
Then proceeds to go back into the theater.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)
Back to China!

Warren and Connie look at each other and start to laugh.

MARY (O.S)
Hey, Zev?

ZEV
Yeah?

Mary comes out of the ticket booth and approaches Zev.

MARY
If a customer wants cold cheese,
just sell it to her, okay?

Zev hands Mary the cash box.

MARY (CONT'D)
You coming over tonight?

ZEV
I have something going on actually.

MARY
You do?

CONNIE
Zev! You're a part of the rat pack
now, you can't just not show up!

ZEV
I'm still in the pack, I just need
the night off.

MARY
Is it because I gave you a hard
time about the popcorn?

ZEV
No, no, I have a thing with my home
friends tonight.

MARY
Because I know you were just trying
to do what's right by the customer,
and you know I'm a good person
globally, but the theatre needs
every dime we can find. Meredith
might be getting stale cheese, but
we give the community art.

ZEV

Yeah, yeah, I get it totally. We're still on for Sunday, right?

MARY

Shabbat Sunday? Of course.

ZEV

It's a bit nontraditional, but my parents are promising the authentic experience.

MARY

We can't wait.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - CONTINUOUS

The final scenes of *Throne of Blood* play on the movie screen.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - MINUTES LATER

The crew has their stuff and are headed for the door. Zev is counting cash at the stand.

JIMMY

Cya, kid.

ZEV

Night guys, have fun.

They say goodbye and all exit the theatre, leaving Zev alone.

There's a NOISE by the stairs and Zev turns to see Charlotte.

The General comes out of the screening room.

CHARLOTTE

(whispering)

Get down!

Zev ducks down as The General emerges into the lobby with a broom and pale.

THE GENERAL

The hoi polloi have left the building!

CHARLOTTE

I'm just about to lock up, are you all set?

He jumps into a salute and heads to the door.

THE GENERAL

(head down to himself)

Hey, that's my seat, buddy! No it's not! Yeah, well tell it to this! Pyaw! The Sunnyside Samurai. I just gotta get me some geishas. That Connie chick's probably pretty cute in a kimono, huh?

Zev is under the counter listening, confused.

EXT. THEATRE - MINUTES LATER

Charlotte is locking the door with The General beside her.

THE GENERAL

Sorry, it's just once you've been in the jungle...

CHARLOTTE

I can imagine... Goodnight!

She starts walking away. The General stays fixed peering through the entrance door glass. Charlotte rounds the corner out of sight.

Zev is shrouded in darkness. Only the lights from the soda machine remain. He peeks up and sees The General staring in.

THE GENERAL

(singing quietly to himself)

There's just something about being afraid...

EXT. BACK DOOR OF THEATRE - MOMENTS LATER

Charlotte is outside the back door trying the handle. It's locked.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Zev crawls on hands and knees out of the lobby.

EXT. BACK DOOR OF THEATRE - MOMENTS LATER

Zev opens the door from inside.

CHARLOTTE
(smiles)
Hey.

ZEV
He's scary. What war was he in?

CHARLOTTE
The Battle of Boerum Hill.

ZEV
I think he saw me.

Walking into the theatre.

CHARLOTTE
He's legally blind. I'm going to
run and get set up, just don't turn
on any lights.

ZEV
Should we not be doing this?

CHARLOTTE
(smiling)
Too late now.

Charlotte jogs up the stairs and Zev makes his way towards
the concessions.

Bathed in the glow of the soda machine's light, Zev fixes two
sodas. DANKE SCHOEN begins to play, softly, over the
theatre's speaker system. He fills two small bags of the
purportedly stale popcorn, which he proceeds to douse with
Flavacol. Finally he grabs a box of candy and heads towards
the stairs, an extra bounce in his step.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

Zev jogs to the top of the stairs, jerkily, and pauses a
minute to catch his breath. He walks up to the projection
booth door and gives it a KNOCK. A second later the door
opens, Charlotte inside fiddling with the projection
equipment and holding the door open with her foot.

ZEV
(smiling)
Refreshments.

CHARLOTTE
Thank you. Get comfortable.

Charlotte removes her foot from the door and it begins to fall closed.

ZEV

Oh are you not --

The door SNAPS shut in his face.

Zev proceeds down the balcony steps, taking a seat on the top row, directly under the projector. He sits down and gets comfortable. He sneaks a few glances up at the projector window to see if Charlotte is looking at him. She is not. The projector clicks on and the OPENING NOTES of *The 400 Blows* begin to play.

A closeup of Zev's face reveals disappointment that he'll be viewing alone. He settles in to watch and about 15 seconds later the projection booth door is heard opening and closing. Zev looks to his right and sees Charlotte descending the steps to where he's sitting, taking the seat next to his.

Tension escalates quickly and after some consideration, Zev grabs her hand. She squeezes back, and as the soundtrack to the film crescendos they both settle in to watch the movie, hand-in-hand.

Some time later as the final notes of the film play. Zev and Charlotte are arm-in-arm, making out. The sounds of the ocean from the film play in the background.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. ZEV'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

MRS. SHERYL STERN (50s) with heavy makeup, pearl earrings, and a fur coat is sitting on the couch in the living room watching television. The room is meek and unchanged from its original 1970s decor.

The doorbell RINGS. Sheryl immediately props her self up, wanting to look good for her incoming guests. No one immediately goes to open door.

SHERYL

(yelling)

Shlomo! Get the door!

Zev comes through the hallway to the door.

He opens it, revealing Jimmy, Robert, Connie, Warren, and Mary waiting outside. They are all dressed nicely. Jimmy is holding a plastic-wrapped shrimp cocktail.

ZEV

I can't believe you actually showed up...

INT. ZEV'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

A large, long dining table is covered nicely with a tablecloth and already set for dinner. Everyone is seated, with the men wearing yamakas. At the table besides the crew is Zev, his mother, and his father, SHLOMO STERN (50s) in a white dress shirt buttoned halfway with a white tank top underneath and a gold Star of David chain. He speaks like an old-timey Brooklyn Jew. Shlomo is up at the head, with his wife to his right, Zev to his left, and the rest of the crew filling in the remaining seats. Sheryl is almost non-stop drinking wine.

MARY

(to Mr. / Mrs. Stern)

Again, we're terribly sorry about the shrimp cocktail, we had no idea. It was so inappropriate, we feel terrible.

SHLOMO

Nonsense! You were never briefed! Zevvy has always had that special non-attention to detail.

Zev is regretting his decision to invite the crew, while the crew is loving every second of it.

SHERYL

Start already, they're starving!

SHLOMO

Alright, alright.

Shlomo stands.

SHLOMO (CONT'D)

I hope Zev told you, we don't do the rituals much anymore, but he told us "give them the authentic experience!" So in about 30 minutes, Zevvy will be crying, she'll be off the manashevitz, and I can give you all a ride to the J.

ZEV

Dad, please.

SHLOMO
 Okay, first we light the candles.
 We're just going to use the menorah
 because I couldn't find a candle
 holder but this is what we use on
 Hanukah so it's all still very
 Jewish, don't worry.

Shlomo lights two candles in the menorah.

SHLOMO (CONT'D)
 (to the crew)
 Like this -

He waves his hands in front of his face three times and
 covers his eyes. Everyone mimics him.

SHLOMO, SHERYL, ZEV
 (singing)
*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh
 ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav
 v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel
 shabbat.*

ZEV
 (a few moments after the
 prayer)
 You can open your eyes.

The crew is thoroughly enjoying the show.

CONNIE
 That was beautiful.

SHERYL
 Zevvy, sing *Shalom Aleichem* with
 your father. It's been years, it's
 a special night.

ZEV
 Mom, please don't do this.

ROBERT
 We want to hear it, Zevvy.

JIMMY
 C'mon!

Zev resigns. He gets up and stands next to his father.

SHLOMO
 We are welcoming the angels to our
 home, to our dinner, on this
 beautiful night together...
 (MORE)

SHLOMO (CONT'D)
 one, two, three,
 (silently mouths "four")

SHLOMO, ZEV
 (singing)
Shalom aleichem mal'achei hashareit
mal'achei elyon.
Mimelech malchei...

The doorbell RINGS, interrupting the singing.

No one gets up to get it and the crew look at Shlomo, Zev, and Sheryl, like "why are you not getting up to answer it" and they are staring back blankly. A few moments pass.

SHLOMO
 (to the air)
 Oh I'd love for a bit of a breeze.
 I wish just by chance maybe the
 door would open. If only the door
 would fly open.

The crew is confused.

ZEV
 (whispering to the crew)
 We can't work after sundown.

SHLOMO
 (to the air)
 Oh how I'd just love for a nice
 breeze from an open door, it would
 be sublime. If only there was a goy
 nearby.

There's a silence. Warren gets up with uncertainty.

WARREN
 (uncertain)
 I guess I can get it.

SHLOMO
 (to the air)
 Oh thank you so much, what a great
 idea you thought of.

INT. ZEV'S HOUSE, FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Warren opens the door to see Charlotte, holding a bottle of wine, and a taxi driving off behind her.

CHARLOTTE
(sweetly)
Hi.

WARREN
(surprised)
Oh, hi... I didn't know we were
expecting you.

Charlotte smiles and walks past him inside.

INT. ZEV'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Charlotte comes into the dining room followed by Warren.

Sheryl is passing out bowls of matzah ball soup.

MARY
(surprised)
Woah!

