

THINGS ARE GONNA CHANGE AROUND HERE

By

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FADE IN

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - DAY

Finches, parakeets, and other birds fly around the aviary. A rat crawls along the back fence within the enclosure.

POP.

The fire of a BB gun sends the birds into a frenzy, the rat doesn't seem to notice.

MAURICE (70), a curmudgeon, cocks the gun while sitting in a plastic lawn seat. He steadies the barrel for his next shot.

ROLAND

At it again?

ROLAND (29), an odd guy mentally situated somewhere on the autism spectrum, stands in the porch doorway.

MAURICE

Rats... Goddamned rats.

ROLAND

Or maybe it's the neighbor's cat you're shooting at again?

MAURICE

I was only puttin' steam in its ass.

ROLAND

And like last time, the steam will come right out the neighbors ears.

MAURICE

They'd never have known if the pellet didn't get caught in that turd's mangy fur.

ROLAND

How about I just set a trap?

MAURICE

Horse shit! It's just a pellet, would barely hurt a flea. Look.

Maurice points the gun a foot from his left hand and fires.

POP.

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE

Hungh.

ROLAND

Oh.

Maurice grimaces. Blood trickles from the wound as he makes a fist.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

That was stupid. Why would you do that.

MAURICE

(through gritted teeth)

Been around a lot longer than you for you to tell me how to conduct myself.

ROLAND

We don't even have any bandages.

Maurice fiddles with his wound.

MAURICE

(sotto)

Yep, yep, yep. Things are gonna have to change around here.

ROLAND

Can you give me a ride to work?

INT./EXT. MAURICE'S VAN - DAY

Maurice and Roland sit in the captain seats as Maurice drives down the street. Maurice has a tube sock tied around his hand.

MAURICE

Can't drive himself to work. I could drive when I was twelve.

ROLAND

I can drive. I don't drive.

MAURICE

It's just as easy to die in that seat as this one.

Maurice lights a Virginia Slim cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

I'll have Dale pick me up tonight.

MAURICE

That's all I'm good for, a roof and a ride.

ROLAND

Why don't you just kick me out already?

MAURICE

You have a strange conception of family kiddo.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER/COMMON AREA - DAY

Roland's work- a large/open human warehouse, with linoleum floors and chipping paint.

JOYCE (85), hunchbacked and disheveled, plays "I WAS BORN UNDER A WANDERIN' STAR" on an out of tune piano. ASSORTED HOMELESS people sit and mill about.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER/FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

Roland is playing solitaire. LINCOLN (55) approaches the desk.

LINCOLN

Can I get a towel?

ROLAND

What happened to yours?

LINCOLN

I don't have one.

ROLAND

You've been here a month, didn't you get one when you arrived?

LINCOLN

No. I never got one.

Roland stands up and pulls keys from his pocket.

ROLAND

What have you been using?

(CONTINUED)

LINCOLN

I had a towel, but someone must
have took it.

Roland unlocks a drawer and pulls a towel from it. He hands
it to Lincoln.

ROLAND

This one is yours now. Hold onto it
and wash it with your laundry.

Lincoln leaves.

Roland walks towards the common area.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER/COMMON AREA - CONTINUOUS

Roland makes his way to Joyce at the piano.

ROLAND

Hi Joyce.

Joyce abruptly stops playing.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Have any other songs you want to
play? We've heard this one many,
many times.

TANK TOP (35) gets up from his chair.

TANK TOP

Ay! Can we put on the TV now?

ROLAND

Yeah that's fine.

Roland slides a seat up next to Joyce.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Lets take a break from the piano
for a while Joyce.

Joyce turns her head towards the shoulder opposite Roland to
address someone that isn't there.

JOYCE

Yeah that guy's some kind of
asshole I guess.

CARTOONS have been turned on on the TV.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND
Joyce...hey Joyce?

JOYCE
Yeah, what is it?

ROLAND
How are you doing today?

JOYCE
Oh fine I guess... I guess there's
some people that want to take my
money and my time. But I know what
they're up to.

Joyce turns to talk to her imaginary friend.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Shut up asshole.

ROLAND
Who took your money ?

JOYCE
Hmmm well. "My Fair Lady"...ever
heard of it? No I guess you
wouldn't have. I wrote all of that,
and they stole it. Those faggots
stole it all from me.

ROLAND
We can't use words like that okay?

JOYCE
Yes yes yes.

ROLAND
Isn't "My Fair Lady" based on
"Pygmalion"?

JOYCE
I know that! There wasn't any music
in that though was there?!

INT./EXT. DALE'S CAR -SAME

A HARSH BEAT blasts through the stereo system. DALE DOWNS
AKA MEOW MIX(35), hip-hop superstar in his mind, is driving
while bopping his head.

(CONTINUED)

DALE
(rapping)
Cause I'm the Charles Mingus, of
making cunnilingus. And the John
Coltrane of bringing the pain. I
rub my penis on the Venus....
(losing the plot)
De Milo, fire off like a missile
silo. Ungh.

Dale struggles for the next brilliant line of his freestyle.

DALE
Han Solo...

Dale fails.

Dale takes a swig through the straw of his Big Gulp.

INT. SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Roland pulls a bar of soap from a nearby drawer and hands it
to CRUTCHES (44) from behind the front desk.

CRUTCHES
Dontcha have an unscented one?

ROLAND
That's what we have today.

CRUTCHES
Any organic one? The organic ones
usually come unscented.

ROLAND
That's what we have today. Sorry.

CRUTCHES
Scented makes me itch.

TRACEY (35), prim Shelter Manager, emerges from her office
near the desk and approaches.

CRUTCHES
Tracey. Hey Tracey, do y'all have
unscented soap?

TRACEY
I dunno. Can you check for him
Roland?

(CONTINUED)

Tracey watches over Roland as he again inspects the drawer, Crutches peers expectantly. Roland rifles through the drawer pulling bar after bar of soap and other travel size toiletries out.

ROLAND

No. It looks like these are all either scented or unspecified.

CRUTCHES

Oooo that one!

Roland hands the indicated soap to Crutches. Crutches draws a long whiff of it.

CRUTCHES

Yeah, this one's good.

Crutches ambles away with the aid of his walking support devices.

TRACEY

Happy to help sir...

(back to Roland)

Freedom of choice as a consumer is fundamental to human dignity. Don't you think so?

ROLAND

I dunno, there's research that demonstrates capitalist models of competitive choice can produce cognitive dissonance and anxie--

TRACEY

--We have new procedure Roland. From now on we'll lock the client fridge and open it for ten minutes every three hours.

ROLAND

That's been tried. The clients nearly revolt and that policy never sticks.

TRACEY

Well if everyone is consistent behind the policy, it will work out.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

I was completely behind it the first time I encountered the refrigerator locking rule, in each iteration of it I have been at least, functionally behind it.

TRACEY

What would you say to all the clients telling me their food is getting stolen?

ROLAND

I would tell them that they live in a tin can filled with ninety other people and things either get stolen or they are locked up and inaccessible. There are some arrangements in life that don't have ideal solutions.

TRACEY

Here, go put this on the fridge now.

Tracey puts a padlock into Roland's hand.

ROLAND

You have my word, I will be behind this policy one-hundred percent...When we go back to the original policy in three months, I will also be behind that one-hundred percent.

Roland walks off as Tracey crosses her arms.

Tracey picks up the client census and starts flipping through it. The front doors burst open, Dale struts in, BEATBOXING.

Tracey gives him a look that says, "Oh hell no!".

Dale approaches the desk.

DALE

Whattup?!

TRACEY

Hello. What's your name?

(CONTINUED)

DALE

It says Meow Mix on the front of my CD.

TRACEY

What's your name as it appears on our register of clients?

DALE

Aw naw. I don't stay here.

TRACEY

Well we don't have any beds right now, and we don't take walk-ins. You have to get a referral from the HSA or the police.

DALE

Na Na Na. I'm here to see...

(noticing Roland)

Roland. Ay Roland! What up rogue?

Roland returns - Dale extends for a fist bump, Roland grabs the top of it.

ROLAND

Hi Dale. You're early.

TRACEY

Roland, you know the rules about client privacy. Can you tell your friend to wait outside please?

OLD MAN AFRO shuffles by towards the door.

OLD MAN AFRO

Ay, what up, Dale?!

DALE

Sup sup!

OLD MAN AFRO

Got a 'pote for me?

Dale follows after Old Man Afro.

DALE

Fo show.

Dale and Old Man Afro exit. Tracey and Roland lock eyes in a stare across the desk.

INT./EXT. DALE'S CAR -DAY

Dale drives down the highway with Roland, his passenger.

DALE

New manager lady's pretty fly.

ROLAND

She's okay. At least this one graduated from college instead of a recovery program.

DALE

So you gonna hit that then?

ROLAND

How is that even a progression of logic?

DALE

Aw c'mon, Rolie. I don't ever see you messin' with any ladies, but you gotta get down sometime!

ROLAND

You know I don't get down.

DALE

How you jizzin?!

ROLAND

Excuse me?

DALE

How you jizzin, blood? My homey gotta be cummin' someways!

ROLAND

Maybe your attitude of objectification should be re-evaluated. The amount of time you spend obsessing about women doesn't translate to results.

DALE

Oh you're gonna critique my game then? Alright...Well funny you should ask my man, it just so happens I have a proposition for ya.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

Great.

DALE

See. I met this girl on OK Cupid. However, she is VERY interested. But she seems like she got trust issues. We gonna have a date, but she is bringing her friend along. So now you have to come.

ROLAND

No way. A double date? No way.

DALE

Its not like a date!

ROLAND

A blind double date? No way.

DALE

Naw man! This girls a third wheel. You're just like...a second third wheel.

ROLAND

Sorry I just don't see it happening.

DALE

A trifecta.

ROLAND

No. Take one of your friends from your rap group.

DALE

My crew? Fuck naw, those muthafuckas are playa's. They'll swoop on my shit.

ROLAND

I'm sorry. No.

DALE

I dunno rogue. I give you a lot of rides, from to and fro. I'd hate for that to not happen anymore.

Roland calmly punches his forehead, defeated.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A TV set illuminates a room that hasn't received any touches of decoration since the early 1980's. Maurice and FRAN (75) sit close on the couch, a blanket covering their lap.

The blanket moves from a concealed motion. Fran looks at Maurice's face, he closes his eyes.

MAURICE

Ungh.

The front door OPENS.

The jerking under the blanket stops. Roland enters from the front door. Maurice COUGHS.

ROLAND

Hey Moe. Hey Fran.

(halting)

Really? You're going to do that out here?

Roland bolts away to the adjacent kitchen.

MAURICE

Hey, this is my house...we wouldn't have to sit out here if you got the cable to my room set up like I asked.

FRAN

Maurice.

INT. ROLAND'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ROLAND

That's what the cable company's for.

Roland digs through the fridge, pulling out sandwich material. Maurice enters the kitchen.

MAURICE

They came but they messed up some goddamned thing or another. I need you to look at it.

Roland holds up a mayonnaise jar.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

Are you back on regular mayonnaise
or should I continue to buy the
light one--

(noticing something)

--You have an erection.

We see now that Maurice has a boner in his pants.

MAURICE

I got that jar on my donation run,
it still had a good date.

ROLAND

Why would you subject me to your
erection? And please don't bring
your old food in here. I've told
you before, it's out of date and
who knows how long it sits out
behind the store before then riding
in the back of your van for hours.

Maurice pushes past Roland and opens the freezer.

MAURICE

Malarkey. It's good enough for your
hobo friends though?!

Maurice pulls ice-cream from the freezer.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

You got it too easy for your own
good.

ROLAND

Sure I do.

MAURICE

We're having some floats, you want
one?

ROLAND

No thanks.

Roland is fixing a sandwich, Maurice pulls tall glasses from
a cabinet.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

I feel like painting. You mind if I
work tonight?

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE

Yeah, it's okay...

(whispering)

I don't know if Frannie's staying over. Just peek in first and see.

ROLAND

(hushed)

Why don't you just tell her what we do?

MAURICE

And let her know my grandson is a freak? I wouldn't do that to you kiddo.

INT. SHELTER - DAY

Roland sits at the front desk, working on a newspaper Sudoku. The front door opens, and ALBA (45) enters. As she approaches, Roland and Alba share a look of surprised recognition.

ALBA

Roland?!

ROLAND

Aunt Alba.

ALBA

My god, it's been fuckin' years. What the hell you doin' here?!

