

HAPPY FACE

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Based on an original idea by
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THICK HAIRY HANDS trace astrological zodiac charts.

MOTHER (O.C.)

Will Richard come back to me?

The hand traces a line to a stylized HORNED symbol.

OLD MALE VOICE (O.C.)

No...

MOTHER (O.C.)

Toutes ces nuits à attendre, les mensonges. Et il me faisait croire que c'est moi qui fabulait...

(her hand hits the table)

Connard.

Suddenly, a 5-YEAR OLD BOY named STAN leaps from under the table. Shouting, he takes several swings at imaginary monsters with his TOY SWORD. The woman yells.

MOTHER (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Merde Stanislas! Tu vas te calmer!

The boy darts back under the table next to the shapely legs of his mother. He stares at her RED HIGH HEEL SHOES.

We move up from the legs to discover a 30-year old BEAUTIFUL WOMAN that's on the verge of a breakdown. She is dressed in the latest 70s fashion and wears perfect makeup except for her RUNNING MASCARA

The woman tries to rub away a headache of anger. Then, she looks at the astrologer and touches her left breast.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

And this shit? They'll get it for good? I have to keep my shape.

*
*

The hand traces a line to a CRAB symbol on the chart.

OLD MALE VOICE (O.C.)

You will have many struggles...

Fuck. Anger gives way to despair. She bends under the table and picks up her last card: her son.

MOTHER

What about him? Will he finish school?
Will he do well for himself?

The hands finishes tracing a new chart.

(CONTINUED)

OLD MALE VOICE (O.C.)

He's intelligent! He will go far in life.

Sweet hope. The woman hugs her son tightly.

After a while, the boy squirms and wants to go back playing with his sword. But the woman holds him still. Her long hands with manicured nails gently caress his torso and face, restraining his every move -- like claws.

Then delicately: the mother takes her son's sword away.

She puts her forehead against his. They lock eyes. She then speaks an oath. As if talking to her lover and not her child.

MOTHER

Bon si beau fils. Tu vas faire de bonnes études. Tu vas devenir un homme bien. T'auras plein de succès dans la vie...

The boy takes it in.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Et quand tu seras grand, toutes les filles voudront se marier avec toi. Tu vas en trouver une belle qui s'occupera bien de toi.

STANISLAS

Mais je veux pas des autres. Je veux me marier avec toi quand je serais grand.

The woman buries her face into her son's hair, hugging him tightly. Becoming one with him.

MOTHER

(whispering)

Tu vas toujours aimer ta mère hein? Tu vas toujours l'aimer, même quand elle ne sera plus belle?

The boy looks up at her, and then buries his face into her bosom.

The mother looks up towards the unseen astrologer.

MOTHER (CONT'D (CONT'D)

I'm all he's got you know.

(she hesitates)

Will I hold on long enough until he gets a good job, until he's armed for life....

(CONTINUED)

The woman waits for her answer.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCE over a MONTAGE of the early 1990s fashion and beauty TV commercials and runway footage.

A charming voice speaks to us over the montage.

VANESSA (V.O.)

I used to do beauty pageants. Runways.
Photo shoots. People adored me. I got
love letters. I was pretty, shapely.
The world was my oyster.

The montage continues: lips, thighs, butts, breasts etc.

VANESSA (V.O)

I could feel the eyes of men on me and
I liked it. I wore heels, wigs, fake
eyelashes, I had my teeth redone. I was
8 years old...

Commercials for bad hair, cellulite, tummy tucks etc.

VANESSA (V.O) (CONT'D)

My parents pushed me too hard. By 12 I
had started eating. I stopped swimming.
I watched TV, read magazines. By 14
the girls in school called me lardass,
cow. And that was what I became in
their eyes.

INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL COUNSELING ROOM - PRESENT DAY

VANESSA PECORARO, 31, cute face but OBESE, sits alone in front of a group of ELEVEN people whose backs are turned to us. We see SWEAT MARKS under her arms.

*

VANESSA

At 16, a very cute boy I had a crush on
invited me to the school dance.
Excited, I spent the whole afternoon
getting ready. When he showed up at
night, he was in the arms of another
girl and showed me to her like I was a
circus animal: "Could you believe she
thought I would go out with her?" he
said, laughing at me.

(pause)

My name is Vanessa Pecoraro. I am a 2nd
class citizen. Why?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Because people judge me on how I look
instead of who I am...
Just like they judge you.

We reveal Vanessa's audience: **ELEVEN DISFIGURED PATIENTS**. The group is formed of **burn and accident victims, cranial deformations, hemifacial atrophy, facial tumor patients**.

Becky, a.k.a. BUCK, a 55-year old with Neurofibromatosis looks away. *

VANESSA (CONT'D)

We are stared at, avoided, name-called. Childhood taunts still ring in our ears. At work, we can be asked to take mental assessment tests, just because of our bodies or faces. Some of us may be rejected by our own family.

BANDAGED AUGUSTIN, a young man, with BANDAGES COVERING HIS DEFORMED FACE, nervously looks down.

He notices Vanessa's flashy high heels.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

But I also know there is a person behind the face. A fun, sociable person. *A sexual person, even.* And we are here to help that person come out into the world. *

MAGGIE, a fit 31-year-old woman with a reconstructed face, stops taking notes and looks up at the other patients. Closed faces.

INSERT on poster: THE PERSON BEHIND THE FACE.

VANESSA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Over the next 7 days, we'll learn every tactic to put people at ease, make them forget the face, and see the real you!

CU on poster: *Change Subject, Explain, Educate, Speak up.*

VANESSA (O.C.) (CONT'D)

There is a famous quote that states:
"Freedom is one of the most precious gifts that heaven has bestowed upon men; no treasures that the earth holds buried or the sea conceals can compare with it." *

(CONTINUED)

Jocko shakes his head in disdain at the feel-good stuff.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

In here, we'll learn to overcome fear,
be at ease in public, so that we too
become free: from our negative
thoughts. Free from the gaze of others.

INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL COUNSELING ROOM - LATER

MONTAGE of the patients introducing themselves and voicing their goals: *I don't want to draw attention to myself. I'd love to have no reaction. etc. They all want anonymity.*

We have PETRA, a 45-year old woman whose face has been deformed from birth. Petra does not want corrective surgery.

We have PIERRE, a 62-year old man who lost his nose to cancer. Pierre wears a skin colored silicone prosthesis taped to his face to replace his nose.

DAN, a 35-year old race car accident victim has a huge scar and dent in his skull. Then we have DIHN, PAULINE, and KEITH. Who are less talkative.

JACK PICO, a.k.a. JOCKO, a 39-year old Police Officer, with 80% burns all over his body and face shakes his head in disbelief.

He's also got some bandages on his ankles under his pants. He tries to act detached.

JOCKO

Jack. Everyone calls me Jocko. I was in pursuit one day and my partner and I didn't hold the wheel as well as he should have. We crashed. Car burst in flames. They took a little too long to get me out... I am only here because the union requires me to be in order to qualify for extended accident insurance. I just want to get back to work. I don't need all this bullshit.

Vanessa patiently nods, knowing he'll eventually open up.

Nervous, young BANDAGED AUGUSTIN drops one of his pens.

BANDAGED AUGUSTIN

Me? I... I want to be a better person.

(CONTINUED)

Vanessa is hopeful, this Augustin seems he'll contribute. *

VANESSA *

You think you're a bad person Augustin? *

BANDAGED AUGUSTIN *

No, I'm... Disgusting. *

Vanessa smiles and looks at her clipboard. *

INSERT on CLIPBOARD: Vanessa crosses out the "E", making *Augustine* masculine. The medical notes under the name are brutal: brain tumor surgery, radiation etc. *

Vanessa's smile freezes. *

OTIS, a 65 year old man with half of his face shrunken and blue with visible veins, picks up the pen that Augustin dropped and hands it back to Becky Buck, who hands it to Bandaged Augustin. *

Augustin takes it. Then, he purposely touches Buck's wart-ridden hand with his own. *

Thin and classy, Maggie finishes. *

MAGGIE

Hi my name is Maggie, I have the Treacher Collins Syndrome.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I had 30 surgeries since I was a child, but my adopted family has been very supportive. I do hand demo photo shoots and I came to Montreal to launch my modeling career.

VANESSA (O.S.)

So you want to get more gigs in hand modeling here in Montreal?

MAGGIE

No, I want to do full body shoots.

VANESSA

It's probably good to have attainable, measurables and realistic goals for this workshop.

MAGGIE

(super confident)

Oh it's realistic, I've already got some meetings with artists. Why limit yourself, Vanessa sweetie?

Vanessa barely contains lashing out. Maggie rubs her the wrong way.

CUT TO:

CUT TO:

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Vanessa hands out a "*Feared Situations*" questionnaire as she continues her lecture. Otis mouths Vanessa's words, knowing the speech by heart.

VANESSA

We'll use a successful treatment called CBT. CBT is a time-based approach based on identifying negative thoughts and changing unhelpful patterns in beliefs.

Trying to act cool, Jocko nudges Otis and whispers.

JOCKO

(whispering)

CBT as in Cock and Ball Torture?

VANESSA

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. No ball torture in that Mr. Pico.

JOCKO

It's Jo-cko.

A flip chart reads: *CBT - Psycho-Education, Cognitive Restructuring, Exposure, Homework, Measurable Goals.*

VANESSA

My personal goal this week is to get back into swimming. Go out to the busy YMCA pool down the hill on Peel, put on a bathing suit, and swim. How about you? What will be your measurable goal?

Vanessa looks around expectantly. No one speaks.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Don't think I use the same catch-all goal every time. Otis who knows me can attest.

Otis nods. His facial veins twist into a smile as he straightens his jacket and tries to lighten the mood.

OTIS

I keep wishing that Vanessa's goal is going to be to start dating, but no!

People chuckle. Vanessa forces herself to keep smiling.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

And I keep wishing, Otis, that you'll
tell me what's holding you back to call
your daughter so that you can finally
meet your grandchildren.

Malaise. Vanessa went too far.

Then, Bandaged Augustine raises his hand.

BANDAGED AUGUSTIN

*"Freedom is one of the most precious
gifts that heaven has bestowed upon
men; no treasures that the earth holds
buried or the sea conceals can compare
with it...and captivity, Sancho, is the
greatest evil that can fall to the lot
of man."* It's from Don Quichotte De La
Mancha.

Vanessa stands there dumbfounded for an instant. She then
nods to Bandaged Augustine and switches gear.

VANESSA (O.C.)

For tomorrow's homework, you will start
a conversation with a stranger. It can
even be small talk. But in doing so, I
want you to identify your negative
thoughts: *they'll laugh at me, they'll
leave, I'll fail etc...*

The group leaves the class as Vanessa collects the
questionnaires.

Otis leaves last. Vanessa calls out to him, but Otis does
not answer, hurt.

Vanessa stays alone and sits down on one of the chairs.

(CONTINUED)

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5	<u>EXT. COUNSELLING ROOM - LATE</u>	5	*
	<p>The group exits the room and goes into the corridor of the hospital. The group leaves the class as Vanessa collects the questionnaires.</p> <p>Otis leaves last. Vanessa calls out to him, but Otis does not answer, hurt.</p>		* * * *
6	<u>INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL COORRIDOR S4 - LATER</u>	6	
	<p>The group walks down the corridors of the S4 wing. Some go to the elevators, Petra goes into the coffee shop.</p>		
6a	<u>INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS</u>	6a	
	<p>The patients cross the lobby.</p> <p>Buck takes out a cigarette and lights up inside.</p> <p>Buck's POV: the stares, full of pity, of TWO VISITORS.</p>		
7	<u>EXT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL LOBBY - DUSK</u>	7	
	<p>Most patients have relatives waiting for them in cars that the patients quickly get into-- trying to avoid the gazes of "normal" people.</p> <p>Dinh and Pauline unhook their bikes. Pauline works up the courage to start a conversation, the homework, with Dinh, but Dinh can't understand and makes her repeat. Dinh still does not understand and bikes away.</p>		* * * *

7 CONTINUED: 7

Somebody picks up Keith in a car. Pierre gets into another car. *

Otis, Maggie and Buck walk out of the parking lot, each in their different directions.

8 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL HANDICAPPED WASHROOM - CONTINUOUS** 8

Bandaged Augustin enters and locks the door, nervous.

9 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS - DUSK** 9

Near the exit, Jocko stops his wheelchair behind a column and gets up. He then walks out with his cane, proud, towards a Medicar waiting outside.

10 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL HANDICAPPED WASHROOM - CONTINUOUS** 10

Bandaged Augustin goes to the mirror and inspects his hand, the one that touched Buck's warts. He washes it.

11 **EXT. MCTAVISH STREET - CONTINUOUS - DUSK** 11

Walking fast down the street towards Sherbrooke street, Maggie puts on a baseball cap and pops up her collar as she sees SEVERAL MCGILL STUDENTS, 20-22 years old, hanging out. She crosses the street to avoid them.

11a **EXT. AVE DES PINS - DUSK** 11a

Otis is waiting at a bus stop. While Buck passes by. *

11b **EXT. AVE DES PINS AND DR PENFIELD - DUSK** 11b *

Buck walks towards the city smoking. *

12 **EXT. AVENUE DU PARC - LATER - DUSK** 12

A bus snails up Avenue du Parc.

13 **INT. BUS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS** 13

POV SHOT: averted eyes, furtive glances, lips whispering.

Though the bus is jam-packed, Otis is sitting alone.
The hard neon lights make his veins stand out even more.

13 CONTINUED: 13

Otis is looking at a MEXICAN FATHER talking to his 12 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER dressed in a soccer outfit. The man is holding her sports bag for her and looks so proud.

14 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL HANDICAPPED WASHROOM - CONTINUOUS** 14

From his pocket, Bandaged Augustin pulls out a KNIFE and starts to cut off his bandages. Impatient, he then tugs at them with force. Not caring for his wounds.

With a grunt he rips all of his bandages, and then looks at himself in the mirror. That's when we notice that...AUGUSTIN'S FACE IS PERFECTLY NORMAL. No scars!

BANDAGED AUGUSTIN is in fact **STAN, 19 years old**. Stan breathes a sigh of relief and paces about the washroom. He dumps the bandages in the trash and exits. *

14a **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS** 14a

Stan exits just after Vanessa passes in the corridor.

14b **EXT. ROYAL VIC MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY** 14b *

Stan exits the side stairs of the main entrance. *

15 **EXT. MC GILL UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - NIGHT** 15

Elated, Stan walks through the campus. He heads downtown.

16 **INT. ST. LAURENT BAR - LATER - NIGHT** 16

The place is packed with sexy girls and cool McGill guys. Unsure, Stan wades through the crowd and loud music. He is clearly not at home here.

Downing a drink at the bar, Stan gets accosted by a tipsy CATHRYN. Tries to be nice, but when she puts on the moves, Stan does not know how to react. He just leaves. *

Stan then sees FRANCESCA, a 20 something sexy student in a short dress with a perfect body, talking to some jocks. Stan hesitates, then musters his nerve and goes to her...

But he is grabbed by VINCE, 20, blond and drunk.

(CONTINUED)

VINCE

Stan! Hey man. How have you Hey.
been?

STAN

*

VINCE

It's the first time we see you here. *It's about time you had a social life!!*

*
*

Even though they are glad to see each other, there is a malaise between the two boys.

VINCE (CONT'D)

How's everything..?

Stan hesitates.

STAN

Good. I've got things are under control.

*

VINCE

Oh good. Good.

The music blares. The two boys don't know what to say.

*

VINCE (CONT'D)

Come and join us for a drink. Oliver is here. We'll fill you in on the campaign.

STAN

Sure. In a little while.

VINCE

Markus NPC'd your character and now "Vasserot the *Mummy Warrior*" is wreaking havoc in the countryside. We're playing after tomorrow. You should come back.

*

Stan and Vince part ways. Vince tries to keep their spirits up.

*

VINCE (CONT'D)

The ring will heal her! Hahaha!

*

INT. ST. LAURENT BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Reaching the bar, Stan says hi to Francesca, but she barely gives him a look.

He asks her name. Péri, she answers before turning away. He annoys her, saying that she is a Persian Nymph... She asks how the hell she knows she's Persian. He looks at her, blows in his bubbles raising his shoulders. Makes her laugh. Dance crazy spastic.

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NEIGHBOUR (O.S.)

She says you never call
and...

STAN (CONT'D)

Fuck off!!

Stan loses his concentration and can't continue. Can't
get it up.

FRANCESCA

Don't worry, it's ok. You're still in my
top ten.

STAN

Top ten?

She caresses his eyes.

FRANCESCA

You are so beautiful.

He removes her hand.

STAN

Don't say that.

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INSERT: the blinking red light of the answering machine.

Stan stares away in the darkness. *She looks at the figurines.*

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FRANCESCA

*

You live in this small place with your mom?

Stan stares at her. Touchy subject.

FRANCESCA (CONT'D)

If I lived with mine, I'd go crazy.

Stan gets up and turns on the light.

STAN

I need to sleep now.

The bright light blinds Francesca. Its harshness exposing her naked body lying on the floor mattress.

STAN'S POV: for an instant, Stan sees Francesca lying amidst blood stains and brown stains.

Francesca gets it. She gets up and gathers her clothes. She looks around and sees posters of *philosophers, historical figures.*

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As she leaves, "she could have taught you manners."

*

After Francesca walks out of the room, Stan leans back in his bed, exhausted. He starts falling asleep, when...

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AUGUSTINE (O.S.)

*

Stanislas? Stanislas? STANISLAS!!

*

*

From lying underwater, just as he was lying in bed, Stan sits up in his bathtub. He's younger, around 16.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.)

Stanislas?! Il est presque 5 heures! Tu as rien fait de toute la journée j'imagine.

Stan wipes his eyes and looks at his mother, AUGUSTINE, 40 something, very attractive in her LATE 80s fashionable Christian Dior outfit. She goes to the mirror and removes her perfect makeup.

Stan picks up his DRAGONLANCE FANTASY BOOK and continues reading in his bathtub.

STAN

C'était comment ta journée toi?

AUGUSTINE

Les clientes du dimanche sont les pires. Elles veulent toutes des échantillons gratuits.

STAN

Tu devrais appliquer pour être gérante. Pas avoir à dealer le ptit monde.

Augustine removes her heels and briefly rubs her swollen feet before returning to the mirror.

AUGUSTINE

Tu as étudié tes maths?

Stan absentmindedly grunts, absorbed by his book.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

C'est demain ton test. Comment veux tu rentrer en médecine si tu joues à ton jeu toute la nuit et tu dors toute la journée?

