

JAY KELLY

Baumbach/Mortimer

White smoke slowly billows up over black, revealing:

"It's a hell of a responsibility to be yourself.
It's much easier to be somebody else or nobody at all."

Sylvia Plath

A light comes up in the background, a body moving in silhouette.

FIRST VOICE

We're coming to the end. The end
of the movie, the end of the shoot.

CANDY

I started getting dry eye balls.
From nowhere.

In the foreground, another voice, Candy, who does hair, in darkness. She turns on a light, her reflection illuminated in a vanity mirror.

CANDY

Like there was grit or something
constantly in them--

Candy and Hailey, the costume designer, walk away from us through what we now realize is a movie set. Bright lights shine on and off throughout the cavernous space. The smoke wraps around a bony scaffolding as a crane climbs upwards like a strange neolithic creature.

CANDY

...And there was an oculist here.
The one who does the lenses.

A man crosses.

SECOND AD

Hey, sorry, Skip needs to do a
check. He thinks it might have
slipped.

Other voices come in and out, overlap, like music.

SOUND RECORDIST

The silk shirt is causing
problems.

FIRST VOICE

And one day it will be my
last movie, her last movie,
your last movie.

Scratching noises as something gets adjusted.

CANDY

I just said, help me with this! I'm
not going to let this be a thing. I
said, what do I need to do?

We arrive at a sound cart in the foreground.

SOUND RECORDIST
 Could you say a quick something
 please Jay?

JAY (O.S.)
 I love you.

Laughter. As he speaks the dial moves on the meter. This voice belongs to Jay Kelly, 60. Being closest to the recording device, it is the clearest voice of all and it's a familiar one.

SOUND RECORDIST
 A little bit more please?

JAY (O.S.)
 10, 9, 8, 7...
 (in an Italian accent)
 Tuesday, Thursday, Wednesday...

Colored lights move in tandem with his voice.

SOUND RECORDIST
 Jay, you're the best.

JAY (O.S.)
 Come on, there must be someone
 better.

Affectionate laughter. We're moving through the smoke, shadows emerge, shapes form. The First AD, in galoshes, marches through a shallow tank of water.

FIRST AD
 We're seeing the whole wide world
 on this one folks.

We find Candy again at a craft service table.

CANDY
 And he gave me these drops and it
 totally went away. Disappeared. The
 dryness. You've got to be ahead of
 the game. Two steps ahead.

Candy walks with Hailey, toward Jay's tent. An older Actress paces, rehearsing her lines.

ACTRESS
 I'm so angry. I cry with anger -
 when you see it on the news. It's
 unthinkable...

Ron Sukenick, 50s, appears in the foreground in a down vest, tie, and on the phone.

RON

Right now your anxiety is at a ten
so of course you feel like quitting-

Ron weaves around crew passing in front of the make-up tent.

RON

Because I'm your Dad, that's how I
know.

Candy and Jay, silhouetted from inside.

CANDY

I just made the decision. I'm not
going to disintegrate without a
fight. Your hair's great. Have you
been using that conditioner? It's
really fed it.

JAY

(genuinely interested)
Really? Because no, I haven't.

CANDY

Yeah. It feels great.

Ron reappears taking us around the tent.

RON

This is the worst part, the
anticipation.
(gently into phone)
But I'll be standing right next to
you on the court.

Jay emerges from the tent just as the Sound Recordist kneels
down to Jay's feet.

SOUND RECORDIST

I'm going to try your pant leg.

Static as he fiddles with a mic. Another set of feet enter
the frame.

JAY'S DRESSER

Jay, sorry to interrupt. Hailey
says she wants to see you in the
bloodier coat.

We rise back up with the Sound Recordist, just as Jay turns
his back to us. Jay walks in shadow through the fog toward
the shooting set followed by Candy. The Actress calls out.

ACTRESS

Did you have the peppers? Or the
ravioli? I should have had the
ravioli.

JAY
I just had my shake.

ACTRESS
Who'd want to be young?

FIRST AD (O.S.)
Find a place to hide.

CANDY
Have you tried liver and whey?

A CRANE swings through and we rise up with it, revealing the set from above.

JAY (O.S.)
Where's the dog? Can I do it with the dog?

SECOND AD (O.S.)
Jay wants the dog. Can we bring in the dog, Frank?

We hear people come running. A dog barks. We pass two Electricians on a rig above the set.

ELECTRICIAN
(looking down)
That dog makes more money than any of us.

Further in the background we see a rain tower.

FIRST AD (O.S.)
Can we see a light drizzle?

Rain pours down.

FIRST AD (O.S.)
That's the light drizzle? That looks more like a deluge.

RAIN RIGGER
Believe me, that's the drizzle.

As the crane swings across the set, a city backdrop is pulled across the edge of the stage. Ron appears small in the distance below, maneuvering around people and equipment.

RON
(into phone)
I've watched you bloom throughout this tournament. And you've really found your second serve.

FIRST AD (O.S.)
Ok number ones for a stumble through please.

Ron comes toward us and we CRANE DOWN. Behind him, a Set PA hurrying.

RON
You think Coco doesn't get
butterflies? Doesn't dread?
Doesn't call her Dad? Or Nadal?

We land to find Jay, his back to us, arriving in front of Hailey, the costume designer.

JAY
Here I am in the bloodier coat.

HAILEY
Bloodier is better.

The Set PA, hurries to a stop with a small cup and saucer.

SET PA
I've got your espresso.

Jay takes a sip. Passes it back.

JAY
Don't let me have more than a sip
after 4.

SET PA
Yes of course. Sorry.

JAY
No - you're new. You wouldn't know.
If you give me coffee I'll drink
it.

A figure in silhouette, moving behind the set.

SECOND AD (O.S.)
(yelling out)
Ok number ones please!

FIRST VOICE
They'll turn off the lights and
that will be that.

Ron sits on the edge of the set, stands and brings us to a series of directors chairs and monitors facing the set.

RON
Of course you should have called
me, puppy. Don't beat yourself up
for that too. You're just getting
at yourself from all angles now.

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Put another double in the 5K.

(pause)

No, not that one!

We follow Jay's silhouette in the background as he finds his mark, sitting against a lamppost.

Lights from a police car turn on, revealing, not Jay, but his stand-in amidst a rainy, city street. Smoke escapes from a manhole. The lights go down just as a hand comes out of the shadow and taps his shoulder.

JAY

Thanks, Clay.

CLAY

Always a pleasure.

Clay leaves as Jay Kelly takes his place. A key light goes on - headlights from a police car. Jay finds the light and the camera finds his face - handsome, kind, worn, every inch a star.

Another figure approaches and crouches by Jay.

DIRECTOR

What are you thinking? We know we have a couple good ones.

JAY

I think it should be just how it happens right? I mean just let what happens happen?

DIRECTOR

You wanna just do another?

JAY

Yeah. I think we should just do it and see what happens.

The Director hurries back behind camera.

AD (O.S.)

Ok. This will be a take.

A clapper appears.

CLAPPER VOICE (O.S.)

Scene 138 Echo. Take 11.

Clap.

RON (O.S.)
 (whispering into phone)
 Hold on, sweetheart, stay on the
 phone, I'm going to watch this
 take.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
 And action.

Jay winces. Opens his jacket, reveals a wound. It looks mortal.

JAY
 (vulnerable and tender)
 'I don't like it here anymore,
 Jerry... I want to leave the party.
 In a way--

The dog approaches.

JAY
 (breaks the moment)
 He entered too soon. Can we start
 again? Sorry. Delay Jerry a beat.
 Keep rolling...no, No DON'T CUT.
 Give me some more of that anchovy
 paste.

The dog wrangler pulls the dog back out of frame. The camera pulls back to its first position. The Prop Master runs in and paints more anchovy paste on Jay's hand. Jay resets himself and starts the action again. The camera pushes in again.

JAY
 'I don't like it here anymore. I
 want to leave the party...
 In a way, I already died. I'm
 lucky. My time passed while I was
 still alive. I got to see it end
 before it ended. You know it's a
 crazy thing, when you're dying,
 everything you thought you were
 isn't true.

The dog, Jerry, approaches and places his head on Jay's leg...right on cue.

JAY
 You're a good dog.

Silence. You could hear a pin drop.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
 ... And....cut....

Mutterings of approval. Close on Jay.

JAY
Can we go again?

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
Really?

JAY
I'd like another one.
(then suddenly not sure)
I don't know, I feel like I could
do it...better, different...
(pause)
But if you're happy.

The Director sidles back up to Jay.

DIRECTOR
I'm very happy.

JAY
OK.

DIRECTOR
(intimately)
If you have an idea, we should
explore it.

JAY
I thought I had an idea, but...
(and again)
You're happy?

DIRECTOR
I'm ecstatic. But, of course you
can have one more.

JAY
You feel good?

DIRECTOR
I really do. I liked a couple of
the early ones too.

JAY
(pause)
Ok. Cool.

DIRECTOR
Good?

JAY
Good.

FIRST AD (O.S.)
That is a picture wrap on Jay
Kelly!

Lights go on. The set is now exposed for all its artifice and mechanics. Everyone cheers and whoops. Crew members, many of them trying to keep it together, come and hug Jay.

FIRST AD

And a wrap on Eight Men From Now!

More cheers. Jay hugs the director.

JAY

Well done man. It's going to be a good one.

DIRECTOR

It was a total honor. Thank you for trusting me.

Ron walks toward the opening doors to the stage.

RON

(on the phone)

We made the finals, Vivian. That's something to celebrate. So, get some rest--

Jay hands his gun to the props person and salutes the lighting riggers up in the beds.

JAY

Pops! Jose! Thank you guys. You've been awesome.

The AD embraces him.

FIRST AD

Thanks for the Dodgers tickets Jay. My kids are going to lose their minds.

DP

Yeah thanks for the Mamiya camera. So generous.

Ron passes a stack of director's chairs being wheeled by.

RON

(on the phone)

--because the Greenbergs are tough opponents but my money's on you and me, kiddo. I love you Vivi...

The sound mixer, Skip, takes off his mic.

JAY

Thanks Skip. No one gives you guys the credit.

SOUND RECORDIST

That means the world.

RON
(on the phone)
I love you Vivi, I've got to go--

Jay joins Ron at the entrance, followed by Meg, his assistant, Candy, Silvano, his security. He gives a final wave and thank you to the applauding crew.

RON	CANDY
Couple timely reminders. We	--be there at 9 for grooming.
have the Omega event tomorrow	
morning. Pick up 11AM. Candy	
will--	

They walk with purpose outside and across the STUDIO LOT.
Bright LA sunlight on their faces.

JAY
Were you watching?

RON
Yeah, I--

JAY
Because you haven't said anything.

RON
Because you get annoyed when I give
an opinion on--

JAY
I know, but then when you don't say
anything I assume you hated it.

RON
It was brilliant. I think take
seven was the one.

JAY
Why do you say seven?

RON
I'm not getting into this--

JAY
Into what?

RON
You always feel this way after you
wrap a movie. Emotional.

JAY
Right.

RON
And then you blame me.

JAY
(conceding)
Maybe it was seven. I suppose they
can always cut to the dog.

SILVANO
That dog was great.

CANDY
What's it like Jay to experience
your own death?

JAY
I didn't really die.

CANDY
I know that...

CANDY
But how do you perform something
you haven't ever done?

JAY
You pretend, Candy.

RON
I don't know if I'd want to
have that ability.

JAY
(walking backwards now
as he addresses the
group)
Thanks all of you guys for
working so hard and for being
so great. You rock. Couldn't
do it without you.

Jay's team cheer and applaud.

CANDY
Love you Jay.

JAY'S DRESSER
Thanks for having us Jay.
You're the best.

Ron keeps pace beside him as they all climb into Jay's
TRAILER. There's a spread of different kinds and brands of
water, coffee, nuts, fruit, and a single slice of cheesecake.
All untouched.

JAY
Why is there always a slice of
cheesecake in every room I'm in?

RON
It's in your rider. Along with the
nuts and the fruit and all the
different kinds of water and--

JAY
I don't even like cheesecake, how
is it in my rider?

RON
You once said you liked it. You
did.

I never-- JAY You just don't remember. RON

JAY
If anything, the rider should say
No cheesecake. Never cheesecake.

The dresser hangs and packs clothes commenting on how neat and thoughtful Jay is. Jay circles the trailer living room. Ron going over schedule on his phone.

RON
And dinner tomorrow with Daisy--
Chef Mario is doing the special
tamales.

Good. JAY

RON
Also, Antonio from the Tuscan Arts
Festival called again. They need
an answer about the tribute.

I said No.

JAY

RON

And I told them No, but they're very persistent--

Still No. JAY

Jay heads for the trailer bedroom.

RON
I know, I just mention again,
because they are quite reputable--

JAY
No. Not on your life--

RON
You're right. And it was always going to be tight anyway, we start shooting in a couple weeks.

JAY
No tributes ever.

No. Never. RON

Jay shuts the door to the DRESSING ROOM leaving Ron on the other side. He exhales, alone maybe for the first time all day. A low hum from somewhere. He hesitates, possibly unsure of what to do with himself.

DAISY
I guess that was the point when I
realized I was more intelligent
than you.

Daisy, 18, addresses Jay who fishes leaves out of his pool. Jay wears a crisp light blue Oxford shirt and tailored shorts. We're in a SPACIOUS BACKYARD. It's the next day.

JAY
What does that mean?

A pool man stands by, letting Jay do the work.

DAISY
I know more than you.

JAY
Do you?
(deciding)
No, you don't.

DAISY
Yes, I do.

JAY
How could you? About what?

DAISY
About everything. What's the capital of Croatia?

JAY
I barely know the fucking capital of California.

DAISY
Who was Agamemnon's wife?

JAY
That's just facts. Anyone can know facts. I know more about emotional stuff. You have to live a life for that. I'm more...emotionally intelligent.

She looks at him with sweet disdain.

DAISY
Don't you want me to be smarter than you? Isn't that the whole point of this.

Indicating the space between him and her.

JAY
Yes, but don't you think it's a bit early?

DAISY
I can't help the timing.

She smiles warmly.

DAISY
It looks good.

JAY
What?
(realizes, runs his hand
through his hair)
Thanks.

DAISY
You can't tell.

JAY	DAISY
(insecure about it)	They usually make it too
She did a good job. She left	black.
a little gray in.	

JAY
This isn't--

DAISY
No, this is...just right. But you
should go full gray soon, if you
want my opinion.

JAY
But not just yet.

DAISY
(suddenly)
OK, I'm going to go meet Moses and
Rio. Love you--

JAY
Weren't we having dinner tonight?
Mario is doing the tamales.

DAISY
Did we say that?

JAY
It's OK. See your friends.
There'll be other dinners.

Jay hands the pool net to the pool guy and follows Daisy.

JAY
I wrapped this last one and I've
got the Louis Brothers movie here
on the lot so I'll be around this
summer. Maybe we take a weekend in
Ojai or something--

DAISY
I'm going to Europe with Rio and
Cooper and some friends. I told
you that.

JAY

I thought that was...in July.

DAISY

No, it was always June. I'm leaving on Saturday for Paris and we're making our way over to Tuscany.

JAY

Saturday already? That's... Saturday? That's too soon. I have two weeks off, we won't have had time to hang out.

DAISY

When you're working we never hang out and then you get all sad that we're not hanging out.

JAY

It's your last summer.

DAISY

That's why I want to see my friends.

JAY

It'll be lonely here without you.

DAISY

No it won't. You're never alone.

JAY

Really, because I think I'm always alone.

Silvano, his security, hands Jay a glass of ice-tea.

JAY

(off handed)

Thanks, Silvano.

Daisy stares at him with a small smile.

JAY

What if I joined?

DAISY

(laughs)

We're going to this really great jazz festival in Paris which is a lot of people so you can't do that. And then taking a train with no first class to Pienza which you also can't do. And we're sleeping in tents. Which, I mean, come on.

JAY
I basically grew up in a tent.

DAISY
But not anymore.

JAY
No, but the muscle memory is there.

DAISY
OK, I got to go.

She's met by Ron who emerges from the house toward the pool.

DAISY
Ronnie! Will you have tamales with
Dad?
(a big hug)
Vivian's been posting about the
tennis. You guys are adorable.

RON
We made the finals!

DAISY
You got a friend now, Dad.

She runs off into the the house.

JAY
You want a tamale?

Jay passes Ron, heads inside the house. Ron says,
reluctantly:

RON
Peter Schneider died.

JAY
(from inside the house)
Fuck, I need to call him.

RON
No. I just heard and came here.
He...
(gestures strangely)
...died.

Jay reappears in the doorway.

JAY
Really?

RON
I'm sorry.

Ron comes to Jay and embraces him. A real hug between
friends. Jay holds on.

RON
I know you loved him.

JAY
His message is still on my phone.

