

INT. THE BEDROOM - PRE-DAWN

The cool glow of pre-dawn spills in through the window of the bedroom. This relic of a room sports artifacts and decor of the 90s and early aughts. It looks like the room of a pubescent boy fed on a diet of poorly aged raunch comedy and video games. The sound of rhythmic exerted breathing can be heard from somewhere just off camera. Two twin beds on either side of the room - a window on the wall between them. An old antenna radio plays softly from the nightstand next to the bed.

RADIO HOST (O.C.)  
(from the radio)  
Men were not made for love. To be  
loved. It's survival of the  
fittest. Kill or be killed.

EXT. COUNTRY HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Snow blankets the treelined countryside as a luxury SUV barrels down the icy highway - the two passengers barely visible through the windshield.

RADIO HOST (V.O.)  
The veneer of "civilation" is razor  
thin. When the shit hits the fan, I  
promise you, we will abandon every  
notion of compassion so we can get  
our blood soaked hands on one more  
can of beans.

EXT. RADIO OUTPOST - MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - CONTINUOUS

A lonely radio shack tucked between an expanse of trees and snow covered hills. It looks more like a house that someone build into a radio station - rickety tower peeking from behind the house.

RADIO HOST (V.O.)  
To eat for one more day. One more  
day to stave off the inevitable  
decent into darkness.

INT. THE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Between the two beds, a head bobs into frame repeatedly as he slams through a set of push-ups. This is JACK - late 30s, bearded, wild.

RADIO HOST (O.C.)  
Men are made for violence.

Jack's push-ups start to slow as he struggles with the effort  
- beads of sweat forming at his brow - his breathing ragged.

RADIO HOST (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
Since the ape first stood up and  
rubbed two sticks together, we've  
been tearing each other a part. For  
what? For nothing. Because we *can*.

Jack collapses to the floor out of breath.

RADIO HOST (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
Men. Are made. For violence. Kill  
or be killed. When did we lose  
that? When did we start pretending  
that we're something other than  
that which we *clearly* are?

INT. TRICKED OUT ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

In the driver seat is QUINN - 30s, clean look, put together.  
He stares out over the road as he drives, pensive. Sleeping  
in the passenger seat beside him is SUSAN - 30s, whip-smart,  
stylish - designer coat and scarf bundled about her.

RADIO HOST (V.O.)  
What favors are we doing our sons  
by coddling them, huh? Tell me  
that. The world takes no prisoners,  
and life never gets easy. The best  
thing we can do for our boys is  
stop hugging them... stop wiping  
away their tears, and to teach them  
that they better harden up.

INT. RADIO OUTPOST - CONTINUOUS

Inside the darkened, smokey, and cluttered recording booth  
sits the RADIO HOST - 60s, wild hair, wilder beard, a face  
like a canyon topographic map. A cigarette dangles from his  
fingers.

RADIO HOST  
Some of you are gonna bitch and  
moan at me - "but the research says  
that boys need- blah blah blah blah  
blah". Tell yourself what you want  
but you know I'm right. In your  
heart of hearts you know.

(MORE)

RADIO HOST (CONT'D)

You wanna be governed by a bunch of weak-willed limp-dicked liberals? Be my guest. But I'm here to empower men to take back their goddamn birthright. Look yourself in the mirror. Feel it coursing through your veins? That's vitality, boys.

The man takes a long drag from the cigarette.

RADIO HOST (CONT'D)

You're in pain. Of course you are. Of course you fucking are. To be a man is to live with pain. It's our burden to bear. Take the aching in your heart and see it for what it is: a distraction from your purpose.

INT. THE HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The kitchen hasn't been updated since the house was built sometime in the 60s. It's functional and drab. LINDA - 60s, blue collar, she moves like a woman who did too many years hard labor with too few vacations. Linda hurries about the kitchen cleaning frantically.

LINDA

Jack! Jack!  
(beat)  
I need your help getting this place together for your brother!  
(beat)  
I know you're up there, you idiot!  
(beat)  
Why do I bother? Why do I even bother? Might as well be talking into my own ass right now!

RADIO HOST (V.O.)