STAN

C'est peut être pas la fin du monde si je rentre pas en médecine. Papa a dit que c'est bien d'explorer pour vraiment savoir ce que je veux faire. Peut-être même prendre des courts d'arts.

(CONTINUED)

Augustine rubs her makeup even faster.

AUGUSTINE

Tu sauras que même les artistes travaillent sans relâche. Crois tu que Mozart jouait à des jeux toutes la nuit? Non, il bossait. Comme Beethoven, qui a réussi à finir sa 9eme symphonie,

STAN

...Même en étant sourd. Et c'est son violoniste qui l'a retourné pour qu'il voit le public qui l'acclamait!

AUGUSTINE

...Même en étant sourd Et c'est son violoniste qui l'a retourné pour qu'il voit le public qui l'acclamait!

Stan smiles at his mother. Augustine calms down.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Je radote hein?

(off Stan's nod)

Et si je te préparais ton repas pendant que tu commences à réviser? Tu n'as pas besoin de t'occuper de rien ce soir, je vais ranger et faire ton lavage, comme ça tu auras assez de temps.

STAN

Ben merci m'man.

Augustine walks over the bathtub and starts washing his back. Stan lets her do it. Like a young king being pampered.

AUGUSTINE

Mon beau fils... Quand tu étais petit, je t'inspectait sous toutes tes coutures pour être sûre que tu n'avais pas de défauts. Je n'en revenais pas que tu étais sorti de moi. Que je t'avais fait!

STAN

Ensuite, tu m'as tenu par le talon d'Achille et tu m'as trempée dans le Styx pour que je sois invincible.

Augustine smiles. Without her makeup, we can see that life took a toll on her. She tries to ask casually.

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE

Quand est-ce que tu l'as vu?

She starts washing his chest, Stan pushes her hand away.

STAN

OK, c'est bon, je vais faire le reste.

Augustine goes back to the mirror, takes the pins out of her hair and removes her jacket.

STAN (CONT'D)

Hier, avant D&D. Il m'a demandé si je voulais venir vivre avec lui.

Augustine tense up. She nervously undoes the rest of her hair as she starts pestering her son with questions.

AUGUSTINE

Encore? Qu'est ce qu'il ta promis exactement?

Stan regrets bringing it up, as his mom, getting more and more emotional, won't shut up about it.

STAN

Rien. Il a juste demandé si ça serait pas un bon changement pour moi. Mais oublie ça, ok.

AUGUSTINE

Pour quoi tu veux me laisser? Tu n'est pas heureux ici? Il est jamais là pour toi et dès qu'il claque des doigts tu veux partir d'ici et aller vivre avec lui, chez ELLE.

STAN (CONT'D)

Maman, non. C'est pas comme ça. Attends.

BLAM! Stan slams his hand on bathtub.

STAN (CONT'D)

Ferme ta gueule ok!

She stops. Stan tries to remain calm.

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

Je lui ai dit qu'après toutes ces années ou tu m'as torché, fait faire les devoirs, soigné, que tu m'as envoyé à l'école privée, que je pouvais pas te faire ça à toi câlisse. ...Et là que j'étais plus un kid et intéressant pour ses amis, qu'il n'allait pas avoir juste les avantages sans avoir été là pour moi quand tu étais malade. Je l'ai envoyé chier! T'es contente!?

AUGUSTINE

Parle un peu mieux là. Tu le fait exprès de parler comme ces ploucs.

Stan pulls the shower curtain across the tub to close the discussion, but his mother silently starts to sob.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

(gives up)

Je suis fatiguée. J'ai mal à mon bras. Et tu me cries après. Je travaille tout le temps, je fais tout ici. Et Paulette qui est si loin.

Through the curtain Stan sees his mother fall apart.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Si tu veux aller vivre avec eux, vas-y. Avec un salaire de misère, toujours seule... Mieux vaut être morte que de vivre une vie pareille. Et qui voudrait de ça?

Crying, Augustine opens her shirt, and removes a breast pad, Stan quickly looks away, but we catch a glimpse of her chest: her breast has been removed. A large ugly scar is all that's left.

From a Chic Dior saleswoman who does her best to keep up with beauty, Augustine, has "devolved" into a 40 something cancer survivor with no breast.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Je ne suis même plus une femme.

Stan puts a towel around his waist and goes to hug his mother trying to console her. At first Augustine pushes him away, but then she hugs her son. *

We zoom in on Stan's face in the mirror until the image distorts... And becomes George Bush Sr. *

(CONTINUED)

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President Bush Sr. is on CNN. The the captions read: "Oct 30, 1991 - Historic Madrid Peace Conference"; "First Arab-Israeli talks in 43 years."

PRESIDENT BUSH SR.

We come here to seek peace for a part of the world that in the long memory of man has known far too much hatred, anguish, and war.

Stan, in his boxers, is watching the TV. After a while, he takes a look at his answering machine.

INSERT on machine: "23 messages." Stan's presses play.

The messages are from Stan's aunt, PAULETTE, and of increasing worry. Stan deletes them quickly.

PAULETTE'S MESSAGES (O.S)

Hello Stanislas, It's untie Paulette, how did the surgery go..BEEP! Hello could you please call me..BEEP! Hello Stanislas, It's Paulette, I've tried to reach..BEEP! Hello, I got your message, but could you call me at night...BEEP! Stan it's..BEEP!

As more messages are heard, we we survey the messy lower income apartment: dead plants, unwashed dishes in the sink, clothes and medical books littered everywhere.

We also see Stan's hands flipping through a gruesome MEDICAL BOOK.

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Stan's deleted nearly all the messages, until...

VOICE MESSAGE (O.S)

This is a message from the office of Dr. Zadeh regarding Augustine Miskievicz. The Doctor would like to see to discuss your mother's transfer. Please call us back at 514-934-1934 extension 6288...BEEP!

Stan quickly deletes the remaining messages.

INSERT ON ANSWERING MACHINE: "0 Messages."

Stan takes a deep breath, then takes the phone and dials.

(CONTINUED)

STAN

Yes, hello. This is Stan Miskievicz,
calling regarding my mother's transfer.

(he shifts uneasily)

I couldn't. I had this bad flu and they
thought it might have been meningitis...

Yeah, thanks... It's at his office? Yes
of course. See you tomorrow. Oh wait! **Did
they take the whole jaw?**

(relieved)

No? Oh that's good. Ok, thanks. See you
tomorrow.

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Stan hangs up. On the TV, Bush Sr. Finishes his speech
amidst the smiling Middle East leaders.

Stan looks at the mess around him, at the large plants
near the window, all dead. After a moment, he gets up and
starts cleaning up the place. He starts by throwing away
the dead plants.

*

26

INT. GROCERY STORE - LATER - DAY

26

Stan buys large quantities of everything. Nuts, salads,
cans of soup etc.

At the cash, Stan pays with a blank pre-signed check.

27

INT. MEDICAL SUPPLY STORE - LATER - DAY

27

Halloween decorations adorn the mobility aid displays.

Stan is leaning on a medical wall-ramp. He pretends to
walk with difficulty, leaning on the ramp. He nods to a
SALES REP wearing shorts and orthopedic shoes.

STAN

When can you deliver? My mom's coming
home from the hospital.

SALES REP

In a couple of days.

STAN

(nodding)

I'll also take the shower seat.

INSERT ON CHECKBOOK: pre-signed blank checks, signed with
the name Augustine Miskievicz. Stan's hand writes \$900.

Stan is at the cash with his purchases: a pill box, hot-
water bottle, vomit bucket, a walker, gauze bandages etc.

28 **EXT. PLACE RAOUL WALLENBERG SQUARE - DAY** 28 *

Stan eats alone, sitting on the steps of the statue.

29 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - LATER - DAY** 29

Stan drops his purchases on the floor. He takes some scotch tape and gauze bandages before heading out again.

30 **EXT. BUCK'S FURNITURE STORE - DAY** 30

CLIENTS are looking at the different pieces of vintage furniture for sale lined outside the shabby store. ZSOLTA, Buck's mother, is discussing prices with a GREEK CLIENT.

Buck looks conflicted. From inside the large window, she stares at her mother.

BUCK (V.O.)

I knew that if I got outside and talked to a client, my mother would make no sale at all.

VANESSA (V.O.)

All or Nothing Thinking: you look at things in an absolute. "They'll run away." Not so, you might know a lot about furniture and land a few sales yourself.

BUCK (V.O.)

They might also say something...

VANESSA (V.O.)

What's going on in your head when that happens?

Buck steps back into the shadows of the back store.

BUCK (V.O.)

It's like, they see me and I am naked... and I shatter in a million pieces.

31 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL COUNSELLING ROOM - DAY** 31 *

The 11 patients look at Vanessa. Otis, Jocko, Maggie, Petra, Pierre, Dan, Keith, Dinh, Pauline, Bandaged Stan and Buck.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

And THAT is the definition of social phobia.

Stan, face hidden with bandages, sits behind Buck.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

You also Jump to Conclusions. How can you know if you did not try?

BUCK

My mother doesn't want me to try.

Vanessa goes to a large *Cognitive Distortions* flip chart. It reads: *All or Nothing Thinking, Mental Filter, Jumping to Conclusions etc.* She points to... *Blaming others.*

Buck concedes her point. From behind, Bandaged Stan leans in and looks at Buck's face.

OTIS

Maybe deep down she wishes it, but can't show it.

BUCK

No, she says the worst things to me.

Buck launches into what her mother tells her.

After a while. Vanessa changes the subject.

Vanessa gets the other patients to talk about their own cognitive distortions. She does the same process with Keith.

Using FLIPCHARTS. Vanessa goes over meeting new people and flirting.

VANESSA

CBT works very well for meeting that special someone.

Vanessa gets Pauline to talk about dating. She gets her to rephrase using flipchart example. Pauline looks at Dinh after her example. VANESSA'S STUFF IS ALL VERY "APPLE PIE" and SWEET.

But when the patients talk about sex or intimacy, it gets much more serious and dark. We get them to talk:

Jocko lies about his girlfriend.

Petra talks about her youth with older men.

(CONTINUED)

Buck talks about her dating and how her mother told her she was a slut. *

Dan talks about girls that stopped calling back. *

Otis talks about... something about his youth. Drinking. *

Keith talks about physical solitude. *

Maggie talks about her sexualized relationship with men. Vanessa asks questions and Maggie makes a comment how Vanessa could get some men if she made an effort or something. That rubs her the wrong way. *

Vanessa changes the subject. *

VANESSA (CONT'D)

So, who actually did their homework and talked to a stranger? Petra?

Petra shakes her head.

DAN

Well. I called an old friend who I used to work with at a dealership and he told me to come in for an interview. *

VANESSA

Wow! That's great. You see, instead of catastrophizing, you acted and the outcome was not what you expected. *

DAN

Yes, but Dan is confused, he still doesn't know why it worked this time around. *

Vanessa asks him more questions. *

BANDAGED STAN raises his hand but quickly pulls it down. But Vanessa noticed. *

VANESSA

Well, how did it go Augustin?

BANDAGED STAN

No, it was nothing.

Vanessa is eager for some success of her therapy.

VANESSA

Come on! Who was it? What happened?

(CONTINUED)

BANDAGED STAN

It was a girl. I took her home.

Jocko chuckles. Vanessa glares at Stan as she starts packing her things, signaling the end of the session.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

You all better take this homework seriously and try again, because for session 3 tomorrow, we're going outside the hospital for some Exposure Activities with perfect strangers.

The patients get up silently. Jocko has trouble getting into his wheelchair. He readjusts his bandages under his pants. Bandaged Stan comes to help, but Jocko pushes him away.

JOCKO

(Proud)

I got it.

Otis is in no hurry to go home.

OTIS

(To Vanessa)

You want to grab some tea? It's been a while since the last workshop.

Vanessa looks at Otis for a moment, then nods.

As Bandaged Stan goes on his way out, Vanessa stops him.

VANESSA

I don't like impostors.

Bandaged Stan instinctively touches his face, nervous.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Here, we try to create a climate of honesty needed to vanquish social phobia. Lying won't make things better for you.

STAN

Yes. Thank you.

Vanessa suspiciously eyes Stan as he walks away.

INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER - DUSK 32

The patients slowly walk down the corridor. As Buck passes an ELDERLY WOMAN, she pats her on the arm.

ELDERLY WOMAN

What a darling angel you are.

33 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL COFFEE SHOP - LATER - DUSK** 33

Vanessa and Otis walk into the Coffee shop. The employee, MARC ROBERT, 42, balding and pudgy, smiles at her.

MARC ROBERT

The usual, V?

Marc tries to make conversation. He's clearly into Vanessa. He starts to talk about the internet. *
* *

34 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS** 34

After turning a corner, Bandaged Stan checks behind him and quickly darts into a handicapped washroom.

35 **EXT. PEEL SUBWAY STATION - LATER - NIGHT** 35 *

Stan, no bandages, walks down towards the entrance. He's sipping an energy drink and is in a hurry. *

Just as he's about to push the large subway doors, he runs into... Maggie's *
* *

36 **EXT. PEEL SUBWAY STATION - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 36 *

A look of panic appears in Stan's eyes. Maggie, carrying a grocery bag, is struggling with the door right next to him, but does not recognize Stan. *
* *

MAGGIE *

I've never tried that drink "Cobra."

Stan just smiles shyly, barely looking at her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I usually avoid the ones that are called after porn films.

Stan pushes the door for her, but does not enter. He goes into a different direction. *
* *

37 **OMITTED** 37 *

38

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

38

Stan comes home to the phone ringing. He turns on the lights and notices something on the floor.

INSERT ON FLOOR: a large brown and red stain on the carpet. The stain is faded, but will never disappear.

Stan ignores the BEEP of the answering machine and heads to his room.

39

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

39

Stan crashes on his bed, exhausted. The bed bumps against his bedside table causing all of his D&D figurines to fall down. All except two.

Stan looks at them: a wicked looking MUMMY WARRIOR, its face WRAPPED IN BANDAGES and a KNIGHT in shining armor.

Stan holds the Knight up and inspects it.

STAN (O.S.)

On, on, you. Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-torn lands! Fathers that have in these parts from morn till even fought. Stand now facing these elves of fair blood, and teach them how to war.

40

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

40

Stan is seated next to his buddies OLIVER and Vince (who we met at the bar). Both are around 20, drinking beer and not taking this very seriously. Contrary to Stan who's really into the game.

STAN (O.S.)

(grabs Vince)

And you, vile bowman, whose limbs were made in the arenas, show us here the mettle of your pasture; let us swear that you are worth your ill breeding. Follow your spirit, and upon this charge, let loose your arrows, your bile, and your rage...

Vince Burps loudly.

MARKUS, a 22-year old geek who thinks he is a Spartan, rolls some dice. He's the Dungeon Master.

(CONTINUED)

MARKUS

Dude! You're a pig.

Stan just tries to block the joke out and stays focused on what he is imagining about the story.

STAN

(to Markus)

We enter. They flank me.

MARKUS

You three enter and face a line of guards surrounding the Queen. Ready for battle.

Markus rolls his dice. He moves the KNIGHT FIGURINE on a map laid out on the table.

MARKUS (CONT'D)

As Vasserot approaches, he sees the frail queen under her blankets. Her blond hair has turned white from the poison rotting her insides. Suddenly: HIII! She screams.

STAN

Clear the room! We found the Ring!

(to Markus)

I hold it up in the air.

MARKUS

The suitors, nobles, Clerics look at you with contempt. Nobody moves. But they don't attack.

STAN

I approach her and kneel at her bedside.

VINCE

And you go down on her...

Oliver cracks up. Stan gives him a frustrated look.

MARKUS

The Queen looks at you. In her hollow eyes, you see a glimmer of hope.

STAN

OK. I put the ring on the Queen's finger.

Markus mimes an imaginary ring being put on his finger.

MARKUS

Aaaand... Nothing happens!!!!

Oliver hits Vince in the shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

OLIVER

(to Vince)

Just like you and Val last night.

VINCE

(lying)

Shut up! I shagged her, dude.

Determined to stay in the story. Stan looks at Markus.

STAN

Nothing?

MARKUS

What'd you expect? You must embrace the Dark Gods to *feel their powaaaah!*

STAN

OK, Vasserot clasps the Queen's hand and embraces the Ring's evil. Heart and soul.

Stan takes a few deep hissy breaths as if conjuring evil.

STAN (CONT'D)

Anal nathrak, uthvas bethud, do che-ol di-
enve. Anal nathrak, uthvas bethud.

MARKUS

You feel the ring pulsate with dark energies. Life is given back to the queen... Life taken... from YOUR lifeforce! You live. But your very essence gets sucked until you become....

Markus pulls out a new figurine from behind his books and drops it on the table: the bandaged Mummy Warrior.

MARKUS (CONT'D)

(undead voice)

VA-SSE-ROT the accursed!!

Markus takes Stan's Knight figurine and tosses it to him.

MARKUS (CONT'D)

Put that away, this is your new self. You loose half of your experience points.

STAN

That was evil Markus...

VINCE

Wait, maybe I can undo the spell.

(CONTINUED)

Stan looks at him, hopeful. Vince lifts his bum off the couch and farts loudly.

Oliver and Vince burst out laughing while Markus goes to open the window.

Stan stays silent for a moment, then turns to them, imitating them.

STAN

"Eh I went out to this bar yesterday, it was dope!" "Oh, I fucked this girl, no you didn't!" "Shit! Patrick Roy kept the Habs in the game last night".

(angry)

What the fuck guys? You can't for one minute, stay in character, live the myth... be great? Instead you insist on remaining insignificant. Maggots.

Oliver and Vince are silent. That sobered them up.

VINCE

Look dude. I know things are rough for you right now...

STAN

It's got nothing to do with that! Everything's fine.

Stan starts packing his things. Oliver and Vince don't know what to say.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Stan preps his mother's room: putting towels near the bed, the vomit bucket, a bottle of water, the walker etc.

The phone RINGS. Stan ignores it and organizes her messy bedside table: a mix of small golden pyramids and power crystals lying on top of health and wealth mantras written down on small pieces of papers.

The PERSON BEHIND THE FACE workshop flyer is in the mess.

In the background, we hear the answering machine kick in, but the volume is down.

42 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - LATER - DAY** 42

When the room is ready and organized, Stan puts the medical book on the pillow and opens it to a page with pictures of cancer face surgeries. It's as if the face of the patient was lying on the pillow.

Stan takes a step back, looks at the book on the pillow. Then, he brings his face inches away from the photo.

STAN

Good morning mom... How did you sleep?

Gently, he kisses the face on the picture. Practice.

43 **EXT. DR ZADEH HOSPITAL OFFICE PEEL - LATER - DAY** 43 *

Stan arrives at the door of a building adjacent to the main hospital. He hesitates for a second, then enters. *

44 **INT. DR ZADEH SECRETARY OFFICE - DAY** 44 *

Stan looks at the clock and waits. Further away, a 60-something SECRETARY wearing a WITCH HAT is typing. *

DR. ZADEH (O.S.)