The crew look up to see Charlotte. They are stunned. They
look at Zev.

CHARLOTTE
(to her hosts)
I'm sorry I'm late. I'm Charlotte.
Thank you so much for having me.
(handing the bottle to
Shlomo)
It one of my father's favorites.

Charlotte holds the bottle out in front of her.

SHLOMO
(to Charlotte)
Oh, what a lovely gift! Thank you,
thank you! Shlomo Stern. A
pleasure, please sit.

Sheryl pulls up a stool in the corner edge of the table in
between Mary and Jimmy.

SHERYL
(to Charlotte)
Here you are sweetie, I'll get you
a soup. How many balls?

CHARLOTTE
Uh... two please.

She takes a seat on the stool.

Mary exchanges looks with Jimmy. She pours him and herself glasses of wine, and then hovers over Charlotte's glass.

MARY

I'm sure it's not as good as what
you brought.

CHARLOTTE

That's quite alright.

Mary pours her a full glass to the brim.

Sheryl comes back with the soup and places it front of
Charlotte.

MARY

(mockingly)

Just like Sadelles.

Jimmy smiles slyly at the joke. Charlotte does not dignify it
with a response. Robert, Warren, and Connie are exchanging
looks.

SHLOMO

I grew up with Benny Sadelle. We
used to cut school together and
catch a matinee at The Avalon. In
the morning, he would stop at the
Respoli's, get a bag of rainbow
cookies - and it wasn't about a
movement back then, that's just how
they made them. He'd come into my
bed with his feet at my head,
completely kosher, and we'd sleep
until about three or four. Then we
would walk down to 15th Street and
watch a picture and eat our rainbow
cookies. I remember when I was 12,
I snuck in to *Bullitt*. With Steve
McQueen, I bet you kids don't even
know that movie.

JIMMY

(interrupting)

Oh we do. 1968, directed by Peter
Yates.

SHLOMO

(surprised)

Oh, that's right, very good.

(continuing his story)

(MORE)

SHLOMO (CONT'D)

I remember there was an Albanian woman in the back of the theatre who would stroke your thigh for a nickel, and for a dime she'd rub your back and say she was proud of you.

(he lights a cigarette)

I miss the old 'Bush. It was all candy stores, delis, and dentists. Now its coffee shops, Korean foot spas, and coffee shops. Who needs so much coffee and acupuncture?

CHARLOTTE

I heard The Avalon was beautiful, it's a shame they tore it down.

SHLOMO

On Tuesday nights, they had an Open Mic in the lobby, and me, Benny Sadelle, and Willy Katz were a trio called "Home Before Sundown".

JIMMY

It must've been incredible back then.

SHERYL

(slightly slurring)

It was a complete bore! Everything fun was in Manhattan.

SHLOMO

What'd do you know about fun?

SHERYL

You'll die three blocks from where you were born. If you'd made anything of yourself you wouldn't be rotting here, yapping on about all you did with those boys. Look at them, successful men, do you think they dream about you?

Shlomo is upset.

CHARLOTTE

(coming to his defense)

Woody Allen is from Flatbush.

MARY

(tired of Charlotte's
shit)

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)
 You mean that pervert who made a
 movie called *Manhattan*?

SHERYL
 (nostalgic)
 Oh, I miss Heywood.

Shlomo abruptly gets up from the table. He looks at his
 guests.

SHLOMO
 Shabbat Shalom.

He walks out of the room. The air is awkward. Sheryl gulps
 down her wine.

CONNIE
 Shabbat Shalom.

MARY
 (concerned it was her
 fault)
 Was that...

SHERYL
 (upset)
 Don't mind him, sweetie, he's
 always been a jealous man.

MARY
 If that was my fault, I'm sorry.
 It's just that we can't normalize--

JIMMY
 Mary.

MARY
 What, I--

Sheryl abruptly gets up from the table.

SHERYL
 (quivering)
 Shabbat Shalom.

She exits while the group watches in silence.

INT. ZEV'S HOUSE, FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Jimmy, Robert, Mary, Robert, Warren, and Zev are the door.
 The crew has their coats on.

JIMMY

(hand on Zev's shoulder)
Thank's for having us. Really, it
was a pleasure.

MARY

Yeah, really, it was nice and I'm
sorry about the Woody thing. You
know I can't help but fight for
wha--

WARREN

Mary! Give it a rest!

ZEV

Thanks, Mary, it's totally fine.

Zev opens the door for them and all but Charlotte go outside.
Jimmy notices Charlotte still inside.

JIMMY

(trying to be nice)
Charlotte, you have a ride?

ZEV

(jumping in)
I'm driving her in after rush hour.

JIMMY

(suspicious)
Got it. Well I'll see you two
tomorrow then.

Jimmy looks at Zev and gives him a look and a little salute.

EXT. ZEV'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy jogs to catch up with the rest of the crew, which is
walking down the street and chatting.

WARREN

Oh my God, Mary, that was so
embarrassing. Why did you do that?!

MARY

I was embarrassing?! Charlotte
mentioning that creep was
embarrassing.

JIMMY

(catching up)
Did you guys see that? They were
practically headed up to his room.

MARY

Who?

JIMMY

Charlotte and Zev.

CONNIE

Who?!

JIMMY

(annoyed having to repeat
himself)

Charlotte and Zev!

WARREN

I'm sure it's nothing.

JIMMY

Yeah, right. Something is up there.
(shivering)

I hate the way that witch looks at
us! I wanted to warn you that Alan
is bringing in some *consultant* to
help with the theatre, but I didn't
want to talk about it with her
around.

The crew BERATE Jimmy in exasperation at him having withheld
this information.

INT. ZEV'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - LATER

Zev and Charlotte are sitting affectionately beside each
other at the dining table - what would have been Shabbat
dinner. There are plates of cold soup and half drunk glasses
of wine. They are holding each others' hand on the table
warmly, stirring their cold soup, and silently pondering the
disaster that had just previously occurred.

ZEV

(closing his eyes)

Bo-i kalah! L'cha dodi, likrat
kalah, p'nei Shabbat, n'kab'lah.

Charlotte watches him pray, moved.

Zev opens his eyes and smiles at Charlotte.

ZEV (CONT'D)

(softly)

"Enter, O Girlfriend!

(MORE)

ZEV (CONT'D)
Come, my beloved, to greet the
girlfriend, let us welcome the
Shabbat presence."

Charlotte's smile widens.

CHARLOTTE
Did you just ask me out?

Zev nods. She smiles and leans over and embraces him.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Shabbat Shalom.

FADE TO:

INT. THEATRE OFFICE - NEXT AFTERNOON

The entire staff is in Alan's office.

DAKOTAH (early 20s) tall, handsome and tan, wearing a suit,
walks in.

MARY
You're joking, right?

He smiles at the group, and then walks to Alan's side.

ALAN
Here he is!

He stands to shake Dakotah's hand.

ALAN (CONT'D)
Everyone, the dark days are over.
We've been selected as an "at risk
business" for Dartmouth's Summer
Consultancy. They've graciously
sent us one of their best...
(looking down at a note)
Dakotah is "at the top of his
junior class, majoring in the
business of entertainment." He's
here to get to know us and suggest
some changes. He's nobody's boss,
but he's got my ear, and I'm
listening.

DAKOTAH
(embracing Alan)
Thank you for the kind words. It's
truly a privilege to come here and
work with you all.
(MORE)

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)

Before I dive in, I want to address the elephant in the room. It's never been an issue in the past, and I don't expect it to be one now...

(pausing to look over the staff and smiles)

I can already see the gears turning... "he looks familiar, where do I know that face?" The answer is *A Place Under The Sun* - I am the grandson of Montgomery Clift. Now I want to be clear, that does not mean I can call up Monty to come save the theatre. I do things on my own accord, and I'm going to turn this place around with sound business practices, hard work, and winning attitude.

There's a short pause, then it's obvious that he has finished his speech. Alan claps and the rest of the staff halfheartedly join in.

FADE TO:

INT. THEATER LOBBY - LATER

Alan gives Dakotah a tour of the lobby. Dakotah is holding a clipboard. Alan leads Dakotah over to Zev at the concession stand.

ALAN

Here's our other newbie! Maybe Zev has some interesting thoughts for you.

DAKOTAH

That's great.
(handshake with Zev)
Dakotah Clift.

ZEV

Zev Stern.

DAKOTAH

(chummy)
You gotta show me the ropes Zev. I see the stand as a big part of our success. What we have here is a closed system, like an airport. Once the customer is in, you're their only source of nourishment.

(MORE)

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)

We crank up the heat and fix the
Slurpee machine, I can already see
massive potential.

Alan is clearly a big fan of Dakotah, very impressed.

ZEV

We have a "no outside snack" policy
and we conduct random searches at
the rope. They're not so random
really.

DAKOTAH

(to Alan)

Psh! This guy. You don't need me
here! Business tycoon.

ALAN

It's kismet!

Jimmy walks through the lobby. Alan sees him and jumps to
chat with him.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Jim! Hold on a second.

(to Dakotah and Zev)

Talk, talk, I'll be back.

Alan leaves the two of them. As he walks away, Dakotah turns
to watch the lobby with his back against the concession
counter.

DAKOTAH

(not looking back at Zev)

This place is a lump of coal... and
I'm going to make a diamond.

INT. CHARLOTTE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zev and Charlotte are sitting on her couch, close to each
other. Charlotte's apartment is insubstantial in size but
immaculate in decoration, with old furniture, lots of plants,
and large windows.

