

"SPELL CHECK"

by

Jack Savige

*"Sometimes, you think you're doing the magic,  
and sometimes you realize the magic is doing you."*

Oberon Zell

FADE IN:

INT. A TEENAGE BOY'S BEDROOM - DAY

That morning sun is hitting! NICK SELLA, 18, walks into the shot. The Internet's next boyfriend, he talks directly to CAMERA. Very Ferris Bueller coded. He's in his Calvin's.

NICK

Get ready with me for a cold brew.

Yep, we're inside a "Get Ready With Me" vlog, but there's no way to scroll outta this one! Nick tousles his hair in a way he knows will launch a thousand fancams.

NICK (CONT'D)

Today, we're doing raised greaser vibes. Let's go!

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN - MOVING - DUSK

ELIAS MANN, 18, delightfully weird and weirdly delightful, watches Nick's VIDEO on whichever looping video app hasn't been banned by the government or gone out of style... so far!

A seat behind Elias is the inimitable CARTER HALL, 17. He radiates main character energy and not just because he's one of our main characters. The world is his Hot Cheeto. He doesn't like oysters. He's also peepin' at Nick's video. Much like the book by Sheryl Sandberg, he decides to lean in.

CARTER

Hot, right? I love how creative he is with hiding his dick print. He goes to my school.

ELIAS

I go to your school.

Carter bugs out. He switches seats and takes in Elias' face. A realization washes over him.

CARTER

No way. Justin Copperthwaite?

ELIAS

No, Elias Mann. But you committed to it so much, I almost believed that was my name.

CARTER  
Commit to the bit. My mom taught me  
that. She teaches improv.

ELIAS  
I'm so sorry.

CARTER  
Thank you.

The boys return their attention to Nick's thirst trap programming. Nick now has some jeans on, but not just any jeans!

NICK (ON PHONE)  
Going in with the Wrangler jeans.  
The cowboy cut. The only cut. Then  
a Buck Mason white tee, because,  
well, yes.

CARTER  
I mean, I can see the rizz.

ELIAS  
And you know he's bi, right?

CARTER  
I do, but you really seem to know.

NICK (ON PHONE)  
Rolling the sleeves up a little,  
because, we all know why.

CARTER  
Give the people what they want.

ELIAS  
I'm people.

NICK (ON PHONE)  
And we've got this bitching vintage  
"Nightmare Before Christmas" crew  
jacket. Jack Skellington anywhere  
on your 'fit? It's over. Dude  
always goes hard.

Nick winks in another serve that will launch a thousand further fancams.

NICK (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
And that's the 'fit. Raised greaser  
task completed.

CARTER  
 "Raised greaser"? That makes no sense, but his face lets him get away with it!

ELIAS  
 I think it's cute.

CARTER  
 No, you think he's cute. Give me your phone.

Elias passes his phone over to Carter, who goes for a scroll down liked videos lane.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
 Yup, knew it. You've liked literally every one of his posts.

ELIAS  
 All I wanna do is go from parasocial to social.

CARTER  
 It's giving Swiftie and I say that as a Swiftie. I'm a "Reputation" girly. What are you, "Lover"?

ELIAS  
 No, I'm also a "Rep" girly.

CARTER  
 Huh. 'Cause a real "Rep" girly would hit his ass up while you still can. Like before we graduate.

Elias looks out the window, pondering the mysteries of love.

EXT. RIVERSTON TRAIN STATION - DUSK

Elias and Carter begin their fare thee wells.

CARTER  
 Good trip. I uncovered a crush and my under the graduation gown 'fit has been secured. Fucci.

Carter shows off his countered 'fit to Elias.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
 Thanks for talking shit with me. You're a real one for that.

ELIAS  
I kinda wish we did it sooner.

CARTER  
Yeah, why have we never hung out before?

ELIAS  
Because you're cooler than me?

CARTER  
Right, right. Well, looks like we've run out of stuff to talk about anyway. See you tomorrow.

Carter turns, then turns back to our limerent lad.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
Hey, if you really wanna get with Nick, hit my line. I know a guy.

ELIAS  
What does that mean?

CARTER  
It means this.

Carter takes out his phone and thumbs through the Favorites tab on Untitled Video Looping App (working title).

CARTER (CONT'D)  
(every emotion)  
Where the fuck is it? Fucking shit thing. God. Oh, here it is.

Carter taps a video, sorry, THE VIDEO and CLICKS PLAY.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ALFIE'S ROOM - NIGHT (APP VIDEO)

Dream catchers, fully charged crystals, beaded door curtains tied up with strings, these a few of the phantasmic things in ALFIE ASBURY'S room. He's 22, and he doesn't chase, he attracts. Is it bath salts or is it a higher frequency? A Lohanesque husk to his voice draws you in. You're hung up on every word he says.

ALFIE  
That boy you're thinking of all the time? You can have him. At midnight, cast this spell and he will love you.  
(MORE)

ALFIE (CONT'D)

Say, "He will love me the way I love him," then cross both fingers, tap them together twice and snap! The spell will be cast and he will be yours. Then, for extra protection, you're going to cast a hex, which is a hex sent by text. Text your crush's initials to (646) 238-2910 and thank me later. Alfie out.

Carter looks at Elias for his Letterboxd review.

ELIAS

Yeah, I'm gonna hit pass.

CARTER

What?! A love spell is you core. Like, if we put a love spell in the middle of this parking lot and asked it to go to it's mommy, you'd be mommy.

ELIAS

It feels like cheating. I want Nick to like me for me.

CARTER

You haven't even read the comments yet! They're all saying it works!

ELIAS

No, I can do this on my own. Like a... single mommy.

Carter shrugs as a GOLD TRANS AM pulls up nearby. Elias' grandpa, TERRY BURCH, 77, is at the wheel. Think John Waters and let's cast John Waters if he's "tech avail".

CARTER

Hold on, who is this baddie?

ELIAS

My grandpa.

CARTER

Your grandpa? Is he Fruity Pebbles? He seems Fruity Pebbles.

ELIAS

He did just buy me a ticket to go see a Sunday matinee performance of "The Pacifier: The Musical" on Broadway.

CARTER  
Aw, I want a gay grandpa.

ELIAS  
Too bad.

Carter is gagged by Elias' sass sneak attack. Game does respect game. Elias gets into Terry's ride.

TERRY  
What was that about?

ELIAS  
An unhealthy choice.

TERRY  
I'll drive to that!

Terry FLOORS IT, almost sideswiping Carter in the process.

I/E. GOLD TRANS AM/STREETS OF RIVERSTON - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Terry turns to his grandson as they wait for a green light.

TERRY  
How was the show?

ELIAS  
It was camp.

Elias places the Playbill for "The Pacifier: The Musical" down on his lap and flips it over to reveal a PreP ad on the back. Terry clocks it immediately.

TERRY  
They know their audience.

INT. DAVID'S DINER - NIGHT

The generational gays share some tater tots and a booth.

TERRY  
How's the boy?

Elias almost chokes on his 7UP® Cherry Zero Sugar. Look, you've gotta get the product placement tie-ins down early.

ELIAS  
Huh?

TERRY  
You're thinking about him again.  
Who is it? Kid from the train?



ELIAS  
No. Someone cuter.

Terry lets out CACKLE, simply delighted by Elias' cheekiness.

TERRY  
"Someone cuter"! That shallowness comes from me. You know I was doing it with the most handsomest guy in school, Scotty Randwick. He was going steady with Patricia Temple --

ELIAS  
I forgot, was Scotty pan?

TERRY  
Eh, we didn't use those words back then. How's cock hungry?

ELIAS  
Sure.

TERRY  
Now I wanna meet your potential Scotty.

ELIAS  
Okay, but you've already met.

INT. (JERSEY SUB REMIX) - NIGHT

Terry looks at the door, antsy for Elias' potential honey.

TERRY  
What's happening? Is he going to meet us here?

ELIAS  
No, he's already here.

Elias motions his head over to the counter, where Nick is subbing up a storm.

TERRY  
That's why we come to this place? Not for the subs? Not for the fast casual dining experience? We come to this place for that boy?

ELIAS  
When you put it that way, yes.

Nick slams down a sub and starts loading it up.

TERRY

Can you say it, so I don't have to?

ELIAS

I want his footlong.

TERRY

Thank you. I feel like I can breathe again. But you've got competition.

ELIAS

Huh?

TERRY

Yep, right there, competition.

Terry indicates towards a table of TEEN GIRLS, ogling Nick.

TERRY (CONT'D)

They're probably having the exact same conversation as we are, with less crude mentions of cock. Or more. I don't know how they are.

ELIAS

But they wouldn't know any of his lore, not the way I do.

Terry looks over to another table.

TERRY

And then there's this guy, clearly another Mary --

Elias SHUDDERS at KYLE NAST, 17, the actual worst.

TERRY (CONT'D)

What? I should know him?

ELIAS

That's Kyle, me with confidence? Got to write songs for the musical and's off to Berklee?

TERRY

Pfft. Berklee. No one can really teach you how to be songwriter, anyway. You don't need Berklee. We're going to LA. You toss that graduation cap and I start the engine. That's the plan, right?

ELIAS

Yeah.

TERRY

But the plan right now is for me to scope out... what's his name?

ELIAS

Nick Sella.

TERRY

'Cause I've just realized, you always do the ordering here.

ELIAS

You got me.

Terry tussles Elias' hair like the sneaky scamp he is.

INT. (JERSEY SUB REMIX) - MOMENTS LATER

Terry moves up in the line and reaches the Nick Sella.

NICK

Hey, pops! Nah, I'm just being goofy. What do you want, man?

TERRY

It's not what I want, it's what my grandson wants.

(a beat, then)

Which is the whole wheat meatball sub with ranch dressing.

NICK

I know that order. Oh, shit.

(noticing Elias)

You're Elias' grandad? Fire. Sir's pretty dope.

TERRY

He gets that from me.

As Nick gets acclimatized to the comedic stylings of Terry, we WHIP TO Elias, watching and hopin' Nick gets his granddaddy's seal of approval. His hope is rudely interrupted by Kyle, who stands over Elias like the true triple Scorpio he is.

KYLE

Elias, hi!

ELIAS

Hey! Oh, congrats on getting into Berklee.

KYLE

I know. Where are you going?

ELIAS

No college, straight to LA.

KYLE

That's nice, for a vacation?

ELIAS

No, to like make it happen. You know I do songwriting too, right?

KYLE

Oh. But, that'd be silly, *right?*  
Going there with no formal training, no connections? That'd be silly, like asking Nick out.

(off Elias' scandalized look)

Your voice carries. And you stare at him all the time in class.

Kyle walks off, leaving Elias' confidence levels in a ditch!

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - NIGHT

Terry drives home as Elias screams internally into his sub.

TERRY

I've gotta tell ya kid, you're onto something with this Nick Sella character. I like him. As a wise man once said, "Sometimes, stupid and cute are enough." And he said you were, "pretty dope." He called you pretty!

ELIAS

Doesn't matter. No, it's silly and it would never happen.

TERRY

Sure it can. You know what you've gotta do? Commit to the bit.

ELIAS

That's what Carter said.

TERRY

Carter? Don't know who that is and I don't care for him stealing focus from me. What did your parents do when that research spot opened up in Antartica? They shipped you off to me and scrambled. You want Nick Sella, then you go for it, okay?

ELIAS

Okay.

Terry nods, it's settled. A silence, then.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Hey, Grandpa? Do you miss Scotty?

Terry almost runs off the road... in his mind.

TERRY

Sometimes. Maybe more than sometimes. So don't think you'll just forget about your one, because you won't.

Elias continues his constant craving as Terry takes a left.

INT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Elias walks down the hall with his cosmic cousin, REILLY HORNE, 17. I know, another character's name to learn? Last major-ish one, promise. Quick with a quip and also has the ability to fully examine someone right down to their core. You can tell this whole back and forth thing is kind of their thing.

REILLY

Tell me a tale.

ELIAS

Oh gosh, a tale? So much pressure. What about a fable or a parable?

REILLY

Those sound harder to execute.

Reilly nods towards a fast approaching Nick.

REILLY (CONT'D)

There's your will they, won't they.

ELIAS

They won't.

REILLY

They won't?! Who says, the network?

ELIAS

No, it was a purely creative decision. Kyle came up with the pitch.

REILLY

You're really letting Kyle decide the will they, won't they of your show?

ELIAS

He also said I shouldn't go to LA. Said it was silly. And he said it in some weird slam poetry coded way that really got to me.

Reilly drops a collection of TUTS.

REILLY

Iambic pentameter. That's how they get ya, my dude. And silly as a drag? You are silly! That's your legacy.

ELIAS

But he's like next level me. He got into Berklee.

REILLY

So you're listening to him because he got into Berklee? Listen to me, I got into Barnard.

The BELL RINGS, giving awards show playoff music vibes to the rest of this convo.

ELIAS

No one even watches my show.

REILLY

I watch your show, I'm someone. I'm very invested. At the end of each episode slash school day, I think, "What sort of whimsical quandaries will Elias Mann get himself into next?" You know who else watches your show?

ELIAS

My haters?

REILLY

You. So, what do you wanna see?

As Elias experiences a whimsical quandary in real time, we...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Elias, still afflicted with resting whimsical quandary face. It's happening. Elias turns to face him. We PUSH IN on Elias, soul spilling.

ELIAS

Hey. I know that we graduate next week, but if I don't tell you this now, I'm scared I never will. A lot, I know. But basically, I'm... gonna need the spell.

REVEAL Elias has been talking to Carter the whole time.

CARTER

Knew you were it's mommy. Meet me at midnight.

ELIAS

You could just text me the video.

CARTER

No, I'm emotionally invested now. Your plucky charm and Grandfruity Pebbles made me care.

ELIAS

Midnight o'clock it is.

Elias and Carter nod then split.

EXT. CARTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Elias RAPS on the door of a classic Craftsman-style home. You'd fantasize about it on Zillow. Carter opens the door.

CARTER

It's 8:08 pm.

ELIAS

I got too hyped.

INT. CARTER'S HOUSE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Elias catches up with Carter. Our boys walk past the cutest li'l pupperino you ever did see. Let's call her FLUFFLES.

CARTER  
Careful, she bites.

