

High Tide Line

written by

William Parsons

williamparsons1969@gmail.com
(434) 466-2683

OVER BLACK:

"Beware that, when fighting monsters, you yourself do not become a monster...for when you gaze long into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you."

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

FADE IN

EXT. WHEELER BEACH - DAY

A pod of dolphins frolics in Narragansett Bay.

CORY ATKINSON, 17, tall and gawky, lifts his brand new camera up to his fading black eye. Cory bites his bottom lip as he readies that perfect snap.

MYJA BEECHAM, 16, strong swimmer's build, pounds Cory on the shoulder, practically knocks Cory off his feet.

MYJA

The old Delaney place! C'mon, Cor,
let's finally check it out before
it's gone!

Myja kicks up sand with his Converse All-Stars as he rushes over to the half-demolished beach house.

Within moments he's shimmied to the top of it.

Cory darts his eyes up and down the beach, then glances where the pod of dolphins had been. He huffs and frowns.

Myja, his T-shirt tied around his tight waist, his chest shiny with sweat, surveys his domain.

MYJA

Genuflect, plebes!

Myja shades his eyes.

MYJA

Hey, Cory! Quit with that camera and
get over here!

CORY

Myj, you didn't see all these "No
Trespassing" signs? This big one
says "Danger".

MYJA

Did "No Trespassing" signs stop
Caesar when he crossed the Rubicon?

CORY

Well, Magistra Wassermann hasn't
lectured on that yet, but I really
think you oughta come down.

MYJA

Wassermann: I'd sure love to
conjugate her perfect tense.

CORY

Myja, she's our Latin teacher!

MYJA

You're just mad you don't get any.

CORY

And you do?!

MYJA

Hey, Jackie Rorbeau --

CORY

Jackie Rorbeau doesn't know you
exist.

Cory's frown deepens.

CORY

Or me.

Myja, cracking a wide smile, throws out his arms.

MYJA

Look what the girls are missin'!
Hey, you just know they want it.

Myja cups his crotch, thrusts his hips, the whole time hoots.

Cory indulges an ol'-fashioned forehead slap.

Myja jumps down and lands in what was once the front hall.

Cory steps toward the house, past the signs.

CORY

You break an arm or a leg...What am
I saying? You never break anything.

INT. OLD DELANEY PLACE - CONTINUOUS

Myja explores, not in the least carefully, the place littered with broken glass and rusty nails and splintered wood.

CORY

Myj, I keep tellin' ya, man, you want to talk about your mom --

MYJA

Hey, remind me I left my Walkman at your place. Oh, wow!

Myja rushes over and stands under some exposed beams.

CORY

Myja! Don't even think --

Myja leaps up, grabs a beam, soon has his long legs entwined around it, his feet hooked together. He lets himself hang down with his arms outstretched and a wild expression on his face. He whoops and hollers and laughs.

MYJA

Nothing can touch me!

Myja points at Cory's camera.

MYJA

C'mon, use that thing for something important.

Cory clicks off some pics.

CREAK.

Cory lowers the camera.

SNAP!

CORY

Myja!

Myja crashes head-first to the cement floor.

Cory rushes to him, helps Myja sit up straight.

CORY

Oh, God! Oh, God!

Myja groans as he puts his hand to the top of his head. The hand comes away dripping with blood.

Myja grins widely, his eyes dance.

MYJA

Wicked!

Blood flows down Myja's face, drops off his nose and chin and onto his chest, mixing with the sweat.

Cory tentatively reaches a hand out to him.

CORY

No. Not wicked. Bad. As in, real bad. My God, you look like an extra from Carrie.

MYJA

I love that movie. Did you know that de Palma and Lucas --

CORY

Shut up! Help me get you up.

Cory unknots Myja's T-shirt and wraps Myja's head in it.

CORY

Why do I let you get me into trouble all the time? My folks are starting to say things, y'know.

INT. SOUTH COUNTY HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

DON BEECHAM, 40, shoves the curtain aside, stalks into the examination area, his fisherman's boots loud on the linoleum.

MARSDEN TARCHER, M.D., 34, an ornate tattoo on the inside of his right forearm of a skull and "Semper Fi!" -- his scrubs hug his powerful build lean as a snake from his recruit days.

DR. TARCHER

Mr. Beecham?

DON

Something wrong with my kid?

