

FADE IN:

EXT. CANADIAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

A solitary STAG grazes on Spring vegetation. Content. Free.

He abruptly uprears his newly racked head, still masticating. Radar EARS sense and swivel at angles. But he remains still. It is silent, apart from a soft breeze that chills his fur...

A RUMBLE grows from nothing. Vibrates the earth. Horn BLASTS!

EXT. CANADIAN COUNTRYSIDE - CONTINUOUS

A TRAIN cruises past, disturbing the peaceful Québec scenery.

SUPER: 'Day 1,824'

ALLAN (V.O.)  
Everyone has a reason...

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

ALLAN (26) swaggers audaciously down the aisle, sips at a ginger ale. Worn boots and a wrinkled shirt. He's unshaven. He passes various PASSENGERS; one fidgets, another gazes flirtatiously at him, the third reads a romance novel --

ALLAN (V.O.)  
... Escaping the pain of a broken  
relationship... Hoping to end one,  
possibly... Dreaming of finding  
someone foreign. Exotic. Watched  
too many films.

Allan glissades into his booth, snuggles up to a faded blue BACKPACK. 'SLIM' written in marker. Smiley face underneath. He pulls out a half eaten pack of trail mix from his pocket. Offers two FEMALE LATINA PASSENGERS, sitting opposite but they refuse it. Allan takes his habitual handfuls --

ALLAN (V.O.)  
Lost her job, she's on sabbatical.  
Still haven't found any Spanish who  
like my nuts and berries mix.

Two well-to-do KIDS, no doubt on a 'GAP year' joust with each other across the aisle --

ALLAN (V.O.)  
Cramming as many sights, souvenirs,  
shags and inevitable STI's into one  
year... Usually how they roll.

ALLAN switches his gaze to outside, the blurry greenness. Pensive. Then melancholy overcomes the seasoned backpacker. The hidden, private side of his personality.

ALLAN (V.O.)  
 Searching for individual utopia.  
 Fleeing from miserable dystopia?  
 Love, life, excitement... For me--

KID 1 (O.C.)  
 --You're full of shit!

KID 2  
 I swear, it's a real place.

The train decelerates. Hard!

Allan clutches on to his seat but Slim flies forward. He gathers his backpack up and a stash of POSTCARDS fall into the aisle. They're old but well kept.

ALLAN  
 Bugger!

He collects all of them with haste and shuffles through them; Barcelona, Auckland, Buenos Aires, St Petersburg, Kathmandu. It's like he is ordering the cards in some way --

A small, frayed cloth badge; A LEOPARD lands in his lap.

The train jerks, accelerates again. The ginger ale spills. Allan rescues his cards, the Leopard, sacrificing his trousers to the stain. The two Latinas share a smirk as a female VOICE on the PA updates passengers on the journey; expected arrival times into Montreal --

Allan's nose twitches. He SNIFFS, something stinks. Armpits?

EXT. MONTREAL - DAY

Establishing shots. English vibes mixed with French vibes. Confused, culturally conflicting, it's complicated...

EXT. MONTREAL CENTRAL STATION - DAY

Evening rush COMMUTERS spew in and out of the archways.

JACK (29) struggles with the raging foot flow. Uncomfortable. Backpack strapped tightly, a camera dangling around his neck. He furiously studies the city map in his guide book. Then he steps out into the street, looking right. The WRONG way!

A CAR heads straight for him. Horn TOOTS, braking --

A female ARM covered in leather wrist straps and bracelet beads yanks Jack by his backpack. Returns him onto the safer sidewalk in one superhero motion.

Jack stumbles, realises his almost near collision with a car. Sheepish. Goes to thank whoever, but whoever has disappeared. He starts along the sidewalk this time, referring to his map. Halts again after a few paces. Stepped in some chewing gum.

JACK  
Brilliant.

EXT. YOUTH HOSTEL - DAY

HOSTEL GUESTS mooch on the front steps, smoking, chatting.

GUEST (O.S.)  
I got a problem with my room--

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

Jack waits to check in behind a heavy set peculiar GUEST, complaining to the native FEMALE RECEPTIONIST.

GUEST  
I'm here four nights, there three  
women in my room...

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST  
I'm sorry but I don't understand--

GUEST  
Four nights. Three women!?

Jack is dumbfounded. She is very confused and embarrassed. Jack motions to say something but the MALE RECEPTIONIST waves him to his desk. He pauses then obediently moves as directed.

MALE RECEPTIONIST  
Truly sorry for that, we get all  
kinds here--

JACK  
I'm used to it, me.

MALE RECEPTIONIST  
You are checking in?

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

By the door Jack scans the neglected 12-bed dump of a room. Locks of HAIR just visible out the covers on a lower bunk, towel-curtain strung over it. Jack claims the free top bunk. He adjusts his flat cap, wondering what he's gotten into...

Allan emerges out of the steamy shower room, dripping wet. Only a tiny red towel covering his bits. He's comfortable.

ALLAN  
I had a cap just like that once,  
bet you're from the UK?

JACK  
England, like.

Allan waddles up to his bunk, right opposite Jack's. Cozy.

ALLAN  
Nice place England.

JACK  
Erm... If you say so--

ALLAN  
Keen for a beer?

JACK  
Let me put me bag down first.

ALLAN  
What's your name mate?

Allan extends his right arm out. His TOWEL comes loose, slips down but he catches it before completely revealing himself.

JACK  
Erm, just cover your bollocks kid.

Jack awkwardly side-steps away to the lockers and begins to stow all his valuables. Allan watches him; such a newbie.

JACK (CONT'D)  
TOSS. Tossing idiot! You know if  
they sell padlocks downstairs?

Allan grabs Slim, finds a small PADLOCK in the side pocket. He lobs it up and Jack snatches it from the air.

ALLAN  
Keep it mate. I don't bother with  
padlocks anymore.

JACK  
Cheers... It's Jack by the way.

Allan prepares his clothes on the bed. Then drops his towel!

JACK (CONT'D)  
Woah! Mixed dorm, you know?

Allan shrugs his shoulders.

INT. BATHROOM SUITE - DAY

FRANCIS (20) studies his charming, baby-faced reflection. Ties a simply-detailed tie and adjusts his blue blazer coat. He checks himself out. He knows he looks handsome. Smiles. From his wallet he takes a small photograph of himself, wearing the same clothes, standing with an elderly lady.

His smile slowly fades.

INT. OLD PERSONS CARE HOME / ROOM - DAY

Francis sits upright in an armchair, hands clasped tightly. ECHOES of a bingo tournament. Numbers sing out in French from down the halls.

Shuffling through the threshold, a NURSE escorts Francis' AUNT (75) into her room, the lady in the photo.

NURSE  
(in French)  
Genevieve, you remember Francis?

Francis stands to attention, then goes to hug his aunt.

AUNT  
(in French)  
Who are you? Handsome young man...

Francis catches the nurse's eye. Almost too sensitive to cope with the situation. They both share in the emotional torment.

INT. HOSTEL BAR - NIGHT

The BARMAN consoles Francis in French as he sips his pint.

JACK (O.S.)  
Ridiculous how much cheaper pizza  
is here, you know... Good!

Allan and Jack bound into the bar, take a stool.

ALLAN  
What d'you want?

JACK  
Whatever's cheap.

ALLAN  
Deux bières blondes s'il vous plaît  
mon ami.

Jack shoots Allan a strange look --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
I can order beers in a few dialects  
these days.

The Barman affirms Francis with a simple gesture then gives Allan a fist bump. Respect. He prepares the two pint glasses. Allan tastes the beer. His EYES immediately light up --

FRANCIS  
Yeah exactly. It's from Québec.

ALLAN  
It's also delicious. Where are you  
from mate?

FRANCIS  
Québec City.

ALLAN  
I'm Allan. Enchanté. That's Jack--

England. JACK Francis. FRANCIS

They all shake hands --

FRANCIS  
Nice to meet you. This is first  
time in hostel for me. Before now,  
I rested with my aunt.

JACK  
She kick you out?

Francis loosens the knot of his tie, upset.

FRANCIS  
Now, she knows not herself. I  
cannot explain properly in English--

BARMAN  
She has a dementia.

Jack, Allan don't quite know how to react. Awkward glances.

FRANCIS  
C'est la vie.

Barman pours four shots. They quietly toast Francis' aunt.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)  
And you? Why come to Montréal?

ALLAN  
I could write a book about that.

JACK  
Go on then lad, give us your back  
page synopsis.

Allan is taken aback. Francis is quietly intrigued and the barman is ever attentive, casually wiping glassware.

CHRIS (O.S.)  
Bar CRAWL!

CHRIS (30) enters boisterously. He's the ultimate hipster, and hostel events coordinator. Very animated individual.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
You guys coming out tonight?

NODS all round. It's unanimous and it has to be done.

EXT. PLATEAU BAR / BACK TERRACE - NIGHT

Green LANTERNS create a moody glow in the CROWDED garden.

MARIAN (35) tops up pints from a pitcher of beer with German precision, her wrist covered in straps and beaded bracelets. Multiple nose piercings and messy brown hair. Self assured, she takes her place with Allan, Jack and Francis.

JACK  
Next--

ALLAN  
Suitcase or backpack?

MARIAN/JACK	FRANCIS
Backpack.	Suitcase.

Allan points at Francis. He drinks a penalty measure of beer.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
You've missed a flight. Do you stay  
in the airport or sleep in a hotel?

JACK  
I ain't sleeping in no airport.

Allan points at Jack this time --

JACK (CONT'D)  
Whatever chump. What would you do?

ALLAN  
Find one of those multi-faith  
prayer rooms, lay out some carpets.

Marian hisses. Jack takes a drink and gives all at the table, the FINGER.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Don't forget two fingers mate.

Jack changes to the two fingered, British; 'Up yours Allan!'

MARIAN  
What if one has more than three  
pairs of underwear?

Jack CURSES! Drinks again. Allan and Marian engage Francis --

FRANCIS  
I'm here three days only--

JACK  
How many pants you got then?

MARIAN  
Three.

	JACK	MARIAN
Sick!		Efficient.

ALLAN  
Rightio. This time, say "Cheers" in  
a foreign language. If you can't,  
you finish off your pint. Cheers!

Around and around the table they go making TOASTS in many  
foreign languages...

MARIAN  
...Na zdrowie.

FRANCIS  
Salud.

JACK  
Erm... Slawn-cha. Ha!

ALLAN  
Egg-esh ay-ged-reh.

	FRANCIS	JACK
Quoi?		What?

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
It's Hungarian--

MARIAN  
Chok Dee.

Francis is freaking out. He IS out!

FRANCIS  
Aii! TABARNAK!

Francis has failed. Considers the rest of his pint of beer.



MARIAN  
Und drei, zwei, eins...

Marian SINGS a Bavarian drinking chant while Francis struggles to finish his pint but he gets there. Finally! Throws up his arms, BELCHES loudly. Then his face goes red --

SINDY (25) glides between their table and the one adjacent. An attractive server. Mixed race Montrealer, elegant yet sassy. Everyone notices her grace and femininity, plus other attributes --

JACK  
Top bollocks like!  
(clarifying)  
Smashing set of tits on her.

FRANCIS  
Yeah exactly. She is Québécoise.

Allan studies Cindy gliding around the terrace, infatuated. Cindy catches Allan's gaze. WINKS at him. Jack nudges Allan --

JACK  
No chance Allan! Pure tease.

CHRIS appears, delivering shots of green coloured TEQUILA.

CHRIS  
On the house guys.

Brilliant. JACK Ai, non! FRANCIS

They CLINK glasses and quickly neck their green shots.

ALLAN  
What a wonderful place, ay?

FRANCIS  
The girls here are very fine.

JACK  
Erm. Should we get more beer?

Sindy materializes with an empty tray. Allan grabs her arm.

ALLAN  
Excuse me. We'd like four more free  
drinks please.

Sindy confidently removes Allan's grip on her forearm.

SINDY  
Oh honey. Nothing is for free...

Allan places the empty shot glasses on Sindy's tray.

ALLAN  
These were. Some beers please--

SINDY  
Where are you from?

ALLAN  
Wouldn't you like to know--

SINDY  
I do know, for sure--

ALLAN  
Really... Free beers?

SINDY  
Big tip!

ALLAN  
We'll take four blondes for 100.

A tense beat.

Sindy goes around the table, labelling each one of them --

SINDY  
Québec. Germany. England...  
Of course the annoying one is from  
Australia. You cannot hide under  
the table.

Jack, Allan are impressed. Marian more indifferent and  
Francis ducks, UNDER THE TABLE:

--Allan's Aussie THONGS, Jack's jeans with REEBOK trainers,  
Marian's hiking BOOTS and trousers with leather SHOES--

MARIAN (O.C.)  
Actually it's Bavaria--

JACK (O.C.)  
Still Germany. Don't be a tit.

Francis sits up again as Allan hands over a plastic CARD.  
Sindy swipes it in the machine.

ALLAN  
Well played--

SINDY  
Rejected.

Allan SWAPS cards. Sindy swipes again and shakes her head.  
Allan becomes confused. Jack is amused. Allan has one more.

ALLAN  
The charm Sindy. Isn't it...  
Are you are 5-1-4- or a 4-3-8-?

SINDY

Cute.

Sindy swipes. It works! She returns Allan's last card.

SINDY (CONT'D)

Lucky... 5-1-4- but I don't give  
out my number to random tourists.

ALLAN

What's your name?

Sindy leaves Allan hanging, swinging her HIPS. She knows how to work it. She knows they're looking. They ALL are --

FRANCIS

You see... Québécoise.

JACK

Pure tease.

ALLAN

I'm not a fucking tourist!

Allan leaves abruptly, knocks his chair over. Doesn't fix it.

JACK

Bell-end.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Locked in a stall, Allan squats on a toilet. He analyses his WALLET, his cards. Discovers some folded notes; only \$45.

ALLAN

Bugger!

EXT. PLATEAU BAR / BACK TERRACE - NIGHT

Allan returns to the table to find an uncouth country girl, ANTONIA (30) hovering by his place --

ANTONIA

--she was French, so bloody rude  
for no friggin reason--

JACK

Bloody French--

MARIAN

One must embrace the local culture.

Allan squeezes past Antonia into his place, his face is pale. Marian notices. The others have their attention on Antonia --

ANTONIA

This Dutch and some guy. Fucking!  
All night. So, like I had to change  
to the four bedder, now this creepy  
guy's in there. Don't you hate  
hostels!?

MARIAN

Why not use the female-only dorm?

ANTONIA

Why can't they make like hostels  
with like single rooms. You know,  
like a hotel but, like a hostel...

JACK

You're like missing the like point  
there luv... Like--

ANTONIA

Shut up! I can't wait to go home--

ALLAN

Then fucking go home!

Table goes silent. Awkward silent.

Finally Sindy appears with four beers, easing the tension.

ANTONIA

Anyone want to buy my OPUS card?  
It's got a month on it.

No one responds...

ALLAN

Fuck it! I will, twenty bucks...

ANTONIA

It's only the 11th? Shitter! I need  
money... You know it cost 75 bucks.

Allan shrugs his shoulders, that's the offer. Antonia  
reluctantly makes the trade then leaves for the bar.

JACK

What a trollop!

ALLAN

Now that was a fucking tourist.

CHRIS (O.S.)

Hostel! Hostel, time to go--

ALLAN

Rightio. Let's get annihilated--

JACK

Way!

