

MIMESIS: "PILOT"

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"In order to understand,
I destroyed myself."

— Fernando Pessoa

INT. CAPP'S DELI - SKAGWAY, ALASKA - DAY

A DEAD SALMON HEAD fills our view, but its BULGING EYES are alive with a reflection of a TV where a MAN IN A SUIT is sat by a couch. He's in a postcard perfect early 80s living room.

We see the TV pitted up high in the corner of our dingy deli.

MAN IN A SUIT (TV)

Welcome back to K-ALA 13'S Classic
Movie Hour, as we now return to
1985's "The Triumph of Henry".

(pause)

Known as a breakthrough role for
Mr. Dallas McGrath who was just 16
at the time. Fun fact, Dallas would
practice running on the beach with
ankle weights in order to train for
the role. Impressive, right?

The hand grabbing the salmon head loosens...its eyes bulge a bit less.

MAN IN A SUIT (O.S.)

Anyways, let's get back to the show
now. Enjoy folks.

Back on the TV a BLONDE-HAIRED TRACK STAR (DALLAS MCGRATH, 16) speeds towards a colorful finish line surrounded by a LARGE CROWD of cheering fans.

OLD MAN IN CROWD (TV)

(startled)

Come on son, you can do it...

TEACHER IN CROWD (TV)

(excited)

Wow, he's coming in hot!

The track star dashes across the finish line straight into the arms of his MOM (40s), and a group of adoring fans.

HENRY(TV)

(on the screen)

I did it mom...I made it!

MOM (TV)

(on the screen)

You didn't just make it, honey. You
won!

As Henry and his mom hug, he pulls out an inhaler and starts to regain his breath.

MOM (TV) (CONT'D)
Henry, you're an inspiration to
kids like you everywhere.

HENRY(TV)
(on the screen)
Thanks mom.

Suddenly SOME STUDENTS from the crowd lift him up chanting
"Henry! Henry!". The local news team FILMS it all.

BACK IN THE DELI

ABEL CAPP (late 30s) is revealed holding a large butcher's
knife above the fish, chanting in perfect sync with the
crowd.

He sports a dirty apron, and a big, bushy beard...a tear can
be seen in the corner of his eye.

In profile, Abel looks a bit like an older version of Dallas
with his strong eyebrows, Roman features and lean frame. But
with his unkempt appearance, it's hard to tell for certain.

BACK ON THE TV

Dallas is looking down at his Mom as the kids hoist him up on
their shoulders.

Abel emotionally mouths the words as we hear Dallas say...

HENRY (O.S.)
I did it for you mom. You're my
inspiration.

Abel watches the sweat run down Henry's face, a bit lost in
the glory of the moment, until suddenly the door BURSTS
open and in walks GENE CAPP (mid 50s), Abel's father -- a
tall, no-nonsense guy, with the voice of a lifelong smoker.

GENE
Seriously? You're watching this
crap again?

Gene grabs the remote from the counter; struggling to press
the right button to shut it off.

ABEL
No! This is the best part.

He darts a cold glance towards Abel.

GENE

Tomorrow I'm putting you on the morning shift. Custodial.

Gene still can't find the "power off" switch on the remote.

ABEL

Look, it won't happen again. Alright? I prom--

Gene yanks a cord at the back of the TV, rendering a DEATH WHIZ to the magic box. That'll do it.

GENE

Stop. Just finish up your batch. Maurizio will handle the rest.

ABEL

(whispered)

Fine.

Gene walks out the door, muttering obscenities to himself. As he slams the door shut, Abel stares down at the fish.

ABEL (VO)

Yes father, whatever you say father.

He delivers a rage filled THWACK. The salmon head plops into the garbage, joining its fellow beheaded kin.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)

You're pathetic.

EXT. SKAGWAY DOCK - DAY (SUNRISE)

Abel sits at the edge of the dock, his feet in the water, as fish swim by. The sun is setting across the quiet, rugged mountains.

ABEL (VO)

It's painful this distance we have. Especially when last year, I felt so close to you.

He pulls out his phone and opens up Instagram, checking in on PRESENT DAY DALLAS (late 30s).

He scrolls pasts PHOTOS & VIDEOS of him in Bali "training" people (mostly women) in the ways of yoga and cross fit.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 But I know you're working hard to
 make others happy. You were always
 so generous.

On the phone, Dallas looks great, like he's barely aged since
 the movie. He sports a man bun and flashy workout attire.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 I know it's not the same as our
 original fantasy, but Skagway isn't
 all bad. At least, I could make it
 worth your while.

Abel smiles and rubs the phone screen with his dirty, worked
 fingers...trying to pierce the digital divide.

EXT. BOAT DECK, SKAGWAY RIVER - DAY (MORNING)

Abel tosses some FISH NETS into the river, as Gene drives the
 boat calmly through the dark water.

ABEL (VO)
 (continued)
 Not everything here is as exciting
 as Hollywood. But I know how much
 you love your solitude...and the
 great outdoors too.

Gene inspects his work from the captains chair.

EXT. BOAT HARBOR, SKAGWAY RIVER - LATER

The boat is now parked at the harbor as Abel looks through
 their catch of the day.

He throws the small EUCHALON FISH into buckets with the help
 of MAURIZIO (15), an Italian immigrant and deckhand with the
 dark, intense eyes of a young Al Pacino.

Gene grins widely, observing the catch in the background.

GENE
 Hey Maur! Let me show you something
 real quick.

Maurizio looks at Abel, but doesn't turn around when Gene
 calls his name. Maurizio as far as we know is deaf.

Abel doesn't bother to say anything to Maurizio, as Gene
 walks up to him placing his hand on his back to get his
 attention. He signals a driving motion with his hands.

Maurizio smiles and walks back to the chair with Gene.

GENE (CONT'D)

Abel, why don't you take our day's worth back to the deli and start cleaning them off.

Abel takes the buckets and walks back onto the dock...with his feet barely safe on the dock...

...Gene CRANKS the boat into gear, as Maurizio stays by his side, shadowing his steering. Abel struggles to find his footing back on the dock, as the guys drive away.

ABEL (VO)

Don't worry about my family either.

With one hand on the wheel, Gene gently moves it back and forth. Maurizio places his own hand on the wheel. Soon after he tries out the throttle. There is a sweet, grandfatherly-like dynamic here as Gene patiently teaches him.

Maurizio smiles at Abel on the dock.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)

They won't get in the way this time.

Abel responds with a big smile back through clenched teeth.

EXT. SKAGWAY FOREST - DAY

Abel is tying up a slack line in the woods, between two large mossy trees. He is talking to his iPhone on a tripod (the source of where the previous VO has been coming from).

ABEL

(to the camera)

Sometimes when I really need my own space, I come here.

He smiles at the camera and heads over to carefully tie the slack line rope onto both sides of the trees.

ABEL (CONT'D)

(to the camera)

I've been practicing a little. Not just for you, you you big goof...

(points at the camera)

But, for me too.

After a deep breath, Abel raises up the rope higher. We get the sense he's attempting a new level of difficulty today.

Carefully, he steps onto the rope, keeping his balance as he traverses his way slowly across it.

ABEL (CONT'D)
 (to the camera)
 See?