Elias sidesteps Fluffles and follows Carter into...

INT. CARTER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Carter opens his fridge, looking for snacks to burn time.

ELIAS  
Should I say hi to your parents?

CARTER  
They're at pickleball.

ELIAS  
Good. I'm very bad at parent  
smalltalk. There's a specificity to  
it I can't master.

CARTER  
Okay, but now I want pickles.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. 7-ELEVEN - NIGHT

The automatic door opens to reveal Elias and Carter. Carter  
beelines for a shelf of Van Holten's® Pickle-In-A-Pouches.

ELIAS  
I haven't been this excited for a  
midnight since the first time I  
watched "Gremlins 2: The New  
Batch"! I'm a Gizmo, you're a  
Stripe.

CARTER  
Don't care what that means, because  
I'm still Hot Mama and a "Rep"  
girly.

Carter picks out a Hot Mama for himself and for Elias, he  
bestows...

ELIAS  
Why do I have to be Sour Sis?

CARTER  
I mean, if you have to ask.

Elias' face appropriately sours. They head for the register.



I/E. CARTER'S CAR/7-ELEVEN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

In a cinematic parallel to the 1994 Penelope Spheeris picture, "The Little Rascals", Elias and Carter eat pickles in an idling car.

CARTER

I get it. I'd take the magic way out too. I mean, he's really fucking hot, you're running out of time to ask him out, he barely knows who you are and he might say no. Is that it? I think that's it.

ELIAS

Feeling very seen and witnessed.

Elias tears his Sour Sis open.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I don't even like pickles. Their texture is not it for me.

CARTER

Oh, so you're neurospicy. Same.

ELIAS

You're neurospicy too?

CARTER

The spiciest. ADHD. You?

ELIAS

Touched by the 'tism.

CARTER

Don't tell me your special interest is Nick.

ELIAS

No. It's writing songs... about Nick. Muses come from many places. Mine just happens to come from a himbo who loves a 'fit check.

CARTER

Does his lack of depth loop back around to having depth or...

Elias LAUGHS.

ELIAS

You know, sometimes stupid and cute are enough. Sometimes.

We TIME LAPSE -- the dashboard clock goes from 8:32 PM all the way to 11:59 PM. Elias and Carter continue to shoot the shit, until...

CARTER  
We doing this or what?

Elias checks the time on the dashboard -- midnight o'clock!

ELIAS  
That went fast.

CARTER  
And you're sure you wanna do this?

ELIAS  
Commit to the bit, right?

Elias props up his own phone under the dashboard light. We're looking at Nick's latest photo dump: a buncha selfies from vaguely different angles. Vaguely. Elias locks in and sets his hocus to pocus.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
He will love me the way I love him.

He performs Alfie's FINGER SNAP choreo, as foretold in the video prophecy. Elias basks in some post cast clarity, then starts HEXTING the hextline.

INT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Elias and Reilly take their clown vibe down the hall.

REILLY  
Does it bother you how British people say "I'm sat"?

ELIAS  
It does! I'd even go as far to say it haunts me. It sounds like how a McDonald's Sprite tastes. "I'm seated" is right there.

REILLY  
Someone else is right there.

Reilly nods towards a quickly approaching Nick, who um, quickly approaches. He walks past our pals and gives 'em a quick 'sup head nod.

NICK  
What's up, Elias?

ELIAS  
What's up, Nick.

Then, once Nick is safely down the hall...

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Was there something up in that  
"what's up"?

REILLY  
Mmm, still no signs of him seeing  
you or witnessing you. Why?

ELIAS  
Trade secrets.

Elias takes out his phone and TEXTS CARTER: *When will it  
start to hit?*

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - SAME TIME

Carter sits with his INDIE FRIENDS, all much cooler than  
Elias. His phone LIGHTS UP with Elias' text.

Carter TEXTS him back: *"start to hit?" it's not an edible.  
let it cook.*

Elias TEXTS back: *Or maybe it won't hit.*

Carter fires back a final TEXT, with a sprinkling of clapping  
hand emojis: *let. it. cook.*

INT. ELIAS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

A cozy little breakfast nook. Terry looks over at a fruit  
bowl. He indicates towards it, then Elias.

TERRY  
I guess we're not the only fruits  
in the kitchen!

ELIAS  
Please. You say that every morning.

TERRY  
And every morning it's funny.

ELIAS  
True.

Terry goes sicko mode on some toast, as Elias rereads CARTER'S TEXT. He SIGHS and then opens Untitled Video Looping App. Immediately, his algorithm spits out --

INT. NICK'S ROOM - DAY (APP VIDEO)

-- Nick! He's back to giving the people what they want.

NICK  
Keep scrolling unless you're a  
ranch head, who goes to my school  
and has liked all my videos.

Nick "waits" until he's pretty sure there's only Elias left.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Hey. You know who you are. I'm  
weirdly down since... now? If  
you're really up to be down, meet  
me at lunch. I'll get you right.

He hits Elias with his patented come-hither face.

INT. ELIAS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Elias is speechless. Terry takes it home.

TERRY  
We call that footlonging.

EXT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - QUAD - DAY

Elias and Reilly continue to keep it pushing, if keeping it pushing means mindlessly scrolling on your phone at lunch. Carter does a quick drive-by and pulls up NICK'S LAST VIDEO.

CARTER  
Congrats on the dick.

Elias watches Carter go, unsure on his line reading.

ELIAS  
Did he mean "dick" dick or that  
Nick's a dick?

REILLY  
Scholars remain divided.

Reilly's pookie, ANNIE OMINE, 17, appears, cradling a can of Pringles® All Dressed. She's a grounding presence to the onslaught of whimsy Elias and Reilly both emanate.

REILLY (CONT'D)

Look, the comments are already saying "Nickias Summer".

ANNIE

"Nickias"? Why not "Elick"? Who's having that conversation?

ELIAS

Okay, where even is Nick today?  
It's lunch. Does he still want the parasocial to social pipeline or not?

REILLY

No, he wants to *frack* your pipeline.

REVEAL a lavender hazed Nick Sella. He lifts up his shirt to wipe some sweat off his brow. His abs are ab-ing. He WINKS at Elias, who turns to Reilly and Annie, thrown.

ANNIE

That felt deliberate.

Nick ain't finished. He hands Elias a TICKET.

NICK

Got a show for ya. Auditorium. Now.

Sounds good to Elias! He NODS at Reilly and Annie, then DIPS.

INT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - MOMENTS LATER

Elias' sat dead center in the front row. He clutches a special edition Playbill: "Nicked Down".

"Reputation" era SMOKE BEGINS BILLOWING from the stage. On cue and off book, Nick enters stage left. Elias meets him up on the stage, anticipatory butterflies gnashing his gut up!

NICK

What's up, Elias?

ELIAS

What's up, Nick.

Definitely something up in both of those what's ups.

NICK

Heard you were a theater kid, so thought I'd give you some theater... kid.

The SMOKE MACHINE CUTS OUT as SPOTLIGHTS HIT the young men.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Did you peep the video?

ELIAS  
I did. I peeped the swag, high  
energy, queer yearning. Ranch.

NICK  
Nice. So... would you want to get  
ready with me, *with me*?

Elias nods, cherishing this moment.

ELIAS  
I would. I wanna get Nicked down.

NICK  
Fuck yeah.

The STAGE CURTAINS CLOSE on our players and then let's do  
some CUTE TRANSITION where they OPEN AGAIN ON...

INT. NICK'S ROOM - MORNING (APP VIDEO)

Nick JUMPS into some Levis. Dappled sunlight daps him up.

NICK  
Get ready with me for a lymphatic  
drainage appointment. Sheesh!

He reaches for his second lymph-'fit piece, just out of shot.

NICK (CONT'D)  
So this sweater is really gentle  
and cuddly and what's the material  
made of? Boyfriend.

Nick pulls Elias into the shot.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Yeah, going in with the hard  
launch, because Elias Mann has got  
me right.

Nick starts smooching Elias' cheek. "Officially Mine" by  
Maude Latour KICKS IN as we BEGIN MONTAGE SEQUENCE:

We see various reactions to Nick's hard launch VIDEO --

-- Kyle watches on from his ROOM, like a true Sour Sis.

-- Reilly and Annie hit replay from the QUAD.

-- Carter watches with his Indie Friends in the CAFETERIA, he looks up as... Elick walk in. Nick rocks a t-shirt, with *ELIAS MANN* in a sick ass font and a collage of Elias Manns littered below.

-- Nick gets hyped up by his ICE-HOCKEY BROS at his LOCKER, one offers Elias a fist bump.

-- OUTSIDE SCHOOL, they take selfies with NICKIAS STANS.

-- Nick working on his fitness, as Elias is his witness at a PLANET FITNESS.

-- Elick behind the sandwich bar at (JERSEY SUB REMIX), making his and his subs.

-- They make snow angels in shredded mozzarella.

-- Nick SQUIRTS some house ranch into a container for Elias.

END MONTAGE SEQUENCE

EXT. (JERSEY SUB REMIX) - NIGHT

Nick shuts up shop as Elias dusts off some excess mozzarella.

NICK

What's next? Can I go where you go?

ELIAS

Wait. Those are "Lover" lyrics. Are you a "Lover" girly?

NICK

All I know is that I'm in love...  
er. I don't think I've ever been  
happier than right now with you.

Nick hugs Elias.

ELIAS

(decidedly not sheesh)  
Sheesh.

INT. ELIAS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Terry watches some Nick at Nite on the TV. Elias walks in.

TERRY

So. How was Nick at night? Better  
than my version?

ELIAS

Stupid and cute are enough, right?

TERRY

Right. If the stupid gets too much,  
look for the cute. If the cute gets  
too much, look for the stupid. Is  
that mozzarella?

EXT. ELIAS' HOUSE - MORNING

Elias and Terry step onto the front porch. A JOGGING ON THE  
SPOT Nick waits for Elias to join him. His face lights up at  
the sight of his fave grandfather and grandson duo.

TERRY

Have a nice day at Nick!

EXT. STREETS OF RIVERSTON - MOMENTS LATER

Nick carries Elias to school on his shoulders.

NICK

You're my favorite weighted vest  
and I've worn Alo.

VARIOUS OVERHEAD BRANCHES get up in Elias' business.

ELIAS

Branch.  
(Nick dips down)  
Branch.  
(Nick dips down)  
Michelle Branch.

A vinyl copy of Michelle Branch's "The Spirit Room" dangles  
by a string from a sycamore tree. He YOINKS it down.

NICK

How'd that get up there?

Nick SHRUGS and drops it on the sidewalk. A trailing  
SOPHOMORE picks it up and walks off with it, ready for some  
kind of musical awakening.

ELIAS

(accidentally out loud)  
This'll be everyday.

NICK

That's right. It will be everyday!  
Me rides to school until we  
graduate, then we're going to LA,  
right? I think I can help with your  
music. Songs just have to rhyme,  
yeah?



A despondent Elias gets BRANCHED.

INT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - HOMEROOM - DAY

Elias PLAYS the end of ALFIE'S VIDEO to Reilly and Annie.

ELIAS

You know I'm down to clown, but I  
might also be down to wizard!

REILLY

You really think it worked?

ELIAS

Look at these Nick pics, of course  
it worked!

Reilly takes a beat to absorb the abracadabra.

REILLY

So you threw a love spell and now  
he wants to throw ass. Isn't that  
all you wanted? He loves you.

Elias' guilt eats him up -- he hasn't got a choice.

INT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - LATER

Elias steps in front of a moving Carter.

ELIAS

Nick and I have gotta go.

CARTER

Well fuck me.

ELIAS

I can't be with him, not like this.  
This love spell is way too potent.  
He's put me up on some pedestal,  
where I'm just his perfect dream  
guy, but he doesn't even know the  
real me! Yes, I'm hearing myself.

Elias COUGHS UP a cloud of dust.

CARTER

What is that? The love spell? Is it  
inside you?

ELIAS

Pre-workout. He makes us dry scoop.

CARTER

That can't be good for you.

Without missing a beat, Carter takes out his mint vape and hits it until it blinks.

ELIAS

He wants to get me diced so we can have matching abs. Oh shit, he's coming.

Elias quickly opens up a first edition paperback of "Miss Piggy's Guide to Life" to hide his face. Nick nods at Carter and keeps searching. Elias puts down his book, vibing a clear coast.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

This is what I get for committing to the bit. Hate to say it, he gives me the ick.

CARTER

Okay, you still saying "the ick", gives me the ick. Great, now I've said it. Twice.

EXT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

A JOCK now FRISBEES the "Spirit Room" vinyl. It just misses Elias' cornea as he rounds a corner with Carter.

ELIAS

Anyway, gonna meet that Alfie guy, get an un-love spell.

CARTER

You know where he lives?

ELIAS

I know where his PO Box lives.

Elias shows Carter the addy in Alfie's Untitled Video Looping App bio: PO Box 0218 Nashville, TN 37201.

CARTER

Nashville? Great, have fun. If it comes to twink on twink violence, so be it.

ELIAS

I guess we'll find out.

CARTER

"We'll"?

ELIAS

Yeah, "we'll"! If you hadn't shown me his video, none of this would've happened!

CARTER

Wow. The thanks I get for giving your life some songwriting material and dick.

ELIAS

Oh, we haven't -- no, Nick's saving himself for 100,000 followers.

CARTER

Disgusting.

ELIAS

Please. I don't know how to drive. I mean, I could use my Uber teen account, but my discount code is only valid for a 32 mile radius and it's way further than a 32 mile radius.

CARTER

Why can't that cute friend of yours, Reilly take you?

ELIAS

She can't. She's seeing Chappell Roan this weekend.

CARTER

Fruity Pebbles?

ELIAS

He can't. He's seeing Chappell Roan this weekend.

(off Carter's look)

What? He's a fan. C'mon, I thought you were emotionally invested.

Carter calculates his emotional investment levels, then.

CARTER

Okay, but if I fall asleep at the wheel, don't wake me.

Elias trots off as Carter quietly smiles to himself. Huh.

EXT. ELIAS' HOUSE - DAY

Elias drags his overnight bag down to Terry's car.

ELIAS

You aren't mad at me for not asking  
him out like a man?