Four pint glasses CLINK together --

INT. PUB 1 - NIGHT

Bursting through front doors, Chris leads his tipsy GROUP. Allan, Jack, Francis and Marian race ahead to the bar.

Four pints of blonde beer are presented on the bar --

INT. PUB 2 - NIGHT

Four flaming shots are presented on the bar this time. Allan, Jack, Francis and Marian collect one each. Cheers all round. Down the hatch. It's hammertime --

INT. PUB 3 - NIGHT

Three amber beers are delivered on the bar. Jack, Allan analyse the pint.

Francis is distracted by a DRUNK GIRL racing to the ladies, busting. She joins the back of the queue shifting her weight, in agony --

INT. PUB 4 - NIGHT

At the bar, two brown beers CLINK together, spill over. Allan, Jack take their first sip together. Satisfied.

The same drunk girl dashes past them towards the toilets, straight past the queue for the ladies this time and into --

INT. MENS PUB TOILET - CONTINUOUS

She barges through the doorway. Pauses --

Two LADS pee at opposite ends of the urinal. They turn simultaneously but give no real notice. She checks the few cubicles. Busy, all of them. But she cannot wait --

Goes between the two lads at the urinal. Drops her pants --

The lads notice her this time. Clueless how to react, where to look. She looks at both of them, then both of them. The lads grow self-conscious.

EXT. SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Chris busts out the exit, his debauched GROUP follow him.  
Jack with Allan.

CHRIS  
The metro is \$3 if you haven't  
bought an Opus card.

Jack, Allan erupt in hyena-like laughter. Antonia, still  
around and well pissed off.

INT. CLUB LE CHAT NOIR / MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Alcohol and drug fueled CLUBBERS party, like the apocalypse.

Jack emerges from the crowded mezzanine BAR gulping from an  
enormous plastic VESSEL. The guest (from reception) stumbles  
into him. He loses a good volume of beer. Annoyed.

GUEST  
Japanese sex dogs... Heard about  
those, specially bred for making  
German pornos--

The guest scats off, talking to himself. Allan chuckles,  
observing Jack's misfortunes from the mezzanine rail --

JACK  
I'm used to it, me.

ALLAN  
You bought a whole pitcher?

JACK  
Watching me budget.

ALLAN  
But it costs more--

JACK  
Better value innit.

ALLAN  
I think we lost the German--

JACK  
Massive dyke! Anyway, go on...

ALLAN  
Whatever you say man. She seems  
cool. I like her. Hope she's fine.  
Have you seen Francis?

Jack gestures to Francis below. Sloppy dances with a YOUNG  
GIRL in the mess of a dance floor. Loose as a goose.

JACK  
Absolutely rendered, him.

ALLAN  
I think he needs to blow off steam.

JACK  
Seems more like steaming in, to me.

Along the mezzanine rail NAT (22) is in a trance. She sways, eyes closed. Alternative dress and tattoos. In her own world, out of time with the beat.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Would you smash?

ALLAN  
Would you?

JACK  
Not if she's French.

ALLAN  
What you got against the French?

JACK  
Erm... Everything.

ALLAN  
Well, you shouldn't--

Allan struts over to Nat, taps her on the shoulder. She opens her eyes and throws her arms around him. Intimate. They sway to the music.

NAT  
I am having a party at my house.  
You're invited...

ALLAN  
Cool. A party? Where is it?

NAT  
At my house--

Jack can't believe it, observing Allan's apparent prowess. Then Nat's FRIEND pulls her away from Allan. She slams him in the chest, right off balance.

FRIEND  
She's got a boyfriend, you dick!

Nat is continuously chastised by her friend as she escorts her away. Allan retreats, this time to a CACKLING Jack.

JACK  
Blown out! Don't think your accent works on these Montreal women kid.

ALLAN  
I don't need my accent--

INT. CLUB LE CHAT NOIR / LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Francis makes out with the young girl he found on the floor. Suddenly he stops. He pulls away from her, looks a real mess, upset like he's about to cry.

He runs out of the lounge, leaving the girl confused.

INT. CLUB LE CHAT NOIR - CONTINUOUS

An intense exchange at the mezzanine bar. Allan analyses Jack, trying to figure something out --

ALLAN  
Seriously? A grand? Watching your budget ay?

JACK  
The money is safe, ain't happening. Alternative lass, she weren't even A-grade. That Sindy before, it were A-grade.

ALLAN  
I could get Sindy if I want--

JACK  
You're rubbish kid... But like all of us, you're a competitor. So?

Jack holds out his hand. Ready to shake on it...

ALLAN  
1000? No, I'm not interested. It's not why I'm here.

JACK  
Then why are you here?

ALLAN  
I'm going for a piss.

Allan's had enough. Bails.

JACK (O.S.)  
Let me know tomorrow, when you change your mind... Bell!

INT. CLUB LE CHAT NOIR / WASHROOMS - NIGHT

Allan shivers at the urinal. A heavenly release.



Francis falls out of a cubicle, wiping his mouth. He brushes up against Allan's backside. He flinches. Then Francis props himself up behind Allan. Holds onto his shoulder with one arm, the other clutches a bottle of red.

FRANCIS

What time is now is the time Allan?

ALLAN

Francis mate. Back up a minute would you...

FRANCIS

It's fine. I like womans. I need to show you something.

ALLAN

Can it wait two seconds?

CHRIS enters. Pauses in the doorway gawking at Allan and Francis in their compromising position. Francis hiccups.

CHRIS

I'll come back. No judgement dudes.

Chris exits swiftly.

Allan zips up, faces Francis who pulls from his back pocket, a folded piece of PAPER:

--MAP of the world with a few countries shaded in pencil--

ALLAN

It's not womans. Women. No 's'.

FRANCIS

I like them, all kinds--

ALLAN

Interesting hobby...

Francis is nodding... Nodding off. He's falling --

EXT. LE CHAT NOIR - CONTINUOUS

Up on the MEZZANINE, Jack is pinned to the rail by Antonia. Allan carries Francis as they re-enter the chaotic main room.

ALLAN (V.O.)

Sometimes we all need a little bit of help to find our ways back home.

EXT. MONT ROYAL - NIGHT

Deathly quiet. The huge white cross atop the mountain park illuminates Marian's FACE.

She's settled on the grass, Buddah style, smoking a joint. Half a dozen BRAZILIANS, also smoking, squat around a small barbecue fire. They start to sing a traditional folk song. Marian seems to be getting along fine, speaking their tongue.

EXT. RUE ST CATHERINES - NIGHT

The GUEST shuffles along the road, passing a STRIP JOINT.

INT. PIZZA TAKEAWAY - NIGHT

Antonia peruses the manky selection of pizza slices. Jack still biding his time...

ANTONIA  
You want anything?

JACK  
...Not pizza.

The PIZZA MAN, a real sight. A weird limp and a strong lisp materialises from out the back.

ANTONIA  
One large pepperoni pizza please...

JACK  
Large?

ANTONIA  
Don't judge me.

Antonia lifts up her checkered shirt, pushes her jeans down, pulls out her under shirt; a secured travel wallet, and her CREDIT CARD.

ANTONIA (CONT'D)  
You're no gentleman are ya?

Jack rolls his eyes. Antonia swipes her card. Then hides it. She walks outside... The Pizza Man stares Jack down --

PIZZA MAN  
Why don't you want to eat pizza?

JACK  
Erm... I'm just not hungry.

EXT. PIZZA TAKEAWAY - CONTINUOUS

Antonia shares the stoop with a broad, slightly unhinged-looking fellow, B-JAY (30) who rests on the side. He swigs from a 40 ounce. Antonia keeps checking her watch, uneasy.

B-JAY  
Chilling...

ANTONIA  
I have to be at the airport in 4  
hours.

B-JAY  
Word.

PIZZA MAN (O.S.)  
If someone offers you the pizza you  
eat the damn pizza!

JACK (O.S.)  
I don't want to eat the damn pizza!

Jack appears on the stoop. Flustered and ready to leave.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Fuck sake. Why is it always me?  
(re: B-Jay)  
Who's this?

PIZZA MAN (O.S.)  
I got the best wraps in the city!

The Pizza Man shoves the pizza box into Antonia's rib cage.  
Jack drags Antonia away.

B-JAY  
Peace.

B-Jay pulls out a phone. He starts making a call.

EXT. RUE ST CATHERINES - NIGHT

Francis keels over, VOMITS second hand wine into the gutter.  
Allan assists kindly but confiscates his remaining wine.

BELLOWING! Across the street --

That peculiar guest turns up again, SHOUTING profanities. A  
bloody gash on his face. Francis is intimidated. He finishes  
up and hails a creeping cab, sniffing business. It pulls up.

ALLAN  
It's less than 10 blocks mate.

Francis ignores Allan and falls in the cab. Mumbles French.  
Allan closes the door.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Rightio mate. Suit yourself.  
Auberge de Jeunesse, please driver.

The cab screeches away leaving Allan alone.

He exhales loudly, looks around. It's late, empty and still. Melancholy overcomes him and he starts on the bottle of wine.

EXT. RUE ST CATHERINES - NIGHT

Antonia ambles with Jack. She hands him the empty pizza box.

JACK  
That was some serious Hoovering.

ANTONIA  
I asked if you wanted any.

Jack throws the pizza box on top of an overflowing bin.

ANTONIA (CONT'D)  
Thanks for the D&M by the way...  
And I hope things work out with  
her. Honestly--

Antonia stops dead --

JACK  
What's up with you?

She feels around in her pocket. She begins freaking out --

ANTONIA  
My phone's gone? Fuck!!!

JACK  
Calm down woman! I'll call it?  
You know this ain't gonna be cheap.

Antonia nervously RECITES her number, Jack enters the digits. RINGING... He switches to loud speaker. Someone picks up --

ANTONIA  
Gimme back my phone!

PHONE VOICE (O.S.)  
I got your phone bitch. Ha ha!

Antonia goes mental. Jack regrets for the night's decisions.

EXT. PLATEAU NEIGHBOURHOOD / INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Allan wanders aimlessly. He hums his melancholic tune. Flat. Phone RINGS... Caller ID; NEIL GOODMAN.

Allan answers --

ALLAN  
Yes. I'm drunk but go ahead.

Allan awkwardly squats down on the edge of a four way stop. Squints as he tries to listen --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
 Yes I know... No. I'm still away...  
 Not really... Neil? Say 'happy  
 birthday' from me.

Allan hangs up.

A CAR slowly approaches. Pauses, then moves off again. The DRIVER eyes Allan, judging him from the safety of inside. Allan swigs from the bottle but it's empty now...

From his cargo pants pocket he pulls of a POSTCARD:

--MONTREAL, taken from the Chalet on top of the mountain--

Allan stares at the photograph longingly.

EXT. MONT ROYAL - NIGHT

The barbecue fire embers out. Brazilians are nicely stoned.

Marian and one Brazilian practice CAPOEIRA. Marian chucks her spliff, really gets into it. Practice fighting. High kicks!

EXT. PLATEAU NEIGHBOURHOOD / INTERSECTION - NIGHT

A red octagonal STOP SIGN on the street corner says; 'ARRET'. Allan stares at it. Practices how to say it in French...

ALLAN  
 No. What if I don't want to.

He swigs again from the bottle. Still empty. He shakes it. Walks straight past the sign, towards a green light shining.

EXT. PLATEAU BAR - NIGHT

On the street Allan lurks outside the same BAR from earlier. In through the front WINDOWS, several BAR STAFF are drinking. Sindy too!

She heads for the front door --

OUTSIDE Sindy settles on the front steps. Lights a CIGARETTE. Takes a long drag, blowing smoke up elegantly into the air. Allan stares at her in the shadows across the street, still clawing the wine bottle.

SINDY  
 Are you lost?

Allan jolts out of his dream. Not expecting acknowledgement. He DROPS the bottle on the ground. It doesn't break but rolls away. Allan chases it, eventually collects it. Loses his balance momentarily. Sindy is entertained. Allan shrugs --

ALLAN  
 Maybe, maybe not. I came, to say...  
 Hey you--  
 (burps)  
 ...OH and, pardon me.

Allan giggles. Sindy laughs her smoke up into the atmosphere. She studies him. Then extinguishes her cigarette.

Sindy approaches Allan in the street. She draws in close, looking Allan up and down, up then down --

She plants on him a solid and confident KISS. French style.

SINDY  
 You think you're funny don't you?

ALLAN  
 I am going to say, yes--

INT. SINDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Allan and Sindy romp around, barely inside the front door. It's hot'n'heavy. Allan accidentally puts his foot in the metal cat food bowl. They chortle.

Sindy suddenly HUSHES Allan. Now silent foreplay continues. Kissing, fondling, teasing. Trying to be quiet at least.

Sindy pushes Allan onto the couch. He lands on his back. She straddles him, her pelvis rests on top of his. She takes him in, rubs his face with her fingertips, over faint SCARS...

ALLAN  
 I used to get into a lot of fights.

Sindy accepts. Then shuffles down and unbuckles, UNZIPS him. Allan kicks off his shoes, then closes his eyes.

Sindy starts priming him up.

SINDY  
 Allan?

ALLAN  
 What? I'm concentrating.

Sindy leans in close, KISSES Allan; lips, cheek, neck, ear.

SINDY  
 Look at me.

Allan opens his glazed eyes again. Cindy gazes into them... She's suddenly taken aback, her body retorts --

SINDY (CONT'D)  
What's wrong?

ALLAN  
Nothing's wrong. Why?

SINDY  
You have dishonest eyes.

ALLAN  
What are you talking about?

Sindy sits up. Allan BLINKS a few times, tries to distract her. He kisses her again, on the lips. That works very well. She's back in the mood --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Shall we continue.

A loud, aggressive BANG BANG! Pounding on the front door. Sindy jumps off Allan, goes to her front door. Hesitates. Looks through the peep hole.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Jeez. What time is it?

SINDY  
(quietly)  
Tabarnak... You need to go now.

ALLAN  
Now? Go where?

MALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Let me in please, I want to talk.

PANIC! Allan gets up off the couch, uneasy on his feet, knees ain't working right. Clumsily, he sorts his jeans out. Shoes.

ALLAN  
Boyfriend? Fucking typical--

SINDY  
Not boyfriend... It's, um--

ALLAN  
(sarcastic)  
What? Your landlord?

SINDY  
Yes. He's a bit crazy.

ALLAN  
Whatever. Fuck!

The BASHING on the door continues. Harder. Allan waits for a real answer. Nothing...

Allan's over it. He heads for the door but Sindy intercepts. Sindy escorts Allan to the window. Outside, a dodgy FIRE ESCAPE for Allan's stealth departure. Allan takes a look --

ALLAN (CONT'D)

No way.

SINDY

Yes way!

Sindy shoves Allan through the window. He falls hard onto the landing. Sindy immediately closes the window shut behind him. Allan looks back. Sindy DRAWS the curtain. Muffled yelling...

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONTINUOUS

Allan forces himself to look down at his escape route. Apprehensive and intoxicated.

ALLAN

This probably tops the list.

His knuckles whiten as he clings to the iron and descends the ladder.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Bugger me...

FADE TO:

EXT. YOUTH HOSTEL - DAY

The white building FACADE is lit by amber morning light.

SUPER: 'Day 1,825'

Two Swedish BLONDES exit with huge PACKS on their backs. Allan passes them, a head nod. He returns home.

I/E. SINDY'S HOUSE - DAY

A hot cup of coffee steams. Sindy, in her gown looks outside onto the fire escape. The landing. Pondering life...