As he looks back down to his feet, his balance breaks, and he falls into the mossy forest floor. He shakes it off, and walks back up to the camera, a bit out of breath.

ABEL (CONT'D)
 (to the camera)
 I keep forgetting how bad the dew
 is in the morning. Whoops.

He looks at the camera like he's waiting for a response back, after a few moments, he shuts if off, and the VAST EXPANSE OF WOODS around him is finally revealed.

He leans against a tree, catching his breath, as he grabs A GREEN INHALER from his pocket.

We move back farther until Abel is just a small, lonely speck in a lush kaleidoscope of green and brown.

EXT. ABEL'S ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Abel's room is the only light on in an old wooden house. We see through the window him sitting, writing in his journal, hunched over a dimly-lit desk.

ABEL (VO)
 (journal text)
 "Anyways, I hope I'm not intruding
 or anything..."

INT. ABEL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Abel continues to write.

ABEL (VO)
 (journal text)
 "...but I couldn't help but notice
 how Jill and you haven't slack
 lined recently...so I thought...
 (Pause)
 Never mind, it's not my place...I
 just...I really hope everything is
 okay between you two".

Abel lifts his pen, thinking for a moment before he signs.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 (journal text)
 "As always, sending peace and love.
 Your loyal friend, Abel"

Abel closes the journal and walks over to his closet. On the journal is a slightly worn Mexican sticker that says "Hasta Pronto!". Abel rubs this sticker with a sense of longing.

He pulls back a large curtain to reveal standing next to his dresser...

THE DALLAS SHRINE.

A well-kept LIFE SIZE POSTER OF DALLAS from his role in a firefighter film stares back at us. The cutout features an axe in his hand, mustache and a heroic smirk.

There is a real firefighter jacket hanging over the poster, with a spotlight cast above it. It's kept as clean and preserved as a retired superhero's just-in-case-cape.

The only notable issue being some loose, torn seams where the name badge should be. After a moment of admiration, Abel places the journal carefully into the jacket pocket.

ABEL

Sweet dreams, my friend.

Dallas's inanimate smirk looks back at Abel. Before the spotlight is turned off and Dallas falls into darkness.

TITLE CARD: "MIMESIS"

EXT. TENNIS COURT - SKAGWAY, ALASKA - DAY (MORNING)

On a dilapidated tennis court, SERA (18), tall, hardheaded, sweeps away rocks from the worn surface.

In the corner of the court is the imposing, overall-wearing BIG DAN (50s). He watches with a look that feels like it breaks one or two HR policies.

Sera keeps sweeping the dirt and dust into a corner.

BIG DAN

(walking over)

Do you need a hand?

SERA

I'm good. Thanks though.

Sera tries to ignore him, but her eyes do catch the sight of a TENNIS BALL MACHINE in the far corner of the court. It looks like it's seen better days.

BIG DAN

Do you play?

Big Dan is now standing fairly close to her.

SERA
Maybe. I mean not in America.

BIG DAN
Yeah, well it probably works the same out here as it does in...?

SERA
Italy.

BIG DAN
Ah, Italy. I like the cars y'all make out there.

SERA
Thanks. I guess.

Big Dan looks over at the tennis ball machine.

BIG DAN
You know I could get that machine setup for you, if you do me a favor.

SERA
Favor? (pause) like what?

Big Dan looks at her. A lot longer than necessary.

CUT TO:

EXT. TENNIS COURT - SKAGWAY, ALASKA - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Big Dan is handed a big stack of blueberry waffles as he sits on one of the benches. He looks as giddy as a kid with some fresh ice cream on a summers day.

BIG DAN
Sweet! Thank you darling.

SERA
(whispered)
Please don't call me that.

BIG DAN
(already eating)
Sure thing sport. Take a look, I got it all setup for you.

Sera looks over to see the tennis ball machine on the other side of the court. Finally a new opponent for her to play.

BIG DAN (CONT'D)
 Yeah Aunt Christie doesn't like me
 in there on accounta she caught me
 smoking inside...so I appreciate
 this. Nobody beats her waffles.

Sera grabs a tennis racket from the wall.

SERA
 Are you related to her too?

BIG DAN
 Nah, we all just call her that.

Sera starts spinning the racket in her hands. Clearly this is
 not her first rodeo.

BIG DAN (CONT'D)
 (mouth full of waffles)
 So how long have you played for?

She keeps her focus. Her eyes on the machine as it whizzes
 and whizzes until it finally spits out a fresh green ball.

It speeds across the court, bouncing once in the zone and
 then flying way over to her left, she slides a Djokovic
 worthy split-slide and hits it back over with a precise
 backhand.

SERA
 I have some experience.

Big Dan almost chokes on his waffles at the sight of this.

EXT. DALLAS BALI COMPLEX, INDONESIA - DAY (MORNING)

Dallas (present day) has a pastel colored band wrapped around
 a palm tree. He uses it demonstrate lunges to a large group
 of WOMEN (30s & 40s) who are excitedly listening in.

DALLAS
 Alright, so there's one key word I
 want you to all remember here, and
 that is "gradations". You don't
 want to come in too hot and pull a
 hammy like Carol did over here.

CAROL (60s) blushes.

DALLAS (CONT'D)
 Although we love the enthusiasm.

He starts showing off a less strenuous maneuver.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

So just focus on feeling a slight
burn, but make sure to take it one
step at a time...okay ladies?

(the group nods)

Alright, now as you push in, just
breathe on each pull.

The ladies watch him in awe. He soaks up the attention,
loving every minute, as he flexes his tan calves.

Suddenly, LAURA (30s) one of his trainers walks by and
whispers something seemingly important into his ear.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

Alright everyone, so Laura here is
gonna take over the ropes...
literally, you could say.

(the group laughs)

I'll see you all at our dinner
tonight though, yeah? Alright. Oh.
and don't forget to bring a little
something special from the garden!

The group enthusiastically agrees, and he jogs past them,
tossing high fives as he goes.

As he exits the group, the ladies gather around and start
talking.

SPRY WOMAN

I'm gonna bring eggplant!

ANXIOUS WOMAN

Who here remembers his allergies?
Is it legumes?

While the ladies are caught up in their conversation, Dallas
starts to hobble a bit. The only ones who notices is Laura
and Carol.

Laura, spotting Carol's observant eye, steps up to the palm
tree workout setup to rally the troops.

LAURA

Okay then ladies! Who's up first?

Several women eagerly raise their hands in response.

INT. DALLAS'S HOUSE, BALI - DAY

Dallas is on a Zoom conference with two members of his team.
He sits in his large kitchen with a ring light in front of
him, sporting a towel to clean up the sweat.

DALLAS

So guys. What's the latest?

TIFFANY (30s) his energetic, hip social media manager pops up on the screen.

TIFFANY

Okay, so as we all know the fans have been straight vibing with all of your workout content lately...so we thought that maybe we should turn things up a notch.

DALLAS

Oh yeah? How much of a notch are we talking?

BARRY (40s) an old school talent manager and proud New Yorker, jumps in.

BARRY

Notch 11 means raffle time.

TIFFANY

Exactly. Something like a camping trip...or dinner. Lots of celebs are doing it these days.

DALLAS

Huh.