ROLAND

I work here. And it looks as though you're a prospective client.

Alba hands a slip of paper to Roland.

ALBA

The po-leece gave this to me and tole me to come down. I can't believe this shit.

Alba takes a seat across from Roland at the desk.

ROLAND

It's okay. A lot of people come through here. I won't judge you.

(CONTINUED)

ALBA

Why not? Our family only ever was judgment anyhow. And look at you! Some kinda boyscout to work in a homeless shelter.

ROLAND

There is no moral foundation to my employment here I assure you. I'm just not suited for most career trajectories.

ALBA

Shit. This isn't my kinda deal, I think I should just go.

ROLAND

No, don't go. This is better than the street. If there's some help that this shelter can offer you, than stay.

ALBA

You say that...but I know I'll just be messin' things up for you here.

ROLAND

Don't worry about me. I have to get some info for an intake, but don't tell me anything you don't want to...or just lie. Almost everyone lies on these.

Roland pulls papers out of the drawer and sets them on the desk.

ALBA

Do you still see HIM?

ROLAND

Maurice? Of course, I live with him.

ALBA

AUGH. You let him live with you? I can't imagine.

Roland begins filling out the paperwork.

ROLAND

I know enough to get started here... still have the same surname? Martin?

(CONTINUED)

ALBA

God no. I took my ex-husbands
...Jones. The only fucker out there
that's worse than my daddy.

ROLAND

How long have you been homeless?

ALBA

I dunno. That depends, what do you
consider a home? I haven't been on
the streets or nothing, but I ain't
had a place you could send mail to.

ROLAND

I'm going to put down 'first time
homeless' okay?...What do you
consider your primary cause of
homelessness?

Roland focuses on Alba, she glares at him.

ALBA

Just put down whatever's best. I
won't be here long, jus' till I get
my shit together.

ROLAND

Don't tell anyone we know each
other. It might make my job
difficult.

ALBA

Can I use the toilet? Where's the
toilet?

Roland stands up, Alba follows suit.

ROLAND

Yeah... we'll get you settled in.
This voucher gets you a bed for at
least a month as long as you don't
cause any trouble.

Roland picks up his keys, Alba slings her duffel bag over
her shoulder.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Hey...Grandpa actually doesn't live
with me. I live with him... Your
old room actually.

(CONTINUED)

ALBA

His house? No no, your parents bought that offa him, about a year before they died. Got him outta money trouble.

ROLAND

What?!

ALBA

They left that house to you.

ROLAND

That's not possible.

ALBA

Course it was! You don't think I know? That old bastard was fuming after he learnt that.

ROLAND

I've been paying him rent.

ALBA

Sheeit..

Alba laughs mockingly.

ROLAND

Every month. I've been paying him rent more than ten years.

ALBA

I told ya...he's a bastard.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - DAY

A rat scurries along the backyard fence. The sight at the end of the BB Gun tracks him.

POP.

INT./EXT. DALE'S CAR - DAY

Dale is chauffeuring Roland home from work.

DALE

Yo, I can't believe salty ol' Moe could steal a whole muthafuckin' house from you.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

I'm not sure he did. My Aunt was never all there, and she has substance abuse issues. Her info could be all wrong.

DALE

Fuck. What you fin ta do then?

ROLAND

Stop off at the county building.

DALE

Naw we gotta get you lookin' tight for our date tonight.

ROLAND

Fine. You want me to go on the date?! Just stop at the County building first before they close.

DALE

Goddammit muthafucka, I swear to god you're saltin' my game. You playin' the playa, rogue.

INT. COUNTY RECORDER'S OFFICE - DAY

The small office is grey, a sick plant in the corner is its only touch of decor. Roland marches in, with Dale stepping with swagger behind him.

They approach the front desk, where MEREDITH (45) looks up to help them. Dale checks the plainly dressed woman out.

ROLAND

I need to make an inquiry about title--property ownership.

DALE

S'up girl.

MEREDITH

Sure, use any of those computers over there. Just follow the prompts. We're closing in twenty though.

Roland hurries off to the indicated computers, Dale hangs back and stares hungrily at Meredith.

(CONTINUED)

MEREDITH (CONT'D)

Is there something I can help you with?

DALE

Probably. What're you thinkin' ?

MEREDITH

Don't look at me like that, Sir.

DALE

Am I excitin' you too much?

MEREDITH

You're about to give me cause to reach across this desk and slug you.

DALE

Damn.

INT. COUNTY RECORDER'S OFFICE /AT COMPUTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Roland types furiously, researching the County's database. Dale is on Facebook at the computer next to him.

ROLAND

It's all right here. It's all been inside here the whole time.

DALE

Look Rolie, I found her right here. Molly's on Facebook. Peep this song she posted.

Dale starts playing a song off the computer, something like BLANK GENERATION by Richard Hell.

ROLAND

Didn't you meet this girl on there? Why is this a revelation?

DALE

I can get into this. It's edgy shit right?

Meredith approaches.

DALE (CONT'D)

Naw I met her on OK Cupid, don't get it twisted.

(CONTINUED)

MEREDITH

You need to turn this off.

DALE

S'up lady.

MEREDITH

And you can't be on Facebook.
C'mon, you two need to leave.

ROLAND

Ma'am what's this look like to you.

Roland indicates to his screen.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

It says granter, grantee. But it
looks to me like Roland is the
owner of the house.

Meredith looks at the screen.

MEREDITH

Yeah. Roland was deeded the house
as a minor, so there would be a
state guardian to monitor the
situation...but that was more than
ten years ago. So yeah, Roland owns
the house.

ROLAND

But I'm Roland.

MEREDITH

Congratulations. You own a house.

DALE

Fuckin' rad!

MEREDITH

We're closing, can you two pack it
up now?

ROLAND

That son of a bitch stole my house.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Roland stares off blankly. He shares the booth with Dale and their dates, MOLLY (31) and ROSALINE (33), women who have punk rock/indie affectations and attire. Dale is holding court, the women seem amused in a far from romantic way.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

So that was my sixth album. But I'm working on like eight and nine right now. I'm not gonna release number seven. That's like, a lucky number and I wanna keep it in the vaults... release it posthumously.

ROSALINE

A superstar huh? How come I've never heard of you?

DALE

You don't believe me?! I sent your girl Molly here my Soundcloud links. She'll tell ya.

MOLLY

I haven't listened yet.

DALE

Aw damn. Well there ya go. Ya go on a date and don't even do your homework! Roland'll tell ya. Ay Rolie!

Dale turns to his friend.

DALE (CONT'D)

Hey wake up yo!

ROSALINE

(sotto/ to Molly)

He looks pensive.

ROLAND

Yeah?

DALE

Hey man, tell these girls-- Hey what's your problem man? We have some beautiful ladies here, and you're mister spaceman.

(to Molly)

I'm sorry, he gets, like nervous.

MOLLY

(sotto /to Rosaline)

Strong silent type.

ROSALINE

(sotto/ to Molly)

But not that strong.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

And Dale gets a little excitable around the opposite sex. I'm happy to be here. I'm just a little distracted at the moment.

MOLLY

Distracted? Like how?

ROLAND

My grandpa stole my dead parents house from me.

MOLLY

How do you steal a house?

ROLAND

Just...with lies. A whole long string of lies.

ROSALINE

Than where do you live now?

ROLAND

I live in the house...And I'm going to take it back from him too.

MOLLY

Great than it's settled.

DALE

We were talking about my music.

Roland turns to Dale and nods his head. Molly quickly looks Roland up and down, intrigued.

ROLAND

Oh yes. Dale here is a very talented recording artist. Did you tell them about your rap opera Dale?

ROSALINE

Rap opera?

ROLAND

Yes, rap opera. It's lovely. You should hear it, like Wagner's Ring Cycle but hyphy-er.

DALE

Thanks homey!

MOLLY

Sounds great.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

What's that?

Roland points to Molly's hand. She spins a harmonica in her palm.

MOLLY

My harp.

ROLAND

You play it?

MOLLY

Sometimes. But mostly I just keep it around, with the looming threat that I might play it.

DALE

Yo, we could put that down on a track.

ROSALINE

She just wants people to notice her.

EXT. DINER - LATER

Roland zips up his jacket as Dale sparks up a cigarette.

DALE

These girls are ready and raring brotha! What's the game plan?

ROLAND

Have you considered an exit strategy?

DALE

Yo, lets think of a smooth move, get them to the motel down the way.

ROLAND

You'd probably expect me to veto that proposal, but I'll tell you what. If you can get them to agree to extending this soiree, you can count me in.

DALE

MMM HMM. What's this?! Is yo dick risin up like a muthafuckin' compass to guide us home into those

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DALE (cont'd)
beautiful vaginas? Rogue, I knew
you had it in you.

Dale puts his arm up for a high five.

ROLAND
No. I just know there's no way
those two women see anything
compelling in potential coitus with
us.

Dale retracts his arm.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
But by the slim chance they do. I'm
just in that kind of mood. I feel
angry. Reckless.

DALE
This is you angry? You still pretty
chill homey.

Roland turns his steely glare towards Dale.

ROLAND
I don't give a fuck about anything
in this world anymore.

INT. DINER/ WOMEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A toilet FLUSHES, Rosaline exits from the stall. Molly is
BLOW DRYING her hands.

MOLLY
Wanna switch?!

ROSALINE
No way! You met that guy on Ok
Cupid? He seems more like a
candidate for the Megan's Law site.

MOLLY
Yeah but Roland looks ready to wave
the white flag and retreat.

ROSALINE
That's fine by me.

MOLLY
He's cute enough though.

Rosaline washes her hands.

(CONTINUED)

ROSALINE

Yeah he is. They seem harmless, but
lets wrap this debacle up, okay?

MOLLY

Aw. I was thinking a few drinks at
The Broadway might be a laugh.

Rosaline joins her hands next to Molly's under the jet dry.

ROSALINE

I'm not saying I wouldn't give the
goobers a second shot...but their
game's not worthy of morning after
regrets.

MOLLY

You're right.

ROSALINE

We can get into something more
interesting after they drop us off.

Rosaline and Molly clasp hands in the jet dry and raise them
out together, locking eyes and belting out in unison:

MOLLY

"We belong to the night, we
belong to the thunder!"

ROSALINE

We belong to the light, we
belong to the thunder!"

EXT. DINER - MOMENTS LATER

Dale takes a drag from his cigarette and flicks it off.
Rosaline and Molly exit from the diner, GIGGLING.

DALE

Ladies, ladies! How was that?
Dinner and a movie huh? Roland and
I, we were thinkin' we could get
into some drinks, have some fun.

ROSALINE

Sorry--

MOLLY

We're tired. Do you think
you can drop us off at my
place?

Dale looks crestfallen, Roland fires a knowing smirk at him.

INT./EXT. DALE'S CAR/ OUTSIDE ROLAND'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dale and Roland confer.

DALE

Salted my game muthafucka.

ROLAND

What did you think would happen?
What about me says 'wingman'?

DALE

True that. Thanks for tryin' tho
rogue.

Roland motions to exit.

DALE (CONT'D)

Ay. Whatchu gon' do bout Moe?

Roland takes a moment to consider.

ROLAND

I'm going to throw some salt in his
game.

INT. ROLAND'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Roland holds up a fresh painting and looks the canvas over. His room is packed floor to ceiling, but meticulous. Full bookshelves and art materials consume the room.

This painting disgusts Roland, he observes it with a grimace. His work is abstract, a blend of curvy primary colored blobs and sharp, dark, frenetic lines. He slips the canvas behind several others leaned against the wall.

We see a painting, hung on the best real estate the wall offers. It is unfinished, but depicts Roland as a teenager, smiling with a tennis racket over his shoulder. It's clear from the style this was not painted by Roland.

Roland pulls painting materials from a tool locker, loading them into a working tray. He picks up a fresh canvas.

INT. MAURICE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Maurice is asleep, laying on his back, mouth agape -- SNORING. Fran lies next to him, a reading light strapped to her head, romance novel in hand.

(CONTINUED)

The door swings open. Roland enters, arms full with art supplies. Making no effort to be quiet, he flips on the light.

FRAN
Roland?

ROLAND
Hi Fran.

Roland sets his canvas on Maurice's belly. He sets up his other materials within arms reach, on the nightstand.

FRAN
What are you doing?

ROLAND
Fran. This is what we do when you don't stay over.

FRAN
But...I'm here right now.

ROLAND
Can you please go home now Fran.

FRAN
You paint in here?...Like this?