Let's do our boys a favor this holiday season. Give them the gift of a little tough love. Give them the gift of a reality check. Give them the gift of resolve. Pass your sons the stick and let them wield it in power. It's the natural order.

INT. THE HOUSE - THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack is picking through a pile of dirty clothes to find the least offensive shirt he can - satisfied with a particularly ragged looking flannel, he pulls it on as he listens...

LINDA (O.S.)  
 (calling from somewhere  
 downstairs)  
 For days I've been asking you  
 to help me. For *days*! Now  
 here we are.

JACK  
 MA! Quit riding me! I'm  
 bettering myself!

LINDA (O.S.)  
 No surprises though-- Oh is  
*that* what you're-- I  
 shouldn't be surprised. Why  
 would I be surprised! I can't  
 do this forever, you know. I  
 can't *do this forever*!

Jack shoves some of the dirty clothes into a closet.

JACK  
 I ain't asking you to! *There*. I'm  
 cleaning!

He pulls a beer out of the mini-fridge buried in the closet.

EXT. COUNTRY HIGHWAY - DAY

A tricked out Escalade is parked along the side of this  
 lonely stretch of highway situated in middle of nowhere  
 Michigan - snow blankets the landscape. A few feet away from  
 the car, Susan vomits into the snow. Quinn is crouched over  
 Susan, his hand on her back.

RADIO HOST (V.O.)  
 In a cosmic sense, we're all  
 already dead our sun has  
 supernovaed and every light  
 in the universe has gone  
 out... Morbid? Maybe. The  
 truth feels morbid when we  
 live in lies.

SUSAN  
 (between wretches)  
 I'm okay-- Just-- gimme a  
 minute.

Quinn backs away. Despite the cold, he looks to be  
 overheating - his face is sweaty and his breathing a little  
 ragged.

Quinn's breathing intensifies. He mutters inaudibly to  
 himself.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
(still vomitting)  
Are you-- okay?

QUINN  
Yeah... You?

Susan hurls once more in answer. When she evacuates the last remnants of her breakfast, she stands abruptly and turns to Quinn:

SUSAN  
Are you ready?

QUINN  
Are you sure about this?

SUSAN  
We can't avoid them forever.

QUINN  
We could try. They're animals.

SUSAN  
We'll be okay. We're together.

They both get back into the car. The car starts and pulls back into the road.

INT. RADIO OUTPOST - CONTINUOUS

The Host puts out the last of his cigarette.

RADIO HOST  
But listen. In all non morbidity.  
Merry Christmas and all that. Or  
Happy Hanukkah. Or Happy It's-Just-  
Another-Day-For-A-Heathen-Like-Me.

He pulls a small comb from his pocket and works it through his beard a few times while he continues - it has little taming effect...

RADIO HOST (CONT'D)

If I missed the proper greeting for someone and you want to cancel me -  
 - Well, if your feelings are hurt because I didn't wish you a Merry It-Was-Originally-A-Pagan-Ritual-Anyway-And-I'm-A-Goddamn-Wicken, well, man-up and listen closely and see if you can hear my middle finger standing perfectly erect in your direction.

INT. THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack stares intently at a shelf of trophies situated above the small desk shoved into the corner of the room - his gaze is unreadable and yet somehow unhinged. He drinks from the can of beer in his hand as he studies the trophies: Baseball, football, wrestling - all championship trophies with the name Jack Doran. And one single trophy from an academic decathlon with the name Quinn Doran. All of the trophies have gathered a thick layer of dust except for Quinn's, which still shines brightly.

RADIO HOST (O.C.)

Onto the weather. It's gonna be bad. Apocalyptic bad. That Lake Effect is sending a beast of a storm right up your asses, so batten down the hatches ladies and gents, and get ready for a white-ass Christmas. Here's a word from our sponsor...

Jack shuts off the radio as Linda's voice bellows from somewhere downstairs...

LINDA (O.S.)

Is that room clean yet? You better be getting it ready! Your brother will be here any minute and--

JACK

I'm trying to do what you're saying if you just get off my ass for a minute!

He reaches up and adjusts Quinn's trophy so that it sits front and center on the shelf. He gathers another pile clothes and stuffs them under a bed.

