

Parallels

By

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SCENE: 2011, Chicago, late September, day, int. black town-car.

We see a closeup of a man's hands in his lap in the backseat of a town-car (we know this from the sound of a moving car, the shakiness of the camera simulating the town-car's movement, and a driver speaking in Arabic over his radio). The passenger has a scratched silver watch with a weathered brown leather strap on his left hand. He jolts his arm forward and shakes his hand a few times so that his sleeve goes up and he can see the time.

Chicago, day, ext. sidewalk.

View from the sidewalk looking at the street, we see the black town-car pull up to the curb and the man gets out. Man: STEVEN: 46 years old, wearing a very sharp camel hair expensive sports jacket, tan khaki pants, brown leather watch, and loafers with beige socks. Before he closes his rear-door he ducks down and peeks his head in the door:

STEVEN
I'll be right back.

SCENE: Chicago, day, int. ATM room.

Steven goes into an ATM room. Now the camera is from the perspective looking out the door with Steven facing the ATM and the camera. Steven walks in the door from the outside and stands in front of the ATM. He is in focus at the beginning, but then the camera focuses on the outside yet we can still see his blurry image using the ATM. Steven continues the ATM process while there is a large boom from outside which shakes the camera. He turns around for a split second, but shakes it off, imagining it was nothing. He continues to get his money out, but presses a wrong button and has to start over.

STEVEN
Ah shit.

Steven starts over, first getting out his wallet again from his back pants pocket and then swiping his card. He makes grunting exasperated noises throughout. At this point, the ATM room begins to flash blue and red, blue and red, and he can begin to hear an ambulance outside. He is intrigued but stays to wait for his receipt. Steven leaves the ATM after getting his money and receipt.

As he steps outside, he sees and hears commotion down the street. He begins to sway towards whatever is happening. His town-car is still in front waiting for him and the driver puts down his window. DRIVER: 58 years old, dark short hair,

with a dark complexion, chubby folding neck. He has a very bushy large mustache and a semi-visible scar, but the shot is too far to really see specific characteristics.

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Get in, there's an ambulance trying to get passed.

Steven gets in the town-car.

STEVEN

What happened?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Some accident.

There is a lot of noise outside from the open window, ambulance sirens, police sirens, people talking. We can hear an officer yelling to the crowd that gathered.

OFFICER

(Shout)

Where are the boy's parents? Does anyone know this child?

Steven rolls up the window and all of the noise and commotion is softened. Pause.

SCENE: Ext. park in Chicago. Morning.

We hear a police siren a little louder than the ambulance just before. We see a view of the park, and a police car go by quickly. There is a man, George Caldwell, sitting on the edge of a fountain eating a tuna-fish sandwich. The fountain is off for the cold weather, and the bottom is stained from the water's earlier presence.

GEORGE CALDWELL: he is balding and has gray hair, very red in the face, 5' 9", skinny, with a buttoned-down white dress shirt tucked into light blue jeans with a woven black leather belt and brown loafers with maroon argyle socks. He is 68 years old. He wears rectangular black-rimmed glasses with rounded edges. He has a dark weathered wedding ring on.

A 56 year old woman with brown hair, and beautiful wise-green eyes walks past him slowly. George's face lightens up. His eyes widen, and we can tell that he recognizes her.

GEORGE

(quietly) hey...(louder) Hey, um, Susan? (she looks over at him) over here!

The woman walks over to him, and stands in front of him, but gets no closer than a few feet away.

WOMAN (SAMANTHA)

It's Samanth-(pause) Sammy. How
have you been George?

George has trouble looking Samantha directly in the eyes, so he looks down at the ground, at his hands motioning frantically amidst the conversation, at his tuna sandwich, which he now takes bites of very carefully and awkwardly so as not to spill any.

GEORGE

Oh. Ah sorry heh, it escaped
me...I've-I've been okay, you
know...it's been tough without
Elouise, but you know...

SAMANTHA

Yes, I heard. Jim told me...how
have you been holding up?

GEORGE

Oh you know...just a little
lonely... but I've been keeping
busy... you know I've been working
a little at the Church, helpin'
them with the Christmas events and
all...