ROLAND
Please Fran.

FRAN
But it's dark out.

ROLAND
You live just around the corner.

Roland is now setting up paints on a palette. Fran sits up in bed.

FRAN
I don't understand.

Fran begins to shake Maurice.

FRAN (CONT'D)
Moe...Moe....Maurice!

ROLAND
You know him...sleeps like the dead.

Fran, in pajamas, gives up and rises up out of bed.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND (CONT'D)

He only wakes up when he wants to.

Roland picks up Fran's clothes from the floor and hands them to her.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Just change in the hall bathroom.
Thanks for understanding.

Fran is mortified. She slowly slinks out of the room.

Roland stares down at his grandfather.

Fran exits, shutting the door.

Roland pours some paint medium into a little cup and sets it on the bedside table.

ROLAND

Things are going to change
around here, Moe.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Fran reacts, unsettled. She steps back from the door. She walks towards the bathroom and enters.

INT. MAURICE'S ROOM -CONTINUOUS

Roland snaps his fingers in front of Maurice's face. He waves his hand back and forth, inches from Maurice's eyes.

Roland smiles.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Fran exits the bathroom, pajamas in hand. She walks down the hall towards the front door of the house.

She come to the front door, reaches for the knob, but hesitates.

Fran looks through the living room at the door to the backyard porch.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

The door opens and Fran exits.

A few birds, up past their bedtime, CHIRP intermittently.

Fran slowly walks, towards the side-yard.

A motion detector flips a porch light on, Fran flinches.

Reaching the side-yard, she walks towards a window illuminated from the inside.

Fran reaches the window and prepares herself.

She slowly leans in, glimpsing through the window.

INTERCUT / INT. MAURICE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Roland stands next to the bed Maurice sleeps in. He is holding his grandfathers hand, which is holding the brush. They paint on the canvas rested on Maurice's belly. Maurice sleeps peacefully. Roland and Maurice paint in long, fierce strokes.

Roland's eyes are wide open, he clenches his teeth.

Fran backs away from the window, eyes wide with shock.

INT. MAURICE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Roland continues to paint in a frenzy, guiding Maurice's hand across the canvas. Maurice continues to sleep-- partner in the process nonetheless.

The door opens and Fran cautiously enters. Roland looks up briefly but otherwise doesn't acknowledge her. Fran slowly approaches the bed.

FRAN

What are you doing?

ROLAND

Painting...This is how we paint.
It's my process.

Roland continues to work, not looking at Fran.

FRAN

He's not going to like this.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

We do it all the time...It's how I work.

FRAN

But, why?

ROLAND

(losing cool)

You probably have a goddamned Jackson Pollock print hanging in your kitchen so don't address me like I'm some weirdo.

FRAN

I just don't--

ROLAND

--Sorry. It's just probably an innovation in the medium. I avoid work when you stay over. It seemed like he was embarrassed or something. He never told you we do this?

FRAN

No, he--

ROLAND

--He doesn't say a lot of things...Did he tell you this was my house? That my parents bought it from him and I inherited it?

FRAN

No...This is his house Roland.

ROLAND

No. Not any more.

FRAN

All I know is that he was helping you out. After they passed--

ROLAND

--Did he tell you how they died?

FRAN

That's. That's a terrible thing...

Fran searches for words while Roland paints, unfazed.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

They moved in here to help him. And look what he did to us.

FRAN

Moe's not good with money, but he's good to you. He was good to them.

Roland slowly turns his head to Fran, his eyes burning.

FRAN (CONT'D)

I always told Moe that you two need each other...to be kind to you. It's just his way.

ROLAND

I never knew. I had to learn the truth from my tweaker Aunt... He never let me forget for a minute that this house wasn't a home for me.

Roland returns to painting.

FRAN

You've both had a hard road.

Roland is immersed, ignoring Fran. She slowly backs away and moves to the door to leave.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. MAURICE'S ROOM- MORNING

Maurice releases a GASP and awakes. He slowly looks around and takes his time sitting up.

Maurice sees that his blankets are covered in paint and that art mess is all around him.

MAURICE

Oh shit...damn.

Maurice looks to the floor where he sees Roland sleeping, splayed out next to a completed painting.

Maurice slides out of bed and rests his feet on top of Roland's back.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Wake up Picasso.

Roland's eyes open.

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Wake up. Yoo hoo!

Roland rolls out from under Maurice's feet, turning right side up to face his grandfather.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

You made a big goddamned mess here.
You're supposed to be careful!

ROLAND

It's your mess too.

MAURICE

This is a yard too far kiddo.

ROLAND

...What is the biggest lie you ever told me?

MAURICE

The Easter Bunny probably, what about this mess?

ROLAND

Are you going to lay down the law Moe? Are you going to kick me out?

MAURICE

Lord knows I outta, you sure know the outer limits of normalcy. You got me pinned though I reckon, on accounta you know I'm a softie. Don't count on a ride to work today kiddo!

ROLAND

You are going to give me a ride.

MAURICE

Ah horseshit. Are you gonna clean up this mess?!

ROLAND

Don't I always clean up your mess?

MAURICE

Is this my mess now? Jesus, Mary and Joseph!

ROLAND

You have to give me a ride. You've never done a thing for me, all I ask for is a ride.

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE

Goddamned little shit- get up then!
I got the donation run too. Clean
this mess up first.

Maurice starts pushing the painting detritus off the bed.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

Koko the ape paints better than you
and keeps a cleaner cage.

EXT. SAFEWAY/ BACK OF STORE - DAY

Maurice's van pulls up.

Maurice steps out like Clint Eastwood coming off a horse, a
slim cigarette hanging out of his mouth.

Roland exits from the passenger side.

They make their way to the roll-up door delivery entrance,
Roland glaring at Maurice.

Piles of boxes of food sit outside the doors.

The Safeway product receiver ARNOLD (60), comes out to greet
them.

ARNOLD

There he is!

MAURICE

I'm back for more...whatta ya got
for me?

ARNOLD

Oh stale bread, stale pastries, a
coupla spoiled milks in there. You
got some gunk on your face there
Moe.

MAURICE

This guy here. It's paint.

ARNOLD

(To Roland)

Oh yeah? You guys doing some house
painting or something?

ROLAND

Yeah...we're fixing the place up.

(CONTINUED)

ARNOLD

Ah. When you takin over for your grandpop here? Carrying on the legacy, the Robin Hood of spoiled food.

ROLAND

I don't know. One day soon probably.

MAURICE

You don't even drive ya dumb shit.

EXT. BACK OF MAURICE'S VAN - MOMENTS LATER

Roland and Maurice are loading the boxes into the back of the van.

MAURICE

Help me drop a few off at the senior home then we can leave the rest with you at work.

ROLAND

No. Lets go to my work first.

MAURICE

I'll have to double back in that case, that's too much trouble.

ROLAND

No. I'll be late for work.

Maurice shuts the van doors.

MAURICE

Your birthdays a week out yet, why d'ya think you can call the score today?

ROLAND

I don't know Grandpa. Maybe pure rage is coursing through my veins.

MAURICE

Figure it out kiddo- just quit pushin' me. I'm like the apple with the razor in it. Sweet, hard, and liable to cut yer throat.

INT. SHELTER/ FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Roland and Maurice come through the doors of the shelter. They carry a box each of old bread. Roland looks about.

They walk into the front main room.

INT. SHELTER/ MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

VARIOUS HOMELESS sit about, Alba among them. Maurice doesn't notice her at first but she does a double take, and pops up from her seat.

Maurice and Roland set the boxes down on a large table.

ALBA
Hey, asshole!

Alba steps up to Maurice.

MAURICE
Alba?!

ALBA
What'r YOU doing here?!
(to Roland)
Why'd you let him in here?

Roland stares at Maurice, producing a slight smile.

MAURICE
Why are you here? The hell is
this?!

ALBA
Whadda ya think you stupid
gorilla?! I'm a street urchin now!

MAURICE
I wouldn't have let you stay HERE!

ALBA
LET ME?! You kicked me out!

Maurice and Alba square off.

MAURICE
You brought that...that JUNK in my
house. I wasn't gonna come home to
find another one of my girls dead!

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

My house!

Maurice and Alba shut up and look to Roland. VARIOUS HOMELESS "OOOH" and "AHHH" and gather around the melee.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

I know everything now. You are living in my house.

MAURICE

Malarkey! Did she tell you something?! She's a druggie and a liar!

ALBA

Hey pop, addiction is a disease and I ain't no liar!

Tracey enters quickly from the front desk area.

TRACEY

Hey, hey, hey, what is?!--

Tracey halts as Alba and Roland shoot crazy eyes at her.

MAURICE

I've never met a pack of more ungrateful S.O.B.'s.

ALBA

Ungrateful?!

MAURICE

I help you both and only get grief. My house, my food, my money...you just take like it comes out a spigot.

ROLAND

It's my house.

MAURICE

Horse shit. I bought that house before your mother was born. They only helped me temporary for the bank, it was only for the papers--

ROLAND

--IT'S MY HOUSE!!

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE
(sotto)
Horseshit.

ALBA
I told you, he's full of it, the
bastard!

ROLAND
Get ready for a whole new dynamic
Grandpa.

Tracey approaches the three and tries to separate them.

TRACEY
Okay...come on.

MAURICE
(at Roland)
You walked me into this goddamned
rat trap!

TRACEY
Okay! Thanks for the bread Maurice.
Now please go.

Maurice picks up a box of the donation bread.

MAURICE
This is what happens when you try
to be charitable! The whole of
goddamned creation marks you for a
sucker.

Maurice makes for the door, as the dumbfounded room of
homeless people watch him go.

MAURICE (CONT'D)
You won't be seeing me again, you
lot can go eat mud!

TRACEY
(to Roland)
What the hell is wrong with you?

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Dale and Molly stroll along at the edge of the pond.

DALE
I like to come here and do my
thinking...walk in circles, write
some verses.

(CONTINUED)

MOLLY

No you don't.

DALE

Yeah I do! For reals, I get introspective.

MOLLY

We had to use navigation to get here.

DALE

Aight. I most times just find this spot by instinct I guess.

MOLLY

What's Roland up to today?

DALE

Workin' at the shelter- hobo junction! Why?

MOLLY

Just wondering, Rosaline thought he was cute. Just doing some recon.

DALE

He's kind of asexual or something. He tole me once "I don't trust anyone that would be interested in me".

MOLLY

What?!

DALE

Haha! How ya like that shit?

MOLLY

Well, we could all hang out again and see what happens.

DALE

I like us hanging out like this, you and me... Lets make this happen.

Dale tries to reach in for a kiss.

MOLLY

Ew!

Molly gives Dale a shove. Molly CHORTLES as he loses his balance and slips on some mud.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

Damn!

MOLLY

You could take a note from Roland
and be a little less pushy.

DALE

My white sneakers!...These were
clean!

MOLLY

How is a guy like you friends with
him anyways?

DALE

We always been tight since grade
school. He's like, always straight
up with me. And smart.

MOLLY

You're an O.G. though huh? Isn't he
kinda square?

DALE

A playa has to keep all kindsa
peeps in his crew to keep his game
straight. Like you fer instance.
You're kinda like a punk rock
chick. I dig it. Diversity...But,
uh. Mmmmm. I'm kinda feeling you
girl.

Molly stops and looks at Dale. They turn towards each other.

MOLLY

I like you Dale. But I'm not
feeling...this. You and Roland are
real weirdos...the kind of people I
like knowing. But there's not going
to be anything between you and me.

Dale looks down, stroking his chin.

DALE

Aight, aight. You feeling my boy
Roland then instead, huh?

MOLLY

No I--

(CONTINUED)

DALE

--Let me tell you. You won't get too far with that cat.

MOLLY

I just want to be friends. Can you work with that?

DALE

Fo sho, fo sho. No doubt.

Molly fakes him out as though she is going to shove Dale again. He flinches.

DALE

Oh shit.

Dale composes himself, while Molly mugs at him mockingly.

INT. MAURICE'S ROOM - EVENING

Roland pulls a pair of old penny loafers out from under Maurice's bed. He throws them out of the way and goes back to digging. Maurice stands nearby, leaning on an ornamental wooden cane.

MAURICE

I did it for your own good kiddo. It's not like I have much longer anyhow.

Roland pulls various debris from under the bed.

ROLAND

You lorded this house over my head. I know now, the only reason you didn't kick me out is that I own it.

MAURICE

Family doesn't do that kinda thing.