BARRY

We could tie it together with some park or animal refuge you know... whatever place.

DALLAS

Right.

TIFFANY

The fans would have to donate to the cause in order to enter the contest. So its a win-win.

DALLAS

Hmm, it's an interesting idea...

Dallas leans back, thinking things over some more.

BARRY

But...?

DALLAS

Yeah, it's just, I don't know guys...why can't we just do a little LA lunch with the winner? A camping trip feels a bit...I don't know, excessive for me.

BARRY

We thought you might say that, which is why -- Tiffany, sweetheart.

DALLAS

Barry, we talked about that word...

Barry raises his hands up, as if to say my bad.

TIFFANY

Yeah, anywho: GoPro wants to sponsor you!

DALLAS

Oh...cool. I mean are those things still cool? I've never really used one of them before.

TIFFANY

Of course, it's like super cool. Just don't duct tape it to your helmet like Barry did.

BARRY

Okay, sure laugh it up. How was I supposed to know there was a clip? Did you know about the little clip?

Dallas laughs. Tiffany pulls out a GoPro from its box. It has a classic black exterior and sleek ergonomics.

TIFFANY

You'll be getting all their latest tech so you can livestream your experience to your fans.

DALLAS

Sounds like a lot of work. Can't we just stare at some trees and enjoy some quiet time in nature?

TIFFANY

Don't worry. Once we get you setup, you'll barely even remember that it's there.

BARRY

Just please do remember though,
okay? The fans don't need to see
everything.

Dallas smiles a bit and then stares at his protein shake.

DALLAS

Let me think about it.

A pause. Tiffany and Barry stare at each other on the screen.

BARRY

Yeah, we thought you might say
that. You want to tell him Tiff or
should I...?

TIFFANY

Look Dallas, we all know the
industry can be tough, and this,
you know...divorce isn't gonna be
cheap, so...

DALLAS

What? Why would you even mention
that?

He sees one of his yoga disciples walk by in the background,
and does his best to keep it down.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

(whispered)

I'm on a fucking retreat to get
away from that Bellini'd up
nightmare.

BARRY

Hey, buddy. Look at me. Okay? Now,
take a breath.

Dallas listens. Takes a breath.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Now, what she means to say is that
you should really, really consider
this one...because GoPro is
offering to give you two million
just for a weekend shoot.

Dallas accidentally spills his protein shake on the computer
in surprise. He quickly uses his towel to clean it up.

DALLAS

Okay, so, I've given this some thought, and...

BARRY

Great! I'll make the call.

TIFFANY

Dope! Let's go...pro!
(laughing at her own joke)

BARRY

Wow, nice...what a zinger.

TIFFANY

Barry no one even says zinger anymore.

DALLAS

Thanks guys.

Dallas waves goodbye and closes the computer screen. He looks around. The place is finally empty.

We get the sense that he's found a rare moment of quietude. He plops his leg up on the chair next to him. Lifting up the ice pack he reveals a big purple scar on his upper leg, shaped like Montana, just as Laura walks in.

LAURA

You good? Or you need another 10?

Dallas throws the ice pack back on his leg.

DALLAS

Could you hold them a bit longer? I think I might take a power nap.

LAURA

Of course. Happy to.

Laura heads back outside.

LAURA (O.S.)

Alright everyone, who is ready for some mindful water aerobics?

The ladies all cheer enthusiastically. Dallas smiles, and as the ladies move to the pool, and the coast becomes clear, he plops down on the BLACK COUCH, making contact just as...

INT. CAPP'S DELI - SKAGWAY - NIGHT

...A huge black bag plops in the dumpster. Abel is taking out the end-of-the-night trash behind the deli.

He pauses his work when he sees Maurizio standing by the dock nearby. He is staring up at a HUGE CRUISE SHIP.

ABEL
(whispered)
Ahh, Christ.

Abel tosses the trash in the dumpster and walks over to him.

BY THE DOCK

Abel catches up with Maurizio, who stands at the dock with a bottle of beer in his hand.

Abel starts signing ASL (American Sign Language) as he sits next to him and starts talking.

NOTE: All sign language (ASL) and Italian will have subtitles and will be written in Italics, unless mentioned otherwise.

ABEL (CONT'D)
(signing & speaking)
Hey Maurizio, everything alright?

EDM music can be heard echoing from the cruise ship. Lights flash from inside, blasting out from the port-side windows. Maurizio keeps staring at it. After a moment of thought.

MAURIZIO
(signing back)
They're back again.

Maurizio points up to the big white cruise ship in front of him. Its formidable presence looming over the small dock.

ABEL
Shit.
(signing & speaking)
I thought they were going to redirect them to Anchorage?
(long pause)
I'm sorry you have to...

At that moment a NEW EDM SONG starts up and we look up to see the party having now moved up to the roof of the boat. Most of the party is clearly wasted, as neon lights flash.

MAURIZIO
 (Italian, mouthed)
Sons of bitches.

The MUSIC ECHOES across the small town. SOME LIGHTS of the neighbors go up in protest.

VARIOUS NEIGHBORS (O.S.)
 Shut it down!/Enough!/You know
 what time it is asshole?

SERA (O.S.)
 Maurizio!

Abel and Maurizio turn around to see Maurizio's sister, Sera as she shivers through the cold night. She signals for Maurizio it's time to go.

Abel encourages Maurizio to get back to his feet, which he does after a moment.

SERA
 Hey Abel.

ABEL
 Hey, you guys need a ride back to
 Aunt Christie's or--?

SERA
 No, it's fine. It's a short walk.

As Sera and Abel talk, Maurizio turns around to the boat and chucks his beer bottle at the hull of the ship. It lands on the side of the ship with a sad, anti-climatic ding.

Some people on the roof look confused by the sound, but nobody seems to be sober enough to investigate.

Sera grabs him by the ear, as she pulls him from the dock.

SERA (CONT'D)
 (Italian)
*Great, now tomorrow you're going to
 fish that out yourself, okay?*

Maurizio shakes her off, as he walks away from the dock. Abel watches them go.

ABEL
 Be safe guys.

SERA
 Thanks. Buonanotte Abel.

Abel waves goodbye to them. As they leave, he looks over at the beer bottle floating sadly near the ship as the party rages on.

EXT. CHARLENE'S BAR, SKAGWAY - NIGHT

Charlene's bar looks like something from a classic wild west film. Tattered windows and faded paint fill our view.

A neon sign for CHARLENE'S flickers in the evening air. It's hard to say if this place has seen better days...it looks as if it has always existed as long as there was some liquor or other desperate libations to serve.

A few LOCAL RUFFIANS (40s & 50s) drink beer outside, they could easily be mistaken for Tombstone extras. Classic rock from a jukebox spills out, feeding the lingering bar flies.

INT. CHARLENE'S BAR - NIGHT

SAM (70s) is sitting at the bar. He's got the typical outfit of an outdoorsman: flannel shirt and a sweaty mesh hat. He's counting crumpled twenty dollar bills onto the counter.

SAM
One, two, three, four...and...
(he digs real deep in his
pocket for this one)
Five! Knew I'd find it. That's five
20s right there honey.