RON
When was the last time you saw him?

JAY
Maybe six months ago.

Jay looks past Ron, through the window into his KITCHEN. Night suddenly falls on the image. Jay sees through the glass:

PETER
Sweetheart, I'm going to make you a sandwich.

Peter, 70s, stands at the kitchen island in the midst of a big modern kitchen. He wears a neckerchief and a jacket with pockets. Jay, in the memory, passes by him.

JAY
I'm really glad to see you Peter.
I've missed you.

A MEMORY.

It's evening.

PETER
Where do you keep the knives?

JAY
They're on that magnet thing there
by the cutting board.

PETER
I see.

Barbara, the housekeeper passes carrying a hamper of clothes.

JAY
I'm sorry, Barbara, we're making a
mess after you already cleaned.

HOUSEKEEPER
That's OK, Jay.

She exits. Jay regards Peter laying out the sandwich fixings.

JAY
I've...Lately, I feel like my life
doesn't really feel real. Maybe a
better way of putting it is...
(saying the same thing)
(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

...my life doesn't really feel real.

PETER

I heard about your break-up with the hand model, sweetheart. Break-ups are like deaths. Mayonnaise?

JAY

Um, the shelf on the door of the--?

PETER

Yes-- How are the girls?

JAY

Daisy's graduating in the Spring. Going to John's Hopkins for bio chemistry if you can believe it.

PETER

She's a brilliant girl.

JAY

And Jessica's in San Diego. That's... I don't know what to do there.

PETER

You'll figure it out sweetheart. Do you have olive oil?

JAY

(points)

I've been thinking a lot about Cranberry Street and... We had such fun making that, didn't we?

PETER

We were always laughing. You know it's the thirty-five anniversary coming up.

JAY

Jessica was born the next year. That's how I know that. All of my memories are movies.

PETER

That's what movies are for us, my love, pieces of time.

JAY

Pieces of time.

PETER

(and then)

You have pickles?

JAY
I think so? Maybe--

PETER
Here they are.

JAY
Check the expiration.

PETER
Pickles don't expire, my love.

JAY
They definitely do.

PETER
(smells them)
They're fine.

JAY
Thirty-five. Is that possible?

PETER
It's all possible, son.

JAY
There was real magic on that one.
I was spoiled. I thought they'd
all be like that. But they're not.

Peter continues to construct a sandwich.

PETER
So few are. Sweetheart, I'm glad
you're thinking about us. I have a
picture I'd like for us to do
together.

JAY
(not what he wants to
discuss)
Oh yeah?

PETER
It's the prostitute picture I told
you about--

Jay hesitates.

JAY
I'm shooting a movie now, and I'm
going to start another one right
after. You know these kids, the
Louis Brothers? They're big fans
of yours.

PETER
I didn't care for their
picture. Too much MTV
cutting.

JAY
So, I don't know when I'll be
available--

PETER

We can wait for you, darling.

JAY

I told you, Peter, it's not for me.

PETER

I did a rewrite with my assistant, Shelley. You met her I think at that idiot's premiere. We made it more contemporary. They have cell phones now.

JAY

It's just not a territory, that I want to explore--

PETER

If you could just attach yourself. My lawyer says we need a name.

JAY

I can't do that.

PETER

I thought I'd ask Daphne to play the wife.

JAY

She's retired.

PETER

(suddenly)

I'll be honest with you, son, I need money.

JAY

I'll give you money.

PETER

But I need to make another picture. I want to make two right in a row back to back. You know what dear Truffaut said:

(doing the accent)

"Sometimes quantity is impressive."

JAY

Art is personal, Pop. You know that.

PETER

I understand, dear, but if you could just lend your name--

Hands him the sandwich on a plate.

JAY
I can't. I'm sorry.

Jay bites into the sandwich. He says somewhat emotionally:

JAY
It's delicious.

PETER
Pickles don't expire.

PETER'S SON (V.O.)
My dad was never there. In the
seventies and eighties he was
always on movie sets.

We're in a small MEMORIAL SPACE in Hollywood in the PRESENT.
It's well attended. The audience is mostly older people from
the Hollywood community. A woman, either thirty or seventy
sobs in the front row.

PETER'S SON
And when he started to struggle--
after he made a couple of what many
of you in Hollywood would call
bombs, or turkeys, forgive me I'm
not in the business I don't know
the language. Flops that now are
considered cult classics by Gen Z.
After the industry turned its back
on him, after his third bankruptcy,
after he was forced to sell his
beloved mansion, Casa del Oro in
Bel Air and move into the one-
bedroom in Encino, he was always
trying to raise money. Dreaming of
the next picture.
(gestures to the crowd)
It's wonderful to see all you well
wishers and the celebrations of
Peter that are now coming in. It
would have done his heart good.

Jay watches, emotion barely hidden behind his sunglasses.
Silvano next to him. Behind him is Ron, his wife Lois, 40,
his daughter, Vivian 16, and son, David 5.

PETER'S SON
But you know, as he lay dying he
said. 'I know how the movie ends.
It's about love.'

After the ceremony, Jay is surrounded. People saying they
know him from random times. A woman says, "You don't
remember me, do you?" He handles it all with grace. Another
guest says, "I was in the only movie he directed on
horseback. And not surprisingly it was his worst film."
Ron, with Lois and his kids, clocks Jay.

RON
I think I've got to go rescue Jay.

LOIS
How long do you think you'll be?

VIVIAN
I have beach clean up at three.

RON
We'll get you there.

VIVIAN
If I'm late they don't count it.

RON
Just take the keys.

Ron drops the keys in Lois's palm. Peter's son approaches Jay.

PETER'S SON
Thanks for coming, Jay.

JAY
I'm so sorry, Nathan.

PETER'S SON
Dad always said how lucky he was that he found you.

JAY
He changed my life.

PETER'S SON
He felt the same way about you. He wanted you to have one of his neckerchiefs.

He hands Jay what appears to be a bandana.

Jay and Ron, followed by Silvano, emerge into the UNRELENTING LA LIGHT.

RON
I'm glad we came. It makes it all more real.

JAY
None of this feels real.

RON
I know. Death is so surprising. Particularly in LA.
(pause)
I like the neckerchief.

JAY
You want it?

RON
Thanks.

JAY
Maybe I should have done another movie for him. What would it matter?

RON
You're feeling this way because you're a good person.

JAY
Or lent my name. He just wanted my name.

Ron ties the bandana around his own neck like Peter did. (He will wear it from now on.)

VOICE
Jay?

Jay looks round to see a handsome but faded man of about his age walking toward him.

JAY
(doesn't recognize him)
Hey, man.

Silvano takes a small step forward. Jay then smiles in recognition and gives Silvano an "It's OK" look.

JAY
Tim!... Timothy?

TIMOTHY
Don't worry I'm not stalking you.

JAY
No, I didn't think-- Wow! How are you man?

Jay approaches Timothy.

JAY
Were you at the--

TIMOTHY
Yeah. We lost a great one. So sad.

JAY

JAY
Yeah, he was special.

RON
We're just busy all the time and then people are dying.

JAY

(turning around)

Ron, this is Timothy. We were in acting class together. My old roommate. My old budd-ay!

TIMOTHY

(same voice)

Budd-ay!

RON

OK.

JAY

(trying to cue him)
I told you about him.

RON

(catching on)

Yes, Tim, nice to see you. Ron
Sukenick. Jay's manager. Friend.
I've heard a lot about you.

TIMOTHY

Really? You have? Good, I hope.

RON

Haha. All great. All...great.

TIMOTHY

Because we were some pretty bad boys in those days.

He gives Jay a playful shove. Jay grins.

JAY

How are you, man?

TIMOTHY

You know, living the life. How are you? Stupid question, you're doing great.

JAY

I'm all right, I'm all right.
Great to see you.

TIMOTHY

You too.

Awkward pause. Jay hits Tim on the shoulder affectionately.

JAY

See you, man.

They both start walking and realize they're walking the same way. Acknowledging this, they laugh.

TIMOTHY

I'm not following you. I'm parked
over here--

JAY

No, man, I'm glad to see you. We should get a coffee or something sometime.

TIMOTHY

I mean, that'd be awesome. How should I-- Should I call your office?

Ron, hovering, hands Tim a card.

JAY

Yeah that's great. I'll get the message.

TIMOTHY

OK. If not it's cool. Don't feel obligated.

Jay hesitates. Makes a decision.

JAY

I actually have time now--

TIMOTHY

(pleased)

Great. You want to-- Remember Chez Jay by the water?

JAY

Yeah. I'll see you there.

TIMOTHY

(smiling, heading to his car)

Budd-ay.

Jay grins.

SILVANO

(quietly)

I'll follow you--

JAY

No, Silvano, you can go home.

Silvano looks at him, like "Are you sure?" Jay gets into his car. Ron leans in the window to Jay and whispers:

RON

You OK with this guy?

JAY

Yeah, he's an old friend. I haven't seen him in years.

RON
Because there will be people there.

JAY
It's fine. I remember people.
I'll see you tomorrow.

RON
No, you won't because remember, I
have the tennis finals with Vivian?

JAY
Right, right, good luck.

RON
Maybe take it easy on the drinks.

JAY I will-- RON Because it's an emotional--

JAY
I will.

RON
Stick to beer.

CLOSE ON A whiskey in a glass. It rests on a juke box. Jay grabs it and drinks as he picks out songs, swaying to the music. (Songs from his twenties.) It's an LA DIVE BAR that has a boat theme.

TIMOTHY (O.S.)
My guru said that when someone's
dying and getting closer to the
spiritual world, they get less
afraid of death.

Tim arrives with more drinks.

JAY
You got a guru, man, that's
great?

TIMOTHY
Death becomes less real.
Power and success become
totally unreal because
they're no longer relevant.
So it's like Peter said, all
that's left is love...

JAY
That's beautiful.

A couple of college kids ask for a picture, Jay obliges.
(Jay is easy but business-like with the people who approach
him.) Jay and Tim sashay their way back to the table,
laughing.

JAY
I'd love to get your guru's number.

TIMOTHY
He's magic. He's best on text.

JAY
This place is great. I haven't
been here since we were in class.

They reach their table.

TIMOTHY
You see anyone from class?

JAY
Not really, no. No, no. You?

TIMOTHY
Yeah, we have reunions! I think
you're the only one who still
works. Except Cindy does a lot of
voice overs.

JAY
But you were the one we all looked
up to.

TIMOTHY
(loving it)
No.

JAY
You were the best of all of us.
You were method. I wasn't method.

TIMOTHY
You were method.

JAY
I was method-lite. But you. I
could watch you do anything. I
could watch you read this menu.

Timothy flushes, laughs. Jay thrusts the bar menu at him.

JAY
Go on, do it. Do the thing.

TIMOTHY
(hesitates)
OK. With no emotion:
(reads the menu with no
emotion or effort)
Truffle parmesan fries. Brussel
sprouts with balsamic honey glaze
and bacon - 12 dollars. Wedge of
iceberg lettuce. Shrimp cocktail,
calamari with lemon aioli sauce -
15 dollars.

JAY

OK! Now do it with an emotional choice.

TIMOTHY

I don't know. I don't really do this anymore. I'm a child therapist.

JAY

Do it!

TIMOTHY

OK, OK, what would Larry say...
Let's see... I'm now remembering something that's really important to me. It's really--
(starts to break)
--important to me and I can hear him and I can see him--

He's now crying.

TIMOTHY

And I can speak through it--
(reads the menu with genuine feeling and emotion)
Truffle parmesan fries. Brussel sprouts with balsamic honey glaze and bacon - 12 dollars. Wedge of iceberg lettuce. Shrimp cocktail, calamari with lemon aioli sauce - 15 dollars.

It's a killer reading. And then just as quickly he's back to normal.

TIMOTHY

(wipes his eyes)
And that's what method acting is.

Jay applauds.

JAY

Amazing!

TIMOTHY

My problem was I wasn't ambitious.

JAY

It's such a hard business. I wouldn't wish it on anyone. I don't know, I keep thinking I might just stop.

TIMOTHY

You've done all right, Jay Kelly.
I made two bad decisions. You know
I passed on the original 90210.

JAY

Oh yeah?

TIMOTHY

Was doing Hamlet in Louisville.

JAY

That's cool. I haven't done a play
since high school.

(pause, thinks to ask)

What was the other one?

TIMOTHY

I let you come to that audition.

A silence as Jay tries to read Timothy's face. And then a
smile breaks out.

TIMOTHY

But my boys got to see me waiting
outside the school gates every day -
I gotta think that counts for
something.

JAY

For sure it does. It counts for
everything.

TIMOTHY

I'm sorry - I read about your
divorces. Your girls must be fully
grown people by now.

JAY

Yeah Daisy's going to college in
the fall. Thankfully she doesn't
give a shit about acting. But it's
freaking me out, her leaving. I
feel like I...missed it.

TIMOTHY

The tragedy of parenting. We're
only successful once we've made
ourselves irrelevant.

JAY

God, that's so sad!

TIMOTHY

Hey, but you...you've made the
right choices. For you. You make
movies. That's what the world
wants from you.

(MORE)

TIMOTHY (CONT'D)

(Jay shrugs)

My world is much smaller. Take the dogs to the park. Being with my family, my patients--

Timothy seems like he's going to say something more. Ask a question... but hesitates. He clinks glasses with Jay, downs his bourbon. Jay drinks too. Then -

JAY

It's nice to see you, to talk about those times. Nice to be in touch with you and also that guy. The guy I was.

TIMOTHY

Is it?

JAY

Yeah.

TIMOTHY

I don't think you want to meet that guy again.

(suddenly)

I'll be honest with you. I can't stand you.

JAY

(knocked back)

What?

TIMOTHY

You kind of stole my life.

Jay hesitates.

JAY

Hey, Tim, I didn't steal anything from you.

TIMOTHY

You stole my job, my girlfriend. At twenty three I didn't have much more than that. And now, any time I pick up a magazine I'm forced to read about Jay Kelly, and his amazing origin story! How he accompanied his friend to audition for Peter Schneider and he got the part! Imagine that. But they never wonder about the friend. The guy he took it from.

JAY

I got Peter to cast you--

TIMOTHY
I was a glorified extra. I had one
line.

Silence.

TIMOTHY
If people knew the things I know
about Jay Kelly...

He shakes his head. Jay stands up.

JAY
I should get home. I've got to get
up early.

TIMOTHY
I'll get the bill.

JAY
I took care of it.

TIMOTHY
Don't worry, I'm not going to tell
people. I'm not that kind of guy.

BAR PATRON
Can you sign my menu Jay?

Jay scribbles his signature without breaking stride.

JAY
I don't know what kind of guy you
are.

Timothy follows Jay who exits the bar onto the STREET. The
roaring sounds of the ocean and cars along the PCH.

TIMOTHY
You're not that important to me.
You're important to other people en
masse maybe but not to me.

The valet takes their tickets. Jay and Timothy are now stuck
next to each other waiting for their cars. Silence.

JAY
(muttering)
I'm sorry you feel this way, I
always had fond thoughts--

TIMOTHY
I'm not the only one who feels
this. Your daughter agrees with me.

JAY
(alarmed)
Daisy?

TIMOTHY

Jessica. We're Facebook friends. I recommended a therapist for her in San Diego. A colleague.

JAY

That guy's a charlatan.
(sharp)
Don't talk to Jessica.

TIMOTHY

You going to tell me who to be friends with now?

JAY

No, I'm not going to tell you--

TIMOTHY

She calls you an empty vessel. I used to defend you. But maybe she's right. Is there a person in there? Maybe you don't actually exist.

JAY

OK, here's my car, let's leave it--

TIMOTHY

I have to say I've always had a fantasy of hitting you.
(laughing, jumps around like a boxer)
I should have done this years ago...

He pushes Jay suddenly. Jay staggers back. He rights himself, a look of fury crosses his face--

JAY

(can't help himself)
You weren't going to get that part anyway.

Jay's eyes are alive. Something is going to happen.

Ron leans in close to his daughter, Vivian, 16. Their heads inches apart. We're on a TENNIS COURT.

RON

You've got this, puppy.

VIVIAN

(nods nervously)
I'm just...I'm getting that feeling I feel.

RON
That's OK. Now say goodbye to
that.

VIVIAN
I'm trying.

A poster reads Father/Daughter Finals. Ron jogs to his place at the net, leaving Vivian at the service line. Another father/daughter return service. Ron's wife, Lois watches from the stands with their son, David. Lois picks up her ringing phone. Vivian bounces the ball and tosses it into the air.

LOIS (O.S.)
Sorry, Liz, can Ron call you back?
Vivian's serving for the match--

Vivian serves long.

OTHER DAUGHTER
Out!

VIVIAN
I know!

OTHER DAUGHTER
I'm just saying, it's out.

RON
I know, I know, it's just the way
you said it.