ROLAND

You talk family. Your daughter is in a homeless shelter.

Roland crawls up off the floor and faces Maurice.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

So today's moving day Grandpa.

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE

And where pray tell am I moving to?

ROLAND

Right across the hall... You can stay for now, but that's up in the air. Believe me.

MAURICE

We're swapping rooms?

ROLAND

You start paying rent of course...and you can pay me back all the rent I paid on top of that.

MAURICE

Your rent only went to property tax mostly!

ROLAND

And NO we are not swapping rooms. I am keeping my old room as my studio.

MAURICE

You expect me to move into their room?!

INT. ROLAND'S PARENTS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room is dark.

There is a BANG on the stuck door. Another BANG and the door swings open. Roland and Maurice stand in the doorway, the room illuminated from the hall.

Roland flips the light switch. The room is lit up, but then POP. The bulb has burnt out.

INT. ROLAND'S PARENTS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Roland precariously balances on the bed, changing the lightbulb. Maurice holds a flashlight to assist.

Then there is light. Roland hops off the bed. The two look around the room.

Maurice settles in to sit on the bed. Roland moves to the dresser.

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE

We shoulda cleaned this place up a long time ago.

Roland picks up a baseball cap. He tosses it down and picks up a necklace from a jewelry stand.

ROLAND

I'll donate what I can to work, and move most this stuff to the garage for now.

MAURICE

Kiddo...

ROLAND

Finish moving out of the other room by tomorrow.

MAURICE

Your grandmother and I bought this house in 1967. Your mother was raised here... It was only after Ginny died that you and your folks moved back in. And you hated me since then...you were only aged seven.

ROLAND

They bought this house from you. Then they left it to their son. Me. My house.

MAURICE

They didn't think they were going to go first! Who would expect that? They helped me out sure, but it wasn't a permanent thing.

ROLAND

Just pack up. I can help if you want, just let me know.

MAURICE

This isn't fair! Not right!

ROLAND

Are you prepared to really present the specter of fair and righteousness into discussion?

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE
Kiddo...I'm sorry.

ROLAND
Sorry for what.

Maurice looks into Roland's eyes, his expression begging for sympathy.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
You're sorry now, ex post facto. It
it sounds like an excuse...and you
know what you always say.

MAURICE
Excuses are like assholes.

ROLAND
Everyone's got one and they all
stink.

INT. SHELTER/TRACEY'S OFFICE - DAY

The small office is still not completely set up. Boxes are stacked, yet to be unpacked.

TRACEY
I've had to put a lot of thought
into this.

Roland nods from the other side of the desk.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Technically, it's against policy to
have friends or family of staff as
clients.

ROLAND
I'm sorry but that position doesn't
seem very...humane.

Tracey begins to unpack a box of books and stack them on the corner of her desk.

TRACEY
There's a lot of shelters out
there...and you know well enough we
have to turn away people for a
whole host of reasons. The policy
is in place to ensure fairness and
privacy for all the clients.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND
It's a fine policy.

TRACEY
Well, why did you admit her?

ROLAND
I had just forgotten that
particular policy.

TRACEY
You may not respect the rules, but
you sure seem to know them.

ROLAND
Yeah, I know the policy. I lied
just now for some reason.

TRACEY
Look, I know you didn't invite her,
and she went through all the right
avenues to get a voucher, but you
should have informed me. Now we
have to make a hard decision.

ROLAND
I can tell her, I'll make a phone
call and try to get her into Oak
Street, or some other shelter-

TRACEY
--I'm not going to exit her now. We
admitted her and owe her at least
30 days.

Roland gives Tracey a 'then what' expression.

TRACEY (CONT'D)
Have you considered Case Management
before?

ROLAND
I have.

TRACEY
I don't want to make a decision out
of necessity, but you know we've
been interviewing for the open Case
Manager position. You should apply
for it today. You're smart, maybe
not a people person, but you could
do it.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

I was passed over every time I applied before.

TRACEY

It means an office, and you wouldn't have Alba on your caseload, so it gets us around this problem.

ROLAND

No thank you.

TRACEY

What's your plan for yourself? What are your ambitions?

ROLAND

I don't have any.
(realizing)
I don't think I every thought like that before.

Roland rises.

TRACEY

You can do good here. And do something good for yourself.

ROLAND

I don't want to be rewarded for doing the wrong thing. I can fix this.

Roland moves to exit.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

But thank you. Maybe next time.

Roland exits. A precariously stacked pile of books falls to the floor from Trecey's desk.

EXT. BURGER STAND - DUSK

Alba and Roland dine on the outside patio of a greasy Burger stand.

ALBA

You're on his side anyhow.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND
Do you think so?

ALBA
Ya kiddin?!

ROLAND
Then why would I invite you to
stay?

ALBA
You just don't know you're on his
side yet.

ROLAND
I feel a sense of obligation, and
Maurice and I have an uncomfortable
symbiosis to be sure. But he sure
isn't on my side.

ALBA
Won't I get in the way of
your...symbiosis?

ROLAND
He'll just have to face it, he has
no say anymore. You're moving in
and that's it.

ALBA
For now...but we'll see.

ROLAND
There's no catch, no stipulations.
We're family.

ALBA
Mmm-hmm...sure. Did you go to
college?

ROLAND
Yeah, I did.

ALBA
You queer?

ROLAND
No.

ALBA
(rhetorically)
You're friends with Bill though.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

No. I'm not.

ALBA

Shit. You ain't nuthin' like my
sister, you're prolly more like your
Grandad...coming to stay? We'll
see. You ain't dirty, but you sure
ain't clean.

Alba tosses her half eaten burger to a flock of pidgeons.
Then she CACKLES off of Roland's glare.

ALBA (CONT'D)

They got more use for it than me!

The birds swarm over the food.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Bowling pins stand in a perfect neat set, and then --
STRIKE.

MAURICE

Atta boy!

Maurice returns to his crew. Fran, SHIFTY SAM (72), ELMER
(75) and LOIS (65) welcome him with CHEERS.

SAM

Yer making us look real bad
tonight!

Maurice settles in next to Fran, Lois get up to roll.

MAURICE

Not too difficult though is it?

ELMER

You can bowl like Apollo, long as
I'm still the handsomest.

Elmer runs a hand over his slicked back hair.

MAURICE

I've seen better mugs on a baboon's
heinie.

Lois throws a strike but no one notices.

(CONTINUED)

SAM
Where's Roland at tonight?

MAURICE
Ah. Roland.

Maurice GUFFAWS. Lois returns from her roll.

LOIS
Hey! I'm clearing the deck here,
where's my chorus?

FRAN
Don't mention his name Sam.

ELMER
Good job darling but Moe's
thrown a ham bone.

FRAN (CONT'D)
They've been at odds.

SAM
At least you see the guy. My
grankids think I'm Santa Claus, if
it ain't Christmas they can't tell
me from Adam.

MAURICE
That kid figures it's Christmas
everyday.

LOIS
He's not all that bad--

ELMER
--A little shifty.

MAURICE
There's no gratitude there--

FRAN
--He has his reasons maybe, give
him some time--

MAURICE
--I haven't been a saint. But I've
been there for the kid...through
everything.

Maurice un-shells a peanut. The crew looks around to each other.

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE (CONT'D)
Throw your ball Frannie.

Fran gets up and moves towards the lane.

FRAN
He's not the worst.

SAM
You better patch up the squabble!
You promised us a party for his
thirtieth, an it's been years since
I had a crack at yer liquor
cabinet!

Fran looks back before rolling her ball.

FRAN
Don't worry I've been attending to
it just fine.

Fran ambles down the lane, releases the ball, which makes
its journey and knocks a few pins down.

MAURICE
I dunno about all that.

Fran walks back.

MAURICE (CONT'D)
Good job, Frannie.

FRAN
A party's a good idea, things need
to be patched up one way or the
other.

Maurice 'poo-poo's' with his hand.

LOIS
Yeah Moe!

Fran moves in close to Maurice, the rest of the crew GABS
behind them.

FRAN
He has all rights to be mad.

MAURICE
He woulda got the house soon
anyhow, it's not like I'm long for
the world.

(CONTINUED)

FRAN

You've had him living like a boarder.

MAURICE

He was 16, I just forgot. It made things simple.

FRAN

All this trouble isn't simple.

MAURICE

He never did me any favors...

FRAN

...You two were made for each other.

MAURICE

Roll your ball darling.

Fran moves back towards the ball return.

ELMER

Alright Fran, you can pick it up!

Maurice watches intently as Fran releases the ball and it rolls towards the remaining pins.

INT./EXT. PUBLIC BUS - NIGHT

The doors to the bus close. Roland reaches into his wallet to pull out cash and pay. Alba beats him to it, handing two bus vouchers to the driver.

Alba carries her overstuffed duffel bag. Alba and Roland move through the bus, finding seats in its center. Various HOBOS and COMMUTERS are spread about the vehicle. The bus jerks into motion. Roland settles into a seat, Alba sits in a seat behind him.

ALBA

You stupid? You about to pay when them passes are free at the shelter?

ROLAND

Those aren't for me. They're for clients.

(CONTINUED)

ALBA

So you don't drive but you don't know your bus route home either?

ROLAND

I usually get a ride...walked a few times.

ALBA

I could get you a deal on car, this guy--

ROLAND

--I'm risk averse, don't trust myself operating heavy machinery.

ALBA

A goon like you's liable to get ganked ridin' the 22 at this time.

The bus lurches to a stop.

ROLAND

Sure, but the idea of others doing me harm is okay. I just don't want to bear personal responsibility.

POLLARD (38), rasta guy, boards the bus. Alba notices him and slinks in her seat.

ALBA

Shit.

POLLARD

You! You bitch...You!

ALBA

I don't know him.

POLLARD

Two-hundred thirty seven dollars! I paid you and you didn't do shit!

BUS DRIVER peers back through his mirror.

BUS DRIVER

Hey! Shut the fuck up!

Pollard addresses the whole bus.

POLLARD

This woman is a thief! She says she'll do computer work and she

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

POLLARD (cont'd)
doesn't do computer work. She stole
my money!

BUS DRIVER
Hey. I'm gonna throw you offa here!

Pollard settles down into a seat behind Alba.

POLLARD
All right, all right!

Pollard leans forward, glaring.

POLLARD
(whispering)
Stupid bitch.

Alba hits Roland's shoulder.

ALBA
C'mon.

Alba gets up, and Roland follows. Pollard watches them as
they move towards the back of the bus.

POLLARD
I want my money bitch.

Alba leans in to Roland to whisper.

ALBA
All kindsa folks on here tonight.

They reach the back of the bus, Alba shoos GORDO GUS (55),
forcing him to move over and make room.

ROLAND
You didn't know that guy?

ALBA
Nope, never seen him before.

GUS
That's Pollard Alba, you know him.

Roland, surprised, leans across his Aunt to address Gus.

ROLAND
You know her?

GUS

Oh sure.

ALBA

You holdin' Gus?

GUS

She know all kinds of people.

ALBA

Ya got crank Gus?

GUS

Sure, okay. But only a little bit.

Gus reaches into his overstuffed jacket pocket and produces a plastic wrapped little baggy.

GUS (CONT'D)

Only for cash though today. Need cash.

ROLAND

That's great. You're going to bring that home?

Alba pulls some wrinkled bills from her pockets.

ALBA

Got greens today. Greens for Gus.

Roland glances about warily as Alba and Gus transact.

ALBA (CONT'D)

No stipulations you said.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Roland and Alba enter the living room through the front door. Roland indicates to the couch.

ROLAND

You can stay in here. We could use a new couch anyways, maybe we'll buy a futon.

ALBA

Yeah you need a new couch! I had my first screw right there.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

That nature of activity seems to occur here with greater frequency than I'm comfortable with.

ALBA

This goddamned place hasn't changed at all. I was better off at the shelter.

ROLAND

You want to go back?

Alba throws her bag on the coffee table with a THUD.

ALBA

Nah, we'll get by here-- Thought I'd at least get my old room.

ROLAND

That's my studio.

ALBA

Studio?!

ROLAND

I paint.

ALBA

Okay, sure ya do.

Alba looks at Roland curiously.

ALBA (CONT'D)

Freaky kid, you prolly have a swing hangin' from the ceiling.

Roland doesn't respond. He stares at her- motionless.

ALBA (CONT'D)

My sister painted too.

ROLAND

I know... My mom painted as well.

ALBA

My sister WAS your mom!