CHARLENE (50s), leans down to look at the stack of Jackson's on the counter. She's got a fun-but-don't-cross-me kind of vibe to her. She shoots Sam a charmed smile.

CHARLENE
I thought we said double or
nothing.

SAM
(whispered)
Damn! You're gonna empty an old
mans pockets.

Sam reaches into his overall pockets, even deeper this time, for more money. Charlene puts her hand on his shoulder.

CHARLENE
Don't worry about it, Sam. We'll do
a rematch sometime, alright?

Charlene takes the money off the table and starts pouring Sam another Whiskey on the rocks.

CHARLENE (CONT'D)

Deal?

SAM

Whatever you say boss.

Sam shares with her a wrinkled smile, and takes a big sip. Charlene smiles, and goes back to tending the bar.

FROM THE POOL TABLE Gene is playing pool with a couple of FISHING BUDDIES (40s and 50s). He looks up at Charlene. Clearly there's some chemistry and complicated history lingering in the air between these two.

Gene hands off his pool stick to one of his buddies, and starts to mosey over to the bar, sitting next to Sam.

GENE

He causing you any trouble?

CHARLENE

No more than the usual.

GENE

Good. I taught him well then.

Charlene shakes her head. Gene doesn't need to say a thing, Charlene starts pouring him his signature drink, a Gin and Tonic with a slice of lime. He thanks her.

GENE (CONT'D)

What should we toast to?

SAM

To the best damn dart player this side of Face Mountain.

Sam tilts his glass to Charlene. Charlene grabs her beer from under the counter, and they all cheers.

GENE, CHARLENE, SAM

(unison)

Cheers.

After a moment.

CHARLENE

Where's Abel at these days?

GENE

Hell if I know. He stopped going out after his little Mexico trip. Likes to keep to himself...like some kind of hermit...

Gene takes a swig. A heaviness in his eyes.

SAM

(spacing out)

I think I ate a hermit crab once
down in Mexico. Mex---eee---coo.
Yeah...can you believe that?

GENE

You serious?

SAM

Cross my heart. I got the shits for
three days though.

GENE

Thanks for that.

Charlene leans in.

CHARLENE

You sure he's alright?

GENE

Who?

CHARLENE

Abel.

GENE

Oh. Maybe? Maybe not? As long as he
don't pull another stunt like he
did last year.

(pause)

Besides, I got enough on my plate
with those two stowaways running
around town.

Charlene gently puts a hand on Gene's.

CHARLENE

I know you can't help but make fun,
but I think what you're doing for
those kids is really sweet.

Gene returns her comforting gesture. Sam looks on concerned.
He's seen this sad ballad play out one too many times before.

GENE

I sure do appreciate that darling.
But Christie is really the one who
takes care of the little meatballs.
I just found them by the docks and
helped put them to work.

SAM

You know, I can't stand meatballs
after dark either. Gives me the--

Sam starts gesturing for an exodus of the southern border.

GENE

Yep. We get the picture Sam.

CHARLENE

Yeah...anyway, I'm just relieved
they got somewhere safe to stay. I
heard that their mom back in Italy
is a real piece of work.

GENE

I'd say your intel is spot on...as
per usual.

They both laugh a little. Beat.

CHARLENE

Just know, that if you ever need
anything...

GENE

I know where to find ya.

Gene smiles at her. Charlene moves on to tending the bar, as
some new patrons filter in.

INT. ABEL'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Abel is standing in his bathroom, staring at a small make-up
mirror. Next to the mirror is a photo of Dallas at the Met
Gala, clean shaven, with a man bun, and a black tux.

ABEL (VO)

It's Saturday night, so the old man
is at the bar. Which means...

In the photo Dallas stands by Jill, (20s) who smiles widely.
She is in an elegant red dress staring up at Dallas with
botox-laced reverence, as cameras flash around them.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)

...No distractions.

He rips Jill out of the picture and drops her in the trash.
She stays smiling at us, amidst a pile of used tissues.

BACK IN THE BATHROOM

In a delicate, ceremonial way, Abel plugs in an old pair of speakers, starting up some 80s British Pop music (something with an air of drama and desperation like The Cure).

SEQUENCE DURING MUSIC

-- Abel takes off his dirty fishing hat, washing his greasy hair in the sink. He blow dries it in the mirror.

-- He cleans off his face with some witch hazel pads, and trims his beard to the same length as Met Gala Dallas.

-- He takes out some tanning cream, rubbing it on his face, and neck, continuing to look at the photo for inspiration.

-- He goes into his CLOSET and grabs a classic black tux, which although it hangs in a brand-new plastic sleeve, looks much cheaper than Dallas's Met Gala attire.

-- Under his bathroom sink, he rifles around for something, tossing out shoe boxes and old shampoo bottles to find it. Finally, after seemingly emptying out his whole cabinet, he finds it -- a SMALL BLUE PASTEL BOX. He rises from under the sink and places it on the counter.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)

My father thinks he can hide things
from me...that he can place this
wedge between us. But I know all
his hiding spots by now.

-- He opens it up, and sees inside two BLUE EYE CONTACTS. Holding them up to the light, smiling like a mad scientist.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)

They never were able to complete
the operation in Mexico, so for
now, this will have to do.

He looks back at the photo of Dallas. He puts one hand over his eye without the contact. Comparing himself to the photo. No doubt, the contacts help complete the look, making the resemblance uncanny.

ABEL

(admiring himself)

There he is.

MEANWHILE, DOWNSTAIRS...

Sera knocks on the door tentatively, until she eventually opens it up, and walks inside.

SERA

Gene?

She sees a small envelope on a table top addressed to her brother. She picks it up.

As she's about to leave, she notices the music playing from upstairs. She sticks the envelope in her jacket, and starts up the steps, the music growing louder and louder.

SERA (CONT'D)

Hello?

No response. Sera keeps walking up the stairs until she gets to the top level. As she nervously spots the source of sound in the bathroom, she looks up to see Abel about to put his second contact in his eyes...

SERA (CONT'D)

Abel?

Abel finally notices her, embarrassed he rushes to turn off the music.

SERA (CONT'D)

Sorry! I shouldn't be here.

She turns away.

ABEL

No, no! It's fine.

SERA

I'll just...

She runs down stairs, as Abel races out the bathroom. The other contact never making it in.

ABEL

Wait! I can explain.

Abel calls over the stairs as Sera is already downstairs, paused by the doorway.

SERA

I'm sorry, I shouldn't have interrupted...whatever you were doing...I was just curious if someone was home...

ABEL

It's cool. No need to apologize. I was just having a little...Friday fun, you know?

Abel laughs.

SERA

Right. Umm, I just came for my brother's check. So..the door was open, and...yeah I..I should go.

She opens the door.

ABEL

Wait! It's cold out there tonight. Let me at least make you some hot cider before you go.

Sera pauses, a bit unsure about the offer. Her hand still on the door.

ABEL (CONT'D)

Please? It's a family tradition.

She stares back at him, finally after a long moment she swings the door closed, as we move to...

INT. DALLAS'S L.A. HOUSE - DAY

...Dallas closes the door behind him as he walks into his lavish LA mansion. He flips through the mail, which is mainly a mix of health and wellness magazines and scripts. Suitcases are stacked by the couch showing his recent arrival.