SAMANTHA

Oh good, that's great...how's your
son?

GEORGE

Oh I wouldn't know...yeah he hasn't
talked to me in...let's see...well,
since Elouise, um...since-

SAMANTHA

Ohh that's a shame. It's um, it's
been what? Almost a year?

GEORGE

Eleven months yep. (he looks down
at the ground) Yep...So, what have
you been up to?

George's eyes hardly ever leave hers for the rest of their conversation. He remains seated, and she remains standing, so he has to look up at her.

SAMANTHA

Oh just work, like, well, painting a lot...

GEORGE

Heh! that ain't work!

SAMANTHA

...I actually have an opening tonight over in the Arts District, at the Peter Miller Gallery, I'd love it if you came!

GEORGE

Oh of course! yeah I'd like that...Hey, maybe we could get something to eat before, or, or maybe after?

SAMANTHA

George...you're a wonderful man, but-

GEORGE

I know a great place we could go near the galleries, they have tapestries that line the walls, you know, it's very warm and, and well, it's pretty fun... you-you eat everything with your hands, there ain't any forks, knives, ain't anythin'!

Pause.

SAMANTHA

George... I'm sorry, but I just- I don't think it's right. With your- (pause. she looks at George) with everything...

George looks at the ground again and she starts moving away slowly, taking very small backwards steps away from him while still facing his direction.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

...but the Peter Miller Gallery! It starts at six but I'll be there 'til 9, so...anytime!

GEORGE

Okay, yeah, will do! It was, well it was nice to see you.

George watches Samantha as she walks down the path and disappears from his view into the crowds of the park.

SCENE: Ext. daytime Chicago downtown, sidewalk.

Steven is standing *in* the street, close to the sidewalk yet still not on it, shaking one leg anxiously looking down the street. He is standing dangerously close to the cars passing by. A bus comes very close to hitting him yet swerves out of the way slightly. The bus honks at him as he quickly moves out of the way. After it passes he puts up his hand as high as it can reach to hail down a taxi. He is very antsy and looks at his leather watch almost methodically while moving up and down the street trying to hail a taxi. There is a woman also waiting for a taxi to come by with her hand raised. She is standing closer to the incoming cars than Steven is, which means that the next cab will probably come pick her up.

Woman: NASTASSIA: Black woman, 35 years old, Haitian, eight months pregnant, with a floral yellow dress, dark purple sweater, gray sweatpants and white sneakers on with a thin pink stripe on them. She has an old and weak golden retriever (WYCLEF) on a dark green striped leash next to her. She is not holding the leash, yet the dog stays at her side as she tries to hail down a cab.

Steven begins to walk at a hurried pace, almost running down the street, fast-walking stiffly, passing the pregnant woman and her dog. The woman, Nastassia, gives him a suspicious and ethically-disappointed look as Steven crosses a perpendicular street, and then stands behind a parked UPS truck so that the pregnant woman could not see him in his shame. He raises his arm again. We see a taxi zoom past him and stop by the pregnant woman. Steven looks back at the traffic, and there are no taxis in sight. Steven takes out his phone and makes a call.

STEVEN

(Before he puts the phone to his ear, he loudly whispers)
 Fuck! ...Oh hey, Barbara? Tell Carl I have to cancel, yeah, I just couldn't make it...yeah, yeah, my last appointment ran late...well just make something up, uhhh I got sick, I don't know, you know, something...I'm gonna go home for an hour or so until I have to call a driver to go get my son from school...yeah we're meeting his mother at the

hospital to see his
grandmother...yeah...okay
thanks Barbara...okay, bye.

We see the sidewalk where Nastassia stands with Wyclef at her side just as their yellow cab pulls up. She opens the right back door of the cab and gets in before pulling in Wyclef.

NASTASSIA
Allez, Wyclef.

We see the taxi driver, a young Eastern European man with a buzz cut and a heavy accent. He turns around and looks back at her. He sees her trying to pull Wyclef into the backseat by his leash.

NEW TAXI DRIVER
Stop! No, no, nononono. No dogs!

NASTASSIA
Eum, pardon, je ne parle pas
Anglais.