TERRY

Are there any men here? I'm just  
happy you'll be breaking curfew for  
once. Look at you. Breaking curfew  
and then breaking a spell. What was  
the last thing you broke? Your  
voice?

ELIAS

(a very Brady voice crack)

Yes.

Carter appears in the distance with a Fucci bag. Elias grins  
at him actually fronting. They meet at the hood of the car.  
Carter only has eyes for Terry. Major stan behavior.

CARTER

Fruity Pebbles.

TERRY

Trix. Here, catch.

Terry pretends to "go long" with his car keys. Carter panics.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Please, I would never throw.

Terry gently hands Carter the keys, who gets settled behind  
the wheel. Elias and Terry walk back to the trunk.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Why my car again?

ELIAS

Carter wants to score some of your  
aura points.

Elias PLOPS his bag in the trunk. Terry pretends to help.

TERRY

Got ya a bag of tricks for the  
road.

Terry hands Elias said trickery -- a folded brown paper bag.

ELIAS

Do I want to know what's in this?

TERRY

Probably not. But take these right  
and you might even see me.

ELIAS

Noted. Oh and don't even worry  
about Nick showing up here. I've  
got a cover.

TERRY

Good, keep it interesting.

Elias SLAMS the trunk shut. Terry pretends to help.

ELIAS

Enjoy Chappell.

TERRY

Now you be like Chappell and get  
the job done.

Terry salutes Elias into the road quest ahead.

I/E. GOLD TRANS AM/ELIAS' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Elias and Carter BUCKLE UP. The ride has been pimped to  
include a cassette player.

CARTER

Tell me we can CarPlay.

ELIAS

It only takes cassingles.

Elias fusses in the center console and pulls out a cassingle  
for "I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)" by Darryl Hall & John  
Oates. Carter fires up the engine as Elias CLICKS PLAY.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - DAY

Carter and Elias hit up the MAIN DRAG of Riverston.

CARTER

You gonna miss this place?

ELIAS

Nope. Maybe The Pancakery.

CARTER

Okay, but now I want pancakes.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THE PANCAKERY - DAY

Just the right amount of kitsch. The walls are lined with pancake art of celebrities faces, à la Sardi's. Carter mainlines some pancakes. Elias admires his sprit.

ELIAS

I'd say we're making good time, but  
our first stop was a minute in, so.

CARTER

Woulda crashed out without these.  
We're saving time.

Carter passes Elias some maple syrup.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Here, go fill up the ashtray. I'll  
blast it next time I start to dip.

Elias SCOOCHES with the syrup. He stops when he spots...

Nick at the buffet! He tongs his way over some berries.

ELIAS

Shit. Not Nick. He can't see me!

CARTER

Why? Where are you meant to be?

ELIAS

Not here! And not with you.

Elias SCOOTs under the booth. Carter follows.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

(hushed, to Carter)

We shot 47 videos for his account  
before I packed. Thought it'd keep  
him busy editing, like a peanut  
buttered Kong.

CARTER

Needed more peanut butter.

Carter reaches up and pulls down his plate of pancakes.

ELIAS

Did he already post them all?

Elias opens Nick's page. He's LIVE STREAMING! The caption:  
"Going Live Until My Boyfriend's Back". Elias' eyes widen.

NICK (ON PHONE)

Chat, do we think Elias is hitting that ginger ale yet? Wrong. He's hitting that Minute Maid. Only way he gets his fruit in. The flight attendant better attend to that!

CARTER

He thinks you're on a plane?

Nick is now only a booth's throw away.

ELIAS

It's a good cover.

Yep, Nick takes a seat at their very booth! He props his phone against the maple syrup, continuing his stream of conscious livestream.

NICK

I would never come here, but Elias said it was his favorite place to eat after (Jersey Sub Remix). Gotta check out my competish!

Nick manspreads. His boots almost nick Elias, who gets contorting. Elias and Carter are now a pair of Squishmallows.

NICK (CONT'D)

I'm gonna give him so many kisses. 27. No, 87! 87 kisses when he gets back.

CARTER

He's making me vom. We gotta go.

ELIAS

Working on it. Can you ball me up and roll me out the exit?

In Elias' pocket, one of those COASTER SIZED BUZZER DEALIES GOES OFF. Nick starts looking around for it.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

My sundae's ready.

Carter grabs the buzzer and TOSSES it.

CARTER

Get to the car. I'll improv!

Elias nods and SCAMPERS OUT, using "Fozzie's Big Book of Sidesplitting Jokes" to hide his mug. Nick almost double takes, but... order's up! Carter's boothside, ready to serve.

NICK  
Carter. You work here?

CARTER  
First shift. I was just checking  
the table fixings, before I check  
your *fixin's*!

Carter and Nick YUK IT UP.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. THE PANCAKERY - PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

Elias DUCKS against the side of the Trans Am. He watches the  
new adventures of Carter and Nick on his PHONE.

CARTER  
How's your meal?

NICK  
It'd be better with Elias.

CARTER  
We could pancake art his face. Then  
he is the meal.

NICK  
Can the batter like capture his  
soul? That's what I miss the most.

CARTER  
Sure. I'll make ya a Kodiak moment.

Carter checks the parking lot. Elias signals to wrap it up.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
Oh, my shift's over. Bye!

He hightails it, leaving Nick with an extra side of forlorn.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

Carter turns out of the parking lot. "I Can't Go For That (No  
Can Do)" CONTINUES on the cassingle player. Elias hits up a  
bag of NERDS Gummy Clusters Very Berry, very relieved.

CARTER  
So still cocky as fuck, but somehow  
I feel bad for the guy.

ELIAS  
Bad enough to break the spell,  
right?



Elias watches more of NICK'S LIVE. The sad is getting sadder.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

He usually only makes a face like  
that when he's mewling.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Trans Am passes a sign: "WELCOME TO ASBURY PARK".

EXT. ASBURY PARK TOWN SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER

Our boys pass the COURTHOUSE, some MOM-AND-POP SHOPS and one MOM-AND-MOM SHOP. Representation matters, even in establishing shots.

They near the PARAMOUNT THEATER -- featuring a DANNY DEVITO STATUE out front. Historically accurate? Look, you create the world you want to see and this world contains a Danny DeVito statue.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Carter eyes lock on the statue. He's enraptured.

CARTER

Finally, a statue I don't want to  
behead.

He BRAKES HARD and PULLS OVER. Wouldn't you? Elias' Gummy Clusters SPILL all over the car.

EXT. ASBURY PARK TOWN SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER

Carter takes a SELFIE with the Danny DeVito statue. Again, wouldn't you?

His boots share screen time with a plaque: "YOUR HOMETOWN, OUR TOWN'S CROWN. IT'S ALWAYS DANNY IN ASBURY PARK".

Elias watches on. He's somewhere between angsty and antsy.

CARTER

Can we keep him? Can we keep him?

ELIAS

No. We can't keep stopping for  
hijinks.

Carter opens his mouth to comeback. Elias is quicker.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Or lowjinks. C'mon, Carter. We've  
gotta get to Nashville.

CARTER

Why? What's the rush? Spell gonna self-destruct?

ELIAS

Maybe! You been seeing Nick's live?

CARTER

No. You told me to stop using my phone while driving.

ELIAS

Take a looksy. He's getting worse.

CARTER

Worse than wanting your soul in pancake batter?

They both gaze into Elias' crystal ball/phone.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NICK'S ROOM - SAME TIME (APP VIDEO)

Nick cozies up with a pancake art... sculpture of Elias! Tonza pancakes Frankenstein-ed together, each making up a different piece of Elias. Not too off-model, with attention clearly going into his eyes and fragile wrists.

CARTER

Is that... you?

ELIAS

He calls it his Elias Manncake. The syrup? His tears.

Nick is going through it.

NICK

I can do a calorie deficit, but an Elias deficit? Not built for it. Chat, who else has an Elias deficit?

Hearts FLUTTER UP the live. The Nickiases are strong with this one. Nick attempts to hold pancake Elias closer, causing his pancake head to FALL.

CARTER

Okay, I'm seen enough.

They take one last look at the statue, then Danny DeVi-go back to the Trans Am.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - NIGHT

Elias scans the distance made on his phone's map app. Uh-oh.

ELIAS

We've moved maybe a NERDS pebble at most, not even a gummy cluster.

Carter peeks at the navigation.

CARTER

Ah, why are we going through Ohio? That's way longer. Don't tell me it's 'cause "Glee" was set there.

ELIAS

You know, maybe we are making good time.

Elias tries to be slick and retrieves one of the escaped Gummy Clusters. He waits until he thinks Carter isn't looking and POPS it in his gob. Carter saw everything.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - LATER

THE SAME MUSIC continues to music. Carter *really* can't go for that, no can do. He EJECTS Darryl Hall & John Oates (they don't like being called Hall & Oates).

CARTER

We've gotta get another song in here.

He fusses in the center console and FINDS ANOTHER CASSINGLE. Elias TAKES it, embarrassed. He pockets it.

ELIAS

No, that's okay.

CARTER

Why? Blank tape? I'll take a blank tape. Pop it.

ELIAS

It's just... that's my demo cassingle.

CARTER

Your what?

ELIAS

My demo cassingle, okay? If a song sounds good in a car, it's good. I've only played it to Nick and --

CARTER  
What's this? Nick can hear one of  
your songs and I can't?

ELIAS  
Please. His taste has lovesick all  
over it. I care about what you  
think. What you really think.

Can't argue with that! Carter smirks, loving the ego stroke.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Trans Am BLASTS past a sign: "OHIO WELCOMES YOU TO THE  
HEART OF IT ALL!"

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

Elias looks around, putting the oh in Ohio.

ELIAS  
Arguably worth the extra miles.

Carter dips his finger in the ashtray, then rubs his teeth.

CARTER  
This'll keep me going.

ELIAS  
Never put the syrup in.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - LATER

Carter's ashtray "concoction" is indeed keeping him going. We  
catch our playful pair mid-shenanigan.

Elias closes his eyes and turns away from the dashboard  
clock.

ELIAS  
10:17 pm.

Elias looks back: 10:17 PM. Right on time.

CARTER  
How are you doing that?

ELIAS  
Internal clock autism.

CARTER  
They've got an autism for  
everything, huh?

TIME JUMP

Elias goes for one more round against the dashboard clock.

ELIAS

11:58 pm.

They clock the clock: 11:58 PM.

CARTER

Okay, you alone are why we don't need AI.

TIME JUMP

Elias. Closed eyes. Full heart. Can't lose.

ELIAS

2:02 am.

Carter doesn't even need to check, but does anyway: 2:02 AM. He gives a look at Elias. Late much?

CARTER

I know I said if I fall asleep at the wheel don't wake me, but I can't go out like this. Couldn't do that to you or my paint huffing.

He searches the road ahead for some proverbial hay to hit.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - NIGHT

Terry's trusty Trans Am trundles towards the town's TRAVELODGE. Carter makes his pitch.

CARTER

Turn in at the Travelodge?

ELIAS

Let's elevate the material.

Carter takes the note and keeps on truckin'.

EXT. HAMPTON INN - NIGHT

The biggest cinderblock on the block. The Trans Am pulls up. Elias takes a look out the window. Exercises his option.

ELIAS

No notes.

He slips out and slips on Nick's "Nightmare Before Christmas" jacket. The dreamboat dreamcoat! Carter plays fashion police.

CARTER  
You stole his look?

ELIAS  
Close. We did a dress as each other  
video and swapped jackets. Said if  
I ever felt lost, to remember he's  
right here.

Elias PATS a Jack Skellington head on the front.

CARTER  
You wanna light it up? Pregame the  
spell break?

ELIAS  
No, it's comfy.

Carter studies Elias. Feeling out if he's still got feels.

CARTER  
It's comfy or *he's* comfy? I'm not  
turning back halfway 'cause you've  
changed your mind.

ELIAS  
No turning back, only turning  
front.

Elias leads the way in to the Inn. Carter stays skeptical.

INT. HAMPTON INN - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Horrid green walls that would've paired nicely with late '90s  
clear tech. Behind the front desk is HARRIET BOOTH, 20, no  
media training on a press tour energy. She regards Elias like  
an old chum.

HARRIET  
Oh my god. You're here! How are you  
here?! I love your work!

ELIAS  
My work?

She lets the work speak for itself and scrolls through her  
Untitled Video Looping App FEED: Nickias. Nickias. Best of  
Mike Myers in "The Cat in the Hat" countdown video. Nickias.

HARRIET  
And love this jacket. Right from  
Nick's cold brew 'fit. My favorite  
episode, until you got hard  
launched. Nickias is the peak era.

ELIAS  
I've been tryna push Elick.

CARTER  
The fans have spoken.

HARRIET  
I can't believe I'm seeing  
you in person. It's like I've  
gone from parasocial to...  
social.

ELIAS  
Social.

Harriet takes one more look at Elias. That settles it.

HARRIET (CONT'D)  
These rooms tonight? Comped.

Carter looks over to a lighting fixture he finds neat.

CARTER  
I kinda like this lighting fixture.

HARRIET  
Comped.

INT. HAMPTON INN - DELUXE SUITE - NIGHT

Florid green walls that look all the more spectacular in  
comped lighting. Carter walks in, cradling his prized  
lighting fixture. Some drywall DUSTS the floor as he moves.

CARTER  
Oh good, a safe.

Carter empties out MULTIPLE WEAPONS, including but not  
limited to a taser, brass knuckles and a switchblade. He  
secures them and types in a combo.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
(off Elias' look)  
What? You don't remember texting me  
why I was running late and I told  
you I was packing?

Elias, supremely checkmated, walks to the KITCHENETTE. A  
FRUIT BASKET with an accompanying NOTE bewitch him.

ELIAS  
"Dear Elias, I hope your stay at  
the Hampton Inn Lancaster is as  
delightful as you are. Your  
friends, Harriet Booth and the  
Hampton Inn Lancaster, a subsidiary  
of Hilton Worldwide. P.S.  
(MORE)

ELIAS (CONT'D)

You probably thought I put the mid  
in midwest, offering you up a fruit  
basket. If you want some candy in  
the *Nick* of time, pull the banana."