Something white, a piece of CARD catches her eye.

She opens the window curiously. Slinks out on the landing. It's the postcard. Addressed to Allan but only a squiggle. Reverse side is the photograph of Montreal's skyline.



INT. HOSTEL CHILL OUT CORNER - DAY

Allan is in a zombie-like state. Slouched in an office chair. LAPTOP out. Logged into net-banking and his ACCOUNTS:

--'MAIN, CAR, RENT, HOLIDAY', barely a hundred bucks in each. One account is called 'DAD' with a balance of \$3,787.83--

The mouse cursor hovers over the TRANSFER funds icon. Flickers constantly. Demanding action. Allan looks ill. Tired.

He flicks over other web browser TABS:

--Google maps, Gmail, Hostelworld.com, random jobs sites--

All the jobs say in bold the need to be proficient in French. Finds a Craigslist website ad:- '\$3,000 Paid Clinical Trials' The laptop closes!

Allan scrambles --

INT. CLINIC RECEPTION - DAY

Allan scribbles all over a form. Ticks boxes and autographs. Willy-nilly. He rushes over to the counter, a HAITIAN guy (40) with a beaming smile is already there, proper casual. Allan hands over the form and pen to the FRENCH RECEPTIONIST. She doesn't even look up.

HAITIAN

Just made it. You done these kind of trials before?

ALLAN

I need the money.

HAITIAN

These longer ones, experimentals pay the best. How do you feel about the overnight observations?

ALLAN

Overnight observ--

HAITIAN

And the anal probes?

Allan COUGHS. Puzzled. The Haitian guy smiles widely white. Allan freaks. Snatches his form back off the desk.

The Haitian guy doesn't stop smiling. Allan backs away, intimidated. He warily escapes the clinic. Fail!

HAITIAN (CONT'D)

(in French)

Not desperate enough for anal.

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

Light shines through a gap in the blinds, on Jack. Asleep. The only one in the dorm. He SNORES loudly. Beer snores.

A blaring ring TONE!

Jack wakes up in a start. Reluctantly answers his PHONE --

JACK  
Hello... Ya hello? Fucking bells.

Jack hangs up again.

Backpack is on the floor by the lockers, belongings strewn.

Jack leaps off the bunk. Pissed! He checks his belongings. Favourite football shirt, check. Condoms. Passport, check. Content everything is there. He squares it away. Relieved.

He stands, rubs his belly...

INT. HOSTEL BAR - DAY

Jack barges through the swinging doors. Hostel STAFF are packing away the free breakfast BUFFET. He's too late --

JACK  
Brilliant!

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL RECEPTION - DAY

Allan rifles through his day pack. Finds an Ace BANDAGE. Carefully, he unrolls... \$40 falls out. That's it.

He takes out the stash of old but well kept postcards, shuffles through them. Berlin, Riga, Mexico City, New York... He turns them over. Each card has alternating hand written messages on the back, 'Happy Xmas' or 'Happy birthday' plus a recurring squiggle in the bottom left corner.

Allan faces up the cards to see the photographs. He studies the pictures carefully even though he's seen them all before.

JACK (O.S.)  
Brilliant start to the day.

Jack slumps down next to Allan on the reception pews. Hungover. Very hungry. Allan promptly packs his cards away.

JACK (CONT'D)  
What you doing?

ALLAN  
Um... Waiting for you.

JACK

Reet-- Did you lay pipe?

Allan reaches for a small bulge in his cargo pants pocket. Pack of TRAIL MIX. He offers to Jack, he's not interested in rabbit food...

Allan scoffs it all himself --

JACK (CONT'D)

If you didn't run off with some bird, where were you then?

ALLAN

What happened with you and the tourist?

JACK

What?

Francis gingerly enters and joins them. Three sorry STOOGES, the day after the night before. Big bags under their eyes. Jack pulls out his GUIDE BOOK from his day pack, obliged. Pages are marked with coloured paper.

Allan snatches the book and LOBS it at the bin. It misses. Jack's not impressed. He retrieves the book. A real effort.

FRANCIS

When is the breakfast?

JACK

Missed it kid.

(adoring his book)

Cheap and cheerful I suppose?

ALLAN

I heard about a cool place.

JACK

What's the name?

ALLAN

It won't be in your stupid guide book.

JACK

Won't be in your guide book?

Alright guru! How cool?

ALLAN

You'll love it. Trust me. We all could do with the distraction--

JACK

What?

Allan is suddenly motivated. Marian appears in the entrance --

ALLAN

Woah! We are heading out, want to come with us?

MARIAN

Can one guarantee coffee is involved--

FRANCIS

It is for breakfast.

JACK

More like brunch. Can anyone else smell weed?

ALLAN

Yeah, I can smell that evil shit too mate.

Jack glares at Marian as they head out the door.

EXT. BRUNCH BAR - DAY

A derelict looking brick building. Blacked-out windows. Signpost reads, 'Les Bonbons Roses' but barely.

JACK (O.S.)

'Trust me' he says... Allan...  
This place is a toilet!

INT. BRUNCH BAR - CONTINUOUS

Four rickety chairs scrape along the vinyl. Allan, Marian, Francis and Jack take their seats. Take in their surrounds. Paint peels and mould on the ceiling, MIRROR along one wall. An OLD MAN drinks coffee at the decrepit counter.

The BARMAID suddenly appears out from under the bar. TOPLESS! Then two WAITRESSES pop out from the kitchen carrying plates. Topless! Sporting sexy old fashioned suspenders, with garter, bright heels. They deliver meals to a COUPLE in the corner.

MARIAN

Curious. How does one learn about this, intriguing diner?

ALLAN

Ex-student told me on the train--

JACK

Triple-x!

Their SERVER approaches. She stands between Allan and Jack, he perky NIPPLE inches from Jack's temple.

ALLAN

I was recommended we order the  
'number 6' meal. That cool?

Jack is very distracted by the server's nipple proximity.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Four orders of the number six  
please. Right guys?

SERVER

All with coffee?

JACK

(snaps to life)  
No! Tea for me, please.

SERVER

Green, jasmine, sweet chai, regular  
chai, peppermint, three mint,  
ginger and lemongrass, ginger  
lemon, just ginger, licorice and  
cinnamon, Earl Grey, French Earl  
Grey?

JACK

Erm, just normal? English break--  
Yeah? No? Reet. Earl Grey, not the  
French one. And, I'll have a bacon  
sandwich please luv.

Their server heads back to the kitchen.

JACK (CONT'D)

No normal tea, what a joke!

ALLAN

You're not in England anymore mate.

MARIAN

Better if one drinks coffee.

Jack is not sure if this is a dig from Marian, or not...

FRANCIS

Jack, top bollocks?

The table laughs at cute Francis.

MARIAN

One thing I do not understand is  
the British obsession with tea and  
sandwiches. How does it possibly  
make one full?

JACK

It doesn't always... So we just  
have another sandwich.

ALLAN  
You get many of these kinds of  
places in Germany?

MARIAN  
One can find them if one looks.

Jack catches Allan's glance. Smirks.

INT. BRUNCH BAR - LATER

Only empty plates are left on the table. Jack, Francis, Allan observe the bizarrely clad servers, the silent goings on. Their server returns. She giggles and tops up their waters. Loiters around the intriguing foreigners...

FRANCIS  
How long will you stay?

JACK  
Got me a few more places on the  
itinerary before back to the site.

FRANCIS  
Site?

Marian rejoins, taking her place. She smiles at the server.

JACK  
Construction. Real grind. But you  
know, gotta pay the bills like,  
play the game--

ALLAN  
Sounds like typical 'Path' to me.

Blank looks. Allan is forced to elaborate, he's willing --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
College, cars, careers, lovers...  
Wife, house, kids, new car, new  
house, debt, divorce, more debt,  
new used car, new used wife and the  
rest. Endless acquisitions and  
then, you're dead. 'The Path'.

Jack wonders if Allan is quite done with his rant...

FRANCIS  
I am only in college.

ALLAN  
I suggest you run Francis before  
the society takes you hostage too.

Marian casually rolls a smoke. Smiles again at the server.

MARIAN

An interesting philosophy, one's interpretation of life's journey.

JACK

An excuse to justify being unemployed... Lazy twat--

ALLAN

Lazy?

JACK

Time to grow up kid--

ALLAN

You mean take it up the arse from the full capitalist compliance... Fuck that oppression.

JACK

Don't be a bell-end Al. You're ruining my trip right now--

ALLAN

Few weeks, cruising round some joints, snapping pics. Some trip-- Half arsing trip.

Allan glances at Marian for affirmation. Francis is lost.

MARIAN

Not the one to get involved in your campaign Allan.

JACK

Look at you, you embellished hobo, no responsibilities, obligations. Pathetic. And fucking selfish--

ALLAN

Selfish?

JACK

Damn right. Who lives like that?

Allan is about to explode. He holds it in --

ALLAN

Fuck this. I am going for a piss.

He JUMPS up, straight into a waitress carrying three meals. She loses her balance plus the meals. Allan reacts, throws his HANDS out. CLOCKS her in the chest. She SCREECHES!

The plates and food make a mess on the floor. Allan, the waitress plus their server get down on all fours.

A bright red mark on the waitress' boob; Allan's HANDPRINT.

The waitress looks at Allan, nervous.

FOOTSTEPS on approach --

FOREARMS, strong and robust, swing around Allan's neck and lock under his chin. Pulled him up to his feet by the CHEF.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Accident... Accident. Désolée...

Chef THROWS Allan, over the table. He lands on the floor with the rest of the table's contents. You don't mess with chef. Allan rises slowly to his feet. Checks his nose...

The chef fumes, picks up his waitress by the elbow. Protective, he towers over the group, an intimidating stance. Francis edges toward the exit. Jack backs away too, hands up. Eyeballing the crazy chef.

The door violently swings open --

A frozen stand off.

FRANCIS  
Look it's that girl--

It's Sindy. In the doorway. She seems rushed, stressed.

SERVER  
Salut Sindy. Ça va?

ALLAN  
What are you doing here?

SINDY  
I'm late for work.

Awkward beat.

Sindy walks around the commotion, heads into the back room. The chef chases after her, YELLING in French.

JACK  
Time to bail kid.

Allan goes to follow Sindy, but Marian BLOCKS him. He's turned around by Marian and she simultaneously slips enough notes to cover the meal discretely to their server. Apologetic smile. Marian pushes Allan toward the exit.

EXT. BRUNCH BAR - CONTINUOUS

Allan is SHAKING with adrenaline. He tries to breathe calmly.

JACK  
What a toilet.



FRANCIS  
Are you fine Allan?

ALLAN  
Anyone else feeling energetic?

EXT. MONT ROYAL - DAY

Four BIXI BIKES ascend the dirt road toward the summit.  
Further down, one bike lags, Jack struggles with the incline.

JACK  
Why are there only three gears on  
this damn thing?

Jack labors hard on the pedals, he fiddles with the gearing.  
The bike CLINKS and CREAKS. The CHAIN breaks!

JACK (CONT'D)  
Brilliant.

EXT. CHALET DU MONT ROYAL - DAY

Marian chills on the WALL. Smoking. She looks down on the  
city. Francis and Allan arrive next. They look back --

TOURISTS fuss around, taking group photos. No sign of Jack.  
Marian shrugs, blows smoke up into the air.

FRANCIS  
He was following us, non?

ALLAN  
He'll be here.

FRANCIS  
Allan? Do you have a girlfriend?

ALLAN  
Girls just tie you down man.

Francis is unsure if he understands. He engages Marian but  
she offers no opinion.

Jack appears, on his bike. SWERVING tourists.

A KID comes out from nowhere. Jack BRAKES --

The bike TIPS up on its nose. Jack FLIES forward, hard into  
the terrace. The bike lands on him. He YELLS out a string of  
profanities and makes the kid CRY. She runs away.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Oh no... You alright mate?

Allan picks the bike off Jack. Jack picks himself up.

MARIAN

Better to use the rear brakes...

JACK

They're on the wrong side.

ALLAN

They're different in North America--

JACK

It's incorrect in North America!

Jack's HANDS are grazed and covered in chain grease.

Allan returns the bike. Jack SLAMS the bike down. Hard. Marian snickers smoke through her nose. Jack storms off. Francis is upset for Jack --

ALLAN

Give him a few to cool off Francis.

Allan picks up Jack's bike, leans it against the wall.

INT. CHALET RESTROOMS - DAY

FRANCIS carefully rounds the corner. Restroom seems empty --

JACK (O.S.)

Yeah in another two weeks, I  
already said that woman...

Francis follows the sound deeper into the room. Freezes by the mirror. The reflection of the cubicles.

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

You can't keep doing this... That's  
bollocks and you know it!

A CUBICLE on the end. Occupied. Jack inside. On the phone --

JACK (CONT'D)

Of course I'm gonna fight Karen...  
Karen?

Francis quickly turns on his heel. Leaves. Jack senses someone is near, opens the door but the restroom is empty.

EXT. CHALET DU MONT ROYAL - DAY

Marian lights up another cigarette. Glances next to her, at Allan who appears to be spaced out, in a meditative trance. She clicks her fingers in his ear. Allan wakes up --

MARIAN

One cannot disagree. Interesting,  
mesmerizing aspect. Feeling fine?

Behind Marian, a MOTHER struggles to control her TWO BOYS.  
The bigger boy is bullying the smaller. Allan can't look --

ALLAN

Sorry. Did you say something?

Marian contemplates Allan, blows smoke through her nose.  
Francis returns with a cola and joins them on the wall --

FRANCIS

I do not think he's ready yet.

MARIAN

Now, it is 14:40. Time for  
appointment. Until the next  
encounter...

Marian chucks her cigarette, hops on her bike and cycles off.

ALLAN

Is he taking a shit Francis or  
what?

FRANCIS

I don't know... Are you gay?

Allan laughs. Shoots Francis a strange, confused look --

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

You said you never want a girl.

ALLAN

Everything doubles up with girls,  
girlfriends. You understand?  
Cost, the time, space, the drama.  
You know many couples split when  
they get involved in this world.  
Fact.

Francis opens his cola. Gas HISSES on escape.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

You have to choose... Relationship  
or pure freedom and independence.

FRANCIS

Why not both?

ALLAN

Your funeral mate.

FRANCIS

For me, I cannot. I must be near my  
aunt. She needs me now. And... You  
are always alone, non?

ALLAN

Sometimes, I guess--

FRANCIS  
You prefer to be this way?

ALLAN  
It's like I said...

Francis waits for more. Allan looks back out on the city.

FRANCIS  
Is it possible to do this forever?

ALLAN  
(whispers to himself)  
I have a plan--

JACK (O.S.)  
Alright chumps, where's the German?

Jack returns, taking Francis and Allan by surprise, squishes between them. Allan shuffles over to the side. Uncomfortable.

The mother loses control, SCREAMING at her sons. They CRY.

A MAN ON A BIKE (48) cycles through between the crying boys and Allan, speeding along the chalet terrace --

Allan JOLTS!

He recognises the man. He's sure of it. But he's already cycling away, beyond the terrace. Allan hurries off the wall. Grabs his bixi bike --

FRANCIS  
Everything is fine Jack?

JACK  
Yeah. Why wouldn't it be?!

ALLAN  
I got to go guys.

Allan bails on his bike. Pedals furiously after the man.

JACK  
Bell.

FRANCIS  
You are going back to the hostel?

Allan is too far away to respond. Jack, Francis are over it.

JACK  
Reet Francis, I need a beer.