Mr. Miskievicz?

Stan looks up and sees DR. ZADEH, a 50-year-old Iranian man, JOSEPHINE, a Jamaican Head Nurse and a FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER, both in their late forties.

45 **INT. DR ZADEH MEETING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY** 45

Stan enters the room, followed by the Doctor and the two ladies. They all sit down. Dr. Zadeh opens a file. The Social Worker gives Stan a compassionate smile, but Josephine's looks upset at Stan. *

STAN

How is she doing? I am so glad you did not remove everything. Can she talk? *
*
*

SOCIAL WORKER

She's started to say a few words. Mainly to ask about you. *
*

JOSEPHINE

How is your cold by the way? *

(CONTINUED)

Stan squirms uncomfortably in his chair.

STAN

Better. Thanks.

*

JOSEPHINE

It's been more than two weeks, you could have called...

STAN

(interrupting)

I called the day after the surgery.

Josephine is about to say something else, but notices the social worker's gaze and stops.

Silence. Stan coughs.

STAN (CONT'D)

So, when are you transferring her home?

SOCIAL WORKER

Pardon me?

STAN

The message said you would transfer her.

SOCIAL WORKER

Sending a patient home is called a discharge, Stan. We're transferring your mother to another unit.

Stan doesn't understand.

STAN

(looks at Dr. Zadeh)

Ok. But... our plan of getting her a room so that she can rest and get better before coming back home...

(looks at all of them)

That's still the plan, right?

SOCIAL WORKER

Do you have any other family in town?

STAN

They're all in Europe. But my dad's here.

SOCIAL WORKER

And... you're over 18, right?

STAN

I'm 19.

(CONTINUED)

They all look at each other. Dr. Zadeh clears his throat and launches into an impersonal monologue.

DR. ZADEH

Yes Stan, that was our plan. Some rest and care to perhaps get her strenght back. But in doing our post surgical MRI, of your mother's jaw, we found invasive new lesions in the cerebellum, where we had removed the initial tumor last year. We also found a lesion in the right cerebral hemisphere.

*
*
*

Stan tries to process what Zadeh is saying.

DR. ZADEH (CONT'D)

Surgery not being an option, we will try an aggressive radiotherapy protocol to slow down the cell growth. The radiation will impede the healing process of her jaw, which will be painful. But we will put her on Fentanyl to make her as comfortable as possible.

STAN

What's Fentanyl.

DR. ZADEH

It's synthetic Morphine.

STAN

So how long before she comes home?

DR. ZADEH

We are terribly sorry Stan. But she can't leave the hospital. With those results the outcome is... inevitable.

Stan leans back in his chair.

STAN

How many tumors?

DR. ZADEH

Four.

STAN

So, let's say the treatments work, she MIGHT get better, right? It's possible.

DR. ZADEH

There are always those cases, but...

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

JOSEPHINE

Ok. Let's go and see her.

Zadeh, Josephine and the social worker get up.

STAN

Now?

JOSEPHINE

It's good for family to be here when such news is given.

Stan nods, numb. He gets up slowly.

Stan faces the door leading out the room and hesitates. He has a look of dread in his eyes.

The social gives a look to Josephine.

SOCIAL WORKER

Stan, your mother is going to need a few things from home. Maybe you can go and pack things for her. Loose clothing, her glasses, some people even bring mementos and photos...

(looks at Josephine)

And then you can bring her things tomorrow morning for the rounds? With one of her friends or... your father?

Josephine nods.

JOSEPHINE

That works. We'll meet you at 7:00am.

Stan acquiesces and exits the room.

INT. DR ZADEH HOSPITAL OFFICE LOBBY - LATER - DAY

Halloween decorations adorn the lobby. Ghosts, skeletons, ghouls etc. Stan is at a pay phone.

STAN

Dad. It's Stan. Can you call me when you get back from lunch? It's urgent.

He hangs up and looks at the grinning Halloween balloons.

EXT. BATHING SUIT STORE - DAY

Vanessa is standing in front of the store, hesitating.

(CONTINUED)

She is looking at a thin mannequin wearing a cute lavender bikini in the window display.

She enters the store.

48 **INT. BATHING SUIT STORE - MOMENTS LATER**

48

SFX: DOOR CHIME.

A conversation stops abruptly between the SALESWOMAN and her CLIENT FRIEND. The two women eye Vanessa top down as she enters the store.

VANESSA

Hello. I'd like to see that cute lavender model on display.

The Saleswoman goes into overly-polite mode, treating Vanessa as if she were a child or an elderly person.

SALESWOMAN

Is it for a gift?

VANESSA

It's not for a gift, it's for me.

The Saleswoman remains extra polite. Too polite.

SALESWOMAN

Of course. I think we have that color in our "Encore" line.

49 **INT. BATHING SUIT STORE DRESSING BOOTH - DAY**

49

Vanessa enters an ultra small dressing booth.

SALESWOMAN (O.S.)

There. Please tell me if you want to try something else or if you require help.

Inside the booth, a sweating Vanessa tries to take off her clothes, but she is too large for the booth. If she continues, she will "spill" outside of the curtain.

Frustrated, she stops; and then, for what seems a long moment, stands motionless with her bathing suit in hand.

50 **INT. BATHING SUIT STORE - CONTINUOUS - DAY** 50

Both women are looking at the curtain of the dressing room. Silence. After a while, Vanessa comes out.

VANESSA

I'll think about it. Thanks.

She puts down the bathing suit on the counter. The women look at the bathing suit with contempt as Vanessa exits.

51 **INT. NUN'S ISLAND FURNISHED CONDO - DAY** 51

Bland furniture, unpacked boxes neatly piled on one side of the room, nothing on the walls. Jocko is seated at a multi-flex exercise machine that stands out in the middle of the near empty living room.

He grabs the bar to start doing some back exercises, but the pain stops him. Frustrated, he tries again, but can't. He then slams the bar against the machine.

52 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - LATER - DAY** 52

The phone is ringing. A few seconds later, the answering machine kicks in. In the background, we hear the door being unlocked.

Stan rushes to the phone and picks up.

STAN

Dad?!

BEEP! Too late, the person hung up. Stan frantically presses play and turns up the volume.

The crying voice of Paulette bursts out of the machine.

PAULETTE (O.S.)

I spoke to Dr. Zadeh and he told ...

BEEP! Stan immediately deletes the message.

53 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - LATER - DAY** 53

Stan is packing his mother's things in a TRAVEL BAG: nightgown, slippers, a framed photo. He closes the surgery book lying on the pillow and packs the pillow.

(CONTINUED)

He stuffs the little crystals and pyramids along with the mantras into the bag. There are also photos of sunny places and beautiful country houses. He takes it all.

Stan tries to stuff a Scrabble game in the bag, but it's full. Stan puts the game away.

The bag is done. Stan sits down and stares at it.

The room is very quiet.

EXT. OUTREMONT APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER - DAY

Stan walks towards an older man smoking a cigarette in front of the building.

Stan rings frantically at the buzzer of a posh building.

No answer. Stan starts to yank on the door while buzzing other apartments, until...

VOICE

(angry)

Yes, what is it!?

STAN

Is Andrei Misckievicz here? I am is son,
and he's not at work!

VOICE

Oh hello... No, he left on vacation to Mexico with your mother.

Stan steps away from the door, looking up.

STAN

Step-mother...

OMITTED

INT. HANDICAPPED WASHROOM - LATER - DUSK

Stan stares at himself in the mirror. Then he deform his face with thin transparent tape: bending his nose like a piglet, twisting his ear, taping his eyelid inside out.

His face is taped into a contorted permanent scream. A monster. Slowly, Stan hides his face with gauze bandages.

Petra hands a portable tape recorder to Vanessa.

PETRA

My goal is to sing in a choir. Here's what I've been working on...

CLOSE ON Vanessa's thick finger as she presses PLAY on a TAPE RECORDER. Nina Simone's "*I Wish I Knew How it Would Feel to Be Free*" comes on.

NINA SIMONE SONG

I wish I knew how it would feel to be free. I wish I could break all the chains holdin' me.

Otis, Jocko, Maggie, Buck, Petra, Pierre, Dan, E.R., Dinh, Pauline are seated in front of a large table where they are trying different hats, wigs and MAKEUP products. *

VANESSA *

These products were generously provided for by several cosmetics companies that want to make women look their best. *

She takes a sample product and reads from it. *

VANESSA (CONT'D) *

Bringing out your inner beauty... And it works for men too. *

Vanessa is standing. Her large hips swaying to the song, as she supervises this Kumbaya moment of her workshop.

Bandaged Stan enters the counselling room. Vanessa checks her watch.

NINA SIMONE RECORDING

I wish I could say All the things that I should say.

Petra, is combing her hair to partially hide the "bad side" of her face. Jocko is trying a sports cap on, acting cool.

JOCKO

My girlfriend will LOVE this one.

CLOSE ON BANDAGED STAN: Stan's eyes.

In front of a mirror, Maggie finishes putting some heavy duty skin-colored makeup on her facial scars. Her hand starts to tremble as she tries to put lipstick.

VANESSA

How's "camouflage" going?

Dan (Dave) was trying a tie or something.

*

*

MAGGIE

I look like a clown. I can't show up like this for an audition.

*

(CONTINUED)

SONG: I wish I could live like I'm longing to live.

Maggie is getting really depressed, on the verge of tears. Her hands tremble as she slowly touches her destroyed face. She gazes right through herself.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

This is bullshit. Who will want this..? *

Song: I wish I could do all the things that I can do.

BANDAGED STAN looks at Maggie's trembling hands.

The hands reach up to the face of AUGUSTINE dressed to go to work in the bathtub flashback. Augustine's gaze goes to the huge scar that lies on her chest.

Vanessa puts a hand on Maggie's shoulder.

VANESSA

Don't give up now Maggie. The sadness stage often overlaps with the other stages of grief.

MAGGIE

I'm not giving up! I'm pissed off! Or in the "anger stage", to use your high school psychology!

VANESSA

It's perfectly normal to be unnerved about facing the world. Tomorrow at noon, I'll go swim for the first time in 15 years. I know how you feel...

MAGGIE

No you don't. Nothing can undo this. I can't just workout and make my face become normal!

Vanessa forces a smile and moves to another patient.

Maggie notices that Bandaged Stan is staring at her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

What?!

Stan forces a smile.

PAT (O.C.)

Smile!

Stan around 18 and without bandages, forces another smile. He's at the Christian Dior Counter, standing awkwardly between JOHANNE, a Christian Dior supervisor, and Augustine, his mother.

Stan wants to leave, but Augustine grabs him the by arm and keeps him there where she flashes a big smile.

Augustine, older, is way thinner with a hairdo that's too blond and too curly. Probably a wig. Her face is gaunt and she put too much lipstick on. She's trying to look pretty and young, but her sickly state and pale skin can't be hidden. It's a bit pathetic.

Stan picks ups a bunch of bags.

STAN

OK, on y va.

Augustine takes her handbag. As she moves, her shoulders are very stiff as if she had a neck ache.

AUGUSTINE

Anyway, it was nice to see you all. We've got some more shopping for Stan. He's going into finance at McGill next Month. He was kind enough to come with me to see you, but we still have to buy his pyjamas.

STAN

(ashamed)

Maman, arrête.

PAT, a 26-year old cute Dior cosmetician, hands the camera to Stan, smiling.

PAT

Wow, finance. Aren't you a little young.

STAN

(joking)

I have a superior intellect.

AUGUSTINE

Not superior enough to get your math grades up and get into Med School.

She shoots a quick reproachful glance at Stan.

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Playing his dungeons dragons game. *With this Markus. I don't like him, he takes drugs. I see it in his eyes.* People have committed suicide with this game!

*
*
*
*

STAN

MAMAN!

Pat changes the subject.

PAT

And you like Finance?

STAN

I don't know. I like literature, folklore, history...

AUGUSTINE

Literature is a great hobby, my son. He's so smart.

(to Pat)

He'll do his MBA after his Bachelors.

STAN

OK, I'm going.

Stan nods goodbye to Pat and starts walking away.

Augustine quickly turns to Johanne.

AUGUSTINE

As you can see, I'm almost ready to work. If you would just ask head office to keep my spot Johanne. I'll be back soon.

Johanne lies. There is no way Augustine can work here.

JOHANNE

Of course Augustine.

AUGUSTINE

Don't just "of course me" Jo. I took you in, remember?

Augustine goes after her son who is waiting in the middle of the cosmetics alley.

INT. SHOPPING MALL COSMETICS SECTION - MOMENTS LATER

But as she walks away, we realize that Augustine is very weak and that she struggles to follow Stan, even though he's carrying all the bags.

(CONTINUED)

STAN

La rousse, Pat. Quelle âge est-ce qu'elle a?

AUGUSTINE

Elle?! Pas elle Stanislas. Soit pas intéressée par elle. Elle a a peine fini son secondaire. Elle est vulgaire.

Stan picks up the pace, leaving her mother behind.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Tu vas trop vite. Pourquoi tu me laisses toujours toute seule?

Then, Augustine readjusts her wig. Her wrinkled bald skull briefly appears and we catch a glimpse of a large scar on the back of her head.

Stan looks around, ashamed. From far away, he can see that Pat is looking at him from behind the counter, a look of pity on her face.

He sees a few customers that stare. And the he sees Johanne's face. She gives a forced smile.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Est-ce que je te fais honte?

Stan denies it, clenching up. Tears welling up.

STAN

Allez, viens. On rentre à la maison.

AUGUSTINE

Tu marches 3 mètres devant moi. Comme ton père. As tu honte de moi, mon fils?

STAN

Non! C'est pas ça. C'est juste des trou de cul ici. Ils veulent pas que tu reviennes.

AUGUSTINE

Et tu crois que je le sais pas? C'est pour. Mais au lieu d'aider ta mère à récupérer son travail pour qu'elle paye pour tes études, tu penses qu'à toi et me fait avoir l'air d'une idiote.

STAN

Tu veux que je fasse quoi? Que j'y retourne et que je les frappe jusqu'à ce qu'ils te ré-engagent?

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE

Laisse moi. Vas-y. Je vais me
drébrouiller toute seule.

Eyes red with tears, Stan tries to speak, but can't. He
stays next to his mother as she slowly walks away.

62 **INT. HOSPITAL COUNSELLING ROOM - PRESENT TIME - DUSK** 62

Bandaged Stan is alone. The patients are gone.

VANESSA (O.S.)

Augustin? Come on! Augustin.

Vanessa is at the door, waiting.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Everything's going to be ok.

63 **INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER - DUSK** 63

The group (Otis, Jocko, Maggie, Buck Petra, Pierre, Dan,
E.R., Dinh, Pauline), now all "camouflaged" with makeup,
caps, or scarves, heads towards the front doors. Stan,
hidden by his bandages is walking among them.

63a **EXT. HOSPITAL UNIVERSITY STREET EXIT - DUSK** 63a

The group comes out of a side entrance.

64 **EXT. STANLEY STREET - NIGHT** 64 *

Vanessa leads the group of 11 patients down the Street. *

VANESSA *

So who wants to go buy cigarettes? *

I've also got trying out clothes, *

ordering a drink in a restaurant. *

The group keeps going towards downtown. Further away,
SEVERAL MCGILL FRAT BOYS notice Vanessa.

VANESSA (CONT'D) *

We'll split up and go for exposure *

activities. But I want you to identify *

your distortions when you're going *

through with them. *

FRAT BOY (O.S.) *

Dude! Isn't that your mom?

(CONTINUED)

Vanessa glares at the attractive young man who spoke.

VANESSA

(to the patients)

Ignore them.

The group of patients stops next to a bar that has a large bay window through which we can see the trendy crowd enjoying their drinks. Vanessa, now completely frustrated by the start of the evening, turns to Maggie.

VANESSA

(Vindictive)

So... Who wants to go inside and order a drink. Maggie? You can pretend you're meeting an agent or photographer.

*

MAGGIE

Are you serious? What would I do?

*

VANESSA

It's ok if you don't want to step outside of your comfort zone. But remember, you came to this workshop for a reason.

Maggie takes up the challenge.

MAGGIE

Fine, I'll go. But I won't go alone.

Nobody volunteers. Vanessa points at Bandaged Stan.

VANESSA

Augustin, since you're so good at socializing...

Stan hesitates, but Maggie grabs his arm and pulls him towards the tapas bar, determined.

Maggie and BANDAGED STAN enter and go towards a YOUNG HOST in his mid 20s. He looks like a more mature and confident version of Stan.

MAGGIE

Hi, we'd like a table for two.

HOST

Do you have reservations?

MAGGIE

No, but you seem to have some room.

She smiles, the Host hesitates, looks inside.

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Plus, we're disguised!

She's touched a chord in the Host with her joke.

HOST

OK, follow me.

Maggie turns to Stan, nervous. They go in the restaurant.

INT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Maggie instinctively goes for a table near the front window. But as they pull up chairs, the host grabs their attention with his most polite voice.

HOST

This area might be a little noisy for you. Let me to show you a quieter spot.

Maggie trustingly follows the host to another area.

INT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The Host leads Stan and Maggie towards the back.

He takes Maggie to a lone table by a nook in the wall near the washrooms: their table is way at the back of the restaurant, hidden from all.

HOST

I'll get your waiter.

INT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - NIGHT

Maggie just stands there, frozen. Then she starts to cry. A little at first, then more. Painful tears come out.

Her makeup is now running as she wipes her eyes.

MAGGIE

This was a stupid idea.

STAN'S POV: CLOSE-UP of peoples' eyes looking at them.

And then for an instant, Stan sees Johanne, dressed in her Christian Dior outfit--She's in his imagination. Johanne gives him a fake smile and waves goodbye.

(CONTINUED)

After noticing Johanne, Stan looks at Maggie.

After hesitating, he awkwardly pats her on the back.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

(angry)

I don't want to be here. I want to go home. Please take me out of here.

*

Maggie is a mess. Bandaged Stan ushers her out.

The Host, tending to clients, pretends not to notice.

EXT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The patients are huddled around Vanessa who consoles Maggie with the benevolence of a tyrant back in power.

MAGGIE

(crying)

It's never going to happen, I am an idiot.

*

VANESSA

Don't say that Sweetie. It was too soon. I'm so sorry.

Stan goes into the side alley of the restaurant.

MAGGIE

Don't touch me!

EXT. RESTAURANT ALLEY - NIGHT

Stan leans against the wall.

MAGGIE (O.C.)

(touching her face)

Who's going to want to take pictures of this!