Elias immediately PULLS the banana. In Rube Goldberg style,  
an apple DROPS from the basket and ROLLS down the counter. It  
HITS a lineup of mini cereal boxes, that FALL LIKE DOMINOES.  
The last cereal box KNOCKS DOWN a bottled water that FLIES  
and LANDS on a foot switch, TURNING ON A LAMP. The HEAT from  
the LIGHTBULB causes a dangling piece of TWINE to CATCH FIRE.

CARTER

Should that be doing that?

Elias and Carter FOLLOW the BURNING TWINE LINE into the  
BEDROOM, where it SNAPS, CRACKLES AND POPS OPEN a CEILING  
TRAPDOOR. A mound of Mounds bars DROP onto the king bed.

After a beat, a glossy 8.5" x 11" of Nickias "Forrest Gump"  
feather FLOATS and lands on top of the Mounds mound. Harriet  
has crudely Photoshopped herself in to the photo.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Fanned up! Likely hidden camera.

ELIAS

Better check our hidden camera.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. NICK'S ROOM - SAME TIME (APP VIDEO)

FLOATING up the CHAT Nick sees: *eliasmann joined*.

NICK (ON PHONE)

Elias joined. He got to Alaska!

Nick TWISTS and POPS a CONFETTI CANNON.

ELIAS

Said I was visiting my parents.

CARTER

They're in *Antartica*. Wouldn't --

Nick prepares to launch another CONFETTI CANNON. It ain't  
popping. Confused, he turns it around. It POPS in his face.

CARTER (CONT'D)

So he doesn't know the difference.



ELIAS

It felt more believable.  
Antartica's like an eighteen hour  
flight. Didn't want too much dream  
logic in my cover.

NICK

(not the broadcast live)  
"Go live with him." He's in Alaska.

Nick runs that sentence back. Catches the context clues.

NICK (CONT'D)

Oh, go live with him. Okay.

Elias picks up a Mounds bar and starts blotting flop sweat.  
He looks at Carter and chills. He can do it with him here.

ELIAS

Which wall looks the most Alaskan?

Carter has a wave of inspo. He ZIPS to the fridge ice-maker.

Nick clicks Elias' profile and TOTAL REQUESTS LIVE. Elias  
does a quick adjustment to his bangs and ACCEPTS.

NICK

Baby! How's Alaska?

ICE-CUBES start DROPPING on Elias. He looks up. Carter is the  
iceman cometh. Elias starts vamping improv at the DOWNPOUR.

ELIAS

It's hailing? Melting ice-caps.  
It's hailing melted ice-caps.

NICK

Fuckass sun. Only tight with moon  
now.

CARTER

(his best Elias' Dad)  
Elias Leslie Mann! Who're you on  
the phone to? It's 3:00 am!

Elias tries harder than an "SNL" cast member not to "break".

CARTER (CONT'D)

(his best Elias' Mom)  
Honey, he's on Nick time. Time is  
nothing when they are together!

Nick reaches his hands out like he wants uppies.

NICK  
Ooh, your parents! Can I see them?

ELIAS  
Ah, they're camera shy.

Nick SHRUGS and looks back to the CHAT.

NICK  
"I have screenshots that could lead  
to the breakup of you and Elias."

Elias' gut drops harder than the beat in his demo cassage.

NICK (CONT'D)  
"He's on a roadtrip with Carter."  
Carter just quit his job. Why would  
he be on a roadtrip?

Carter blots flop sweat with *multiple* Mounds bars.

NICK (CONT'D)  
(wrong live)  
"Get the tea. Go live with them."  
Why would I wanna live with someone  
who's a meanie to me and Elias?

ELIAS  
(intentionally wrong live)  
Yeah, they shouldn't live with us.

NICK  
Oh, go live with them. Sure.

Nick PUSHES A LIVE REQUEST and KYLE appears in a newly formed  
Brady Bunchian box below Nick! He greets his contemporaries.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. KYLE'S ROOM - SAME TIME (APP VIDEO)

Kyle is amped on spite and Nick's bone structure.

KYLE  
Hey Nick. Liar.

NICK  
That's enough on Elias. Not a liar.

KYLE  
Oh really? Here's that screenshot.  
Carter's stories. Five hours ago.

Kyle dramatically flips open his MacBook lid to reveal:  
Carter's SELFIE WITH THE DANNY DEVITO STATUE and ELIAS' ARM!

KYLE (CONT'D)  
Okay, now look here. Edge of frame.  
Elias' arm. He was wearing that  
sweater at school!

ELIAS  
I wasn't wearing that. I'm wearing  
a crew jacket from "The Nightmare  
Before Christmas". See?

KYLE  
You're wearing it *under* the jacket!  
Take it off.

Elias starts reading a new "comment".

ELIAS  
"Carter should go live to clear his  
name and defend Elicks' honor."

Carter KEYCARDS his way through to his CONNECTING SUITE.

KYLE  
No one even wrote that!

Boom. Carter's SQUARE'S UP and he's ready to square up.

CARTER  
Hey, Kyle? You wanna fuck off?  
Camped out on Nick's live at 3:00  
am? I'd say touch grass, but that  
would be cruel to the grass.

KYLE  
I know you're together. Elias, your  
digital footprints are nowhere near  
Alaska.

CARTER  
Not in the same room, I can tell  
you that.

Carter SPINS like a Sky Dancer toy, furthering his receipts  
to CVS levels. Not a drip of Elias in his 360 shot.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
Nick, do you see Elias here?

NICK  
Nah, you're good.

KYLE

It'll all come out in the wash.

CARTER

What wash?! Rinse all you want.

NICK

Yeah, tell him what he'll find in the wash, Elias.

ELIAS

Only that our love is magic.

CARTER

Darn tootin'. He's with Nick and you can't stand it. Go watch their videos again.

ELIAS

We saw you bookmarked them.

CARTER

They see the bookmarks!

Kyle CUTS his live, plotting most foul. Elias and Carter share a look between boxes, beaming at their tag-teaming. Nick's too busy looking at his own square to notice.

ELIAS

Nick, I better go. The "fuckass sun" only goes away for two hours here and --

Carter stays stagecrafty and LIGHTS OUT the joint.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

-- it just went away.

NICK

I love you! Elias time for life.

He KISSES Elias Manncake, then his camera lens, making us...

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. HAMPTON INN - BREAKFAST AREA - MORNING

A pancake machine FEEDS out a fourth pancake onto Carter's plate. He's fallen for it.

CARTER

Harriet'll comp it.

He pulls the pancake machine out from the outlet and DUMPS it down on their table. Elias picks up a baguette and uses it as a yeast filled hype man.

ELIAS  
Now let's break some bread and  
break a spell!

Elias SNAPS his baguette poorly.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Played out better in my head.

Harriet walks past the table. She avoids eye contact so bad, that it almost has the Streisand effect. Hmm.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Hey, thanks for helping me whale on  
Kyle last night.

CARTER  
Ain't shit. We tore his receipts up  
and pissed on 'em.

ELIAS  
If it was just me and Kyle, I'd  
panic and my brain would short  
circuit, but us, together -- I  
didn't even know that you rode for  
me like that.

CARTER  
I've rode for you since December 1.

ELIAS  
December 1?

CARTER  
That's the date you transferred to  
our school, yeah?

ELIAS  
Never knew you had some date autism  
in you, too.

CARTER  
Yeah, I first noticed it June 4.

Elias and Carter share a look they've never shared before.

ELIAS  
Better check the baby monitor.

He fires up NICK'S LIVE.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. NICK'S CAR - MOVING - DAY (APP VIDEO)

Nick drives. He's eerily locked in.

ELIAS

Looks like he's driving to work.  
Those gua sha tools don't pay for  
themselves.

INT. HAMPTON INN - LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Elias and Carter go to check-out. Harriet? Still checked out.

ELIAS

Hey Harriet!

HARRIET

Hey.

ELIAS

Something wrong?

HARRIET

Nick's live.

ELIAS

Did he ignore a comment you wrote?

HARRIET

Yeah. I even drafted it in my Notes  
app first, to make it perfect  
and... you're not in Alaska, you're  
in the Hampton Inn Lancaster!

Oh shit.

ELIAS

So there's a, um reason --

HARRIET

There's no good reason to lie to  
Nick Sella! So, I prayed on it and  
then I went to church. My version  
of church. The Nickias subreddit.

Harriet shows the r/Nickias subreddit page off her phone.

ELIAS

We have a subreddit? How? We've  
been dating for like three days.

HARRIET

Four! Anyway, I wasn't gonna snitch, but this other redditor said I should do it.

She reveals the redditor in question: notkylenast. That tool!

HARRIET (CONT'D)

He also got an affidavit from Mr. Heckerling, confirming you wore that sweater in homeroom yesterday.

ELIAS

So... you've told Nick?

HARRIET

Maybe. I'm not going to tell you just yet. Not until you've paid up.

ELIAS

Paid up?

HARRIET

I don't comp liars.

Harriet starts tallying up the total. Elias sinks. Oh boy.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Let's see. One lighting fixture. Drywall repair. Crowbar handling maintenance fee. Deluxe suite times two. Rube Goldberg machine fruit basket times two.

CARTER

I didn't even use mine!

HARRIET

Minibar. Those cookies they only have at DoubleTree. Don't know how they got in.

CARTER

(to Elias, explaining)  
Tunnel system.

HARRIET

Wifi.

She sees one more charge to ring up. Elias and Carter freak.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

And one, sorry, two pay-per-viewings of "Dicked: For Wood".

CARTER

I had already seen part one.  
(full Ebert to Elias)  
Less broomstick play than you'd  
think.

Harriet does a bit more bibbidi-bobbidi-beeping on her computer, calculating the grand total. She turns her monitor around: \$12,450.32!

HARRIET

How are we paying?

She SLIDES the bar on one of those old school credit card imprinters. Getting it warmed up. Elias and Carter form a huddle. Making some sense out of the incensed cents.

CARTER

You think she's doing a bit?

ELIAS

I don't know. She seems pretty  
serious with her click-clacking.

They look over as Harriet does another CLICK-CLACK SLIDE on the credit card imprinter.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Maybe there's a local talent  
contest we can enter.

ELIAS' POV

His eyes land on a nearby bulletin board and poster: "SEARCH FOR THE STARS TALENT CONTEST. \$12,450.32 GRAND PRIZE!"

ANGLE ON ELIAS

He reads the rest of the copy.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

And it was yesterday. You got  
twelve thousand, four hundred fifty  
dollars and thirty-two cents?

Harriet leans over the counter. Loving the theatricality.

HARRIET

There is one more option.

ELIAS

Pay in four?



HARRIET  
Pay in Nick.

INT. GOLD TRANS AM - MOVING - DAY

Carter SCREECHES out of the parking lot. Harriet rides front passenger, full villainess. She turns to Elias in the back.

HARRIET  
When I meet Nick Sella, I'm gonna  
treat him right. Unlike you.

ELIAS  
Harriet. Fan to fan --

HARRIET  
"Fan to fan"? Please! You've proven  
you're a fake fan. That's why I did  
what I did.

Elias tries to untwist her twisted logic.

ELIAS  
And what did you... did?

HARRIET  
I made the subreddit proud. I told  
Nick. Now *that's* a comment he  
couldn't ignore. An undeniable,  
shouty premise with a neat hook.  
Backed it up with some pics from  
the hidden camera in your suite.

Elias deflates. Not this.

CARTER  
I knew there was a hidden camera!

Harriet swivels back around to Carter.

HARRIET  
But you keep driving like you're  
driving and I'll say I was lying  
and I photoshopped you in the  
Hampton Inn Lancaster deluxe suite  
for clout. Just get me to his  
house.

Harriet SINGS "Part of Your World" (Harriet's Version) from  
"The Little Mermaid". Pitchy, but you can't deny the emotion.

HARRIET (CONT'D)  
*"I wanna be where the 'fit checks  
are."*

Major apologies to Howard Ashman. Harriet cuts to the chorus.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

*"Up where he vlogs, up where he  
jogs. Up where he streams all day  
until one. Pondering me. Wish I  
could be, part of Nick's wor --"*

Carter deliberately swerves into a guardrail and THE CAR  
CRASHES. Any remaining Gummy Clusters get their shit rocked.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

They all get out out of the Trans Am. Totally totaled.

HARRIET

You ruined my "I Want" song!

CARTER

It was already ruined.

Elias assesses the damage. He starts stewing.

CARTER (CONT'D)

And I mighta ruined something else  
in that car. Your career.

Harriet blinks. Puzzled. Carter gives her the missing pieces.

CARTER (CONT'D)

I went on the Hilton Honors app,  
because you weren't being  
honorable. Half why I crashed.

HARRIET

Hilton Honors...

CARTER

Yeah, 'cause the Hampton Inn  
Lancaster is a subsidiary of Hilton  
Worldwide. Your corporate office  
and I did a li'l live chat. A  
hidden camera in a hotel room?  
Vehicular imprisonment? Shitting on  
a Disney Renaissance classic? Your  
jobless behavior might just make  
you jobless.

HARRIET

Okay, the crazy in me does not see  
the crazy in you.

(to Elias)

Or you.

Harriet splits. She takes her phone out. CALLS Mom.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Mom? I need you to come pick me up.

She starts walking back into town as Elias goes to town.

ELIAS

Why'd you do that? The car's ruined. We're ruined!

CARTER

Hey, it was fight-or-flight or yes, and! I improvised. I was helping.

ELIAS

"Helping"?! We're here because of your helping! Don't try to help me.

Carter hits his mint vape, trying to take the edge off.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Oh, and that's *really* gonna help. Gimme that. Robot cigar.

Elias THROWS DOWN the vape. It barely makes a dint.

CARTER

I wanted to stay at the Travelodge! Good, salt of the earth people work there. No one who would've had you or Nick on their feed. Trust!

Elias shows NICK'S LIVE to Carter.

ELIAS

Well I just *checked* Nick's feed. He's not driving to work, he's driving to us!

CARTER

Let him drive to us. We have like seven hours on him. Seven hours to break the spell. All he knows is that we stayed the night at a sketch-ass hotel in Ohio. He doesn't know we're going to Nashville. How's he gonna find us?

Elias has never been less down to clown. He goes further.

ELIAS

I wish you never leaned in on that train.

Oof. Carter's heart rocks. He's liked this ride. A lot.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

You should've just pretended not to see me. That's what you do when you see someone you barely know in public, you pretend not to see them!