DR. TARCHER

Exactly the opposite. The injury occurred two hours ago, yet the wound already shows a day's healing.

DON

He's done that all his life. I know you're new, but ain't that in your little file there? This has been my family's hospital our whole lives.

Dr. Tarcher eyes Myja again, and Myja shrugs, too, even manages a small grin.

DON
All a big joke to you.

MYJA
No.

Don shakes his head in disgust, turns to the doctor.

DON
Can I take shitferbrains here home?

DR. TARCHER
Sure. Tests are all negative. Keep an eye on him. Any signs of dizziness, nausea, headache, get him back here immediately.

DON
He won't get any of those things.

Don walks off a few paces.

The doctor watches after the father, then looks down at Myja.

DR. TARCHER
This healing thing of yours --

Myja leans forward, his eyes dance.

MYJA
Doc, I can do anything. Nothing can touch me.

Dr. Tarcher looks at Myja seriously.

DR. TARCHER
If we'd had that in 'Nam.

Don throws at Myja the boy's T-shirt from the brand-new movie that summer Aliens. Don looks ready to bite through a rudder.

Don stomps out of the room.

Myja slips off the exam table, glares after his father, flips the middle finger in Don's direction, pulls on his T-shirt.

EXT. ROUTLEDGE AVENUE - DAY

Don repeatedly paces the length of the pickup truck as Myja lounges against it.

Don stops.

DON
You little shit. This morning's
memorial Mass meant nothing to you?

Don teeters a little bit.

DON
You go right afterwards, tear up the
town like it's your playground.

Myja bites down on his lower lip.

DON
I do not, do not like what you're
letting this thing turn you into.
And I know your mom wouldn't.

MYJA
Yeah, well, I kinda do like it. And
I think she would to.

Myja starts to stalk off, collides his shoulder into Don's as
he passes his father.

Don grabs Myja's arm.

Myja looks down at Don's hand, then up, into Don's eyes.

MYJA
Might want to remove that. I don't
want to have to hurt you, old man.

DON
Cold day in hell, boy, you'll ever
be able to hurt me.

Don does let his son go, Myja rubs his arm.

DON
You know that co-pay I just shelled
out because of you? Now Claire can't
go on that school trip on Wednesday.

Myja stares at Don, says nothing. His Adam's apple plays up
and down his throat.

DON
I don't believe you. You spit on
your mother's grave, then you hurt
your sister and don't even care.

MYJA
No, Dad. Wait.

DON
Get out of my sight.

Myja takes a step toward him.

DON
Go!

Myja opens his mouth, thinks better of it, kicks the pickup's tire, kicks it hard, heads off down the sidewalk.

EXT. WHEELER BEACH - DAY

Myja walks the near-empty beach. His All-Stars sink into the sand with each heavy step. He passes a trash can, swipes the now-unnecessary dressing off his head, throws it away.

Myja grits his teeth as he pulls his hand out fast. He looks at the slice along his finger, then shakes out his hand. Sucking on his finger, he just continues his aimless walk.

He stops in front of the old Delaney place. His jaw muscles work under the skin as he glances from one "No Trespassing" sign to the next, then the big "Danger" sign.

Myja walks over to the beach's high tide line, stares out over the ocean.

He sniffs, wipes at his eyes. He mouths a few words, but they're as empty as they are silent. His shoulders sag.

The breakers roll in and recede, roll in and recede.

Myja lifts his hand and examines his finger. He rubs with his thumb the wound that's already sealed and healing.

He stares out again across the ceaseless, careless ocean and narrows his dark eyes, no longer brimming, but hard.

INT. PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Cory sits at a table in the corner, stares straight ahead.

Documents of all types litter the table.

Books: Medical Mysteries, The Arm of the Starfish by Madeleine L'Engle, other titles

Magazines: New Age Journal, Psychology Today

Photocopies of articles with titles such as "Are Some People Born with the 'Healing Gene' Permanently Switched On?" and "What Makes Good People Turn Bad?"

CAMILLE, 19, stops her book-laden cart beside the table. Her fingers continue to absently tap out a tune only she hears.

CAMILLE

We close in fifteen minutes.

Cory jerks upright, looks at her. Cory looks her up and down, sits up straight, runs his fingers through his hair.

Camille grins at him, glances over all the documents.

CAMILLE

I'm taking summer courses, too. What are you, Brown or Johnson & Wales?