FRANCIS  
Why not? Le plateau?

JACK  
I'm ditching the bike, you know.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The man on a bike cycles fast. He swerves between vehicles. Allan is desperate to keep up. Dodges traffic hazards but he's losing him. He's on a far inferior bicycle.

ALLAN  
Xavier! Xavier!!

He drifts into the centre of the road --

A horn BLASTS! The TRUCK swerves. ABUSE comes from the cab. Allan stops off on the kerb side. Then the truck passes him.

Ahead. The man on a bike turns off the road.

Allan continues after, turns down the same road --

EXT. COMMUNITY PARK - CONTINUOUS

A green space amongst residences. Allan halts. Scans. Nobody. He continues cycling through the park in hope. Looking...

He reaches the opposite side, no sighting at all. Fail.

ALLAN  
Bugger.

EXT. BRUNCH BAR - DAY

Allan pulls up across the street, surprised to end up here.

The door OPENS...

Sindy exits in her 'work outfit' and SLAMS the door behind. French PROFANITIES ring out from inside. BREAKING glass --

SINDY  
Tabarnak!

She leans forward, tries to calm down...

Allan RINGS the bike bell. Sindy sees him across the street. 'Kind of' happy to see him. Allan approaches...

SINDY (CONT'D)  
He's in a bad mood because of you.  
What are you doing here?

ALLAN  
Um... You wanna go somewhere?

Sindy considers a moment. ARGUING reverberates inside...

SINDY  
I will get changed.

EXT. STADE OLYMPIQUE - DAY

Allan and Sindy check out the weird stadium building...

SINDY  
A perfect example of how  
incompetent this place is. It  
doesn't even work. Nothing works!

ALLAN  
O-Kay?

Sindy takes out a cigarette and her lighter. She lights up. She blows smoke directly into Allan's face but he flinches. Ducks away in a weird dance move. Sindy laughs at him.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
I hate smoking.

SINDY  
I like smoking... How I cope.

ALLAN  
What was last night all about?

SINDY  
Tell me something interesting.

Allan plays along for now...

ALLAN  
It's been five years, the longest I  
have stayed in one place, 13 weeks.

SINDY  
Only 13 weeks? Mon Dieu! What could  
tie you down for so long? A girl?

Allan doesn't give up any details.

SINDY (CONT'D)  
How many places have you visited?

ALLAN  
Plenty.

SINDY  
So... Which one is your favourite?

ALLAN  
I like Montreal.

SINDY

Cute.

Sindy SLAPS Allan on the forearm. Two times. Flirting...  
THUNDER rumbles overhead. Ominous.

INT. PLATEAU BAR MONT ROYAL - DAY

Raining buckets outside. Jack's mood reflects the weather.  
Bleak! He watches PEOPLE huddle under shelter in the street.  
Glugs down the rest of his beer, drops pint on the table --

FRANCIS

It will improve. I am certain.

JACK

Are you always this optimistic?

FRANCIS

It is right to be this way, non?

JACK

I remember being a kid, good times.  
Eventually Frenchie you'll  
discover, kak gets in the way...  
Sometimes life becomes impossible.

FRANCIS

I heard you in the washroom--

JACK

What?

Phone RINGS. Both react to their pockets. It's Francis --

JACK (CONT'D)

You want another?

Francis listens conscientiously for a beat. His face DROPS!

JACK (CONT'D)

You don't want a beer?

Francis tries to hold back tears.

INT. POUTINE DINER - DAY

Sindy and Allan are in a booth. They wipe off the rain with  
several paper napkins. Allan sniffs his sleeve, the armpit --

ALLAN

At least these clothes have been  
washed now.

Sindy scrunches her nose up at Allan.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Wow! Look at this--

SINDY  
Oui, exactement.

Two servings of famous poutine are delivered. Allan picks up a lonely fry covered in cheese curds, gravy. Some gravy falls down his front. Sindy giggles, hands him another napkin --

SINDY (CONT'D)  
No. I think you are still dirty...

ALLAN  
Such is life. Sindy, ignoring the incompetence as you said, what would say, is special about here?

SINDY  
Montreal? It has... An essence. Truly a unique essence. But difficult to describe what I mean, there is--

ALLAN  
You mean, a vibe?

SINDY  
(with accent)  
'Vibe'?

ALLAN  
You should stick with 'essence'. I like the way you say it--

SINDY  
Essence... You like my accent?

ALLAN  
More than that.

Sindy blushes. Embarrassed. She focuses on her poutine.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Would you say it's a confused vibe?

SINDY  
Pardon?

ALLAN  
I kind of got a sense of it, as soon as I arrived, like a clash of culture-- French and English. Fighting with one another internally... Anyway, it is interesting, what do you think?



SINDY  
I think it suits you?

ALLAN  
What is that supposed to mean?

Sindy steals some of Allan's poutine. Teases him.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Have you ever left Canada?

SINDY  
Why? Montreal is the best city--

ALLAN  
Don't you want to go somewhere new,  
change-up the shitty routine, get  
some perspective--

SINDY  
You think I don't have perspective?

ALLAN  
Guess it's all about priorities.

SINDY  
You seem to me like a person  
without priorities.

Sindy analyses Allan, feeling judged.

ALLAN  
Maybe you should come with me--

SINDY  
Is that what you say to all the  
girls?

ALLAN  
Only the special ones--

SINDY  
You think you're charming? You're  
not...

ALLAN  
You're right.

SINDY  
I know...

The BILL slides onto the table. Allan glances at the bill.  
Sindy steals it straight away.

ALLAN  
I'll pay.

SINDY  
No! I will pay.

Allan leans back, puts hands behind his head. Very content.  
Sindy lays cash on the table.

ALLAN  
Very kind of you.

SINDY  
This is Montreal... Just now, you  
look like this man off the TV.

ALLAN  
I've never owned a TV.

SINDY  
Everyone has a TV.

ALLAN  
Doesn't fit in my bag.

SINDY  
You are so weird... So, where are  
you taking me for dessert?

ALLAN  
Oh, I get it now--

SINDY  
Only fair.

EXT. PARC JEAN DRAPEAU - DAY

Sindy and Allan walk in the park. Side by side. Hand in hand.  
Eating ice-cream cones.

SINDY  
In the winter the ambiance is so  
peaceful. Perfect for thinking.

Allan has a brief shiver --

ALLAN  
Are you cold?

Sindy hands Allan her ice-cream. She removes her red scarf,  
ties it warmly around his neck. She takes him in --

SINDY  
Cute. But you will never survive  
here.

ALLAN  
Really?

SINDY

What do you think about?

ALLAN

What are you getting at-- I don't know... Lots of stuff.

SINDY

Don't know, or don't want to say?

ALLAN

What about you?

SINDY

Simple things. Friends, family, you don't think about that?

ALLAN

Maybe...

Allan finds a bench. Sindy follows. This is real hard work. Allan grabs a drink, observes a BUILDING in front of them. The Casino!

A bird SHIT splatters on Allan's back, near the shoulder. Allan is unaware of it. Sindy tries not to laugh.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Damn, I'm out of water.

SINDY

There's a fountain behind the trees over there. I'll wait...

Allan slinks away behind the trees, finds the water fountain. Fills his bottle. He splashes some excess into his face.

On the bench Sindy plays with the Montreal postcard --

ALLAN (O.S.)

The water here tastes good eh?

SINDY

What is this Allan?

Reveals the Montreal postcard to him. Allan reacts, pats down his pockets. They're empty --

ALLAN

Where did you get that?

SINDY

Found it?

ALLAN

Please, may I have it back?

SINDY  
So serious...

Sindy holds the card out but snatches it back again. Playing.

ALLAN  
Don't do that...

Sindy jokes around with Allan. Showing the card, hiding the card, showing the card. Allan snatches at it. But catches only the edge. They both have hold of it now...

A struggle. A game for Sindy, for Allan not at all. Stressed.

SINDY  
(playful)  
Ow! You're hurting my arm.

Allan jerks his hand back. Hard. Sindy SCREECHES.

ALLAN  
Give it to me!

The card RIPS in two.

They both have a piece.

Allan GASPS. He slumps on the bench. Devastated.

SINDY  
You actually hurt my hand Allan...  
It is only a blank postcard.

Sindy throws her half in Allan's lap. He holds his breath, catatonic --

SINDY (CONT'D)  
Allan? Alright, I'm sorry.

ALLAN  
Please go away--

SINDY  
I didn't know a souvenir postcard  
would be such a drama. Jeez--  
Fine... Fine. I will go...  
Also, a bird has left a shit on  
your shoulder. Just desserts.  
And... Fuck you--

ALLAN  
We already tried that.

Sindy scampers off, completely gob-smacked.

Allan puts his head in his hands and expels a loud SIGH.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Idiot!

Across the grass Sindy strides, not looking back. She checks her phone --

Three missed calls from a B-JAY.

She calls him back...

INT. CASINO DE MONTREAL - DAY

Morbid, Allan places \$40 worth of chips down on the roulette table. All on RED. Watches the table, in a daze --

The DEALER spins the WHEEL... The ball drops...

RED 3 - Allan wins.

Allan doubles his chips. Shows no euphoria. He plays again. All on RED.

The wheel spins again... The ball drops...

RED 19 - Win! He begins to perk up...

Allan repeats the same plays. Same results. He's on a roll!

The dealer analyses him closely. He waits for the next play. Allan smiles at the dealer, throws all his chips on RED.

ALLAN

Must be my time.

The dealer sets the wheel, completely poker-faced.

The wheel spins... The ball The ball drops!

Black 13 --

DEALER

Better luck next time.

INT. OLD PERSONS CARE HOME - NIGHT

A lamp offers little light. Francis prays in the armchair.

He completes with an AMEN and leans over from his armchair. He places his hand on top of a still, pale and wrinkly hand. His aunt is asleep in her bed. Very ill. He kisses her hand.

The nurse calmly KNOCKS on the door, stands in the threshold. Francis looks up, tear in his eye --

FRANCIS  
 (in French)  
 She doesn't know who I am?

The nurse offers all her compassion but it doesn't suffice.

NURSE  
 (in French)  
 Try to get some rest. Don't worry.  
 She is safe with us here.

INT. HOSTEL BAR - NIGHT

'HOCKEY NIGHT' Habs V New York plays on the BIG SCREEN.

Chris is pumped up wearing HABS supporters gear, dancing.  
 Slaps a HIGH-5 to EVERYONE who passes him on way to the bar.  
 The bar is busy. Boisterous. Boozed up in high spirits.

JACK  
 They're aloud to fight? It's so  
 different from football, you know.

CHRIS  
 It's the best dude. Can't beat it.  
 Go Habs go! Go Habs go!

GOAL!

Habs score the equalizer. The bar erupts! It's now even 2-2.  
 Chris hugs Jack. Squeezes him. Excited... Anxious...

The room is buzzing, the final period nearing completion.  
 Chris is fanatic, jumping around. He cannot keep his eyes off  
 the big screen. He clutches Jack's shoulder. Jack has to  
 brace himself on the bar, but soaks up the experience --

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
 Jack! We need to score now... I  
 can't take the pressure.

JACK  
 I know-- I can feel it.

CHRIS  
 Come on! Go Habs go. Go Habs go! Go  
 Habs--

The clock counts down. Chris gets EVERYONE to stand up.  
 Encourages them to cheer, scream, whistle, anything --

EVERYONE  
 Go Habs go. Go Habs go. Go Ha--

Even Jack starts to joins in. Chris has an intoxicating vibe.

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

The CHANTING from downstairs is very audible in the room.

Allan rests on his bunk bed marrying up the two sides of the postcard. From his first aid kit he finds some tape. Adheres the two halves together but it's not the same. He knows it.

He places the damaged Montreal card in the middle of his stash of postcards. Buries it inside his day pack.

INT. HOSTEL BAR - NIGHT

On the BIG SCREEN:

--The HABS suddenly lose the PUCK. New York RANGERS have it. They push, on the attack. Skate forward, frantically, deep into the danger zone, towards the GOAL. They make the SHOT--

Rangers score! The HORN sounds. Times up!

The Habs lose 2-3.

CHRIS

Nooooooo!

Chris is a wreck. He drowns his sorrows over in the corner. From the bar Jack watches everyone leave.

Allan pushes against the traffic, completely drained.

JACK

Fancy seeing you here.

ALLAN

What's with all the chaos--

JACK

Missed it. Montreal lost the match to New York. Tragic apparently--

Chris is being melodramatic in the corner. MOANING.

JACK (CONT'D)

--But very enjoyable. Beer?

ALLAN

Doesn't seem like it was enjoyable for Chris?

JACK

He takes it way too seriously...

Allan SLUMPS down in a lounge chair. A look of self pity. Jack joins him, jauntily. Positive energy from the match.

JACK (CONT'D)  
What's up with you chump?

ALLAN  
You're finally in a good mood--

JACK  
Yeah. Didn't recognise it, me. Been a while-- But what's kak'd you off this afternoon?

Francis suddenly turns up in front of them.

FRANCIS  
I forgot my soap.

Jack just starts laughing. Francis is confused.

JACK  
Sorry Frenchie, just found it funny, what you said there. Shit! I must be rendered-- What strength is this beer?

FRANCIS  
I want to go take shower now. I have to wash my hair. You have any--

JACK  
Not me.

ALLAN  
Don't use shampoo.

FRANCIS  
I will go to Pharmaprix.

ALLAN  
Actually mate, hang on a sec. I want to show you something.

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL RECEPTION - NIGHT

Allan rummages through a large tub of miscellaneous items; tooth paste, sun cream, tampons etc, a piece of PAPER:

ALLAN  
'Dear motherfucker who stole my phone, I hope you die a slow and painful death, preferably by Chinese water torture, or similar, you cunt! Nil regards, Antonia'  
Wow... That's funny.

Francis finds a half used bottle of travel shampoo. Exactly what he needs --



ALLAN (CONT'D)  
 Happy mate?  
 (to receptionist)  
 Did any mail come for me?

The receptionist shakes her head. Allan pushes the tub along the counter toward her. Slightly disappointed.

FRANCIS  
 I visited my aunt.

ALLAN  
 Yeah? How is she?

Francis get upset. Allan comforts him. Hand on his shoulder. Francis hugs Allan. He's taken by surprise but kindly reciprocates.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
 You really care about her...

Francis releases. Allan is struck by Francis' dedication.

FRANCIS  
 Like the big brother, I never had.  
 I think I will take shower now.

Francis leaves Allan, alone in the reception. Catches himself in the CCTV monitor. He seems disturbed.

He turns on his heel, escapes outside into the night.

INT. HOSTEL BAR - NIGHT

Jack is comfortable by himself on the couch with his beer. Drunk, but contented drunk. Watching random sports on TV.

Chris storms past Jack, in a huff. He exits the bar --

Marian stoops by the DOORWAY, she exchanges a small PAPER BAG for CASH with a shady DUDE. Marian disappears promptly into the corridor --

Jack becomes suspicious. He sups away, questioningly...

EXT. MONT ROYAL - NIGHT

Allan wanders the dark trails zig-zagging the mountain. Follows a sign that points toward the Chalet --

EXT. CHALET DU MONTREAL - NIGHT

Allan perches on the same stone wall as earlier, feet dangle over the edge. He takes in the city high-rise, the lights --

A picture perfect postcard aspect.

Allan pulls out the leopard cloth badge, carefully rubbing over the fraying end. On the reverse side of the badge is; 'Freedom is Paradise.'

He kisses the badge and puts it away in his pocket.