He finally turns to a BIG PINK ENVELOPE in the stack. On the front it's labeled "Welcome Back" in elegant cursive, with a lipstick kiss stained on the front.

A bit excited, he opens it up to find a LARGE MANUSCRIPT, entitled: "Tales From a Loveless Marriage: The Jill McGrath Story". The cover has a black and white image of a blonde woman (Jill) walking away from a bed of wilted roses on an empty, tropical beach.

DALLAS

(whispered)

You gotta be fucking kidding me.

He tosses the manuscript on the table and stands up, immediately calling Barry.

BARRY (O.S.)

You got Barry.

DALLAS

Jill's writing a tell-all.

BARRY (O.S.)

Oh, christ...look I was planning on telling you --

DALLAS

I thought everything was squared away with her lawyer?

BARRY (O.S.)

Okay, so it was, I promise...but she upgraded recently. Alright? I didn't want to tell you until you shook off the sand first though.

DALLAS

Uh-huh. So how much of an upgrade are we talking about?

BARRY (O.S.)

Okay, don't freak out, but, she may or may not have Diane Estrada in her corner now.

DALLAS

Jesus! Diane Estrada? Fuck me Barry. What else are you not telling me?

BARRY (O.S.)

Okay...well, nothing is confirmed yet, but she may have gotten, or is in the process of getting the other ones to talk too. That's just the word around town though.

DALLAS

"The word"?! What in the actual fuck does that mean? Barry it is your fucking job to know the very clear difference between the "word" and the goddamn truth. Okay!?

BARRY (O.S.)

Hey, just settle...breathe. Alright? I'll schedule a meeting with your lawyer for Monday. You were just in Bali, remember? Namaste and all that. Okay?

Dallas tries to breathe a bit. Closing his eyes, trying to contain it all.

DALLAS
(grimacing)
Uh-huh.

BARRY (O.S.)
I'm on it. Alright?

Dallas opens his eyes, a cold clarity in his expression.

DALLAS
Just don't forget, I wasn't the
only one involved in this mess.
(a bit threatening)
There were others who played their
part too...you know? Corsica, 2017.
Need I say anything else...?

Pause.

BARRY (O.S.)
I know, I know. Believe me. I
know...

DALLAS
Good. Because I need you in my
corner here.

BARRY
You know I always got your back.

Dallas is about to hang up.

BARRY (O.S.)
Hey, wait before you go. I got
something for you.

DALLAS
Hopefully not another surprise.

BARRY (O.S.)
Just have a look down your hallway.

DALLAS
Alright...I'm looking.

BARRY
Now, just keep on walking to the D
room.

Dallas continues to walk down the hallway. At the very end of the long hall, he sees a black door, with a big red "D" emblazoned on it. After a moment he reaches it.

DALLAS

Okay, I'm at the D room now. So what? Looks the same as ever.

BARRY (O.S.)

Great, now head inside.

He opens up the door.

There, sitting in this small room, is a BLACK AND RED MASSAGE CHAIR, with a big colorful bow on top. This is SAGE.

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

You see it?

DALLAS

(in disbelief)

You got me a Sage? I thought these weren't on the market til next year.

BARRY (O.S.)

Let's just say the vice president of marketing owes me one.

DALLAS

Barry...I don't even know what to say.

BARRY (O.S.)

How about "Barry you're the best?" Now go on. Try it out and forget about all that noise.

DALLAS

Barry, you're the best.

Dallas hangs up the phone, and walks to the massage chair. Feeling its fabric and admiring its sleek craftsmanship.

After a moment, he takes a seat. As soon as he does it STARTS UP. The room lights turn off, and its embedded neon lights begin to flash to life, bringing a futuristic club like atmosphere to the space.

A metal mirror (like a luxury car visor) drops down in front of the seat, startling Dallas a bit as it faces him.

It flashes words on the visor as it speaks, like you'd see at a pharmacy display.

SAGE

Hello, Dallas. Welcome back. My name is Sage.

DALLAS

Oh, hi, thanks.

SAGE

Are you seated comfortably? You've had a long trip from what my data tells me. Your vitals are low.

Dallas looks at his arm, which is having its pulse being checked by a small strap, like in a nurses office.

SAGE (CONT'D)

You must be needing to recharge.

DALLAS

How did you? I couldn't even feel that, until you...

At the back of Sage, there are some small but muscular robotic tentacles which are starting to protrude from the side of the chair. They are wrapped in carbon fiber mesh.

SAGE

We pride ourselves on discretion and comfort. It's the Sage way. How's your leg doing? Is the shrapnel all gone now?

Something about Sage's female voice is a bit sinister.

DALLAS

Wait, what do you want to know about my leg for? No one knows about that...

SAGE

We're just here to maximize your pleasure and reduce your pain.

DALLAS

Oh-kay.

Sage tilts Dallas's chair down, as the lights dim, the tentacles place an eye mask onto Dallas.

SAGE

It's the Sage way.

INT. ABEL'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

FADE IN:

Abel is sitting in his room blowing air over some hot cider. He hands Sera the fresh cup.

SERA

Thanks.

(pause, sipping)

So, why just the one?

Abel looks in his make-up mirror by his dresser. Noticing the one contact he has and quickly takes it out.

ABEL

Oh, sorry about that.

He puts it back in his blue plastic case.

ABEL (CONT'D)

I have the full set. I just ran outta time cause...

Sera nods, still a bit weirded out.

ABEL (CONT'D)

I really hope I didn't scare you or anything.

SERA

Don't worry. I don't scare that easily.

ABEL

Good.

Sera looks at the array of Dallas photos on his make-up mirror, taking everything in, noticing all the similarities.

SERA

So are you guys related or something? I think my mom used to watch his movies when I was a kid.

ABEL

Dallas and me?

(laughs)

No, no. I wish. I mean I'm just a big fan, you know?

SERA

(uncomfortable)

I can see that.

Abel leans closer to her. Getting a bit more serious.

ABEL

Look...I know what you saw tonight was strange...but I hope we can just keep this little moment between us and move past it.

SERA

I mean, is it even a secret? Isn't that why you went to Mexico last year? I thought everyone knew.

ABEL

Wait...who told you that?

SERA

I heard your dad talking about it with some guy at the docks the other day. I mean even with your beard and hat...people can tell.

Abel turns to his dresser mirror.

ABEL

Not everything worked out on the trip. I'd rather not get into it.

SERA

Fine with me. As we say back home: *Così è la vita...*so is life.

Sera shrugs.

Abel half-smiles to her. Then in the mirror, he takes off the bow tie in defeat. After a moment.

ABEL

You ever feel like you were meant to meet someone? Like from the very first moment you saw them, you felt this sensation like this person just gets me. They know me on a deep, almost...cellular level.

Pause.

SERA

Not really....I mean maybe with my first boyfriend. But he turned out to be a grade A *stronzo*. I was pretty naive about him.

ABEL

Stronzo?

SERA
Asshole.

ABEL
Ah. Got it.

Abel starts to play with a hair brush on his dresser.

ABEL (CONT'D)
I know people might not get it, but I feel that way with Dallas. I guess I felt like looking more like him might get us closer to bridging that connection. Or at least allow me to understand how it must feel to be someone so special. Someone so admired and loved...