LOIS
He'll call you as soon as they're
done.

Ron and Vivian gaze into the stands. Lois is on her phone.

VIVIAN
I'm sorry, Dad, I heard Mom and I
got distracted.

RON
It's OK. I did too.
(to Lois)
Honey, you can't talk while we're
playing.

Lois peers through the fence, holding her phone.

LOIS
I know, I'm sorry. Liz says it's
urgent.

Ron hesitates.

RON
(to the other father)
Hold on-- Vivian gets a do-over
because she was distracted!

VIVIAN	OTHER FATHER
Dad, don't, I don't want a do-over.	What rules are you playing by?

RON
Gordon, this isn't the French Open,
give the girl another serve.

Ron hurries to the fence.

OTHER FATHER
I give Vivian another serve, then
why not give Michelle another
serve? Hell, I'd like another
serve too while we're at it. Let
chaos reign?!

VIVIAN
I don't want another serve.

RON
It's not another. That one
shouldn't have happened.

Lois tries to pass the phone through the hole but it won't fit. She holds it up to the chain-link and Ron leans in, listening.

LIZ
(on the phone)
Don't you pick up your phone?

RON
We're serving for the --

LIZ
(on the phone)
We need you now, Ron.

RON LIZ
I can't come now, I'm in the middle of-- It's Jay.

RON
Jay knows I have this tournament--

LIZ
He's dropping out of the movie--

RON
(surprised)
The Louis Brothers movie?

LIZ
--that he starts in a week.

David presses his face against the fence.

DAVID

Dad--

RON

(to his son)

Don't put your mouth on the fence,
David.

DAVID

Dad--

RON

(back to Liz)

He's not dropping out. This
is Jay when he wraps a movie.
He always does this.

LIZ

Believe me, Ron. It's bad. It's
really really bad.

OTHER FATHER

Ron, today!

VIVIAN

He got a work call!

RON

(to Liz)

Fine. I'm coming.

Ron walks back out on the court.

DAVID

Dad--

VIVIAN

Dad--

OTHER DAUGHTER

Five all. It's our serve.

DAVID

Dad, do you know about
ghosts?

RON

I do, David.

RON

Change in plan, guys. We need to
suspend the game--

OTHER DAUGHTER

Suspend the game?!

OTHER FATHER

No way, Ron.

RON

Something's come up. I have to go.

VIVIAN

Where?

RON

To Jay.

OTHER FATHER

If you suspend, you forfeit.

RON
Really, Gordon? Says who?

OTHER FATHER
Says the tournament rules.

RON
What if it was raining?

OTHER FATHER
It's not raining, Ron.

VIVIAN
It's not raining, Dad!

Ron looks at Vivian who looks back at him imploringly.

VIVIAN
I feel good. We can win.

RON
I...know...I have to go.

Ron drives the windy roads of the MALIBU HILLS.

Jay's HOME. A Range Rover pulls up and Ron hurries out in tennis whites. Jay's assistant, Meg, opens the door.

MEG
They're waiting for you.

Ron races past glamorous images from Jay's life on display. Photos. Awards. Expensive art. We hear hushed voices coming from the living room. Ron enters and is swarmed by Jay's publicist, Liz and Jay's lawyer, Alan. Meg follows closely from behind.

LIZ
What happened yesterday?

RON
Nothing, we went to Peter's memorial, he ran into an old friend, they went out for drinks.

LIZ
Well, something happened.

Mario, the chef, is preparing lunch.

RON
You're not making those quesadillas by any chance.

MARIO
I mean, I can--

ALAN
If he pulls out of the movie, he'll be in breach.

RON
Where is Jay?

Ron opens the refrigerator and takes out a healthy soda.

MEG
In his bedroom.

ALAN
(reading the contract)
...compensatory damages
resulting from the breach,
e.g. reimbursement for all
costs incurred--

LIZ
He's packing!

RON
Packing for what?

ALAN
--because of the shut down
including all salaries,
location costs, equipment
rentals, insurance premiums--

LIZ
I don't know!
(quickly to Mario)
Are these the ones with smoked
gouda?

Ron heads up the stairs, followed by everyone.

ALAN
Quitting the movie would be
financially devastating.

LIZ
Not to mention devastating on
a reputation level.

ALAN
His box office is already not
what it was.

MEG
Nobody's is.

ALAN
He's not twenty-five anymore.

LIZ
He's not fifty-five anymore.

ALAN
(looks at his phone)
The studio is calling.

RON
(gesturing relax)
OK, you done? Everyone done?
No one's in breach. Jay's
doing the movie--

ALAN
That's not what he's saying.

RON
(confidently)
Well, now I'm here.

LIZ
Find out why he has a black eye.

RON
(stops at the door)
He has a black eye?

Ron enters Jay's BEDROOM. The bed is empty, covers strewn. An open suitcase on the comforter. We hear rummaging. The housekeeper appears and drops some folded shirts into the valise. She smiles at Ron and fixes his collar.

RON
Jay?

Jay emerges from the closet, showered, dapper, packing.

JAY
Hey, brother.

Jay hugs Ron.

RON
(feeling it out)
Hey puppy. What's the packing?

We see Jay has a black eye. Ron is about to comment when--

JAY
You come from the game? How'd you
and Vivian do?

RON
Well, we were up five, four and
serving for the match when--

JAY	RON
I do too many movies.	(trailing off)
	But it's fine.
	(again)
	What's the packing?

JAY
Do you think I do too many movies?

RON
I think you do just the right
amount of movies.

JAY
Barbara, do you think I do too many
movies?

HOUSEKEEPER
You do work a lot.

JAY
(to Ron)
See, Barbara tells me the truth.

Jay and Barbara shimmy past each other.

RON
What happened last night?

Jay resumes quickly, confidently, in a kind of dance with his housekeeper. They toss clothes to one another.

JAY
Can't have too much underwear.

RON
Why do you have a black eye?

JAY
I'll tell you on the plane.

RON
What plane?

JAY
The plane I booked. We're leaving at one.

RON
Where are we going?

JAY
Meg, where are we going?!

Meg pokes her head in the door.

MEG
France.

JAY
France.

RON
France.

MEG
I spoke to Daisy's friend Rio's mom, Claire. Rio uses her mom's credit card so Claire can see the charges online.

JAY
Of course she can!

MEG
Daisy and her friends are currently in Paris and due to leave for Italy after the jazz festival on Tuesday.

JAY
Great work. You kids on your
computers.
(to Ron)
France.

Meq leaves.

RON
We have a fitting on Monday. Both
Louis Brothers are going to be
there.

JAY RON
Not if we're in Paris. Marvin and Yusef.

Jay does a little twirl with the housekeeper as she continues to pack. Ron, not able to help himself, removes a jacket that Jay has stuffed in the suitcase and refolds it.

RON
If you need some time to clear your
head, I'll tell the studio to--

JAY
Tell them we're joining Daisy and
her friends for a jazz festival in
Paris. Then we'll take a train to
Italy.

RON
(hesitates)
And you're tracking her through her
friend's mother's credit card...

JAY
This is our last chance to spend
time together before she's gone
forever.

RON
I'm fairly certain, Daisy doesn't
want you following her around
Europe with your entourage.

JAY
(smiles)
Well, I'm the Dior ambassador so we
have every reason to be in Paris.
And then we have a tribute to
receive in Tuscany.

RON
But I said No to the tribute. You
said No. I told them Never.

JAY
Call them and say, Yes.

RON
Listen, take some days. Drive up
the coast, order that Pinot we
liked at the Post Ranch. Remember
those towels?

They both crack up at the memory.

JAY
(laughing)
So weird--

RON
What did that even mean?!

RON
(wiping a tear of
laughter)
How about, I'll tell them to push
the fitting to Tuesday...

JAY
If you don't want to go, I'll go it
alone...

RON
You on your own wandering through
Europe is like a little gazelle
alone in the Serengeti. But not a
gazelle, a...cocker spaniel.

JAY
This cocker spaniel will take his
chances.

The Van Nuys private AIRPORT. Four black SUV's swerve into
the vast airplane hanger. Silvano steps out of the first
SUV, and opens the back door. Jay emerges wearing a suede
bomber jacket and jeans. Meg hops out of the town car.
Another car arrives revealing Krista, Jay's stylist, on the
phone and Candy.

MEG
(conspiratorial)
Today, Daisy and her friends were
at the Louvre, Cafe de Flore, a
flea market, and they're staying at
a youth hostel in the 11th.

JAY
Now we're cookin'.

KRISTA
(on phone)
There's lasagna in the
refrigerator. Heat that up.
He'll eat that.

MEG
After we land tomorrow morning, we
can surprise her at the jazz
festival.

JAY
 (to Meg)
 Perf.

KRISTA
 (on phone)
 Cut it into small squares
 though. He won't eat it if
 it's in strips. I know, it's
 annoying.

Jay, Meg, Krista, Candy, Silvano collect luggage and approach
 the awaiting plane as two more cars pull up. Liz gets out.

LIZ
 (on phone)
 What do you mean, they're giving
 the tribute to someone else?

Ron appears out of the other vehicle.

RON
 (on phone)
 Some history. When Jay passed on
 the tribute, I got them to offer it
 to Ben Alcock.

They both hang up and continue talking.

LIZ
 You gave Jay's tribute to another
 one of your clients?

RON
 Well, someone had to take it and
 it's a good piece of architecture
 for Ben.

LIZ
 Fuck a duck. Does Jay know this?

RON
 I spoke to Antonio and they're
 going to do two tributes, but
 currently there's only one trophy.

LIZ
 I'm missing like three junkets, a
 Vanity Fair cover shoot and
 Justin's little league whatever for
 this clusterfuck--

RON
 I know. I know. But it's Jay.

LIZ
 Why does he have a black eye, Ron?

RON
 We're getting to that.

LIZ
This is why I could never marry
you.

RON
Why, because I'm loyal?

LIZ
No, because you enable.

Jay sits at a piano which is on a transport in the hanger
with other musical instruments. He plays.

LIZ
(aside to Ron)
Oh, man, now we have to listen to
him play the piano.

JAY
(sings a little song)
We're on the road to Paris!

LIZ
Oh, goody!

Liz does a little shimmy.

JAY
We're on the road today--
(calls out)
Sing it, Ron!

Ron hesitates then gives it a shot.

RON
An adventure to the place where...
(losing steam immediately)
I don't know the words...

It's night on the PRIVATE PLANE. Liz shows a video of her
son to Candy and Krista.

LIZ
Justin's on the B team. It's so
sad, you guys. He doesn't know
where to run. It's so sad.

Ron emerges from the bathroom in his monogrammed pajamas.

LIZ
I can't believe my son is so bad at
baseball. But look at the little
shmush!

Ron sits next to Jay who lies in his chair/bed, still dressed
apart from his sneakers which he's kicked off. He's put on
reading glasses. Ron, fiddles with a pill bottle.

RON
Should I take a half or a whole?

JAY
What's the dosage?

Ron reaches out for Jay's glasses.

JAY
Did you forget your glasses?

RON
I left in a hurry. I can't say
goodbye to David or he has a
meltdown. The therapist said I
should say goodbye anyway so he
knows I'm leaving. But today I
couldn't do it.

CANDY
(from the back)
He'll be OK. He's five.

RON	KRISTA
(nods)	They block it.
He's five. But I should have probably said goodbye.	

JAY
Take a whole. Otherwise, you'll
stress out and end up waking me up.

CANDY
The man on this podcast was saying
that we're always always the same
age.

KRISTA
Like literally?

CANDY
I don't know literally
but...essentially.

RON
(nods)
I'll take a whole.

Ron takes the pill and hands Jay back his glasses.

RON
Why do you have a black eye, puppy?

JAY
I'll tell you when we get to Paris.

RON
But it's nothing I need to know
now, right?

Jay stands.

RON
Are we running to something or from
something?

JAY
Yes.

Jay walks to the back of the plane. The others watch movies,
sleep or talk softly.

Jay opens the curtain to the bathroom to reveal:

A stage in a SMALL THEATER. A young Jay performs a speech
from Chekhov. Jay, from the present, watches him.

YOUNG JAY
What does it feel like to be
famous? It doesn't feel like
anything as far as I know.

Around ten people, mostly in their twenties, relax on the
floor or in chairs in the audience. A MEMORY.

YOUNG JAY
You talk about fame and success and
this sunlit life and happiness. You
talk about me as if I'm some kind
of king - but your words are like
sweetness that disappears in your
mouth in an instant.

LARRY
OK, Jay, stop there. What did you
feel just then?

A middle age man, Larry, the teacher, stands facing Young
Jay.

YOUNG JAY
I felt conceited, successful, a
star.

LARRY
Do you want to be a star?

YOUNG JAY
I mean...sure, yeah.

Laughter. Young Jay laughs too. So does Jay.

LARRY
Go on. What else?

YOUNG JAY
Enjoying patronizing a young girl.
Thinking I'm king.

LARRY
(to the class)
Did that feel powerful, kingly, to
you?

ACTING CLASS STUDENT
It looked like a lot of posturing.

Laughter. Young Jay flushes.

LARRY
How old are you, Jay?

YOUNG JAY
Twenty-three.

LARRY
I'm not interested in seeing you
try to be a famous writer in pre-
revolutionary Russia. I want to see
a hung over kid who just got off
the bus from Kentucky who's trying
to impress all the cute girls in
the class.

Young Jay nods, chagrined.

YOUNG JAY
Basically be myself.

LARRY
Do you know how hard it is to be
yourself?
(pause)
If you're lucky enough to act
professionally you'll be lying for
a living. And the better you lie,
the more truthful you'll seem and
the more successful you'll be.
That's confusing shit for a young
man who doesn't tend towards
introspection.

YOUNG JAY
Uh huh.

LARRY
And you say you want to be a star -
I've known a few of those. That's
a whole other layer of head fuck.
Now, you're acting twice. Once when
you play the part and again when
you play yourself.

Young Jay is silent.

LARRY
You have to really want that.

YOUNG JAY
(under his breath)
I do.

JAY
(echoing his young self)
I do.

LARRY
Tim - you want to have a go?

Young Timothy emerges from the group and climbs up on stage. Jay, from the present, observes from the wings. Young Tim recites the same speech from *The Seagull* with real authority and ease. Without trying to be powerful, he's somehow completely believable and IS. Everyone is spellbound.

After class. Young Tim smokes a cigarette by the door. Young Jay removes the cigarette from Young Tim's mouth and takes a drag. He then hands it to Sara, Young Tim's girlfriend.

SARA
Tim's having a panic attack.

YOUNG JAY
Why?

YOUNG TIMOTHY
I have a huge audition for Peter Schneider.

YOUNG JAY
That's amazing.

SARA
And Tim hates auditions.

YOUNG TIMOTHY
I'm the worst auditioner.

YOUNG JAY
I've barely ever gone on an audition.

SARA
It's so not a test of talent.

YOUNG TIMOTHY
It's a test of something.

YOUNG JAY

Your talent will shine through.
How could it not?

SARA

Go with him, Jay. You're a calming
influence. Come by the bar after
for free drinks.

YOUNG JAY

We will.

Young Jay and Sara meet eyes.

A HALLWAY packed with 20 something men looking at sides,
muttering lines to themselves. Young Tim and Young Jay sit
together. Young Jay is leafing through a magazine. Young
Tim is sweating bullets.

YOUNG TIMOTHY

(studying his pages)

"I used to wanna die. I'd imagine
my funeral." I think he's from the
sticks. "All the pretty girls
cryin'."

(shakes his head)

Then he goes on about the sky and
the stars. He's too poetic for a
hick kid.

(Tim improvises)

It'd be more like, "There're too
many girls I aint layed. Dede
Duffy for one." I don't know.
Shit like, "I might even grow more.
There are so many things I aint
done yet, I don't have the
vocabulary to list 'em."

YOUNG JAY

(laughs)

That's better! You should say
that.

YOUNG TIMOTHY

Nah, I can't mess with their
script.

YOUNG JAY

(shrugs)

You're going to be great.

YOUNG TIMOTHY

I just get so fucking nervous at
these things.

Young Jay sees a photo of Marlon Brando from The Wild One in
his magazine.

YOUNG JAY

Look at this. It's a sign. You're gonna get this buddy I can feel it.

YOUNG TIMOTHY

Ah, thanks buddy.

Young Jay tears the page from the magazine.

YOUNG JAY

Here. Eat it. For good luck.

YOUNG TIMOTHY

What?

YOUNG JAY

Go on - just a little corner.
Harness his powers.

YOUNG TIMOTHY

Stop it, you're freaking me out.

A casting assistant peeks her head out.

CASTING ASSISTANT

Tim Galligan.

Young Timothy nods.

YOUNG TIMOTHY

(to Jay)

Read with me?