ZEV

The neighborhood is beautiful -
it's definitely not Brooklyn.

CHARLOTTE

Thank you, thank you.

(perking up)

What do you want to watch?

ZEV
You're asking me?

CHARLOTTE
Mmmm.
(she looks over at her
closet)
Let me see.

Charlotte stands up and walks over to her closet. She begins opening it then stops and turns to Zev.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
So tell me something. Did you
really like those Godard movies or
were you just trying to impress me?

ZEV
(jokingly)
No, no, I was actually just trying
to get access to the balcony.

CHARLOTTE
You can be honest, I just want to
know what you like!

ZEV
I'm being honest! I really liked
them!

CHARLOTTE
Yeah?

ZEV
Yeah!

She turns back to her closet and fully opens it, revealing shelves and shelves of DVDs.

CHARLOTTE
(pondering)
Okay then... so you like European
stuff... which you should, because
they're the best... hmm...

While Charlotte is scanning the shelves, Zev gets up, shocked, and walks to the closet.

ZEV
Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait, what is
this? You've got all of world
cinema in this closet!

She turns to Zev and smiles.

CHARLOTTE
You can be honest, is this a red
flag?

ZEV
No, I love it. I think.

CHARLOTTE
(turning back to the
shelves)
Anyways, maybe I should show you
something Italian.

ZEV
We did have pizza for dinner.

CHARLOTTE
I think you should probably start
with some Fellini.

She takes 8½ out from the shelf.

ZEV
Okay.

CHARLOTTE
He's like the most famous of the
Italians. Him and Antonioni, but
his stuff is kinda slow.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
Or...
(looking through the shelf
and pulling out a DVD)
Nights of Cabiria. It's one of his
early ones, too.

ZEV
How did you get all these?

CHARLOTTE
I've been collecting movies since
middle school!

ZEV
You've been into film for that
long?

CHARLOTTE

Well, growing up we'd always spend our summers in the Hamptons, and my best friend, Jessica, and I wanted something to keep close, because she spent her summers in the Pocos. So, we decided we'd start a film club. For the two of us. She'd pick a movie one week, and me the next, and we'd watch it at roughly the same time and discuss afterwards. It made the summers less lonely.

ZEV

And being twelve or thirteen the natural choice of movie was black and white French films about sexual ennui.

CHARLOTTE

Not quite. It started with everyday movies, then moved into Hollywood classics, and eventually my dad suggested we try some foreign films and it grew from there.

ZEV

Are you close with your dad?

CHARLOTTE

Very.

ZEV

What does he do?

CHARLOTTE

He's in pharmaceuticals.

ZEV

Got it, got it. Well this is really... something.

Charlotte smiles and brushes past him with the DVD in hand and heads to her DVD player, while Zev heads back to the couch.

ZEV (CONT'D)

So, does everyone who comes over get a tour of the closet?

CHARLOTTE

Zev... Do you think I just do this sort of thing with lots of men?

(MORE)

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Have them over to my apartment to watch Italian movies with me?

ZEV

I don't know!

CHARLOTTE

I'm offended.

ZEV

No, no, no, it's not that! I'm sorry. Really. I'm just... here you are, with a movie closet in West Village, you're beautiful, and I'm just some kid.

CHARLOTTE

I like that about you. You're not like most guys, trying to prove something.

There's a pause.

ZEV

What are most guys like? Dakotah?

Charlotte bends down and begins fiddling with the DVD player.

CHARLOTTE

What is that supposed to mean?

ZEV

Opportunistic, maybe.

CHARLOTTE

Who are you to say he's only looking out for himself?

ZEV

I don't know, I talked to him after the meeting today and he's just so... I mean, does he seem like somebody that really cares about art to you?

Charlotte, still bent over, turns her head to look at Zev.

CHARLOTTE

I don't know. I think he cares about keeping the theatre running, and that means more art.

ZEV

He just gives me a weird vibe.

Charlotte stands up and starts walking back to the couch.

CHARLOTTE

Maybe he'll turn the place around
and that way people will be able to
enjoy the cinema for years to come,
or discover it for the first time.

Charlotte sits back down on the couch, close to Zev, turns
towards him, and begins running her fingers through his hair.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Let's wait and see. He might turn
the place around, you never know.
And besides, let's not talk about
work tonight. Let's just enjoy the
movie.

Charlotte gives Zev one last quick kiss.

Zev kisses Charlotte on the head, then reaches over to switch
off the lamp next to the couch while Charlotte clicks play on
her remote.

INT. THEATRE OFFICE - AFTERNOON'S LATER

Time has passed. The staff, Alan, and Dakotah are gathered in
Alan's office. Also, NATHAN, a chubby boy, early 20s with
high functioning Aspergers, is in the office standing next to
Dakotah. He is wearing an Oakland Athletics hat.

DAKOTAH

I have a big announcement for you
all today. I'd like to make my
first official recommendation. I've
decided, and I've discussed with
Alan, to bring in some help with
curation. We're just not showing
movies that people want to see.

MARY

You've got to be kidding. That's my
slate! Alan? He can't do this.

Alan gestures for her to calm down. Dakotah doesn't
acknowledge the outburst and continues.

DAKOTAH

Can we give a warm welcome to the
founding, sole member of the
Dartmouth Math and Film Society and
my best friend, Nathan Jolie - no
relation.

Nathan comes next to Dakotah and shakes his hand warmly.

NATHAN

(addressing the group)

It was really just a couple of us watching movies... then we would analyze some of them frame by frame, then watch them without sound and we came to understand how each scene was composed at its core. The club got a Cary Grant

(he winks)

from Warner Brothers after we made an algorithm that could automatically light a set based on any scene from another movie.

The group is silent.

DAKOTAH

Yes, when Nathan and I were roommates freshman year, I got to witness his savant-like problem solving and love for cinema and, let me tell you, it's truly phenomenal. He's already got some great ideas.

NATHAN

Via artificial intelligence, I have created, for every human demographic, the most optimal slate. Additionally, with Dakotah's help, I ran a SWOT analysis on who the theatre's most profitable demographic.

ALAN

And what did you find?

NATHAN

Sex sells. Starting Monday we are going to run: *Midnight Cowboy*, *Beau Travail*, *Brokeback Mountain*, *Fox and His Friends*, and anything from the Marvel Universe.

WARREN

I love it!

DAKOTAH

Exactly.

MARY

What the hell is this?

DAKOTAH

Tell 'em Nate.

NATHAN

My research shows young, closeted jock homosexuals in their early teens struggle with distinguishing other closeted jocks from the regular guys on the team. These boys wish they had a way to invite their bros to an activity and suss them out. So, they say, "hey bro wanna go see Spiderman 2 and some other movie?" Then they pay for the double header, which is buy one get one half off, for the both of them. The kid's hoping for two pitched tents by the time the house lights come on, but he wants to know either way. Every homosexual teen in Kings County will be here after batting practice.

MARY

(offended)

This is cosmically batshit insane, but why are all the films gay? I'd imagine there are quite a few confused girls on the softball team too.

NATHAN

You are absolutely correct. However, women are much more perceptive at an early age. In any four season city, young girls automatically know "a beanie past May means you're absolutely gay."

CONNIE

He's right.

It's silent.

MARY

Jimmy you have nothing to say about this? Robert? This is ridiculous. Alan is that what you want your theatre to become?

CHARLOTTE

Let's give him a chance, we can't
be doing any worse.

JIMMY

I'm a little worried about having a
bunch of boys around here with The
General...

DAKOTAH

Ah, yes. That was the other
announcement. We are letting The
General go. The payroll just can't
sustain it.

MARY

He's a volunteer! No, Alan, no. He
has nowhere else to go.

ALAN

It's either him, or all of us. It's
what the business needs to survive.

The General walks into the doorway with his pail and broom.

THE GENERAL

Attennnntion.
(he stays in a salute)

The room is silent. The General looks at the crew's faces.
Mary comes to tears.

She rushes to The General to embrace him.

THE GENERAL (CONT'D)

(eyes wide)
Enemy engaged!

He knocks her to the ground with the tip of the broom.

Mary lays on the floor sobbing, from the firing of The
General, not from being knocked down.

MARY

We're gonna miss you.

INT. THEATER BATHROOM - LATER

Robert, Mary, Jimmy, Connie, and Zev are packed in closely in
the bathroom, having a secret meeting. They are speaking in
low voices. Mary has a black eye and is icing it.

JIMMY

If Jean Luc Retârd makes us run
Mission Impossible, I'm going to
burn this place to the ground.

CONNIE

(quitely, shocked)
Jimmy...

WARREN

He's pretty cute.

CONNIE

(earnestly)
He doesn't look at all like
Montgomery.

JIMMY

He's going to turn us into a Regal.

ROBERT

He's going to turn us into Yob
central station.

ZEV

What's a Yob?

ROBERT

I thought that was part of the core
at most schools these days.

JIMMY

Most schools probably still call it
late-stage gentrification.

Zev gives a look like "doesn't ring a bell"

ROBERT

That's what our movie is all about.
Exposing the people that bounce
between Sweetgreen and Equinox and
call it a personality trait.

MARY

Exactly!
(hearing Dakotah)
Shh!

FOOTSTEPS are heard approaching the bathroom. Robert turns
the light off. The STEPS subside.