CARTER

But I do see you. I've been seeing you since December 1. Remember?

Elias slumps against the Trans Am. Over it.

ELIAS

Let's just go home.

Carter revs back up. Not over it!

CARTER

You are relentless. You wanted Nick so bad that you made it happen.

ELIAS

I don't want to want everything so bad, but I do!

CARTER

Why do you stop at Nick, though? Why don't you try putting that energy into other pockets of your life? You say you write songs? I haven't heard one. I think that cassage really is blank!

ELIAS

You can play it. I don't care anymore. Anyway, it could be shit.

CARTER

It could be a smash.

Elias softens. He can't ignore Carter still rooting for him.

CARTER (CONT'D)

And, you're right. I did get you into this, but I'm going to get you out of it, too.

Carter takes out his phone and OPENS Uber. He TYPES "Nashville" into the "Where to?" box.

ELIAS

Wait. You wanna Uber it? That's going to cost a lot.

CARTER

I know.

ELIAS

No really, it's going to cost like a thousand dollars.

CARTER

I know.

Carter steps closer to Elias. Meaning it.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Do you want to break this spell? Get your life back, get Nick's life back?

ELIAS

Yeah.

CARTER

Then we have to commit to the bit. This is still all part of the bit.

Elias has been bitten. Slightly. He's still pissy, okay?

CARTER (CONT'D)

You look out for... Jen in a blue Prius. I've got a demo to blast.

Carter opens the driver's seat door and it FALLS OFF.

INT. ELIAS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Terry and Reilly are glue gunning their outfits for Chappell Roan. They both smoke from pipes. For funsies.

TERRY

More Pop Rocks?

REILLY

I'm okay.

Without missing a beat, Terry takes out bag of Pop Rocks and tops up his chamber. He makes a smoke ring that CRACKLES. Reilly rhinestones her way around a collar.

REILLY (CONT'D)  
 (re: rhinestones)  
 You think this will get Chappell to  
 notice me?

TERRY  
 I notice you. Isn't that enough?

REILLY  
 No.

TERRY  
 Well, I see where we stand.

Before this frostiness can become permafrost, Terry's phone  
 RINGS.

TERRY (CONT'D)  
 It's Elias!

He obviously ANSWERS IT.

SPLIT-SCREEN WITH:

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME TIME

Elias stands behind the Trans Am, trying real hard to restore  
 equilibrium. Carter's getting his life to Elias' cassingle.

TERRY  
 Elias!

ELIAS  
 Hey Grandpa.

TERRY  
 Did you eat the acid? Didn't take  
 you for a day-tripper.

REILLY  
 No, his line delivery of "hey  
 Grandpa" was too muted. Whimsical  
 quandary?

ELIAS  
 Emotional cataclysm.

Terry and Reilly GASP. They inch closer to the receiver.

TERRY  
 Who're you cataclyzing with?

ELIAS  
 Carter. I even yelled at him.

TERRY  
So you told someone how you really  
feel?

ELIAS  
Yeah. I didn't know I could do  
that. Feel kinda sick.

REILLY  
Classic case of emotion sickness.

TERRY  
No, it's good for you. Think of the  
songs. Can you think of the songs?

As Elias plans his track listing, the BLUE PRIUS PULLS UP.

ELIAS  
Oh, the Uber's here! Blue Prius.

REILLY  
(proudly)  
I taught him how to read cars.

TERRY  
An Uber? Where's Goldie?

ELIAS  
Um. In Lancaster, Ohio in a ditch.

TERRY  
How bad is she?

Elias SENDS a PIC. Our costumers inspect said PIC. Yikers.

REILLY  
Oh, she is *botched*.

Elias pulls his junk out of the trunk.

ELIAS  
I should go. Jen might drive off.

TERRY  
Better to be driven off than driven  
on.

And on that note, Terry HANGS UP and our SCREEN DESPLITS.

JEN FOX, 77, blunt and likes blunts, ROLLS her WINDOW DOWN.

JEN  
Hey dudes. Hop in.

Carter retrieves one last item from the wreck: the demo cassingle. He comes at Elias with a Pitchfork... online music magazine style review.

CARTER

Your song's really good, even if I  
know it's about Nick.

The "dudes" haul their baggage and *baggage* over to the Prius.

INT. JEN'S PRIUS - MOVING - DAY

Jen JAMS to "White Girl" by X. She sees that the jamming ain't reaching the back. She CRANKS IT. Still nothing. Zilch.

JEN

You know, I might've smoked my  
breakfast, but I can see somethin'  
ain't right with you two.

If you squint a little, Elias and Carter actually do look like they're in couples therapy. Neither wants to go first.

ELIAS

We're having some... creative  
differences.

Jen UNCRANKS IT.

JEN

Yeah, no shittin'. Look, we got six  
hours to Nashville. Ya wanna suffer  
in silence the whole way or just  
part of the way?

Elias instantly can't take the tension. He pipes up.

ELIAS

So there's this really bad spell...  
ing bee. Bad like the difficulty.

Carter clocks the improv. He waits for the yes to and.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Carter's... my coach.

CARTER

Coach Carter. Like the movie.

JEN

I only watch my bootleg of  
"Clerks".



ELIAS

He showed me the sign up sheet, but  
I'm the one who signed it and I  
never should have.

JEN

Jesus, you're going this nuts about  
putting a buncha letters in the  
right order?

ELIAS

I just don't know what'll happen if  
we lose.

JEN

He a good coach?

Elias looks at Carter. Really looks at him.

ELIAS

Yeah.

JEN

He a good speller?

Carter really looks at Elias.

CARTER

So good we have to get to Nashville  
about it.

JEN

Have you lost yet?

ELIAS

No.

JEN

Then don't break the band up before  
you even get there!

The boys in the band take a look at each other. She's right.

JEN (CONT'D)

That was heavy. Might need to smoke  
my lunch as well.

CARTER

I'm happy for you to hotbox.

This dream blunt rotation settle in for the trip. Jen CRANKS  
BACK UP "White Girl" as we BEGIN MONTAGE SEQUENCE:

-- Jen motions for Elias and Carter to bunch up closer.

-- Jen RACES a BIKER GANG. She clears them effortlessly.

-- Elias and Carter share a gaze. That was pretty cool.

-- At a BUC-EE'S, Carter and Elias recklessly spin a rack of sunglasses, then a rack of binoculars. They pick pairs out.

-- Back in the PRIUS, Jen tells a ZINGER that CRACKS UP Elias and Carter.

-- Our trippin' trio have now swapped outfits.

-- They've swapped back 'fits and now EAT soft-serve cones.

-- Elias looks out at the road ahead, living out the "girl who is going to be okay" meme.

-- Jen DRIVES DOWN LOWER BROADWAY, with the WINDOWS DOWN.

-- Elias and Carter are thrilled. Nashville? They are in you!

-- Jen PULLS UP right outside the NASHVILLE POST OFFICE.

END MONTAGE SEQUENCE

EXT. DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE - DAY

Jen does a big stretch. Elias and Carter pull out their baggage, now free of *their* baggage! The power of a roadtrip and Jen Fox.

JEN

Okay, go K-I-C-K A-S-S at that spelling bee!

ELIAS

Jen, wait. There isn't a spelling bee and --

JEN

And?!

ELIAS

And it's not taking place at the Post Office, because they both deal with letters.

JEN

So all those words we practiced --

ELIAS

An elaborate R-U-S-E. R-U mad?

JEN

Not yet. Still a little zooted. Why are you really here? On the run?

ELIAS

On the hunt.

CARTER

Someone ruined Elias' life and we're here to fuck him up.

JEN

What'd this asshole do?

ELIAS

He made someone love me.

JEN

Oh, so he's a matchmaker. I get it.

ELIAS

There's more, but it sounds fake.

JEN

Say no more. What's the plan? Throw a match on the matchmaker? I got some lighter fluid in my trunk.

ELIAS

Hmm. Third degree burns for some third degree yearns? No, better not.

CARTER

Yeah, I can't miss graduation for a felony charge. My 'fit's too good.

JEN

Fine. Let's all just shit on Jen! I'm getting lunch.

Now's she mad! Jen collects her stuff as NOSILY as she can.

ELIAS

Well seeing as you're already pissed and your car's just gonna be parked here, would you mind if we used it for our stakeout?

(points to Post Office)

The matchmaker's PO Box is in there.

Jen forks over her keys to Elias. She adds some fine print.

JEN

Alright, you can have Petey until  
I'm back from Monell's. Only reason  
I accepted this ride. I hear their  
corn pudding is delicious.

Jen sets forth for Monell's. She nods farewell to Elias,  
Carter and especially Petey the Prius.

INT. PETEY THE PRIUS - LATER

Carter sits on his own. Kinda glumming it. He peeps Elias  
returning with a fresh bag of take-out and joyfuls right up.

Elias gets in and WE SEE his bag of delectable delicacies is  
from seeming Raising Cane's spin-off: "Raising the Steaks" --  
logo clearly visible for freeze-frame gag purposes.

ELIAS

Ah, the steak out stake out.

He RAISES a steak out of the Raising the Steaks bag. Digs in.

CARTER

Did you only get that so you could  
say "ah, the steak out stake out,"  
then pull up your take-out plate to  
reveal a steak?

ELIAS

Yeah.

CARTER

Good, I wanted that.

ELIAS

Now how can we get Alfie here? He's  
been swerving my DMs. I even tried  
texting "STOP" to the hextline,  
that didn't work.

CARTER

Why don't we just call Alfie up?

ELIAS

We don't have his number.

CARTER

Don't we? Open the hextline.

Elias obliges and finds his hext messages to (646) 238-2910.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Call it.

Elias CALLS IT.

SPLIT-SCREEN WITH:

INT. ALFIE'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Alfie tops up a pipe with Pop Rocks. Must be a new trend. He feels his phone A-BUZZIN' and ANSWERS. Carter was right!

ALFIE

Hello?

Elias is shocked at this being Alfie's legit phone number. Carter nudges him to keep on gabbing. Elias puts on A VOICE.

ELIAS

(his best USPS employee)  
Hello, ah, this is the Post Office  
of Nashville. We're calling about  
your Present Offering Box?

Elias winces at his creaky set-up. Alfie demurs on the offer.

ALFIE

I'm a little piped up right now.

ELIAS

But it's overflowing!

ALFIE

Any good shit? I'll only come if  
there's good shit.

ELIAS

There's *great* shit! I'm peeking and  
seeing, um, ooh, a gift card to  
Wingstop and GameStop.

Carter's got just the pitch to seal the deal. He TAKES Elias' phone. He DROPS IT and PICKS IT UP -- all part of the grift.

CARTER

(stressin' USPS employee)  
Ian, are you okay? God, he's down  
bad. He just tripped over a stack  
of curated PR packages!

Alfie SPIT-TAKES some CRACKLING PIPE SMOKE. Sold!

ALFIE

I'll be right there!

He HANGS UP. Elias and Carter look satisfied. Truly gifted.

I/E. PETEY THE PRIUS/DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE - A LITTLE LATER

Elias and Carter peer through their Buc-ee's binoculars, looking like F.B.I. agents. A pair of cooped up Dale Coopers.

CARTER  
Is that him?

Elias focuses in on Carter's "perp".

ELIAS  
No. That's another tween with sass.

They put down their binoculars. Over it.

CARTER  
I mean, while we wait, would you...  
want to sign my yearbook?

He takes out his yearbook. Sweetly vulnerable for our Carty.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
Not to be lame on main or anything.

ELIAS  
How'd you get this early?  
(doing the math himself)  
You're on the yearbook club.

CARTER  
I like to control my narrative.

Carter opens to a glossy editorial spread: "CARTER BLANCHE".  
Elias runs his finger over the photos and text. Impressed.

ELIAS  
Embossed.

CARTER  
Cig for a sig?

He offers Elias a "cig" from a pack of Parliaments. Elias takes it and the yearbook. Carter CLICKS a clicky pen as Elias FLIPS to the blank signature pages. The weight of the blank page gets to Elias. Know the feeling!

ELIAS  
I'm getting page fright.

Elias closes his eyes. He gets in a flow state and WRITES...

ELIAS (CONT'D)

"Hi Carter, imagine a beautifully crafted, emotionally layered sentence here. Intentional space left here for the teardrop splash zone -- EM."

CARTER

No notes.

(then)

Have you ever put our initials together?

ELIAS

EMCH?

Carter uses the other blank page to WRITE IT OUT.

CARTER

"CHEM". Some might say we have it.

Carter and Elias share a look -- are these feelings?! Why the only thing that could break this tension is Alfie. DOOR SLAM!

ELIAS

There he is!

A hyped Alfie SKIPS from his Infiniti QX4 to the Post Office.

Elias and Carter BUST OUT of Petey. Elias SLIDES over the hood, then FALLS VIOLENTLY. He woozily gets up, ready to scrap or at least mildly confront. Carter pulls him back.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

(lemme at 'em!)

What are you doing? He's right there!

CARTER

Yeah, and he could run off and then we'd lose him forever! No, we've gotta pull up at his house.

ELIAS

His house?! We can't just go --

REVEAL Carter TOSSING his Fucci bag and then *himself* into the back of Alfie's QX4. He finds a floral print sherpa jacket to nestle under. Popping out like Thing, Carter's hand beckons for Elias to join him.

Elias SNATCHES his overnight bag and hauls ass to the QX4. Before he can get to tossing, he spies Alfie leaving the Post Office -- hype levels severely depleted!

ALFIE

Pfft. A "crank call"? I don't even know what a crank call is!

Elias panics and RUSHES back to the safety of Petey.

Alfie HOPS in the driver's seat. Carter peers out from under the sherpa. Crap. Alfie DRIVES OFF!

Elias sits down on his overnight bag. Woe is him. His dark seconds of the soul are blasted when he looks up and sees...

Jen Fox! Now feeling chipper after her meal at Monell's. She beams down at Elias.

JEN

Hey baby, you hungry?

She holds out some corn pudding.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PETEY THE PRIUS - MOVING - MOMENTS LATER

Elias stress eats corn pudding as Jen GRANDS HER TURISMO.

JEN

And you're sure we can't ride him off the road?

ELIAS

Yes! Carter's in there too!