NEW TAXI DRIVER
Ah, listen bitch! Yeah?! No dog in
the car!

The driver points at the dog and then at the backseat to try and show her what he means. However, Nastassia, due to her minuscule understanding of the English language, keeps pulling Wyclef in and makes him sit on the floor *in front of* the seats, which is what she thinks the taxi driver wants her to do. The driver, without turning off the car, opens his door very abruptly and powerfully. It bounces back and hits him softly as he gets out. He pushes it back open and goes to the back left door, and begins mumbling angrily in Ukrainian. He begins to pull her out through the back left door. Nastassia begins to scream a little. She is still holding on to Wyclef by his leash, and the man pulling her makes it so that she is strangling her dog. Wyclef begins barking at the driver and continues to do so for a while. She lets go of the leash and Wyclef jumps up on to the seat and lies down. The driver finally pulls Nastassia out of his taxi and she collapses to the ground. She begins to cry without tears, just the facial expression, shocked, holding her pregnant belly. The taxi driver wraps the end of the leash around his hand and pulls the dog out of the cab, and the dog whines rather than barks. The driver smacks Wyclef on the top of his head when he is almost out of the cab. The driver yanks him out of the cab in one powerful motion. We see a closeup of Nastassia's face and then of her belly, and we can see the driver get back in his seat and pull away.

Nastassia stands up slowly, her back hunched over as she stands. She stumbles back down a little, but Wyclef stands by her side whimpering, nuzzling his head in her side. Nastassia rubs his head and slowly attempts to stand one more time.

SCENE: Ext. Chicago downtown, Sherwood Café.

Sherwood Café: maroon and black striped awning and wooden outdoor seating. Some of the umbrellas are open, covering the rectangular or square tables, and some are closed. It is sunny out, and the focus of the camera is on Nastassia, who is mildly sweaty from her walk. Wyclef is tied up by his leash which is attached to the short metal fence that surrounds the seating area along with a short trimmed hedge. The table is covered by a white table-cloth, and there is a small candle unlit in a glass holder, a basket of bread rolls, and a vase with three fake light-purple flowers in it on her table. Both Nastassia and the dog look worn-out. Nastassia has her cell phone to her ear with her left hand, making her large bright yellow fake nails evident.

NASTASSIA

...et comment a été Johnathan?...
 Ah bon, bon... ouais, ouais je suis
 très bien, tu sais, que je suis en
 Chicago maintenant... ouais c'est
 très différente... je ne pourrait
 pas même prendre un taxi en raison
 du Wyclef, nous avons dû marcher
 ici!...Wyclef ? ouais, non je ne
 pense pas qu'il a aimé le tour
 d'avion, il a obtenu malade. ouais,
 ouais il a vomit un peu... oui je
 sais, je sais... comment est faire
 de maman?(she takes a deep breath)
 ouais bien son aller être dur
 pendant un moment, mais dire s'il
 vous plaît lui que je serai de
 retour après une certaine heure,
 après que j'aie arrangé et à mon
 bébé est assez vieux...hé ne mettez
 pas cela sur moi, j'a dû partir...
 oui, j'a fait... qui n'était aucun
 endroit pour l'élever (she puts her
 hands on her belly) vous savez
 que... ouais, ouais la communauté
 haïtienne ici est très chauffant...
 ouais moi ont déjà été à leurs
 sièges sociaux et ils étaient très
 utiles avec tout... Ils m'ont
 indiqué réellement que je pourrais
 rester dans un de leurs

(MORE)

NASTASSIA (cont'd)

communitites de logement jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit née, et moi leur a dit je fais toujours laisser un mois mais ils ont insisté...ouais je sais qu'il est merveilleux...Je suis censé réellement rencontrer mon commanditaire en quelques minutes....