CORY

All this? Not for school, it's about my friend. I'm worried about him.

CAMILLE

Sorry. None of my business.

Cory can't stop looking at her.

CAMILLE

You can leave the books and magazines. I'll grab 'em when I come back around.

Camille returns to tapping away on the cart's handle as she moves on to her other duties.

Cory watches after her, then stands, gathers his stuff.

Cory widens his eyes when he reads the word "freak" he'd doodled in a deep scrawl in the top corner of a photocopy of a 1972 issue of the newsletter "The Goddess Speaks". He'd doodled the word almost right through the paper.

Camille stands beside the table again.

CAMILLE

I think that's really nice, you're worried about your friend. You want to talk? You look like you do.

CORY

You think it's nice? Guy and his goons at school say it's faggy.

Camille points at Cory's faded black eye.

CAMILLE
That guy?

CORY
Uses my face as a punching bag.

CAMILLE
What are you looking ashamed about?

Cory shrugs.

CORY
Jack won't leave me alone, it's
gotta be me, right?

CAMILLE
No!
(sternly)
Hey, look at me.

Cory does so.

CAMILLE
You got to go to your principal and
report this jerk.

CORY
My principal?

Camille leans in to him.

CAMILLE
Your secret's safe with me.

Camille puts her hand on his shoulder.

CAMILLE
A coffee shop just opened up around
the corner. Let's go and talk.

Cory regards her, nods slowly, then with conviction, smiles.

Camille smiles back.

CAMILLE
Better.

Her eyes brighten.

CAMILLE
You've got a really nice smile.

Camille helps him finish gathering his stuff together.

CAMILLE

This Jack guy hitting you, that's just awful.

CORY

You're the first person to say that. Everyone says I should just belt him back. Dad, my brothers, even Mom. Coach, too.

CAMILLE

I'm the first person? Not even your friend you're so worried about?

Cory wipes his mouth with the back of his hand. He opens his mouth to say something in reply, then just shrugs.

CAMILLE

Sorry to say it, but...sounds like a sucky friend.

Cory frowns.

CORY

Wasn't always.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Myja enters through the back door.

JAKE BEECHAM, 64, looks up from washing dishes.

JAKE

About time, boy. It's dark out.

Myja sits at the table.

Jake grabs a plate heaped with meatloaf and mashed potatoes out of the oven, sets it in front of his grandson.

Jake hands Myja a fork, then sits across from him.

JAKE

Where's that dressing the doc applied?

Myja shrugs as he picks at his supper.

JAKE

What? "Garbage Gut Myja" isn't hungry?

Myja just shrugs again.

MYJA
Where's Dad?

JAKE
O'Reilly's.

MYJA
A'course he is.
(under his breath)
Asshole.

JAKE
Hey! Nuff of that. He said don't
wait up.

MYJA
No worries there. I don't want to
see him.

Myja looks back at his grandfather watching him, darts his eyes anywhere but meeting Jake's.

Jake starts to chuckle.

Myja knits his brows, finally meets his grandfather's eyes. Myja dares let the corner of his mouth curl upwards.

JAKE
Your mom, she'd've gone down to that
hospital today and high-fived you
right there in the exam room.

Jake slowly sits back, sighs.

JAKE
God, I miss her.

Myja shifts in his chair, taps his foot on the old floor.

His eyes grow distant.

Jake reaches across the table, pats Myja's hand.

JAKE
You gotta give your dad some
patience, especially today. Your
stunt today, it would kill him to
lose you, too.

Myja keeps his eyes distant, but he shifts even more in his chair, his foot bounces even more up and down.

JAKE

It's okay for you to miss her, too.

Myja remains silent, refuses to look at him.

JAKE

What's going on in that head of yours? Talk to me, Myja. We've always been able to talk.

Myja picks at a nick in the table. Finally he looks at Jake.

MYJA

Why couldn't I give some of this to her, before the cancer got her?

JAKE

I don't know. But I know she knows you would've if you could've.

Jake brushes hair out of Myja's eyes.

JAKE

You look so much like her. It's like she's still here.

Myja's eyes brim as he takes a couple of breaths.

MYJA

At least I look like somebody in this family.

Myja slaps at his eyes, sets his jaw tight.

MYJA

Let Dad hate me. I hate him back.

JAKE

Big words.

Jake frowns, shakes his head.