ROLAND

I thought I'd try your conversational technique of stating the obvious.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Roland sits Indian style on the floor eating a bowl of oatmeal, intently watching the NEWS on TV. Alba sleeps on the couch under a pile of blankets.

Maurice, shirtless with his large belly hanging out, passes through towards the kitchen.

MAURICE
(groggily)
Yep...tis' another bless-ed
goddamned day.

ROLAND
Good morning.

We hear the sounds of cupboards OPENING and SLAMMING from the kitchen.

MAURICE (O.S)
No more saltines?!

ROLAND
I dunno. I don't eat saltines.

INTERCUT/ INT. ROLAND'S KITCHEN

Maurice pops open a can of sardines.

MAURICE
Dang gummit.

Maurice saunters into the living room.

Maurice looks at the couch where Alba is asleep under the blankets.

MAURICE (CONT'D)
Two rooms and you slept out here?

ROLAND
There's a person under there...Aunt
Alba.

MAURICE
You let her in here?! That junkie?!

Maurice angrily slurps down a sardine.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

You were upset about her staying in a shelter. It saddened me too. And seeing as how this is my house--

MAURICE

--Hell it is kiddo! You may have the papers, but this will always be my house.

Alba begins to stir under her pile.

ROLAND

No it won't.

MAURICE

Horseshit!

ROLAND

You're welcome to stay, and we can keep it civil. But it's a whole new dynamic between you and I.

Maurice points his sardine can holding hand towards the couch.

MAURICE

And her?!

ALBA

Me what?

ROLAND

She's family Moe. That's what's important...right?

Maurice hustles over to the couch as Alba bolts up.

MAURICE

You have to leave!

ALBA

I just fuckin' woke up.

MAURICE

You can't stay!

ROLAND

Relax, Grandpa. She's staying.

MAURICE

No! I can't live like this!

(CONTINUED)

ALBA

What? With your mistakes starin'
you right in the face?

ROLAND

Just calm down, both of you. You're
roommates now.

Maurice lights up a cigarette.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

There's no smoking in the house
anymore.

MAURICE

Goddammit! You just told me to calm
down.

ROLAND

Do it on the porch.

MAURICE

Can't smoke in the house? How's a
man supposed to live?

ALBA

I'm gunna be smoking in here too
kid.

ROLAND

No. That's a rule okay?

MAURICE

Malarkey! I'm goin to see a man
about a horse anyhow.

Maurice opens the front door and motions to leave.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

I'll be back.

The door SLAMS shut.

ALBA

Stipulations.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Dale is animatedly rapping. Roland and Alba sit on the
couch, Alba thoroughly enjoying the performance.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

"I'm the pup to yo
pussy, like Milo and
Otis, come into my
garden, open up your
lotus..."

ALBA

(to Roland)

This guys great, I know some people
who gotta see this!

Dale halts his rapping.

DALE

Dope! Yeah, let's get some peeps
over here - celebrate the change in
ownership!

ROLAND

Sure. That's okay I guess.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A lighter sparks a glass pipe, Alba draws smoke through it.
She holds her breath and passes the pipe to LANKY METH FREAK
(45).

The room is filled with STRANGE MUSIC coming from laptop
manned by SPACEY JIM (27). A few assorted WEIRDOS litter the
place, bobbing their heads, and CHATTING. Roland surveys the
scene from the couch.

Molly and Dale sit in front of the TV, an episode of "My
Three Sons" silently playing. Dale smokes weed from a pipe.
He attempts to pass it to Molly.

MOLLY

No thank you-- just like last time,
no thank you.

DALE

C'mon girl. "Smokum um peace pipe".

MOLLY

I told you, I have classier
indulgences. Also, don't be racist.

Dale tries to lean in for a kiss. Molly LAUGHS and shoves
him away.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

This ain't the 80's. The War on Drugs was lost. Hit this shit for the veterans.

MOLLY

My fine palette for drugs dictates moderation, and a more interesting agenda. This place looks ready to devolve into a drum circle. Go on and suck your pipe like a pacifier.

DALE

Pacifier?

MOLLY

Your ganja teat.

DALE

Damn girl.

Dale indicates to his pipe.

DALE (CONT'D)

This right here gets my creative muses going.

MOLLY

Okay Dale. Chase the muse, I'm gonna get a drink.

Molly stands up.

DALE

Aight, aight.

Dale draws from his pipe and lays back on the carpet.

Molly makes her way to the couch and flops down next to Roland.

MOLLY

Roland.

Molly bats her lashes in an exaggerated fashion as Roland slowly turns towards her.

ROLAND

Hello.

MOLLY

...You're awful quiet.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

Am I?

MOLLY

Your party sucks and I need alcohol.

ROLAND

This is just an informal gathering my Aunt and Dale put together and I've seen some alcohol around here.

MOLLY

With these tweakers? Yeah, they have wino water. I mean something good.

ROLAND

My grandpa has some stuff, gin mostly I think.

MOLLY

We can work with gin.

ROLAND

It's in his room now probably.

MOLLY

(coyly)

But I heard this was your house.

ROLAND

I won't be motivated by a challenge to my machismo.

MOLLY

How about a bat of the eyeleashes and hiking of the skirt?

Molly follows through with the action.

ROLAND

I don't condone sexuality as currency. You're demeaning and objectifying yourself.

Molly balks.

MOLLY

Asshole! I was turning on the flirt numbnuts.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

I'm sorry. I thought I was being
played or used or something. I
like...your moxie.

INT. MAURICE'S NEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is jammed with stacks of clothes and items
hurriedly moved in but unorganized. Maurice and Fran sit on
the bed watching TV. MUSIC blares through the walls.

FRAN

Let's just go to my house.

MAURICE

Fran. I like being in my home.

FRAN

I think there's gangbanger's here.

MAURICE

What pray tell...an orgy?

FRAN

No Moe...violent people, gangsters.

MAURICE

Roland doesn't like this hootenanny
any more than us, he's just
throwing a tantrum. He'll cut the
baloney soon enough.

There's a KNOCK and then the door instantly opens.
Roland pushes his way in, Molly beside him.

ROLAND

Your spirits. Did you bring all
that stuff in here?

MAURICE

Huh?

ROLAND

Alcohol. I want your booze.

MAURICE

What the hell for?

ROLAND

I'm entertaining company.

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE

Her? You wouldn't know how to operate HER.

Fran smacks Maurice's knee.

MOLLY

Wow. Don't worry you silver fox. I have intuitive, user friendly design.

ROLAND

Just give me the bottle.

Maurice indicates to a pile in the corner. Roland fishes through the clothes and pulls out a big jug of gin.

MOLLY

(in Moe's direction)

You clean your combs in that?

ROLAND

Alright...To the kitchen, where there's an abundance of seltzer water.

INT. ROLAND'S KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Roland pours seltzer into the glasses of gin. Roland and Molly settle in at the kitchen table. NOISE and MUSIC from the adjacent living room spill in.

MOLLY

Don't suppose you have a cucumber.

ROLAND

No...what for?

MOLLY

A little slice in those will make that cheap gin palatable.

ROLAND

No. Not really any vegetables here, unless they come in a can.

Roland spills a bit on the table.

MOLLY

Failed out of bartender's college I take it?

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND
This will be my first drink.

MOLLY
Are you twelve?!

ROLAND
I never saw the point in
consumption for pleasure.

MOLLY
You're some kinda Quaker or
something?

Molly raises her glass, Roland figures out the gesture and with a CLINK they cheers each other.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Cheers...I guess I'm a lucky lady,
popping your cherry.

Roland flicks his tongue with surprise, not enjoying his first taste of liquor.

ROLAND
You caught me in a moment of
personal crisis. I feel
like...feeling DIFFERENT all of a
sudden. Within reason, you see my
Aunt, addiction runs in the family.

MOLLY
It runs in every family dummy. Like
that strange human compulsion to
eat and poop. Just don't get hung
up...manage your shit.

ROLAND
I'm managing things.

Roland's two sips in but Molly has downed her first drink. She quickly sets to fixing herself another.

MOLLY
(rhetorically)
Hmmm. Why do I see your creepy face
and feel like making out?!

ROLAND
...I don't know. The liquor?

Molly gives him an 'oh please' look.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

I can see you are a pretty girl but
I don't want to do that.

MOLLY

Of course. You're a virgin. Saving
yourself for marriage I take it?
Want it to be - SPECIAL?

ROLAND

No, I just feel like it would be
pointless--

MOLLY

--Gee thanks!

ROLAND

Not because it's with you. It
wouldn't be pointless with anyone.
Sex is a base animal need, like
(with a gesture)
eating and pooping.

MOLLY

You're some kind of elevated
creature.

ROLAND

No. And I'm not a virgin either.

MOLLY

DUDE! You were molested, that
explains everything!

ROLAND

No, I wasn't molested...Actually,
in a legal sense I guess I was.

MOLLY

Alright then, who was she? Or, he.
Or he-she?

Roland takes a sip from his drink.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

Dale has migrated, sitting close next to Alba on the floor.
Alba offers him her meth pipe.

DALE

I dunno, that's not really my
style...You wanna try this?

(CONTINUED)

Dale offers his weed pipe.

ALBA

Yea-ah. See, I'm a stylish gal, all kindsa fashion appeals to me.

Dale passes the pipe to Alba. She sparks it up and inhales.

DALE

You're sexy too. You don't mind me askin', how d'ya keep yourself together doin that shit?

ALBA

I dunno...give it time. I got deeper in to go. I always need somthin' ... Ain't been at this too long, when my ex walked out on me, I got back into the same ol' hobbies.

DALE

You still got it tho... you fine actually. You shouldn't fuck with that shit.

ALBA

Fine, eh? And you're a fine specimen of somethin'. I don't need no man no more, an you ain't more than a boy.

Dale sidles in closer.

DALE

My balls dropped a long time ago lady. Pheromones... that's the law of the jungle.

ALBA

Kid, I smell like shit. At least I should. Ain't showered in days.

DALE

See! That's what makes it more powerful. No wonder! I could tell cross the room we had compatible hormones.

ALBA

You're fuckin' weird--

Dale leans in for a kiss. Alba turns and it plants awkwardly on her cheek. He keeps on sucking her cheek while she looks sideways at him.

INT. ROLAND'S KITCHEN - SAME

ROLAND

I was actually very curious, almost obsessed with the idea when I was about twelve. I had an orgasm for the first time. It was bizarre, outside of myself. I was being driven to do things I didn't understand, or like...

Molly fixes Roland another drink.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

I felt an inertia and inevitability. But I wanted to crush the emotions and hormones that were wrestling for control of my cognition. It was an 8th grade trip to Washington D.C. I had saved up money, a couple hundred dollars from mowing lawns and odd jobs. This was separate from the money my Mom or the chaperons knew about. At night I snuck out of the room well after everyone was asleep. I only had to walk a few city blocks before I found some girls--er, women. They laughed, shooed me away. I composed myself well for a kid, but it was obvious I was young. One followed me, she was not the most--to be crass--marketable, of the group. And a block away she caught up to me and took my money.

MOLLY

She robbed you?!

ROLAND

No. I preceded this story by stating that I'm not a virgin--She took my money for services.

MOLLY

On the street right there?!

Roland and Molly sip their drink simultaneously.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

We went into this vacant lot area,
under a freeway overpass.

MOLLY

Jesus. That's a story you shouldn't
tell people Roland.

ROLAND

I don't until now. It was just
something I did...It worked though.
I would say it cured me of ape
brain compulsions.

MOLLY

If you're cured I'd hate to see the
disease--And you're a total fucking
hypocrite! Giving me shit about
commodifying sex and shit!

ROLAND

I'm sorry. I was a jerk for saying
that. Look, it's not something I'm
proud of, or would do again. I know
it was wrong, in a sociological
sense. It's just something I did.

MOLLY

What a creepy fuck. UGH! What's
wrong with my mind?! I want to make
out with you even more now! Fuck!

Roland seizes up, then rises. A boner can be seen in his
pants.

ROLAND

I'm. Going to use the restroom.

MOLLY

Oh. Okay.

As Roland walks away.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

(sotto)

And I'll pretend I didn't see the
boner.

EXT. ROLANDS BACKYARD - LATER

MUSIC can still be heard coming from the party inside, but somewhat more subdued. Dale exits from the living room to join Roland whom was sitting alone.

DALE

Yo, Rolie. I have to be straight up with you as a homey... I'm kinda feeling your Aunt at this moment.

ROLAND

That's not surprising but still disgusting.