ENGLISH TRANSLATION: ...AND HOW'S JOHNATHAN BEEN?...AH GOOD, GOOD... YES, YES I'M FINE, YOU KNOW, I'M IN CHICAGO NOW...YEAH IT'S VERY DIFFERENT...I COULDN'T EVEN GET A TAXI BECAUSE OF WYCLEF, WE HAD TO WALK HERE!...WYCLEF? YEAH NO I DON'T THINK HE LIKED THE PLANE RIDE, HE GOT A LITTLE SICK. YEAH, YEAH HE THREW UP A BIT...I KNOW, I KNOW...HOW'S MOM DOING? (SHE TAKES A DEEP BREATH) YEAH WELL ITS GONNA BE HARD FOR A WHILE, BUT PLEASE TELL HER THAT I'LL BE BACK AFTER SOME TIME, AFTER I'VE SETTLED AND THE BABY IS OLD ENOUGH...HEY DON'T PUT THAT ON ME, I HAD TO LEAVE...YES, I DID...THAT WAS NO PLACE TO RAISE HER (SHE PUTS HER HANDS ON HER BELLY) YOU KNOW THAT...YEAH, YEAH THE HAITIAN COMMUNITY HERE IS VERY WARMING...YEAH I HAVE ALREADY TALKED TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS AND THEY WERE VERY HELPFUL WITH EVERYTHING. THEY ACTUALLY TOLD ME THAT I COULD STAY IN ONE OF THEIR HOUSING COMMUNITIES UNTIL SHE'S BORN, AND I TOLD THEM I STILL HAVE A MONTH LEFT BUT THEY INSISTED...YEAH I KNOW IT'S WONDERFUL...YEAH I'M ACTUALLY SUPPOSED TO MEET WITH ONE OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES IN A BIT...YEAH I'M JUST AT A CAFÉ, GETTING A LITTLE TO EAT BEFORE I HEAD OVER THERE...

A waiter walks out of the door of the restaurant midway through the above conversation and comes to Nastassia's table. WAITER: 22 years old, has messy long-ish brown hair, and a black dress-shirt with a maroon apron drenched in dried spilled food and drinks. He stands there with an awkward smile, looking at other tables and around the block as he waits, seeming preoccupied and not desperate for her attention. As Nastassia laughs at something her sister says, she puts up one of her long fake-nailed fingers on her right hand, signifying to the waiter "one second".

NASTASSIA

...ma soeur... m-ma soeur, je dois aller... ouais je suis à un café et le serveur se tient-il ici... (she laughs) ouais ouais, est-ce qu'ainsi j'appellerai un plus défunt chéri, dites-tu le père que j'ai dit bonjour, bien ? D'accord, bon, á la prochaine. Mwah !

ENGLISH TRANSLATION: ...MY SISTER...M-MY SISTER, I HAVE TO GO...YEAH THE WAITER IS JUST STANDING HERE...(LAUGHS AND LOOKS UP AT THE WAITER) YEAH YEAH, SO I'LL CALL LATER DARLING, YOU TELL MOM I SAID HELLO, OKAY? OKAY GOOD, SO, TALK SOON. MWAH!

Nastassia hangs up her phone. She closes and opens her eyes slowly, in an apologetic way, waving her hand in a "don't worry I'm done" manner.

WAITER

Oh no problem ma'am, what'll it be?

Nastassia pulls out a piece of paper from her purse.

NASTASSIA

Eumm, (reading the piece of paper)
I donut spek ongleesh verry, eum,
verry welleuh.

The waiter points at the menu that is laying on her table in front of her.

WAITER

(He speaks slowly)

What would you like to drink?

Nastassia shakes her head with an embarrassed smile.
Do you want a drink?

Nastassia gives an apologetic expression.
You know, water? beer? coke?

NASTASSIA

Ah! yess, yess, eumm, ...coke!

WAITER

Great, you want that diet?

NASTASSIA

(She shakes her head slowly)

I, donut-

WAITER

Oh right, uhh...whatever, one coke!

NASTASSIA

Wwwwon, coke!

The waiter claps his hands gently for Nastassia and leaves the scene.

NASTASSIA

Won, coke..(Nastassia roughly pets
Wyclef's head and pats his back)

Nastassia takes a piece of bread from the basket of rolls on her table. She looks down at her dog who is slumped on the ground, exhausted, looking forward at nothing in particular. Nastassia breaks him off a piece of bread and lowers her hand down to in front of his eyes, waves the bread around a little to make him aware of it, and then he stands up on all fours and takes it from her.