JEN

I'd be careful. You know I'd be careful.

Elias TEXTS CARTER A LOCATION PIN: *Pin up! Jen's my ride!*

INT. ALFIE'S QX4 - MOVING - SAME TIME

Alfie turns quickly, still fried about his zero PR packages.

ALFIE

God it's hot!

He BLASTS THE A/C.

Meanwhile, back at the floral print sherpa jacket, Carter TEXTS ELIAS HIS LOCATION PIN: *he needs to be stopped.*

INT. PETEY THE PRIUS - MOVING - SAME TIME

Elias gets back Carter's LOCATION PIN. He directs Jen.



ELIAS

Okay, second lane to the right and  
straight on 'til Morning Street.

JEN

Got it!

INT. ALFIE'S QX4 - MOVING - SAME TIME

Carter watches Elias' LOCATION BLOB moves closer. He smiles.

ALFIE

God it's cold!

Wanting to lose his chill, Alfie PATS AROUND for the sherpa.  
He starts YANKING at it. Carter YANKS right back.

INT. PETEY THE PRIUS - MOVING - SAME TIME

Jen BLASTS HER HORN and the TRAFFIC SKITTERS away from Petey.

JEN

You've just gotta blast 'em.

What a road rager. She BLASTS her way into the FAST LANE.

INT. ALFIE'S QX4 - MOVING - SAME TIME

Alfie gives up on his sherpa, for a couple of seconds. Carter  
lets his guard down and WHOOSH! Alfie SWISHES UP the sherpa.  
He checks the back for any signs of snagform. Nothing.

REVEAL Carter hiding behind Alfie's seat, just out of view.

INT. PETEY THE PRIUS - MOVING - SAME TIME

Elias checks the LOCATION BLOBS. They're close!

INT. ALFIE'S QX4 - MOVING - SAME TIME

Carter checks the LOCATION BLOBS. They've become one!

EXT. MORNING STREET - CONTINUOUS

Elias and Carter lock eyes from their DUELING CARS. They  
playfully flip the bird at each other. How cute.

EXT. ALFIE'S HOUSE - LATER

A Trenta, two-story Colonial Revival, with extra *whip* as  
Alfie PARKS next to a Ford Maverick Lariat. He barrels out.  
The lingering heat has him heated. Extra heated. Heated+.

ALFIE

Ugh!

Fuckass sun. He FLINGS his sherpa on the driveway and heads inside. Carter waits a beat, then slinks out like a spy kid, Fucci bag included. He looks back at...

Petey the Prius, who BRAKES curbside. Elias steps out, overnight bag included. Jen's Uber app makes NEW RIDER DINGS.

JEN

Oh Jesus Christ. These beeps.

She checks the deets and accepts the ride.

JEN (CONT'D)

Okay, Elias, stop giving a shit and Carter, don't rock, punk rock!

She hits 'em with a sign of the horns and METALS OUT onto the road. Carter swipes TWO STARS on her Uber rating.

CARTER

(off Elias' heartbreak)  
I'm kidding, I'm kidding.

Carter swipes it all the way up to SIX STARS.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Yeah, betcha didn't know it could do that.

They step up to the porch. Showtime. Elias KNOCKS RHYTHMICALLY on the door. A call-and-response type sound.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Love that knock.

ELIAS

I like my knocks to have a setup and payoff.

CARTER

You sure my mom didn't teach you improv? That's her first class.

Alfie OPENS the door. Lightly marinates. He doublechecks a DM in his Untitled Queer Hook-Up App, then doublechecks Elias.

ALFIE

Hmm. Different than your picture.  
Not mad at it. Is this your man?

Alfie size queens up the pair. Elias puts a hard stop to it.

ELIAS  
We're not looking for a third.  
We're looking for a word.

Alfie lets them in, begrudgingly. Hate to be his mood ring.

INT. ALFIE'S HOUSE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Alfie leads Elias and Carter up the stairs. ALFIE'S DAD, 54, an ally, pops his head out from the KITCHEN. He looks to Alfie for some snappy exposition.

ALFIE  
Just some buds I met at the  
tailgate!

Elias and Carter "bud" up their movements.

INT. ALFIE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The room has had a considerable makeover. Boho-chic has been replaced with NoHo-bleak. Our production designer can figure out whatever the fuck that means. Alfie closes the door.

Elias and Carter share a look. Time to body him.

CARTER  
So! What's it all about, Alfie?  
Where'd you study? Got bitten by a  
witch? How'd you get your powers?

ALFIE  
My powers?

Elias DROPS THE SPELL VIDEO on Alfie's perplexed peepers.

ELIAS  
Spelt it dealt it. You made my  
maladaptive daydreams come true.  
Too true.

ALFIE  
Oh, I don't do those anymore. That  
was like ten rebrands ago? Yeah, I  
just did the whole "love spell"  
thing so I could put my song in the  
background of all the videos.

ELIAS  
(becoming "good cop")  
Really? You know, I do songwriting.

CARTER

And I do a mean disco fries! How  
can we stop the spell?

ALFIE

Praying? It's not my spell. I did  
come up with the hexes, so I could  
add you all to my mailing list.

A text alert LIGHTS UP Elias' phone.

ELIAS

Then who gave you the spell? The  
witch who bit you?

ALFIE

No. The estate sale I went to. You  
know what us gays are like with  
estate sales.

CARTER

Mmm-mmm, don't go and try and make  
this into the sisterhood of  
traveling rants. There is no  
sisterhood between us, only a spell  
that needs breaking.

ALFIE

Okay. There was this whole section  
velvet roped off with a sign, "Not  
For Sale". That's kind of on him.  
Like why even put it on display?  
I'm a seeker. I was meant to not  
open a book called "Spell Book"? So  
I tore out a page and dipped.

ELIAS

Who's this "him" you mention?

ALFIE

The guy running it. Likely wizard.

ELIAS

Where was the estate sale? Nearby?

ALFIE

Yeah. Some old house in the woods.

CARTER

And what did these woods look like?

ALFIE

Like woods.

CARTER  
And what did the wizard look like?

ALFIE  
Like a wizard.

CARTER  
Woods that look like woods and a  
wizard that looks like a wizard.  
God you're helpful.

ALFIE  
You want helpful? I can be helpful.

Alfie disappears into the depths of his canopy bed. He pops  
back out with the stolen page from the spell book.

ALFIE (CONT'D)  
Been using it as my pillow because  
of the magical properties.

Elias and Carter barely react to that. It's been a day.

ALFIE (CONT'D)  
But you know what? I fucked up. I  
missed some of the spell. Look.

He points to the bottom of the incantation.

ALFIE (CONT'D)  
"PTO". Thought it was paid time off  
and I was thinking, "good for him,  
looking after his sprites and  
elves." Didn't mean that. No. It  
was please turn over. Doy!

Pretty tragic omission! He hands Elias the *double-sided* page.

ALFIE (CONT'D)  
You read the rest, it'll be more  
dramatic.

Elias takes the sacred text, rattled by Alfie's dramaturgy.

ELIAS  
"If you don't quell the spell in  
five midnights time, it will be  
forever."

Alfie pulse checks the room, to see if they're goosebumping.

ALFIE  
Chills? Chills? Chills.

INT. ALFIE'S HOUSE - SECOND LANDING/STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Elias and Carter BLOW OUT of the room. No time for Southern hospitality with their newfound reality! Alfie waves 'em off.

ALFIE

Bye, thanks for visiting! Pre-save  
"Freeze Me" on all streaming  
platforms.

They race it down the staircase.

ELIAS

This is so shitty! Why would the  
writer... of this spell, do that?

CARTER

Raising the stakes.

ELIAS

What?

CARTER

Your receipt from Raising the  
Steaks fell out.

ELIAS

Oh, thanks.

Elias DASHES back up a step and pockets his receipt.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Did the midnights start when I cast  
the spell? Or is that like midnight  
zero and midnight one is --

CARTER

Find the woods, find the wizard.

ELIAS

But --

CARTER

Find the woods. Find the wizard.  
That's all we've gotta do.

ELIAS

The woods could be anywhere!

CARTER

Mmm, not really. You think Alfie  
travels? Please. He couldn't even  
travel down the stairs to see us  
out.

EXT. ALFIE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The Hardy Boys step onto the porch and grab their bags.

CARTER

No. His whole thing is off. You can  
tell he uses Hismile toothpaste.

Elias SNEEZES at the sunlight, confirming his kinship with  
Gizmo. Carter looks funny at Elias.

ELIAS

The sun makes me sneeze.

CARTER

That might be the whitest thing  
I've ever heard.

ELIAS' POV

His sneezy haze quickly becomes lavender haze. Nick Sella,  
looking fit in his 'fit -- a white tee tucked into black  
jeans -- leans on the mailbox. His Elias Mannhunt is over.

NICK

'Sup.

What the hell. He reports LIVE at the scene.

NICK (CONT'D)

Chat, we got him.

Nick WRAPS his LIVE and struts up to a gobsmacked Elias.

NICK (CONT'D)

I had to find you. I was getting  
lovesick.

He takes Carter's face into his hands and keeps a sustained  
level of eye-contact that would frighten even a neurotypical.

NICK (CONT'D)

I forgive you.

He turns to Elias, does the same. Horrendous. Horrible. Hot?

NICK (CONT'D)

I forgive you.

Nick begins doling out his prophesied 87 KISSES.

ELIAS

Wait. How did you find me? Kyle?

NICK

My love.

(then)

Also sewed an AirTag into the back  
of Jack Skellington's skull patch.  
You look so tuff in it.

He scoops up Elias. Carter can barely hold down his chunks.

Elias looks down the driveway. Nick's chariot awaits 'em at  
the curb: a Hyundai Sonata dripped in (Jersey Sub Remix)  
decals. He looks back at Nick. Masterminding his business.

ELIAS

You wanna go camping?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. WALMART - DAY

Nick DROPS CAMPING STUFF into a cart. He's giddy.

NICK

We're gonna throw back so many  
s'mores.

He tracks down some more s'mores ingredients. Elias steers  
the cart to Carter.

ELIAS

And I know I don't need him, but we  
do need his car. He can get us to  
the woods with the goods. Wherever  
that is.

Nick BEAR HUGS graham crackers off a shelf. He CARTS 'EM and  
JETS for some Jet-Puffed Marshmallows. Carter looks at Elias.

CARTER

Well Alfie was right about one  
thing. Gays do love their estate  
sales. Other gays would've gone  
there well. New plan. Find the  
gays. Find the estate sale --

ELIAS

Then find the woods. Find the  
wizard.

CARTER

I don't like you stealing my bars,  
but yes.

Elias and Carter NOD at their revised plan. No biggie.



EXT. WALMART - PARKING LOT - DUSK

Nick UNPACKS the haul. Elias joins his hunk at the trunk.

NICK

I didn't even know you were into camping.

ELIAS

Sure, I've always wanted to look camp right in the eye. Now I can. Just me and you. And Carter.

Nick squeezes in a sleeping bag with a bit less pluck.

INT. NICK'S SONATA - MOVING - A LITTLE LATER

Nick drives. The front passenger seat is brimmed up with camping gear. Elias and Carter are smushed in the back, chowing down on deconstructed s'mores.

NICK

That's how I got here so quickly. Carpool lanes with Elias Manncake. Had to eat him when a cop car got too close.

CARTER

He's where he'd want to be. Inside you.

Elias and Carter go prayers up, then start passing some Notes app between each other. We hear their typings in VOICE-OVER.

ELIAS (V.O.)

"Where're we gonna find the gays?"

CARTER (V.O.)

"A gay club. Hello. Can you convince Nick to take us to one?"

ELIAS (V.O.)

"Yep. If I told him to cure rheumatoid arthritis for me, he'd probably be able to do it."

CARTER (V.O.)

"Himbos in STEM. Let's talk about it."

Elias and Carter LAUGH OUT LOUD. Like actually. Nick looks in the rearview mirror. CHEM are really showing their chem!

Elias goes in for the killer invite. Channels his pre-ick.

ELIAS  
Hey, Nick? Let's go out before we  
go tents up.

NICK  
Okay. Where you thinking?

ELIAS  
Um...

Elias goes for a quick Googs. He smiles at the first result.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
A club where we're all minorities.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. THE GLEE CLUB - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

A SIGN LIT UP like it's just won Nationals: "THE GLEE CLUB".

INT. THE GLEE CLUB - NIGHT

The rootinest tootinest gay club that infringes on copyright.  
Not a dive, but you'd want to dive into it. Filled with joy.  
"Love You Like A Love Song" (Glee Cast Version) is THUMPING.

A DRAG SUE SYLVESTER greets our gleeful gang near the door.

DRAG SUE SYLVESTER  
You came on a good night,  
Porcelains. Tonight's Santana  
Saturdays, where we only play solos  
by Boobs McGee herself. Now if  
you'll excuse me, I have a glee  
club to destroy. Those barstools  
aren't gonna thumbtack themselves.

Drag Sue Sylvester pulls up a bucket of thumbtacks that would  
make even Kevin McCallister proud. She stalks off.

ELIAS  
And that's what you missed on  
"Glee".

CARTER  
This place was like built for you.

ELIAS  
Right?

Elias and Carter's "yearbook look" returns for a surprisingly  
solid second entry that may even surpass the original.

Nick sees *and* witnesses it.

He knows what he has to do. He disappears into the nightclub.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Should I follow him? I can't even see him. Where'd he go?

CARTER

Don't worry about that. Worry about getting to where we're going. The woods. And I think I've found it.

ELIAS

You did?

CARTER

Yep. While you and Nick were taking a piss, I went somewhere no one wants to go. Alfie's Instagram. Look. He dumped it in a photo dump.

Carter SHOWS Elias a CAROUSEL of estate sale shenanigans. Elias reads the caption, repulsion growing with each letter.

ELIAS

"I know an estate sale *esthates* to see me coming".

CARTER

We'll work out the punishment for that caption later. Right now we have a club full of gays to question. Someone in this club is going to know the addy. You might want to liquor up. I know you don't like talking to people.

ELIAS

Would be a waste not to use grandpa's fake ID again.

Elias shows off his fraudulent ID: "Fenson Foone."

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I got to choose the name.

They split.