MARY (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 I called some friends at Dartmouth,
 they said Dakotah is a total play
 boy. Oh, and apparently Charlotte
 was on the roster.

Zev's heart sinks.

JIMMY
 (whispering)
 She probably recommended him!

MARY
 It's possible, but who knows?

JIMMY
 Zev over here should know.
 (impersonating him)
 "I'm driving her into the city!" No
 wonder you haven't been over to
 Mary's lately.

ZEV
 I...

JIMMY
 Why don't you ask her about it,
 since you're so close.

ZEV
 We'll I'm sure she wouldn't...

The bathroom door swings open, the crew is backed out of
 view. Dakotah switches the light on.

CONNIE
 AHH!

Dakotah YELLS and jumps back.

DAKOTAH
 Jesus, you scared me!
 (collecting himself,
 professional, stern)
 Now, I don't want to start off on
 the wrong foot, but time theft
 costs corporations 57 million
 dollars a year.

MARY
 Well you're off to a great start,
 Cockafeller.

Mary shoves past him and the rest of the crew follow.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

The crew is filtering into the lobby from the bathroom.

Jimmy holds Zev back for a private chat.

JIMMY

Zev, can I tell you something about trust?

ZEV

(annoyed)

Sure.

JIMMY

There was a point in my life when I did therapy twice a week, for \$250 dollars an hour. That's \$2,000 dollars a month, Zev. And you know what I did? I don't even know why, but sometimes I just couldn't stop myself.

ZEV

I don't know if I really want to hear this.

JIMMY

I lied. I was filthy liar. At first it was little things like "oh yeah no I'm stuffed" when I had in fact not eaten at all. Then, one day, she asked if I liked the Mets, because I was talking about living in Crown Heights. I've never watched a baseball game, I don't know the rules, but my mouth just said, "yeah, I've been a fan my whole life."

(pondering)

Maybe it's my subconscious wanting to really be from Brooklyn.

(sternly)

Well it turned out that she'd watched them religiously since childhood with her father.

ZEV

(ironically)

Oh no.

JIMMY

I had to commit. I learned RBI's, Curveball, Umpire, Barry Bonds did steroids, a pitch killed a bird. I watched *Moneyball*. I watched all the Seinfeld episodes where George worked for the Yankees; the cotton uniforms! Every week I would have to look up the scores because all our sessions began to start with 5 minutes of baseball chat. For nine months I did that. Do you grasp the weight of that statement; how much money of the little money I earn that I've spent talking about the Mets?

ZEV

I do. I really do.

JIMMY

(serious)

It's a sickness, there has to be something seriously wrong with me. I'm 30 years old. I travel, on the subway, to an office, to sit across from a licensed psychotherapist, whose only job it is, is to accept me, unconditionally and without judgement. And I still can't do it Zev. I just can't.

ZEV

(still annoyed)

That's quite a story.

JIMMY

Anyways, what I'm trying to say, is I'm sorry about that little performance in the bathroom. But I want to know I can trust you, and that you're open with me. I really consider you a friend, and not an enemy spy.

Zev stares at Jimmy for a moment, then glances at the stairs.

ZEV

You know I wouldn't lie to you guys.

JIMMY

Good. And I better see you at Mary's more often.

Jimmy turns to walk away and Zev slips up the stairs to the projection booth.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Charlotte is sitting in the projection booth when she hears a KNOCK on the door. She goes to open the door. It's Zev.

CHARLOTTE

Hey!

ZEV

(curt)

Hey. How's it going?

CHARLOTTE

Good, good.

ZEV

(making small talk)

So, *Hereditary*, huh?

CHARLOTTE

Yeah, I don't think we were able to score *Midsommar* since it's less than two years old.

ZEV

You know, I realize I have no clue where you went to school.

CHARLOTTE

Like high school?

ZEV

(sternly)

College.

CHARLOTTE

(taken aback by his tone)

Oh, I, I went to Dartmouth. Why?

ZEV

Dakotah goes to Dartmouth...

CHARLOTTE

Yeah, but he's still there, he's a senior. I graduated last year.

ZEV

(slight relief)

So you never knew him?

CHARLOTTE

Well, I mean... I *knew* him, but not like--

ZEV

Not like...?

CHARLOTTE

Look, I don't want to lie to you. But I don't know why it's such a big deal. So what, I knew him!

ZEV

Char, it's not that it's important, per se. It's just, why wouldn't you tell me? Why keep that information from me, the other night when we were talking about him?

CHARLOTTE

I'm sorry. I promise it was nothing.

ZEV

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to barge in here, I'm just... it hurt me because I really like you and it felt like you were hiding something from me. And, you've been so defensive of the guy... I mean, how often do you talk to him?

CHARLOTTE

I mean, never. I've seen him here and said a few things, but never really anymore.

ZEV

Then why did you recommend him? You had to have been talking to him.

CHARLOTTE

I saw him last winter and he mentioned he was looking for a summer job.

Zev starts to get worked up and becomes visibly angry.

ZEV

He's a creep.

CHARLOTTE

He's not a creep. Come on.

ZEV

Take his side, sure. I see, must be a Dartmouth thing.

CHARLOTTE

(upset)

Why are you doing this to me?

ZEV

I'm not doing anything to you. But why did you lie to me?

CHARLOTTE

I didn't lie!

ZEV

(overlapping)

Okay then, by omission!

Charlotte begins to cry more heavily. She's not full-on bawling, but she's close.

ZEV (CONT'D)

You go on and on about cinema, the art, and you let it all go to waste because you want to do a favor for some hotshot who doesn't know Antonini from... from *Fast and Furious*.

CHARLOTTE

You don't have to be an asshole. That's just not true. This place was being run into the ground. Plus, I don't want to hear it. You wouldn't know who any of those people were if it weren't for me and--

ZEV

You're right! And that's why I'm shocked! I thought of all people you would understand why what we do here is important. You're right, I'm a nobody when it comes to this stuff. But it means a lot to me-- which I thought it did for you, too--and I hate to see it treated like garbage by some hotshot Ivy Leaguer who just wants to pad his resume.

CHARLOTTE
 (trying to defuse the
 situation)
 Maybe he'll save this place, he'll
 save it and more people will
 discover great film.

ZEV
 How? Where? One super villain movie
 at a time? Where's the art?

Charlotte is at a loss for words.

ZEV (CONT'D)
 Look, I know you love him but the
 rest of us...

CHARLOTTE
 Oh God, you asshole. Fuck you. You
 know what, I do have a history with
 him. We would hook up in college. I
 didn't want to tell you, because I
 thought those days were over, I
 thought you were the ticket to
 being a better person, but
 obviously not. Get the fuck out of
 here.

ZEV
 You what?!

CHARLOTTE
 Out. Get out. Now!

ZEV
 I'm sorry, it's just--!

Charlotte pushes Zev out the door, shutting and locking it
 behind him. Charlotte takes a seat at the desk and begins
 crying more heavily.

FADE TO:

INT. THEATER LOBBY - WEEKS LATER - NIGHT

A weeknight at the theatre. The lobby is sparsely populated
 with MEN. Zev is behind the counter with Connie still perched
 near the ticket station despite the lack of customers.
 Warren, Robert, and Jimmy are nowhere to be seen.

Connie looks in Zev's direction. Zev replies with an
 exasperated expression.

CONNIE

This feels like *Survivor*.

ZEV

Yeah exactly. Now it's between you, me, and Mary.

CONNIE

I think Mary could survive the apocalypse as long as she had a Walkman and a good book.

ZEV

In that case we can be losers together. Ever since Dakotah streamlined our schedules, I feel like I haven't seen the full crew in weeks.

CONNIE

I know, it's super sad. Also, has the movie started yet? Isn't it like eight-thirty already?

ZEV

(lighthearted joke)
Nathan's plans are really paying off.

CONNIE

What's playing, again?

ZEV

Hitchcock's *Rope*.

Alan walks out of the office and locks the door behind him. He approaches Zev and Connie.

ALAN

How many?

ZEV

Six.

Alan shakes his head silently and makes his way towards the door. He stops halfway and turns back towards Zev and Connie.

ALAN

Let's cancel the late showing. I'll tell Charlotte to close up.

ZEV

(reserving excitement)
Oh, okay.

CONNIE
(overlapping)
Thanks.

Alan walks over to a phone on the wall and dials in to the projection booth.

ZEV
(gathering the money box)
So I guess that's it.

CONNIE
(Chuckling)
Yeah.

Alan puts the phone back and walks back to where Connie and Zev are standing.

ALAN
I let Charlotte know we're closing
up early. And know that's just for
tonight. God willing we'll be
drawing bigger crowds in no time.
(calling to Mary)
Mary, you catch that?

MARY (O.S.)
Yep. Thanks, Al.

Alan exits, frustrated.

Mary leaves the ticket booth and walks to Connie and Zev.

MARY (CONT'D)
I've got a date, so no apartment
shenanigans tonight.

Mary walks towards the back of the lobby, towards the employee cubbies. Leaving Connie and Zev alone.

ZEV
Which direction are you headed in?

CONNIE
Oh, I'm headed out this way.

Connie points towards the front door.

ZEV
No, I mean where are you going?

Mary walks by, slinging a backpack over her shoulder.

MARY

Bye bye.

CONNIE

Bye!

ZEV

(overlapping)

Adios.

CONNIE

Anyways, I walk down Wabash St.

ZEV

Do you take the train?

CONNIE

No, I live super close. It's a like ten minute walk. But it's on the way to the G, right?