Young Tim looks at Young Jay imploringly. Young Jay nods. Young Tim stands and heads for the audition room. Young Jay hesitates and crumples up the photo and shoves it in his mouth.

The casting assistant stops Young Jay.

CASTING ASSISTANT

Who are you here to read?

YOUNG JAY

(mouth full)

I'm here to read with my friend.

(swallows)

If that's OK?

The casting assistant reluctantly nods...

Young Timothy stands in front of the video camera, his sweaty hands sticking to the sides. Young Jay feeds him his dialogue and Young Tim plays the part unsteadily, vague, the self-sabotage of a bad audition.

He forgets a line and looks down at the page, searching. His hand gripping the sides is shaking.

YOUNG TIMOTHY
(playing part)
...I never really looked at these
trees. This sky--

CASTING DIRECTOR
Thank you, thank you very much.

YOUNG TIMOTHY
But there's more. I didn't finish
the--

CASTING DIRECTOR
That's fine. Thank you Timothy.
Thanks so much. Very nicely done.

Young Tim, disappointed, heads for the door. Suddenly:

YOUNG JAY
Would it be cool if I read too?

Quiet. We see now that Jay watches from the back of the
room.

CASTING DIRECTOR
I'm sorry, if you're not on the
appointment sheet...

PETER'S VOICE
Yes, sweetheart, that would be
fine.

Peter sits at the window, silhouetted, in the back. Young
Timothy is thrown. Not sure what he feels really, but it
doesn't feel good.

YOUNG JAY
I mean, if that's OK?

YOUNG TIMOTHY
Um...yeah.

Young Jay reaches out and Young Timothy hesitantly hands him
the pages. Young Tim reads the other part, in a state of
disbelief.

Close on Young Jay's hand steadily holding the page.

YOUNG JAY
"I used to wanna die. I'd imagine
my funeral. All the pretty girls
cryin'. But I don't wanna die now.
I haven't seen enough.

Young Jay hesitates. Then launches into the lines Young Tim
made up in the waiting area. Young Tim watches, staggered.

YOUNG JAY

There're too many girls I aint
layed. Dede Duffy for one. Hell,
I might even grow more. There are
so many things I aint done yet, I
don't have the vocabulary to list
'em. And I've only been as far as
Archer City.

He's compelling and you can feel it in the room.

YOUNG JAY

But I don't need to see Paris or
Rome or one of those places they
got kings. I'm the king here. I'm
the king of this dust cloud. I'm
the king of my Coca Cola. I'm the
king of Cranberry Street."

Silence.

CASTING ASSISTANT

Thank you--

PETER

Would it trouble you to read
another scene?

YOUNG JAY

I'd love to.

(beat)

I'm sorry I changed some of the
lines, I just thought--

PETER

No, dear, we liked it very much.

Jay watches as his young self is handed more pages and Young Timothy is ushered out the door. For a moment, Young Timothy becomes Present Day Timothy. His eyes find Jay's before the door closes leaving us in black.

The PRESENT. Close on Jay's eye. Someone applies cover up to the bruise underneath it. We're on the PLANE.

CANDY (O.S.)

Does that hurt?

JAY

No. Yeah, a little. But it's
fine.

CANDY (O.S.)

You'd never know.

A sharpie pen is applied to Jay's eyebrows, darkening them. Jay dresses. He pulls a cuff through the sleeve of a blue patterned jacket.

His bare foot slips into a light brown suede loafer. He puts on his sunglasses as the light from the sun changes through the window.

Silvano walks down the plane steps toward the TARMAC. We're in France.

SILVANO

My father used to say the first person you meet when you get off the plane is you.

He passes Liz and Krista who walk toward the waiting cars.

LIZ

Well, it should be the greeter.

KRISTA

Remember the last time we were in Paris? The Chanel show? It was in silence out of respect for the war.

They find Candy.

CANDY

I remember Gucci. That was very loud. Maybe it was for peace.

Who brings us to Ron, looking crazily tired.

RON

(on the phone)

Thank you, Antonio.

(aside to Liz)

They're blowing a second trophy for Jay--

LIZ

Great.

RON

(into phone)

We arrived in Paris and will be heading to you tomorrow-

Jay emerges from the plane followed by Meg.

MEG

(looking at her phone)

I'm just getting all my texts. According to Rio's mom, Daisy bought tickets for a ten o'clock train to Italy.

JAY

They're not doing the jazz thing?

MEG
Apparently not.

JAY
(looks at his watch)
We better head straight to the
train station.

Jay gets into a car. Meg turns to the group.

MEG
Flag on the play! We're catching a
train to Italy!

LIZ
A train? We're literally standing
next to a plane.

KRISTA
Why did we fly to Paris then?

RON
(into phone)
What? Hold on... Antonio, slight
shift in...plan...

He reaches Candy.

CANDY
Oh no! I booked a job for this
afternoon. I'm giving Emmanuel
Macron a haircut.

RON
(to Candy)
Can't you cancel?

CANDY
It's my first president.

RON	MEG
Jesus Christ.	(passes Ron)
	Ten o'clock.

RON
(into phone)
Did you hear that? That's right,
the ten o'clock.

LIZ
Are you fucking kidding me?! I
can't put Jay Kelly on a train!

Four black towncars, in tandem, snake through different
neighborhoods in PARIS. They pull up outside of Gare de
Lyon. A smoky, dirty, noisy TRAIN STATION.

Inside a TRAIN. A German and a Dutch cyclist, two very tall men in Lycra, are filling their water bottles in the corridor. They speak in German.

GERMAN CYCLIST

I'm an atheist who supports the established church. I approve of everything about it but God.

DUTCH CYCLIST

If there were no God, life would be absurd.

GERMAN CYCLIST

Well, exactly.
(looking through the window)
Fuck is that Jay Kelly?

Through the window we see Jay in his sunglasses as Ron and Silvano and Liz and Krista and Meg push through the crowds on the PLATFORM. People take pictures and thrust photos at Jay to sign. Ron yells out instructions at the hoard.

RON

One each, guys...garcons.
One autograph each.

LIZ

(to someone)
You already got yours, you just snuck another one in.

RON

(to the hoard)
Don't let this garcon ruin it for all of you!

Jay graciously signs what he can. Ron aside to Jay:

RON

They're going to have a trophy for you so you needn't worry.

JAY

Was there ever not going to be a trophy?

RON

This is what I do. I fix things so you don't have to know about them.

JAY

If you don't want me to know, why are you telling me?

RON

Because we were late with our acceptance and they'd offered Ben Alcock the award, there--

JAY
You gave Ben my tribute?

RON
You said, No, puppy.

JAY
I know, but then I said, Yes.

RON
I would never say this to Ben, this is in the cone, but you were their first choice, you're the headliner. You know that puppy.

JAY
I'm so confused talking to you right now.

Jay hesitates. Up ahead, a young woman and her friends are getting on the train.

JAY
(shouts out, waving)
Daisy! Hey!!

The girl, not Daisy, turns around. She grins wildly and waves at Jay, recognizing him. Jay waves politely. People snap photos... Silvano pulls Jay inside the train. Liz and Ron follow behind.

SOMEONE ON THE PLATFORM
Excusez-moi, c'est Jay Kelly?

LIZ
Non, non...ce n'est pas Jay Kelly--

RON
(to Liz, re: the tickets)
Seat 48? That doesn't sound like first class.

LIZ
It isn't.

RON
We're going to put Jay Kelly in seat 48?

LIZ
You tell me. There were no first class tickets or maybe no first class at all. I don't know. They all speak French here.

Ron accosts a conductor in the vestibule.

RON

We have Jay Kelly, the movie actor with us. Is there a private area--

CONDUCTOR

C'est impossible. La Fete Nationale demain. Lundi de Pentecôte. Fifty days after Easter. Very busy holiday for the French.

LIZ

I don't know who to be mad at. But I find myself being very mad at you Ron.

Jay looks back over his shoulder.

JAY

Be mad at me Liz. The train was my idea.

LIZ

That's the problem, I'm not allowed to be mad at you.

They all shuffle down the packed corridor, squeezing past bodies. Ron gets a call. Jay glances around, looking for Daisy. Meg clocks his concern.

MEG

According to Claire, Rio got a chai latte at the Starbucks at Gare de Lyon forty-five minutes ago.

JAY

(conspiratorial)

And you don't go to a train station for coffee.

MEG

I mean it would be weird.

Quick tableaux of people in their lives: A businessman twiddling his train ticket in his ear, teenagers sharing ear buds, an older woman, Sharon, carefully laying out her homemade sandwich on the table in front of her.

No one on the train yet recognizes Jay. Jay soaks this in for a brief moment.

A woman putting on make-up, looking at her reflection in the window. In her own world until she sees Jay in the glass. She turns around. And beams.

Liz on her phone further down the carriage.

PASSENGER

(noticing Jay)

Do you think he's fallen on hard
times?

LIZ

It's research for a part.

(into phone)

Alan, you have to speak louder--
I'm in a French train on a French
holiday.

Liz tries to stuff one of Jay's bags into an overhead
compartment. Ron moves toward her, also on his phone.

RON

(into phone)

There's a lot of moving
pieces here, Rich, I'll have
him there Monday morning--/no
later than Tuesday--

LIZ

(plugging her ear)

I don't know, La Fete Fucking
Nationale. I hadn't heard of
it either.

Ron helps Liz with the bag.

RON

(into phone)

Then let's move his fitting
to the day of the shooting--

LIZ

(into phone)

Wait...what?... Say that
last part again.

RON

(into phone)

Can you hear me, Rich? I'm sorry,
it's fifty days after Easter here.

Ron moves the bag to a luggage rack on the other side of the
train. Liz's face goes white.

LIZ

(into phone)

Say it one more time. I want
to make sure I get this
right...

RON

(into phone)

I know that Rich, but we're
playing three dimensional,
four dimensional chess here.

LIZ

(into phone)

You're fucking kidding me.

Ron hesitates.

RON

(into phone)

I know that's not what Jay says,
but, it's what I say. I'll get him
back.

She mouths:

LIZ

It's bad.

Liz disappears into the vestibule between cars.

RON

I'll call you you back, Rich--

Ron hangs up and looks back over at Jay, who has now become the focus of several of the train passengers.

FEMALE BACKPACKER

I can't believe he's actually here on this train with us. Are you real?

JAY

I believe so, yes.

FEMALE BACKPACKER

Like will you use the same bathroom as us?

JAY

And I'll try to remember to put the seat down.

They laugh.

FRENCH BUSINESSMAN

What a nice, regular guy.

HUSBAND/CLIVE

He's a good egg that one.

WIFE/BRENDA

A real double yolker.

Two priests take their seats.

PRIEST

I read that his secret is he's never the seducer in films.

Ron, sliding through passengers, finds Jay.

RON

I'm sorry, there are a lot of people, it's a big holiday, 50 days from Easter--

JAY

(to Ron, kind of into it)
I haven't been on a train in over twenty years. Thirty maybe.

RON

Subway?

JAY

I couldn't tell you the last time I was on a subway. Oh, the Kozak movie.

RON

Right, the chase.

JAY

That was on a stage. But the dimensions were very accurate.

Jay and Ron squeeze past a British couple, Clive and Brenda, who are situating in their seats.

CLIVE

We saw you're being honored at the prestigious Tuscan Arts Festival.

BRENDA

Aren't you too young to be having a tribute?

JAY

That's kind. But I don't know how many movies I have left in me.

RON

Well, at least one more.

CLIVE

I'd like to have a tribute in Italy.

BRENDA

Clive, they don't give tributes to computer programmers in Italy or anywhere.

CLIVE

(to Jay)

I expect you'll get all dressed up and invite your friends and family. That's what I would do.

Jay smiles, touched by the father's enthusiasm.

RON

(also touched)

Clive's right. It's your career, let's do it up. Invite your kids, your Dad -

JAY

(surprised)

My Dad?

RON

I know, but why not? He'd get a kick out of it. They all will.

JAY

My kids, yes, but my dad?

RON

I know, but he's your dad. He won't be here forever.

JAY

(suddenly to Ron)

OK. But you call him. We can send a plane if he wants.

RON

Done.

Ron moves ahead, trying to reach Liz in the vestibule. A middle aged man stands up to stow his bag and finds himself face to face with Jay.

ITALIAN PASSENGER

Oh my. When I look at you I see my whole life.

Ron reaches the VESTIBULE and Liz pulls him in.

RON

I talked to Rich at the studio, they'll push the fitting--

LIZ

Alan called. Jay was in a bar fight last night. He broke a child therapist's nose.

RON

(processing)

He broke a child... What?

LIZ

Did you know this? Did he say anything about this?

RON

(pause, maybe hurt)

No.

They look at Jay through the window. Jay having a ball engaging with everyone in the carriage.

GIRL ON TRAIN

Do you like being famous?

She coughs without covering her mouth.

JAY

When I was your age I wanted it very badly. And I feel very fortunate to have gotten it.

BRENDA

You must have such a wonderful, sunlit life. You're so happy.

GIRL ON TRAIN

I'd think it would be terrible being famous. Everyone looking at you. Talking about you. That's like being crazy.

(to Jay)

Isn't it?

JAY

(nods)

Yes.

CLIVE

It clearly doesn't help with travel, look at him packed in with us plebs.

JAY

(suddenly to the car)

What do you all do? Where are you all going?

ITALIAN PASSENGER

Milan and Farm equipment!

JAY

My father was in farm equipment!

ANOTHER ITALIAN PASSENGER

Pisa and Fireman!

JAY

I played a fireman!

From the VESTIBULE, Liz and Ron watch through the glass.

LIZ

Explain what is happening.

RON

My thoughts are formulating in real time here, Liz.

In the TRAIN CAR, passengers yell out their professions and destinations. Barrister, doctor, sales, teacher, wine merchant, student etc and Turin, Florence, Venice...

Back in the VESTIBULE, Liz says, quietly.

LIZ

Do you remember the last time we
were in Paris?

RON

I don't want to talk about it.

LIZ

Because we never did. Talk about
it. Twenty years ago. I left you
up the Eiffel Tower.

RON

I don't want to talk about it.

More laughter as passengers interact excitedly with Jay in
the TRAIN CAR.

FRENCH BUSINESSMAN

I looked you up, you're 60.

JAY

Yes.

FRENCH BUSINESSMAN

You can't get old.

(sadly profound for him)

If you're getting old, that means I
am.

JAY

I'll stop if you will.

FRENCH BUSINESSMAN

Deal.

They shake hands, laughing.

SHARON

You want some peanuts?

JAY

Sure!

Sharon pours some of her nuts into Jay's hand.

GIRL ON TRAIN

What do you say to people who say
you only play yourself?

JAY

Do you know how difficult it is to
be yourself? You try it.

Jay, inspired, turns back to the group in their seats.

JAY
 You know, I'm having a tribute in
 Tuscany on Saturday. You all
 should come.

People shout out, "Yes." "I'll be there." "How do I get
 tickets?" "What time?" "Jay Kelly is so kind! What an
 amazing person!"

JAY
 Talk to my publicist, Liz.

He points toward the vestibule window. Liz ducks away,
 pushing Ron against the wall.

LIZ
 Sorry.

GIRL ON TRAIN
 Do you have any regrets?

JAY
 What's your name?

GIRL ON TRAIN
 Phoebe.

JAY
 You're tough one, Phoebe.
 (back to the passengers)
 I'll see you all in Tuscany!

People applaud as-- Jay joins Liz and Ron in the VESTIBULE.
 He's on a high.

JAY
 Everyone is so nice! People are so
 nice! And by the way, these are the
 best peanuts I've ever had. Ron,
 you've got to try these peanuts.

RON
 (eating one)
 It's a nice peanut. A European
 peanut.

JAY
 Liz, I won't offer you because I
 know about your allergy.

LIZ
 (deadpan)
 That's right, my throat will close
 and I will die.

Before Ron and Liz and can speak, Jay continues:

JAY

How can I play people when I don't...see people, don't touch people?

LIZ

Don't touch people.

RON

Puppy, you know those times you say don't tell me about it unless I really need to know?

JAY

Mmm hmm.

RON

This isn't one of those times when you don't really need to know.

LIZ

(interrupting)

Why didn't you tell us you punched
a child therapist in a bar fight?

Jay's countenance changes. A deflation. He says slowly:

JAY

I didn't know he would--

T.TZ

--sue. He's suing.

RON

I know it's difficult, sometimes,
to be honest even with the people
who know you best--

LIZ

You have to tell us
everything or we can't do our
jobs.

RON

--who love you no matter what-
- Maybe more difficult even--

LIZ

What? Why are you saying that?

RON

We do, we love him.

LIZ

You love him, I work for him.

(to Jay)

You know I adore you, but when the press gets a hold of this, which they will--

RON

Do you want to tell us your side of the story?

LIZ

--we need to leak a counter narrative.