ALLAN  
(whispers)  
Where are you?

INT. HOSTEL CHILL OUT CORNER - NIGHT

Allan swivels side to side in the office chair. Fidgety. Picks up a bag of trail mix, upturns it over his mouth. Empty.

Flicks between tabs on his LAPTOP:

Allan GOOGLES 'Xavier Fleeting'. He opens a link. A travel blog, written by Xavier Fleeting. Mostly photographs of cityscapes, urban travel pictures and barely any text. His fingers tap on the table...

He closes the blog. Disappointed.

He logs into his EMAIL; lots of junk advertising, viagra ads, bank mail, subscriptions, the DECLAN REHABILITATION CENTRE...

An EMAIL from JOY FLEETING appears in the list. Subject line reads - 'When are you coming home?'.

Allan OPENS a mail folder, labelled 'JOY'. There are more emails, with similar subjects. Every one of them UNREAD. Allan deposits this latest unread email with the others...

Two emails arrive; NEIL GOODMAN - 'Timothy's 21st birthday!' and the other from JOY FLEETING - 'I'm going to end this!!!' Allan pauses... He closes the email tab.

ALLAN  
Bluffing...

Allan flicks to his net-banking tab. Nothing has changed, still broke. The mouse cursor hovers over the TRANSFER...

Allan CLICKS to mouse. The funds transfer. The money shows up immediately in MAIN account. Now with a balance of \$3,813.13. Exhales loudly, logs out. It's done.

Allan tabs to open FACEBOOK. His profile shows 2867 friends. Allan scrolls through many faces. Just faces, not friends.

Allan TYPES 'Sindy' into the facebook search bar. Taps enter. Many results return for Sindy.

Allan scrolls carefully through, checking the profile pics but none are the 'Sindy' he is after. Repressing frustration, he closes the laptop.

He grabs the bag of trail mix. Reminded it is still empty. Chucks it away. His nose itches, so he scratches --

A drop of BLOOD lands on the table.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Bugger me.

INT. RESTROOM - NIGHT

Red blood stains scattered around the porcelain sink.

Allan leans close to the mirror, examining his bloody nose. He takes a moment to look at the faint scars on his face...

An IRISH guy stumbles in, wearing Guinness branded pyjama bottoms. He does an immediate double take when he sees Allan.

IRISH  
Haven't I seen you before?

Allan reacts to the Irish guy through the mirror.

ALLAN  
Happens all the time mate. We're all on the same circuit.

IRISH  
You're that lack Kylie's fella, t'were you not?

ALLAN  
You're wasted.

EXT. MARCHÉ JEAN TALON - DAY

Rows and rows of colourful fruits, vegetables, aesthetically displayed in little market stalls. Huge vibrant space. Busy. Allan helps himself to free samples of cut tomatoes, kiwis.

SUPER: 'Day 1,826'

Jack glares at him disapprovingly --

ALLAN  
I thought you were into cheap?

JACK  
Yeah cheap. Not stealing.

Allan carries on to the next stall, takes a handful of melon.

The MARKET VENDOR catches him. He shouts ABUSE in French, then he lunges out of his stall --

Allan takes off with the pieces of melon. Jack follows --

A CHASE!

They duck in and out of fruit stalls, specialty goods and fish stands. Up and down, through the rows of the market. Allan streaks on ahead stuffing melon down his gob. It's a game to him.

Jack almost runs into a reversing truck. Not a game at all. The market vendor CURSES the whole time but he cannot keep up, too old, unfit. He gives up. Returns to his business...

Allan and Jack rest at the other end of the market. Safe. Catch their breath --

JACK (CONT'D)

Good one. Bell-end!

Francis exits a bakery, nibbles a croissant. Apprehensive.

ALLAN

I thought you were visiting today?

FRANCIS

They tell me to try not to worry.  
Maybe I could go in the afternoon.  
What are doing at marché?

JACK

Committing misdemeanors--

ALLAN

Come on! A few pieces of fruit?  
Don't know what his problem was.

JACK

You need to get a job chump.

ALLAN

No I don't. I sold my car, all my  
valuables, everything that didn't  
fit in my bag--

JACK

What a hero. Money doesn't last.

Allan knows it. Remains quiet.

FRANCIS

It is expensive to live in other  
countries, non?

Allan slings his arm around Francis. Does the 'walk and talk' as Jack follows after, shaking his head --

ALLAN  
Well... It all comes down to beer.

JACK  
This'll be good Frenchie.

INT. SINDY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sindy hastily removes some money from an envelope and adds it to a pile of loose notes and tips. She counts the money, up to \$650.

Places it all back inside the white envelope and seals it. 'RENT' is written on the other side.

Sindy flops on her bed. But breaths a SIGH of relief.

EXT. METRO JEAN TALON - DAY

Allan winds up his lecture to Francis on the 'Beer' economy --

ALLAN  
...Which is 45 minutes you need to work in order to buy a beer. Compared to the UK only being 32 minutes to buy a pint so you see? Therefore, cheaper to live in the UK--

JACK  
Everywhere is cheaper than here. You live in a well expensive place Frenchie.

ALLAN  
The global beer economy. You must check it out for yourself one day.

Francis scratches his head, completely confused.

JACK  
When are you going to stop talking bollocks Allan?

FRANCIS  
I cannot!

ALLAN  
One day...

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Truthfully though Francis, my father left me some money too.

FRANCIS  
He died?

ALLAN  
(hesitates)  
I don't know--

CHRIS shows up behind them, carrying a bag of limes and mint from the market. Happy to see them.

CHRIS  
Dudes! You like mojitos? You're coming to Nat's tonight right?

EXT. NAT'S HOUSE / BACK YARD - NIGHT

MUSIC blares from a sound system. DJ on the decks.

The garden is full of PEOPLE drinking, smoking, chatting. French and English mash-up. Allan, Jack, Francis enter carrying bags of BOOZE.

ALLAN  
Strange... Déjà vu.

JACK  
Al! Your major fail from the club.

Jack points out Chris who struts over with Nat.

CHRIS  
Dudes! This is my girlfriend, Nat.

Nat waves at them, shyly. Allan feels very awkward, gawks at them both. Jack is amused, chuckles to himself.

MARIAN materializes with a beer and a smoking spliff in hand. Jack is annoyed just by the sight of her.

MARIAN  
Great. You made it. May one take care of the beer?

ALLAN  
It's OK. I can do it.

CHRIS  
Mingle guys. Alcohol goes in the ice tub in the washroom.

Jack quickly steals another beer from Allan before he heads inside with the drinks. Chris takes Nat to say hi to others. Jack glares at Marian, in silence.

Francis can feel the tension. He's uncomfortable.

INT. NAT'S HOUSE / BATHROOM - NIGHT

Allan kneels at the ice bath and unloads beers, sinking them.  
A SHADOW darkens his space --

It's sindy! She nurses a huge, litre bottle of wine. Topsy...

ALLAN  
Small world--

SINDY  
Small plateau... What are you doing  
in my washroom?

The déjà vu clicks for Allan instantly.

ALLAN  
You and Nat?

SINDY  
My house mate.

ALLAN  
Of course she is... Listen, I feel  
bad about today. It was kind of  
weird. I'm sorry if I hurt you.

SINDY  
My hand is more or less fine.

ALLAN  
Are we cool?

Allan stands up to meet Sindy properly.

SINDY  
You want to go to the roof?

EXT. NAT & SINDY'S HOUSE / ROOF TERRACE - NIGHT

Allan, Sindy sit together on a wooden bench under the stars.  
Romantic fairy LIGHTS strung between, flowering pot plants.  
Big CANDLE burns in front of them. It is cozy on the cushion.  
DJ music is softer up here but Sindy isn't into it --

SINDY  
I cannot listen to this trash!

ALLAN  
Not feeling it either...

Sindy analyses Allan as he gazes into the candle flame --

SINDY  
What's wrong?

ALLAN  
Nothing... I'm just thinking--

SINDY  
So you do think!?

ALLAN  
My brother is turning 21.

SINDY  
You eyes are hollow-- Vacant. Why?

ALLAN  
Timothy... Tim. I've always called him Tim.

SINDY  
Little brother? What day is Tim's birthday?

ALLAN  
Yeah, it's tomorrow--

SINDY  
Tomorrow? And you will miss it...

ALLAN  
Don't look at me like that please.  
You don't understand. He has a--  
Um... We have an odd relationship.

SINDY  
Every family has odd relationships.  
You are away, you are missing a  
lot, it's completely natural to  
feel like this. Right?

ALLAN  
Maybe...

SINDY  
A double anniversary for you then.

ALLAN  
Double what?

Sindy lights a cigarette off candle and takes a huge drag.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
I wish you wouldn't smoke...

She cranes her neck, blows the smoke away from Allan.

SINDY  
Tim's 21st birthday... Your 5th  
anniversary of--



ALLAN  
Escaping?

SINDY  
Escaping? Call it what you want...

Allan takes a moment...

ALLAN  
I used to walk in circles round the kitchen when I was a boy. Mum hated it, she said it made her crazy. 'Stop pacing like a caged lion' she would yell at me... Lately, I have been thinking, where will I end up?

SINDY  
What is wrong with home?

ALLAN  
I don't have one.

SINDY  
Everybody has a home to go back to. I don't understand you. Seriously. Australia is a paradise.

ALLAN  
Visiting somewhere is different from living there.

Sindy gazes at Allan, his eyes, trying to figure him out...

SINDY  
So what's next?

ALLAN  
Don't know. Somewhere new I guess. I only buy one way tickets.

SINDY  
You never return? Anywhere?

ALLAN  
Nope.

Allan's tone scolds Sindy. She takes a drag and blows smoke straight back --

SINDY  
Again another new place, again another new city? And always alone? Why? Don't you want to share your life with someone?

ALLAN  
I make friends fast--

SINDY

People you collect from hostels and  
go to yard parties with are not  
your friends. They are just people.  
When are their birthdays?

Allan shrugs. He has no idea --

ALLAN

Are birthdays really important?

SINDY

Today is my birthday.

Sindy takes a big gulp of the wine.

ALLAN

Really? Oh... I get it now.

SINDY

Do you?

Allan snatches Sindy's wine and takes a couple of sips.  
Stares into the candle flame. Sindy ashes her cigarette,  
watches Allan continuously --

SINDY (CONT'D)

Do you like being a vagrant?

ALLAN

I'm not a vagrant.

SINDY

OK. Describe yourself for me--

ALLAN

I'm an explorer. Living life in  
freedom, because you know what?  
Freedom is paradise.

SINDY

Have you ever been in love?

ALLAN

I've had girlfriends before.

SINDY

That's not what I asked. You think  
you can explore forever?

ALLAN

Have you ever been in love?

Sindy extinguishes her cigarette. Allan engages with Sindy.  
They are silent. They lock eyes. A tension between them...

SINDY

I think so...

The music cuts out. The fairy lights. Just the candle flame illuminates their posture --

Sindy draws nearer, closer to Allan. Their FACES meet.

Allan KISSES Sindy on the LIPS. A simple but prolonged, passionate peck.

Allan loses his grip, the wine bottle tilts. Deep red liquid flows out and onto the terrace.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

The power cut kicks back to life. The lights come on again. Music recommences. It's like nothing happened.

B-Jay rolls into the garden, sipping from a 40 ounce. Approaches Nat --

NAT

I assumed you were uninvited?

B-Jay ignores her. He barges past Jack for no reason, knocking him off balance momentarily. Jack's annoyed --

JACK

Bell!

He checks in with Nat --

JACK (CONT'D)

Have you seen Allan?

NAT

Your friend, I have never watched anyone kiss for so long?

Francis is making out with a RED-HEADED GIRL by the DJ decks.

JACK

Coping mechanism, you know.

EXT. ROOF TERRACE - NIGHT

Allan has his arm around Sindy. They both stare at the flame. Both seem confused, conflicted with their own emotions. Motivations. Petrified to make eye contact with each other...

ALLAN

Sindy--

SINDY

I have to pee.

Sindy stands, Allan quickly copies. She's quite stand-offish. She escapes toward the stairs --

ALLAN  
Hey! Cindy?

Sindy stops, dead. Turns back --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Happy birthday.

She disappears down the stairs.

INT. SINDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sindy PACES in her bedroom, getting worked up. She halts, then checks herself in the mirror. Frustrated --

SINDY  
Tabarnak!

EXT. ROOF TERRACE - NIGHT

Allan concentrates on the candle flame. Mesmerized.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

Sindy emerges from the house into the BUZZ of the garden; The DJ jives at the decks. Chris does shots with Nat in front. Francis still makes out with red-headed girl. It's too much!

She strides the other way. Heads for the side gate.

B-Jay spots her. Chases.

EXT. ROOF TERRACE - NIGHT

Allan checks the time. Restless. Curious...

He blows out the huge candle.

I/E NAT & SINDY'S HOUSE / SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jack hovers over the toilet. One hand drinks a beer, one hand shakes to finish up. Satisfied.

Some YELLING coming from OUTSIDE --

Sindy storms out into the drive. She evades B-Jay who staggers after her. CALLING OUT. Inebriated...

SINDY  
We already had this discussion...

Jack remains drunkenly complacent observing from the window --

Beneath a tree, out front a HIPPY exchanges some CASH with Marian. She passes him a small brown PAPER BAG. The hippy hugs Marian then dissolves away into the darkness.

Marian stays, lights up a cigarette. Leans on the tree.

Jack squints his eyes outside to clarify, shaking his head. He begins to close the bathroom window.

Phone RINGS!

Jack jolts in shock. The window falls onto this hand. CURSES! Jack releases his hand and answers the phone. But he hears nothing coming from the other end. Phone BEEPS, goes dead.

JACK

Fuck sake! I'm sick of this shit.

Jack throws the old flipphone on the floor. It doesn't break.

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

Marian chills by the gate, smokes a joint. Allan walks over --

ALLAN

Have you seen Sindy?

Marian takes in Allan for a moment, then points toward the front of the house --

MARIAN

Everything is fine?

Allan leaves before answering...

EXT. NAT AND SINDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Allan emerges out on the street.

Nobody in sight.

ALLAN

Bugger.

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Heavy SNORING. The room sleeps. Everyone at peace --

Except Allan. He tosses and turns on the bed.

EXT. YOUTH HOSTEL - NIGHT

The entrance doors stealthily open.

Allan TIP-TOES outside and sits down quietly in the low light on the front steps. A desperate need for some solitary contemplation.

JACK (O.S.)  
Can't sleep?

Allan JUMPS out of his skin.

Jack leans against the hostel wall at the edge of the stairs. Loiters in the dark --

ALLAN  
Fuckin'ell Jack! You scared me.

Jack joins Allan on the stairs, with a six pack of TINS. Offers a drink --

JACK  
Cheap shit... Does the trick kid.

ALLAN  
I'm alright. Thanks--

JACK  
Suit yourself.  
(slurps away)  
Life can be out of order, you know?  
I have a boy... Back, back home...  
Honestly though, she's killing me.  
Luck has to change soon. You know?

ALLAN  
Actually, could I--

Jack hands Allan a tin. He throws his empty on the street. Grabs another from the packet. They CRACK their beers open simultaneously.

INT. HOSTEL BAR - DAY

'Craft Tastings Today' is written on the black board inside.

The breakfast BUFFET is fresh. Allan slouches at a corner table, blinded by the bright light coming through the window. Head down, he fidgets with his toast and jam. His coffee...

A female ASIAN GUEST (20) mimics Allan's posture in the opposite corner. She's new. Insecure.