NASTASSIA

Tu aimes cela? Ici. Ouais, ouais...

ENGLISH TRANSLATION: *YOU LIKE THAT? HERE.*

YEAH, YEAH...

SCENE: Ext Humboldt Park, day.

George is still sitting on the edge of the fountain. He watches people going by, a young mother, 30 years old, in fitness clothing goes by him at a fast pace with infant twins in a stroller. He watches as an old man, 90 years old, goes past him in a motorized wheelchair. His eyes are half open and his old hand moves gracefully over the ball which controls his movements. His head is tilted to the side which shows his incapacitation. He pulls over by a bench and some pigeons. A young woman, 19 years old, walks by the old man. Her scarf delicately trails behind her and falls to the ground without her noticing.

OLD MAN

Excuse me! (his frail arms motion towards her and her scarf, as he tries to reach for it with all his strength) Your scarf!

The young woman turns around and she comes back and picks her scarf up off the ground.

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh thank you very much! have a great day!

OLD MAN

Okay now, you go do the same.

He positions his body back into his wheelchair, and slowly puts his shaking fingers back over the controls. He has a slight smile, and looks around at the different people with squinted eyes. He presses a button on his wheelchair, closes his eyes and his head slouches a little. He is still besides the slight movement of his chest when he breathes.

SCENE: Int. Black town-car, angle from the backseat looking at Steven enter.

Steven opens the door to the backseat. He scooches in to the rear left seat as the camera remains on the right rear side, mostly facing Steven however there is a shot of the driver from the backseat, and we can see that it is the driver from the first scene. His mustache is large enough to be seen from this angle.

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Where you headed?

STEVEN

Uhm, yeah could you take me to Humboldt Park?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Sure thing, see behind me there's a list, of sections, fixed prices.

STEVEN

Huh?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Fixed Prices. See its twenty-five bucks to Humboldt Park.

STEVEN

(He looks up and down from his watch, half paying attention, distracted)

Oh yeah, sure, that's fine, just take the quickest route.

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Ookayee Doakey.

Steven looks out the window. There is a new shot of the outside from his perspective with his out-of-focus reflection visible in the window. Very tall buildings line the view, and many people walk by which seem like large herds going every direction. We can see the Lake from the small bridge that the town-car drives over to enter a different part of the city. We go back to the shot from the right side of the backseat of the car aimed at Steven. He is looking at the mandatory licensed picture of the driver right behind the driver's head on the pane of plastic that separates the front from the back of the car.

Close up of Driver's photo: an Arab man, his name, Ackeem Qassem, is written under his photo. He has a large thick mustache and bulging lazy eyes, and his eyelids are subtly

sagging, making him look more sympathetic. There is a large birthmark staining his skin beginning just below his right eye on his right cheek going through his upper and bottom lip and then curving off of his face down to his jaw bone and neck and past his hair line behind his right ear.

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

(Still a close up of picture,
shaky as if we are in the
taxi)

So where near Humboldt Park are yeh
headed?

STEVEN

Um, down on Michigan Avenue, the
school, um, the elementary school?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Which one?

Pause. Steven looks up from his phone, distracted.

STEVEN

Sorry?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Which school?

STEVEN

Oh, I'm not sure, (he looks at the
driver through the rear view mirror
with an awkward laugh) It's our
son's first day. I know it's on
Michigan Avenue, ah I'll find out
just gimme a second...but you know
where you're going in general
right?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

Yep.

STEVEN

Okay well you can never be sure
these days, hiring drivers
that can't even fuckin' read...

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

(looks at Steven through the
rearview mirror)

I know where I'm going.

Steven gets out his phone and texts somebody.

STEVEN
 Good, and take the fastest route possible, I have a schedule to maintain.

TOWN-CAR DRIVER
 Will do, but there's traffic, so you know.

STEVEN
 Ah, shit, yeah?

The driver does not turn around or say another word for a while.

Moments pass. Steven's phone vibrates in his hand.

STEVEN
 (looking down at his phone)
 It's Cameron.

TOWN-CAR DRIVER
 (without looking back at Steven)
 Ackeem.

Pause.

STEVEN
 Oh, no, hah no, sorry...