DALE

Hey, you know I like cougars.

ROLAND

She's got abuse issues. Addiction issues... She's unstable.

DALE

Maybe I feel like the white knight okay? Wanna fix someone up.

ROLAND

I know your M.O. You're basically a chimpanzee in a tree, masturbating upon unsuspecting passerby. Have some forward thinking okay? I know she'll only have your interest for a few sessions of intercourse, but she may live here for a year, two or more.

DALE

Hmmm, forward thinking huh? This is a highly hostile situation here. Like this arrangements NOT gonna last. Why's she hate Moe so much anyhow?

ROLAND

She came unhinged after my parents died.

DALE

Yeah, that's bout when he became a cantankerous ol' coot too.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

Compared to then he's more even tempered now actually.

DALE

True that. Prolly all that pussy he be gettin' from Frannie --Yo look. It's on your word, brother. You want me to back off and not spit game at your Aunt? Cool. Fine.

ROLAND

Just do whatever you want. I'd like to think she'd have the sense not to take your advances seriously, but I have a feeling that's not the case.

DALE

Right on man. Knew I could count on you bro...and uh, y'know, that chick Molly? She's a dope girl, I jus' wasn't so much feeling her though. She talks real smart--feminist like. I think you might have a shot homey. I know you don't get caught up in the game so much, but I'd like to see my boy get his dick wet sometime.

ROLAND

I'm glad you're thinking about me and my penis Dale. Molly's nice, and I'm not some android with no sex drive like you might think. But any woman that would see me as a potential mate? Well, I have reason to suspect their judgment and stability.

DALE

You dumb. Just dip your stick in...Leave it at that! Dip, dip dip!

Roland shakes his head, disapproving.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/ HALL - LATER

Roland is walking towards his room. Molly exits the bathroom.

ROLAND
Oh, hey.

MOLLY
Thought I left already?

ROLAND
No--

MOLLY
--Well I'm going now.

Roland thrusts his hand to her shoulder and goes for a kiss.

Molly deflects and backs him off.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
You gotta pick your moments buddy.
And they gotta be the right ones.

Molly leaves. As we hear the front door SHUT, Roland punches the wall.

He stares at his fist - shocked.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

Two finches sleep quietly next to each other in their nest.

EXT. ROLANDS BACKYARD - DAY

Finches, and assorted other birds fly in a frenzy, SQUAKING and CHIRPING.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alba and Dale sleep, spooning on the couch. Lanky Meth Freak and Spacey Jim are passed out on the floor. Roland makes his way through the room, bagging up trash.

Roland see's Molly's harmonica on the floor, half sticking out under Lanky Meth Freak's leg.

Roland pushes Lanky Meth Freak's leg to the side and picks up the harmonica. Lanky Meth Freak wakes up.

(CONTINUED)

LANKY METH FREAK
Ay man, you messin' with my shit?

Roland looks at the harmonica.

LANKY METH FREAK (CONT'D)
You're too close fucker, get away.

Maurice and Fran enter the living room from the hall.

MAURICE
Some kinda goddamned tornado came
through here! Is this how you rule
the roost?!

Lanky Meth Freak bolts up. Roland turns to Maurice, Maurice
turns to Fran.

MAURICE
(To Fran)
Get home sweetie, I'll come see you
later.

Fran and Maurice kiss, and then Fran begins to leave through
the front door. Lanky Meth Freak snatches the trash bag from
Roland.

LANKY METH FREAK
Gimme my shit bitch!

MAURICE
Making new friends, huh?

Roland puts a hand on Lanky Meth Freaks shoulder.

ROLAND
I think you're a little confused.

Spacey Jim wakes up and looks around. Alba and Dale stir on
the couch.

Lanky Meth Freak gets up in Roland's face and SNARLS, but
Roland doesn't back down. Dale's eyes open and he looks
over.

Lanky Meth Freak quickly snatches a Russian nesting doll
from the mantle and throws it in the trash bag.

DALE
What the hell, yo?

Dale gets up. Roland begins to push Lanky Meth Freak towards
the door.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

Time to get going.

Dale rushes over to help. Dale and Roland have Lanky Meth Freak by the arms and guide him to the door.

DALE

This fuck tryin' a gank your shit
or what?!

LANKY METH FREAK

Get offa me! I'll kill ya!

Dale snatches the trash bag away from Lanky Meth Freak and tosses it to the side. Lanky Meth Freak tries to fight loose but Roland and Dale get him to the door.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/AT FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Maurice retreats back down the hall.

Dale and Roland shove Lanky Meth Freak out the front door.

Lanky Meth Freak charges back but they SLAM the door before he can get through. Lanky Meth Freak begins BANGING on the door.

LANKY METH FREAK (O.S.)

Hey!!...HEY!!!

DALE

Yo, he got up on the wrong side of
the pipe.

The BANGING persists. Maurice re-enters with his BB Gun, and moves quick towards the door. Roland tries to hold him back.

ROLAND

No don't!

Maurice gets the door open and points the BB Gun right at Lanky Meth Freak.

INT/EXT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

LANKY METH FREAK

HEYYYY!!

MAURICE

GET OUTTA HERE ALREADY!

(CONTINUED)

Lanky Meth Freak dances side to side, not particularly frightened.

LANKY METH FREAK
Ooooh...oooooh.

MAURICE
Get away from my house!

Lanky Meth Freak begins to lurch forward. POP. Maurice shoots him right in the chest with a BB.

Lanky Meth Freak isn't fazed. Roland shoves him back out the door, then SLAMS the door shut.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/NEAR DOOR - CONTINUOUS

DALE
You shot him!

Roland glares at Maurice.

ROLAND
It's okay it was only a BB.

LANKY METH FREAK (O.S.)
HEY!....HEY MOTHERFUCKER!!

The DOORBELL starts chiming. Roland and Maurice stand face to face.

ROLAND
Can you go outside Dale and hose him off till he leaves?

DALE
No!

ROLAND
You have to get rid of that pellet gun.

MAURICE
Like hell I am.

Alba walks over, rubbing her eyes.

ALBA
The fucks goin on? I'm tryin' a sleep?

(CONTINUED)

MAURICE

The dirtbag you brought in here
just went apeshit.

ALBA

Who?

The DOORBELL persists.

ROLAND

We just had a little problem with
one of your friends.

MAURICE

LITTLE problem? he's having a full
blown episode. I'm calling the
cops!

Alba lets out an ARGH, then advances to the door and opens
it quickly.

INT/EXT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

ALBA

Jimmy?!

Lanky Meth Freak/Jimmy instantly relaxes.

JIMMY

Yeah?

ALBA

Get the fuck outta here.

JIMMY

Alright. Later on then.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/NEAR DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Alba shuts the door.

ALBA

Now can everyone keep it down for
awhile?!

Alba walks back towards the couch. Maurice, then Roland
and Dale follow.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alba flops onto the couch.

MAURICE

(to Roland)

She's going to kill herself like this. Probably get one of us killed too.

ALBA

Yeah? I'm a killer? Is that right?

ROLAND

It's fine Moe. I have control of things.

MAURICE

Horseshit you have control!

ALBA

Yeah, I'll get us all killed. Like you killed my SISTER! And that poor chumps daddy too!

ROLAND

Hey--

MAURICE

I-I- didn't. That wasn't--

ALBA

--Hell ya didn't! Always think you got control of everything! You sure fixed up Roland, lettin' him think you owned this place. Treatin' him like shit just like you treated me--

ROLAND

--Okay Alba.--

ALBA

--You still gonna be Mr Fix It Dad? Maybe fix the heater again?!

ROLAND

SHUT UP!

ALBA

Kick him out Roland, like he did to me.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

No. I'm not kicking anybody out.

ALBA

He killed your parents Roland.
Always had to do everything
himself. Like, in control. But he
fucked that heater up didn't
he...and it leaked didn't it?

ROLAND

That was...just...an accident.

ALBA

Well...excuses are like assholes.

MAURICE

I'm...going to go to Fran's. I'll
stay there for awhile.

ROLAND

Grandpa--

MAURICE

--I don't want to talk about it.
You want this house? Take it! It's
just a box of horseshit anyhow.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - DAY

Birds fly about the aviary, TWEETING. A rat runs along the
fence.

INT./EXT. PUBLIC BUS - MORNING

Roland reads a newspaper as the bus moves down a suburban
street. A nearby CONVERSATION becomes audible. Roland looks
up to see:

YOUNG MOTHER (21) talking to slick BABY DADDY (22) at the
front of the bus. Roland watches them flirt and LAUGH, their
CUTE KID (4) playing at a handrail.

Roland connects eyes with Baby Daddy, and they hold the
stare awkwardly--a little too long.

After Baby Daddy looks away, Roland turns his head to look
out the window. He watches as suburban homes pass by, one by
one.

INT. FRAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Maurice wakes up - Fran lies next to him on her bed, which is smaller than his own. The room too is much smaller than his old room at Roland's.

Maurice takes in the details around him: a lamp with a gaudy frilly shade, a clock TICKING loudly, a tacky painting on the wall, an ugly crocheted horsehead wall ornament.

His expression reads as horrified.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

Roland walks through the bed areas with a clipboard. VARIOUS HOMELESS are making their beds or getting ready. Roland spots Old Man Afro at his bed, in his underwear.

ROLAND

You have to have clothes on out here.

OLD MAN AFRO

I'm changing, man!

ROLAND

Change in the bathroom, those are the rules.

OLD MAN AFRO

Shit, I'm changing out my sleep clothes to my toilet clothes! I ain't gon get my bed clothes nasty!

Roland takes a moment.

ROLAND

Yeah, I get it, just do me a favor in the future. Change bottoms and then change the top--quickly.

OLD MAN AFRO

Bottoms, and then tha top?

ROLAND

Right. So than there will be no moment where you are fully undressed.

OLD MAN AFRO

I see, I see. More dis-creet.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND
Exactly. There's women around.

OLD MAN AFRO
I can't entice them with my classic
chiseled form!

Old Man Afro pats Roland on the back, and Roland continues his rounds. He makes his way back to the front desk area, where Tracey is adding powdered creamer to her coffee.

TRACEY
Morning.

ROLAND
Hi.

INT. SHELTER/ FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

Roland leans against the counter next to Tracey.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
I thought about something you said.

Tracey stirs her coffee and faces Roland.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
I want to interview for the Case
Management position.

TRACEY
You took your Aunt out of here-
without completing the proper
discharge papers too I may add. The
issue is resolved.

ROLAND
And now when I interview you'll
know it's because I want the
position. I'm going to be here
everyday anyways. I want to be
present, and to care.

Crutches hobbles up to the front desk.

CRUTCHES
The fridge is locked! How am I
supposed to get my food?!

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alba sits on the floor watching CARTOONS on the TV, with Dale asleep on the floor next to her. Her eyes are bugging --she is high.

Alba MUMBLES to herself incoherently then GIGGLES.

She sparks a lighter and hits her pipe.

Exhaling she looks at Dale, then begins MUMBLING, her words nonsensical. BLABBERING, then a giggle.

Fear grows on her face. Then her face seizes up.

She tries to stand. She stumbles and falls on Dale. Dale stirs and wakes up.

DALE
What the shit?

He wakens to see Alba loudly BLABBERING and shaking on the floor.

DALE (CONT'D)
The fuck you doin' ?!

Dale shakes her.

DALE (CONT'D)
Oh shit! Wake up.

INT. SHELTER/ FRONT DESK - SAME

Joyce stands in front of Roland from across the desk.

JOYCE
I need to make a report.

ROLAND
What's going on Joyce?

JOYCE
Oh let's see. Just some asshole
thinks it's okay to take my clothes
out of the dryer and put them on
top of the dryer before my time is
up.
(over her shoulder)
--Oh shut up you, I can handle
this.

Roland looks at Joyce and then looks in a binder.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

Joyce. It's not your laundry time,
you shouldn't even be washing.

JOYCE

So now it's my problem?! I see how
it is. I suppose you want me to
wear dirty clothes--

ROLAND

--It's okay Joyce. Let me just go
talk to Frank and see if you can
dry after him.

Roland's cellphone rings. He pulls it from his pocket.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(to Joyce)

Hold on a sec.

Roland answers.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(in phone)

Hello?...hey

Dale...what?...okay...okay...yeah...bye.

Roland hangs up the phone. He pauses.

JOYCE

Hello?...I'm chopped liver or
something?

Roland bolts up from his seat.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Roland walks into the room. Alba is asleep in the hospital
bed. Dale sits next to her and looks up to towards Roland.