A long pause. A defeat shows in Abel's eyes.

SERA
Look, I understand...I mean, it's a bit strange. But girls all around the world want to look like Kim Kardashian. So I guess, it does make sense in a way.

ABEL
(quietly)
Thank you for saying that.

Pause. Sera shares a supportive look his way.

SERA
So what's your plan here then? Are you just gonna keep on playing dress up or...?

Abel smiles and pulls out his phone.

ABEL
Can I show you something?

Abel shows her the Instagram video advertising Dallas's new contest. In it, Dallas poses in the backyard of his modern LA mansion, as the Hollywood hills rest majestically in the BG.

ON THE SCREEN

DALLAS

What's up guys? Happy Earth Day!
Just checking in to tell you about
a special contest I'm doing with
the World Wildlife Foundation. If
you, yes you...

Dallas points enthusiastically to the camera.

DALLAS (CONT'D)

...my ahh-mazzzz-ing fans have ever
wanted to go on an adventure with
me and save the planet at the same
time, now's the time! If you click
the link in my bio and donate to
the WWF you will have the chance to
win a backpacking trip with me to
Joshua Tree. One of the most
magical places in the world. Hope
to see y'all out there. Lots of
love. Peace!

They finish watching the video.

SERA

He seems kinda...annoying?

Abel takes the phone back. Aggressively.

ABEL

What?! No way. That's just a social
media thing. He's really much more
of a down to earth, private guy.
Trust me.

Sera is a bit taken back by his sudden anger.

SERA

Hey, I'm sorry. I didn't...I can
see how much he means to you...

Abel nods quietly. Long pause.

SERA (CONT'D)

I should probably....

She stands up, and heads out the door.

ABEL

No, you're fine. It's just me. I
overreacted. I'm sorry.

All is quiet. Sera stays standing by the door. After a
moment, we watch her face as something clicks.

SERA

Wait...what if I had a way we could help each other?

ABEL

What do you mean?

SERA

I'm pretty smart when it comes to social media. And computers. Maybe I could think of some way to help.

ABEL

Like what?

She takes a seat on the bed, thinking.

SERA

Well...what if I created some fake emails for you that could donate to this organization, the smallest amount...let's say one penny? Right?

Abel nods.

SERA (CONT'D)

Okay, so when one of these fake accounts wins, I could have them all link back to your Instagram, that way you could multiply your chances of winning, like...

ABEL

Exponentially.

Sera nods. Abel takes this in.

ABEL (CONT'D)

What if I get caught?

SERA

Trust me. I've done this kind of thing before.

ABEL

Okay, but I don't understand. Why would you do that for me?

SERA

Because you're gonna help me run the tennis courts at your Aunt's hotel.

(MORE)

SERA (CONT'D)

I'm sick of scrubbing stupid
toilets and folding laundry all
day. Plus Big Dan is getting on my
nerves. He never lets me practice
in peace. She'll listen to you if
you ask her about it.

ABEL

Why tennis though?

SERA

Because it's my passion. And, also
my dad...he taught me how to play
as a kid and I never stopped,
until, recently I guess.

ABEL

(whispered)

I understand.

He looks over at his Dallas shrine, seeing the firefighter
face peaking out the corner, looking at him as if to say
'What are you waiting for? Go for it buddy!'.

SERA

So, what do you say?

ABEL

Alright. You got a deal.

Sera extends her hand, Abel is about to shake it, when...

ABEL (CONT'D)

But wait...on one condition.

SERA

What's that?

ABEL

You help me figure out this man bun
thing he's got going on.

Abel points to the photo of Dallas at the Met Gala, comparing
it with his own bun, which is in total disarray.

They shake hands, the comb in-between their hands, as if to
help seal the deal.

SERA

(laughing)

Deal!

Abel sits in the chair as she starts helping to comb his hair down, as he stares in the mirror; a look of determination building.

She stops for a moment.

SERA (CONT'D)
What do you think he'll say when
you two finally meet?

Pause.

ABEL
I've thought about it a lot, of
course. But I feel like...whatever
is meant to happen, will happen.
Naturally. You know?

He shares a hopeful smile with her in the mirror.

SERA
Okay. Whatever you say, Buddha.

Abel laughs a bit. Sera goes back to fixing his hair.

ABEL
Do you think we can get started on
this idea tonight?

SERA
No time like the present.

He smiles and turns back on his bluetooth with his phone, playing some quieter, chill hip hop music.

EXT. ABEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Abel's room is the only one still lit in the Capp house. As Sera continues to help Dallas with his hair...the large, imposing, snowcapped, mountains fill our view.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. DENNIS'S HOME, SKAGWAY - DAY (EARLY MORNING)

FADE IN

A group of doves flap wildly in a cage. After a few moments, a withered hand reaches out, clicking the cage door open.

It's DENNIS, (80s), the wheelchair-bound father of Marla. He opens his hands to the birds...they fly out one by one and pick at the bird seed that's in his hands. The old man's wrinkled face turns into a smile.

DENNIS
(re: birds)
One at a time guys. Come on now.

GENE (O.S.)
Special delivery.

Dennis turns around a bit startled to see Gene. The birds flap about, as Gene tries to resettle them all.

DENNIS
Jesus, you scared the devil outta me. You ever try knocking boy?

GENE
The back gate was wide open, and you didn't answer the doorbell, like usual.

Dennis turns his focus back to the birds.

GENE (CONT'D)
I got you those hearing aids for a reason.

Dennis tosses the rest of the bird seed on the ground. The doves jump around wildly, competing for a nibble.

DENNIS
I don't like to wear those things when the birds are out. The damn squawks screw 'em all up. Plus I wasn't expecting any visitors.

GENE
It's Saturday.

Gene holds up a white pharmacy bag, and Dennis remembers.

DENNIS
Yeah, right. Well, come on, let's get this shit over with inside.

Dennis starts wheeling away from the cage. Gene looks at the birds, fluttering around on the wet ground.

GENE
Want me to close the...?

DENNIS
Doesn't matter to me. They come and go as they please. They always fly back eventually though.

Gene closes the gate of the main enclosure, leaving the smaller cage door open, so the birds can roam about the space. They continue to eat; settling down a bit now.

As Dennis rolls towards the house, Gene notices a new stitch on the back of his wheelchair: "R.I.P. TO MY BABY: MARLA CAPP (1975 - 2012)", seeing this throws Gene for a loop.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch...

Dennis is stuck, as he struggles to roll up his muddy, wet wheelchair ramp. After a moment Gene snaps out of it and jumps in to help.

GENE

Here, I got you.

DENNIS

You know I'm fine when the weather ain't so foul.

Gene helps push him up the ramp and get him in the house.

GENE

That's alright. Easy does it now.

Dennis closes the door behind them as they step inside.

INT. DENNIS'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Dennis and Gene sit at a small wooden table inside a humble home. Gene pops open one of the ORANGE PILL BOXES and takes out 1 WHITE PILL, placing it on the counter.

After a moment, he slides over a glass of water to Gene.

GENE

Come on, I even got you donuts to sweeten the deal.

Gene shows off his bag of fresh donuts. Out of nowhere Dennis pulls out a huge knife (maybe from the back of his wheelchair) and SLICES the pill in half.