LIZ

He hit you first. That's how you
got the black eye.

RON

Is that what happened, puppy? Did
he hit you first?

Liz licks her thumb and wipes at the cover-up under Jay's
eye. Jay recoils like a child.

LIZ

Because Jay Kelly defends himself
from crazed stalker sounds a whole
lot better than Jay Kelly beats up
defenseless child therapist.

She holds up her phone to take a picture. Jay blocks it.

JAY

That's not what happened.

LIZ

Well, how would we know that?!

JAY

(strangely fatalistic or
maybe philosophical)
If I've made my last movie, I'm OK
with that. I've had my run.

RON

Don't say that. You don't mean
that.

LIZ

You broke his nose. Listen to
this. This is what they're
claiming...

Jay opens the rest room door. Liz reads from her phone:

LIZ

From Alan:
(reading from her notes)
...multiple fractures needing
surgery plus permanent reduction in
sense of smell and--

JAY

(to no one in particular)
He said I stole his life.

He closes and locks the door behind him.

LIZ (O.S.)
 --potential deformity can result in
 compensation up to a hundred
 million dollars--

The train hisses. Out the window, we see a conductor shout
 "Tout a bords!" And then Daisy and her friends, Rio, Moses,
 two French boys and another girl, bolt down the platform
 laughing. They jump on at the last minute.

In the TRAIN TOILET Jay is alone. He checks out his hair in
 the mirror. And says over and over:

JAY
 Jay Kelly. Jay Kelly. Jay Kelly.
 Jay Kelly. Jay Kelly. Jay.
 Kelly. Jay.
 (pause)
 Kelly. Jayyyyyy. Kellllly. Jay
 Kelly. Gary Cooper. Jay Kelly.
 Cary Grant. Clark Ga-ble. Jay
 Kelly. Robert DeNiro. Marlon
 Brando. Jay Kelly Jay Kelly Jay
 Jay Jay Kelly Humphrey Bogart Jay
 Kelly Jay Kelly Jay Kelly--

He stops. And sees in the reflection behind him:

A rec room in a CARE CENTER. Jessica, 30s, as she packs up
 the toys and says goodbye to the last kid. Jay turns around
 and sees himself in the room with her.

A MEMORY.

Jessica pulls a couple of seltzers out of the fridge in the
 kitchen area and hands one to Jay.

JESSICA
 I can't believe you drove all the
 way from LA by yourself?

Jay, intimidated, proud walks around the space, looking at
 snapshots on the fridge, post-its that ask people to please
 clean up after themselves, kids' drawings.

JAY
 I wanted to see you in your life.

JESSICA
 I've been living in San Diego for
 almost a year.

JAY
 (defensive)
 This last movie went long and I had
 this vodka ad in Greece... I'm
 lucky to have this weekend free.

JESSICA
I know you're busy.

JAY
I jumped in the truck and
drove all the way here.

JESSICA
Can you even... Like at this
point, can you just go into a gas
station alone?

JAY
I did the self-serve. Baseball cap
over my eyes.

JESSICA
What about having to pee?

JAY
Side of the road.

JESSICA
God, Dad...

JAY
I loved seeing you with those kids.
They adore you.

JESSICA
I finally found what I really want
to do. It took a second, God
knows.

(sighs)
Acting really fucked me up. It was
too insecure making. I don't know
how you do it.

JAY
(said like a movie star)
I'm insecure.

She laughs.

JAY
You always had it, though. Ever
since you were a little kid. Those
shows you did with your sister in
the backyard.

JESSICA
It's Kelly and Kelly.

JAY
No, it's *Kelly* and Kelly.

Jessica picks up toys from the floor and puts them in bins.

JAY
 (smiles warmly)
 I'm so happy for you now. And if I
 can help with the rent or--

JESSICA
 That's OK Dad.

JAY
 --I can support you in any
 way--

JESSICA
 No.

They're silent for a moment.

JESSICA
 I'm glad you're here though. You
 want to go for a drive?

We're now in a old beat up JEEP. Jessica drives.

JESSICA
 It's Theo's birthday next week by
 the way.

JAY
 I know. You don't have to remind
 me.

JESSICA
 Right, you have people who do that.

JAY
 No, I know it's the 24th. I got
 him a pony that's the actual size
 of a pony. But it's stuffed.

JESSICA
 He'll like that.

JAY
 (looking around)
 Where are we going?

JESSICA
 You know, I've been seeing a
 therapist. And he's become an
 important part of my life.
 (hesitates)
 I made an appointment for both of
 us with Carter.

JAY
 Carter is...? Jessie, I'm hungry,
 why don't we get a bite and talk
 just us--

JESSICA

This is why I didn't tell you. I
knew you wouldn't want to do it.

Jay says nothing.

JESSICA

This is very important to me.

The car pulls into a PARKING LOT in front of a small lone
office building.

A photo of a sunset with the line "Transformation...begins
with you" beneath it. We're in a cheaply renovated OFFICE
with rented furniture and pictures of surfers on the wall.
Carter, 50s, has dyed blonde hair and dark glasses on. A
giant sheep dog sleeps on the carpet.

CARTER

I'm sorry about the shades, I have
a retinal disorder so I'm very
sensitive to bright light.

JESSICA

I tell him it makes him mysterious.

CARTER

(to Jay)

You should be the one with the dark
glasses.

JAY

Right, when it's sunny, sure.

CARTER

Do you surf?

JAY

Me? A little. I'm not very good.
I'm guessing you do.

CARTER

Every day until I broke my femur.
Then I got my psychology degree.

JAY

I'm sorry, but I guess good?

CARTER

A door and a window, right?

JAY

Right.

CARTER

Thank you for coming. It's very
brave.

JAY
(hesitates)
Oh, OK.

Jay is silent. Carter smiles.

CARTER
Jessie and I have been doing a lot
of work these past weeks and Jessie
wrote you a letter.

JAY
OK.

CARTER
It's from her ten year old self.
She'd like me to read it.

JAY
(to Jessica)
Why can't you read it?

JESSICA
Because I can't read it without
sobbing. So Carter and I decided
he should read it.

JAY
OK, I mean, if that's...

CARTER
(reads the letter)
"Dear Jay, when you abandoned me--"

JAY
I didn't abandon you, that's your
mom speaking.

CARTER
Try not to comment until after I've
finished the letter.

JAY
I left her but I didn't leave you.

JESSICA
I was with her. I mean, what's the
difference?

JAY
Just because I wasn't there doesn't
mean I wasn't your father.

CARTER
Jessie's told me a bit about your
relationship with your own father--

JAY
(to Jessica, defensive)
I'm not like my father. My
father's an impulsive, rageful,
bitter egomaniac.

Jessica stares at him without comment.

CARTER
Perhaps your determination not to
be like him took precedence over
being a father yourself.

JAY
(pause)
Keep reading.

CARTER
(reading)
"You say you always want to be with
me but your actions aren't speaking
the way your words are...
(his voice breaking)
My worst day was when my babysitter
rented that movie you did with
Daphne Spender. She couldn't
believe I'd never seen it. And in
it you were this great father and
you were so sweet with the boy and
with Daphne. I cried and cried.
It was like you had a happy
family..."

Carter wipes his eyes.

JAY
Jessie, this isn't...

CARTER
I'm still not finished.

JAY
I'm sorry, I can't...

Jay stands up.

JESSICA
You aren't going to hear the whole
letter?

JAY
Not if Carter reads it. No.

Jay walks down the narrow hallway toward a STAIRWELL.
Jessica comes after him.

JESSICA

I knew you'd make this about you.
Carter said you would.

JAY

Carter is crying in there.

JESSICA

I find it interesting that you're
not crying.

JAY

Tell him, the best way to get the
audience to cry is not to cry.

JESSICA

Do you know how I know you didn't
want to spend time with me?

(Jay is silent)

Because you didn't spend time with
me.

She walks back toward Carter's office. Jay hesitates and
then heads toward the exit of the building.

The TRAIN barrels through the countryside. The PRESENT.

Jay walks through the TRAIN CAR, scanning backs of heads,
looking for Daisy. Meg anxiously points ahead.

MEG

She's in the Cafe Car.

Jay hurries forward as passengers all watch.

Liz heads down a different CAR. Ron on her heels. She stops
periodically to make a point, Ron trying not to run into her.

LIZ

Explain to me Ron. If he doesn't
care why should we?

RON

(clearly rattled)

He cares, Liz, of course he cares.
This is just how he's managing his
feelings right now--

LIZ

(imitating Jay)

"They're so nice!" Of course
they're nice, you've walked off a
movie screen and into their lives.
You think they're like this with
everyone?

RON

They do seem like a nice group.

LIZ

We're in second class on a French train to nowhere taking care of an infant. Worse, an infant who hit a guy.

RON

We've known Jay for thirty years--

Liz halts, turning to Ron. As she speaks, a group of backpackers pass macaroni and cheese across the corridor in front of Liz.

LIZ

We clearly don't know Jay. And who knows what else is out there, whatever hillbilly shit he did in Kentucky. It can spiral.

LIZ

(reflecting)

Thirty years. Jesus.

(shakes her head)

It was different when we were young. It was fun. Jay was our baby. But-- Acting out when you're sixty is a bad look.

Liz, now frustrated with the food passing, starts grabbing things trying to speed it up. The backpackers laugh.

RON

We're going to handle this because that's what we do.

RON

And then we're going to get Jay to the tribute--

LIZ

He behaves like he's the first person to ever have a nervous breakdown.

RON

--and he's going to feel the love and remember--

LIZ

We're all having nervous breakdowns every single fucking second.

LIZ

Why? Why should we chase this demented infant when we have actual living kids at home who are aging by the minute?

RON

Because we're supporting a great artist who shares with other human beings what it is to be a human being.

LIZ
We're human too, Ron. More so,
maybe.

RON
It's not about us. Our love isn't
conditional. We're like parents
or...imaginary friends. We vanish
under cloak of night with no trace.

RON	LIZ
Maybe just an elegant	What the fuck are you talking
business card that floats to	about?
the ground in a wisp of	
smoke.	

LIZ
He's not our family or our friend.

RON
He was just at Vivian's sweet
sixteen.

LIZ
But were you at Daisy's graduation?

RON
(hesitates)
I think it was...it was small...

LIZ
No, you weren't invited. Because
it only goes one way. No one wants
to say it, but it does. We are not
to him what he is to us.

RON
I disagree.

Daisy talking to a young man across a table in the CAFE CAR.
The boy films her on a small super 8 camera. She's shy and
beautiful and it's really romantic. Jay watches from the
vestibule through the glass. He can't take his eyes off
them. They kiss.

Daisy, mid-kiss, sees her father out of the corner of her
eye. Jay tries to hide but too late. Daisy's face falls.

GUILLAUME
What's wrong?

DAISY
(sighs)
OK...my Dad is Jay Kelly.

GUILLAUME
Like the actor?

DAISY

Yes like the actor and also is the actor.

(waves reluctantly to Jay)

The reason I'm telling you is because he's standing right behind you right now.

Guillaume turns around to see Jay waving back through the window between cars. Jay opens the door, comes in and sits down in the booth with them.

DAISY

Hey.

JAY

Hey--

DAISY

I guess we're on the same train.

JAY

(grins)

Yeah...isn't it crazy?!

That was way too enthusiastic for Daisy's liking.

DAISY

It's weird, Dad--

JAY

I had to come to Paris for my Dior campaign... And other bits and bobs...you know...and then we made this train because of my tribute in Tuscany... Hi, Rio.

Rio, down the car, waves confused.

DAISY

(not buying it)

Uh huh.

JAY

So how was the jazz festival?

DAISY

We didn't go. Guillaume said it's all fusion now.

GUILLAUME

(to Jay)

Bonjour, Guigui.

JAY

(extending his hand)

Hi, Jay.

DAISY

Guillaume was our waiter at Cafe de Flore. He's a singer and filmmaker.

Daisy looks adoringly at Guillaume. Jay takes it in.

GUILLAUME

So embarrassing to say filmmaker to you.

JAY/DAISY

No, it isn't.

Jay and Daisy share a smile.

GUILLAUME

Daisy, how does it feel to have the hero of so many brilliant films of our time to be your father?

DAISY

I know him too well to tell.

GUILLAUME

Jay Kelly is a hero of cinema.

DAISY

(whispers)

Tu es mon héros de cinéma.

Guillaume blushes. Jay doesn't know what to say. He turns to Daisy, searching:

JAY

What was it I wanted to tell you...

DAISY

I don't know.

JAY

Listen, I don't want to intrude. Just wanted to invite you guys to my tribute Saturday. I can totally get tickets for all five of you.

DAISY

Since when did you care so much about a tribute?

JAY

I don't know. But I think I do care. I'm inviting Dad. I'd like to make it a family thing.

DAISY
(incredulous)
You invited Grampa? Do you
really want him there?

JAY
Yes, I think I would like him
to come. And Jessica too.

DAISY
Jessie?

JAY
Obviously it's more complicated for
her. You and I are in the same
country.

DAISY
(suspicious)
We're on the same train.

Pause. Daisy looks at him, takes in his eagerness.

DAISY
Let me get back to you about it,
ok? We're on kind of a tight
schedule.

JAY
So, Paris was great?

DAISY
It was amazing.

She looks into Guillaume's eyes.

JAY
Tell me everything.

DAISY
We jumped off rocks into pools in
the woods, we went to this crazy
bar that David Lynch designed, I
ate a brain. We went to
Delacroix's house. Do you know his
paintings? They're amazing.

Jay nods. But he's watching Guillaume who is filming Daisy
as she talks. Guillaume pans down to their fingers wrapped
round each other and then back up to Daisy's face.

DAISY
Dad, are you listening?

JAY
I'm listening. This is the look of
me listening.

DAISY
You asked about Paris, I'm
telling you about Paris...

JAY
Sorry. Just start again from
like two sentences back.

DAISY

You're so ADD.

(to Guillaume)

I'm going to get some snacks, ok?

JAY

I'm sorry. Don't get snacks. Stay.
Sorry - it's strange. Great. But
strange. Hearing about your
adventures, seeing you so--

(chooses his words)

--independent. Sorry. Tell me. You
ate a brain.

DAISY

I ate a brain. We danced with
these tango kids outside the Opera
House. And I think I want to act.

Jay frowns.

JAY

Well, after you finish college if
that's still what you want to do,
we can--

DAISY

I think I might not want to go to
college right now. Guigui's making
a film in Sicily and he's asked me
to be in it.

GUILLAUME

Just a little thing about memories
and dreams.

Jay glances quickly at Guillaume. Says, firmly:

JAY

You're going to college. You
worked incredibly hard and it's an
amazing opportunity. One I didn't
have.

DAISY

I never even allowed myself to
think of being an actor because of
you. But I am good. I know you
think Jessie was the talented one--

JAY

I think you're one of the most
brilliant people I've ever met. I
just don't think you want that
life.

DAISY

That's so hypocritical. Acting has been your whole life.

JAY

That's why I know how difficult it is. How much you miss. How crazy it makes you. How lonely I am.

DAISY

You're never alone.

Silvano hands Jay a water bottle.

JAY

Thanks, Silvano.

Daisy gives Jay a disparaging look. Uncomfortable silence.

JAY

(takes the cue, stands)

Think about the tribute. Because I can make it work. From the horse race or wherever you are. I'll send a car - a helicopter. There's a jet bringing grandpa. Whatever you need.

DAISY

How did you end up on this train Dad?

JAY

(hesitates)

I...knew...I knew because...Rio uses her mom's credit card and--

DAISY

Oh my God that is so fucked up.

(calls out)

Rio, your mom is tracking you on your Amex.

RIO

Fuck!

Rio immediately calls her Mom.

JAY

(weakly)

I thought I'd surprise you.

DAISY

(with disgust)

You stalked me to Europe.

JAY

I'm here because... you can't just leave and stop being a kid. I haven't spent enough time with you.

DAISY

It's not even just you. It's you and all your people!

JAY

Come on, I'm not that guy.

DAISY

You're totally that guy. You can't say, "helicopter" and not be that guy.

JAY

I'm just trying to make it easy for you to come --

DAISY

I don't want a helicopter or a private jet. I want to be on a rickety train and in a youth hostel and a tent! I want to have this holiday without you Dad.

Daisy walks down the car toward her friends passing Clive and Brenda. Guillaume follows sheepishly. Rio is on the phone with her mother.

RIO

I fucking hate you Mom! You are worse than Russia. I will never forgive you.

(pause)

No, do not cancel the card!

Daisy passes Meg, in a corner, looking horribly guilty.

MEG

Forgive me.

The train pulls into a STATION. Liz drags her wheelie suitcase onto the platform. Ron stops in the doorway.

RON

Don't go. He needs you. I need you.

Krista, bumps past Ron lugging her suitcase, joining Liz on the platform.