ZEV

Yeah, that's right.

EXT. BROOKLYN STREET - NIGHT

Zev and Connie are walking together on the sidewalk.

CONNIE

You know, growing up outside of New York, you don't really realize that people just exist here. You think of it as such an alien lifestyle.

ZEV

What do you mean? I exist here. You're existing here.

CONNIE

I don't know, it's just different when you're on the outside looking in.

They walk a few paces in silence.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

I love walking on nights like tonight.

ZEV

When it's balmy?

CONNIE

Yeah. It reminds me of being home.

ZEV

And where's home, again?

CONNIE

Germantown, Tennessee. It's right outside of Memphis.

ZEV

Do you miss it?

CONNIE

Yeah, I do. I miss my family.

(motioning to the stop)

Anyways, this is where you get on, right?

Connie and Zev arrive at the train stop.

ZEV

Yeah, but you know what I could go for? An ice cream sandwich.

CONNIE

Yes! I don't know if you wanna walk this far, but the bodega across from my place has the Magnum Doves.

ZEV

(considering, eyeing the subway)

I don't mind a stroll.

CONNIE

Are you sure? I don't want you to have to walk all the way back.

ZEV

It's no problem!

(trying to be clever)

I too love walking on nights like tonight.

The pair begin walking down the street, away from the stop.

ZEV (CONT'D)

So what made you move out here if it was so strange?

CONNIE

That's a loaded question. I guess I just thought if I was gonna find my future, I was gonna find it here.

ZEV

With no job?

CONNIE

No, I had a job. I still work there some days, actually. It's at a little art studio in Long Island City. But really it's just grueling work and way more corporate than artistic, which is the last thing I want to get wrapped up in.

ZEV

And what is it you do there? Design?

CONNIE

No, craft books and pottery kits. I'm working on my first adult coloring book.

ZEV

Is that your dream?

CONNIE

Well, I've always wanted to make adult coloring books, yeah.

ZEV

I should get back into coloring, haven't done it in years. My colors always bled between the lines.

CONNIE

It probably seems silly, but I just think one of the big problems in modern life is that people don't take time to appreciate the beauty of the world around them.

Connie waves her hands, motioning to the quiet, empty street.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

And when you're coloring something, you're really focusing on it.

ZEV

And Cinema Four is sort of your halfway house to drawing full time?

CONNIE

I think so. I didn't really mean to get involved at the Four at all. One day, I walked by and saw they were running a Studio Ghibli marathon. I came in, watched them all, and then Mary noticed me hanging around and asked if I wanted to apply.

ZEV

Do you think you'll stay in New York? You can't take tickets forever.

CONNIE

It really depends. I think about it a lot.

ZEV

Where would you go? Back to Tennessee?

CONNIE

Memphis, Nashville... maybe. Or maybe somewhere much different. I went to school at Sewanee, so I've had about enough of Tennessee.

ZEV

I never had that feeling growing up that I had to go somewhere else to find my dreams. I could just take the G to Fulton and I was there.

CONNIE

That's why everyone comes here and pretends to be a local, it's the cliché. But I wouldn't trade growing up in Germantown for the world. I remember being a little girl, and being in my room late at night, on a Saturday night where I didn't have school the next day, and I'd hear a train way off in the distance. And that, and maybe the hum of a car way off, would be the only things I'd hear. And it would all seem, you know, the place where the train was, far off--it would all seem so mysterious and I'd wonder where the train was headed. And I'd feel so unbound and free.

(MORE)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

And in New York, I know it sounds silly, but the train you hear is the subway and you know where that's headed. You know exactly where it is and where it's headed. And same for the cars. There's no mystery here, or at least not anymore. And I don't know if I wanna live in that environment forever.

(beat)

I'm sorry, I probably sound so silly right now.

ZEV

No... I understand you.

Connie stops walking at her building, Zev keeps going a few paces before realizing. He looks back.

CONNIE

(lightheartedly)

Here she is.

ZEV

Oh.

CONNIE

But you know what I just remembered? I actually have some Talenti in my freezer. Any interest in just having that instead?

There's a very brief silence.

ZEV

Oh, okay. Sure.

Zev walks towards Connie and follows her up the steps into her building.

A light flicks on on the third floor.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. THEATRE OFFICE - AFTERNOON

The entire crew is there with Alan, Dakota and Nathan up at the front.

NATHAN

(reading from a notebook)
9% growth day-to-day for the last
fortnight.

DAKOTAH

We are on pace for something really
big, and it's only going to get
better.

MARY

Going from four people to six isn't
really a breakthrough.

JIMMY

It has been starting to buzz a bit,
I can't lie. Strangely it hasn't
even been mostly kids, it's like
dads who golf and Hell's Angels.

NATHAN

Yes, I noticed it as well. I built
an adjustment into my model and
we're adding *Magic Mike XXL* to the
slate.

DAKOTAH

Growth is growth, and the best is
yet to come. And I know you all
like to hang out after work, but to
thank you, I'd like to invite you
for drinks at *my place* tonight.

Alan is beaming.

ALAN

Show some appreciation for Dakotah
everyone. We're turning a new leaf!

CONNIE AND WARREN

(under their breaths)
Elaine May.

A few half-hearted CLAPS come from the crowd.

EXT. THEATER - MOMENTS LATER

The group floats out of the doors of the theatre with
Dakotah, Nathan, and Charlotte at the front, walking down the
block. After a couple paces the entire group besides Dakotah,
Nathan, Charlotte, and Zev stop walking. There is a sizeable
gap before Zev realizes he's stuck with Dakotah's group. They
stop and turn around.

MARY
(waving back)
We can't make it tonight, but any
other night just let us know.

ZEV
Uh... I should go.

Charlotte grabs his arm and makes him stay with Dakotah's group. Zev looks out to the crew helplessly.

INT. DAKOTAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Charlotte, Nathan, and Zev are in Dakotah's posh apartment living room.

Dakotah is in the kitchen getting drinks together. He walks into the living room with a tray of drinks.

DAKOTAH
Zev, I heard some great things
about you. You've got good taste.
(he winks at Zev)

ZEV
(curt)
Thank you.

Dakotah hands out drinks to the group.

NATHAN
When you see Denis Lavant on screen
and the way he moves his body, I
mean it's pure magic. I'd take him
over Peck or Dean or any of those
guys.
(taking his drink)
Thanks.

Nathan sips his, he was expecting a mocktail as he does not drink.

He SHRIEKS.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Jesus fucking Christ!

He drops the glass and spills it all over his lap.

Zev and Charlotte are surprised.

Nathan looks at the drink Charlotte is holding.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
My Shirley Temple!

DAKOTAH
Nathan, I'm so sorry, I must've
mixed them up in the kitchen.

Nathan starts HEAVING. He runs to the bathroom.

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)
We're going to order up a
Pedialyte!
(to Charlotte)
I'll make you a new one.

CHARLOTTE
Did I take the wrong drink, I
didn't mean to.

DAKOTAH
(heading to the kitchen)
No, no, that was on me.

Dakotah leaves the room. It's just Zev and Charlotte. It's
silent for a few moments.

CHARLOTTE
How have you been?

ZEV
I can't believe you roped me into
this.

The sound of a SHAKER can be heard in the back.

CHARLOTTE
Look, I don't want to hurt you, I
still care about you.

ZEV
Clearly not, because if you did
you'd just leave me be.

Dakotah comes back in with a new glass and sits across from
them. Zev and Charlotte play nice while Dakotah is around.

DAKOTAH
Cheers! To good company, and better
business.

They "cheers". Dakotah enjoys his sip immensely and then puts
down his glass and brushes his legs.

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)

(in a low voice)

I'd like to tell you something Zev,
if you promise to keep it between
us. Only Nathan, Alan, Charlotte,
and myself know.

Charlotte shoots Zev a look.

CHARLOTTE

(to Dakotah)

I don't think you should. Nothing's
official.

DAKOTAH

Relax. We're amongst friends. This
is great news, Zev will be over the
moon.

ZEV

(eyeing Charlotte)

Whatever you feel comfortable with.

DAKOTAH

Ever heard of the Paris Theatre?

ZEV

I've never been to Europe.

Dakotah is momentarily confused.

DAKOTAH

(smiling slyly)

Netflix, that's all I'll say.

CHARLOTTE

That's enough Dakotah.

Dakotah downs his whisky and AAHs in delight.

ZEV

Yeah... I've heard of it.

DAKOTAH

All I'm going to say is Hulu could
be interested in premiering films
in *their* own theatre.

ZEV

The Four? I love the place but it's
kind of a dump.

DAKOTAH

You'd be surprised what a paint job
and new management does to a place.
(he winks)

The gears are spinning in Zev's head.

CHARLOTTE

Dakotah, enough.

DAKOTAH

We've got a couple of suits coming
to do a walk-through. It's supposed
to be incognito, so play it cool.

CHARLOTTE

He's going to run to Mary's and
tell them about everything.

DAKOTAH

Zev wouldn't do that. We have a
bond. Plus, nothing at the theatre
will change. Actually most
corporate acquisitions leave the
business exactly as is, save for a
few operational efficiencies. The
idea that corporate takeovers
somehow kill the culture that
existed is a falsehood. You would
all get raises, benefits, there
would be big premieres.

CHARLOTTE

I wouldn't be surprised if they
stage a lock in.