SUPER: 'Day 1,827'

Allan raises his gaze to her, gives a reassuring head NOD. She shies away. Allan studies her, how she avoids eye contact.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STRIP - DAY

Allan meanders along, drags his feet. Deep in thought.  
Beautiful, LOCAL WOMEN glide by with that French panache.  
They check Allan out, scan him up and down until they pass.  
Allan is clueless to it all. In his melancholic own world...

Suddenly he halts by a shop, squares up to the glass window.  
Stares at his own REFLECTION --

Cargo pants, wrinkled shirt. Unshaven. A veteran backpacker!

HOMELESS MAN (O.S.)

Son--

Allan flinches at the sound --

A HOMELESS MAN (50) a few paces ahead also watches himself in  
the glass retail frontages.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

(singing)

Sunshine, and lolly pops--Bass--  
Baseball, with big lamp chops...

He jigs, laughs at himself. Delirious.

Allan approaches him. They stand only a few feet apart. Check  
each other out in the reflective glass.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

You are, we are-- A very handsome  
man. We have, you have a very  
handsome plan... Look at you, look  
at me. Look at you, look...

Allan leaves the crazy homeless man to amuse himself.

EXT. METRO - CONTINUOUS

Allan escapes into the underground metro.

EXT. NAT & SINDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Allan loiters at the front door. He CALLS out --

KNOCKS...

No answer.

He finds a note pad in his day bag and a pen. Writes a note.

INT. HOSTEL CHILL OUT CORNER - DAY

Francis studies the contents of the BOOKSHELF. Guide books everywhere, for every place. He runs his FINGER along their spines.

A selection of guide books branded; 'URBAN NOMAD'.

Francis stops at a book on Japan. He removes it from the shelf

JACK (O.S.)  
Any change?

FRANCIS  
She is unwell.

Jack joins Francis with a cup of tea.

JACK  
You want to go after this Frenchie?  
I think Al's gonna meet us there...

INT. CRAFT BEER BAR - NIGHT

Francis gag reflexes but he manages to keep everything down. Allan finds it amusing. He slides a basically full sampling glass across the table to Jack. Empty glass in front of him --

JACK  
Too dark? You need to man up kid.

ALLAN  
Do you want to try my ginger beer mate?

JACK  
Francis is into his gingers, you know.

Francis tentatively sniffs Allan's sampling glass. Jack sips on the beer Francis rejected; a dark coffee stout.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Yeah. Strong that. Good--

MARIAN (O.S.)  
Does it taste like coffee?

Marian materialises. She takes her place, right next to Jack. Jack is annoyed, instantly.

FRANCIS  
I am certain it is not a beer.

MARIAN  
May one try it?



Jack necks the beer. ALL of it. Puts the empty in front of Marian and points to the bar --

MARIAN (CONT'D)

If one has a problem, why not say?

ALLAN

Rightio Francis, you happy with it?  
I'll get another drink.

JACK

Get me another too, buyer's choice.

Allan escapes to the BAR --

Allan stares at the huge selection on the black board MENU.  
Francis hurries past him, bails to the toilets.

Jack and Marian ARGUE at the table in the background...

Sindy rushes inside from the garden. Very flustered.

ALLAN

Hey you... Did you get my note?

SINDY

Ai, TABARNAK!

Sindy EXHALES loudly, tries to calm down. Leans on the bar.  
Nat pops up from underneath with a bottle of tomato juice.  
She places it in an empty space next to the other mixers.

ALLAN

Drink? What do you want?

SINDY

Deux vodkas Nat. Merci...

ALLAN

(surprised)

OK... Vodka works.

Nat finds the bottle. Sindy watches her, avoids Allan.

SINDY

It will not work.

ALLAN

What?

SINDY

I can't do this.

ALLAN

You want tequila instead?

Nat halts!

SINDY  
We're opposites Allan. Our lives...  
Mine is real life but yours is a  
fantasy.

ALLAN  
I think we'll stick with vodka.

Nat sets two shots of vodka in place on the bar for Sindy.  
She reengages with Allan, focuses deeply into his EYES.  
Penetrating...

Allan is taken aback --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
What exactly is your problem with  
my lifestyle-- Can you quit staring  
at me like that?

SINDY  
I can't sense any connection.

ALLAN  
What do you want me to do?

SINDY  
Your eyes are vacant--

ALLAN  
What does that even mean?!

A hush comes over the bar. Sindy and Allan lower voice --

SINDY  
I'm over mysterious guys. I want  
reliability. I need honesty--

ALLAN  
I'm not honest enough for you?

SINDY  
I don't think even with yourself.

Chris escorts a new tour GROUP inside. One girl, KYLIE (20)  
fusses over her chair. Fiesty. She observes the bar --

Nat behind bar, Sindy deeply engaged with Allan!

Chris tries to usher the group to their seats but Kylie makes  
a b-line for the bar, past Jack and Marian bickering --

MARIAN  
I am dodge?

JACK  
Yes. Yes you are. How you fund your  
lifestyle innit?

Kylie reaches the bar, approaches Allan. Has his back to her. She taps him on the shoulder. Allan about TURNS 180 degrees. Immediately sweats --

ALLAN  
Kylie? Hi...

KYLIE  
Prick!

Kylie SLAPS Allan. Hard across the cheek. The sound echoes...

Sindy picks up the VODKA shots. She slams one, then the next. Allan's eyes start to water.

Nat pours two more vodka shots. One for her, one for Sindy. Nat takes hers straight up.

Jack abruptly leaves Marian. Heads for the SCENE at the bar. Marian follows after him. They stay out of striking distance.

KYLIE (CONT'D)  
You must be the next conquest?

SINDY  
Next conquest?

KYLIE  
I fell for his charm also. We were together in Van for a while but he simply got up and left one day, didn't you Allan?

SINDY  
So you're another player, Allan?

KYLIE  
I received the note by the way. Thanks babe--

SINDY  
Note?

KYLIE  
He's not enough of a man to express himself face to face. He writes then runs. Like a loser...

JACK  
Guess it's game over pal.

ALLAN  
Jack! Come on man--

SINDY  
Are you all involved in this?

KYLIE  
You are not the first, and you  
won't be the last either--

ALLAN  
Can you mind your business Kylie!?  
This is not the same thing.

Sindy's hurt. Confused and embarrassed. Feels played, for a fool --

She SLAPS Allan. Hard! His other cheek.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Ow... Bugger.

B-Jay YELLS out as he strides in from the garden, same place Sindy emerged from. He stands by Sindy at the bar. Adopts his alpha male posture. Macho!

NAT  
You're banned from here B-Jay.

B-JAY  
Incorrect. I'm on probation Nat.  
Why you keeping me waiting girl?

ALLAN  
Excuse me mate. Who are you?

B-JAY  
Boyfriend. Who's asking?

JACK  
This is like a bloody soap, this.

Allan is dumfounded. Kylie CRACK UP and turns on her heel --

KYLIE (O.C.)  
Karma.

ALLAN  
Probably deserved... But now I'm  
really confused--

SINDY  
I have to pee.

Sindy runs to the washrooms. Nat quickly goes after Sindy. Allan tries to follow but B-Jay STEPS forward, blocking Allan's path --

ALLAN  
Come on mate. Don't be a dick.

B-Jay shoves Allan. Allan pushes back, trying to pass him. Then B-Jay SLAMS Allan into the bar --

Jack steps in for him. Begins a shoving match with B-Jay.

A FIGHT!

B-Jay wrestles with Allan and Jack simultaneously while Marian carefully waits on the sideline. Francis emerges looking a little ill. He timidly stays with Marian on side.

Jack pushes B-Jay back. Gaining the upper hand --

B-Jay grabs him by the arm, throws Jack off balance. His arms flails, CLOCKS Francis on the cheek. Francis goes down, hard. Marian helps Francis up quickly. Sits him on a chair.

Jack, B-Jay are locked together in a standing rugby TACKLE. Allan tries to separate them. They come apart. B-Jay SWINGS wildly and connects with Allan, grazes his JAW.

Jack suddenly lands a golden PUNCH on B-Jay.

B-Jay's stunned! Falls toward the bar.

Sindy returns. Red faced. Upset. Nat has her back --

B-Jay supports himself on the bar top. Picks up a random BOTTLE of wine from the edge of the bar. SMASHES it on the corner of the bar top. Glass flies everywhere --

NAT  
You're banned B-Jay!

He brandishes the jagged weapon in hand. Lunges for Jack. Jack DIVES out of the way --

From nowhere Marian performs an extreme Taekwondo KICK, direct hit to B-Jay's chest. B-Jay FLIES backwards -- KNOCKING Sindy over, and Nat --

B-Jay CRASHES into the bar. SMACKS his HEAD. A KNOCK OUT!

JACK  
Holy shit Marian. Where'd you learn  
how to...

Jack breathes heavy. Cannot finish his sentence. Allan is full of relief. Marian goes back to check up on Francis.

Down on the floor B-Jay is passed out. Jack gets right up in his face --

JACK (CONT'D)  
Bell-end just got Jackie Chan'd!

ALLAN  
Are you OK Sindy?

SINDY  
Don't touch me!

Allan tries to help Sindy up off the floor.

SINDY (CONT'D)  
I said, get away! I don't want you  
near me.

ALLAN  
I'm sorry...

Nat and Sindy help one another. They stand up, face Allan --

SINDY  
Just go Allan! It's time to go  
home...

Allan is crushed. Looks into Sindy's eyes. Tries not to cry.

Allan heads for the exit. The whole establishment observes his pathetic 'walk of shame' they're shaking their heads. Kylie captures Allan's gaze. Pokes her tongue out at him.

Allan hangs his head. Escapes.

INT. CAFE - NIGHT

Allan sulks. Glass of water rests on the table, untouched. He fidgets with sweetener sachets, curled up in a corner booth.

MARIAN (O.S.)  
Would one like some coffee?

Allan turns --

Marian is there, again. Cup of steaming coffee in each hand. She slides into Allan's booth. Opposite. Plants one coffee in front of him. He propels the coffee back along the table...

ALLAN  
No.

Marian examines Allan's resistant state toward her. But unperturbed she pulls out her tobacco rolling paraphernalia. Not moving. Starts rolling...

MARIAN  
A very entertaining evening?

ALLAN  
How did you even--

MARIAN  
So?

ALLAN  
So? Is solitude a bad thing?

MARIAN

Interesting. For one, perhaps but for another, perhaps not... A famous writer once said, in order for one to be content, one needs a favourite job, the opportunity to travel plus real love--

ALLAN

To be content with what?

MARIAN

Is one contented to be present here in Montreal?

ALLAN

How long has it been for you?

MARIAN

Very interesting... One mustn't justify the choices one makes based on another but find a unique path--

ALLAN

How long?

MARIAN

Enough.

Marian sips her coffee. Allan takes a drink of water. They maintain eye contact over the rim of their drinking vessels. They place their drinks down together --

ALLAN

Will you ever go back?

MARIAN

(looks at coffee)

Hmmm... Disappointingly uninspired--

ALLAN

Why do you always talk like you are not within yourself? You think you're an oracle or something?

MARIAN

(direct)

What do you want, Allan?

ALLAN

What do I want? I want to move on.

MARIAN

And the destination?

ALLAN

No. Actually... Move on!

MARIAN  
Move forward?

ALLAN  
What's the difference?

MARIAN  
To move on is to get over the past,  
to move forward, that is to improve  
one's future.

ALLAN  
Do you ever regret any choices  
you've made in the past?

MARIAN  
I know where I belong.

ALLAN  
Where is that?

Marian taps her fresh cigarette on the table.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Is it possible to do this forever?

MARIAN  
You must decide what you want to  
achieve; to get lost or be found?

Marian analyses Allan analysing himself. A powerful  
melancholy overcomes him.

ALLAN  
Sometimes I feel like I'm at war,  
inside--

MARIAN  
It's strange... I met a man once  
with the same aura as you. A soft  
tone of amarillo on the outside but  
a dark indigo inside. Like a fresh  
bruise on the skin. I really liked  
him, he had a unique world view.  
But..

ALLAN  
But what?

MARIAN  
He was suffering a deep depression.  
I told him to not go near the edge--

Marian's hand starts to shake. She reads her body's energy,  
the sign --

MARIAN (CONT'D)  
Oh Scheisse!



ALLAN  
What?

MARIAN  
It was--

ALLAN  
What?

MARIAN  
Xavier.

ALLAN  
Who?!

MARIAN  
He talked about you. A lot.

ALLAN  
Don't fuck with me! You know him?  
Xavier? Xavier Fleeting. How?

MARIAN  
The world is small. I knew him.  
Yes. We spent a little bit of time  
together in Rio--

ALLAN  
When?

MARIAN  
Time is a blur in this life.

ALLAN  
What did he say about me?

MARIAN  
He said, many nice things about you  
but overall... He said he was  
sorry.

ALLAN  
Where is he?

MARIAN  
Allan. He fell off a cliff. I saw  
everything. It was truly horrible--

ALLAN  
What happened to him?

MARIAN  
The sea was too rough. They  
searched but, they couldn't find  
him anywhere.

ALLAN  
It's not true.

Allan is lost for words. Completely shattered and confused. He stares at Marian, she maintains eye contact with him too. Allan struggles to hold his emotions tightly together and Marian can sense it all.

Allan picks himself up.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Don't follow me!

Allan bolts out of the café.

Marian's hand slowly stops shaking. She is drained of energy. Pushes her coffees away.

MARIAN  
First stage is always the hardest.

EXT. OLD MONTREAL - NIGHT

Allan dawdles along the old streets. TRIPS on a loose kerb. He stumbles, almost completely over. He catches himself on a lamp post.

A PROSTITUTE hovers at a closed boutique --

PROSTITUTE  
Walking alone, or walking lonely  
there cutie?

Allan ignores her. With haste turns down a different road.

INT. 24 HOUR STORE - NIGHT

Happy classical music plays instore. The CASHIER scans a small pack of TRAIL MIX. He tries to rise a smile from Allan.

CASHIER  
\$3.65. S'il vous plaît.

Allan checks his wallet. Only a few loose coins. Not enough. He presents his card. The cashier shakes his head, points to the sign, 'CASH ONLY'.

ALLAN  
Shit! I'll come back in a minute.

EXT. BANK - NIGHT

The ATM BEEPS in protest. It spits the foreign CARD out.

Allan SIGHS, reinserts the card straight back in its slot. Waits impatiently. Fingers tap on keypad, retype the PIN --

He selects a couple of options. An ERROR message comes up --

Allan hits CANCEL. Frustrated...

He waits for the machine to return his card. The ATM resets! Confused, Allan hits CANCEL but nothing happens. He BASHES the buttons, presses all the buttons on the machine. Nothing. Allan starts punching the ATM --

PROSTITUTE (O.S.)  
Give me your fucking money.

The prostitute, doped out, presents a large kitchen KNIFE. Allan's hands raise. Frozen!

The prostitute points the knife at Allan's pocket. He hands over his wallet, one hand still in the air. The prostitute goes through it. Only finds 85 cents. She is not very happy. Allan tries to be calm --

PROSTITUTE (CONT'D)  
Give me your bag!

The ATM starts BEEPING repeatedly. Loudly! Screen flashes --  
ERROR!

The ATM's temper tantrum spooks the prostitute. She drops the wallet on the ground and the knife. Scrambles off.

Allan is left, shaking in the street...

A nervous laugh escapes. He picks up his wallet. Thinks about the knife but he kicks it into the drain.