LINDA (O.S.)  
Listen to me-- If I come up  
there and that room is a  
mess, you are *done* for. *DONE*.  
*FOR*.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Yeah yeah yeah yeah-- How  
about you come up here and  
see for yourself-- see for  
yourself!

He finishes his beer and chucks the can at the trash bin in  
the corner - he misses.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Fine! Whatever! God!

Jack looks out the bedroom window - in the distance, a car  
can be seen winding it's way closer to the house.

LINDA (O.S.)  
Don't you--! Fine then. Fine! I'm  
coming up there!

Linda's footsteps can be heard as she stomps up the stairs  
toward the room. Jack abruptly turns and rushes toward the  
window - He throws it open and climbs out, shutting it  
quickly behind him as Linda enters. She scans the room for  
him then slams the door in an exasperated huff.

CUT TO:

INT. TRICKED OUT ESCALADE - DAY

Classic Christmas tunes play on the radio. Quinn stares out  
over the road in a bit of a daze.

SUSAN  
It'll be different this time.

QUINN  
Mm-hmm.

SUSAN  
Don't you think?

QUINN  
Mm-hmm.

SUSAN  
I mean, a lot has happened since  
the last time.

QUINN  
Yeah.

SUSAN  
And I know what to expect now.

QUINN

Mm-hmm.

The house can be seen through the windshield as Quinn slows toward the driveway.

EXT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack hides in the bushes and spots Quinn's car approaching. He quickly packs a snowball and launches at the car - it slams into the windshield. Then he turns and sprints back to the house.

INT. TRICKED OUT ESCALADE - CONTINUOUS

Quinn slams on the breaks as the snowball plasters the windshield.

QUINN  
Shit!

SUSAN  
Fuck!

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Are you okay?

SUSAN  
Did that fall off the tree?

QUINN  
Somehow I doubt it...

Quinn pulls up to the house.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

With the snow flurries drifting down and the aged trees reaching high in the yard, there's a very "George Henry Durrie" feeling about the home. The picturesque serenity is shattered moments later by Jack as he sprints toward the front door, knocking over the trash bin on his way. He swings the door open and rushes inside.

INT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack stomps into the foyer, not bothering to wipe his feet on the mat. He starts stripping off his parka, tossing it on the floor.

LINDA (O.S.)  
(calling out)  
Where the hell did you go?

JACK  
They're coming!



LINDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 I need you to go up to that room  
 and get it ready for them. It's  
 filthy!

JACK  
 I'll do it in a minute.

LINDA (O.S.)	JACK (CONT'D)
Not in a minute, dammit! If	I didn't invite them, they're
you plan on staying you need	your guests--
to help-- That's it!	

Linda can be heard stomping through the house. Jack makes a quick exit, charging up the stairs.

JACK (CONT'D)  
 (as he goes)  
 It's my room, Ma!

Linda emerges from within the house.

LINDA  
 It's my house. Get back here!--  
 You're tracking snow all through  
 the-- Jack, if that room isn't  
 ready by the time your brother and--  
 -!

Jack appears at the top of the stairs.

JACK  
 Fine! Ma! Shit! Quit busting my  
 fucking balls!

LINDA  
 Goddammit! Quit being an asshole!

Jack disappears from the top of the stairway.

JACK (O.S.)  
 FINE! You know how many moms I know  
 calling their son an asshole?!

INT. THE HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jack stomps down the hall - old wall paper, lined with framed photos from years past. Jack mumbles obscenities under his breath as he pushes his way into--

INT. THE HOUSE - THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jack bursts into the room still muttering under his breath.

JACK

None moms! That's how many! 'Cept  
you. Maybe you're *the asshole!*

LINDA (O.S.)

Oh I'm the asshole?! I'm getting  
the spoon!

He sweeps the junk off the desk in the corner into the trash  
bin - most of it spills onto the floor.

Jack makes one more pass to the shelf of trophies and attends  
to Quinn's trophy.

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

That's it! I'm coming up there and  
I got the spoon!

Jack quickly throws open the window letting in a gust of cold  
air. He climbs out, knocking over a lamp on his way, and  
shuts the window behind him - he disappears from view as  
Linda sweeps into the room, big wooden spoon in hand.