Suddenly, Stan puts his hoodie on... For an instant, he has the same posture as the Mummy Warrior figurine.

Stan takes a garbage can and rips the bag open.

VANESSA (O.C.)

Not so. You are a beautiful person with a lot to offer. Desirable and...

72 **EXT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - NIGHT** 72

Buck notices that Stan, holding the garbage can, goes in.

73 **INT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - NIGHT** 73

Stan storms in and stands in the middle of the room, nervous. His hands tremble and his voice waivers.

STAN

(shouting)

You thought she was disgusting? How disgusting is this you fuckers!!

He then swings his garbage can around and sprays revolting garbage juice on clients and staff alike.

74 **EXT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - NIGHT** 74

Outside, Maggie has stopped crying as she, Vanessa, and the group, look in utter disbelief at inside the restaurant where Stan soils everybody with garbage.

VANESSA

Oh no, no, no, no!

75 **INT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - NIGHT** 75

Silence. Everybody is just too stunned to react.

The Host comes back to his senses and rushes Stan. Stan turns away, pretending to leave, and with a feint, swivels around and throws the garbage can at the Host, taking him completely by surprise.

The Host gets it in the face and falls back. The can bounces into a CHIC MAN's back and crashes on his table, breaking glasses and spraying more juice on people. The man screams in pain. A woman throws up. It's chaos.

76 **EXT. DOWNTOWN TAPAS BAR - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** 76

BANDAGED STAN bursts out of the restaurant.

BANDAGED STAN

Run!

Buck reacts first. He grabs Jocko's wheelchair and bolts in the alley. The group runs clumsily after them.

(CONTINUED)

Stan kicks the restaurant door shut. Glass breaks. The shock of his kick bought him precious seconds. Stan bolts through the alley after the group.

EXT. PEEL STREET BACK ALLEYS - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Vanessa and the group run in the downtown alleyways. They are in complete shock and disbelief as adrenaline surges through their veins. Buck giggles like a little girl.

The patients run at different speeds. Some go right, others go left, it's a debacle.

In the distance Pierre is holding his face while running and screaming.

PIERRE

J'ai perdu ma prothèse! J'ai perdu ma prothèse de 400 piasses tabarnak!

Suddenly, the Host turns a corner and is right behind them. He's angry and he's fast. Faster than the patients.

BUCK

Oh Shit!

The group clears another corner. As the Host follows, Stan tackles him. In the distance, a SIREN is heard.

OTIS

(to Jocko)

Can't you do something? Do you have your badge.

*
*
*
*

JOCKO

(laughing)

No I don't have my badge!

*
*
*

The patients can't believe this is happening to them.

Stan tries to run away, but the Host manages to hold on to his shirt and bandages. Stan kicks him repeatedly.

STAN

You know what you did was wrong!

The Host finally lets go. Stan runs away.

78

EXT. ST CATHERINE STREET - NIGHT

78

-On the busy street, Keith and Petra hug the wall. They go for the fake movie kiss to evade pursuers. But it does not work out.

*
*
*

-Dinh and Pauline, find themselves in front of a locked door. Pauline goes for the kiss to escape the waiters.

*
*

79

EXT. PEEL STREET - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

79

Pierre, comes out of the alley hiding his nose and tries to act natural. He's scared.

(CONTINUED)

Several waiters catch up to him and whirl him around, angry. Pierre lets go his nose to reveal a GAPING HOLE in the middle of his face.

The waiters stop dead in their tracks. Pierre tries to act naturally.

PIERRE

On respire bien ici. L'air est pur n'est-ce pas?

The waiters back off while Pierre walks away.

EXT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - LATER - NIGHT

Some of the patients have regrouped behind a large container: Otis, Jocko, Maggie, Buck, Petra and Keith.

Otis slumps on the metal structure, while Vanessa is making loud wheezing sounds.

They are in semi-darkness except for the light of a lamppost outlining them.

Stan arrives a few seconds later. His fake bandages have been pulled off. But in the dark, it is barely noticeable.

Wheezing, Vanessa corners Stan against the container.

VANESSA

Are you out of your mind? You can't just do things like that!

STAN

Why not! They got what they deserved in there! Didn't they?

The patients got revenge and it felt good.

Maggie can't believe it. She laughs nervously.

JOCKO

Did you see the look on that woman's face? She got some in her mouth!

BUCK

And then it was, Cobra commander: Retreaaaaat!

A car approaches in the parking lot. In the semi-darkness, Vanessa notices Stan's bandages have come off.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

What the hell?!

Vanessa grabs Stan's arm. She's strong. With her free hand, Vanessa pulls on Stan's bandages.

At the same moment, the car's headlights shine on the patients, fully illuminating them. And that's when they all notice it: Stan's face isn't burnt or deformed.

The headlights fade away. The group is back in darkness.

VANESSA (O.C. (CONT'D))

Who the fuck are you!?

Stan tries to run, but Vanessa holds him firmly.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

I'm calling the police.

Stan speaks very fast to try and clear the situation.

STAN

No, please! My name's Stan and Augustine is my mother.

VANESSA

What are you doing here?

STAN

She's had face surgery. I wanted to get it right when she came home. To be ok with her, no matter... no matter what she looked like...

VANESSA

You practiced on us?!

Petra hits Stan repeatedly.

PETRA

Fuck off!

Vanessa hold her back.

BUCK

I don't fucking understand this.

E.R. shakes his head and leaves.

E.R.

This is bullshit.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

You can't just do that!

Petra spits on Stan, but her crooked mouth causes the spit to drool on her chin. She points to Vanessa as she starts walking away.

PETRA

This is your fault! The hospital's going to hear about this!

OTIS

(to Stan)

So you actually looked for a group of disfigured patients across Montreal?!

STAN

No! My mom registered for your workshop.

OTIS

Probably because of you.

STAN

Yes because of me!!

That quiets everybody down.

STAN (CONT'D)

But the tumors came back, and...

Stan can't continue. Vanessa calms down.

VANESSA

OK Stan. What you did is very wrong. But I understand that things might be tough for you right now. So I'll give you the number of a counsellor I know.

STAN

Is it ok if I stay until the end instead?

VANESSA

You can't stay here, Stan.

STAN

It's just... They'll be more treatments and she's going to get worse, and I have to be ready.

VANESSA

No.

Stan lowers his head.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

You don't belong here. You're not like them.

STAN

So I have to be excluded because I am different?

He's got a point. The patients look at Vanessa.

VANESSA

Maggie, give him a hug please.

Stan and Maggie look at each other, taken aback. Maggie comes closer and hugs Stan.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

(to Stan)

How does that feel? Are you disgusted?

Stan takes a good look at Maggie.

STAN

No. Of course not.

VANESSA

See? You're not shallow, Stan. It's grief, not disgust that you're feeling. You don't need to be here, you're "cured."

Stan and Maggie separate.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

My patients are not to be used for your needs. They each bring something to this workshop. Their experiences. What do you contribute?

(to her patients)

Let's go inside.

Vanessa heads back towards the hospital entrance, followed by what's left of her patients.

Maggie stays a moment longer.

MAGGIE

Well, no man ever defended me like this.

She gives him a warm hug. A real one this time.

VANESSA (O.C.)

Come on Maggie. We've got to go look for the others.

(CONTINUED)

Maggie hates being patronized by Vanessa, she let's go of Stan who wants to cling to the hug.

Stan stays alone in the darkness.

INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL CORRIDOR S4 - LATER - NIGHT

Vanessa goes from one corridor to the other.

VANESSA

(to the group)

OK, stay here, I'll go look at the University street entrance.

STAN (O.C.)

I think contribute.

Stan has entered the lobby.

VANESSA

Please, they've had enough for one night.

STAN

Your workshop. It doesn't work.

JOCKO

Kid is right.

STAN

It does not deal about what's really important: love, sex, the shame of not being desirable. Letting all that go.

VANESSA

What do you know about that?

STAN

I know how tiring it is to always try to put the other at ease. To please. To fear causing revulsion. It's draining. You know what I'm talking about?

Timid nods. They know exactly what he's talking about.

STAN (CONT'D)

Wouldn't you like not to give a fuck about what the other person thinks. Whether it is a stranger or family? Like a drunk or a madman?

Stan gets closer to them.

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

What you felt like for 5 minutes earlier tonight. When they got garbage all over themselves. A giant fuck you!

They smile.

STAN (CONT'D)

What if you didn't care what they said, or thought. They think you're freaks, well screw them!

VANESSA

DO NOT USE THIS WORD!

Vanessa goes to the counter, she signals for Marc Robert to hand her the phone. He gives it to her and she dials.

INT. ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL CORRIDOR S4 - NIGHT

STAN

Let me stay and I promise you no one will ever treat you like that again!

That argument hits hard.

VANESSA (O.C)

I'm calling security! All of you, leave him here.

The patients stay where they are. They are hooked.

STAN

They treat you like garbage and ruin your lives? You fight back and ruin theirs!

MAGGIE

We don't want to pick fights in bars.

STAN

I am talking about you saying Screw it!

MAGGIE

So you help us defend ourselves and we help you become a good caring son, is that it?

Vanessa hangs up and comes back towards Stan. Maggie moves in front of Stan, challenging Vanessa.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Wait. Maybe he can stay.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

Oh really?! And to do what?

MAGGIE

Could we not try it out with him?
Unless this is outside of your comfort zone.

Touché. Vanessa is cornered.

Unsure, Buck looks at Jocko.

JOCKO

This is going nowhere anyway.

VANESSA

After what happened tonight, if we try this and it doesn't work, you won't go and complain to the hospital?

They nod. Damn.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

(to Stan)

Do you have any idea what you're doing?

STAN

I know you've got to get out of this hospital.

BUCK

How about my mother's store tomorrow?
We close early...

STAN

And when you meet a superficial asshole, it's learning to hit them where it hurts and feeling good about it.

That seems agreeable. Vanessa holds her hand out to Stan.

VANESSA

Okay then, deal.

That was easy.

Stan shakes her hand and then... BLAM! Vanessa knees him in the groin. Stan falls to the ground like a sack of potatoes, screaming in agony.

All the patients look at Vanessa.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Hey, it works! I feel good already.

(to Stan)

But don't you ever deceive me again.

MAGGIE

Did you get your degree in a box of crackerjack?

83 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

83

The place is dark. Only the light of the washroom is on.

84 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT WASHROOM - CONTINUOUS**

84

The FRAMED photo with Johanne, Stan and Augustine sits on the sink counter

Stan is in his underwear. He's holding an ice pack to his groin with one hand and masturbating with the other.

As he climaxes, Stan lets out a beast-like shout.

He sits there, back turned to us, catching his breath.

85 **INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING.**

85

Stan is sleeping soundly. Suddenly the phone rings in the other room. Stan barely stirs.

After a while, BEEP, the answering machine kicks in, and suddenly, a voice comes at full volume.

NURSE JOSEPHINE (O.C.)

Come on Augustine, you can do it.

Stan opens his eyes in terror as a barely intelligible female voice comes on. The voice of a monster.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.)

Stanislasss...It's M...Mo-oom. The doctors were here. Wh...where are you?

86 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

86

Stan comes rushing in towards the phone and answering machine and freezes just before picking up.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.)

I need to speak with gnouuu..

(CONTINUED)

86

CONTINUED:

86

Shallow breathing and gasping and then BEEP! Stan just sits there, frozen. He looks at the time: 9:15 am.

*
*

87

INT. AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

87

Stan runs into the room, picks up his mother's bag.

*

88

INT. BUS - LATER - MORNING

88

Stan is on the bus with the travel bag on his lap. Someone sits behind him. Someone with a sweet voice.

VALERIE (O.C.)

Stanislas?

Stan turns around. We never fully see VALERIE, except her blond hair and youthful mouth as she leans towards Stan.

STAN

Val... How is it going?

VALERIE

Okay. I am in Psych at McGill. You?

STAN

Finance. But... taking the session off.

VALERIE

I heard that you're mother was sick.

STAN

Yes. It's not good...

*

VALERIE

I am so sorry.

Stan sees the Royal Victoria Hospital approaching. He hesitates to get up. Valerie puts a hand on his shoulder. They say nothing. She puts on the walkman and headset on Stan's head.

*
*

The bus travels through a green scenery (on Mount Royal)

*

The music stops. The bus is back in the city.

*

VALERIE (CONT'D)

I have to get off.

Valerie's smiling mouth gives Stan a kiss on the cheek.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

I'll think about you...

(CONTINUED)

88

CONTINUED:

88

And just like that the blond wisp of hair leaves. Stan stays on the Bus.

*
*

89

EXT. PARC OF ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL - LATE AFTERNOON

89

*

A SPORTY 20-SOMETHING COUPLE is playing frisbee in the park. The Royal Victoria Hospital looms up on the hill.

Jocko, in his crutches, is walking with Vanessa. Maggie, Otis and Buck are with them. Maggie's hair is partially in front of her face. Buck wears a cap, casting a shadow on as much of his face as possible. Otis' collar is up, he's wearing a panama hat.

*

VANESSA

(to Jocko)

You still haven't stated your goal.

Jocko looks at the frisbee couple. His eyes follow the GIRL, running around and jumping to catch the frisbee.

JOCKO

She reminds me... She looks just like my girlfriend.

VANESSA

Lucky guy. What's her name?

Jocko tears his eyes away from the frisbee Girl.

JOCKO

Brenda... We were into the outdoors; rock climbing, swimming.

VANESSA

You'll be able to swim soon...

90

EXT. PARC OF ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

90

*

Stan, bag on his lap, is waiting, sitting on a secluded park bench. Vanessa and Jocko arrive.

JOCKO

What about you? You went and did your thing at the pool?

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

Going tomorrow.

JOCKO

Ha! Good luck with that.

STAN

Good luck with what?

JOCKO

(sarcastic)

Vanessa says she'll do laps tomorrow afternoon at the Peel YMCA. We should all go and cheer her on...

VANESSA

So, What's in the bag, Stan? Our lesson plan?

STAN

I've got to take this to my mother.

VANESSA

Is she at the Vic?

STAN

(lying)

No, she's at St Luc.
Where are the others?

VANESSA

Some cancelled. Some said it was not for them. Others had plans.

*
*
*

Otis, whose eye had been caught by TWO TEENAGE GIRLS walking home from school, lags behind.

EXT. PARC OF ROYAL VIC HOSPITAL - DAY

*

The group is seated at a table. Stan is telling his story.

STAN

My dad left my mom after she got sick for the first time. To go with a younger woman. Since I was 5, my mom used to tell me her breast had been removed just like the amazons: to help her shoot the bow. And then later that she had a bionic breast. Just like Jamie Summers, to give her strength.

(CONTINUED)

The patients are listening.

STAN (CONT'D)

Whenever she brought a date home, and I went to bed. I knew what was going to happen. I knew how worried she was. Getting enough glasses of wine into him, talking about her body before showing it. keeping her clothes for as long as she could. All these efforts so that the guy would not run off. These fucking efforts so that the asshole would give caresses that heal the soul.

VANESSA

(dismissive)

And you can help with that?

STAN

No. Nobody can. Nothing can fix it. They'll be peace in the Middle East before people treat you normally.

VANESSA

Oh boy.

Stan spots TWO WOMEN sitting on a nearby bench.

*

STAN

Buck, go to these women and talk up this great sale at your furniture shop.

Buck is unsure. She looks at TWO WOMEN sitting at a nearby bench.

BUCK

What if...

STAN

They stare? You say, "It turns me on when you stare," or "I'm contagious!"

BUCK

But we have no sale on right now.

Vanessa smiles. Stan's methods are useless. But Stan won't give up.

STAN

So WE have to shatter you in a million pieces. Then you'll be immune. Just like with a virus.

(CONTINUED)

The patients are not exactly sure what he means.

STAN (CONT'D)

Get immune to the words. Get immune to the stares. Then you're invincible.

STAN (CONT'D)

Jocko you're not afraid, right? You're willing to try something else.

(off his look)

What's the worse thing they can call you?

JOCKO

A cripple? Useless.

STAN

Okay, not bad. Now you guys insult him. No niceties. He can take it.

Jocko waits expectantly, wanting to appear tough.

STAN (CONT'D)

You wanted to try something new.

Hesitantly, Otis starts.

OTIS

You ever seen the film *My Left Foot*?

BUCK

He's more like *The Hunchback of Precinct 13*.

MAGGIE

Quasimodo Cop.

Jocko laughs, he can take it.

STAN

I hope that you have a good memory to remember what it was like to be with a woman, because it is NEVER going to happen again! You fucking burnt toast! Fried chicken cop!

Jocko's smile fades.

STAN (CONT'D)

You'll never fuck. Never be considered a real cop by the others alpha cops. They'll probably move in on your girl and take her from you.

(CONTINUED)

Mad with rage, Jocko lunges at Stan but trips on his crutches.

*
*

JOCKO

Fuck you! Fuck you!

Stan pulls back and Jocko falls hard on the floor, exploding into tears. Jocko the cop breaks down, drool and tears streaming down the scars of his face.

Vanessa goes to Jocko and tries to calm him down.

VANESSA

It's OK, it's OK. It's not true, he's an idiot, women don't do this. People don't abandon their loved ones.

JOCKO

(screaming and crying)

Yes they do! Mine did! She left me! She left me BECAUSE I got like this!

Vanessa gives a look to Maggie, who averts her eyes.

Vanessa then turns to Stan.

VANESSA

You can't help, Stan. Just go take care of your mother.

With a strange look in his eyes, he backs away holding his bag while staring at Jocko who is yelling on the floor.

Vanessa turns to Maggie.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

How about we get back to our regular programming? Maggie, what do you say?

Maggie doesn't say anything. She looks at Jocko as he keeps yelling and crying.

A FATHER exits with his TEENAGE DAUGHTER, passing in front of Otis who is leaning at the counter with Vanessa.

Otis looks at the girl and tries to give off his most benevolent smile. She averts her gaze and hurries away.

Marc Robert is preparing several cups of tea while talking Vanessa's ear off. He's clearly into her.

(CONTINUED)

MARC ROBERT

...So my son set up his account here at McGill before leaving for Denmark. And now if we both go into the game at the same time, our characters can play and talk to each other!

VANESSA

(half listening)

Like on the phone?

BUCK (O.C.)

I don't know, I learned some stuff.

MAGGIE (O.C.)

It's Mickey Mouse bullshit!

Vanessa turns around to see Maggie arguing with Buck. Not listening to Marc's conversation.

MARC ROBERT

No, in writing!

(makes another cup)

I don't care about the game, so we go into an inn, write to each other and see what the other is writing instantly!

Vanessa takes the cups of tea and hurries back to the table where Jocko Maggie, Buck are sitting. Otis follows.

MARC ROBERT (O.C.)