JAKE

What you're letting this thing do to you...be careful.

MYJA

I don't have to be careful, Granddad. I can do anything I want, nobody can touch me.

Myja narrows his eyes at Jake.

MYJA

And it's a nice feeling, Granddad.

Jake narrows his eyes right back at Myja.

JAKE

Power always is.

Myja stands, picks up his plate, starts for the sink.

Jake puts his hand on Myja's arm.

JAKE

Be careful you use it right, okay?

Myja seems to relax a little as he nods at Jake.

Myja walks up to the sink, puts his plate down in it, squints to stare out into the nighttime, past his reflection in the dirty window over the sink.

Jake stands as Don enters, shuts the door behind him.

JAKE

Now, Don. Now, Myja.

Myja moves toward the stairs.

MYJA

I know, I know. You don't want to see me.

Don focuses his bloodshot eyes on his son.

DON

Myja, hold on. This thing between us...we gotta talk.

JAKE

Yes, we definitely do. All of us. As a family.

Jake looks up.

JAKE

Claire! Come in here, sweetheart.

Myja glances at CLAIRE, 14, now standing in the small hallway to the living room.

Myja pounds up the stairs.

INT. MYJA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Myja pulls a small wad of cash out of a sock in his dresser drawer, which he brutally slams closed.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Myja gives Claire the money.

CLAIRE
Your guitar money?

MYJA
(to Don)
All I do is think of myself?

CLAIRE
All you talk about is that guitar.

MYJA
Don't worry about it.

Myja runs a hand through his thick hair.

MYJA
Lots of guitars in the world.

JAKE
That is a nice gesture, Myj.

CLAIRE
Maybe you can pull one of those
"Will my arm break?" bets and get
this right back.

MYJA
Or maybe just steal one out of Old
Man Jacobs's shop.

CLAIRE
Myj, he broke the hand of the last
kid he caught stealing.

MYJA
Yeah, well, see him try that with
me. See where it gets him. My fist
in his face, that's where.

Claire throws Myja's money in her brother's face.

CLAIRE
Keep your stupid money.

Don steps forward, right up to his son.

DON
I have absolutely had it with you
today. You go to your room.

MYJA
You go to hell!

Myja storms out the back door, which stays open.

Don rushes over to it.

DON
Myja, get back here!

His tone turns from angry to pleading.

DON
Myja, please! Son! Come back!

Don turns and looks at his father hugging Claire.

INT. CAMILLE'S CAR - NIGHT (MOVING)

Camille pulls the car to a stop in front of Cory's house.

CORY
Well, thanks again for saving me the
bus ride back down here.

He glances to his left, immediately exits the car.

EXT. CORY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cory's parents try to console Myja on the front porch.

MR. ATKINSON reaches his hand out to Myja, Myja pulls away.

MR. ATKINSON
Myja, come inside. Your dad called,
he's worried about you, we all are,
have been for a long while.

MRS. ATKINSON steps forward.

MRS. ATKINSON
Honey, we were all at today's
memorial Mass. Let us drive you
home, all of us sit down together,
talk it out.

MYJA

I don't need any of you!

Cory and Camille walk up.

Myja stiffens, glares at Cory, then at Camille.

MYJA

(to Cory)

Seems you don't need me anymore
either.

CORY

Myja. No!

Cory holds up a folder stuffed with the photocopies from the books, magazines, and newsletters.

CORY

I found a bunch of stuff to help you
understand this thing of yours.

MYJA

I don't want to understand. Why
can't everyone understand that? I
just want it. It feels good!

Myja stalks off the porch.

MYJA

I knew coming here was bullshit.

CORY

Myj, c'mon, man, let us hel --

Cory grabs Myja's arm.

Myja swings around, punches Cory square in the face.

Cory presses his hand to his face, stumbles backwards.

The folder slips from his grasp, papers fly everywhere.

Camille grabs ahold of Cory.

Everyone stares at Myja.

Myja stares back at them.

He takes off at a dead run into the night.

Cory's parents rush over to Cory, Mr. Atkinson gets him to slowly lower his hand.

Cory hisses breath through his clenched teeth as his dad fingers where Myja had punched his son.

CORY

Ma, Pop, I've never seen him this
out of control.

Mr. Atkinson nods.

The four of them start picking up the papers.