KRISTA

Tell Jay I'm sorry. My dog ate a screw. I wrote him an apology.

She thrusts a written note in his hand. Ron says to Liz:

RON

You know what we say, if it feels good, don't do it.

KRISTA

(hands Ron a binder)
And here are the outfits for each event. They're color coded.

LIZ

I'm doing it.

RON

(hesitates)

You did just bolt. Back then. That night on the Eiffel Tower.

LIZ

We had just sat down to dinner and I wanted to turn off our phones... but you said to keep them on just in case. And of course we got the call. Jay'd been photographed with the daughter of the French Ambassador. He couldn't leave the hotel and one of us had to go.

RON

I stayed to keep the table. I was so nervous because I had a ring planted in the ganache.

LIZ

I never knew that part.

RON

Yeah. It was like a very romantic movie but one that is not romantic at all in fact because you never came back.

LIZ

I was there with Jay and you were calling and I realized we'll never get a moment that is just us. And it all just seemed so impossible and absurd.

(pause)

I'm sorry about the Eiffel Tower.

RON

It's OK. I'm happy now.

LIZ

I know. Me too. And also I'm sorry.

RON

Thank you.

As the doors close, she kisses Ron on the lips.

LIZ

Save yourself.

The doors shut. It's over. The train pulls away. Ron puts his hand up against the glass. An announcement in Italian and French comes over the speaker. Passengers groan and complain in various languages. Ron turns to a priest.

RON

What did they say?

PRIEST

(tugging at his collar)

The bloody air conditioning is no more.

RON

Swell.

Ron's phone is ringing. He clicks it on speaker. Loud horns and car sounds.

LOIS

Vivian's feet are swollen! Like I've never seen swollen.

RON

Wait, wait, swollen how? Like after the cello recital?

LOIS

So much worse, Ron--

VIVIAN

I can't get into my Jordans, Dad. I had to wear Crocs!

LOIS

We're driving to Dr. Fenner's now! I'm doing everything I can to keep it together--

VIVIAN

It's disgusting, Dad! Michael Bronfman said it looks deformed.

RON

Michael Bronfman is an asshole.

She laughs.

DAVID

Dad--

RON

When did the swelling start this time?

LOIS
Right after the tennis debacle.

Oh God. RON LOIS
Almost immediately.

RON
Oh, OK, so it's my fault, I get it.

LOIS
I didn't say it's your fault, Ron.

RON
What about the cream? Did the
cream not--

VIVIAN
The cream did nothing, Dad.
Nothing!

RON LOIS
Because he said to really Ron, I slathered it and we
slather it-- did the Advil--

RON
Oh man, I'm so sorry.

DAVID
Dad--

VIVIAN
Mom, you just totally ran a red
light.

RON
(concealing his emotion)
Vivi, you're going to be OK. You
hear me?

VIVIAN
You think?

I know. RON DAVID
Dad--

RON
Hi, David, sweetie, yes--

DAVID
Am I going to be OK?

RON
You are! You're going to be great.
You too, Lois. You're my hero.

LOIS
I'm pulling in. We'll call you
from the doctor's.

DAVID

Dad, I think I might love mom more.

RON

I love you all so much. Lois, can you hear me?

LOIS

I hear you, Ron. You're on speaker.

RON

It kills me I'm not there with you. You're all my babies.

LOIS

Oh hell, this spot is for a compact.

VIVIAN

Mom, I told you to valet--

RON

I love baby!

He loses signal.

Jay, alone in the same booth in the CAFE CAR, stands up and walks toward the door. The train goes into a tunnel white lights flashing in the dark.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Dear Jay, you say you want to be with me, but your actions aren't speaking the way your words are...

He opens the door and reveals a dark bedroom with a couple in bed. He hesitates.

JESSICA (V.O.)

My worst day was when my babysitter rented that movie you did with Daphne Spender...

Lights come on and an entire film crew is visible behind the bed. We're on a MOVIE SET.

And we're in another MEMORY.

Young Jay and Daphne, now in their thirties, lie in the bed, surrounded by film equipment and people.

YOUNG JAY

I'm sorry I feel like we should have got to know each other before we did this.

DAPHNE

Sometimes it's better to have sex
with someone before you know them.
Or pretend sex in this case.

YOUNG JAY

Have you had pretend sex with a lot
of people before you knew them?

DAPHNE

A few. It's the least sexy thing
ever.

The SET is very quiet. Just a few whispers and deliberate
gestures on the part of the crew. Present Jay finds a place
in the corner of the room.

DAPHNE

It's so embarrassing, that hush
that descends. Like we're doing
something incredibly serious and
important.

YOUNG JAY

It's more like a funeral than a
love scene.

DAPHNE

I know.

DIRECTOR

(in a hushed voice)

Ok...rolling. And I'll just talk
you through it - so Jay can you
kiss her? Kiss her on the neck and
then the shoulder. Daphne, run your
hands through his hair.

The actors oblige. Out of nowhere Daphne farts.

DAPHNE

(whispered)

I'm sorry

YOUNG JAY

(whispered)

Did you just fart?

DAPHNE

Yes.

They both laugh. Jay smiles.

DIRECTOR

(hushed)

OK. Keep rolling. We'll go again.
Kiss her neck, her shoulder. Run
your hands through his hair.

Fingers interlocking. Hair falling in Daphne's face, her eyes finding Young Jay's. She reaches out for his face.

DIRECTOR

(whispery)

OK, one more time. Kiss her neck, her shoulder. Run your hands through his hair. Can you just push that one hair out of the way. And...yes. And one more time: Kiss, neck, hair, shoulder.

(aside)

OK, cue Eli...

An eight year old kid, Eli, climbs on the bed. Young Jay and Daphne startle and then laugh.

DAPHNE

Are you asking to be tickled?

ELI

No!

DAPHNE

You are. You are asking to be tickled!

Daphne tickles the kid who objects and laughs in equal measure. Jay beams, filled with joy as he watches her and the boy playing.

DIRECTOR

OK, cut.

Young Jay turns immediately to the director.

YOUNG JAY

Can we go again?

DIRECTOR

Really?

YOUNG JAY

I maybe had an idea.

DAPHNE

(smiles at Jay)

I thought we were great.

YOUNG JAY

(smiles back)

You did?

DIRECTOR

(to the AD)

Jay wants another one, can we beg the tutor?

The kid rejoins and the three actors play cards to pass the time. Jay watches them intently.

JAY

I wonder if you remember this the way I do. I was still married, had just had Jessica. You had a boyfriend. We stayed on the set for a while that day, playing cards with the kid. He was our decoy. It was ok to be together if he was there. Hanging out like a pretend family.

DAPHNE

I'm not going to let you win. I'm very competitive.

ELI

You're cheating.

DAPHNE

I am not! And if you're going to hold your cards so splayed out like that, how can I not look?

Jay rises and walks toward a door.

JAY

We didn't even kiss for real until the very end of the shoot. Later, you told me you wouldn't fall in love with me. And maybe you told the truth. Maybe you never did.

Daphne and Young Jay climb back into the bed. Her hair is futzed with for continuity. Discussions about where the blanket was in the previous take.

JAY

A month later, Jessie's mom took her to Seattle and I saw less and less of her. You quit movies, had a family. You said you loved acting but didn't want to be famous. Life is so weird. Do you think about this the way I do?

A gaffer opens a door on the set revealing the TRAIN CAR. Jay's now hovering between MEMORY and the PRESENT.

JAY

There were a million reasons why we didn't stay together.

DIRECTOR

(hushed voice)

OK, Daphne, Jay, we're going again.

Jay turns to leave.

DIRECTOR
And action...

DAPHNE
I'm so in love with you.

Jay turns back around to catch Daphne and Young Jay kissing in the scene. He leaves, closing the train door behind him. The PRESENT.

The TRAIN barrels through the Northern Italian countryside. The cyclists are looking out the window. The PRESENT.

GERMAN CYCLIST
Looks like we're in Italy.

DUTCH CYCLIST
Italy. What is its fatal charm?

GERMAN CYCLIST
I believe it is a certain permission to be human, which other places lost long ago.

Jay finds Ron. Ron, deep in thought, stares out at the passing countryside.

JAY	RON
I'm suddenly remembering	My family's losing it at
things I haven't thought of	home.
in a long time.	

JAY
It's like a movie where I'm playing myself or watching myself. I'm not saying it very well.

RON
(pause)
I'm sorry. You got to go again I didn't hear a word you said.

JAY
I'm suddenly remembering things...
What is that... Doesn't matter.

RON
Memory?

JAY	RON
Well, yeah, but...	Maybe your memories are
	trying to tell you something
	about your present.

JAY
Like what?

RON
I don't know I'm tired.

JAY
I just had a fight with
Daisy.

RON
I wish I was there to help
them.

JAY
What did you say?

RON
What? Nothing, I'm...I'm just
tired. I'm... I said that.

JAY
I just wish I'd had more time with
her. I was working all the time,
away--

RON
I always negotiated you flights on
the weekends so you could go home
and see your kids.

JAY
Yeah, but I'd be exhausted. It was
very difficult to--

RON
Ok, I'm just saying. But you
could've...

JAY
What are you getting at?

RON
Well, Ben, for instance, flies back
every weekend from his show to see
his family--

JAY
Ben. Ben Alcock.

RON
I'm not comparing I'm really
not--

JAY
It's hard not to feel like
you are--

RON
I'm not, I'm just saying these are
decisions we make--

JAY
They're not all decisions--

RON
--like I make to come on this trip.
Or to not kiss Liz back.

JAY
Kiss Liz back?

RON
My family would rather I be
at home trust me, I would too--
-

JAY
You kissed Liz?

RON
She kissed me.

JAY
Is that a thing again?

RON
No.

JAY
Where is Liz?

RON
Liz left. Krista too. Her dog ate
a screw. Krista's dog, not Liz's.
Liz was just pissed. She left you
this note. Krista not Liz.

He hands him the note. Jay reads.

JAY
Did Liz leave leave? Like forever?

RON
What's forever?

JAY
Does Ben Alcock really fly back
every weekend?

RON
Ben's no saint. This was his
second marriage. She was the
nanny.

JAY
You don't have to put him down now--

RON
Were you ever going to tell me what
happened with Timothy?

JAY
I told you I would.

RON
Yeah, but you didn't.

JAY
You think you could find me a
water?

RON
Can't you get it?

SHARON
Stop! Thief!

A man bolts down the aisle, knocking into Ron.

SHARON
He's got my handbag!

It's the German Cyclist. Jay looks at Ron who shakes his head.

RON
No--

Jay pursues the thief down the cramped aisle. Ron reluctantly follows. The Cyclist pulls the brake cord as he disappears around a bend. The train lurches, sending Jay and Ron and other passengers backward.

The thief leaps off the train and runs across a WHEAT FIELD. Jay recovers and follows him, hoofing through the grass.

Passengers press their noses to the glass. Others wander outside to watch.

BRENDA
He really is a hero.

The train is stopped seemingly in the middle of nowhere. The thief, with Jay in pursuit, looks like a speck in the vast landscape. Ron and Silvano hustle off the train and into the field. Silvano steps in a divot and yelps, twisting his ankle. Ron checks to see he's OK then continues onward.

Jay reaches a GRAVEYARD at the side of a road. He slows down, winded and alone among the dead. The cyclist appears behind him, hiding behind a headstone. He breaks for the gate, but Jay catches him just as he passes and they both fall to the ground. They wrestle for the purse, grunting, grabbing and kicking each other.

Jay finally tackles the Cyclist, holding him down, as he squirms and kicks.

JAY
I got you, you sonofabitch!

Passengers arrive on the scene. Some people film on their phones.

CLIVE
Jay captured the thief!

The French Businessman holds the man down as Jay stands up, triumphant. People cheer. He can't help but smile.

SHARON
Thanks, love.

More cheers from passengers. Jay bows in response.

CLIVE
He gave Jay Kelly a black eye the
bastard!

BRENDA
A real shiner.

Jay touches his eye where the make-up has come off. He returns the purse to Sharon who kisses him on the cheek. Ron pants, out of breath, but pleased for Jay.

RON
Shit was real.

Jay looks at the cyclist who is suddenly vulnerable and harmless.

GERMAN CYCLIST
Stop looking at me and talking
about me all the time!

His friend, and cycling companion pushes forward.

DUTCH CYCLIST
Please be kind. He just needs his
medication.

And suddenly a sadness sinks in for Jay. He reaches Ron who puts his arm around him.

DUTCH CYCLIST
He's a nice man. A family man.
Has three wonderful kids. This is
not who he is.

RON
You're a hero, puppy.

The French Businessman helps the Cyclist up and walks him to the gate. His Dutch friend explaining as they walk away.

JAY
Can we get him a doctor?

Passengers slowly make their way back toward the waiting train.

RON
I'll get you that water.

JAY
You go on ahead. I'll be right
there.

Ron hesitates and follows the group, leaving Jay, among the headstones.

Nighttime on the TRAIN. Ron reads a The Little Fur Family to David over the phone. Jay and Silvano listen.

RURAL ITALIAN TRAIN STATION. Pienza. Everyone gets off and disperses. The German cyclist is led into a police car. His Dutch companion follows unhappily.

Ron is his phone. Silvano hobbles on his crutch. Daisy and her friends get on a waiting bus with their backpacks, consulting phones and guidebooks. Jay, now in a white linen suit, sees her through the window.

JAY

Daisy!

She stops and turns around. Jay hesitates and then...

JAY

Have fun.

Daisy reveals a small smile. A look of understanding passes between them.

DAISY

See ya Dad. Love you.

Daisy turns back to her friends as the bus drives away, leaving Jay at the station, heartbroken.

RON (O.S.)

It's right to let her go.

Ron approaches with purpose. He wears reading glasses and holds out a document on his phone.

Jay doesn't respond.

RON

I spoke to Alan who has a legal letter ready -- I've signed off on it.

Daisy is out of sight. Jay still staring.

RON

And we have to have a statement prepared in case Timothy goes to the press. I have a draft here--

He hands his phone to Jay.

RON

(re: document)

I need you to read it and make sure you're OK with it.

He removes his glasses and hands them to Jay.

RON
(re: his glasses)
These are yours.

Jay hands Ron his phone back.

JAY
I know you know the thing to say.
(shrugs)
Whatever happens happens.

Ron looks at Jay with concern. Meg arrives in tears.

MEG
I'm Daisy's friend too, and I
betrayed her!

JAY
You were just doing your job.

MEG
But that's a Nazi excuse. I feel
like such a bad person.

JAY
It's my fault, Meg. Here--
(takes out his wallet)
Take a break. Have a holiday in
Italy. I'll be OK.

Realizes he doesn't have any money.

JAY
Ron, do you--

RON
Hm? Oh.

Ron gets out cash and hands it to Meg.

MEG
(taking money from Ron)
Thank you, Jay. For the record,
I'd love it if my father chased me
across Europe.
(starts to go then:)
Oh, and Emmanuel Macron is taking
Candy to Geneva. So you'll need
another hair person.
(gently touches his hair,
says suddenly)
I love you.
(quickly)
And congratulations.

Meg hurries to a waiting bus. A tall Italian woman comes running up holding a hand drawn sign on cardboard: Mr. Caterpillar Brown.

ALBA

Mr. Kelly...Caterpillar, I am Alba, your driver! Your Daddy is waiting for you in the Piazza. With Antonio and host committee.

JAY

(thrown)

My Daddy?

RON

Your Daddy! I called him and sent a plane. He's very excited.

JAY

(tenses up)

Shit. I didn't know he'd actually come.

ALBA

I will bring you to your Daddy.

(looks at the three men)

Is this everyone?

Alba is driving the VAN. Ron, Jay, and Silvano are piled in the back. Silvano's crutch lies across their laps. Alba reaches back and hands Jay a paper plate with a plastic fork and a napkin wrapped around a slice of--

ALBA

I forgot to give you, Mr. Kelly...Mr. Caterpillar, your cheesecake.

JAY

Oh--

RON

Wonderful, thank you.

JAY

(to Ron)

My rider?

(Ron nods)

You eat it.

He hands it to Ron who hands it to Silvano.

ALBA

Here in Italy we like to work hard. But also when we finish our work we relax and like to eat. We cry sometimes but also if you are funny we might laugh.

(MORE)

ALBA (CONT'D)

Sometimes we get married and have children, sometimes not have children and enjoy the single life...We argue sometimes, but also we like to dance and play.

RON

Don't be mad at Candy. We'll find you a new hair person.

JAY

I have too many people around me anyway.

RON

You need some people, though.

JAY

Maybe an accountant--

RON

A lawyer. You need Alan.

JAY

Publicity, I don't know, chef.

RON

(pause)

Well...me. You need me.

Jay looks at Ron who is left with his open question.

JAY

(not as convincing as Ron
would like)

No, of course you, Ron.