(CONT'D)

With this thing and that game, you can talk to anyone in the world, for free! I should just show you, one of these days...

VANESSA

(to Maggie)

Look, I assure you that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy works. Let's go back to our classroom and...

Maggie, eyes still red, interrupts her.

MAGGIE

Works in here maybe. But outside, no.

The others agree with her. Vanessa looks to her ally.

VANESSA

It helped Otis...

(CONTINUED)

JOCKO

Otis' got nowhere else to go.

VANESSA

You know nothing about Otis!

MAGGIE

We know his family hates him, so he's alone. But he has children. He shouldn't even be here.

OTIS

I'll have you know that I grew up at a time far less tolerant than today!

Maggie puts on her coat. Vanessa is losing them.

She sees her 50-year old SUPERVISOR at the entrance of the coffee shop. The man has glasses and a kind demeanor, but a look of stress passes in front of Vanessa's eyes. She motions one minute to her supervisor.

VANESSA

Progress takes time. Baby steps. I'll make some changes.

MAGGIE

What kind of changes?

VANESSA

We can meet outside of the hospital.

Jocko shakes his head, that was the kid's idea.

BUCK

How about my mother's store tomorrow?
We close early...

Vanessa latches on to that.

VANESSA

Great idea. Tomorrow night 6pm at Buck's place.

(to Buck)

Give them the address. I've got to go.

And with that she rushes towards the exit and her supervisor.

Stan walks in the long corridor leading to the elevators. The place is eerily quiet and empty.

94 **INT. ROYAL VIC ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER - DAY** 94

The doors open and Stan just stands there, staring.

Stan's POV: a sign reading PALLIATIVE CARE UNIT

Stan double checks the NOTE he's holding with the floor and room number written on it. He looks up again. The doors start to close. KA-KLANG! Stan keeps them open.

Stan hesitates. Then makes a decision.

95 **EXT. PALLIATIVE CARE UNIT - CONTINUOUS - DAY** 95

From outside of the elevators, we see the quiet corridor.

After a moment, the travel bag SLIDES OUT onto the floor.

The note with the room number is wedged in one of the bag's pockets.

The doors close with a chime. Stan is not going.

95A **EXT. HOUSE BASEMENT - LATER - NIGHT** 95A *

Stan crouches by the basement window of a house. He peers inside the window and sees: Oliver, Vince and Markus playing D&D and rolling dice. *

After a while, Stan silently moves away from the window. *

96 **INT. VANESSA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT** 96

Rows of trophies, ribbons, photos of a BEAUTIFUL 8-YEAR OLD in all kinds of pageants. A collection of sewing thimbles is displayed near the trophies.

In a neat little 2 bedroom, Vanessa is angrily rummaging through her closet, cursing. After a while, she pulls out an old flowery red bathing suit. Vanessa puts the bathing suit against herself.

97 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT** 97

Stan is standing in the well-prepared room of his mother.

He looks at his reflection in a wall mirror. Suddenly, the phone rings in the other room.

CLOSE ON answering machine: 11 new messages.

(CONTINUED)

The answering machine kicks in. The volume is on mute, so Stan just hears the long BEEP.

Stan punches the mirror, cracking it in many places.

CLOSE ON MIRROR: the cracks show Stan's scarred face.

In the broken reflection, we see Stan start to punch the mattress in a silent rage. One, two, three, four etc. Then, he starts kicking the mattress like a madman.

Suddenly... CRACK! Stan accidentally kicks the metal foot of the bed. He collapses in pain on the bed.

Clutching a pillow, Stan emits long scream. After he runs out of air, Stan closes his eyes. Drained.

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY - DREAM - FLASHBACK - DAY

Augustine is being held by a **bookstore employee (Security Guard)** in front of a shopping mall bookstore. *

She has no makeup on and she's dressed with a tie-die shirt and a jean jacket with studs. She has a bike chain around her shoulders and her jeans are tucked in her boots. A bandana covers her bald head. She looks like a bald hippy cancer survivor. A stark contrast compared to how trendy she used to be.

Stan comes in running.

STAN

Yes? What happened? I'm her son.

PUDGY SECURITY GUARD

Sir, your mother took some books under her jacket and tried to sneak out of the store without paying.

The security guard points to a bunch of self-help and meditation books piled up near the entrance of the store.

Stan looks at his frail mother, then to guard.

STAN

Are you sure?

**OLD POLISH SALESWOMAN
(O.S.)**

Yes! They fell! Books fell out!

A 5 foot 4 POLISH STORE MANAGER comes out waving her finger at Stan. She's probably 65, trying to look 35. With huge mascara lines and layers of makeup piled onto one another. She looks like Jack Nicholson as the Joker. An abomination of beauty products.

(CONTINUED)

**OLD POLISH SALESWOMAN
(CONT'D)**

She steal books! She pay!

STAN

I'll pay if she damaged any.

Augustine sticks her pasty tongue out at the Old Woman.

AUGUSTINE

Too many facelifts Zsa Zsa Gabor!

Stan looks at her, bewildered.

STAN

Mom?

AUGUSTINE

Haaaaappy Face. You're a Happy Face
you.

Stan sees that PEOPLE passing by are staring at Augustine
and then quickly turning away as if scared.

Augustine does not care. Like a raving lunatic, she makes
a face at a man passing by. The guy just walks faster.

The guard is also weirded out. He lets Augustine go.

PUDGY SECURITY GUARD

Just take her home...

Stan is very worried, until he catches his mother's gaze.
She gives him a knowing wink. She was just playing crazy.

INT. FRENCH FRIES RESTAURANT - FLASHBACK

Seated across each other, Stan and Augustine are eating
FRENCH FRIES. Augustine pours a lot of VINEGAR onto
them.

Augustine chews with difficulty but seems pleased.

AUGUSTINE

Au moins comme ça, elles ont du gout.

CLOSE ON Augustine's mouth: yellow teeth chewing. Dried
spit and food in the corner of her lips.

Her jaw hurts as she chews the fries.

*

STAN

Ca va?

*

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE

C'est rien. Mon pauvre fils. C'est pas facile de vivre avec une mère qui a été malade.

*
*
*

Suddenly, Augustine doubles over. Stan rushes to her.

STAN

Maman?!

Augustine then pulls out a book from inside her pants and hands it to her son: "*Don Quichotte de La Mancha* by Miguel de Cervantes.

Stan (CONT'D)

Tu as volé ça?

Augustine laughs.

AUGUSTINE

Joyeux anniversaire mon chéri.

Stan looks at the book. He has not read it.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Comme tu aimes les chevaliers, autant que lises ça! C'est le plus connu.

Stan kisses his mother on the cheek.

STAN

Toi et moi on est invincible tous les deux.

Augustine puts her hand on the book.

AUGUSTINE

"Fais attention, Sancho, qu'il y a deux espèces de beauté, l'une de l'âme, l'autre du corps. Celle de l'âme brille et se montre dans l'esprit, dans la bienséance, dans la libéralité, dans la courtoisie, et toutes ces qualités peuvent trouver place chez un homme laid.

She looks at her son intently.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Quand on vise à cette beauté, et non à celle du corps, l'amour n'en est que plus ardent et plus durable."

Augustine then turns to the camera and whispers.

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

"L'amour n'en est que plus ardent et plus durable."

100

INT. AUGUSTINE'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING - DAY

100

BUZZ BUZZ. The doorbell rings repeatedly.

Stan stirs, fully clothed, in his mother's bed. His face is red from lying on the medical book.

Stan goes to the window and discretely peers out.

STAN'S POV: the social worker, dossier in hand, giving one last look at the building before leaving.

101

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

101

CLOSE ON: Stan's hands as they unplug the phone and answering machine from the wall.

102

INT. OTIS' APARTMENT - DAY

102

Otis, in his bathrobe, sits by the phone with his notebook. After a while, he takes the phone and dials. *

OTIS

Hello? Yes. Who's this?

(his eyes go wide)

Luna!? Did I wake you?

(he smiles)

I am Otis, your grand dad. How old are you Luna? Wow, 7!

Your granddad! Grandfather Otis.

(he goes pale)

What do you mean you don't have a grand dad? Can I speak to my... to your mommy? Is that her back there...

Hello?! No, wait!

Slowly, Otis puts the phone down.

103

INT. YMCA SWIMMING POOL SHOWERS - DAY

103

Vanessa pulls open the curtain of the changing booth and comes into the locker room. She's wearing a huge towel.

(CONTINUED)

Further away, TWO TEENAGE GIRLS, mouth the words "Oh my God" as they see her. Vanessa pretends she didn't notice.

104 **INT. YMCA SWIMMING POOL SHOWERS - MOMENTS LATER - DAY** 104

Vanessa puts her towel on the rack and starts to shower. She is a whale of a woman, clad in her red flowery out-of-fashion bathing suit unnaturally stretched to the max.

Suddenly, girlish giggling disrupts her concentration. She turns around and barely has time to see the two Teenage Girls' faces dart back into the locker room.

TEENAGE GIRL (O.C.)

Oh my God, she's going!

VANESSA

(towards the lockers)

That's very rude you know!

The girls' giggles die down. Vanessa takes her towel, and makes a few steps towards the pool entrance.

There she stands motionless in the shower area. Alone in between the two doorways. The noises of the kids playing in the water now seems unnaturally loud.

Then, she goes for it. She heads towards the pool.

105 **INT. YMCA SWIMMING POOL - CONTINUOUS - DAY**

Vanessa comes out from the showers towards the pool and sees: A bunch of 15-17 year-old GUYS horsing around in the water.

CLOSE on Vanessa: beads of sweat trickle down her forehead. She takes deep breaths, trying to calm down.

She arranges her hair, wipes her palms, and starts fidgeting, just like a teenage girl.

The boys see her. Their reaction is immediate. They spaz-out with laughter, mimicking elephants and making jokes.

Vanessa looks at some schedule on the wall. Then, very slowly, she withdraws back towards the lockers when.

STAN (O.S.)

Vanessa!

It's Stan, in swim shorts, running down the side of the pool towards Vanessa. A LOUD WHISTLE makes him slow down.

Stan turns towards the LIFEGUARD.

STAN

No running, I know, no running.
(to Vanessa)
Hey, wait up.

Stan comes next to Vanessa. Her eyes are wide with dread.

VANESSA

How..? Did you know I was here?

STAN

Well you told us... look, I know how to help.

Vanessa can't think straight.

VANESSA

What?

STAN

If someone stares, get inside people's bubble. And if they say something, go overboard!

Vanessa's will is gone, given how she's dressed and where she is. Her eyes go to the young boys making fun of her.

VANESSA

(whispering)
Can we talk outside?

Stan notices the teenage boys making fun of her. He sees the effects on Vanessa.

Suddenly, he yells out from across the pool.

STAN

Oy! Big nose! Yeah you! Would you stop making fun of my girlfriend!

Silence in the pool. Everybody has stopped. The Teenager doesn't say anything and looks at his friends.

Vanessa would like to run, but Stan grabs her firmly by the hand. Stan shouts purposely loud.

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

Sorry, what did you say? That she's a lardass? That is NOT cool!

(to the lifeguards)

Hey could my girl enjoy a bit of peace here?! Or should I make a real scene!?

By now, everybody wants Stan to shut up. The Lifeguard walks over to the teens to talk to them.

Vanessa is mortified.

VANESSA

(whispering)

What the fuck are you doing?

STAN

(excited)

Look at them. Look at THEM. They pulled out a knife, you pulled a longsword!

Vanessa looks at the pool: Swimming has resumed to normal, people completely avoid looking at her. The teenage guys barely give them furtive glances.

STAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

They all pretend to ignore what happened, but now they're as uncomfortable as you are. They want you to go away. Vanish.

Vanessa gets it.

STAN (CONT'D)

But you will not... By staying, you are saying "*fuck off, YOU deal with my looks, not me.*"

Stan points to the GOOD LOOKING TEENAGER and his friends.

STAN (CONT'D)

Look at this insecure idiot. I bet he's still a virgin.

Stan looks at Vanessa. She gives him a strange smile.

INT. YMCA SWIMMING POOL - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Like a great white whale in her red bathing suit, Vanessa communes with the water. We follow her swimming, turning and gliding in weightlessness.

(CONTINUED)

When she comes back up for air, she is changed. Happy.

STAN

I want to make them immune to whatever is said or done to them. Bombard them with the worse. RATATATAT!

As Stan says this he repeatedly splashes Vanessa in the face, so fast that she can't catch her breath and speak.

VANESSA

It's called flooding.

*
*

Vanessa jumps on Stan and dunks his head under the water, wrapping her huge arms and legs around him to drown him.

A LOUD WHISTLE rings out. Vanessa lets Stan go. Coughing his lungs out, Stan comes up for air, aroused. Still coughing, Stan discretely arranges his swim shorts.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

With what you're going through with your mother. Are you up to this type of commitment.

STAN

If you think this can help them? I mean really help them?

(Vanessa nods)

Then yes.

*

VANESSA

But WHY are you doing all this?

STAN

My mom gave me the idea last night.

That's not what Vanessa asked. But before she can speak again, Stan spits water in her face. Vanessa dunks him under the water again, wrapping her legs around his neck.

Under the water, Stan stops fighting and lets go.

INT. BUCK'S FURNITURE STORE - DAY

In the back of the store, Buck's mother, Zsolta, is conversing with TWO GREEK CLIENTS around a small table.

(CONTINUED)

She's pointing at her daughter and badmouthing her to her friends, but we can't hear what's being said.

Near the back, Buck is serving tea to Vanessa, Maggie, Jocko and Otis.

BUCK

They should leave any minute now.

Suddenly, Stan's face slams in the storefront window.

They all jump.

OTIS

How did he find us?

JOCKO

What the fuck?

VANESSA

I invited him...

Jocko and Maggie looks at Vanessa reproachfully.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

You were right about him, Maggie. I was wrong.

Maggie's taken off guard by Vanessa's admission.

Zsolta opens the door.

ZSOLTA

We're closed, sorry.

STAN

I know, but Buck told me to drop by to pick up an item for my living room.

Perplexed, Zsolta lets Stan in. Stan picks a coffee table at random and casually proceeds to buy it.

STAN (CONT'D)

You were right, Buck. Art Deco. I'll take it. How much?

Buck doesn't know what's happening. Vanessa nudges her and she finally gets it. She gets up.

BUCK

You see? It's in great condition.

CLOSE ON: one of the pre-signed blank checks made out to "Cash" by Augustine. Stan writes the amount of \$199.

Stan gives the check to Zsolta who eyes it suspiciously.

ZSOLTA

I go pack it for you.

Zsolta eyes her daughter suspiciously and goes to the back room. Buck shakes her head.

Stan is about to sit next to Jocko, but given the glance he gets, he goes next to Maggie.

VANESSA

What Stan did to Jocko, you're going to do to each other. It's called Exposure Therapy. We expose you to what you fear the most and then you build resistance.

Vanessa approaches the two greek men, left all alone. She gets very close. They notice her. Suddenly.

VANESSA

Hello! My name is Vanessa. I am obese because I am lazy! I have poor hygiene and I smell! I am also a bitter person.

STAN (O.C.)

Weapon 1: Auto Insult. Best to serve it to ourselves properly than to let them do it poorly. Cyrano de Bergerac.

Vanessa inches very close to the men, her size inside their personal space.

STAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Weapon 2: Proximity Attack. You dread that people will pick on your flaws. But that's what they're most afraid of. Shove it in their faces.

The men, arms crossed, smile at her. Unsure.

STAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Look at them squirm.

Back at the table, the patients smile. He's right.

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

But you've got to be able to parry everything.

(to Vanessa)

Hey fat cow! Did you get baptized at Sea World?

INT. BUCK'S FURNITURE STORE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Vanessa gives the finger at Stan.

VANESSA

Eskimos dream of harpooning me at night.

The two old men are now completely weirded out. They get up to leave, but Vanessa stays close to them.

As he gets up, one of the old men pushes Vanessa to get past her. Nothing violent. The poor guy just wants to get away.

Suddenly Vanessa screams out at the top of her lungs and collapses on the floor, shaking.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Don't hurt me! Don't hurt me!

In a panic, the poor men run away and exit the store.

STAN (O.C.)

Weapon 3: *The Pity Strike*. If they treat you like kids, if they keep insulting you, or if in doubt: play the victim or the retard. But make it loud. Draw attention to them.

At that moment, Zsolta comes back with the wrapped table to find Vanessa on the floor and his friends gone.

INT. BUCK'S FURNITURE STORE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON: DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MONSTER FIGURINES: an Undead Ghoul, a wart-ridden Troll, an evil Harpy with wings and a vicious grin, a big headed Ogre with monstrous teeth.

Stan places the figurines in front of each patient.

EXTREME CLOSE UP ON: Otis' veins. Buck's tumors and warts. Jocko's scars. Maggie's twisted skin.

(CONTINUED)

STAN (O.C.)

Jocko the Ghoul. They must save against Fear or run away screaming. Otis the Troll, if they come near your veins, they have a 50% chance of contracting a rotting disease. Maggie the Harpy, you torture and devour men.

(cavernous voice)

Buck the Ogre. Deformed Cranium. Not too smart, you crush!

Maggie, Jocko, Otis, and Buck stare at their respective figurines.

Stan picks up the Ghoul and hands it to Jocko.

STAN (CONT'D)

You've earned this yesterday.

(to the others)

You'll get yours when you go through the gauntlet.

OTIS

What about Vanessa?

Stan hands Vanessa a Slender Priestess figurine, dressed in azure blue with a diamond tiara and yellow painted hair.

STAN

Healer Priestess of the CBT God!

Vanessa looks at the slender figurine.

STAN (CONT'D)

You should keep these figurines. They represent your "defect", which is also your weapon.

Maggie picks up a lone figurine left on the table: the KNIGHT in ARMOR.

MAGGIE

And that's you right? Sir Lancelot. Coming to the rescue of the freaks?

Stan takes the figurine from Maggie and puts it away.

STAN

I don't like this one...

VANESSA

Maggie, you're next.

CLOSE UP on Maggie's face.

Maggie tells them what insults she received in her life and the others add some extra cruel insults to the mix.

She ends up crying.

STAN

Why are you crying? Why?

MAGGIE

Because. Because she's right!

STAN

Bullshit! You're doing that distortion again.

He gives a questioning look to Vanessa.

VANESSA (O.S.)

Fortune Telling.

STAN

Right. You're not a fortune teller. Neither is she!

MAGGIE

But she's right...

STAN

No! She's hitting where it hurts. You don't like that, do you?

MAGGIE

NO!

STAN

You're angry?

MAGGIE

YES!

STAN

Then screw her and scream at her! Scream like the Harpy that you are!