EXT. NARRAGANSETT - NIGHT

Myja wanders the familiar streets which at this hour on a Sunday are all but deserted.

MYJA

Screw Toothpick already! Asshole
made me hit him.

Myja punches a pole, grimaces, grits his teeth as he shakes out his hand. He looks at his torn knuckles and grins.

INT. JACOBS CONVENIENCE AND CONSIGNMENT - NIGHT

MIKE SNIDER, 17, scrawny with a peach-fuzz beard that barely hides a riot of pimples, watches Myja's every move.

Myja walks up to the counter, bangs a bottle of Coca-Cola down on it.

Mike jumps.

MIKE

Anyth --
(clears his throat)
Anything else?

Myja stares hard at Mike, who shrinks under the scrutiny. Myja turns his eyes only for the brief moment it takes to glance up at the security camera.

Mike gulps. He can't take his eyes off Myja's fist.

Myja's chest rises and falls, his whole body trembles.

Myja slaps tears off his cheeks.

Mike's eyes are wide. He darts them at the phone. Mike gulps as he sees how Myja keeps darting his own eyes at the cash register.

MIKE

C'mon, man, please. I got a one-year-old at home I'm raising alone. Mr. Jacobs will fire me, you rob this place.

MYJA

I look like I care? I don't care about nothing.

MIKE

Then why you crying, man?

Myja, with a broad sweep of his arm, clears the countertop, sends merchandise, papers, candy, and lottery tickets flying.

He grabs Mike by the front of his threadbare shirt and drags him halfway over the counter, then shoves him back, where Mike slams against the wall, grimaces.

Myja looks at Mike one last time, then stares right into the security camera and flips it the middle finger, then slams out of the store, shattering the door's glass.

Mike can barely pick up the phone, his hand shakes so badly.

EXT. WHEELER BEACH - NIGHT

Myja walks up to the group of teenage boys standing around a fire as they drink beers and smoke cigarettes and joints.

JACK MAGUIRE, 18, pudgy, no one's idea of a looker, smirks.

JACK

Freak at four o'clock, guys.

Jack takes a long toke off his joint.

JACK

What, Beecham, here to stick up for your loser friend again?

MYJA

You can turn the asshole's face into hamburger, all I care.

Myja holds up his clenched fist already free of any bruises.

MYJA

I just did.

JACK

Dynamic Duo turn on each other.
Wicked. Figured you two for faggots.

Myja's eyes glint with the flickering flames.

MYJA

Wanna know how to really mess
Atkinson up? No more of this pussy
kindergarten bullying shit?

JACK

Sure do. Whatcha got?

MYJA

He's got a nice new little squeeze.
You'd like her, Maguire -- she's fat
and ugly too.

Jack darts his eyes around his group of buddies, brings his attention back to Myja.

JACK

I always knew, Beecham, you were
sick, and something about you was
really fucked, but I never thought
you could be cool.

Myja snatches the joint out a GUY's mouth, takes a tight drag off it, lets it sit in his lungs for a long moment, exhales.

Myja slams his fist in the guy's face.

The guy stumbles back, trips, lands on his backside, clamps his hand over his nose, blood oozes between his fingers.

MYJA

Trust me, none of you don't know
anything about me.

Myja looks all around the group, then into the night beyond the fire, over the small seaport.

He then casts his eyes across the wide ocean.

MYJA

None of you do.

Jack gulps, continues to stare at him.

EXT. WHEELER BEACH

The sky stretches from the horizon as a palette of oranges to reds to blues to violets melds into the star-pricked velvet overhead.

EXT. PAULETTE'S DREAM - PERRY WHARF

Don nudges his son's shoulder.

Myja sits up, then meets Don's eyes.

MYJA

Dad, I --

DON

Last night, me and my dad aired out
a lot of shit that's been pent up.
Later you and me are doin' the same.

Myja withers under Don's hard stare.

DON

Now: work.

Don steps over into the wheelhouse.

Myja stands, glares after his father. Under his breath:

MYJA

Asshole.

Myja steps right into his part of the muscle-memory routine of preparing the Paulette's Dream for that day's fishing, whatever there might be of it.

EXT. PAULETTE'S DREAM - STELLWAGEN BANK - DAY

Myja comes topside, wipes his hands on a rag, tosses it away.

He suddenly looks up.

The unmistakable sound of a whale exhaling ("blowing").