DAKOTAH

(starting to slur his
words)

If they botch this deal, they're
going to have another thing coming.
At least in the 70s, the hippies
were against a war. The only thing
Mary is against is crossing the
East River. And for what? Because
Manhattan is nice? Do kids in the
South Sudan rest their heads on
their pillows to dream of coming to
America to live in a roach infested
four bedroom in Ridgewood, Queens?
No, God damn it! They dream about
the Empire State Building, Central
Park, brunch at Ladurée.

(MORE)

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)

This...this poor chic aesthetic, its complete crap. If you were actually broke you'd be in Hoboken. And for some reason, everyone east of Williamsburg is an artist. When did being a regular person with a job become some sort of grand failure; a disgrace to humanity that we don't make paper machete sculptures of our genitals?

ZEV

(sheepishly)

Actually, the male genitalia is vastly under represented in art. Mary is working on a photo series about it... It's called the Phallic Fallacy.

DAKOTAH

Good lord, the fallacy is that anyone gives a damn.

(to Charlotte)

I told you! Did I do anything to offend them? They've been against me before I walked in the door. Zev really, is what I'm trying to do so god damn evil?

ZEV

I-I don't think so. The theatre's dying, right?

DAKOTAH

They hate the idea of someone like me, actually doing something good. The fact that I'm not ashamed of who I am and the success my family has achieved. Is it because my grandfather is Montgomery Clift? Because I was born with a silver spoon and that means I can't do anything positive? Is it a crime to have connections, is it so disgusting to have your ancestors accomplish something? I will never have a rags to riches story because I never had rags, so what do you want me to do? Slum it in Flatbush and pretend I don't have a trust fund? I'm just playing the hand I was dealt and if you can't handle that take it up with the history books.

CHARLOTTE

Dakotah, relax. You came here for a reason and you're doing great and when you save the theatre, everyone will realize.

ZEV

I think they mean well. They just love the Four so much, when someone like you comes in, they are suspicious about your motives. At the end of the day, they want what's best.

CHARLOTTE

Do they really?

DAKOTAH

(to Zev)

Let me ask you something. You're a straight fellow right? Do they look down on you for being a cis hetero, Plain Jane living life with no flavor?

ZEV

No I haven't felt that at all. I actually invited them all over for Shabbat dinner. They seemed to enjoy that a lot.

DAKOTAH

Ah, so they approved. You're a "real Brooklyn guy", that's a hall pass, congratulations. If I run over someone with my car I'll spend ten years in prison. Utter hell. If they do it, it's Saturday night in Hell's Kitchen.

Nathan is VOMITING in the bathroom down the hall. Dakotah turns back toward the bathroom.

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)

(loudly)

You okay, buddy?

(to Charlotte and Zev)

On top of everything, he's a celiac.

NATHAN (O.S.)

(slurring)

I can't... I can't see...

CHARLOTTE

Poor thing.

Dakotah puts on a CD. MUSIC starts playing.

DAKOTAH

Let me go make sure he's okay. I'll probably just put him to bed so we can relax.

He leaves the room. Leaving Charlotte and Zev sitting, not talking, with the MUSIC playing softly.

EXT. CONNIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Zev scans the buzzer list and then BUZZES 4C.

CONNIE (INTERCOM)

Hello?

ZEV

It's me.

She BUZZES him in.

INT. CONNIE'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Connie looks a little distraught as she steps over to the door and waits, until she hears someone coming up the steps. She opens it, and realizes it isn't Zev, so she smiles and nods and shuts the door again. A second later she hears a new set of feet on the stairs and opens up.

Zev quickly takes off his coat and his shoes.

ZEV

(out of breath from the stairs)

He's gonna sell the place.

CONNIE

Huh?

ZEV

At Dakotah's, he told us.

Zev looks at Connie.

CONNIE

You're not making any sense!

ZEV

Dakotah is getting Hulu to buy the Four.

CONNIE

Whoa, what... what do they want with it?

ZEV

I have no clue, but they're huge. It'll probably ruin everything.

CONNIE

Zev, calm down. There's nothing we can do about it now. We'll tell the gang tomorrow and figure it out.

ZEV

I ran over here, I didn't know where to go. I had to tell you. Charlotte knows, and they all know.

Zev looks up at Connie.

CONNIE

It's okay.

ZEV

I don't think I've ever felt this way about someone.

They embrace.

ZEV (CONT'D)

(quiet)

I love you.

Connie leads Zev over to the couch and sits him down.

CONNIE

Try to relax.

Connie goes to her fridge and brings Zev a beer. He takes a big swig.

ZEV

(defeated)

What a fucking night.

Connie sits closely next to him. She turns on the TV and scrolls through various streaming options, skipping over Netflix. *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls* begins to play.

Connie scoots closer into Zev and he embraces her. They break into smiles at Jim Carrey's whimsical performance.

TELEVISION (O.S.)
Do not fret, my little woodland
friend, for your life is in the
hands of Ace Ventura... pet
detective.

FADE TO:

INT. THEATER LOBBY - AFTERNOON

Afternoon sun bathes the theater lobby, which seems atypically lively. It's a Saturday, so the full staff is working. Connie is in the ticketing position and Zev is behind the counter. The front doors swing open and Dakotah walks in with two men dressed in suits tailing him.

The crew take instant notice of the presence of the SUITED MEN and they exchange tense glances.

DAKOTAH (O.S.)
(speaking with the suited
men)
She was built in '32--the Golden
Era of theater construction. I'm
sure you're well aware of where
this place stands in cinema
history. They premiered *Breakfast
at Tiffany's*, it was the local
haunt for all the big names back
then. Obviously, now we're in a bit
of a slump, but that's why you're
here, right?

Mary and Jimmy look at Zev. Zev nods.

Dakotah approaches the concession stand with the suits.

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)
(to the suits)
Can we get you something? Zev here
is the best in the business.

ZEV
(polite)
Hello.

SUIT #1
We're alright.

SUIT #2

(to Dakotah)

Tuesday though, can you make sure you have the melted cheese machine up and running. I can't sit through a 'flic without it.

DAKOTAH

(laughing)

I know what you mean.

(gives Zev a look)

ZEV

Sure thing. What's on Tuesday?

DAKOTAH

These gentlemen here are going to help us do a little test run. And if things are in working order, eventually a premiere.

SUIT #1

(jokingly)

We have to make sure that projector up there still runs.

Dakotah ushers them away from the stand.

DAKOTAH

On that note, let's head up to the booth, Charlotte'll give you the rundown... Obviously she'd stay on, she's an old friend.

Dakotah leads the suits up the stairs to the balcony.

INT. MARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The crew soberly sit together in the living room, drinking wine. Zev is sitting closely with Connie.

MARY

We do it the old fashioned way - a shut in.

JIMMY

(to Zev)

What exactly did he say last night?

ZEV

(a bit flustered)

He asked me if I had ever been to some Parisian theater and talked about Netflix. I had no idea they were showing up today.

JIMMY

And at the stand?

ZEV

Dakotah said Tuesday they're running a test premiere, then they went to talk to Charlotte.

MARY

(beginning to slur)

I knew this day would come. Once again we get eaten alive again by the almighty oppressor.

ROBERT

(getting angry)

Yobification...

(thinking)

Warren?

Warren looks over.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Do you have your gear bag?

WARREN

Yeah.

ROBERT

(heroic)

Fuck Mr. Galowitz, fuck Netflix, fuck Dakotah. Get the lights.

The crew's energy ignites. Robert springs up, taking directorial control.

JIMMY

What is going on?

ROBERT

Shut it, I have a plan. You're the grip, go help Warren.

Jimmy steps in line and follows Warren out to the foyer.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
 Connie, Zev, you're our stars. Go
 over there.
 (pointing to the center of
 the living room)
 We can incorporate our shoots from
 Yobification.

Robert walks across the room, picks up a typewriter, and
 drops it in front of Mary, who's had a bottle of wine and
 more.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
 Go nuts.

She starts furiously typing.

Jimmy and Warren come back into the living room with lights
 and are setting them up around Connie and Zev who stand
 sheepishly in the middle of the room.

Robert goes to his bag and takes out his 16mm camera. He lays
 it out on the table and carefully loads a new film stock in
 with precision.

He looks over at the lighting of Zev and Connie.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
 Flood lights on the face. I want
 "deer in headlights".

Warren and Jimmy shine the light brightly at Zev and Connie.

Robert takes the camera and fixes it to a tripod pointing at
 Connie and Zev.

Mary is furiously typing away and with a DING, she rips out
 the page.

MARY
 Done!

Robert takes it and brings it to Connie and Zev.

ROBERT
 (in a low voice for just
 the three of them to
 hear)
 Just relax. It's me and you. Speak
 slowly, from the heart. We have one
 roll so you can make a mistake, but
 not many.

Zev and Connie take the paper, surveying it.

Robert reels back to the tripod. Warren walks into the line of the camera.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Lights!

(all the room lights
disappear, leaving just
the set up lets)

Camera.

(he puts his eye into the
viewfinder).

A tense moment of silence.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - NIGHT

It is after closing hours at the theatre. The lobby is still as Alan, Dakotah, Nathan, and a dozen SUITED MEN, two of them the same men from the day before, exit Alan's office.

The crew is shooting nervous glances at each other as they watch the business people waltz through the lobby.

ALAN

(excited)

No, really, thank you for coming,
it means a lot. I have to run home
to feed the cats, but give us a
call tomorrow and Dakotah and I
will sync. And then hopefully we
get the lawyers to fill in the
dotted lines.