Maggie yells at Buck. It's controlled.

STAN (CONT'D)

What was that? Scream! Like Jocko yesterday. What do you care if it's too loud. No one's ever going to hear you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

No photographer will ever take a shot of you. You'll disappear... Do you want to disappear?!

MAGGIE

NO!

STAN

Do you want to be silenced!

Maggie screams a banshee-like wail. Everybody's stunned.

Maggie wipes tears from her face and takes a big breath... and then she screams again.

Damn does that feel good.

VANESSA

See? It's not the end of the world, you're not destroyed. You're still alive.

Stan hands her the Harpy figurine.

STAN

Weapon 4: the scream. Because of your face, people will not dare say anything. Double hit point damage.
(turns to Buck)
OK, your turn...

INT. BUCK'S FURNITURE STORE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY**BUCK**

Hello, I am Buck. I am useless. The only reason I exist is because my mother protects me.

Maggie takes a sweet voice, but it's full of malice.

MAGGIE

Your mother puts you in the storage room not to scare the customers while she can still get government grants for hiring her monstrous daughter. You'll never get a boyfriend, hidden in the back room.

Buck tries to shrug off the comment with a smile.

Stan is about to speak, but Maggie puts her hand up.

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I'm not done here.

(to Buck)

And even if you do get out of the backroom, no one will ever want to touch you. They want smooth skin. Something nice to the touch. Even with my face, I can give them that.

Stan and Vanessa look at each other.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

You can't even convince a man to buy a piece of 2nd hand furniture at a discount. What chance have you to convince a man to touch you? No Buck, by the end of this workshop you'll beg me, on your knees, to tell you what it's like to be with a man.

Buck screams at the top of her lungs.

A second later, Zsolta screams too. Half hidden in the doorway leading to the back room, she heard everything...

EXT. BUCK'S FURNITURE STORE - LATER - NIGHT

Zsolta slams the door and locks it, keeping Buck next to her while the others are outside.

BUCK

But mom!

Kicked out, Maggie, Otis, Vanessa and Stan stand on the sidewalk, unsure where to go next.

VANESSA

(pointing to the left)

There's a place not far away.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

The group arrives in front of a coffee shop.

Jocko, who was rolling a joint, starts to crack up.

JOCKO

I gotta hand it to you Stan, I never thought this psych group would be so crazy.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

He takes a toke out of the joint and hands it to Stan.

STAN

I've never smoked.

JOCKO

You can't refuse a peace pipe kiddo.

Hesitant, Stan takes a toke. And then coughs out a lung. At the same moment, Buck rejoins them, panting.

BUCK

Hey, I want my miniature!

MAGGIE

You're already miniature.

They laugh, and Stan hands him his Ogre figurine.

Otis checks out the YOUNG WOMEN studying inside the place. Stan notices.

STAN

Otis, you're next. You want to go inside?

OTIS

I'll pass, thank you.

Stan looks at Vanessa, wanting her to insist.

VANESSA

I think we should call it a night. But Otis, I want you to call your step-daughter tomorrow.

STAN

Oh, it's not his daughter?

VANESSA

Same thing.

(to Otis)

Just so the others are not the only ones making progress here,

Otis sighs.

STAN

"Bear in mind, Sancho, that one man is no more than another, unless he does more than another."

Vanessa looks at Otis and nods. Maybe Stan's got a point.

(CONTINUED)

OTIS

You can't be serious?

STAN

Or maybe this workshop is not for you.

OTIS

To hell with this...

Otis storms off frustrated.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Vanessa keeps going as if nothing were wrong.

VANESSA

Tomorrow we'll start earlier, work in broad daylight and younger people.

BUCK

What about Otis.

VANESSA

I'll call him. He'll be back...

STAN

OK. Let's start at my place. Nobody's there to sell us crappy furniture.

BUCK

Good. Cause my mom does not want Maggie in our shop, ever.

EXT. STREET - LATER - NIGHT

Jocko's Medicar drives away and Maggie gets into a cab. Buck's already gone. Only Stan and Vanessa linger.

VANESSA

Well, they were happy tonight. Carefree. actually. Thanks to you.

Stan breaths a sigh of relief. It's good to hear that. A car drives by. One of the young men in it screams.

YOUNG MAN

Hey! Call me!

Not caring, Vanessa strikes a pose. Stan chuckles and looks down at Vanessa's black heels.

Vanessa notices, then backs off on her own way, smiling.

120 **INT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - LATER - NIGHT** 120

Maggie is in her apartment, putting hydrating creme on her face. Her place is not much in terms of decoration. There is a fat red stray cat sitting on the couch: Bapu.

When she's done, Maggie puts on a cassette in her stereo. It's a 1970s BOLLYWOOD MUSIC track. Funny, yet poignant.

Maggie starts dancing all by herself, mouthing the words and mimicking a fashion runway model and trying on different sexy clothes that reveal her body. She's great at it.

The festive Indian music continues over the next scenes.

121 **INT. BUCK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT** 121

Zsolta is counting a pile of dollar bills on the dining table. Buck arrives.

Zsolta starts to tell her something unpleasant (we can't hear it because of the music). Buck just turns around and leaves the room.

122 **EXT. ST. LAURENT BAR - NIGHT** 122

Stan, passes a POLISH BOUNCER who waves him in the bar.

123 **INT. ST. LAURENT BAR - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** 123

Stan looks at Cathryn, the cute girl with the heavy bum.

At one point, Cathryn notices Stan. He gives her an exaggerated salute. Cathryn cracks up.

124 **INT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 124

As the song progresses, Maggie cuddles in bed with Bapu her cat. The purring cat licks her face with feline gratitude. Bapu doesn't care about scars.

125 **INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT** 125

Two intertwined bodies twitching in darkness.

(CONTINUED)

We notice Cathryn, in underwear and bra, has her arms
and legs wrapped around Stan's body while they are
making out-- in the same position as Vanessa and Stan at
the pool.

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*
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125

CONTINUED:

125

As the Indian song reaches its crescendo Stan suffocates and moans with pleasure.

126

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

126

CLOSE ON Stan's face, gasping for air, through Cathryn's grip. Suddenly, someone KNOCKS at the door. Cathryn freezes.

*
*

STAN

(shouting)

Go away!

CLICK-CLACK, a lock. The sound of the door opening. Stan pushes Cathryn away, and runs out of the room.

127

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

127

Half-naked, Stan comes face to face with a woman pulling a large suitcase in the door-- PAULETTE THE AUNT.

STAN

Auntie? What are you doing here?

Paulette is a 55-year old, 5 foot 2 woman from a modest background. She looks tired and sad.

PAULETTE

Je suis allée directement de l'aéroport à l'hôpital et ta mère m'a donné les clés.

*
*

Paulette is very tired. She tries to control her anger.

PAULETTE (CONT'D)

Pourquoi tu n'es pas allé la voir?

*

STAN

Elle ne pouvait pas parler après la chirurgie et j'ai été très malade. Et là je fais du bénévolat avec des patients...

*
*
*

PAULETTE

Mais qu'est ce que c'est que ces excuses. Pourquoi ne l'as tu pas appelée. Ou moi? Ca fait des semaines Stanislas. Tu étais ou?

*
*
*
*

Stan gets defensive.

STAN

Et toi, tu étais ou toi?! Au lieu d'appeler non stop ou de me crier dessus?

*
*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

Tu devais venir il y a un mois avec Jean-Paul. Qu'est-ce qui s'est passé?

*
***PAULETTE**

(calms down)

C'est compliqué pour lui. C'est sa grande soeur et il n'a jamais pris l'avion, ni traversé l'océan.

*
*
*

Stan can't believe it.

STAN

Et tu dis que c'est moi qui donne des excuses?!

*
*

Silence.

PAULETTE

Oh Stan. Il y a longtemps, j'ai promis à ta mère que si il lui arrivait autre chose, j'allais être là pour toi. J'allais m'occuper de toi.

*
*
*
***STAN**

Est-ce qu'elle est toujours fâchée après moi?

*
*

Paulette, realizes how messed up he is.

PAULETTE

Elle veut juste voir son fils...

*

Paulette gets closer to hug Stan. But at that same moment, Cathryn, almost fully dressed, squeezes by in between, separating them.

CATHRYN

Good night...

Stunned, Paulette pulls back as Cathryn goes to the door.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Paulette tucks Stan in bed. They're in mid conversation as Stan explains what he wants to do with his life from now on (he's still high from the joint)

*
*
***STAN**

... et j'adore ça. Je vais changer en travail social ou bien en éducation.

*
*

Just as she's about to leave...

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

Mais demain, je peux pas y aller. Ils ont
besoin de moi au workshop.

*
*

Paulette does not get it.

PAULETTE

Je suis sûre qu'ils vont comprendre si tu
prends quelques heures dans ta journée
pour aller voir ta mère.

*
*
*

A pained look comes across Stan's face, even though he
tries to smile at his aunt.

STAN

Mais j'aimerais juste finir ce que j'ai
commencé avec eux avant d'aller voir
maman. Elle sera si fière de moi quand
elle va voir comment j'ai aidé ces gens.
Je pourrais même les amener la rencontrer
pour qu'elle voit ce qu'on fait ensemble.

*
*
*
*
*
*

Paulette bursts into tears.

PAULETTE

Mais qu'est ce que tu racontes?! Elle va
mourir Stanislas!

*
*

Paulette rushes out of the room, crying. Stan lies in
bed, eyes wide open.

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Carrying a backpack and D&D books, Stan tries to be
quiet as he enters his apartment. Then he notices a
shape moaning on the ground. He turns on the lights and
sees...

... His mother, AUGUSTINE, 50, a living skeleton in her
night shirt. She is shaking on the ground, unable to
move, moaning from pain and fatigue.

Augustine is bleeding from a gash on her bald head.
There is also feces on the floor.

Stan drops his bag and books. Figurines fly around.

STAN

Maman!

AUGUSTINE

T'étais ou?

STAN

Je t'ai dit de m'appeler chez Markus si
tu avais besoin de moi. Qu'est-ce qui
c'est passé?

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE

Je suis tombé. J'ai pas pu me relever...
J'ai pas pu me retenir.

Stan is disgusted by the mess of shit and blood all over the floor. He goes to the washroom and turns on the tap.

STAN

Maman. Tu peux plus rester ici...

AUGUSTINE

Tu m'as dit que tu restais à la maison ce soir. Pourquoi tu m'as encore laissée toute seule?

STAN (O.C.)

Bouge pas.

Stan goes to the phone, further away in the apartment.

STAN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Hello. Yes. I'd like to have an ambulance at 4850 Queen Mary Road. Apartment 201. It's for my mother.

Meanwhile, Augustine's gaze lands on the little figurine of The Mummy Warrior. She feebly takes it.

STAN (CONT'D)

She's a patient of Dr. Zadeh at the Royal Vic. You have to bring her there. The Dr. Said that they have her file and a bed waiting for her.

AUGUSTINE

Mais? Qu'est ce que tu fais? Non.

Stan comes back, dumps a big wet towel on the brown stains and proceeds to wipe Augustine's face clean with a washcloth. *When he rubs her jaw, it hurts her a lot.* *

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Aie, tu me fais mal! *

Stan is very tense. He takes the figurine out of her hand and resumes rubbing her face more gently.

STAN

Oh fuck, c'est dégueulasse.

He removes Augustine's night shirt, leaving her stark naked on the floor-- in the same position as Francesca, earlier.

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE

J'ai froid...

Stan helps his mother put on a new nightshirt.

Once she is dressed, Stan uses a towel to grab his mother and hoist her up. Avoiding contact with her skin.

Stan tries to lead Augustine to her bedroom. But she resists. Stan curses loudly.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D (CONT'D))

Pourquoi tu me cries après. Je dois aller aux toilettes.

Stan sighs and leads her slowly into the washroom.

Once she's in, Stan comes out and leans against the wall next to the open door. He stares in desperation at the apartment as he hears Augustine throwing up bile.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Pourquoi tu as appelé 911? Ca va aller.

STAN

Faut qu'on te rentre à l'hôpital Mman. Tu peux pas rester à la maison. C'est pas bon pour toi ici.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.)

Mais je veux rester.

STAN

Il y a un bout de temps, j'ai demandé au Dr. Zadeh si il pouvait te trouver une chambre pour que tu récupère un peu.

Augustine sounds like a little girl.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.)

Tu veux te débarrasser de moi?

Stan slides down the wall onto the floor.

STAN

Non. C'est juste pour un bout, le temps que tu reprennes des forces. Tu auras tous les services à l'hôpital. Ils vont bien s'occuper de toi.

The doorbell BUZZES. Stan goes to open.

AUGUSTINE (O.C.)

Mais?!

(CONTINUED)

STAN

Ca va bien aller. Je vais m'occuper de l'appartement, je vais arroser les plantes. Je vais venir te rendre visite tous les jours. *Je te le promet.* *

Augustine stands in the doorway of the washroom. We can only see the outline of her frail shape trembling with fatigue. Her voice goes from sadness to bitterness.

AUGUSTINE

Tes promesses... Je sais que tu as honte de moi. Que je te dégoûte. *

STAN

C'est pas vrai.

AUGUSTINE

Même avec la chimio, je te faisais à manger, je lavais tes vêtements, je faisais le ménage. Toi tu fais rien ici. Tu me laisses toute seule pour jouer à ton jeu stupide. Comment as tu pu devenir si égoïste après tout ce que j'ai fait pour toi. Tout ce que j'ai sacrifié pour que tu aies tout dans le vie. *Tu m'avais promis que tu resterais avec ta mère!!* *
*

A knock on the door. Stan *opens*. It's TWO PARAMEDICS. *

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Augustine is on the stretcher. She is flipping out.

PARAMEDIC

There's room for you in the back with your mother.

AUGUSTINE

I don't want him with me!
(to Stan)

Je veux plus te voir! Tu seras content quand je serais morte, hein?! Tu seras bien sans moi! Soulagé!

Stan can't take it anymore.

STAN

arrête!

AUGUSTINE

Ton père m'a laissé quand j'étais malade et toi tu fais la même chose.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Après tout ce que je me suis saigné pour
toi. J'ai tout donné. Tout, tout!

The paramedics wheel Augustine away.

AUGUSTINE (CONT'D)

Tu es incapable de penser aux autres,
d'aider les autres. T'aimes personne
d'autre que toi. Comme ton père. Tu me
dégoûtes!

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - PRESENT DAY - MORNING

CLOSE UP: the faded red and brown stains on the carpet.

Stan, nicely dressed, is staring at them.

Breakfast has just ended. Paulette, still in her
nightgown, puts the dishes in the sink.

PAULETTE

I'll take a shower and then we go.

Stan nods. Paulette gets up, goes to the washroom and
shuts the door. Stan hears the sound of the shower come
on. He sits there a while.

Suddenly he bolts out of the apartment.

EXT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Stan runs out of the apartment building, straight into a
DELIVERY MAN carrying the handicapped ramp and
handicapped toilet seat that he bought a few days ago.

The two men fall to the ground with the gear.

Stan quickly gets up and continues running.

EXT. MONTREAL STREETS - DAY

Over a montage of Stan running away from his house, we
hear the sound of a PAY PHONE being unhooked, DIALING and
the ensuing conversation.

VANESSA (O.S.)

Hello?

STAN (O.S.)

Vanessa, gather the troops. We meet
earlier. In two hours.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA (O.S.)

Why? What's wrong?

Stan is running downtown, a pained look on his face.

STAN (O.S.)

Nothing's wrong. It's just... Today's Friday! Why not make it graduation night. Let's go **out!**

*

VANESSA (O.S.)

(chuckles)

What?! No They're not ready.

STAN (O.S.)

We'll get them ready!

There is a pause.

VANESSA (O.S.)

Ok. See you at your place.

STAN (O.S.)

NO!

EXT. PLACE RAOUL WALLENBERG SQUARE - DAY

Stan is sitting **on a bench**. He spots Vanessa, Otis, Maggie, Jocko and Buck coming.

*

STAN

Hey!

They sit down next to him.

JOCKO

Nice clothes. You're going to church?

VANESSA

Stan wants us to go dancing tonight...

They all look at each other, unsure.

Stan slams down the TROLL FIGURINE on the table.

STAN

Time to earn your monster, Otis. You take us to see your daughter and you break the ice with her.

OTIS

Oh, we bring in our personal lives now?

(CONTINUED)

STAN

Why not? We got into Buck's life last night. You're the only one left.

They all look at Otis.

OTIS

How about you introduce yourself, strip naked and WE insult you? See how it feels for us.

*

STAN

I don't need it.

OTIS

But we do?

*

*

VANESSA

"one man is no more than another, unless he does more than another."

Busted. Stan takes a deep breath.

STAN

My name is Stan Miskievicz. I am here because I was disgusted by how my mother looked and...

OTIS

(interrupting)
Why are you STILL here?

STAN

It's helping me and if I help you, then it's good for everybody.

OTIS

Bullshit. Is she dying?

No answer from Stan.

OTIS (CONT'D)

Then why aren't you with her all the time?

Otis encourages the others with a wave of his arms.

BUCK

Does she have friends helping out?

(CONTINUED)

STAN

Her friends are idiots. She was always the one being there for them.

VANESSA

You're not supposed to be nice, Buck.

JOCKO

You said that she wanted to come to the workshop because of you. Why?

MAGGIE

Because you made her feel awful?

Stan swallows. His hand fidgets in his pocket.

INSERT: Stan's fingers pull out his Mummy Figurine.

STAN

Because I wasn't there enough. I was always out. I was ashamed of her...

MAGGIE

And you... what? Went out drinking?

OTIS

So left to bang some healthy woman and you abandoned her too.

*
*

Vanessa shoots Otis a reproachful glance.

JOCKO

She was sick and you left her alone. At night, crying. Death looming.

Stan just stands there. Taking it in.

OTIS

And now you came here to cope with her ugliness. The caring son. I bet she looks pretty next to us?

*
*
*

VANESSA

OK, that's enough.

Otis seems satisfied.

OTIS

(patronizing)

You idiot. Compassion. It's about facing it. Don't you get it? If you did not get it before, then you won't get it now. Certainly not by making us make fools out of ourselves!

*
*
*
*
*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OTIS (CONT'D)

*

The group agrees with Otis' speech. BLAM! Stan slams his fist on the table.

STAN

You know what I don't understand, Otis? It is that you had a family despite your face. But now your daughter won't return your calls? What happened?

STAN (CONT'D)

Did you make promises and never keep them? Always lying, always slipping away instead of being there for her when she needed you.

OTIS

I think you're talking about your father.

STAN

You're right. It must have been way worse. What did you do to your STEP-daughter Otis? Did you find her more attractive than the mother? Did you go too far one day? I see the way you look at teenage girls, you old pervert...