The driver looks back at Steven through the rear-view mirror with a completely serious face.

STEVEN
 Cameron Elementary, the school, that's um, that's where I'm going. You know it?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER
 (looking back at the road)
 I know it.

We see a new area of the city, less tall buildings, time has passed by in the taxi. There are little parks, trees, a housing community, yet all pass very slowly due to the heavy traffic.

STEVEN
 (Still window view)
 So where are you from?

The driver says nothing in return. He has an earpiece plugged in which may be the cause of his silence, yet he glances back at Steven through the rear-view mirror. Steven then looks out the window, and around the backseat, just embarrassed and quite awkwardly. He notices a piece of paper crudely taped to the credit card slot in the back which reads: "Cash Only"

STEVEN

Shit, sorry, I didn't notice the sign, could you stop at an ATM?

TOWN-CAR DRIVER

The system's down, we can only take cash.

Two minutes pass as the driver talks on his radio in Arabic. Steven texts: *There's a lot of traffic but I left early so I'll probably be on time. Can you call the school and tell them I might be late? I'll meet you at your mother's room at St. Vincent's as soon as I pick up Tyler. Love you.* The driver pulls over in front of a Bank of America, and Steven hops out, and we notice that this is where we began in the first scene.

STEVEN

I'll be right back.

SCENE: Ext. Park Chicago.

We see George again, still sitting on the edge of the fountain.

A young boy walks past him, and it is obvious that the boy was just crying due to his swollen eyes, as he wipes his snot on his sleeve which extends over his small hands.

TYLER FREEDMAN: 8 years old, dirty-blond hair, and is very small for his age. He is wearing a blue t-shirt with a race-car on it and a black and white checkered boarder resembling a racing flag, tan corduroy pants, red socks and black sneakers that light up flashing red on the sides.

GEORGE

You okay there champ?

Tyler keeps walking slowly down the path in the park.

GEORGE

Hey hold on there a second. Hey I like your shoes! Veery cool.

Tyler stops walking and looks at his shoes, stomps one against the ground to make it light up. He looks up at the man.

GEORGE (CONT.)

Nice! What's your name?

TYLER

(not looking up from the ground, acting like the immature child he is, seeming over-dramatic)

Tyler...

GEORGE

Tyler. Where are your parents Tyler?

TYLER

I dunno, at work probly.

GEORGE

Oh, are you with a babysitter?

TYLER

No.

GEORGE

Well then who are ya here with? Is your older brother or something?

TYLER

No. I'm asposed to be in English class.

GEORGE

In school?! did you leave school?

TYLER

Uh huh.

GEORGE

Why did you leave?

TYLER

Cuz I was scared...

GEORGE

Scared? of what?

TYLER

Mrs. Lanegan...

GEORGE
Is that your teacher?

TYLER
Uh huh, yeah my English teacher.

GEORGE
And why are you scared of her?

TYLER
Cuz I forgot my book at home, and,
and..and if Mrs. Lanegan knew, um,
she might, um, she could get mad at
me...

GEORGE
So you left school? How did you
manage that?

TYLER
Yeah I um, I askeded to go to the
bathroom, and I, um, I got a pass
for the hall and then I left.

GEORGE
Well you know Tyler, you shouldn't
be wandering outside of school, and
you shouldn't leave school! And you
walked all the way here?!

TYLER
Yeah um, my school's right
there! (he points across the park)

GEORGE
Ohh I see! Well you shouldn't be
out here anyways it's not safe!

Tyler looks down at the ground.

And you shouldn't be scared of your
teacher, she's there to teach you,
and help you!

TYLER
Yeah, but, um, if she knowd that I
didn't bring my book, then um, then
everyone would make fun of me.

GEORGE
Oh, I see...well listen, Tyler.

George motions for Tyler to sit down next to him, and Tyler
climbs the ledge that is 3/4ths his height and sits next to
George.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

So you're scared that the kids in your class are gonna laugh at you?

TYLER

Mhmm

GEORGE

Well do ya think that all those other students, all your class-mates, remember their book every day?

TYLER

Mmmm (thinking), no?