LINDA (CONT'D)

(She chucks the spoon  
across the room as she  
enters)

Call your mother an asshole??! This  
room is-- what is all of this? Good  
friggin Christ you're an animal.  
*Disgusting.*

Linda starts scurrying about the room picking up odds and  
ends, frantically tidying as much as possible. She is  
increasingly disgusted by the various objects she must  
interact with.

LINDA (CONT'D)

(picking up a crusty porn  
magazine)

Oh God. That's it! Use the internet  
like a normal person! You know what  
I'm doing? Say goodbye to your  
stuff!

Linda starts cramming stuff into the wastebasket. She  
wrenches the window open.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Sayanora!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack is pressed against the side of the house, standing on the stretch of roof under the bedroom window when-- the window is wrenched open and out flies a wastebasket full of his stuff.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Linda slams the window shut.

LINDA  
That'll teach you, you little  
prick.

The sound of a car pulling up can be heard - Linda rushes out of the room. A moment later Jack appears at the window - he tries to open it but can't seem to manage - he gives it one last mighty effort but loses his footing and slips out of sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack rolls off the roof and crunches into the shrubbery below. He groans.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Quinn and Susan step out of the tricked out Escalade and head to the back hatch.

SUSAN  
You don't have to impress anybody.

QUINN  
I know that.

SUSAN  
I just-- I know how you can get and  
I want you to know you don't have  
to try and impress them.

QUINN  
I'm not. I hear you.

SUSAN  
I mean, you *know* you're impressive.

QUINN  
Right.

SUSAN  
So no need to...

QUINN  
What?

SUSAN  
Showboat. Do I look alright?

Quinn starts pulling bags out of the back of the car.

QUINN  
You look great.

SUSAN  
Really? I feel like she'll say something.

QUINN  
What? Who?

SUSAN  
Your mom. She hates me.

QUINN  
It's not you.

SUSAN  
Come on.

QUINN  
She's difficult.

Quinn meticulously clears the snow from the wheels of the car.

SUSAN  
What about your brother?

QUINN  
He's difficult too.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
That's why you have an escape  
plan.

SUSAN  
There's a euphemism if I've  
ever heard one-- It's not an  
"escape plan." I can cancel  
it.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
No, you can't. You're never in town  
to see the Delta girls--

SUSAN  
Still not in town.

QUINN  
They're throwing you a baby shower.  
You have to be there.

SUSAN  
I just feel like your family will  
be... I don't know. Punishing or  
something.

QUINN  
Look, they'll be...What they are.  
You'll only be gone for a couple  
nights. And I'm not going to  
showboat, alright? Everything is  
going to be great. New great leaf  
and all that.

SUSAN  
Yes! Exactly. New job. New baby.  
New leaf. Exactly.

QUINN  
Exactly.

The front door of the house swings open to reveal Linda,  
wooden spoon still in hand.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Here it comes...

LINDA  
(from the door)  
Hurry up and get in here, it's  
freezing!

Quinn hurries in front with the luggage - Susan, close  
behind, slips a little on her way to the house.

Jack, completely covered in snow, creeps from around the corner of the house; he watches Quinn and Susan walk into the house.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - THE BOYS' ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Linda continues to pick up odds and ends throughout the room as she talks to Quinn - he sets the bags down and takes off his coat.

LINDA  
I'm sorry about the state of the room--

QUINN  
All good.

LINDA  
I didn't know you were coming until--

QUINN  
Yeah, it was last minute.

LINDA  
And goddamn if I didn't tell your brother so many times to get this room clean--

LINDA (CONT'D)	QUINN
But you know your brother, he doesn't listen.	No, mom, don't worry about it-- seriously. Where is he? He around?

LINDA (CONT'D)  
I have no idea! He's here one minute. Gone the next.

QUINN  
Right.

LINDA  
He's an idiot. You and Susan will each have to take a bed.

QUINN  
Very *Cleaver* of us.  
(off Linda's look)  
Of the *Leave it to Beaver*...*Cleavers*...

QUINN (CONT'D)  
 (beat)  
 It was a show of some  
 cultural significance.

LINDA  
 (beat)  
 I know the Cleavers. Of  
 course I know the Cleavers--

LINDA (CONT'D)  
 Don't condescend to me.