INT. THE GLEE CLUB - A LITTLE LATER

Elias cradles a hard Big Quench slushie at the bar. He watches Carter RUN UP to a GLEE CLUBBER with the intensity of a parent with a child missing or Billy on the street.

CARTER  
Sir! Do you know this estate sale?

GLEE CLUBBER  
Yes.

CARTER  
Yes?!

GLEE CLUBBER  
Wait, no. I was --

"Nutbush City Limits" (Glee Cast Version) PLAYS. Elias looks to the floor, where Nick Sella is looking like quite the fella. He now wears a cowboy hat. Adorability overload.

Shit. Elias hasn't got a choice. He grins like the cowboy hat face emoji dude.

Nick starts full out LINE DANCING to the song. He lacks some rhythm, but makes up for it with his swag. That town from "Footlose" would be catatonic.

Elias stays seated. Call him Amy Adams. Enchanted.

A NEW SUSPECT Carter is questioning BOUNCES and joins in on the line dancing. Carter watches as the rest of his "LEADS" also hit the floor. What in tarnation?!

EVERYONE joins Nick. Like moths to a flame, or rather, thirsts to a trap. The Nutbush City Limits does not exist.

Now the only people not on the floor are Carter and Elias.

Nick clocks Carter's jealous twinge and it fuels him to go even harder. He's two-step stomping his way right back into Elias' heart. His footwork is getting fancier by the second.

The SONG ENDS. Nick tips his cowboy hat at Elias. Wowza.

It's over for Elias. He's Nickmatized. Again.

Cutting through the romance, a furious Drag Sue Sylvester walks up and SLUSHIES Nick square in the face.

DRAG SUE SYLVESTER  
You should be hobbled.

INT. THE GLEE CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Nick walks right to Elias as "Take My Breath Away" (Glee Cast Version) FADES IN. He takes a seat next to him, brushing off some leftover slushie schmutz. Elias tries to be cool. Tries.

NICK  
Hey king. Ow!

Nick FLICKS a thumbtack off his barstool. Drag Sue Sylvester smiles from across the floor. Gotcha!

The BARKEEP WOOSHES over a fondue for two for Elick. (Gleeks will get the ref.)

BARKEEP  
Fondue for two. On the house.

They share it and their feelings.

ELIAS  
That was iconic... icon-Nick!

Nick LAUGHS at Elias' wordplay. Look, someone has to.

NICK  
Had to win you back.

ELIAS  
You also won my front. But you didn't have to win me back or front. I wasn't being a bedswerver with Carter, promise.

NICK  
Bet.

Nick cools it and goes from monosyllabic to monologue... ic.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You're just together 'cause of the magic mission.

Elias' gob is smacked. Nick un.masks his theory between dips.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You told me last week! You said your favorite songwriters were Audrey Hobert, Taylor Swift and Kesha.

ELIAS  
You remembered that?

NICK  
Yeah. I remember like everything you say.

A man who listens! Like the song in the background, Elias' breath is taken away.

NICK (CONT'D)

And you said Kesha's mom, Pebe's a songwriter too and she has a charity called --

ELIAS

(relieved)

The Magic Mission... in Nashville.

NICK

Yeah! They rescue stray cats and dogs and shit. You must've won like a charity auction songwriting sesh with Pebe for The Magic Mission and 'cause all the songs are about me and you wanted to surprise drop me with it, Carter took you. Right?

ELIAS

Right.

Elias browses The Magic Mission WEBSITE on his phone.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I'm donating.

You should too: themagicmission.org. Keep reading once you have.

NICK

I know you've been locked in this weekend, but we're pretty close to getting cocked in. 89k followers.

Nick shows off his follower count to Elias. Not too shabby.

NICK (CONT'D)

My lives have been ripping, plus all those videos we filmed before your trip. I put your demo song in the background of all of them.

ELIAS

Just like Alfie.

NICK

Who's Alfie?

Before Elias has time to bluster out an excuse, Carter DASHES IN and SITS DOWN on a barstool, the other side of Elias.

CARTER

Ow!

He also SWATS AWAY a thumbtack. He WHISPERS to Elias.

CARTER (CONT'D)

We got our plug for the woods.

Elias drops back into reality. He SWIVELS to face Nick.

ELIAS

One second.

INT. THE GLEE CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

Carter guides Elias over to HERBIE HALLADAY, 21. A charming young twunk. Carter grabs his shoulders like a proud papa.

CARTER

Now this is Herbie and he's fully loaded with answers about the woods!

HERBIE

Oh sure. I went to that estate sale. I wanted my cottage cored. It was at Howlin' Hill. Right off the I-24.

CARTER

You hear that? Right off the I-24. We know where to go!

ELIAS

Uh-huh.

Elias is looking over at Nick, who's standing one footed on his barstool and SPINNING RIGHT ROUND LIKE A RECORD PLAYER. Carter "scratches" the record as Herbie heads off.

CARTER

Hey. Remember the magic mission.

ELIAS

I'm remembering it.

CARTER

Are you?

ELIAS

I better tell Nick we're going.

Elias heads back over to Nick. How convenient!

Carter glowers at this Elickening as "A Boy Like That" (Glee Cast Version) VAMPS IN.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. NICK'S SONATA - MOVING - NIGHT

Carter's at the wheel, glower face still completely in tact. Elias and Nick are close-ish in the back.

Not to go full film bro, but "A Boy Like That" (Glee Cast Version) goes from diegetic to non-diegetic in this scene.

Nick falls asleep on Elias' shoulder. Another win for the Elick shippers.

A love triangle is triangulating. Arguably the best triangle.

EXT. THE WOODS - NIGHT

The woodiest woods to ever wood and that ever would wood. Somewhere nearby, Laura Palmer is getting wrapped in plastic.

Nick has EVERYTHING from the car in one SINGULAR PILE. He looks for a clearing. Elias and Carter soak up the sequoias.

CARTER  
Find the woods.

ELIAS  
Find the wizard.

We CRANE OUT on how epically massive these woods are, with an OMINOUS MUSIC STING peppered on top.

INT. THE WOODS - CLEARING - NIGHT

Carter takes out his mint vape, who is now really a character. He places it on the ground and starts to dot STONES around it.

CARTER  
Hello? Mr. Wizard? I'll let you hit  
it 'til it blinks.

He turns to Elias.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
We'll smoke him out.

Carter walks backwards into his tent. Eyes on the summoning spot. He takes out his taser and switchblade.



CARTER (CONT'D)  
I got this shift.

Elias walks away shifty. Carter practices his WIZARD JABBING.

EXT. THE WOODS - CLEARING - NIGHT

Nick's on a log, making s'mores over a ROARING bonfire. Elias joins Nick and makes it a *bond*fire.

ELIAS  
Ow!

He TOSSES away a Sylvesterian thumbtack. Weird. He settles.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
Still up too, huh?

NICK  
I was lost in my thought.

ELIAS  
Thoughts?

NICK  
I only ever have one. You?

ELIAS  
Many. I can like never sleep. Ever.

NICK  
I could sleep right now.

Nick closes his eyes. INSTANT SLEEPING. Elias PRODS him back.

NICK (CONT'D)  
I can sleep for us.

Nick's phone BUZZES.

ELIAS  
Tell me it's not Harriet.

NICK  
My sister. She is so pissed that I took the work car. She thinks I'm making a delivery.

Nick instead hand delivers Elias a s'more. Peak gooey levels.

NICK (CONT'D)  
You're worth it.

Elias can't even stomach it.

ELIAS

Am I? What if I did something horrible? Like what if I did something bad like... deleted your Vinted account and all your videos? What would you say?

NICK

Eh.

ELIAS

And you're completely not mad?

NICK

No. You can't make me mad. Ever.

ELIAS

Okay. 'Cause there is something...

Nick ain't listening. He's busy. He dips a finger into some melted chocolate. He draws a love heart on Elias' cheek.

NICK

Elias Mann, I'm melted.

The power of love... spell. Elias and Nick share a stare that takes several whacks at the "yearbook look" and it's sequel. This ain't gonna end well. This ain't gonna end *spell*!

Elias looks into the bonfire. He checks on Nick. He's fallen asleep again.

EXT. THE WOODS - THE MIDDLE OF 'EM - NIGHT

Carter holds up a PHOTO DUMP SELFIE of Alfie and the Wizard's house. It's an exact match for where he's standing, except the house is missing. Elias is so just thinking about Nick.

CARTER

Why isn't it here? It should be right here!

ELIAS

Eh.

CARTER

"Eh"?! I counted when the spell started to hit and midnight five? Tonight. This is the last midnight. Do you even care about the last midnight? Or do you want it to be forever?

Elias doesn't have to say anything. Nickmatized.

CARTER (CONT'D)

You do. Why? 'Cause he looked hot  
line dancing? That's fucking dumb.

Carter blows off. Elias goes after him.

ELIAS

Who's going to love me like Nick?

Um, he's storming away you, Elias! He catches up.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

America runs on Dunkin' and I run  
on Nick.

CARTER

Shut the fuck up. God, you're so  
fucking annoying.

ELIAS

Why'd you even show me that spell?  
Hmm? Why did you do it? You  
could've just kept walking, but I  
saw you. You turned back and showed  
it to me.

CARTER

Because I was going to try it on  
you.

That stops Elias right in his tracks. He looks at Carter.

ELIAS

You didn't even know my name.

CARTER

But I knew your vibe, okay? I just  
wanted an excuse to still be around  
you, even if you loved Nick. So I  
showed you the spell, full  
believing it was bullshit, but  
thinking maybe it'd give us some  
more time together. And it worked.

So tense you could hear a twig snap. After a beat, they hear  
a TWIG SNAP. Nick SLEEPWALKS past the boys.

NICK

(sleepwalking)

Elias, have some creatine.

CARTER

Aren't you gonna go after your man?

Elias watches Nick sleepwalk into the woods. His mind is set. He looks at Carter.

ELIAS

He's not my man. He doesn't know my  
vibe.

Carter tries real hard to not let his heart melt.

EXT. THE WOODS - LATER

Elias and Carter continue their quest for the wizard. Elias  
PLAYS "Last Midnight" from "Into the Woods" off his phone.

THE WITCH (PHONE AUDIO)

*"It's the last midnight. It's the  
boom, splat! Nothing but a vast  
midnight. Everybody smashed flat!"*

ELIAS

Are you ready for the boom, splat?

CARTER

I'm ready for you to stop playing  
that song.

Elias smirks, causing Carter to have secondhand smirk. He  
quickly recovers his "still-kind-a-shitty-at-you" face.

ELIAS

I know we've been past this tree  
before. And this one. They're all  
exactly the same. Down to the bark.  
We're barking up the *right* trees.  
This is like the portal to the  
wizard!

CARTER

Is it?

ELIAS

There's a wizard. I know there is.  
You know it too.

CARTER

Maybe Nick did just fall in love  
with you. That's starting to make  
sense, because this doesn't. We  
would've found him by now.

ELIAS

And we're about to. He's just  
testing us.

Carter takes out his phone and OPENS a browser.

CARTER  
I'm chartering a helicopter and I'm going home.

ELIAS  
Now that doesn't make any sense!

CARTER  
"This is how the world works, you've gotta leave before you get left." I'm a "Rep" girly, we've been through this. You repping too?

ELIAS  
No. How're you gonna pay for it?

CARTER  
My mom's credit card.

ELIAS  
I thought your mom teaches improv.

CARTER  
She does other things.

ELIAS  
Who the fuck is your mom?!

Carter smiles at Elias' cussing. He looks away. He can't.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
You're turning back. I was meant to do that.

CARTER  
I know. Looks like we've run out of stuff to talk about anyway.  
(a beat, then)  
Mom also taught me callbacks.

Carter heads off to find his chartered chopper. Elias can't bear to watch him go. Heartbreak feels bad in a woods like this.

Elias looks for more wizardy signs from the universe. Nothing. Until...

Elias searches within himself. He pats around in his pockets. He finds what he's looking for -- Chekov's folded brown paper bag from Terry. He UNFOLDS it and POPS a pill in his gob.

It IMMEDIATELY HITS. Right in front of Elias A VISION OF TERRY APPEARS. Eat shit, wizard! The "I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)" Pomo Remix is the ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK for this trip.

Call it a melt your FaceTime.

A WASH OF SEPIA now surrounds them. They're in TECHNICOLOR.

VISION OF TERRY

Didn't I say you might even see me?

ELIAS

Grandpa? I fucked up.

VISION OF TERRY

And now you're fucked up.

ELIAS

What's in this?

VISION OF TERRY

Never mind that.

ELIAS

I mean, is there even a wizard?

VISION OF TERRY

What do you think?

ELIAS

What do you think?

VISION OF TERRY

I think I didn't pack enough smack.

The Vision of Terry starts to FLICKER. Elias walks closer.

ELIAS

What do I do?

VISION OF TERRY

What you should've done last week.  
Bet on yourself. You don't need  
magic. You are the magic.

Elias takes a moment to really hear that.

VISION OF TERRY (CONT'D)

You know what you have to do now.

Elias nods. He does.

ELIAS

Commit to the bit.

The Vision of Terry FLICKERS OFF. Elias just knows what to do. It's like he's already done it.

He races around the identical trees and FIST BUMPS the matching burls.

He steps back. Waits. The ground begins to BOIL AND BUBBLE...

SUDDENLY, A LOG CABIN RISES UP. Giving Jumanji à la abode.

After a beat, an ornate sign ALSO RISES: "THE MAGIC STORE"

CARTER (O.S.)

Hmm. What do you think it sells?

REVEAL Carter's back! Do call it a comeback. Elias lights up.

CARTER (CONT'D)

I heard the earth move and I can't get to the chopper for another half-hour. Disgusting. Jen would never.

Our dearest CHEM approach the log cabin. The door SWINGS OPEN and there he is... THE WIZARD.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Okay, but he really does look like a wizard.

ELIAS

Right? He does.

INT. THE WIZARD'S HOUSE - STUDY - A LITTLE LATER

The Wizard takes a moment to top up a pipe with Ye Olde Pop Rocks. He looks at Carter, then Elias from across his desk.

THE WIZARD

Is this the boy you cast the love spell on?

ELIAS

That's disgusting.

CARTER

Ew, no. ACAB.