ROLAND

What happened?

DALE

Yo, I think she just...it was too
much.

ROLAND

You were with her. Just tell me
what happened.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

I didn't know, I was out--sleepin'.
An I don't know bout that shit. How
much is good to take--

ROLAND

--Zero is good to take. I warned
you about this.

DALE

I tried to cool her off that.
Believe!

Roland fidgets, paces.

ROLAND

Half the people I know Dale, are
addicts and wasters. The other half
are recovery freaks. I always look
at each with the same measure of
disdain. An you! YOU are just a
FUCKING idiot. All of you-- stupid
animals in a stupid zoo and I'm
sick of all this shit!

DALE

Yo! Hey--

ROLAND

--I should't have brought her home.

DALE

Maybe she should get into NA or
something, I dunno.

ROLAND

Why are we even friends Dale? What
good are you to me...or me to you?!

Dale stands up.

DALE

Maybe I don even know rogue.

ROLAND

The truth is, you're not my friend.
My Aunt? I don't love her, or even
care for her well being--

DALE

--But you think I didn't know
that?! Robot Roland.
(Dale wobbles like a robot)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DALE (cont'd)
"I don't give a fuck. I am just a robot." Shit, you don't like any of us, but you need us yo.

Dale squares off, getting in close to Roland.

DALE (CONT'D)
You're just as fucked up as me,
HER,
(indicating to Alba)
and Moe. You're prolly more fucked up than all of us. Dude. She's lying right there! Feel SOMETHING homey.

Maurice enters the room. He walks up to the bed. Roland and Dale face him. Roland shoots a glare at Dale.

DALE (CONT'D)
(to Roland)
Yeah. I called him. He's family.

MAURICE
I did have to get the news from him. Not even from my own grandson.

ROLAND
Hey, I just got here too. Dale was with her.

DALE
(to Roland)
I did fu--get involved with her, okay? I know you didn't think it was smart, and you were probably right. But this? This woulda happened anyway. This ain't on me.

Dale backs up towards the door.

DALE (CONT'D)
Ay, I'm gonna go get food, give y'all a minute to fuckin' cool off.

Roland and Maurice stand alone together as Dale exits. Maurice looks at his daughter.

MAURICE
Maybe I'm not such a bastard huh?
Can't say this one's on my conscience.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND
No, this one isn't.

Maurice becomes dismal, slowly facing Roland.

MAURICE
You just know it all, dontcha?

ROLAND
I'm not going to argue with you. I don't have any feelings. One way or the other.

NURSE FREDDIE walks in, a chipper bounce to his step. Roland and Maurice stiffen their stance.

FREDDIE
Helllooo.

Freddie checks readings and makes marks on his clipboard.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
Oops, scuse me.

Freddie scoots past Roland to check the IV on Alba's arm. Roland and Maurice shoot a glare at each other.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
Dale said someone would be coming with her ID. Is that one of you?

ROLAND
I don't think she has one.

FREDDIE
Oh, oh-kay. Um, I'm just going to have someone come in and talk to you, kay?

Roland nods his head at Freddie. Freddie glides out of the room.

MAURICE
I'm going to go by the house, feed the birds.

ROLAND
I fed them this morning.

MAURICE
And water?

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

Yeah. Of course.

MAURICE

I do need to get my stuff. Christ, you gonna change the locks too?!

ROLAND

I didn't kick you out. I just made it so you can't throw your weight around anymore.

MAURICE

You snide little shit. You drove me out. Of MY HOUSE. Don't mistake it.

ROLAND

It's your house only in a liberal, not literal sense of the word. You can stay for all I care--

MAURICE

--Hell I can, you'll see to making my life a constant hell!

ROLAND

That was you. Your plan! You couldn't kick me out of my own home so you just treated me like shit!

Nurse Freddie returns, bolting into the room.

FREDDIE

Hello! What's going on?

Roland and Maurice just glare at each other, not acknowledging Freddie.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Do you see there's a sick individual lying right there? I presume she's one of yours, right? Why would you be yelling right now?!

Freddie is near panting, but Roland and Maurice still only see each other.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

There's other sick people here too.

Freddie continues to get iced.

(CONTINUED)

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
Okay! That's it for tonight, you
two need to go.

MONTAGE/

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Roland bags up trash.

Roland vacuums.

Roland pulls the horrible wood paneling from the walls.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE /GARAGE - DAY

Roland goes through his parents stuff in the garage.

Roland pulls a photo out of a box.

INSERT PHOTO - Roland blowing out candles on a cake. Maurice
is seen behind him laughing, along with Roland's mother.

INTERCUT/ INT./EXT. MAURICE'S VAN - DAY

Maurice is driving and smoking.

EXT. BACK OF GROCERY STORE - DAY

Maurice is loading up old bread into the back of his truck.

INT. SHELTER / ROLAND'S OFFICE - DAY

Roland, dressed nicer in a collared shirt, is setting up his
new office. He places the photo of him and his parents (now
framed) on the desk.

Joyce, appears in the doorway, Roland welcomes her and
guides her to a seat across his desk.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Alba sleeps in her hospital bed, connected to an IV drip,
hooked up to a monitor that BEEP, BEEP, BEEPS.

/END MONTAGE

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - DAY

A parakeet SQUAKS inside the aviary.

Roland faces towards the enclosure, painting on top of the patio table. He is working on a representational painting of a bird.

He moves the brush, and then pauses in frustration.

He dabs some fresh paint on the brush and brings it to the canvas. The brush hovers, he can't bring himself to apply the paint. He sets the brush down on the patio table.

There is a RUSTLING noise. Roland looks up and sees a rat scurry along the fence behind the aviary.

Roland walks towards the aviary. He stands and looks in, studying the birds. Roland notices something inside.

Roland opens the door to the aviary and steps inside.

INT./EXT. AVIARY - CONTINUOUS

Birds flutter about with SQUAKS and CHIRPS.

Roland looks down at the dead quail. It appears to have been mauled and torn apart.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

The dead bird sits atop the patio table. Roland rotates his painting to the side, the bird he has been painting is now sideways rather than upright.

He grabs the brush and starts attempting to paint blood on his bird rendering.

He grows frustrated once more, grabs the painting and throws it like a frisbee into a bush.

Roland stares at the painting in the bush.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Roland is hosing down the painting. Paint runs off the canvas. He hatefully glares at the canvas.

Roland turns his attention away and begins watering other plants.

INT./EXT. PUBLIC BUS - DAY

Roland rides the bus, appearing despondent.

POLLARD
Ay man, you Alba's boy?!

Roland turns around to see Pollard coming up from behind.

ROLAND
No I--

Pollard sits down without an invite.

POLLARD
--That bitch still owes me!

ROLAND
I don't know anything about that,
she's my Aunt.

POLLARD
Family is bound tight, like sugar
cane, yeah? Then YOU pay me.

Roland turns his gaze to look straight at Pollard.

ROLAND
I look like an easy mark but I'm
not. I'm sorry my Aunt put one over
on you, I can't help.

Pollard flops back into the seat in frustration.

POLLARD
Shit man.

ROLAND
If she did have the means, I would
make sure she paid you though.

POLLARD
I don't have my money. I don't have
my website.

ROLAND
Alba's in the hospital.

Pollard sits up and looks at Roland.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
She had a stroke.

(CONTINUED)

POLLARD

Yeah?

ROLAND

She'll be okay they say.

POLLARD

Maybe it's a good thing...She had problems. But if yesterday was for death? Tomorrow maybe, will be for life.

EXT. ROLAND'S SIDEYARD - SAME

A hand reaches over the fence- struggles before finding and pushing the latch. The gate opens.

Dale and Molly slink into the yard.

DALE

No gate shall impede me!

MOLLY

Shut up, Dale.

Molly and Dale make their way around the back of the house.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Molly and Dale continue walking.

DALE

I put in a good word bout you with Roland.

MOLLY

What makes you think I want good words said about me?!

DALE

Shit who doesn't want rep in the game.

MOLLY

Sometimes, what men think of as a compliment, sounds like a conversation at the butcher counter.

Molly and Dale stop at the window outside the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

DALE

Yo. I bet this shit's unlocked.

Dale begins to fumble with the window screen. Molly pushes him out of the way.

MOLLY

Just let me do it.

Molly carefully and adeptly removes the frame.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

This is how you do it Mr.
Bananafingers.

Molly opens the window up. Dale SNAPS his fingers.

DALE

See, I tole ya! UNGH.

MOLLY

You're a genius. Mensa or
something. Now climb in there.

DALE

What?! Naw. You smaller than me.

MOLLY

Yeah. But you're more susceptible
to coercion.

DALE

Oh, aight I see how it is. Okay
then.

Dale struggles, but gets a foot up on the window sill. Molly tries to help, pushing him. Dale's ass pops out of his saggy jeans. Molly turns her head away, grossed out.

Dale CRASHES through and into the kitchen.

EXT. ROLAND'S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Dale opens the door to the patio. Molly walks through it.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dale and Molly walk through the living room towards the front door.

(CONTINUED)

MOLLY

And what did he say?

DALE

Shit, I can't recall his words exact...but I dunno, maybe he's down for it.

MOLLY

Hey, thanks for just assuming he could just have me if he fucking wanted to! Real cool, dude.

DALE

I was just testing the waters.

MOLLY

Eh, like I care. For the record, I'm not interested in chasing a virginal man-child anyhow.

DALE

I can still chase you, girl.

MOLLY

Paws off pussycat...should I just forget that you were fucking his aunt?

DALE

Damn.

INT./EXT. ROLAND'S HOUSE/FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Dale opens the door and Molly slides past him.

DALE(CONT'D)

Aight. Go get that shit.

MOLLY

Yes sir.

DALE

We fin ta do this!

Molly's gone. Dale has a sly smile.

INT. SHELTER/MAIN ROOM - SAME

Roland sits next to Pollard at the computer. Pollard is picking fonts on a website creation tool. Joyce plays the PIANO nearby.

ROLAND

See, it's really not that hard nowadays. You don't need to know even basic html to get by with simple web design with sites like this.

Pollard clicks excitedly.

POLLARD

Thank you! This is exactly what I wanted!

INSERT WEB PAGE -

TEXT: "Pollard's American Life"

IMAGE: Pollard holding up a fish and fishing pole, smiling. GIF images of fish dance around next to this photo.

ROLAND

Just finish this up and take off before the Manager kicks you out.

POLLARD

Thanks man!

Roland, with clipboard, stands and walks towards Joyce at the piano.

Roland pauses, listening. He pulls up a chair next to her.

ROLAND

Hey, this is a new one.

Joyce stops playing.

JOYCE

No it isn't! It's from "Chorus Line".

ROLAND

I meant new for you.

JOYCE

Humph. Yes. Okay, I suppose.
(Over her shoulder)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOYCE (cont'd)
Just back off asshole. Maybe I
don't want to hear it.

Pollard looks up and turns around. Roland brushes him off,
indicating that it's 'okay'.

ROLAND
Who are you talking to Joyce?

JOYCE
Maybe we don't mention that okay?
I'm talking to you.

ROLAND
You're talking to someone else
too--

JOYCE
--No, NO!

ROLAND
It's okay. Nobody minds, you can
talk to anyone you want...Are they
here?

JOYCE
No. Don't be stupid. He left, of
course Ed's not here.

ROLAND
Your husband? He died?

JOYCE
No he didn't die, he left. Well, I
suppose he did die, but he left
first.

ROLAND
You're mad at him?

JOYCE
I'm not mad at him! I just talk
like I'm mad with him. That's how
familiar people talk.

ROLAND
I'm sorry he left... Was it
difficult for you?

JOYCE
Lets see. Gee! Whadda you think?!

Roland nods his head.

EXT. ROLAND'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Roland approaches his front door. He stops, hearing a BUSTLING inside. He hesitates, opening the door slightly, then pushing it open quickly.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Roland enters to a loud SURPRISE. It's a surprise party, though with only a few attendees.

Dale, Molly, Rosaline, and a few of DALES RAP POSSE stand in the room decorated with a banner, balloons, and table with a cake and snacks.

The room is silent as Roland slowly walks into the middle.

ROLAND

I remember locking the door.

MOLLY

Happy birthday Roland.

ROLAND

Thanks...how'd you get in here?

DALE

Yo, I just shimmy shimmed through the kitchen window. Opened er up--POP.

ROLAND

Okay. Well everyone can just leave through the front door.