INT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The front door creaks open as a snow-covered Jack creeps into the house. He carefully steps toward the living room but as soon as he spots Susan and scrambles quietly up the stairs...

INT. THE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jack steps toward his room but stops when he hears Linda's voice:

LINDA (O.S.)  
 Where did your wife get off to  
 anyway?

Jack slips into the upstairs bathroom.

INT. THE HOUSE - THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Linda has shoved the dirty clothes into a hamper that is just too small for the amount of clothes. Quinn inspects a large shelf full of athletic trophies with Jack's name on them - in the front of the pack is Quinn's academic decathlon trophy.

LINDA  
 She barely said hello, you know,  
 how hard is it to say hello?

QUINN  
 Mom let's... I want everybody to  
 have a good time and-- connect, you  
 know? So maybe...?

LINDA  
 What? What are you saying? Am  
 I missing something? She's  
 disappeared again. Am I wrong  
 about that? It's-- she hardly  
 said anything then she  
 disappeared--

QUINN (CONT'D)  
 No-- I'm saying-- I'm just  
 saying you can be hard on her  
 sometimes and-- You're not  
 wrong but-- Mom. Mom. MOM.  
 It's fine it's fine jesus  
fucking christ it's fine!

Linda whacks Quinn with that big friggin wooden spoon.

LINDA (CONT'D) QUINN (CONT'D)  
Watch your language in my house. Ow!

Linda sheaths her spoon and starts clearing the desk.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
You seem tense.

QUINN  
(takes a deep breath)  
I'm not tense. I'm fine. I just  
want everyone to get along.

LINDA  
Well don't look at me.

Quinn finishes clearing the clutter on the desk. Linda looks at him.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
You're getting older. Right in the  
corner of your eyes. Starting to  
look like your dad.

QUINN  
Well... Long drive and all that.

Linda starts out the door.

LINDA  
I'll grab some sheets for these  
beds.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Susan climbs to the top of the stairs when she spots Linda just ahead of her - Susan quickly ducks out of sight and into the upstairs bathroom. Susan listens and hears the sound of footsteps heading in her direction. In a mild panic, she scrambles into the shower behind the curtain and comes face to face with Jack. She yelps and quickly clasps her hands over her mouth. They stare at each other for a long moment - something passes between them.

SUSAN  
(almost inaudible)  
What are you doing in here? Were  
you outside?



JACK  
What makes you say that?

SUSAN  
Cuz you're all wet. And you have a  
considerable amount of snow like,  
on your person.

JACK  
Er...em...whatever.  
(beat)  
I was here first so, you know, fuck  
off.

SUSAN  
You do not get to talk to me like  
that. Do you understand? I'm not--  
(suddenly)  
What were you gonna do if I came in  
here to go to the bathroom?

JACK  
In the *shower*? Fucking savage.

SUSAN  
You were gonna wait in here and  
listen to me pee like a creeper.

JACK  
Lucky for both of us you just came  
in here to *hide* from mom.

SUSAN  
I wasn't-- I didn't--

The bathroom door opens and Susan and Jack both freeze. They listen to Linda shifting about the room, setting towels aside. Then she sits on the toilet and they listen to her pee. They are both mortified. Linda washes her hands, gathers the towels and exits.

JACK  
Creeper.

Susan glares at him as she climbs out of the shower.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Don't tell Quinn you saw me yet. I  
want to surprise him.

Susan shoots Jack a look before walking out of the room.

INT. THE HOUSE - THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Susan slips into the room - Quinn stands in front of the mirror pulling the skin back around his eyes a bit.

SUSAN  
I think this is going to be a  
little harder than I imagined.

QUINN  
Am I getting older? Like, in my  
face?

SUSAN  
I forgot how *weird* they are.

QUINN  
They're just...cut from a different  
cloth--

SUSAN  
Yeah, with a lower thread count.

QUINN  
Much lower. Are you planning on  
staying?

SUSAN  
What do you mean?

QUINN  
Hat. Coat. Scarf. General look of  
panic.

Susan starts removing the layers of winter gear.

SUSAN	QUINN (CONT'D)
(re beds)	
Two beds? Twin beds? Are we	--Yeah I don't know. I think
sleeping in twin beds? Who	we'll survive for a few days,
are we the Cleavers?	right?-- That's what I said!