Myja musters a grin, which softens his hard and angry expression. He glances over at the wheelhouse.

Don's asleep in the captain's chair.

Myja, ignoring his life preserver still on its hook, hurries over to the bow of the boat.

His hand instinctively goes for the clasp hook on the end of the tether safety line.

When he hears even more blows, he squints intently against the afternoon sun.

Myja scoffs and waves off grabbing the clasp hook and jumps up onto the bow's sheerline.

A humpback whale, a big female, slides right under the Paulette's Dream, rubbing the Dream with the length of her massive body and rocking the vessel.

Myja yelps as he tumbles over the side. The sickening sound ensues of his head slamming against the hull.

Myja slips under the waves, and before he can think straight the big female glides past him, and the broken-off handle of a harpoon embedded in her flank tears into Myja's jeans, snagging him.

Blinking and leaving a trail of blood from his gashed-open scalp, Myja thrashes his arms as he's dragged along, the pressure of the water pressing him against his back against the whale's skin.

Myja's eyes are wide as he puffs out his cheeks but otherwise keeps his mouth shut.

To his momentary relief he finds himself above the water line as the whale surfaces and blows.

MYJA

Da -- !!!

Just as quickly he's under the water again.

He kicks. He thrashes his arms.

The female's calf, practically weaned as seen by his size, slides up beside Myja, keeping close to his mother.

The young creature regards Myja intently.

Myja stares into the calf's eye staring back at him.

Myja's kicking and thrashing slow, then stop.

The calf stays right there beside him, in perfect languid pace with his mother.

Myja, transfixed, can't stop looking into that eye staring into his eyes just as transfixedly.

BEGIN MONTAGE OF QUICK FLASHES

-- MOM, 37, slips away into death in the cold, sterile hospital room.

-- GRANDMA, 60, is pulled out of the twisted wreckage clogging the intersection of Robinson and Kingston Streets. In the background her KILLER is given a breathalyzer test.

-- Cory stands there, stares at him with his one wide eye as he clamps his hand over his other.

-- In the emergency room bay, Dad shoves the curtain aside, looms over his son in his anger and disappointment.

END MONTAGE OF QUICK FLASHES

Myja tries to look away, wants to look away, but he must continue to stare into the calf's whale-eye abyss that stares back into him: hurt matched for hurt, pain matched for pain, loss matched for loss.

The anger, hatred, and rage which had been reflected in Myja's dark eyes for so long subside now to a calm which, despite his current predicament, takes over his whole being.

The word "Aliens" on Myja's T-shirt speaks volumes between him and the whale calf.

Myja opens his mouth.

BEGIN MONTAGE OF QUICK FLASHES

-- Mom tosses THREE-YEAR-OLD MYJA into the air. Both laugh with abandon.

-- Grandma, with hair spray and comb, lends her helping hand to middle-schooler Myja as they put the finishing touches on his one-foot purple mohawk.

-- Middle-schoolers Cory and Myja sit at the end of the breakwater and, staring up at the stars, swap idle chitchat.

-- Don and Myja stand side-by-side on Pier 43, holding their fishing poles at parallel angles, indulging no conversation on such a perfect Sunday afternoon.

END MONTAGE OF QUICK FLASHES

Myja's eyes blink several times, then close, perhaps forever.

Myja, for the first time since we've met him, looks at peace.

INT. MOTORIZED SKIFF - CONTINUOUS

On his back, Myja's eyes flutter open, then he opens them wide and arches his back hard as water spews from his mouth.

Don, as soaking wet from head to toe as his son, immediately moves Myja onto his side.

Myja gasps and spits, spits and gasps. The salt water seems as if it will never stop expelling from his tortured lungs.

Myja sits up fast, grabs Don in a tight embrace.

MYJA

I miss Mom. I miss Grandma. I miss them both, Dad. Why couldn't I save them? I have this thing inside me.

Don strokes his son's head as Myja sobs into his shoulder.

EXT. STELLWAGEN BANK - DAY

Mother and calf humpback whale blow in perfect unison, then glide out of sight beneath the waves.

INT. JACOBS CONVENIENCE AND CONSIGNMENT - DAY

As prune-faced OLD MAN JACOBS lords over them with arms crossed, Myja helps Mike repair the glass in the door.

Myja glances at Mike, reaches out to put a hand on Mike's bony shoulder.