GEORGE

That's right! So just remember...Tyler. Just remember, that if you do something, like forget your book, orrr, or say the wrong answer. Or say that someone picks on you, you know..things like that. Just remember that it happens to everybody and, you know, that nobody's perfect and all.

TYLER

You mean like even grown-ups too?

GEORGE

Ohhh far from it! (he chuckles loudly)

TYLER

You mean people laugh at you too?

GEORGE

Well, no, nobody laughs at me, but, that isn't to say I don't do things wrong...you know, I mean I don't have school or anything, but hell I've forgotten my books more times than you ever will!

TYLER

My dad's perfect. He's really good at his job and, and, he makes it so my mom can play with me all the time!

GEORGE

That's great, you like your dad?
What's he do?

TYLER

He talks to people on the phone a lot and then goes and gives people houses. He goes away for a long time a lot.

GEORGE

Ohh, ya don't see him very much?

TYLER

Nuh uh, but its okay.

GEORGE

Don't you miss him when he's gone?

TYLER

When I was little, my mom said that I would get um, scared when he went away and I missed him a lot but um, now I know that I'll get to see him soon.

GEORGE

Well that's a good attitude to have Tyler. Don't ever forget it. Okay? Cuz that's a good attitude for everyone to have, for someone as young and naive as you, even for someone as old as me.

Pause as George rubs his thumb over his wedding ring.

Do you wanna go get a little ice cream or something Tyler? (Tyler nods) You have to promise me though, that after we get back here to the park you'll go back to school. Got it?

Tyler stands up and puts his hand out for George to take, and George takes Tyler's hand and gets up, and the two walk off.

SCENE: Ext. Sherwood Café.

We see Nastassia again, now with a glass of coke in front of her. Wyclef is lying down by her side. She takes a sip of her coke and some of it spills from her mouth and on to her pregnant belly. She takes her napkin and wipes it off, but it leaves a faint stain. She looks up and sees a boy, Tyler,

across the street. George is right behind him, but he starts running away a little, laughing loudly, playfully screaming when George gets closer. Nastassia smiles warmly and looks down at Wyclef.

NASTASSIA

Vous irez avoir un petit soeur
bientôt mon ami. (she slaps his
side)

ENGLISH TRANSLATION: *YOU'RE GOING TO
HAVE A LITTLE SISTER SOON MY FRIEND.*

The dog lays his head in Nastassia's lap and she pets his head and side. Wyclef is breathing very loudly, sounding out-of-breath, a little wheezy.

NASTASSIA

Cet homme vous a-t-il blessé quand
il vous a tiré ? ouais... laisse
enlever cette chose (she takes the
leash off of Wyclef) c'est
meilleur?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION: *DID THAT MAN HURT
YOU WHEN HE PULLED YOU? YEAH...LETS TAKE THIS THING OFF (SHE
TAKES THE LEASH OFF OF WYCLEF) THAT BETTER?*

Close up: Nastassia limply holds the leash in her hand, and then lets it fall to the ground. The metal clip at the end makes a hard noise when it hits the concrete.

The view changes to the other side of the street, where we see Tyler running around on the sidewalk a few feet ahead of George. Wyclef can be seen across the street right outside of the fence of the restaurant. He barks at Tyler who he hears laughing loudly, and Tyler runs to the spot just across the street from Wyclef. He stands just at the edge of the curb on his side. Close-up: he little feet in the black light up shoes, clumsily standing with one knee a little bent. Out of focus we can see cars quickly going by and we can hear Wyclef.

We go back to the view of the waiter handing Nastassia a napkin for her dress which she spilled coke on. We hear a screech and a loud crash. Nastassia looks up tensely towards the noise. People begin talking all around and it gets loud with commotion for a moment. Pause. A new shot after a little time has passed, as an ambulance shows up and there are two police cars already there. The officer is again by the child in the street.

We go back to a view of the café. Nastassia's face is wet with tears and spit from her upset mouth. She is screaming loudly, saying no, no, no. The waiter takes Nastassia by the hand and leads her inside, as Wyclef follows behind. The waiter grabs Nastassia a chair and puts a glass of water next to her. She sits down.