Quinn slinks up to Susan and pulls her into an embrace.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
I mean, it's *weird* right?

QUINN  
Totally.

SUSAN  
(looking at Quinn)  
I don't think you look old.

QUINN

Really?

SUSAN

Yeah. You look pretty good.

Quinn kisses her, playfully moving them toward the nearest twin bed.

QUINN

We could share one. It'd be like the dorms. Do a little study hour role play.

(more kisses)

"I'm failing art history and I'll do *anything* for you if you help me."

SUSAN

Maybe we should look for a hotel. Create a little solace.

(showing her nails)

Look at my nails. I spent the entire drive chewing them to oblivion.

Quinn kisses her finger tips. Linda enters with an armful of sheets.

LINDA

Here are some clean sheets and towels for you to-- Oh. Well, there you are, Susan. I thought we'd lost you.

Susan laughs harder than is necessary.

SUSAN

Nope. Still here. You're looking well.

LINDA

(picking at her hair)

No. I'm not-- I didn't shower today so...

SUSAN

That's okay! It's-- It's *Family*.

Quinn shoots Susan a look. She shoots it back to him.

QUINN

You look great, mom.

LINDA

Well...

Beat. Linda fumbles with the sheets. Susan runs her hand along the oddly stained mattress of one of the beds.

QUINN

(looking out the window)  
Snow is really coming down out there, huh?

LINDA

(to Susan, re mattress)  
Don't mind the mattress stains.  
I've had them cleaned.

SUSAN

Oh. Well--

LINDA

From when Quinn used to wet the bed.

QUINN

(eyes plead)  
Um, no, I don't think that--

LINDA

Yes, you used to wet the bed for a long time.  
(to Susan)  
I actually added plastic wrap for a while  
(to Quinn)  
You don't remember the plastic?

SUSAN

Well, we all have our--  
issues, when we're young and everything.

QUINN

No, I-- I mean, I guess I remember when I was like, young, you know.

LINDA

Well, not so-- sixteen. We saw doctors about it and everything.  
"Stress induced."  
(to Susan)  
Does he still have trouble with that?

QUINN

No no no I-- I'm well past--  
I've graduated from bed-  
wetting, thankyouverymuch.--  
It's not a problem. A kid  
problem I had when I was a  
kid. Was. Past tense being  
key in this particular issue.  
Thank you.

SUSAN

I mean, no, of course not. I  
never knew it was a problem.  
(to Quinn)  
It's okay, it's not a big  
deal-- In the past. Yes.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(to Linda)

I don't think he wanted you telling  
me that.

QUINN

I'm fine! I just don't know  
why it matters. Okay, I wet  
the bed, but what does it  
matter, you know?

LINDA

You know, I think if he's  
feeling something he can say  
it himself. I'm not the one  
who used to wet the bed. He  
doesn't need a woman to fight  
his battles for him. Do you,  
Quinn?

SUSAN

Oh wow. I'm-- That's not even---  
Okay.

Susan takes a few slow, deep breaths. Linda shuffles toward  
the door.

LINDA

(setting the sheets on the  
bed)

Okay. Okay... Well, I'll leave the  
sheets here for you, Susan.

Any calm Susan was trying keep is fractured immediately--

SUSAN

You know, Quinn is actually *super*  
capable, albeit a *man*, so perhaps  
not the first person to come to  
mind to do basic household chores,  
but this is, of course, the twenty-  
first century and men do all sorts  
of things they didn't used to do.  
And women even have *careers* now and  
everything. It's crazy.

Beat. Linda glares at Susan, and then at Quinn.

LINDA  
(heading out the door)  
I'll be getting dinner ready. Still  
a vegetarian, Susan?

SUSAN  
Yep. Yep, I am.

LINDA (O.S.)  
Oh that's okay, you can have the  
side dishes.

Silence fills the room. Quinn looks to Susan.

QUINN  
You okay?

SUSAN  
I don't get it. I can stand in any  
courtroom in the country and go toe  
to toe with the most ruthless  
attorneys in the world and never  
bat and eye.

QUINN  
Those are lawyers. They have rules.  
Decorum. This is my mother...