GENE (CONT'D)

Jesus! What the hell Dennis?

DENNIS

Relax. If the dogs can take half a pill, why can't I? Besides it saves you the extra trip next time.

GENE

I don't think heart medication and
flea medicine work the same way.

DENNIS

(shrugs)

We're all a buncha animals at the
end of the day son.

Dennis slides the severed pill off of the table. He takes the half-pill down with one big gulp of water. Showing his no-pill tongue to Gene. Gene nods as if to say "good job".

Gene gets up to grab a plate for the donuts and sees a photo of him and Marla (early 20s) at their wedding on the wall above him. He takes a long hard look. Dennis notices.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

It's been 10 years now. This month.

GENE

Yeah, I guess so.

Gene plates the donuts and puts them on the kitchen table.

DENNIS

She looked so beautiful that day.

GENE

(nodding)

Yeah. She was always beautiful.

DENNIS

Yep.

Gene stares down at his coffee, a million miles away.

Long pause. Dennis inspects the donuts with his knife.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

How's Abel doing?

GENE

Fine, I guess. Doesn't talk to me
much. Been trying to keep a tight
leash on him ever since Mexico
though.

DENNIS

Remember, the tighter the leash the
more they want to shake the collar
off.

GENE

Right. I'll keep that in mind.

DENNIS

And what about the Italian kids?
You still looking out for them with
Christie and all?

GENE

Yeah, I mean, I'm their temporary
guardian for now. Still need to
figure out what the hell to do
about their dad though.

DENNIS

You got St. Anthony's down the
street to help you with that.

GENE

Maybe. It's not that simple though.
He was an atheist, besides there
wasn't a will or anything.

DENNIS

What do you mean? He's an I-talian
right? Ain't that against his
people or something.

GENE

It's a modern country, people got
all sorts of views now old man.

DENNIS

Yeah. You know, people just really
like being different. That's it. No
one really believes in all that
atheist crap. Not deep down. And
guess what? Jesus knows and loves
these people too. Don't forget.

Dennis stabs a donut hole with his knife and pops it into his
mouth. Gene checks the time on his watch.

GENE

Yeah, well as much as I hate to
leave such a riveting sermon, I
should really hit the road. I'll
see you next Saturday, alright?

Gene gets up to leave as Dennis wheels in front of him to get
his attention.

DENNIS

Don't forget about the books I gave you. Abel especially, he could use a little scripture these days.

Gene already has one foot out the door.

GENE

Yeah. Sure thing. Just call me if you get into any trouble. Alright?

Dennis nods and Gene heads out the door. After a moment, Dennis wheels back to his table, staring at the spread of donuts on his plate. He closes his hands in prayer again.

DENNIS

Also dear lord, before I forget, thank you oh-so-kindly for donuts and the bless-ed man who invented these worldly pleasures. Amen.

Dennis ends his prayer and takes a big, mouth-watering bite of an Apple Fritter.

INT. GENE'S TRUCK - DAY (DAWN)

Gene drives down the road, playing a local radio station as he passes through the dirt roads of the small town.

To his passenger side is a WHISKEY FLASK. With every passing stop sign, the tension between thee two old friends grows.

INT. ABEL'S HOUSE - DAY (EARLY MORNING)

Abel is laying in bed, his face buried in the covers. His room is completely dark, until a blinding stream of light comes through -- courtesy of Gene.

ABEL

What the hell?

He sits up in his bed, and sees Gene next to his window.

GENE

Good morning sunshine.

He throws him a pair of pants and a cleaning rag.

ABEL

Morning. What's going on?

GENE

You mind telling me why my bathroom looks like a tornado blasted through it?

ABEL

Shit. I can explain, I was---

GENE

Stop. I don't want to hear it. I've had a long ass night. I don't need to come home to you acting like a goddamn fairy again.

Gene throws a shirt (from the bathroom) at Abel, hitting him in the face.

ABEL

You drunk at 7 am now?

Abel starts getting up, putting his clothes on.

ABEL (CONT'D)

(whispered)

That's a new low even for you--

GENE

Mind your fucking business!

Gene grabs him by the ear, pulling him to the bathroom, in the adjacent room.

Abel punches Gene in the stomach and he keels over right outside the bathroom. He's underestimated Abel's strength.

GENE (CONT'D)

(pained)

Fucking shit.

ABEL

(terrified)

Fuck...Dad, I'm sorry. I wasn't trying to. I swear.

Abel tries to help his dad stand up, half-heartedly. Gene pushes him away.

GENE

(still pained)

Really? I don't know...seems just like you.

Abel stares at his dad.

GENE (CONT'D)
(still pained)
You gonna lend me a hand or are you
just gonna stand around with your
thumb up your ass?

Gene puts his hand out, and Abel slaps it away.

Abel's heads over to his room, quickly packing up things into a duffel bag.

GENE (CONT'D)
Hey! Where the hell you going this
time! You ain't got no inheritance
left to steal anymore!

He throws a sheet over something big he's packing.

ABEL
(sinisterly)
I don't need to steal shit.

Abel keeps packing up.

ABEL (CONT'D)
Why don't you go hang with Maurizio
some more. I know he's your golden
boy. I'm sick of this shit.

Abel starts heading downstairs, about to leave. Gene is slowly getting up, kneeling now in immense pain.

GENE
Hey! Clean up your shit! I'm gonna
call fucking La Migra and National
Guard on your ass again if you pull
this shit!

ABEL
Go ahead! I'm tired of giving you
rent money that just goes to your
fucking bar tab. I'm fucking out.

Abel is all packed, and rustling for the truck keys in the bowl by the door. Gene is standing now. Still struggling a bit with the pain. Might've cracked a few ribs.

GENE
Don't even think about taking her!

Gene takes off his STEEL-TOED BOOT and chucks it at Abel, he narrowly dodges it, but it cracks a framed photo that crashes to the ground. Abel looks down at his MOTHER'S YOUTHFUL SMILE under the cracked glass.

ABEL

Nice shot. No wonder both mom and Charlene left your ass.

The two men stare at each other. The weight of the words hanging in the air. Abel heads out, slamming the door.

GENE

Hey! You little fucking shit!

Gene, still in pain, finds the strength to start hobbling out the door. Hand on his chest in pain.

EXT. ABEL'S HOUSE - DAY (DAWN)

Abel is already out the driveway, heading down the road, as Gene makes it outside.

He throws some rocks from the driveway at his car, denting the sides. It's no use though -- Abel is too far gone.

GENE

Motherfucker.

INT. GENE'S TRUCK - DAY (DAWN)

Abel sees his dad, kicking & screaming in the background. He can't help but turn a little smile as he drives away.

He flips through channels on the radio station, until he stumbles upon "Fade Into You" by Mazzy Star. He starts the music up, as he drives towards THE COAST.

After a beat.

ABEL (VO)

Wow, that was...a lot. Sorry about all that back there. How would you feel about getting away this weekend?

Abel looks in the rear view mirror.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)

I was thinking we could go to one of my favorite places. Somewhere I haven't been in a long time, and I think you might be the perfect companion to come along.

Abel takes another look in the rearview. He is now exiting the town, moving quickly along the cold, rugged coast.