DALE

It's your 30th rogue! Lets do it up.

Roland looks at Molly.

ROLAND

There is no significance to reaching a particular age. A year is just arbitrarily based around the STUPID Earth going around the sun!

The partygoers freeze up, awkward looks are shared.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND (CONT'D)

It's not an appropriate time for celebration anyhow.

DALE

C'mon blood. Everyone needs a special day.

ROLAND

No one is special. We are all just stupid animals that exist by pure accident with no purpose whatsoever.

MOLLY

The reality of our accidental existence is still pretty cool. Lets just have a little celebration of your last go around.

People relax, there are head nods and a few YEAHS.

Roland casually makes his way past Dale and Molly and walks to the food table.

Roland stands looking down at his cake, it reads "Happy Birthday Roland!".

Roland takes a Cheeto and runs it through the cake frosting.

Rosaline looks at Molly like, 'what the fuck?!'. Partygoers look to each other, confused.

Roland holds his hands up. He looks at them and then puts his palms directly above the top of the cake.

DALE

Yo. Roland.

Roland slowly presses his hands down and through the middle of the cake.

DALE (CONT'D)

Shit! Molly cooked that. I even did the frosting with one them tubes!

Everyone is shocked. Roland has pushed his hands all the way through the cake and holds them against the table.

Dale makes a call, putting his cellphone to his ear.

The doorbell CHIMES.

(CONTINUED)

ROSALINE
That's probably the pizza guy.

DALE
(to himself)
Answer the phone ya ol' shit.

Roland presses down firm- staring at his hands as they crush the cake.

Dale opens the door--waves PIZZA GUY in.

PIZZA GUY
Where do you want em?

DALE
Yo, someone pay this dude! I'll be right back.

Dale bolts out the door. Pizza Guy looks around questioningly, no one acknowledges him.

Roland's arm muscles are tense as he presses down firm. Pizza Guy moves to set the pizza's down on the table but--

The table legs fold in, and the table collapses from the pressure applied by Roland.

Roland pants-- sweat on his brow --regret comes across his face.

PIZZA GUY
Who is paying for these?

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - LATER

Maurice, ball in hand, begins his approach. Fran, Sam, Elmer and Lois standby. Dale runs up to the lane.

DALE
Yo Moe!

The ball slips from Moe's grasp and rolls loose into the gutter.

ELMER
(to Sam)
I'm back in the game now.

MAURICE
Gaw-dammit!

(CONTINUED)

DALE

Yo Moe, we gotta go!

MAURICE

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, you spoiled
my roll!

Fran stands up.

FRAN

What is it, what's the matter?

MAURICE

You dumb hop head!

DALE

It's Roland!

FRAN

What happened Dale?

MAURICE

He better be dead or dying for this
kinda fanfare.

DALE

Day-um.

FRAN

Moe.

DALE

No, it's just. It's his birthday--

MAURICE

--Think I don't know?! I was there
for his first breath!

DALE

Ya gotta come...stat!

MAURICE

And what? Pop outta the cake? Ya
think he even wants me there?

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Roland, hands covered in cake, and Molly sit next to each other on the couch. Rosaline, Dale's crew and others still linger in the living room, CHATTING and eating pizza.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

No one listened to me, they're all still here.

MOLLY

You don't exactly have an air of authority...though I think you lose your claim to having a calm, composed demeanor.

ROLAND

Sorry about the cake.

MOLLY

It's your party...you can flip shit if you want to.

Roland sits up, turns to Molly and steels himself.

ROLAND

I want to be the type of person that can be at a party...one thrown FOR HIM even. There's just been too much new- too fast.

MOLLY

You want to be a participating member of the human race? Social bonds and all that, right?

ROLAND

Yeah.

MOLLY

You should start by-- well lemme just ask you this. Do you like me? And I mean in any way whatsoever, am I person that holds your interest?

ROLAND

Yeah... Yes!

MOLLY

What do you know about me? I've gotten all up in your life and you haven't so much as asked me, what I do, what I like, my OPINION- on anything!

ROLAND

Wow. I'm an asshole...But I do want to know all that stuff!

(CONTINUED)

Molly waits.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Oh! What do you do?

Molly takes Roland's cake soaked hand. She closes it except for his pointer finger, which she directs to his mouth. Roland eats the clump of cake stuck to his finger.

MOLLY

I'm a pastry chef.

ROLAND

Oh. You're good.

MOLLY

You probably disapprove though.
'Consumption for pleasure' ? That's
my bread and butter.

The front door opens abruptly. Dale walks in with Maurice, Fran, Elmer, Lois, and Sam trailing close behind.

Roland stands up from the couch as they walk into the room.

DALE

Yo, yo,yo. The party just returned
and it's gonna happen no matter
what the fuck you say!

Dale throws a finger into Roland's face. The bowling crew makes their way into the living room.

MAURICE

This dumb ass thought it awful
important I get over here. Blame
him.

The CHATTER in the room has quieted. Moments pass, no one knows what to say or who should say it. Dale steps up to have words with Roland.

DALE

Hey, yo--

ROLAND

--Dale. It wasn't your fault. She
was in control- and out of control.
And you are a good friend. OKAY?

Dale steps back, nodding and accepting. Roland approaches his grandfather.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

You were right about Alba.

MAURICE

That's not your fault.

ROLAND

No. But I didn't even care or consider consequences, I just wanted to get to you. I was wrong.

MAURICE

Kiddo... This was always your house. I always knew it...I lost everything. I didn't want to lose it...and you.

Roland hugs his grandfather.

MAURICE (CONT'D)

You're all I have left of my daughter.

ROLAND

You're an asshole Grandpa...But I'm an asshole too.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

The room is darkened. Dale emerges from the kitchen, carrying a sad/crushed cake, with haphazard candles lit up. Everyone is SINGING "Happy Birthday To You", except for Molly who plays the tune on her harmonica.

The cake makes its way to Roland. He looks around, the happiest he's yet been, and blows out the candles.

Everyone CHEERS.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Spacey Jim is playing some WILD MUSIC from his laptop. Maurice is dancing with Fran, nose to nose. The other party patrons dance as well.

Sam cuts in between Maurice and Fran.

SAM

Hey. How's bout that liquor...where is it?

INT. ROLAND'S "STUDIO ROOM" - SAME

MUSIC thumps from the living room. Roland is holding up a painting, showing Molly.

ROLAND
This one is pretty rote, but
typical of my style.

He sets it down and pulls another painting from behind a row of canvases.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
Now this one. It's one of the first
I did when I came up with my
method. But it's still one of my
favorites.

Molly inspects it, with interest.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
I've stagnated recently. I need to
find a new...process.

Roland sets the painting down.

MOLLY
They're great. I love them
actually.

ROLAND
I really liked your harmonica
playing. Could you play me
something else?

MOLLY
Sure.

Molly pulls her harmonica from her pocket.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Wait, what is your whole process
for painting anyhow?

INT. MAURICE'S NEW ROOM - SAME

Maurice is on his knees, pulling bottles from under the bed. He hands one off to Sam.

SAM
Jackpot!

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

The music is still going. Happy party goers dance about. Sam is mixing up drinks on the coffee table, using assorted cups and mugs. Hands come in to grab them, fast as he can pour. With a LAUGH Sam hands a cup to Maurice, who's flanked by his bowling crew.

SAM

Hey! The party's a hit. Takes the sting outta missing my chance to beat you at the lanes.

Maurice hands his cup to Fran.

MAURICE

Horseshit! I woulda come right back...Where is the birthday boy anyhow?

Roland and Molly emerge from the hallway.

SAM AND ELMER

Hey!

ELMER (CONT'D)

There he is!

FRAN

Happy birthday, Roland.

ROLAND

Thanks...Thank you Moe.

MAURICE

Thirty years old kiddo, ya feel any different?

Roland momentarily looks at Molly.

ROLAND

Yeah. I feel like having a drink.

Roland receives a drink from Sam.

INT. MAURICE'S ORIGINAL ROOM - DAY

Back in Maurice's room (which was briefly Roland's), things are unpacked and returned to their original state. Roland is fumbling, hooking up wires to a box next to Maurice's TV. He finishes.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAND

There. Now you have cable.

Maurice sits in his armchair, struggling with the remote, trying to turn on the cable box.

MAURICE

Wait. You gotta show me how to use this one.

Roland approaches, taking the remote to demonstrate.

INT. ROLAND'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY

The living room is different now. The couch is gone, there is a new paint job and pictures hang on the wall: family shots that include Roland, Maurice, Rolands parents, and the painting of Roland with the tennis racket. Maurice hangs the painting that Roland showed Molly earlier.

MAURICE

This one was always my favorite.

ROLAND

I never thought you looked at them?

MAURICE

Oh. I always snuck in and took a peek.

INT. ROLAND'S PARENTS OLD ROOM - DAY

The door opens. The room has been changed, it's basic with new/simple furnishings. Roland and Dale help Alba inside. Roland and Alba sit down on the edge of the bed.

DALE

Yo, I'll fix up some glasses a water.

Dale leaves.

ALBA

I fought your Mom for this room when we were kids. She won.

ROLAND

Look at the long game. You won.

(CONTINUED)

ALBA

Nah. There's ghosts in here now, I dunno if I can hang.

ROLAND

What I've seen of your life...is dark. Darker than any bad memory. We can all face a few ghosts together. This room? It's all yours now. But this time with stipulations.

ALBA

You're just like Moe.

ROLAND

You have more than a week in clean now.

ALBA

Just don't press my nerves an it'll be a cakewalk.

Maurice steps into the door frame.

MAURICE

Hey darlin'.

ALBA

I'm your darlin' now?!

MAURICE

You looked like my little baby again when you were in that bed. I'm stepping on a fresh foot here so gimme an inch.

ALBA

Yeah okay, okay. We're all friends here.

ROLAND

Family.

ALBA

Same shit.

INT. SHELTER / ROLAND'S OFFICE - DAY

Roland sits behind his desk- tapping a finger.

ROLAND

This is an unusual arrangement. Her only income is SSI, and her health won't be getting any better. How can I be sure you're not just going to dump her on the streets after a few days?

We see that Pollard and Joyce sit on the other side of the desk.

POLLARD

In my culture. Where I come from- the false healer studies and learns the techniques, guided by ambition. The true healer is one who is touched, they hear the voices and can't help but to heal.

ROLAND

She's not a deity or an idol for you. She is a responsibility.

POLLARD

Yes. Yes! It will be my responsibility to make her days happy and safe. That would be my calling.

Roland considers this.

ROLAND

Joyce? What do you think?

JOYCE

Yes, yes, yes! Of course I want to get out of this shit can, asshole!

Roland smiles.

INT. ROLAND'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Roland and Maurice push a brand new couch into place.

They flop down upon it, sitting side by side and looking outward.

INT. ALBA'S ROOM (FORMERLY MAURICE'S/ROLAND'S PARENTS) -DAY

Alba's laying on the bed, Dale sits on the edge, flipping through TV channels with the remote.

ALBA

You don't hafta babysit me.

DALE

Naw, I wanna be here, hang with you.

ALBA

No ya don't. Don't worry about it, I used you much as you used me.

DALE

It wasn't like that.

ALBA

It's always like that, that's like people do...Don't worry, you're a good kid.

DALE

What do you feel like watching? I can't find shit.

ALBA

I wanna watch the inside of my eyelids, I need a nap. Get the fuck out.

DALE

Aight, if you'll be okay.

ALBA

I'll be alright! I got something going for me here, kay? Long as those two apes lemme be, it'll be cool.

Dale stands up, handing the remote to Alba.

DALE

Those two? Yeah, shit'll be copacetic round here now.

INT. ROLAND'S BEDROOM - DAY

Roland and Molly stand tandem behind a canvas on an easel. Roland, behind Molly, holds her arm and moves it over the canvas.

Their arms jerk in a sudden direction.

ROLAND

Whoa, I wasn't trying to do that.

MOLLY

It's like a Ouija board! Like some spirit bullshit is guiding us.

ROLAND

No, I'm actually in control. You're just supposed to keep your hand limp.

Molly LAUGHS.

MOLLY

Yeah right! That's not how this is gonna go, dude. It's a new process.

Roland and Molly crane their heads to look at each other, their faces close. At first stern, with a chuckle Roland cracks a smile.

They return their attention to the canvas in front of them. Their brush makes a simple stroke, then their arms begin to jerk wildly around the canvas. Roland and Molly LAUGH gleefully as they paint with abandonment.

FADE OUT