The business men shake Alan's hand.

SUIT #2

A pleasure. Thanks for having us.

Alan touches their shoulders warmly. He exits the theatre.

DAKOTAH

(to Nathan)

Go get these gentlemen some nachos
and...

(to the business men)

Drinks? We've got the hard stuff if
you're interested.

SUIT #1

Just a round of Sprites.

Nathan nods and heads to the concession stand.

NATHAN

Hello, Zev.

ZEV

Hey, Nate. How are you feeling?

NATHAN

Quite alright now. Did you see the executives?

Dakotah ushers the business men into the screening room as the crew watch them pensively.

ZEV

Yes, I did. What are they screening?

NATHAN

We're not allow to talk about it...
Nachos, please.

Zev turns around to prepare the nachos when Robert comes behind into the concession stand area. He has a messenger bag over his shoulder.

ROBERT

(acting pleasant)
Ahoy, Nathaniel.

NATHAN

Robert. Did you see the executives?

ROBERT

Sure did.

Robert bends down to "grab a snack" and leaves the messenger bag down there.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I'll catch you guys later.

He leaves.

ZEV

(with the nachos)
Okay... nachos. Anything else?

NATHAN

Sprites for everyone.

Zev nods and turns to the soda machine as Jimmy comes into the concession stand.

JIMMY

I'll finish these out and bring everything in. Can you make sure the cubby area is tidied up with Connie, we need to be showing our best.

ZEV

Sure thing.

He ducks down and subtly grabs the messenger bag.

He feigns toward the cubby area, and as Nathan is distracted holding a half dozen Sprites and nachos, Zev slinks up the stairs toward the balcony.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

Zev, shrouded in darkness, is quietly in the balcony area, out of view of the projection window. He is nervous.

He peers down at the orchestra to see the business men and Dakotah all seated and Nathan entering the room with their snacks.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - CONTINUOUS

Dakotah is sitting between two suits.

SUIT #1

(looking around the screening room)

This place really is beautiful.
What'a fuckin' gem you found us.

SUIT #2

(to Dakotah)

Imagine this place packed - the balcony. Standing room only. This happened because of you.

SUIT #1

(turning to Dakotah)

You're an extremely impressive young man.
(he shakes Dakotah's hand)

Dakotah receives it proudly like a cadet from his general.

The three of them sit back, staring forward at the screen, as the movie should be starting.

Without looking away from the screen, Suit #2 subtly passes an envelope into Dakotah's jacket pocket, at which point he turns to Dakotah.

SUIT #2
(winking)
Finder's fee.

Dakotah feels the touch of the envelope on his chest and it feels like the reception of a purple heart.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Zev knocks on the projection room door. The bag is to the side of the door, out of Charlotte's sight.

ZEV
(whispering)
Char.... Charlotte. We need you.

Charlotte opens the door a crack.

CHARLOTTE
(whispering)
Leave me alone!

ZEV
(frantic)
Wait -
(holding the door from
being closed on him)
Dakotah sent me up here. He - he
asked me - the executives asked him
- he needs to know...
(unsure like he doesn't
remember)
"how many millimeters do we own?" I
can't remember it was something
technical. He said run up and ask
you and I messed up I don't
remember.

CHARLOTTE
(mad)
Wait. What? That doesn't make any
sense.

ZEV
(nervous)
I can't remember! He needs to know
now. They want it before the movie
starts.

CHARLOTTE
(upset)
You're really something...

Charlotte hastily exits.

ZEV
Okay...

After holding the door open for Charlotte, Zev slips into the projection booth. He locks the door, surveys the booth, drops Robert's bag, and begins fishing through it.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - MOMENTS LATER

Charlotte is speed walking up the aisle to Dakotah's row. Dakotah is surprised to see her.

DAKOTAH
(mad)
What are you doing? We should be starting now.

CHARLOTTE
(surprised)
Zev said -

The projector starts up, Dakotah and Charlotte peer up. The business people have no idea something has gone astray.

After a countdown reel, an image forms on the silver screen:

"A Film By Robert O'Brien Love"

A shot of Manhattan appearing behind the GWB, followed by shots of the remaining remnants of the 20th century--old neon signs, fading advertisements painted onto the sides of buildings, etc. Stock footage of old buildings being torn down begins to play, until the film fades to Connie and Zev in Mary's living room.

ZEV
(stern, nervous)
Art?
(rapid slam poetry cadence)
The conscious truth of human kind
or should I say hu-people?
(slow and serious)
When did big brother become the
purveyor and not the protector?
(questioning)
(MORE)

ZEV (CONT'D)

Must we stand by and watch the
pillage?

(rapid cadence)

Like hordes before become the whore
of capitalist whims.

Intense music plays, shots of neighborhoods being razed and
skyscrapers being built. Blocks of corporate businesses
replacing mom and pop shops.

Horror sets onto the faces of Dakotah, Charlotte, and Nathan.

The film returns to Mary's living room again with Zev and
Connie center frame.

CONNIE

W. W. J. D. - What would Jean-Luc
do?

ZEV

Not succumb to any of you...

There's a pause on their faces. The screen fades to a black
screen and a quote appears.

"Cinema Four has and forever will be an organization by and
for those who love the cinema. We reject your corporate cash.
We'd rather die than become enslaved to the whims of Park
Avenue financiers. All in all, go fuck yourselves."

The film screen fades to black.

The house lights raise slightly, the room is dim but
horrified faces are visible.

The executives look at Dakotah with indifference; they'll
find another theatre to buy. They get up silently and file
out to the aisle, and out of the screening room.

In the deep back rows of the theatre, Jimmy, Robert, Warren,
Connie, and Mary sit victoriously. Dakotah enters a rage and
Charlotte sobs, in shock at what has just happened. Robert
feels like a hero.

DAKOTAH

(standing up to look)

What the hell is wrong with you
people?!

(walking out of the row)

This is insanity. This is pure
evil. You worthless degenerates!
You hipster scum fucks, you have no
respect for anything in this world.

Dakotah pulls out the envelope.

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)
A recommendation?! This means
nothing!

Dakotah rips the envelope to shreds and storms out of the theatre.

DAKOTAH (CONT'D)
I was going to save this dump!

Charlotte runs out chasing him, in tears.

Zev stands in the projection booth, blank faced.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - MORNING

Following a night of raucous fun by the crew, the screening room is in disarray. Empty bottles of alcohol, snacks, confetti, and kazoos cover the floors and chairs. The only light comes from the projector, that was left running albeit with nothing to play.

The crew is scattered across the orchestra seats, in some combination of passed out and fast asleep.

At the far end of the theater, a crevice of light forms as the entrance is opened. Alan walks in.

Silently, emotionless, he scans the room and absorbs the scene. Then he turns and exits, back into the corridor and out of the screening room.

The SLAM of the screening room door awakens Zev, with Connie unperturbed, still leaning up against him in slumber. In a groggy state he too scans the wreckage of last night's celebration. He softly moves Connie's head from his chest to the back of the chair and slinks into the aisle. He saunters to the screening room exit.

INT. THEATRE LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Zev peeks his head out of the screening room door to find Alan slowly walking through the lobby, looking around at the walls and displayed artifacts like a general surveying his trophies.

Zev is careful to stay unnoticed, unsettled by Alan's reaction, or rather non-reaction. Alan's back is to the screening room door, as he looks at the posters lining the wall.

ALAN
You're going to need a new job.

Zev, having expected anger, comes fully out of the door.

ZEV
(taking small steps into
the lobby)
Me, sir?

Alan, still talking away from Zev, starts walking to his office.

ALAN
(fatherly)
Come, let's see who I can call.

Zev is confused, and gingerly walks to Alan's office.

INT. THEATRE OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Alan is at his desk when Zev walks through the door. Seeing his face clearly for the first time in the light, it is evident that Alan has had a rough night. His face is sunken, eyes dried out.

Alan motions for him to take a seat. Zev sits timidly.

ALAN
Do you like salad, Zev?

Zev, nervous and confused, did not compute the question. Alan can see it in his face.

ALAN (CONT'D)
Do you like salad. Be honest, do
you like it?

ZEV
Not really, no... I'd rather have a
burger.

Alan sighs deeply.

ALAN
Me too, kid. Unfortunately,
CleanGreens only serves salad, so
that's all I can offer you. They
bought the land and offered me a
10% stake. You're not offended if I
don't feel inclined to recommend
you and your friends to new
management?

Zev thinks Alan's completely lost his mind.

ZEV

Are you okay?

There's a long silence.

ALAN

Do you think I do this for the money?

(pause)

I started working concessions here in '76, in high school. Then I was the projectionist, and then the manager, which paid my way through college. After college, I left to work in sales. A few years later this place was basically a dump. Duncan, the owner, passed away in '88, and on the day of his funeral I stopped at TD Bank and took a loan against my apartment for \$30 thousand dollars. His kids wanted nothing to do with the place, I probably could've gotten it for half that. It's been 33 years. I gave her my heart and soul and the lights never went out. They've been dim for a while, but never out.

Alan, proud, triumphant, pauses.

ALAN (CONT'D)

What do you want to do with your life, Zev?

ZEV

This is... was... I enjoyed working here.

Alan throws his arms up in purposefully satirical protest.

ALAN

You poured melted butter!