Mike moves his body to keep Myja from touching him.

MIKE

Gonna start crying again? Huh, sissy? Not such a big shot now.

Myja frowns, darts his eyes at Jacobs, returns to their task.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY (MOVING)

As Interstate 95 towards Boston races by outside, Myja leads Claire and her CLASSMATES belting out a hit song from a recent even more hit movie as TEACHER and BUS DRIVER alike just grin and shake their heads.

EXT. WHEELER BEACH - NIGHT

Myja saunters up to Jack and his goons...sorry...buddies.

Myja steps right up to Jack, grabs his blunt. And. Eats it.

Jack stares at him wide-eyed.

Next, Myja grabs one guy's beer, guzzles it down, grabs another guy's beer, guzzles it, drenching his shirtfront.

Next, Myja digs into the pocket of another goon's...er... guy's jacket, pulls out a Baggie of heroin, snorts in deeply.

Jack hangs his mouth open as he stands there and just stares.

JACK

You are nuts, Beecham.

Myja dons a wide-eyed, wide-grinned crazed expression.

MYJA

Yeah. I'm nuts.

He takes a step toward Jack.

MYJA

I'm crazy.

Another step.

Jack takes a step back.

MYJA

I'm a freak.

Another step.

Jack takes another step back.

MYJA

I'm a psycho.

Another step.

Jack takes another step back, stumbles on a stick.

Myja steps right up to Jack, grabs him by two fistfuls of his shirtfront. Myja brings Jack's face right into his.

MYJA

And now I'm in your life. You don't want me in your life.

JACK

Let go of me, man!

MYJA

And I won't ever get out of your life if you ever, ever bother Cory or his girlfriend or anyone else in school for that matter, ever again. Ever!

Myja releases Jack, acts at first everything's copacetic, then plows his fist into Jack's midsection.

Jack doubles over.

Myja upends the Baggie, pours the rest of the heroin into his mouth, grabs a beer, washes it down, grabs a joint, puffs on it, grabs another joint, eats it, guzzles another beer.

The goons skedaddle, Jack stumbles after them.

MYJA

Remember, Maguire! Your misery's now my mission in life, and I'm nuts!

Myja watches after them with a stupid grin on his face.

When he knows he's alone, he wraps his arms around his middle, drops to his knees.

His expression goes from crazed to miserable. He groans.

MYJA

Oh, shit. Oh, no.

Myja falls over onto his side.

INT. KITCHEN - SOMEWHAT LATER

Myja staggers in, lets the back door shut behind him.

Don and Jake both look up from the table.

DON

You look like shit, son.

Myja musters a grin that's more a grimace.

Jake jumps to his feet, steps over to his grandson.

JAKE

You okay?

MYJA

You know me, I'll be fine.

Myja motions in the general direction of upstairs.

MYJA

I'm gonna go lie down for the night.

Myja starts to stumble up the stairs.

Don watches after his son, rolls his eyes, shakes his head.

DON

Teenagers.

MYJA

Yeah, Dad. We suck.

Myja disappears up the stairs.

MYJA (O.S.)

'Night!

INT. ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH - DAY

Myja stands before the votive stand, many of the candles lit.

Cory and Camille wait in a pew behind him.

Myja slips two photographs out of his pocket.

He places one -- Mom -- behind one candle, lights the candle, places the other -- Grandma -- behind the other, lights that candle.

Myja, tears streaking his cheeks and dripping off his chin, bows his head, shuts his eyes, silently recites prayers.

Myja opens his eyes, runs his fingers over each photograph.

He mouths words: first 'I'm sorry', then 'I love you', then -
- after a long pause -- 'goodbye'.

Myja sniffs, wipes the tears off his cheeks, backs away from the votive stand, kneels to one knee, crosses himself.

He stands to his full height again, turns, walks over to Cory and Camille, who have exited the pew.

Cory quickly kneels, crosses himself, stands again.

CORY

You okay?

Myja nods. He points at Cory's massive black eye.

MYJA

Sure sorry 'bout that. Maybe I can
still give you some of this to --

CORY

You stay away from me with that.

Cory indicates the folder he has tucked under his arm.

CORY

C'mon, let's go down, watch the high
tide come in, go over this stuff.

Myja stands there, frowns, then cracks a grin, nods.

MYJA

Yeah. Let's do it.

The three friends leave the church.

FADE OUT