VANESSA

How does he look at girls?

STAN

Like me and my friends do...

Stan hit home. Otis bolts up, lunges at Stan. But Vanessa manages to hold him back with all her weight.

OTIS

I never touched her! I never touched her!

STAN

(taunting)

Did you smell her panties, did you keep photos of her to masturbate?

Otis is flipping out.

OTIS

You don't know anything! I never touched her!

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly, Stan takes off his shirt. He kicks off his shoes, pulls down his pants. Pulls down his underwear...
Until he stands completely naked in front of the group.

STAN

(to the group)

Why do you stare? It makes me uncomfortable!

(To Otis)

"Speaking Up" technique!

Stan spots a MAINTENANCE EMPLOYEE and goes towards him. Looking at Stan like he is a lunatic, the employee backs off and heads towards the exit. Stan follows him.

STAN (CONT'D)

Oh! Don't mind my ass, it's not catching.

(to the group)

"Explain and Educate!" See how he behaves? He's afraid! He runs!

The group stares at Stan in silence.

STAN (CONT'D)

(to the group)

Use your touch, your looks, your scream, your farts if you have to!

The maintenance worker has disappeared. Stan runs back towards Otis, still held by Vanessa.

STAN (CONT'D)

I don't care about what you did Otis! I don't care how bad of a father you were. All I want to know is: can you say fuck off to the past and train like a Terrorist of the Senses!

Vanessa whispers in Otis' ear.

VANESSA

Otis, you need to forgive yourself.

Otis stops struggling. Vanessa lets him go and he slumps down in a chair, spent.

OTIS

Once, while I was volunteering at a day care, some hispanic kids started kicking me and calling me "il Monstro", "Il Monstro." "Kill him, Kill him..." I still dream about it sometimes. But its her voice...

(CONTINUED)

STAN

I wish my dad has as much remorse as you.

Otis looks up. His anger is gone. There's just sadness.

Then, Stan starts making very subtle hip hop moves.

STAN (CONT'D)

So how about going out dancing to cheer us up?

JOHANNE (O.C.)

Stanislas..?!

*

Stan turns around and recognizes, JOHANNE and PAT, his mother's colleagues, in uniform.

Stan stares, speechless for a split second. Then he runs screaming towards them, like a madman. Johanne and Pat run away, freaked out.

Music starts. It's *Violent Femmes'* song Add It Up.

EXT. PLACE RAOUL WALLENBERG SQUARE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER 135

*

The *Violent Femmes* singer's intense voice carries over the MONTAGE SEQUENCE of the group getting ready.

Somewhere else in the shopping mall, Vanessa gives Stan his clothes in front of the laughing patients.

INT. NUN'S ISLAND FURNISHED CONDO - DAY

Half naked, Jocko is struggling with his clothes. We can see the damage on his body.

When he comes out of his bedroom, Otis, Maggie, Stan, Buck and Vanessa are waiting for him. They approve.

*

An instant later, Otis comes out, dressed like Michael Jackson.

*

*

OMITTED**INT. MAGGIE'S BEDROOM - LATER - DAY**

Maggie looks at herself in the mirror. She then puts on a tight fitting outfit and high heels.

(CONTINUED)

Buck is trying to fit into a dress. After a while, she rips the dress off and puts on pants with a cool outfit.

138 CONTINUED: 138

Buck comes towards the group, then does the MC Hammer's Can't Touch This dance step.

139 **INT. MAGGIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - DAY** 139

Buck, Jocko and Otis are wolfing down food in the kitchen.

In the washroom, Vanessa tries on some of Maggie's perfume and has Stan smell her wrist. Stan nods in approval.

Vanessa puts some on her neck. Then, to her surprise, Stan leans in and smells the nape of her neck. Vanessa shivers at the touch of Stan's face on her skin.

The Violent Femmes music continues.

140 **EXT. ST. LAURENT STREET - NUIT** 140

Stan, Vanessa, Maggie, Buck, Otis, Jocko are walking down the street.

Maggie, Buck, Otis, and Jocko, all dressed to go out, look like a bunch of superheros walking in slow motion.

141 **EXT. ST. LAURENT BAR - LATER - NIGHT** 141

Vanessa, Buck, Otis, Maggie and Jocko **stand in** the VIP line. A few feet away, Stan is standing in front of the Polish Bouncer. The bouncer looks at the group. *

142 **INT. ST. LAURENT BAR - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 142

The Violent Femmes song gets louder. The lights are dimmed. The people young and attractive.

The initial shock is intense. The group just stands there, unsure if they did the right thing coming here.

The resolve of the patients waivers. *

143 **INT. ST. LAURENT BAR - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** 143

The group makes its way to some tables, creating a stir.

(CONTINUED)

People stare in a mix of curiosity, shock, mockery, pity.

The group sits down at a table far at the front. A cute waitress hailed by Stan brings a tray of shooters that the patients quickly down with relief.

When the Violent Femmes song ends, the sound of the crowd is surprisingly low around the patient's table.

BUCK and MAGGIE's POV: Furtive glances, averted eyes, pointing fingers, mocking smirks mouthing "Oh my God!"

Maggie notices some people and turns to Stan. *

MAGGIE *

Shit, they're from my hometown. *

A good hip hop song comes on. Vanessa does little moves in her seat. She points to the dance floor. *

VANESSA

Come on, let's go.

Otis gets up, but Maggie, Buck and Jocko remain seated. Maggie keeps staring at a nearby table.

STAN

Maybe Maggie needs more drinks.

VANESSA

Okay, but then we dance! Otis come help. *

Vanessa leaves with Otis towards the Bar.

Stan's in mid conversation, talking about social studies. *

STAN *

What's the use of getting all of those degrees and making money! I hate Business School! What these people stand for... *

Stan sees that Maggie is unnerved by seeing her friends. *

THREE GUYS and TWO CUTE GIRLS in their early 30s at a nearby table are talking about her. They recognized her.

STAN (CONT'D)

Go talk to them. Tell them what doing. *

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE

It was not a good time back there. I was bullied a lot.

Maggie hesitates. Stan moves closer to her, their bodies touching. Something Maggie hasn't felt in a while.

Stan

If you do it, I'll kiss you.

(CONTINUED)

144 CONTINUED: 144

Maggie looks at Stan for a second. Then she goes for it.

145 **INT. ST. LAURENT BAR TABLE - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** 145

One of the students, a TALL CUTE GUY, notices that his friends look past him. Maggie is standing right behind him. The guy notices her and freezes.

MAGGIE

Hi, you probably did not recognize me because I had more surgeries since I was a teenager.

(she waves at her face)

But I'm Maggie Cummings, we used to go to **school together in Cowansville.** *

TALL CUTE MAN

Yes, I remember, of course... How have you been?

MAGGIE

Great!

They try and show compassionate faces.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I do modelling now. A lot of gigs in modelling.

They laugh at her.

Maggie just stands dumbfounded for an instant.

Then, without warning, she starts doing some modeling poses and calling them out loud. She struts her stuff as if on the catwalk in front of the stunned table.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Becky fucking Crawford bitches! *

146 **INT. ST. LAURENT BAR TABLE - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** 146

Maggie crashes down between Jocko and Stan. She downs a shooter and then turns towards Stan smiling.

Stan leans in and gives her a peck on the mouth.

MAGGIE

Oh, you can do better than that...

(CONTINUED)

Stan hesitates, leans in, closes his eyes. His lips touch hers, giving a soft peck, then another one. She opens her mouth, their tongues lock. It's a real kiss.

Maggie puts her hands around Stan's shoulders and he moves his hands around her hips. The kiss is passionate.

Maggie's acquaintances at the other table stare in disbelief.

The kiss ends sweetly. Stan notices Jocko grinning.

STAN

What? It's the exercise!

Maggie rearranges her hair. She feels good. She looks around, and then... Maggie catches Vanessa's gaze.

INT. ST. LAURENT BAR TABLE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Holding drinks, Vanessa just stands there-- a little girl with a broken heart-- she drops her drinks and runs away.

STAN

Vanessa, wait!

Otis puts more drinks on the table. Before Stan has time to move past Jocko, Vanessa's already gone. Stan starts to follow her, but Buck calls out to him.

JOCKO

Hey! Don't leave us here man.

*

Stan sees Buck, Maggie, Otis and Jocko seated at the table, looking out of place in the bar scene.

Stan comes back to the table. He takes the drink, downs it, and tries to remain upbeat.

STAN

OK, let's dance.

But the patients just lost one of their leaders.

BUCK

I'm hungry.

MAGGIE

Me too.

STAN

Wait! We're here now.

(CONTINUED)

MAGGIE

We can always go back dancing next week.
Plenty of time.

They get up to leave. Stan reluctantly gets up as well.

148 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER - NIGHT**

148 *

Vanessa is sitting on the steps of Stan's apartment building and crying, all glamorous, obese and alone.

A taxi pulls over. Vanessa gets up, hope in her eyes, but Paulette comes out of the taxi. Paulette is all made-up with lipstick, earrings and scarf. Old school European.

As Paulette passes Vanessa to go in the lobby. The two women look at each other.

149 **INT. STAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** 149

*

Vanessa sees which buzzer button Paulette presses. *

Perplexed, she goes to the buzzer and rings 201: Miskievicz. Paulette's voice comes on the intercom.

PAULETTE (INTERCOM)

Yes?

VANESSA

I am looking for Stan.

The door buzzes unlocked. Vanessa opens it and goes in.

150 **INT. GREASY SPOON RESTAURANT - LATER - NIGHT**

150

CLOSE UP: Jocko's drunk burnt face slurring his words.

JOCKO

You broke my heart you stupid bitch! I loved you and you left me. Who does this?

Maggie and Buck's faces squeeze in next to Jocko's.

BUCK

I don't know how you can live with yourself!

MAGGIE

Here's what you're missing, Brenda!

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: 150

Maggie and Buck both kiss Jocko on the lips. Jocko flips.

JOCKO

OK, cut! Cut!

151 **INT. GREASY SPOON RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 151 *

Otis, who was filming with Jocko's mini DV Sony camera, ejects the tape. They're seated in front of junk food.

The place is a dive. The bright neon lights of the cheap 24h diner are not flattering to few patrons made up of PROSTITUTES, HOMELESS and DRUNK MCGILL STUDENTS.

BUCK

Should we go drop it in her mail?

Jocko grabs the camera and DV tape back.

JOCKO

No! Nobody's sending that shit.

Buck, Jocko and Maggie are like a bunch of college friends. But Stan's mind is elsewhere.

152 **INT. GREASY SPOON RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** 152

Buck speaks to the camera and tells her mother what's on her heart. It's gut wrenching *

153 **INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 153

Paulette opens the door to Vanessa.

PAULETTE

Are you a friend of Stanislas?

Vanessa nods. Paulette lets her in.

As massive Vanessa enters, the short Paulette eyes her from top to bottom. But Vanessa pays no attention. She is too absorbed to discover Stan's place.

154 **INT. GREASY SPOON RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 154

Jocko places his hand on Stan's shoulder, focusing his attention to the serious matter.

(CONTINUED)

JOCKO

Stan, you little fucker. I want you at my side when I go see her.

STAN

There's something I want to tell you...

Further away, a DRUNK STUDENT with HIS FRIENDS yells out.

DRUNK STUDENT

Hey! Freddy Kruger! Freddy Kruger!

MAGGIE

Who's Freddy Kruger?

Buck points at Otis.

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Paulette is pouring tea for Vanessa, who is listening to Augustine's deformed voice on the answering machine.

It shows in Vanessa's face that Paulette told her everything.

AUGUSTINE (O.S.)

(deformed voice)

Stanislasss...C'est M...Ma-Maaam. J'ai...
J'ai besoin de te parler...

VANESSA

Can I use the phone please?

Vanessa dials. Paulette watches her, silent.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Hello. Jocko, it's late, I am at Stan's. He lied to us...

INT. GREASY SPOON RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Techno music resonates in the greasy spoon restaurant.

CLOSE ON: A PHOTO OF YOUNG Buck WITHOUT WARTS AND TUMORS on her face. Then, the image darkens and twists. Flames engulf the photo. *

Buck, lighter in hand, drops the burning photo on the table. Buck slams her hand repeatedly to extinguish it. *

(CONTINUED)

BUCK

Well that's that.

DRUNK STUDENT (O.S.)

That's fucking Freddy Kruger man!

Buck holds out *her* hand towards Maggie in a peace gesture. She grabs it, smiling. Otis' hand grabs hold of their hands. Jocko takes Stan's limp hand and puts it on top of theirs. Stan finally smiles.

*
*

SFX: Vanessa's voice leaving phone messages comes on and off over the scene. Telling the truth about Stan in the worst possible way.

VANESSA (V.O.)

Buck, he's using you. He never visited his mother in the hospital.

OTIS

(drunk)

This! This is good.

Maggie sees Otis' large watery eyes and trembling lips looking at her with affection. Otis catches himself.

OTIS (CONT'D)

...you are like family.

VANESSA (V.O.)

He abandoned her mother to die in the hospital, alone. He wanted to show us off to her like his pet project. Like freaks!

*
*
*

Stan goes back to what he wanted to say earlier.

STAN

I just want to tell you that...

DRUNK STUDENT (O.S.)

You're in my dreams Freddy Krugger!

Otis stands up and bellows at the top of his lungs.

OTIS

Hey! There is a person behind the face here!

The student and the crowd of wretched clients go silent.

Otis spazzes out. Grabbing his crotch, he gives off his best macho frat boy imitation.

(CONTINUED)

OTIS (CONT'D)

There's a fucking person behind the
fucking face. But if you can't deal with
the face, then FUUUUUUCK YOUUUUU!

Jocko, Maggie and Buck bellow their drunken war cry.
Gradually, they chant to the rhythm of the cheap musak.

BUCK, JOCKO & MAGGIE

A person behind the face! A person behind
the fucking face! Fucking Face!

Then, A HOMELESS MAN, MALE STUDENTS, a CHUBBY FEMALE
STUDENT, A MOROCCAN GAP-TOOTH COOK all start to chant as
well: partly in solidarity, mostly in drunken mockery, but
Maggie, Otis, Jocko and Buck do not care anymore.

They look at Stan as they chant and are having a blast.
It's all because of him. They love him.

Stan, still sitting down, looks at them let loose. He
looks at the crowd chanting.

And then *he smiles. He's done it.*

*

ALL

Fucking face! Fucking Face! Fucking face!

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - 3 AM IN THE MORNING

The distant CHANTING still resonates over the beginning
of the scene: "*Fucking face! Fucking face!*" Stan, elated
and drunk, enters his apartment. He sees Paulette
packing pillows and clothes into a bag.

STAN

Where are you going?

PAULETTE

L'hôpital a appelé. Faut que j'y aille.

Stan rushes over to Paulette and clumsily grabs the bag
and pillows from her.

STAN

I'm coming with you! I'm ready.
(off her look)
What else do we need to bring?

PAULETTE

Tu restes ici. Tu es saoul.

Stan stands all proud in front of her.

(CONTINUED)

STAN

Elle peut plus rien me dire maintenant.

*

Paulette pushes him away.

PAULETTE

Pas dans cet état.

(She points to his room)

Et ton "amie" est là.

Stan looks over and sees light coming out of his bedroom... and the shadow of a huge person holding a tiny tea cup outlined against the corridor wall.

The door slams shut behind Stan. Paulette is gone.

INT. STAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Vanessa is sitting very still on Stan's bed. The delicate CLINK of the spoon and tea cup breaks the silence.

Stan comes in the room and knows that something is wrong, but he buries that feeling away.

STAN

You should have seen them tonight.
We're going to start a movement. It'll spread.

Vanessa looks at Stan. Her drunken anger palpable.

STAN (CONT'D)

It's going to change the world... With your workshop!

VANESSA

Did you sleep with that slut Maggie?

STAN

What?...no... Why?

VANESSA

You were flirting with me all night. Making me think that... maybe it was the start of something, and then you mock me in front of the others!

STAN

No no no! It was a just a dare and...

At that word, Vanessa loses her shit.

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

(screaming)

Liar!

BLAM! She pushes Stan who falls backwards on the floor.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

You're like the others! You'll always
seduce then abandon people, always!
Just like you abandoned your mother!

Stan stands up and faces her, defiant.

STAN

I didn't abandon her!

VANESSA

When was the last time that you saw her?

Stan doesn't answer, defeated.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

You said that being with us helped you
take care of her. Lies! And then you
wanted to show us to her like freaks!

STAN

That's not true!

VANESSA

Didn't you tell your aunt you wanted your
mother to see us?

Stan tries to process all this, but his mind is foggy.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Answer me!!

STAN

Yes, but it was...

Suddenly, Vanessa starts pummeling him.

VANESSA

You wanted to show us like animals?!

Vanessa's 300 pounds are on top of him. Kick. Punch.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

They counted on you and you've betrayed
them!

STAN

No! Don't go telling them that!

(CONTINUED)

Vanessa kicks him repeatedly.

VANESSA

You used us! For nothing!!

STAN

(pleading, drunk)

No, no, no, no...

Grabbing his hair and throat, Vanessa pulls him up. She's strong.

VANESSA

You've hurt everybody! Your mother, your aunt, my patients! They all hate you!

STAN

No, no, no...

Suddenly, Stan kisses Vanessa on the lips.

VANESSA

Hey?!

Taken aback, Vanessa hits him and tries to push him away, but Stan keeps her hand locked on his throat and kisses her again, rubbing himself against her.

Before she can push him away again, Stan kisses her neck, her lips, her face... So good.

Last time a boy kissed her like that, she was 13.

Vanessa kisses him back. They fall down on the bed like drunk teenagers groping and kissing.

Vanessa's large arms are wrapped around his head and neck, her mouth to his mouth, her large body smothering him, swallowing him. Fusion.

Finally, Stan has sex. As Vanessa's in her own world of bliss, Stan is in his world of pressure and pain. He screams as he climaxes.

*
*
*

Vanessa's large snoring shape is wrapped like a burrito in the blankets.

Suddenly, the PHONE RINGS in the other room. Vanessa turns to cover her head with the pillow and as she turns the covers roll with her, revealing:

(CONTINUED)

-- Stan, eyes wide open, sober.

Suddenly, the DOORBELL BUZZES furiously.

Vanessa sits up and takes in her surroundings: the posters, the figurines etc.

She looks at Stan, but he's turned the other way so it looks as if he's sleeping.

An instant later, the answering machine kicks in. Maggie's voice, angry, echoes across the apartment.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Are you there you little shit? What the hell?! Stan!? Open up!!

Vanessa gets up, gathers her torn clothes and gets dressed. She turn towards Stan for a moment.

Then, without a word, she leaves the room.