ALBA

Oh, fuck, I think I just hit a rabbit.

JAY

Hey Alba is there somewhere I can buy a gift or something for my Dad?

RON

Can you, Alba, can you drop me at--
(checks name on phone)
--Ristorante Da Rosa please?

JAY

(surprised)

Where are you going?

RON

I have a 5PM. Just a quick drink in town. But I'll be there for your dinner. Save me a tiramisu.

JAY
Who do you have a 5PM with?

RON
(hesitates) Ben Alcock. I have to put in a little bit of time with him-

JAY
--since he's also getting a tribute.

RON
The second tribute, yes.

ALBA
Oh, look he's hopping happily now.
Maybe just a graze. He's very
brave, Signore Rabbit.

JAY
(now annoyed)
So, you're going to leave me with
my Daddy? Dad?

RON
I'm here for you. I'm always here.
And I'll be with you from seven for
the rest of the trip.

JAY
Oh, I don't care - go meet Ben
Alcock.
(pause)
What's in his rider?

RON
Ben's rider is actually quite
minimal.

JAY
Fuck off.

The car screeches to a halt outside the town of PIENZA. Ron
hops out. Looks back at Jay.

RON
Try to have some fun.
(closing the door)
Say Hello to your Dad for me.

Alba leads Jay and Silvano to a long table at a beautiful
HILLTOP RESTAURANT. Jay clutches a box with a ribbon.

ALBA
You might meet a ghost while you
sleep here. The ghosts are usually
little monks who expose themselves.
I would have thought they would
love to meet Jay Kelly.

A man's jocular voice growing more and more clear. Laughter.

JAY'S DAD

...stopped pumping iron and took up yoga and now I'm in the best shape of my life. Still slender but taut. Also keep the mental game tough. Do a little Sodoku.

At the table, Jay's Dad is entertaining Antonio, his wife, Catherina, their daughter, Isabella who is asleep, some beautiful young festival people, a middle aged posh English ex-pat, Camilla, a young sprite-like male actor, Zeke, and the pilots from the private plane. Jay's Dad looks up mid-sentence--

JAY'S DAD

My son, the movie star.

He comes forward and hugs his son. Jay smiles.

JAY

Hey, Studly.

JAY'S DAD

Studly made it. Meet Captain Jenny and Lourdes. They flew me on that tiny plane you got me.

(whispers)

A lady pilot!

PILOT JENNY

Your father entertained us all the way from Maine to Florence with his wonderful, often offensive stories.

Huge laughs from everyone.

ANTONIO

What a personality! Jay, the apple doesn't fall very far from the tree!

(leading him to the table)

Please sit. Now, where is this famous Ron? We expected a whole team.

CATHERINA

Yes, we thought Mr. Caterpillar would have rolled very deep.

JAY

The famous Ron had a 5PM.

ANTONIO

Tell me, did we spell your Caterpillar alias correctly?

JAY
(mortified)
It was perfect, thank you.

ANTONIO
Ron is very protective of you. He
was so worried about the size and
shape of your trophy.

JAY
(dying inside)
I'm sure I'll love it.

ANTONIO
A local artisan, Giovanni, did what
I think you Americans call an all-
nighter and blew it himself.

A small elderly man, in a mask, is brought out to shake Jay's
hand. He goes on in Italian as Jay's Dad tips him.

ANTONIO
Giovanni is very sorry for the
mask. He suffers from infinite
Covid.

CATHERINA
(gesturing)
Your cheesecake is waiting.

JAY
(to himself)
Jesus Christ.
(to Catherina)
Thank you. Thank you so much.

Ron walks through a ROTUNDA. His voice echoes with
aggression, toughness, a side of him his clients never see.

RON
I'm the best friend anyone has.
But you don't want me as an enemy.
I promise you you don't.
Because...let me just
talk...because what you're
saying...let me finish...

He comes outside to the RESTAURANT and spots Ben Alcock, 50s,
sitting under an umbrella beside a beautiful garden. He
waves.

RON
What you're saying feels remarkably
like a shakedown...I'm happy to be
wrong...But if this is what we're
doing...then I'm hanging up the
telephone right now.
(MORE)

RON (CONT'D)
OK...you do that...you talk to
Timothy and call me back...
(hangs up, calls someone
else)
Alan, you there? That motherfucker
tried to shake us down...

Ron arrives at Ben's table, holds up a finger while he
finishes his call.

RON
We hear from the detective?

BEN
I like the neckerchief.

RON
(still on phone)
OK, hold your fire...I've got a
drink now with Benny Boy...let me
know...I'll call you after...

Ron hangs up. Sweating now.

RON
It's hot here. What did you say?

BEN
I like the neckerchief.

RON
(flattered)
Yeah? Right?
(takes him in)
You look handsome, Ben Alcock. With
the dreamy blue eyes. Flight good?

BEN
It was a two class plane, small
first but lie down beds so--

RON
Happy ending.

Ron puts on Jay's reading glasses and looks at the bar menu.

RON
You order a drink?

BEN
I'm having seltzer. You just fly
in?

RON
Train. It's a whole... It's fine.
We're all good. Just sent Jay to a
dinner with the festival people.

BEN
Jay got a dinner?

RON
(panicking slightly)
You're getting a dinner too.

BEN
My schedule said "drinks."

RON
(reversing course)
You wouldn't want to be at that dinner. You've got your family here, you're a proper human. Jay's single and weird and needs to be entertained--

BEN
You don't need to put Jay down to make me feel better. You do that Ron, you know that?

RON
I love Jay. I've been like a father to him. But much less complicated because I'm like a brother.
(trying to flag a waiter)
I could use a drink.

BEN
So, I've been thinking and talking to Melanie, and I feel like I'm not really getting enough of you.

RON
Really? I mean, I'm here, puppy. What haven't I been there for?
(re: waiter)
Which one's ours?

BEN
I know you're in the Jay Kelly business, and I can't compete with him-- I'm OK with that. Hell, I know the only reason I'm getting this tribute is because he passed on it.

RON
And then took it back. I'm sorry, that all got farkaktaed, but don't worry, you're both getting trophies.

BEN
But I need to get some of you.

RON
Jay's one of my clients, but he's
not my only client. How can I
improve?

(re: waiter)
He's not looking at me.

BEN
(spitting it out)
I'm going to go without a manager
for a while.

RON
Hold on--

BEN
Just an attorney and an agent and a
publicist...and a business manager.

RON
Hold on. You're my second client
ever. We've been together since
the Disney shows and--

I know--

BEN

RON
I'm having trouble at home,
Vivian has anxiety and
swollen feet.

BEN
I'm sorry to hear--

RON
You're just off a successful TV
show and that correction takes a
minute--

BEN
It's been a minute already--

RON
--and you're between ages
right now, but I think you're
entering a sweet spot--

BEN
(getting emotional)
I just need to try this--

RON
I was at your wedding. I gave a
toast.

BEN
(wiping his eyes)
I know.

RON
We're family. I love you.

BEN

Stop. Stop. I knew it would be hard to...do this. I could have sent an email after the tribute! Melanie said I should do it in person. I didn't have to.

He and Ron are both crying. Ron says, quietly:

RON

There are things I do all day that you don't know about.

BEN

Don't talk me out of it. Don't cry.

RON

You're crying too.

BEN

That doesn't mean you have to cry!

RON

You cry, puppy. You were crying first. I'll--

Tries to wipe his eyes, knocks a glass off the table. It makes a loud smashing sound.

RON

Shit. I'm sorry. I'm just jet lagged and I'm tired and old--

Ron steps out on the COBBLESTONE STREET in the middle of town. He's on his phone with Lois. A marching procession passes through.

LOIS

She's OK. Fenner thinks she's picking up on your stress and it's affecting her feet.

RON

How the fuck is my stress affecting Vivian's feet???

LOIS

Take it easy, Ronnie, it makes sense when you think about it--

RON

You're going to let a foot doctor analyze our child? What is wrong with you?

Lois sits outside on their LA TERRACE with her morning coffee and an iPad. David plays in the background.

LOIS
Don't speak to me like that Ron!
I'm single parenting it here.

RON
I'm sorry...I love you. It's just,
I'm having a bad day.

He starts crying again. Bells clang from a nearby church.

LOIS
Are you ok?

RON
No. I was just fired and I'm
crying. I'm alone in Italy and I'm
crying.
(pause)
I know you're mad at me, but can I
just hear I love you back.

LOIS
(panicked)
Jay fired you?

RON
No. Ben.

We hear Vivi in the background:

VIVIAN
Jay fired Dad?

LOIS
No, Ben. Go in the other room.
(relieved)
That motherfucker. And you got him
this tribute and everything.

RON
I know!

LOIS
But you still got Jay, right?

RON
Yeah, yeah, of course, I got Jay.
If I can get him back to do this
movie. Can you just say it,
please?

LOIS
What's that sound?

RON
The bells. It's all death and
firing here.

LOIS

Ron, I just saw the thing on Page Six about Jay...

RON

Wait, what thing?

The bells clang.

RON

What thing about Jay? Lois?

Jay is at a table with his Dad, the festival committee and invited guests at the HILLTOP RESTAURANT. Silvano eats the cheesecake.

JAY'S DAD

So why am I here Studly, who dropped out?

JAY

Nobody. I invited you.

Jay's Dad turns to Alba.

JAY'S DAD

First time in years Jay's brought me to a rat fuck. He got threatened when I came to the Globes in the 90's.

JAY

That's not true.

JAY'S DAD

Jay's Dad was his most handsome back then. Susan Sarandon had a little crush on me.

JAY

(not taking the bait)
I'm glad you're here.

JAY'S DAD

She sent me a video of a baby elephant reuniting with his parents.

ALBA

And were they happy to see him?

JAY'S DAD

Yeah, that was the point. Very cute. Very tender.

Jay hands his father the wrapped present. Alba watches with Jay in anticipation.

JAY'S DAD
What's this for?

JAY
Just a present. Not for any reason.

ALBA
It's a sweater!

Jay's Dad tears it open unceremoniously.

JAY'S DAD
(quickly, uncomfortably)
Nice, nice, it's a sweater.
Cashmere. You have it. Too high a thread count for your Dad.

JAY
No, I got it for you.

His father places the sweater on the table. We see Jay's demeanor with his Dad. No matter how famous, successful, he's still this man's son.

JAY'S DAD
Where's my granddaughter? Ron said she'd be here.

JAY
She's doing her own thing. You know, she's at that age.
(wants to connect)
Do you remember being eighteen?

JAY'S DAD
I remember Brylcreem.
(aside to Alba)
A little dab will do ya.

Alba laughs as Jay smiles awkwardly.

CATHERINA
Mr. Kelly padre, you are also an artist, like the son?

JAY'S DAD
Artist? No. Working stiff. Worked for the John Deere corporation for thirty-five years. Retired and all those assholes gave me was a shitty pension and a fountain pen.

The table loves this. Laughter.

JAY'S DAD
No trophy or cheesecake for your Dad.

ALBA

You toiled so your son could have his dreams.

JAY'S DAD

I like that. I like how you put that.

(glancing at Jay)

When he was a kid, I thought he'd grow up to be someone I'd have a beer with.

(lifting his wine glass)

Not Beaujolais.

JAY

(half smile)

I played tough guys so I didn't have to be one.

JAY'S DAD

Action movies are bullshit. It's all fake.

There's a moment of tension between father and son. Then interrupted:

CAMILLA

Did you always know Jay was going to be a star?

Jay turns to his dad, dreading what comes next.

JAY'S DAD

Barely said a word until he was about five. Then one day at breakfast he starts speaking in a funny southern way and acting very clumsy. His mom thought he'd lost his mind, but I said, "Celia, he's playing a character."

JAY

(smiles, relieved)

I was imitating Uncle Mark.

Camilla gets an alert on her phone. She reads it then looks over at Jay with alarm.

JAY'S DAD

Right, you kept saying "seriously." Which was Uncle Mark to a fucking tee.

She passes her phone to Zeke who also looks over at Jay. A murmuring at the table.

JAY

He would say to me: "You're a good kid, seriously." As if he didn't mean it otherwise.

JAY'S DAD

I broke up.

JAY

I'd never seen you laugh like that. And mom too. She was always so sad when she drank.

JAY'S DAD

I wish you'd play more characters like Uncle Mark.

(with authority)

Comedy is the most difficult thing to do for an actor.

JAY

Sometimes I think, that was the best acting I've ever done. Trying to make you and mom laugh.

(pause)

Where is Uncle Mark?

JAY'S DAD

In jail for mail fraud.

JAY

"Seriously."

Jay and his Dad both crack up. Jay can't help but notice that the guests seem distracted by something on their phones. They all steal glances at Jay.

CAMILLA

We are sorry to gawp but you are all over the internet right now.

ANTONIO

There is a video.

Jay goes white.

JAY

On your phone?

ANTONIO

On all of our phones.

CATHERINA

A dramatic altercation.

ZEKE

With another man.

Jay braces himself. A heat rising on the back of his neck. He closes his eyes awaiting his sentence.

ALBA
(reading phone)
"Actor Jay Kelly becomes real life hero as he apprehends criminal in dramatic fashion worthy of the cinema!"

Jay is surrounded and congratulated, patted on the back. The chef brings him another slice of cheesecake.

CATHERINA
(looking at the video)
Look at you run in your fancy sneakers....Run Jay, run!!

ALBA
(still reading)
"There was no action or cut as Jay Kelly leaped from the train..."

Catherina hands Jay the phone. Jay searches for his reading glasses but can't find them. He watches the video blankly.

ZEKE
I deplore violence. Haven't we evolved past hitting and kicking?

CATHERINA
But he had to defend himself.
(reading off her phone)
It says here, the man was a crazed thief. A lunatic. In spandex.

JAY
He wasn't a lunatic, he was --

CATHERINA
Stole jewels from women and children.

ANTONIO
Did the children also have jewels?
How interesting.

CATHERINA
Was perhaps a sexual threat!

CAMILLA
No!

JAY
No. He wasn't--

JAY'S DAD
Finally managed to get your trousers dirty, Studly.

Jay hesitates, unsettled.

CATHERINA

It is now time to take our real
life hero to the real life party!

Everyone walks along an open ROAD surrounded by green rolling hills and cypress trees. Jay's Dad's voice above the fray. Jay, pulling up the rear.

They walk through a narrow cobblestone street in Pienza and into a crowded PIAZZA lit by paper lanterns hung from trees and twilight. There's a church, a statue and a fountain.

A giant photo of Jay hangs on the side of a building. Jay sees it as he enters the square.

JAY

Fuck me.

The party is a mix of townspeople and festival goers. There are trestle tables and plastic chairs. A bandstand and a dance floor. A group of teenagers are moving crazily to the music - white dresses and jeans blur in the darkness. Alba and Jay's Dad among them.

RON (O.S.)

He's here!

Ron, amidst the revelers on the dance floor waves at Jay

RON

Look at you, Jay Kelly! So
handsome with your square cut
Superman jaw.

JAY

Where have you been?

RON

We said we'd meet at the party.

JAY

No, we didn't, we said, meet at the
dinner then go to the party.

RON

I don't think so, we said you go to
the dinner and I'll go to the
party.

JAY

You said save you a tiramisu.

RON

How was the tiramisu?

JAY

It was cheesecake!

Ron nods.

JAY
Did you see the video?

RON
Our friends on the train filmed it!
A great result. Congratulations,
puppy.

JAY
They were calling me a hero. I was
so embarrassed.

RON
You are a hero.

JAY
If it were the other story, I'd be
a villain, not a hero. I mean,
what do I have to do?

RON
(getting out his phone)
Hold on, I want you to hear this!
Hold on...

[illegible]

ALAN (O.S.)
Hello?

RON
Alan, you've got Ron and Jay.
Sorry for all of the tribute noise.
Tell Jay the news.

ALAN (O.S.)
It's been taken care of, Jay.

JAY
What has?

ALAN (O.S.)
The lawsuit, Timothy, the nose,
everything.

RON
All done. We discovered a pending
drug charge from the 90's that
would destroy his business.

JAY
(can't believe it)
It's done?

ALAN (O.S.)
It's gone away. You're free Jay.

On the dance floor, Alba dances wildly. Jay's Dad shuffling along side her.

ALBA
You're too young to be his Daddy.

JAY'S DAD
And you're too young to be young!

Jay watches.

JAY
I want to apologize.

RON	ALAN (O.S.)
To who? Timothy?	That can't happen, Jay.

JAY
He was a friend.

ALAN (O.S.)
Not anymore. My counsel is to let it go.

JAY
Yeah?

ALAN (O.S.)
Yeah. It's settled. You won't hear from him again. Enjoy your tribute, Jay. You've earned it.

JAY
(quietly)
OK, thanks Alan.