ZEV

(quick retort)

Yeah, but it was fun! Jimmy and Mary, they all took me in; I know Godard, Antonioni, Coppola. I never knew movies were art. It's pure magic. I feel it just sitting here.

Zev sits back in his chair, a look of exasperation on his face. Alan notices Zev's realization.

ALAN
(playfully)
Charlotte ever run *The Last Picture*
Show for you? She loves that movie.

Zev looks at Alan, confused.

ALAN (CONT'D)
(smiling)
You're not the first concession boy
to get swept up on the balcony.

ZEV
Oh.
(pause)
No, she didn't.

ALAN
That's a damn shame. You'll never
get to see Cybil Shepard, 64 feet
wide, with your back pressed up
against the velvet with an ice cold
Pepsi. Not in Flatbush.

Alan pauses.

ALAN (CONT'D)
Take it from a fellow Queens kid:
when you're young, you can go
around being content that you're
smarter than everyone. When you get
a little older, you've gotta prove
it.

Alan leans back in his chair, looks up to the ceiling in thought.

ALAN (CONT'D)
Maybe I would've done it too.
(pause)
But probably not. Dakotah tells me
your movie sucked.

He gets up, and on his way out of the office pats Zev on his shoulder goodbye. Not lovingly, but decisive. Zev stays in his chair, looking lost.

FADE TO:

INT. ZEV'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Zev is lying on his back, in bed, above the covers. All the lights are off and the curtain is drawn; the only light source his fish tank. His eyes are wide open. He looks lost in thought.

INT. ZEV'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Shlomo and Sheryl sit closely, dressed up in their Saturday best. Their eyes light up as Zev, in a tuxedo, enters the room.

Shlomo springs up and embraces Zev with a hug.

SHLOMO
(so proud)
My boy. My boy. Shalom malom
kitsuanu. Hashem leads you to the
promised land!

Sheryl dabs her teary eyes.

They hear a car pull up to the house. Sheryl jumps up frantically.

SHERYL
Finally the car is here! Let's go.

She rushes toward the door and, passing Shlomo, takes a quick pause to tuck his shirt further into his pants.

SHERYL (CONT'D)
You had to wear this shirt?!

SHLOMO
(yelling and motioning to
the door)
Let's go!

EXT. ZEV'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Zev, Sheryl, and Shlomo walk out of the front door.

Connie, window rolled down, smiles at Zev from the the back seat of a luxury Lincoln town car. She throws her door open for them as Shlomo is locking the house door.

SHERYL
(to Connie)
Don't you look wonderful, Sweetie!

Shlomo scuttles to the car where Zev and Sheryl are standing. The three get in.

INT. THEATER LOBBY - LATE AFTERNOON

The lobby is lit beautifully, the dying light of the summer afternoon pouring in. Alan paces around in the lobby, checking his watch.

Through the glass doors of the theater, he sees the Lincoln pull up to the theatre. He rushes to doors to meet them.

As Alan holds the door open, he ignores the four of them in order to berate the LIMO DRIVER.

ALAN

45 minutes late, you worthless son
of a bitch!

Alan quickly forgets his anger and turns to embrace Zev lovingly.

ALAN (CONT'D)

I'm so proud of you, Zev.

ZEV

I wouldn't have wanted it to happen
anywhere else.

ALAN

It's packed.
(giddy, low voice)
I think I saw Jill Smith in the
fourth row.

ZEV

Jill Smith?

ALAN

Only *the* biggest name in film
criticism.

Alan turns his attention to Connie, Shlomo, and Sheryl, who are a feet few behind them.

ALAN (CONT'D)

(to Connie)

Connie, dear, you look ravishing.

(to the Sterns)

And you must be Mr. and Mrs. Stern

How proud you must be.

(ushering them warmly)

(MORE)

ALAN (CONT'D)
Let's head in to the theater...
give the kid a moment.

Smiling the four of them head to the theater. Zev, meanwhile, walks over to where the rest of the crew is gathered. Mary goes in for a hug.

MARY
My little artiste! Lay it on me!
You know you still have to pick up
some shifts every now and again.

WARREN
(interrupting)
Were those your parents over there?

ZEV
Yeah.

WARREN
Cute.

ZEV
I'll introduce you after the show.

ROBERT
Have you seen the theater yet?

ZEV
No, I haven't.

MARY
Oh you gotta go see it. The General
got it all set up for you--it looks
gorgeous.

JIMMY
Go check it out. We gotta be on
guard before everyone starts to
show up.

The crew walks away and Zev begins to walk towards the screening room. On his way, he happens to glance up the stairs leading to the projection booth, where he sees Charlotte sitting, looking down, smiling. He smiles back and she winks. They look at each other for a minute, and then Zev continues on.

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - LATER

The theater is filled to the brim with well-dressed PATRONS.

Zev is walking in the tunnel of the screening room, not yet visible to the audience in the orchestra. The General is toward the end, broom and pale in hand. As Zev approaches, The General places a warm hand on Zev's shoulder.

THE GENERAL
 (completely coherent)
 We're proud of you.
 (looking out to the end of
 the tunnel)
 Stay calm. You already did the hard
 work, now just sit back, relax, and
 enjoy.

Zev looks down with a smile as The General nudges him forward.

Zev emerges from the tunnel into the audiences' view. They immediately give him a standing ovation. Zev receives the praise with humility.

There is a microphone stand centered at the front of the room. Zev walks to it and takes the microphone from its holster.

ZEV
 (playfully)
 I know this is the part where I'm
 supposed to thank everyone that
 made this possible, but tonight I
 want to try something a little
 avant guard - an un-thank you list,
 for everyone who made this process
 infinitely more difficult.

The audience LAUGHS.

ZEV (CONT'D)
 I don't want to disparage anyone,
 but I will be referencing you by
 name. First, Josh Galowitz, you
 promised us distribution and pulled
 out halfway through production
 because you thought we didn't have
 the magic.

The audience CLAPS, they love it.

ZEV (CONT'D)
 Dakota Clift actively tried to
 sabotage the project by running
 disparaging articles about me in
 the Post. And, I'm pretty sure he
 slept with my ex-girlfriend.

The audience bellows with LAUGHTER.

ZEV (CONT'D)
I'm kidding, I'm kidding. I know he
did, but it's fine, we're past it,
the cosmos are taking care of it.

The audience WHISTLES and CHEERS.

ZEV (CONT'D)
Okay, I gotta do it right real
quick...
(quickly)
I wanna thank mom and dad, you guys
were great. Simon Nuchtern, I have
no words, you were the first person
to believe in my vision and I would
be nobody with you. And lastly, my
writers, Sam and Kenny, I mean,
what's a film without a story. A
little slow turning around those
drafts but we'll work on that for
part two.

BAND MUSIC starts playing from the theatre intercom system.

ZEV (CONT'D)
(looking up at Charlotte)
Alright, alright. I'm getting
played off my own premiere
(to the audience)
You ever seen that? Okay. My entire
heart and soul are packaged into
the next 110 minutes so please,
enjoy.

Zev sets the microphone back as the audience CLAPS. He takes a small bow and walks up the aisle to the row he sat in when he watched *Breathless* for the very first time.

He takes his seat next to Connie, followed by his mother and father, Alan, Mary, Jimmy, Robert, and Warren. The lights go down alongside the clapping, and a film starts.

A series of title screen cards are presented on screen:

"With grant funding from the *Brooklyn Historical Society*"

"Dedicated to: *the memory of a time and a place*"

"Shlomo Productions Presents"

Cinema Five by Zev Stern.

FADE TO:

INT. SCREENING ROOM, ORCHESTRA - TWO HOURS LATER

As the movie reaches its conclusion, all of the audience is crying.

VOICE ON SCREEN (O.S.)
And that's what this theater is
about. Not PROFIT, but ART.

Music wells up and the credits begin to play. The audience jumps up to cheer. Connie pounces on Zev with a big hug, and his mom pushes her out of the way so she can get a kiss in while wiping away a tear.

The pandemonium between Zev and his family calms down but the audience continues to clap. Connie looks him in the eyes then squeezes his hand. Zev looks forward in awe of the enthusiastic reaction. Connie pulls on his arm a little so he'll bring his ear down to her level.

CONNIE
You're gonna be rich!

Zev, looking a little taken aback, nods and gets a big grin on his face.

INT. ZEV'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Zev, now sideways, is smiling when he snaps out of his day dream. He adjusts himself back to reality. He sits up in his bed and after a few moments of thought, he reaches over and grabs his phone. He makes a call.

ZEV
Hey it's me. Are you up yet?

A brief silence.

ZEV (CONT'D)
Yeah. Anyway, I'll be over at
Mary's in a bit, I'll pick you up.

A pause.

ZEV (CONT'D)
(laughing)
No I'm not coming up, you're coming
down!
(MORE)

ZEV (CONT'D)
I hate when we show up an hour
after everyone else - it's
embarrassing.

Zev gets out of bed, throws on his clothes, and fixes his
hair in the mirror.

ZEV (CONT'D)
(Italian style)
Ayyy.

He walks out of his room.

There is a newly taped-on *Saturday Night Fever* poster above
his bed.

ZEV (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(to Sheryl)
I'm taking the car. I might be
late.
(Brooklyn Italian Accent)
Relax Ma, we're just goin'
dancin'...

The front door opens and closes.

The ENGINE of Zev's car rumbles and ultimately fades into the
distance as he drives away from the house.

FADE TO BLACK.