CUT TO:

Stan's naked motionless body on the bed, and next to him, a fresh BLOODSTAIN on the sheets where Vanessa was lying--It was her first time.

We stay on Stan and the blood. He is in the same position as his mother was when he found her on the floor.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER - DAWN

Tired and hung-over, Buck, Maggie, Jocko and Otis are waiting in front of the building. They are surprised to see Vanessa exit instead of Stan.

BUCK

Is it true?

VANESSA

Yes... His aunt told me.

*

Suspicious Maggie stares at Vanessa.

CLOSE ON VANESSA: messy hair, neck marks, torn blouse.

Vanessa grabs hold of Jocko's wheelchair.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Okay, day 7. Let's go see Brenda. Let her face what she did to you.

Jocko glances at Buck and Maggie who don't understand.

JOCKO

Now?

(CONTINUED)

VANESSA

Yes now. Today is catharsis day!

JOCKO

You know what. I don't know. I got the
video tape and that'll do.

*
*

VANESSA

Better if you do it face to face.

Clearly not herself, Vanessa violently yanks Jocko's
wheelchair onto the Medicar platform.

The sudden jerk of his wheelchair hurts the tired Jocko.

JOCKO

Let go! Fuck off!!!

Maggie gets in Vanessa's face.

MAGGIE

Did you spend the night with him?!

Vanessa has a complete teenage girl reaction.

VANESSA

No I didn't!

She suddenly realizes how that sounded.

MAGGIE

You have hickies on your neck! And... is
that sperm on your shirt?

They all stare at her, incredulous.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Go for an older man, a fat man, a black
man, whatever. But grow the fuck up
Vanessa. I'm outta here.

Maggie heads off down the street without turning back.

Pissed off and in pain, Jocko gets in his Medicar.

BUCK

OK, well... It's been... intense.

Buck starts walking away too. Otis grabs her by the arm.

OTIS

Wait, wait. We don't need him, we
have...

(CONTINUED)

BUCK

What?! We have what?

Buck looks up at the building. Curtains move at a window.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Stan, watching through the curtain and open window sees Buck give him the finger.

Stan moves away from the open window. He heard enough.

He catches his reflection the broken mirror.

CLOSE ON MIRROR: For an instant, Stan sees HIS FACE ALL CUT UP AND RESOWN: a monster.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Otis watches Buck walk away. He then turns to Vanessa who is trying to wipe the stain off of her blouse.

OTIS

(unsure)

Let's hope the next group will be calmer.

He opens his arms for a hug.

VANESSA

There won't be another one Otis.

OTIS

Why? THIS is not your fault.

VANESSA

I got fired yesterday.

(off Otis' surprise)

What did you think would happen after this week?

OTIS

But...

VANESSA

I can't do anything for you Otis. If she's not ready to heal, your daughter will never speak to you, no matter how much you've changed. What's broken is broken. At 73 you just have to accept that you'll die without mending your family.

(CONTINUED)

As if struck by a blow, Otis staggers back.

Vanessa doesn't care anymore. She's already walking away.

A WORKER coming back from his night shift passes Otis and goes towards the building entrance.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT WASHROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Stan looks at himself in the BROKEN mirror. He pulls out his KNIFE. Stan tries to bring the knife to his face but can't. He notices Otis. (Mirror scene of Bathtub)

STAN

Go away.

OTIS

I am not leaving. Not this time.

A pained look on his face, Stan looks at Otis.

OTIS (CONT'D)

Come, I'll take you to her.

STAN

It's too late.

OTIS

Not if she's still alive.

STAN

What's the point. I'll never be able to take care of her. After all she did for me...

Stan's losing it.

STAN (CONT'D)

She said I wanted her dead. That I would be relieved.

OTIS

That's not true.

(CONTINUED)

STAN

IT IS TRUE. I want it to end. I want her gone!

OTIS

Come...

STAN

Besides, it doesn't matter. In a couple of days, she'll be gone and all her memories too. Gone, forgotten.

SLAP! Otis slaps him. Stan is too stunned by the violence of Otis' gesture to even register the pain. He just stares at the old man.

OTIS

When someone we love is dying, we just want them gone so that we can be free of the pain. Everybody is like that. You're not special for feeling that.

Otis takes a stunned Stan into his arms. Stan tries to shake him off as it feels a little weird, but Otis clings to him as if it were he that needed the closeness.

OTIS (CONT'D)

(whispering)

You can scream, cry, break stuff, anything... I'm here Stan. I'll clean up the mess. I'll drive you. I'll be there.

Stan's body suddenly relaxes as what Otis said sinks in. For the first time in a long time, Stan starts crying.

STAN

I... I don't know what to do...

OTIS

Just be with her.

Stan nods.

OTIS (CONT'D)

Forget about starting a movement. About being a savior, a knight. *Grow up, be a man, just a man. That's hard enough, believe me.*

*
*
*

164

INT. BUCK'S FURNITURE STORE - DAY

164

Zolta is watching a news summary of the Madrid peace conference on TV. The Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir, is speaking.

YITZHAK SHAMIR

This gathering will be registered in history as a turning point, away from hostility and forward to coexistence and peace...

Zolta notices the Mini-DV camera hooked to the TV with a note that tells her to press play. She presses play. Buck's face comes on the TV.

*
*
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165

EXT. FURNITURE STORE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

165

The store sign says CLOSED. Buck is standing inside the large bay window and looking outside, visible by all who pass in front of the store.

OTIS (V.O.)

I'll drive you, wait for you, drive you back, get you food. I'll help you get through this.

At one point, Buck turns the sign to OPEN. She then bends down and picks up another sign. A big bold sign that she defiantly puts in the window: 75% DISCOUNT!

166

EXT. BRENDA'S HOUSE - DAY

166

BRENDA, 30s and fit, comes back from a jog, in her final sprint and jumps in the air as if she won something.

Seated in the back seat of the Medicar, Jocko, breathing heavily, is spying on her. He is about to open the car door when he notices:

From the other side of the street, comes sprinting Brenda's new DOUCHEBAG BOYFRIEND, in jogging gear.

OTIS (V.O.)

You're going to be grieving for a long time. Life is going to be a fog, a mist.

Brenda and her boyfriend kiss passionately.

Jocko lets go of the door handle and slumps back in his seat, defeated.

Several young models sit in a waiting area, each holding their portfolios and waiting for their casting call. There is an awkward silence

Maggie, in a classy suit and holding her own portfolio, is seated next to them, determined to give it a shot.

OTIS (V.O.)

But you have to go and face it. If not, you'll never forgive yourself.

The DOORBELL rings. Brenda opens the door and sees Jocko, super nervous, barely standing. The douchebag boyfriend comes to the entrance.

Jocko shouts incoherently how she left him because she could not handle his accident and the medical treatments.

The boyfriend tries to usher Jocko out and close the door, but Jocko purposely falls on the floor, convulsing madly and SCREAMING at the top of his lungs.

BRENDA

(to her boyfriend)

Stop! You're hurting him!

The boyfriend is taken aback by Jocko's move.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

This! This is why I left you! The anger, the screaming, the violence.

Jocko stops shouting, dumbfounded.

JOCKO

What?

BRENDA

It's Not because of your face, Jack. I tried to tell you but you never listened.

Brenda shuts the door in his face.

Stan is holding a bouquet of flowers, a Scrabble game and a small brown paper bag. He looks up at the hospital. He's got a bruise under the eye.

(CONTINUED)

169

CONTINUED:

169

There is a SHAPE in the window looking down at him.

Otis gently pushes Stan towards the hospital.

170

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

170

Otis and Stan are in the elevator, silent. After a moment, the doors open onto the Palliative Care unit.

171

INT. PALLIATIVE CARE UNIT - AFTERNOON

171

We stay on Stan's face as he and Otis exit the elevator.

SFX: the beeping of machines, the wheezing of patients, the oxygen pumps. The sound of distant FOLK GUITAR MUSIC.

Stan looks inside a room and sees: a motionless patient hooked to machines.

LAUGHTER jolts Stan back to reality. Through a door, he spots a FAMILY laughing with an old man on a respirator.

Stan turns to Otis who gives him a "you see" look.

At the Nurses Station, Josephine represses any reproach she may have had in the past. She notices the flowers.

JOSEPHINE

She's going to be so happy...

Stan shows her the paper bag.

STAN

I brought her some fries as well.

JOSEPHINE

She hasn't been able to eat anything for a few days now, Stan.

STAN

Okay... But how is she fed?

JOSEPHINE

Through an IV, but she started to have water in her lungs and it was drowning her, so we removed it last night...

Before Josephine can finish, Stan leaves his flowers on the counter and rushes down the corridor.

Stan comes in the room and sees:

Paulette and an ORDERLY holding a half naked Augustine on her side and cleaning bed sores on a back and ass. Augustine's agitated. Her skinny arms are flailing.

As Paulette gently rolls Augustine on her back, she notices Stan and smiles from relief.

Stan gets closer, taking furtive glances at the bed.

We see it in quick CLOSE UPS: a patch of skin on her skull that is burnt by radiation; her sagging skin on her bum; skeletal ribs; her left jaw in bandages stained with blood and plasma.

STAN

Maman?

When Augustine notices her son. Her eyes light up and her arms start flapping more wildly. She moves her lips, but barely any sound come out.

She manages to mouth the name "Richard?"

PAULETTE

Non, c'est Stanislas. C'est ton fils.
(to Stan)

Elle n'arrive plus à parler depuis hier soir.

Stan can't believe it.

PAULETTE (CONT'D)

Ils disent que ce sont les métastases qui poussent le cerveau..

STAN

J'arrive trop tard...

PAULETTE

Tu pouvais pas savoir...

Stan looks away, towards the door of the room. Otis is outside, peering in. He's got no advice for this.

Then, Stan removes his back pack, discards the Scrabble game and stands by the side of the bed.

Stan notices his mother's glasses and bracelets and ring lying on the bedside table. He takes a deep breath, and looks at his mother's face.

*

(CONTINUED)

Her yellow milky eyes are searching for his. There is worry and death in her gaze. Lips moving inaudibly, Augustine raises her shaky hand towards her son.

Stan leans in and lowers his head in apology.

STAN

Maman.. J'ai... Je suis...

Augustine's shaky hand manages to clumsily pat his head. With a supreme effort, she's able to whisper two words.

AUGUSTINE

Mon fils.

Stan exhales as a weight is lifted from his shoulder. He takes her hand and runs it through his hair and good cheek. Like a kid being caressed by his mom.

Augustine's other hand starts touching Stan's BRUISED cheek, but Stan takes both of her hands in his.

STAN

C'est rien. Shhh. Regarde, j'ai quelque chose pour toi. Avec tu vinaigre.

Stan holds up his brown paper bag full of grease stains.

PAULETTE

Je sais pas si c'est une bonne idée...

Augustine opens her dry mouth in hunger reflex.

Stan is happy to be able to do something his mom wants.

STAN

Juste un petit bout. Elle adore ça.

He cuts a very small piece of a French Fry and brings it to Augustine's mouth. Augustine feebly manages to eat it. She takes another small bite.

But when she tries to swallow, Augustine starts coughing and retching as she chokes on the fries.

Paulette presses on the call button, while Stan panics.

PAULETTE

(yells)

Nurse!

Josephine comes running in and helps Augustine sit up.

Josephine starts the Heimlich manoeuvre on Augustine, causing her immense pain and ripping away the IV lines. It's a disaster. Stan looks on, helpless.

Suddenly, a VOLUNTEER MUSICIAN, resembling a young Willie Nelson, pops in the door strumming his guitar joyfully.

MUSICIAN

(singing sweetly)

I gave my love a cherry without a
stone. I gave my love a chicken without
a bone.

JOSEPHINE

Not now!

From outside, Otis ushers the musician away.

Augustine finally coughs up the piece of fry and slumps back in the bed, eyes rolling in pain, bile, dripping from her deformed mouth.

Josephine expertly starts to reconnect Augustine's IV.

Paulette is silently crying, caressing her sister's head and using a sponge swab to wipe her mouth.

PAULETTE

Ma soeur, ma petite soeur..

The fries are a fiasco. Stan throws them in the garbage.

But he won't give up. He pulls out a *book* from his backpack: **Don Quichotte de La Mancha**. the same book that Augustine stole for him on his birthday.

Stan proudly shows the book to his mother.

Augustine's POV: Stan's BRUISED CHEEK, wrinkled clothes-- still a kid. He starts reading.

STAN

"Fais attention, Sancho, qu'il y a deux
espèces de beauté, l'une de l'âme,
l'autre du corps.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

Celle de l'âme brille et se montre dans l'esprit, dans la bienséance, dans la libéralité, dans la courtoisie, et toutes ces qualités peuvent trouver place chez un homme laid."

Augustine lets out A PAINFUL LOW WAIL. Stan stops.

Augustine is complete mental and physical pain.

Her hands are shaking, her breath shallow, her head rolls from side to side. It's as if she's trying to say something to Stan with all her might but will never be able to because her brain is going.

Josephine shakes her head as if she knew it was the end.

Horrified, Stan takes a few steps back. He looks at Josephine and Paulette hovering over Augustine to try and ease her suffering with pillows and morphine. In vain.

Stan slumps in a chair and stares at the floor.

At one point, in between two gasps, Augustine lets out a long drawn out breath. A hiss almost.

A moment later, Augustine does it again. It sounds like the breath of the Dragon from the D&D game.

The third time, still looking at the floor, Stan lets out a long breath. A hiss, in synch with his mother.

Stan looks up from his chair and lets out the hiss again.

STAN (CONT'D)

(murmurs)

Leave us.

PAULETTE

Quoi?

Stan tries to sound confident.

STAN

Tu n'as pas dormi depuis ton arrivé. Va te reposer cet après midi.

Paulette looks from Stan to the nurse.

STAN (CONT'D)

Laissez moi avec elle.

Paulette and Josephine exit the room and shut the door.

Stan is alone with his mother. He sits on her bed.

Ignoring her flailing arms, he gently takes her hand and looks at them.

Then, he takes the ring on the bedside table and reverently puts it on Augustine's finger.

Stan looks her in the eyes.

EXTREME CLOSE UP: Stan and his mother.

Augustine's eyes are unfocused. Stan lets out several long slow breath, and in between them, he speaks to her.

STAN

Maman, c'est moi. Stan. Je suis là. Je suis là.

Hearing those words, Augustine's eyes focus on his.

STAN (CONT'D)

Je vais bien. T'en fais pas pour moi. Tu m'as préparé. Tu as réussi. Ca va aller.

Gradually Augustine's breathing slows down.

STAN (CONT'D)

Je vais reporter mes examens cette session et je les reprends cet hiver. Je vais garder ma moyenne dans le tapis et Honours Finance. Je vais faire beaucoup d'argent. J'aurais pas de soucis. Je te le promet.

*
*

Augustine's breathing is in synch with her son's.

STAN (CONT'D)

Pis je vais me trouver une blonde. Je serais pas seul.

Augustine starts puffing her cheeks repeatedly.

STAN (CONT'D)

(smiling)
La grosse fille? Non, c'est pas ma copine.

Augustine manages a faint smile despite the pain. Mother and son finally connect.

(CONTINUED)

STAN (CONT'D)

Bientôt, tu seras dans la chaleur du soleil. Tu n'auras pas froid, tu seras bien, comme à la plage en Martinique.

Stan moves inches away from his mother and points his hand towards the ceiling.

We follow Stan's hand as he points to the sky lying beyond the ceiling. As if he were running his fingers through an unseen presence.

STAN (CONT'D)

Quand j'irais voir Paulette et la famille, tu seras avec moi, tu me protégeras.

Augustine's murky gaze follows her son's hand, entranced.

STAN (CONT'D)

Tu seras dans une autre dimension, dans le soleil, avec ton père. Et moi je serais ici.

Stan's eyes also follow the hand, as if he were entranced by his own words. Feeling believing everything he says.

STAN (CONT'D)

J'aurais une bonne vie et tu seras fière de moi. Mais pour toi le temps passera vite, et en un instant, je te rejoindrai, de l'autre côté et on sera ensemble. Pour toujours... *Je te le jure.*

*

Stan has calmed his mother down. There is no more panic in her eyes. Her breathing is calm. She closes her eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER - DUSK

*

Night is falling. Still on the bed, Stan is asleep.

Augustine is in his arms, but she is awake now. Her cheeks are rosy. There is an innocent happiness in her eyes, like a newborn child, as she watches her son sleep.

The Mummy Warrior figurine rests on the bedside table.

*

INT. STAN'S SMALL APARTMENT - DAY - OUT OF TIME

Stan stands in front of the mirror and cuts his hair

EPILOGUE

We hear Augustine's breath transform into a mechanical sound. SFX: urrr NNNGGG crrr KEEEEEEE! A dial up modem.

Vanessa and Marc Robert are seated in front of huge beige computers. The neon-lit place is nearly empty.

Vanessa chuckles. Marc Robert smiles at her. She touches her hair, then leans forward and squints at the screen.

INSERT ON COMPUTER SCREEN: "****MUME I **** In Progress at FIRE (Free Internet Roleplay Experiences) Adapted from J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-Earth world and maintained by CryHavoc, Eru, Manwe, and Nada."

"By what name do you wish to be known?"

VANESSA (O.C.)

What should I name my character?

MARC ROBERT (O.C.)

Pick anything you want. Anything!

CLOSE ON SCREEN: *By what name do you wish to be known?*

SFX TYPING.

CLOSE ON SCREEN: "*CiBiTia*"

Vanessa presses "Enter", proud. She turns to Marc Robert.

VANESSA

What's a priestess called again?

MARC ROBERT

Cleric.

Marc takes a sip from his coffee mug, smiling at Vanessa's rapt attention. His date is going well.

MARC ROBERT (CONT'D)

The beauty of the net is that when you talk to people, they only focus on what you have to say. No matter race, sex, or looks. Like your workshop, it's going to steer mankind towards what really matters.

*
*

Vanessa nods, but she's not listening, too busy typing.

(CONTINUED)

Nina Simone's song comes on: *I Wish I Knew How it Would Feel to be Free.*

INSERT ON COMPUTER SCREEN:

"Please enter character description."

CLICK CLICK CLICK as we slowly see what Vanessa is typing:

"Cibitia is a beautiful slender priestess wearing an azure blue tunic and a diamond tiara. Her flowing blond hair makes you instantly want to convert to her worship."

Vanessa types, the song carries over shots of the city.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MONTREAL - DAY - OUT OF TIME.

As we hear the song, we see people going to work in the business district of the city.

At one point we catch a glimpse of a young man dressed in a business suit, hair slicked back, void gaze. He looks like Stan.

Business Stan passes a HOODED FIGURE lurking by an alley's corner.

THE END.