ABEL
So, are you in?

Finally the fireman cutout of Dallas is revealed sitting in the backseat. His bedroom sheet beside it.

His inanimate body bounces along with the bumpy ride. Abel smiles back, happy with his "response".

EXT. MARLA'S BOATHOUSE - DAY (LATER)

Abel curves up to a fairly empty inlet, where a few scattered boathouses line the coast. The terrain is different than the rest of Skagway we've seen -- it's more Cape Cod, than old miner town.

He pulls up to the front entrance, and grabs A KEY underneath the plastic floor mat on the passenger side of the truck.

ABEL
(to Fireman Dallas)
Hang tight for a minute, alright?

Abel exits the car, and walks towards the boathouse. He finds cobwebs at the door and wipes them off.

After a moment the key finally works, and he's in.

ABEL (VO)
I guess I never really told you
about my mom too much.

Abel grabs Fireman Dallas from the car, as he walks in the house, and places him gingerly on a chair.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
When I was a kid, we used to come
here every summer.

Abel looks at a shelf. Family photos of Young Abel, Marla and Gene come into view, as well as fishing gear and other maritime decor which adorn the house.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
I remember diving off the back of
the boat, fishing for trout with my
kids pole. Sometimes we'd spend all
day on the water. This was one of
the few places where my parents
didn't seem to fight.

Abel looks at A PHOTO of him and his dad holding up a trout as they smile widely while sitting in a canoe.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 Sometimes at night, my mom would
 come out here and sing to the
 stars.

Abel opens up the back door to examine the old deck.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 She told me they would twinkle if
 you hit the right note, and I
 believed her.

The water dances with gold in the morning light. He turns on
 the hose and starts spraying down the layers of grime.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 In the morning she used to get up
 and go for a swim. Sometimes I'd
 come out here and cheer her on.

FLASHBACK

YOUNG ABEL (7) in a robe and a cup of hot chocolate, watches
 his MOM / MARLA (LATE 30s) swim in the water as the morning
 light comes up.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 I always thought that if I didn't
 watch her Nessie was gonna come up
 and snatch her away. The water was
 so dark...it made you wonder.

In the flashback, Young Abel imagines THE LOCH NESS MONSTER
 swimming across the water...a noble giant in the fog.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 One morning I heard a large splash
 and so I ran out here, but I
 couldn't see her anywhere...

Young Abel scans the water, but Marla is nowhere to be seen.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
 I remember seeing these weights my
 dad used to wear around his ankles
 were gone too...

Young Abel looks over to an empty weight rack on the deck.

QUICK FLASHBACK

Gene wearing ankle weights as he does weight training on the
 deck, smoking a cigarette.

GENE
Take notes kid.

Abel coughs and tries to wave away the smoke.

YOUNG ABEL FLASHBACK

Young Abel watches nervously as he scans the water, trying to find his mom. To his side, he notices a big orange bottle next to Marla's morning coffee.

ABEL (VO)
Everything goes kind of blurry from there.

Young Abel picks up the bottle, seeing all the pills emptied.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
Next thing I remember is Aunt Christie sitting next to me in front..and my dad telling me what a piece of shit I was. How I didn't know how to watch out for my own mother. How I was a failure.

This recollection is told as Young Abel sits on his doorstep with AUNT CHRISTIE, (40s), a lady who radiates genuine warmth, and who sports 70s style Bohemian clothes.

She protects Young Abel from a screaming GENE (late 30s). At times physically shielding him from Gene's rage.

Gene's friends start pulling him away. Young Abel hides his face in his aunt's grasp, as the guys keep pulling Gene away.

A FEW COPS (40s) in the background are asking WORRIED NEIGHBORS (50s) to tell them more about what they know about Marla, as they take notes -- OTHER COPS are attempting to get Gene to settle down and tell his story too.

Note: This could come across to Young Abel as nonsense "adult-speak". Akin to a bomb exploding, ringing-in-the-ears moment.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
It took search and rescue all night, but they finally found her. They told me she drowned...but I still don't get it. She always seemed so happy out here..

LATER THAT NIGHT...Abel is inside the house, sitting with Aunt Christie as DIVE CREWS start coming up on shore as they pull up Marla's body.

She tries to pull him away, but he fights back, trying to watch it all unfold.

It's dark out and she is far away, but as the headlights of the divers flash we can see a stretcher with a woman's body and TWO ANKLE WEIGHTS, one on each leg.

Abel runs upstairs to his room, collapsing on his bed. Aunt Christie follows him. She sits by his bed, consoling him.

ABEL (VO) (CONT'D)
I wanted to stay underneath that
blanket forever.

A shot of Abel under the blanket, his eyes closed, grabbing the sheets and twisting them, as tears fall down his face.

BACK IN THE PRESENT

Abel sits on a deck chair, reflecting on these memories.

ABEL
You might be wondering why I would
even want to be back to a place
like this...maybe I'm just stuck in
nostalgia. But this was one of the
last places, I was ever truly
happy, before everything...

Abel turns around to face Fireman Dallas, who is curled up in the sheet, as if to be protected from the morning cold.

ABEL (CONT'D)
I'm sorry if that's too much.

Dallas's fireman jacket flaps in the wind in response.

ABEL (CONT'D)
Thanks for listening though.

Abel's phone is buzzing. He turns around to pick it up,

Recognizing an LA area code, he answers it quickly.

ABEL (CONT'D)
Hello?

TIFFANY
Hello! Do I have the pleasure of
speaking with Mister Abel Capp?

ABEL
Yes...who is this?

TIFFANY

This is Tiffany Vacaro. I work with
Dallas McGrath.

Abel looks back at Fireman Dallas. His heart racing.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

You still there?

ABEL

Yeah, totally. I'm here.

Abel walks over to Fireman Dallas, he puts his hand around
him, a tear forming in his eye.

ABEL (CONT'D)

What is this...I'm sorry. This
isn't a prank right?

TIFFANY

No, no! Not at all. I wanted to
call you personally to give you the
exciting news.

Abel is grabbing Fireman Dallas's jacket lapel. Nerves high.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

First of all, thank you for your
generous donation to Dallas's
contest. I have the great pleasure
of telling you that you are in fact
the lucky winner of the Joshua Tree
sweepstakes! How about that?

Abel collapses on the ground, his phone almost sliding off
the dock, but he manages to catch it.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Hello? Can you hear me?

Abel finally gets back on the phone.

ABEL

Wow. Sorry the service here is...
that's..that's amazing. I, I don't
know what to say....thank you. So,
so much.

TIFFANY

Don't mention it! Thank you for
being a Dallas fan. Our reps will
be in touch with more details soon.

ABEL

Okay.

TIFFANY

Have a great day, and thanks for
being a fan!

Abel is lying on the deck, barely able to speak. Overcome
with emotion.

ABEL

Thank you! I mean talk soo--

Abel hears the click of the phone. He slides over to the feet
of Fireman Dallas and starts crying. His tears staining the
cardboard.

In the distance we hear a car pull up outside the house and
the engine stop.

UNKNOWN MAN

Abel! You in there?

Abel lets go of Fireman Dallas. The voice slowly registering.

CUT TO BLACK

THE END