WAITER

I'll be right back. (he motions with his hands that he is leaving)

Nastassia stares blankly forward, with no emotion in her face, until we see her expression change from shock to pain, and she quickly stands up out of her seat holding her belly. She looks down and we see a small pool of water on the ground, and she quickly understands that her water broke. She looks around, still in pain, and opens her mouth to yell for someone, but doesn't know what to say.

NASTASSIA

Monsieur? Monsieur?!

WAITER

(comes back in the room quickly) Yes ma'am what is it- oh did you spill your water? Did the glass break? Be careful where you ste-

We see the waiter's frozen face, and then zoom in on the full glass of water still next to Nastassia, who we see standing stiffly.

SCENE of the accident with the officer, who we saw when Steven went passed in the town-car earlier.

OFFICER

(Shout) Nobody knows this child? Where are his parents?!

GEORGE

Yeah I know him, I'll go with him.

OFFICER

(Pulling a stretcher out of the back of the ambulance, struggling)

Okay, help me get this down.

They pull the stretcher down clumsily and loudly. The paramedic is sitting in the back of the ambulance waiting for the Officer and George to get the kid into the back of

the ambulance. Paramedic: young, 26 years old, Indian, wide-eyes make him look unprepared and scared to try to help such a young boy. His face shows that he almost regrets getting in the ambulance today. The stretcher clatters against the back bumper as they jerk it out of the ambulance.

OFFICER

Thanks, alright, now grab his legs.

Black. Pause.

SCENE: Int. the back of the ambulance.

GEORGE

Is he breathing?

PARAMEDIC

Yes but we need to hurry, he has internal bleeding.

The ambulance goes over a bump, which shakes the equipment a little. The camera shows the ambulance leave the scene of the accident, and the camera turns around and lowers down to ground level, so that we can see the boy's solitary black sneaker in the street, its lights flashing red, mirroring the flashing ambulance lights. The camera zooms in on the shoe's lights slowly, seeming like an emergency of some sort. We keep zooming in until the red lights of the shoe fill the screen in an unsettling way.

Charles Mingus' Mood Indigo begins to play with the irritating flashing red lights of the sneaker for as long as it is only piano. As the horns come in, the new scene opens.

SCENE: Int. Hospital

Nastassia is giving birth in the hospital. There is no noise in the scene except for Mood Indigo, but her face shows that she is screaming in pain, her mouth open uncomfortably wide as she is shouting, a strand of spit going from her lower to upper lip. Her eyes are bulging with pain and fear and her eyebrows are very raised, all in an almost comical way. There is then a close-up of her hand gripping the side of her hospital bed, squeezing it, rattling it. The camera leaves her room, and her dog Wyclef is tied to a chair right outside her room. His eyes look up as the young boy from the accident, Tyler Freedman, is quickly wheeled past him with George Caldwell by his side, who has very swollen eyes from tears and his face is redder than usual from the somber experience. Wyclef tries to follow the boy but is restrained by his leash attached to the chair. The camera follows the boy's stretcher down the hall fairly far, and then the

stretcher veers down a right hallway but the camera continues forward until we see Steven rush in.

When the camera meets him, he goes left through a door into the grandmother's room. The wife (a small blond woman) and the grandmother are in there. The grandmother is very weak and in bed and Steven's wife is holding her mother's frail veined hands in her own hands, smiling. Steven rushes in and you can see him telling them something, yet silently due to the music. The wife collapses to the ground, and we see a close-up of her hand fall out of her mother's. A minute passes and she stands up with Steven's help. She looks at him with intense infuriated and dead eyes and says something incomprehensible. She storms out the door shakily and choppily, frozen from the news of her son Tyler. She rushes down the hall as the camera moves with her.

We run up to an aerial view of Tyler's closed-eyed face as the mother does, and as the doctor pulls a sheet over Tyler's face, the camera cuts to a shot of another doctor delivering Nastassia's baby out from under a sheet covering the actual birth. The camera is looking over Nastassia's shoulder at the doctor holding her baby. The sheet moving over Tyler's face is synchronized with the motion of Nastassia's baby being delivered. The doctor gives Nastassia her baby, and she looks exhausted yet relieved and effervescent. Glowing. Song ends as the picture fades out.