He looks up at the night sky.

ALLAN  
Bugger me!

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Allan sits on the bridge. Stares down between his legs at the fast flowing St Lawrence River...

He opens his daypack, resting on his lap. Finds the stash of postcards at the bottom. He takes the Montreal one from the middle. Examines it.

Allan throws the other postcards over the bridge. They pirouette all the way down and land in the water. Then disappear under the bridge with the current.

Allan rips up the remaining Montreal postcard into many smaller pieces. He throws them over --

Tiny pieces of white and mismatched images of the Montreal skyline flutter downward...

FADE TO:

INT. OLD PERSONS CARE HOME - DAY

Francis is asleep in the armchair, alongside his aunt rests. A soft KNOCK on the door and the regular nurse enters --

She watches Francis with compassion. He stirs...

NURSE

(in French)

Good morning Francis. It's time to get her ready for the day. You can come back later-- My god! What happened to your beautiful face?

Francis touches his brilliant BLACK EYE. Flinches. It hurts!

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Allan rests on the bridge. The morning sun makes him squint.

SUPER: 'Day 1,828'

ALLAN (V.O.)

Everyone has a reason... At least, they should.

EXT. ST JOSEPH'S BASILICA - DAY

Francis and Jack exit the main church door, come out onto the high terrace overlooking the suburbs. They lean on the wall. Francis gingerly rubs his new black eye, takes in the view. Jack takes a sneaky photograph of him --

JACK

Every man will get thumped at least once in his life. Got yours out of the way early kid... I'm sorry...

FRANCIS

I am thinking to stay here a few more days--

JACK

Better buy some more underwear kid.

Francis laughs but it hurts his face.

FRANCIS

I can't leave her.

JACK  
You know, Allan didn't come home  
last night--

FRANCIS  
She was so strong lady, she was  
confidence, but now she is lost...  
She makes me realise that I don't  
know who I am...

JACK  
You know Francis... It is OK--

FRANCIS  
Is it?

EXT. BANK - DAY

Allan walks out of the bank, puts the wallet in his pocket.

EXT. OLD MONTREAL - DAY

Allan mopes around the old town. Completely lost...

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL RECEPTION - DAY

Jack is unusually perky, he hands over his key --

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST (O.C.)  
You had an enjoyable stay?

JACK  
Erm... It was an experience.

She takes Jack's key into the back office.

Jack fixes his backpack, starts to adjust all the straps as Francis enters, who looks to Jack questioningly. Jack shakes his head and shrugs.

JACK (CONT'D)  
No clue kid.

MARIAN (O.S.)  
Jack is leaving now?

Marian appears, sipping a coffee.

JACK  
Going Vegas like. Kind of  
spontaneous, you know... Found me a  
deal.

FRANCIS  
A deal?

JACK  
Perhaps my luck is changing  
Frenchie.

MARIAN  
In this case...

Marian opens her pouch. Searches inside with her hand...

Jack's phone RINGS. He begrudgingly answers --

JACK  
Hello. Hello? For fuck sake!

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST  
(through phone)  
Allo. Hello/bonjour--

JACK  
Who is this?!

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST  
(through phone)  
This number was at the top of  
caller history... And...

The female receptionist exits the office, on the phone...  
Jack and the receptionist realise in unison --

JACK  
Was it you calling me all the time?

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST  
I do not understand what you mean?  
You know who is the owner of this?

JACK  
She's gone home--

FEMALE RECEPTIONIST  
OK. I will investigate.

JACK  
I wouldn't bother if I were you.  
Please don't ring me again, I'm  
sick of paying for incoming  
calls... Such bollocks!

Francis gives Jack a big HUG. Clings. Jack frees himself as  
Marian hands Jack a brown paper PARCEL. He is suspicious...

Jack opens it and discovers a nice handmade piece of jewelry.  
A blue toned BRACELET. Jack goes red in embarrassment.

MARIAN  
This one is for you and also free.  
Blue is soothing, to help you--

JACK

Well I feel a right tit... I thought it were drugs in those bags.

MARIAN

This revelation can explain one's attitude.

JACK

Could you blame me?

MARIAN

One can fund an existence on jewelry trading--

JACK

(half-jokingly)  
True... Bit gay though.

Jack firmly shakes hands with Marian. No hard feelings. Francis and Marian escort Jack to the front entrance --

JACK (CONT'D)

Could you pass on to Allan that, it was a laugh?

EXT. GRIFFINTOWN - DAY

Allan shakes the last of a bag of trail mix into his gob.

Chris has a walking TOUR, observing the 'FARINE FIVE ROSES' sign in the city skyline.

CHRIS

The word "Flour" was dropped due to bill 101 in 1977. It brings bitter contention with the English population even to this day. I love this sign. It depicts Montréal in its struggles with identity and the rejection of a part of who you are, where you've come from. I always say, what's left then is a big-ass hole in your sign.

The tour respond to the joke. Allan hides in the background.

INT. HOSTEL BAR - DAY

Allan hunches over a lonely table. Slim waits discretely at his feet. Francis pokes his head in the door, comes over --

FRANCIS

Jack is gone to USA. He says bye. Marian was asking about you--

ALLAN  
What was she asking?

FRANCIS  
Nothing special, what you doing...  
She returns again tomorrow.

ALLAN  
Cool. When are you leaving?

Francis shrugs.

FRANCIS  
I booked three more nights.

ALLAN  
Cool. And then?

FRANCIS  
I don't know.

ALLAN  
How is she?

Francis sits opposite Allan at the table. He is upset.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
You are making me feel bad buddy.  
Here. I have something for you.

Allan pulls out from his breast pocket, the 'LEOPARD' badge.  
He hands it to Francis.

FRANCIS  
What is it?

ALLAN  
It was passed on to me and now I  
want to pass it on to you.

FRANCIS  
Why?

ALLAN  
Feels right.

FRANCIS  
(reads)  
'Freedom is paradise'... What is  
the meaning of the expression?

ALLAN  
It will come to you when it's time.

FRANCIS  
Yeah... Exactly.



A new girl shuffles through the doorway, quite TALL and Euro, SABRINA. She takes a seat at the bar, talks with the barman. Francis takes a quick studious look at her.

ALLAN

Dutch.

FRANCIS

I think you are incorrect this time. Let's talk to her?

ALLAN

Let me finish my drink. I'll come over in a few minutes. You go, OK.

Allan shakes Francis' hand. Smiles and WINKS. Keeps it in. Francis, leaves Allan and approaches Sabrina at the BAR --

FRANCIS

Hey you. Where are you from?

SABRINA

Hello. I come from Emmericher. I am Sabrina. Nice to meet you--

FRANCIS

Enchanté. My name is Francis. Where is this city?

SABRINA

It's a very small village in North Rhine-Westphalia.

Francis laughs, glances back to Allan but he's not there. Just a half empty beer left on the lonely table. The chair pushed in place.

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

On the Dutch border.

Francis looks back to Sabrina. Shocked. He was right.

EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Dark night. No moon.

White approach lights. The AIRLINER lands on the runway.

EXT. MAIN STREET BUS STAND - DAY

Miserable with jet-lag, Allan collects Slim on his back. After barely a few paces, he stops --

The main street of a quiet middle class township. Clean, modest, safe. Perhaps boring.

Allan looks out of place; a hobo in his hometown...

SUPER: '2 days later'

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Slim sits in a chair opposite Allan, who regresses in his. The MENU up shielding his face. He carefully peeks round at the PASSERS BY --

The OWNER comes to clean the table.

OWNER

I remember you from school. You probably don't remember me... What have you been up to?

ALLAN

Been away... Mostly.

OWNER

We'll see you around ay? Welcome home.

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - DAY

Allan stands at the front door. A deep breath, in then out. A KEY in his hand. He thinks about knocking but hesitates.

He shakily inserts the key into the lock, has to force it. Jimmies it. Tries to turn the key but fails. Tries harder. Then the key snaps off, still stuck inside.

Allan KNOCKS on the door...

The door opens, slowly...

JOY FLEETING (45) is taken aback. Surprised, she extinguishes her SMOKE in her finger tips. Tormented and fragile looking. She's a nervous wreck.

Allan quietly observes her.

Joy starts to CRY. She relishes in the pleasure to hug Allan. She buries her face into his chest.

ALLAN

I broke the key in the lock.

JOY

It can be fixed Allan.

Joy kisses Allan on the forehead. Sobs...

INT. FAMILY HOUSE / KITCHEN - DAY

The kettle steams. Joy searches the drawers for clean cups, spoons. There are none. She runs a couple of dirty mugs under the tap, shaking them clean.

Allan silently takes in his surrounds; a pile of old newspapers, dirty clothes scattered about, smoking ash trays and paraphernalia.

JOY

It'll have to be black babe...  
I don't have milk right now.

ALLAN

I like what you haven't done with  
the place.

JOY

Still cheeky.

ALLAN

Wonder where I get it from--

JOY

Do you drink it black? It's been so  
long, I don't remember.

ALLAN

And we're off!

Joy pours hot water over two tea bags. Tops one up with tap water, sneakily grabs an almost finished bottle of SCOTCH and tops up hers. Stirs it with her pinkie finger. Joy sips hers. She brings Allan's over and sits down.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Are you still meeting with Aida?

JOY

You must have so many stories--

ALLAN

Um... I need to do some laundry.  
Is that OK?

JOY

Let me do it.

Joy springs over to Slim, just lying there on the floor. Picks up the bag. Allan protectively takes it off her --

ALLAN

I can do it.

JOY

I want to do it.

ALLAN

Joy! I've been doing the laundry since I was eight. You remember that?

Joy relents and broods back to the counter.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

Do you have any soap?

INT. FAMILY HOUSE / ALLAN'S ROOM - DAY

On the floor Allan folds his clean clothes, packs them away, efficiently into Slim's insides. Force of habit.

He comes across Sindy's red SCARF.

Allan wraps the scarf around his neck. Checks himself in the mirror on top of the chest of drawers. Regret fills his face. He takes his clothes back out and places them in the drawers. Slim is relieved of duty, set down in the corner.

Joy mopes in the doorway --

JOY

Are you going to see your brother?

ALLAN

Maybe tomorrow.

INT. ALLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Allan is asleep, face down in the pillow, dead to the world.

INT. METRO - DAY

A travel advertising campaign posters the walls of the metro. Sindy is still on the platform. Glazed eyes downward at the train line. Tired. Fed up...

AUSSIE LAD (O.S.)

Yeah. Nah mate, I gotta go see this chick at Beaubien.

AMERICAN LAD

Oh my god. Seriously dude!?

A familiar accent arouses Sindy from her trance. Two foreign LADS joust and tease each other further along the platform. The train arrives and drowns out the lads...

Sindy boards the train, the lads get in a different carriage. The train departs. Leaving the platforms desolate.

The reverse train arrives on the opposite platform.

Francis emerges, completely covered in black, suit and tie. His eyes are puffy. Hands in pockets, he parks himself on a bench in the middle of the platform. He is the only one there but for now it's perfect. He sees the advertising posters.

Suitcase wheels trundle along the platform. Two air crew STEWARDS, a man and a woman are all spruced up to commence a flight. Soft chatter as they pass Francis and gift him with their Disney smiles.

EXT. GRAND CANYON - DAY

Jack is panting heavily from a hill climb, hands on his hips. Gazes out on the spectacular formation from his vantage point. Utterly overwhelmed.

A solitary tear runs down his cheek. A moment of clarity comes upon him and at that instant his facial expression and his breathing changes all together.

INT. ALLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Allan rolls over, wakes up. Startled, he doesn't know where he is. Just for a moment.

A faint line of LIGHT under the door. The floor boards CREEK.

INT. FAMILY HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Joy paces the room. Insomnia. She smokes a blunt.

EXT. AUTISM CARE FACILITY - DAY

TIMOTHY is newly (21) and heavy set. He rocks back and forth with a focused look, sitting rather awkwardly cross legged on the ground under a small tree. He wears only underpants. Severely autistic.

Allan mirrors, opposite Tim but more typically cross legged.

ALLAN

Did Neil give you a nice party? ...  
Has mum been visiting much? Tim?

Tim is uncommunicative...

ALLAN (CONT'D)

You picked a good spot, this tree.  
Your fortress of solitude isn't it.

It starts to RAIN, slightly. Allan reacts to it immediately. Timothy is unmoved, still content under his tree.

Tim changes his focus with at Allan. Now connects --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Hello mate? How's it going?

Timothy doesn't say anything. He stares blankly at Allan.

It rains heavier and louder. Water DRIPS onto Tim's forehead. He tenses up. Then raises his ARMS in a threatening posture. He begins to SQUAWK like a goose --

Allan places his arms up in a rehearsed defensive position. Timothy SHAKES, squeezes his biceps. Slaps his cheeks...

Then suddenly, he stops. Relaxes. Completely still again. Allan takes a deep breath.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Well done buddy... Thank you.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Joy dances a Waltz with a bottle of wine, her partner. Microwave WHIRS away, nuking dinners.

The front door closes with a BANG.

JOY  
How's Timothy?

ALLAN  
Have you seen him recently?

JOY  
I'm making us roast beef dinners.

ALLAN  
How much have you had today?

JOY  
Can I not celebrate the return of  
my eldest son?

The microwave DINGS.

JOY (CONT'D)  
Wash your hands for dinner please.

INT. FAMILY HOUSE / BATHROOM - NIGHT

Allan sees his reflection in the mirror, those faint SCARS.

He looks for some soap to wash up but there is none. Typical. He opens the mirror cabinet. Moves around random bathroom items. A pack of Tampax falls --

A tiny plastic BAG of fine white POWDER lies next to the box. Allan pockets it, discretely. Upset but not surprised.

JOY (O.S.)  
Allan? Come eat before it gets cold.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Allan eyeballs Joy as he sets down at the dinner table. Joy is hungry, knife and fork ready to go --

JOY  
What's the matter with ya?

ALLAN  
I don't feel like eating right now.

Allan stands up. Prepares to say something but holds it in. He walks out the front door.

JOY  
Allan?

Joy throws her knife and fork down on the table. Frustrated. Drinks some wine from the bottle.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Allan strolls along in silent thought. He suddenly stops. Collapses in the street. Starts to cry, still trying to really hold it in. It get harder and harder to do so. But he manages to hold most of the torment back...

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Allan wakes on the couch. He wipes the sleep from his eyes. The CURTAINS flap in the breeze. Loose PAPERS are scattered on the floor.

Allan closes the windows. Tidies the loose papers up a bit. He looks around the house but it seems like no one is home. Allan finds a note, 'Gone out. Hope you're in a better mood.'

Allan scrunches up the note in his fist.

INT. AUTISM CARE FACILITY - DAY

Timothy sits alone in a large room, awkwardly cross legged.

Two MALE STAFF are up on ladders, decorating with BALLOONS, streamers. Allan waves a casual hello and joins Timothy, in his normal rocking routine.

Timothy starts TAPPING the ground with an open palm --

ALLAN  
I know, exciting? Who is having a  
birthday this time?

He makes an incoherent groan. Allan is grieved --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Should I stay here now? Tim... I'm  
so lost--

Two balloons BURST!

Tim immediately SQUAWKS! Trembles --

Tim leaps off the floor. Panting. He starts SELF HARMING.

MALE STAFF (O.S.)  
Sorry... That was an accident.

ALLAN  
Timothy. Calm down buddy. Sssshhh.  
It was only a balloon popping mate.