THE WIZARD

Okay, jeez. The ladies doth protest too much. Who is he? Got a picture?

CARTER

He's got half a camera roll. More if you count his hidden folder.

ELIAS

It's where I bury the nudes.  
Tasteful nudes, but still nudes.

THE WIZARD

I'm just looking for a picture of  
his face. Let's not get weird here.

CARTER

Says the man in the wizard cloak.

THE WIZARD

Says the wizard in the wizard  
cloak.

The Wizard SLAMS his hands on the desk and the study doors  
behind them SLAM SHUT.

ELIAS

He kind of flamed your ass with  
that one.

Elias shows The Wizard a face Nickture.

THE WIZARD

He's got the rizz.  
(off their looks)  
What? I can know what rizz means.  
Why he reminds me of my first love,  
Abernathy Abrahamson.

CARTER

There's always a boy.

THE WIZARD

I'll say. Abernathy was my muse for  
this very spell! His father tried  
to burn my sisters, because he  
thought they were witches. I mean,  
they were, but still.

The Wizard can tell he's boring our boys. He cuts the crap.

THE WIZARD (CONT'D)

So you wanna quell the spell. It's  
a good spell. A great spell.

ELIAS

Too great.

THE WIZARD

How many midnights has it been?



ELIAS

We're not really sure on that.

THE WIZARD

The midnight's don't matter. I just put that in there to spook people and make 'em think thrice. You like spookin'?

CARTER

He'd like to to curbstomp the spell.

INT. THE WIZARD'S HOUSE - LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

The Wizard RIPS a DRAPE off a STEAMPUNK MACHINE that's WHISTLIN' STEAM. Elias and Carter gaze up at it. Goodness!

ELIAS

Is this going to suck us through an inter-dimensional portal?

THE WIZARD

Please and inflict yet another multiverse onto the world? I don't think so. You pop right in and you get popped right out. Consider it a microwave... for your souls and the rest of your body, too.

ELIAS

I like how you went from sinister to upbeat.

THE WIZARD

It's what I do.

CARTER

We won't forget all of this, right? Because, I don't think I want to forget.

Elias sneaks a smile at Carter being caught up in his feels.

THE WIZARD

You know what it will feel like? A dream. But one that you'll remember. Also slight tissue scaring. Okay, just right through here. The steam burns are part of the charm *and* reverse the charm.

Elias and Carter step in. After they are appropriately terrified, the Wizard PULLS A LEVER and a BANNER DROPS in the machine that reads: "GOTCHA!". Him and Drag Sue Sylvester should seriously connect.

Elias and Carter exit the machine, appreciating the "bit".

THE WIZARD (CONT'D)  
This was all just a big misdirect.  
I wanted to make what you really  
have to do less frightening by  
comparison.

ELIAS  
Okay, what do I really have to do?

THE WIZARD  
Tell him the truth.

Elias walks right back into the machine and closes the door.  
Carter and The Wizard open it. Nice try. Elias SIGHS.

CARTER  
Meet you at the chopper.

EXT. THE WOODS - CLEARING - DAWN

From one chopper to another. Nick's shirtless CHOPPING WOOD,  
looking lumberjacked. A wincing Elias nears. Truth hurts.

NICK  
Elias, I'm about to woodcarve you!

Nick looks down at his selection of logs. Judges them.

NICK (CONT'D)  
(log by log)  
Chopped. Chopped. Yes.

Nick picks up his favorite log and speaks to it.

NICK (CONT'D)  
I'll make a Mann out of you! Heh-  
heh. That's like something you  
would say.

Nick notices Elias' sad, sad face.

NICK (CONT'D)  
Why aren't you saying?

Elias sits on one of the discarded logs. Nick follows.

ELIAS

Better throw on a 'fit for this.

Elias grabs a checkered lumberjack flannel. Nick buttons up.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I did... something bad.

Elias opens the SPELL VIDEO on his phone. He reads some of the COMMENTS.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

"You made my dreams come true. My life? Never been better."

NICK

Sick. Nickias comments?

ELIAS

No. From another video. They all sound happy. But it's not real. We both need something that's real.

Nick isn't following. Elias goes on.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I have to try so hard at everything and then you're just so effortless. All the time. I don't know if I loved you or if I just wanted to become you so I used this video and I...

He cuts the crap.

ELIAS (CONT'D)

I put a love spell on you.

NICK

What?

The magic is gone. Nick is stunned. He almost talks to Elias but turns away.

ELIAS

I was losing time and I was scared and I'm really sorry.

Nick gathers his thought.

NICK

You know what the worst part is? You could've just asked me out and I would've said yes.

Nick walks off. Elias falls to his knees... emotionally.

INT. ELIAS' HOUSE - FOYER - DAY (A WEEK-ISH LATER)

FLASH. Terry, dripped in some Chappell Roan merch, takes a pic of Elias in his green graduation gown. A triple G, if you will. Terry WINDS his Kodak roll. He got the shot.

TERRY

Now you toss that graduation cap  
and I start the engine. That's  
still the plan, right?

ELIAS

Right. Added one stop on the way.

Elias passes Terry a scrawl on some scrap paper.

TERRY

What's this?

ELIAS

It's an address.

TERRY

I know it's an address.

ELIAS

Scotty Randwick's. I found your  
yearbook, found his name, found his  
address. I thought on the way we  
could visit him.

TERRY

And why would I want to do that?

ELIAS

Because what if he's the love of  
your life?

Elias looks down. Emotional. This clearly ain't about Scotty.

TERRY

He's not the love of my life. The  
love of my life is kind, sweet,  
silly and he's going to be late for  
his own graduation if we don't  
skedaddle.

He winks at Elias, who gets it together.

Elias hits it out the door. Terry hangs back, looks down at  
Scotty's address one last time and pockets it.

"Maybe Life Is Good" by Em Beihold GOES OFF as we BEGIN  
MONTAGE SEQUENCE:

-- Elias and Terry step out of the house. They both SNEEZE at the sight of the sun.

-- The trusty GOLD TRANS AM, now decked out with duct tape, TRAVELS THROUGH TOWN.

-- They drive past (JERSEY SUB REMIX), Elias haunted by the local haunt.

-- They enter the RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD.

-- A banner hangs over the graduation stage, with it's pun intended: "CONGRADULATIONS CLASS OF 20--". The last two digits are obscured to prevent the movie from prematurely aging. Call it cinematic SPF.

-- Carter shows off his Fucci 'fit underneath his gown.

-- WE FLY OVER the seated GRADUATES, capped up. The "Spirit Room" vinyl is now glued on top of a RANDOM'S mortarboard.

-- Kyle gives the valedictorian speech. No one cares.

-- Kyle FALLS ON HIS ASS stepping off the podium. Now everyone cares about *that*! More yuks are had than the monorail "Simpsons" episode.

-- Elias catches Kyle's embarrassed eye. He wins.

-- The unsinkable Jen Fox is in the bleachers. She takes a POLAROID as Elias gets his diploma.

-- Harriet is also there, in full Hannibal Lecter regalia, many a manacle, flanked by TWO FEDERAL AGENTS.

END MONTAGE SEQUENCE

EXT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - A LITTLE LATER

The GRADUATES start dispersing. FIND Elias and Reilly doing the series finale on their high school back and forth.

ELIAS

I just finished reading his book.

REILLY

His spell book?

ELIAS

No. He gave me one on limerence.

REILLY

Okay, I told you to watch that ContraPoints video on limerence months ago. Skill issue.

ELIAS

How's Annie?

REILLY

I got dropped. The ol' fresh start for college.

ELIAS

Not that. May have a spell for it.

REILLY

I'm good. Are you good?

Reilly nods over to Nick, who's coming right at 'em.

REILLY (CONT'D)

He still gives you the jump scares, huh?

ELIAS

If we lived in a house, it'd be a Blumhouse. I'd Irish goodbye.

Reilly rightfully BAILS. Elias braces for impact.

NICK

What's up, Elias?

ELIAS

What's up, Nick. I mean, I know you're mad.

NICK

Why would I be mad at you?

ELIAS

Um, the whole hocus pocus of it all.

NICK

I was. But then I saw the views. I'm at 100,000 followers now. Someone even wrote they wanted to go to Paris with us. People really like us together.

ELIAS

But do we like us together?

NICK  
I don't know.

ELIAS  
I don't know either.

They both look away -- equal parts torn.

NICK  
I know I'm gonna be in LA, too.  
This manager for creators wants to  
meet me this week. They saw our  
videos. He thinks I can brand deal.

ELIAS  
No, someone wants to meet *me* this  
week! About maybe signing a  
publishing deal? All because you  
blasted my demo so many times and  
their kid saw it.

NICK  
Okay. Nickias summer.

ELIAS  
Nickias summer?

NICK  
We're both gonna be in LA and  
you've only known the magic me.  
Magic Nick.

ELIAS  
Magic Nick. Good pitch. Let's set  
up a general with Channing Tatum.

Nick smirks. Hold up. Is there magic without the magic?

NICK  
That week we had "together", it was  
like a pre-workout. A pre-date.  
Maybe we date-date. No one knows  
we've broken up yet. We could keep  
the videos going.

ELIAS  
Like a showmance?

NICK  
Yeah or not, but I'm cool.

ELIAS  
So, we're cool?

NICK  
We're cool. See you in LA, yeah?

ELIAS  
Yeah.

Elias and Nick share a look of sweet understanding for maybe the first time.

EXT. RIVERSTON HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - A LITTLE LATER

Terry guides Elias to their ride.

TERRY  
Okay, let's get this show on the road. The show being you.

Terry HOPS in. Elias takes one last look at his school. Carter comes out of nowhere. Mock furious.

CARTER  
Hitching and ditching. And you think you know someone.

ELIAS  
I couldn't find you! When Grandfruity Pebble's ready to go, he's ready to go.

CARTER  
Sure. What? No emotional goodbye where we admit our true feelings for each other?

ELIAS  
I was saving it for the reunion. You've gotta let the yearning brew.

Carter LAUGHS. REGINA HALL walks up to Carter. Elias freaks.

REGINA HALL  
Who's stealing laughs from me?

CARTER  
Mom. He's cool. He's a writer.

REGINA HALL  
Okay, a writer gets a pass.

ELIAS  
*This* is your mom?

CARTER  
Yeah, she's Brenda Meeks.



ELIAS  
You said she taught improv.

CARTER  
And she did, in a Masterclass, then  
in a BBC Maestro, because they cut  
a bigger check.

REGINA HALL  
It payed for your helicopter ride!

ELIAS  
Thanks Regina Hall.  
(to Carter)  
Why did you go to a high school in  
New Jersey?

CARTER  
Okay, so the reason for that is --

Terry PULLS UP and Carter shuts up. Sorry exposition fans.

TERRY  
C'mon, Elias. Destiny's calling!  
And after I take her call, we're  
movin' right along to LA.

Elias and Carter look at each other. One last time. They  
ain't ones for schmaltz. They do a jokey formal nod goodbye.

CARTER  
Justin Copperthwaite.

ELIAS  
Secret nepo baby.

Elias JUMPS in the car and Terry DRIVES OFF.

I/E. GOLD TRANS AM/STREETS OF RIVERSTON - DAY

Terry drives. Slowly. Defs some ominous tension. He PARKS  
outside a house.

ELIAS  
Why're we stopping?

TERRY  
You're not going to LA with me.

Elias checks the house they're outside. He recognizes it.

ELIAS  
I'm going with Nick? No. I need to  
go with you. That was the plan.

Elias starts to freak out. Does he want Nick's stupid love?

TERRY

This plan could be better. We gabbed about it. He wants this.

ELIAS

I don't know. An Elick summer?

TERRY

The best way to get to know someone is to be trapped in a car with them. You want to know, right? Know if he's really the love of your life? Without the magic?

ELIAS

Yeah.

TERRY

Well, this is how you'll know. It won't even take the whole trip! You'll know by... Bedford, Pennsylvania. Call me at Bedford.

Elias gets out and walks towards Nick's porch. Heart pounding. He takes a look back at Terry. Goodbye.

He steps onto Nick's porch and starts BOX BREATHING.

EXT. 7-ELEVEN: BEDFORD - MAGIC HOUR

Elias CALLS Terry. He stands behind the Sonata and gas pumps.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ELIAS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Terry answers immediately. He's been waiting for this.

ELIAS

Did you know the next town after Bedford is called Manns Choice?

TERRY

I did. Why did you think I got you to call me now? So you can drive through that town with your choice! So, goodnik or no-goodnik?

ELIAS

I wouldn't know. I got to his porch and I couldn't do it.

(MORE)

ELIAS (CONT'D)

Three days in a car with Nick? He gives me butterflies, laced with poison.

TERRY

That was in the drugs I gave you! Wait a minute, then how'd you get to Bedford? Who's driving?

The Sonata DRIVES AWAY. Real "Spell Check" heads would've noticed the plates were off and lack of (Jersey Sub Remix) decals.

ELIAS

Carter.

TERRY

I knew that. I just wanted to hear you say it. I knew it was him since the train station parking lot.

It's been Carter the whole time! He walks past Elias, with a fresh batch of Van Holten's® Pickle-In-A-Pouches.

ELIAS

He has a place in LA. His mom's Regina Hall! If I had to be trapped in a car with someone for three days, I'd want it to be with Carter.

TERRY

There you go. Better to be trapped in than trapped on.

Elias HANGS UP. He turns around to Carter's wheels -- an FJ80 Toyota Land Cruiser.

INT. CARTER'S LAND CRUISER - MOMENTS LATER

Carter now bestows upon himself his reg Hot Mama and upon Elias... a Big Papa. This pickle character development needs to be looked at.

I/E. CARTER'S LAND CRUISER/HIGHWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Carter motors past a sign that reads: "MANNS CHOICE".

Elias looks to the sign, then Carter. Good choice. *Great* choice.

ELIAS

Got a new demo.

Elias takes out his all-new demo cassingle. Written on the label is a title: "SEEN".

CARTER  
Who's it about?

ELIAS  
Who do you think?

Elias POPS the tape and "Seen" by Elias Mann (really ghostwritten for us by Audrey Hobert, Taylor Swift, and or Kesha) FILLS THE SOUNDTRACK. They hold hands.

FREEZE on Elias and Carter, filled with joy as we --

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END