ALAN (O.S.)
Don't thank me. It was all Ron. He really went to war for you.

Ron shrugs. Jay looks like he's going to throw up. From the dance floor:

JAY'S DAD
I want whiskey and spaghetti bolognese!

ALBA
Then we will eat spaghetti bolognese!

Alba leads Jay's Dad off the dance floor toward the Osteria.

JAY

You all can make up stories, but
you and I know who I am. Do you
know who I am? Who am I, Ron?

Ron indicates the giant photo of Jay.

RON

Look at you. You're the American
Dream. You're the last of the old
movie stars.

JAY

I'm down here, Ron.

RON

You're up there, you're down here,
you're in here--
(indicates his phone)
It's amazing. We've accomplished
so much together.

JAY

Everything you say is so lonely-
making.

RON

You can stop running now, puppy.
It's time to go back to work.

Jay backs up onto the dance floor.

JAY

I'm going to dance.

Ron hurries after him.

RON

You shoot on Monday and I gave my
word you'll be there.

JAY

Give the part to Ben Alcock.

Ron moves in front of Jay, blocking his way. The Polish
cousins approach. Ron raises a finger saying, Hold on.

RON

Come here. Do you know what I had
to go through to get you that job?
I mean, you're you but I was the
one who went to the Louis Brothers'
tequila bar in Bushwick and smoked
crack.

JAY

That wasn't crack.

RON

I don't know what it was but I smoked it and for three hours I was afraid I was going to swallow my tongue. Anyway it got you the job.

JAY

They offered me the job.

RON

The part was written for a thirty-five year old man. It took some convincing.

Jay hesitates.

RON

And I'd do it again because I think what you do is magic.

Jay steps past Ron, people dancing around them.

JAY

I'm just an actor, Ron. An actor who got famous.

RON

Does none of this mean anything to you?

Jay says nothing.

RON

Because it means something to me.

JAY

Give Ben my tribute too. I'm going to dance.

RON

I don't understand. I think I've been a good partner, a good friend-- I loved you.

JAY

I love you too, Ronnie.

RON

But are we friends?

JAY

Of course we are.

RON

Then be a friend to me and go back to work!

Jay hesitates, refusing to be drawn into this.

RON
You're Jay Kelly but I'm Jay Kelly
too. We did this together. You
actually said that to me one time.
You forgot.

JAY
I'm going to dance.

RON
When you fuck yourself, you're
fucking me, you understand?

Jay does a dance move.

RON
You don't know how to be a friend.

JAY
(smiles slowly)
You're my friend who takes fifteen
percent of my income.

Ron reacts, stunned, wounded.

RON
If you're not on that plane
tomorrow...

Jay takes another step backwards.

JAY
I'm dancing.

RON
I wish...I wish you were the man I
thought you were!

Ron unties the neckerchief with some difficulty and throws it
at Jay. It floats lifelessly in the air.

Jay takes another deliberate step and throws up his hands.

JAY
I'm a cocker spaniel dancing in the
Serengeti.

A DJ starts the dance party. Jay, surrounded now by
revelers, is dancing. Really dancing. It's kind of amazing.
We STAY on Jay as he spins and moves. People love it. It's
pure exuberance and freedom. Through the din, a voice...

ALBA (O.S.)
Jay!

Jay spins.

ALBA (O.S.)

Jay!

Jay comes face to face with Alba.

ALBA

Jay.

Jay twirls her.

JAY

Alba, you're an angel. Dance with me!

ALBA

No, Jay, come! Your father is sick.

Jay runs with Alba toward the restaurant in the square. Inside the OSTERIA, a couple of older locals clock Jay as he enters.

ALBA

I think he drank too much. He was eating spaghetti and doing yoga, he lost his balance.

JAY

Where is he?

ALBA

In the kitchen with the doctor.

Jay enters the kitchen. Bright fluorescent strip lights.

JAY

Dad?

Jay moves past some cooks who look star struck. One of them points. Jay peers behind a large refrigerator. Jay's Dad is sitting with his back to him, slumped in a chair. A thin Italian man kneels beside him listening with a stethoscope.

JAY

You OK, Studly?

JAY'S DAD

(terse)

Lost my balance.

The doctor says something in Italian.

JAY

(worried)

Is that blood?

ALBA

That is the bolognese.

JAY'S DAD
(quiet, emotionless)
It's so bright in here.

JAY
Can I do anything?

Jay's Dad is sullen and quiet. The doctor stands, shaking his head, he can't find anything wrong. Jay wants desperately to connect, but can't think of anything to say.

JAY'S DAD
I wish I'd seen Daisy.

JAY
Do you remember being 18?

JAY'S DAD
You asked me that already. I said,
I remember Brylcreem.

JAY
Oh yeah. Sorry.

Jay's Dad unties the sweater from around his waist.

JAY'S DAD
Here you have it. Too high a
thread count for your dad.

Jay's Dad hands it to his son. Alba hovers by the door.

JAY'S DAD
I want to go home now.

JAY
Get some sleep.

JAY'S DAD
No, I want to leave now.

JAY
Stay. See Italy.

JAY'S DAD
I've just seen it.
(stands)
Audrey booked me on the 8AM flight
from Pisa.

JAY
Are you pissed at me?

JAY'S DAD
No. I'm fine.

JAY
Because I do want you to have a
good time.

Jay's Dad holds onto a table for support. Jay takes his arm.

JAY
Please stay til tomorrow, Dad.
We never see each other.

ALBA
The taxi is here.

JAY
Stay for the tribute. Please.

Silence from Jay's Dad.

JAY
(like a little kid)
Please stay.

JAY'S DAD
Where's my bag?

ALBA
It's in the taxi.

Jay's Dad pulls away from his son, and heads towards the back door of the restaurant where Alba waits. Jay follows.

A taxi waits on the road. Jay's Dad climbs in, thanking Alba. Jay reaches the window of the cab as it starts to drive away.

JAY
Dad...

We stay in Alba's perspective as she watches from the door. Jay runs alongside the cab as it gains momentum.

JAY'S DAD
Thanks for the party, Studly.

The taxi pulls ahead, Jay still running.

Alba turns away, a tear rolling down her cheek.

On the ROAD, Jay slows into a breathless stagger. Lights appear behind him. A cavalcade of black vans approach. The roar of the cars getting louder. Jay jogs to the side of the road as they pass and surround him, stopping with a screech. The van door opens and a figure emerges.

BEN
Is that Jay Kelly?

Jay is caught in a bear hug. It's Ben Alcock.

BEN
Are you OK, man?

Jay looks dirty and sweaty. He's drunk and a wreck.

JAY
(out of breath still)
Yeah.

BEN
Proud to be sharing a tribute with
you, amigo.

JAY
You too, Ben.

BEN
You know my wife, Melanie?

JAY
Yes, I think we--

MELANIE
Yes we did--

Ben turns to introduce a giant entourage all stepping out
onto the road.

BEN
And my daughters, Seraphina, Lily,
Bridget and my son, Cole....

More people climb out of the vans: Grandparents, siblings,
staff, ex-wife, babies, Jay says Hi to everyone individually.

BEN
Arlo, the newest addition to our
clan, Nana, Nonno, Terry and Ernie,
my assistant Pam... I'm sorry
about the clown car--

JAY
I...I'm sorry, I don't have anyone
to introduce you to.

BEN
(leans in to Jay)
Only in Italy, would they give two
middle age white men an award. I
mean, seriously, at this moment!

JAY
We've got Ron to thank for that.

BEN

Yeah, listen, this is a bit awkward, but I parted ways with Ron.

JAY

When?

BEN

A few hours ago. I feel terrible. I mean, I love the guy but I just felt like I was being looked after by someone who needs looking after.

JAY

Uh huh.

BEN

Every time it's his kids and inflamed feet or Lois and whatever that is. I mean, God bless, but I need someone younger, someone hungrier.

MELANIE

Or someone older and more powerful.

BEN

Right.

MELANIE

You were also getting into all that psychodynamic stuff with him.

BEN

Yeah, he's too much like my father.

MELANIE

Or he wants to be.

BEN

I have to keep reminding myself they're not our family--

MELANIE

Or your friend.

BEN

I mean, we give them fifteen percent of everything and then they want to be treated like a friend.

MELANIE

Friends don't take fifteen percent!

JAY

Uh huh.

MELANIE

We heard about your act of bravery!

BEN
Nicely done, amigo.

MELANIE
Jay Kelly for president! I mean,
seriously, would you ever run?

Disco music from the party plays through the trees.

JAY
Nah. If you'll excuse me, I'm
going to...

Melanie whispers something to Ben.

BEN
Actually, amigo, we need a few
extra tickets for the fam, if you
have any to spare?

JAY
I could spare all of them, Ben.

BEN
Thanks, brother, I owe you.

JAY
(reconsidering)
Maybe leave me one.

The cars caravan toward the party. Jay tromps off the road
into the FOREST. He takes out his phone and makes a call.

His daughter's voice echoes in the woods over the speaker.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Hello?

JAY
Jessie, it's Dad.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Hi.

JAY
You OK to talk?

JESSICA (O.S.)
What's up?

JAY
I'm in Italy.

JESSICA (O.S.)
I read about your real life
heroics.

JAY

It's a news story. It's not true.

JESSICA (O.S.)

Well, you fooled them again.

Jay says nothing.

JESSICA (O.S.)

So why are you calling?

JAY

(exhales)

I feel bad about our last time together. I'm sorry about it. I just couldn't take that guy. Are you still seeing him?

JESSICA

Yes.

Jessica now appears next to Jay, walking beside him in the forest. (Even though Jay is still talking on the phone, we see how he's experiencing it.)

JAY

But I want to...hear you out. And if that's the way you wanted to do it...I guess...

JESSICA

Uh huh.

JAY

I'm getting this tribute here in
Tuscany. And I'd love you to come.

JESSICA

Since when do you care about a tribute?

JAY

I could send a plane...

JAY

That's a good question. Well...
(really thinks about it)
I did make those movies.

JESSICA

You think if I come and celebrate your career, your brilliance will make me forgive you?

JAY

No.

JESSICA

But maybe yes, Jay?

JAY

Well maybe yes. It's 35 years of my life.

JESSICA

I'm 34.

JAY

I want you to be here with me to see what I did. To celebrate it or... It has to have meant something.

JESSICA

What if it doesn't?

Jay hesitates, unsure how to respond to this.

JAY

I could've been a really good dad to you, Jess. I wanted to be, you know. It's just things with your mom, and the distance, I didn't execute it the way I planned it. That's not a good way to say it.

JESSICA

Just be honest with me, Jay. Stop defending yourself. Stop rationalizing. Stop. Stop.

She wipes tears from her face.

JAY

I was young. I wanted something very badly and I was afraid that if I took my eye off it, I wouldn't have it. And I was right. There was no other way to do it. And it meant choosing it over you. But it was always meant to be temporary. Just until I got what I wanted... But then I had to keep it...

JESSICA

My ten year old self is giving you the finger.

JAY

What about you now?

JESSICA

You don't have to worry about me, Dad. I'm OK. I love what I do, I have friends. I'm going to have a good life, just not with you.

(she looks at him)

And you're OK too.

(MORE)

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You're a good movie star. You've made a lot of people happy.

JAY

I think I might quit acting.

JESSICA

Oh, could you sign a photo for Theo's teacher? She's a big fan of yours.

JAY

Sure. It would mean so much to me if you came.

JESSICA

To Helen.

JAY

What?

JESSICA

That's her name.

JAY

Oh.

JESSICA

I'm sorry, I have to go. Theo's calling for me. I hope you have a good tribute.

JAY

Jessie, please.

JESSICA

Bye Jay.

She hangs up. She's no longer there next to him. No one is.

JAY

Jess...

He appears as a white apparition in the misty forest. He shuts his eyes and runs as fast as can through the trees. Gangly branches and brush scraping his face and tearing his white suit. He runs for as long as he can.

And unable to run anymore, he collapses onto the ground.

A taxi idles outside a large 18th Century converted FARM HOUSE hotel surrounded by bougainvillea and fig trees. Ron emerges from the building lugging his bags down the stone stairs. A driver helps Ron with his suitcases, placing them in the trunk. Antonio hurries past him.

ANTONIO

The famous Ron! Have you seen Jay
Kelly?

RON

Not since last night.

Antonio mutters to himself in Italian and heads inside the hotel. Ron gets into the CAR.

Ron rides in the back. He pats his pockets, makes sure he has his passport, phone, etc. The driver says something in Italian.

RON

What's that?

The driver says it again in Italian and indicates the rearview mirror. Ron turns and looks out the back window. Jay is running after the car. Dust kicking up in his face from the dirt road. Ron turns back to the front, decides maybe he didn't see that. The driver continues gesticulating. Ron sneaks another peak. Jay is still chasing, falling further behind. Ron sighs.

RON

Um, pull over... Pull over!

The car stops at the side of the road. Ron reluctantly gets out of the car. Jay just catching up.

JAY

Ron.

Ron takes in Jay, disheveled, streaked with dirt and blood.

RON

Are you OK?

Jay is breathing heavily.

RON

Take a second--

JAY

I'm Ok...I...

RON

It's OK...

JAY

I'm sorry. About... I'm sorry.

RON

I'm...I appreciate it...But you got me thinking and... I was up all night talking to Lois and...I think you have it right, there comes a point you got to reassess.

(MORE)

RON (CONT'D)

I love you, I really do, and I appreciate the apology, but I can't work with you anymore. It's not good for me.

Jay nods sadly.

RON

The Italians are looking for you. You have a tribute starting in a few hours.

Ron backs up to the car. But Jay doesn't move.

RON

I've got to make a plane. But try to go. OK?

Jay says nothing.

RON

I mean, you came all this way...

JAY

Ron... Come to the tribute as my friend. We did this together.

(Ron pauses)

You're the one I want here most of all.

Ron hesitates.

RON

I'm the only one who is here.

We're BACKSTAGE in an OLD ITALIAN THEATER. Ron pads Jays's face with make-up powder. Jay hands him a marker and Ron darkens Jay's eyebrows. Ron colors Jay's side-burns with a small brush. Ron dabs at some sweat and straightens Jay's coat around the shoulders.

Jay regards Ron, frowns. He adjusts Ron's bowtie. He removes a white handkerchief from his front pocket and places in Ron's corresponding pocket. They face each other, both in black tuxedos, like a mirror.

They rise toward the door. Jay gets a notification on his phone. It's a message from Daisy with a photo of her and Meg making a silly face next to a horse.

CONGRATULATIONS DAD ON YOUR BIG DAY

Jay smiles as he stops at a spread of bottled water, coffee, nuts and cheesecake on a table. He hesitates, his attention on his daughter's message, and he absent-mindedly takes a bite of the cheesecake. He smiles, he likes it. Ron nods, right? Jay quickly takes another bite.

We're now inside an AUDITORIUM in the old theater. It's the tribute. People are gathered in their seats. Jay and Ron sit in the AUDIENCE. Jay looks every bit the classic movie star.

Sharon waves, a few rows over. Next to her is Brenda and Clive. Jay waves back, touched they came.

Lights dim, a projector turns on. A string quintet plays. Moving images of Jay taken from all his movies over the years on the screen in front of them.

We hold on Jay's expression, his life darting before his eyes. All the pain and the joy and the struggle and the beauty and the wins and the cost. Jay looks around the auditorium. The audience rapt, full of emotion.

Jay finds Peter a few rows over, watching attentively. Behind him is Young Jay and Young Timothy. Then Timothy, as he is in the present. There's Larry and Carter, who looks emotional. Daphne. The ghosts of his past.

Jay turns to Ron next to him. Jay grips Ron's hand. Their hands squeeze. A tear falls down Ron's cheek.

We hear:

DAISY (O.S.)

Wait, Dad, it's not over yet.

Two girls appear on the screen in a lush garden. It's Jessica and Daisy as younger kids putting on a performance.

Jay is in his GARDEN in LA in a MEMORY. The sun is lowering. The daughters do a little dance, circling around, pretending to upstage each other. Jay applauds briefly, waves, grabs a bag and heads toward the house.

JESSICA

Dad, look-- You're missing it.

DAISY

You're missing it, Dad!

They launch into another number.

JESSICA

It's Kelly and Kelly--

DAISY

No, it's Kelly and Kelly.

Jay takes them both in, goofily dancing and singing. He hesitates. Then he puts down the bag, walks forward, and watches his daughters.

Applause. The lights come up in the AUDITORIUM and the TRIBUTE AUDIENCE jumps to its feet. Jay remains in his seat. We're in the PRESENT. Ron stands applauding next to him.

We're close on Jay's face. Creased. Beautiful. Older. As the applause dies down, his eyes find the lens. He says directly to us, to the film crew, to the audience, to himself:

JAY

Can I go again? I'd like another one.

Pause, awaiting a reply and then--

JAY KELLY