Tim jerks around, PUNCHES himself in the side of the head,  
with both fists. Repeatedly. Escalates into a violent fit.  
Allan gets up --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Timothy... You'll hurt yourself.  
Ow. Ow!

TIMOTHY  
Ow! Ow-eee... Oweee, Ow...

Timothy continues. His ear starts to bleed from the punches.

The male staff cautiously come over. Following procedure.

Allan tries to grab one arm. After a few attempts, get's it.  
He goes for the second arm. Tim doesn't stop hurting himself.  
Allan catches Tim's other wrist.

Tim suddenly LUNGES forward --

Tim HEAD BUTTS Allan. BLOOD spurts everywhere, he goes down.

The two male staff take over, wrestle with Tim and restrain  
him. Allan scrambles out of the way, holding his bloody nose.

MALE STAFF  
Better see someone about that nose.  
Hey Timmy! Easy on champ. We're OK.  
We're OK.

Tim continues to squawk. Confused.



INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Joy sings to herself as she unpacks simple groceries, microwave meals, a large bottle of WHISKY. She opens a pack of cigarettes, draws a smoke. Then drops everything upon Allan's entry --

Allan holds a white PATCH across the bridge of his nose, a bruise develops on his cheek bone.

JOY  
Oh Baby... Is it broken?

ALLAN  
Not this time.

Joy starts to fuss over Allan with forced, suffocating love. Allan pushes her away, refuses help. Joy gets the message.

JOY  
Just like when you two boys were little, you were always picking on him--

ALLAN  
A balloon burst and upset him-- You know what he's like sometimes. Besides, Tim was never little Mum.

Joy smiles; he called her Mum. Allan realises his mistake. Joy kisses him softly on the cheek. She clamps onto his shoulders and takes him in. She is tipsy...

JOY  
I'm so happy my baby is back home.

Allan remains silent. Not so sure...

Joy opens the fridge. Pulls out some cheap white wine. Routine.

ALLAN  
When was the last time you saw Aida?

JOY  
Turns out Aida is not a good friend to me. What? Why are you looking at me like that?

Allan glares at Joy while she pours a large glass of wine. Polishes most of it in one hit.

JOY (CONT'D)  
Since when do you worry about me? I haven't heard from you in five years--

ALLAN

She is not supposed to be your friend. She's your --

JOY

I'm in control and I don't need her help.

Allan BEATS his fist on the bench. Joy is left startled. Without anything further, Allan leaves the room.

A door SLAMS shut.

Joy finishes her wine. Pours another. She tries to zone out, not allow herself to get upset. She collects her cigarettes up off the floor. Lights up.

Bashing NOISES echo through the walls. From Allan's room. Sounds like pieces of furniture being shifted about --

JOY (CONT'D)

I thought you might have grown up in all this time. Still no respect for your mother--

ALLAN (O.S.)

What have you done with Slim?

JOY

Pardon?

Allan storms back into the kitchen --

ALLAN

Where's my blue bag!

JOY

Your bag? I threw it out.

ALLAN

You threw it out? Where?

JOY

It was old, falling to bits. It smelled disgusting so I chucked it--

ALLAN

It was mine! How many times have I told you? Don't touch my shit--

JOY

Calm down. It's only a bag--

ALLAN

You make me hate you!

Joy DROPS the bottle of wine onto the floor. It SHATTERS! Wine splashes up the sides of the walls, Joy's and Allan's legs.

Joy grips the counter, tightly. Her knuckles go white. Stinging from Allan's harsh words, she holds her breath.

JOY

I'm sorry! I will buy you a new--

ALLAN

You don't have a clue. With what?  
You're broke. All your money goes  
on bloody fags, booze...

Allan reveals the little plastic PACKET of fine white powder.

JOY

Where did you find that?

ALLAN

Nothing's changed!

Allan throws the packet, as hard as he can, at the fridge. Joy ducks out of the way. It breaks open on impact.

JOY

I don't do that anymore. You have  
to trust me. I'm not an addict. I  
might have an alcohol problem but--

ALLAN

You're weak!

JOY

I'm sad. I'm really sad-- I hate  
being alone. All the men I have  
ever loved have left me.

Joy shakes with nerves. She opens the new bottle of whiskey and pours some into a loose tea cup.

ALLAN

You're hopeless. You're a mess now.  
You've always been a mess--

JOY

I'm your mother!

ALLAN (O.S.)

Yes you are. But you're not very  
good at it. Are you?

Joy is offended. She gulps down the whiskey. Allan thinks he may have gone too far this time. Allan resists eye contact with Joy, she does the same, their eyes bounce from the floor to each other and back to the floor.

JOY  
When are you going to forgive me?

ALLAN  
I wish Dad was here...

JOY  
Well he is not, is he? He's gone--

ALLAN  
I KNOW!

Allan screams, the intensity is immense. A lifetime of pain.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
I wish it was you.

Allan storms out of the house. He SLAMS the door after him.

Joy breaks down. She squats, into the faetal position.  
Hugging her knees, whimpering like a little girl --

The packet of WHITE POWDER lies on the floor. Some still left intact.

EXT. TOWN PARK - DAY

Allan slumps on a memorial bench on the edge of the grass.  
Melancholic. Remembering...

ALLAN (V.O.)  
Here is the last place we were  
together... I hope he found his  
paradise.

Allan jumps up and jogs away.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Allan runs and sobs. His emotions feed his muscles...

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - NIGHT

Allan is exhausted but he still runs, at a walking pace. The  
physical pain in his legs no match for his emotional agony.

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - NIGHT

Drenched in his own sweat, Allan reaches the front door.  
Breathes heavy. Gags for water, all his fluids expelled...

He turns the door knob. Locked. He KNOCKS on the front  
door...

No answer.

He KNOCKS again.

ALLAN  
So childish!

Allan gives up. Decides to find another way in.

He scales around the perimeter trying each window. LOCKED...  
He reaches the large living room window. That's also locked.  
The curtains are drawn, but just a small gap in the middle.  
Allan peers between the curtains, INSIDE --

JOY lies awkwardly on the couch. Her eyes are closed.  
Extremely pale. A lighter, spoon, NEEDLES, some residual  
white powder scattered on a table. TELEPHONE rests in her  
limp hand.

Allan BANGS on the window. He YELLS out to her --

No response.

Allan races back to the front door. Tries to break it down,  
he rams it with his shoulder. Tries to kick it down. No use --

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Help! Help...

Allan tries again. The door doesn't budge.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Shit. Shit. Shit!

A ROCK, in the garden. Allan grabs it.

He speeds back to the living room window, takes aim and  
launches the rock --

Glass shatters! Shards are caught by the curtains. Allan  
kicks out more glass, then throws himself into the room --

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Allan rushes to Joy. Shakes her, begs for any response.  
DRABC's... Joy is completely unresponsive.

ALLAN  
Don't you dare die...

Allan picks up the phone. Dials for help. He sets the phone  
onto speaker, on the table.

He drags Joy onto the floor, and prepares to start CPR --

FEMALE OPERATOR (V.O.)  
Police, fire or ambulance--

ALLAN  
Ambulance please.

Allan commences CPR.

FADE TO:

INT. ALLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Slightly younger Allan (16) is asleep under the covers. XAVIER, stealthily enters with a brand new backpack wrapped in plastic. He places it at the end of the Allan's bed.

XAVIER  
(whispering)  
Every pack needs a name. I called  
yours 'Slim'. Happy Christmas son.

INT. AEROPLANE CABIN - NIGHT

Allan is sound asleep. His eye mask blocks out the world. Dreams...

I/E. AUTISM CARE HOME FACILITY - DAY

Timothy sways, cross legged under his tree. Seems content. Allan watches his brother quietly from just inside the building, with NEIL GOODMAN; the one in charge.

ALLAN  
This is all for Tim. I trust you.

Allan hands over a CHEQUE to Neil. He accepts the cheque. Neil has something for Allan too --

Neil passes Allan a postcard from Brasil --

NEIL  
I was going to forward it, but when  
I found out you were back--

Allan studies the postcard. He finds it hard to believe.

ALLAN  
Thanks Neil. But I don't... Listen,  
do you mind storing it for Tim?

Allan returns the Rio postcard to Neil.

INT. DECLAN REHAB CENTRE - DAY

Joy stands for her turn, part of the circle of a dozen rehabilitation PATIENTS and their MEDIATOR. Their routine talks. Humbled, she takes her time to speak --

JOY

Hi. I'm Joy and I'm... I'm an addict... Still.

PATIENTS/MEDIATOR

Hi Joy.

INT. AEROPLANE CABIN - DAY

The STEWARD lightly TAPS Allan on the shoulder. He wakes up.

ALLAN

Where am I?

STEWARD

Exactly where you're supposed to be. We will be landing shortly.

She helps adjust his seat to the full and upright position.

INT. TRAIN (MOVING) - DAY

Allan sits in an empty train carriage. Next to him is a brand new red BACKPACK. 'Xavier' written in marker pen by the brand label. Allan opens the top pouch takes Sindy's red scarf out and ties it round his neck.

EXT. METRO - DAY

The sun is shining. It's blinding.

Allan arrives from the underground subway onto street level. He marches off down the road, with purpose...

EXT. NAT'S &amp; SINDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Allan sets his backpack down by the door. Unties the red scarf, sniffs it, then carefully folds it in his hands. Readies himself with a long, deep breath...

SUPER: 'Day 1'

Allan KNOCKS, and waits --

SINDY opens the door. Allan's backpack slides into the doorway onto her foot. She gasps at the sight of him --

ALLAN

Hi... I know. I'm a wreck-- I brought back your scarf.

SINDY

What happened?

ALLAN  
It's a very long story...

SINDY  
So now, finally you are going home?

ALLAN  
Actually, my flight got in about an hour ago...

Sindy receives her red scarf. Confused.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
From Australia.

SINDY  
Australia?

ALLAN  
And I came straight here because I had to say something to you--

SINDY  
Wait. You said that you never take round trips?

ALLAN  
I did say that. But--

SINDY  
Why would you go all that way only to return again? It's ridiculous!

Allan takes a moment to gather his thoughts.

ALLAN  
Because you make my stomach do 360s, because I get tingles behind the ears whenever you talk to me. Because I have never met someone who has made me-- Sindy, you made me realise... I'm a fucking fraud! I've passed through 33 countries, I've trekked countless miles, met tons of people, too many, I don't even remember their names... But I'm sick of it! Always being alone, always in transit. I'm completely lost.

Allan's eyes begin to tear up.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
This is not my life... You helped me realise... What I truly want is to feel connected to something, somewhere, someone--



SINDY  
Why are you here Allan?

ALLAN  
I think I'm in love with you...

Allan takes care to dab away a tear from his bruised face.  
Sindy stares into his vulnerable pupils. Fully engages...

SINDY'S DAD (O.S.)  
(in French)  
You're letting in the draught.

ALLAN  
Is somebody there?

SINDY  
Do you want to come inside Allan?

INT. NAT'S & SINDY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Allan follows Sindy inside. Kicks his bag over the threshold.  
SINDY'S DAD (55) relaxes with a tiny cup of espresso. He is confident but also possesses a warmth, an air of compassion.

SINDY  
May I present to you my father.  
(in French)  
Papa, here is my friend Allan. He  
comes all the way from Australia.

Allan is in the middles of the room, frozen.

Sindy's dad rises from his chair. Allan is unsure, he awkwardly motions to shake the man's hand but he embraces Allan, like he would his own son. Takes in Allan, curiously. His battered face.

Allan remains completely submissive in the presence of him.  
His mind races. Sindy comes between them --

SINDY (CONT'D)  
Un autre café papa?

Sindy's dad returns to his position. Sindy takes his cup.

SINDY (CONT'D)  
Don't worry, papa doesn't speak  
English well... So, you're in love  
with me?

ALLAN  
I'm into you. Since the moment I  
first saw you. I want to get to  
know you more. And I know there is  
someone else, but I don't care.  
(MORE)

ALLAN (CONT'D)

I am not going anywhere... That's the truth.

SINDY

I can see it in your eyes... Their honest now--

ALLAN

I guess you would know--

SINDY

I know. And the truth is, there is no one else. There never was--

ALLAN

But, what about--

Sindy hushes Allan. She places her finger to his lips.

SINDY

Living somewhere it different from visiting there.

ALLAN

I have to now... I haven't got any money left.

Sindy slaps Allan playfully on his arm.

ALLAN (CONT'D)

You know of any jobs going?

SINDY

How's your French?

ALLAN

Obviously not that great, yet.

FADE TO:

EXT. SKY - DAY

At altitude, an AIR LINER in cruise.

ALLAN (V.O.)

Everyone has their reasons...

EXT. CANADIAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

MARIAN chills under a tree. Flips through a SCRAP BOOK. Discovers some dried FLOWERS, handwritten notes, a nice CARD:

--'Freedom is Paradise, love Xavier'--

ALLAN (V.O.)

Some are trying to get lost...

A LADY walks up playing a ukulele. She squats next to Marian, gives her an affectionate peck on the cheek and they turn through the scrapbook together. Marian presents a joint and they grin at each other.

INT. AIRPORT ARRIVALS - DAY

A 65L BACKPACK slides down the conveyor belt. The Leopard cloth BADGE is sewed on the top. Francis grabs the backpack. He squints to read a sign in JAPANESE script, also English, 'Exit, Buses, Taxis'.

ALLAN (V.O.)  
Others are trying to be found...

INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - DAY

A BOY (3) locks eyes with a seven foot dinosaur. He sits on Jack's shoulders. They wander about the prehistoric exhibit.

ALLAN (V.O.)  
Some need to escape for a while...  
To gain a little perspective,  
clarity of mind.

They make 'dinosaur' sounds and jaunt over to the mother, KAREN (30) who explores a big map of the world on the wall.

ALLAN (V.O.)  
For me...

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

A map of the world covers the back wall. 'DEAR TRAVELLER' branded across the top in bright script-like lettering. Colourful photographs and adverts fill the windows.

ALLAN (V.O.)  
Things have changed. But I'm still  
a guru.

Allan is professionally groomed, head set on, he types at a workstation. JASON (26) wears the same uniform, browses a magazine at the adjacent workstation.

Super: 'A year later...'

JASON  
Did you find your connection?

ALLAN  
Dubai. All booked. And while I  
remember the Desrochers are coming  
in to pay you the invoice for Aruba  
and Curacao. Cool?

Jason swivels to the printer and collects some files. He highlights various lines.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
I still can't believe she agreed to  
it all--

JASON  
She trusts you dude. But Jesus, 88  
days is hard core... Must be a year  
now for you guys?

ALLAN  
More or less. Myanmar could be a  
good test... If not, Bolivia  
definitely will be.

JASON  
What kind of test?

ALLAN  
The test.

Sindy enters the agency. Allan greets her with a little KISS.  
She sits opposite Allan.

ALLAN (CONT'D)  
Salut belle, ça va?

SINDY  
Ça va bien merci. Salut Jason.

JASON  
How you doing Sindy?

SINDY  
Allan? Did you contact--

ALLAN  
I'm told she's doing well but there  
is still along way to go... And  
Tim, apparently he likes balloons  
now.

JASON  
Who doesn't like balloons?

The phone RINGS --

JASON (CONT'D)  
I'll get it.

ALLAN  
Thanks Jason... So, I managed to  
find us a good flight. I've got one  
question for you before I lock it  
in... One-way or round-trip?

Sindy SLAPS Allan on the arm. And once more...

FADE OUT.