Susan collapses onto the bed, her coat bundled on her lap.

SUSAN  
Look-- Can you...say something next  
time? To your mom? When she gets  
all...

QUINN  
I get it.  
(beat)  
I'm sorry for freezing up there.  
I'm just, you know, feeling weird  
about being back after so long.

SUSAN  
You never told me about the wetting  
the bed stuff.

QUINN  
Why would I ever tell you that?  
Like, what purpose would that  
serve?

SUSAN  
It sounds like it was kind of  
a big deal for you and I'm  
your wife and I want to know  
things about you.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
No. No, that's not-- I know  
you're-- It's fucking  
emasculating.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
It's not. It's--

QUINN  
Yea. It is. And I wish she hadn't  
said anything to you about it cuz  
it doesn't matter anymore.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jack has crept close to the bedroom. He listens through the door.

SUSAN (O.S.)  
Cuz it's in the past.

QUINN (O.S.)  
Exactly.

SUSAN (O.S.)  
It sounds like you had some-- and  
don't get all defensive on me  
remember I'm on your side-- but it  
sounds like trauma.

He reacts to the word trauma as we cut to--

INT. THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Quinn works the sheets onto one of the beds.

QUINN  
Oh come on. *Come on*. Trauma? Come  
on. We're not *Gen Z* over here.  
Everybody's family is fucked up on  
some level but that doesn't mean  
we're all walking open wounds.

SUSAN  
Everybody's family?

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jack processes what he's hearing.

QUINN (O.S.)  
Yes. Yea. Most. Yea. That's family.  
They just-- Pass down their shit,  
you know? Like an inheritance. "To  
my son, Jack, I bequeath thee  
limitless rage a drinking problem.  
Enjoy."

SUSAN (O.S.)  
My parents were good.

QUINN (O.S.)  
Every parent is good after they  
die.

INT. THE BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Susan recoils at that. She stands up slowly.

QUINN  
Shit. I'm-- I'm so sorry. I know  
they were good. Like good good.

Susan nods.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
That was really shitty of me.

Quinn goes to Susan.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. Suz? I'm sorry.

SUSAN  
I'm just gonna... Get some air.

Susan puts on her coat. Suddenly something wells up in her.

QUINN  
I'm-- I'm so sorry.

SUSAN  
No. It's not you.

QUINN  
Hormones?

She heads to the door.



INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jack hears Susan approaching and quickly retreats back into the bathroom. A moment later Quinn and Susan emerge from the bedroom. She stops just outside the door putting on her gloves.

SUSAN

I don't know what I wanted here.  
You just-- The way you talk about  
family. Like it's a curse.

QUINN

...It's complicated.

Quinn pulls Susan close to him.

SUSAN

I don't love the idea of you  
starting-- Of you becoming a father  
to our child thinking of family as  
a curse. Is that crazy of me?

Susan pulls away, processing.

QUINN

It's not like that-- I just... it's  
complicated.

Susan kisses Quinn then turns, heading down the stairs.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

Quinn follows her down the stairs into--

INT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

FOYER

Susan opens the front door pulling on her hat.

SUSAN

I'm going to hide in the car and  
check my email. You want to get  
unpacked maybe?

Quinn watches the door close behind her for a moment.

Quinn, alone now, takes in the house listening to its sounds - the creaking of old wood floors, the wind outside, the tremor of poorly sealed windows. He can just see the shape of Linda down the hall as she moves about the kitchen.

## STAIRCASE - UPSTAIRS

He climbs the steps - the staircase groaning under each foot. As he walks down the hall toward the bedroom, he eyes the numerous photos on the wall. He passes by the bathroom but doesn't notice Jack looming within.

## INT. THE BEDROOM - DAY

Quinn takes in the room. His hands tremors slightly - he clamps his eyes shut and breathes. Finally, he drifts toward the shelf of trophies. He inspects the Academic Decathlon for a moment.

JACK (O.C.)  
The hell is that?

Quinn is startled and drops the trophy. He quickly bends down to retrieve it.

QUINN  
Hey! Hey. Hey, man. I was uh...  
this is just, uh-- trophy.

JACK  
Your nerd award.

QUINN  
No it-- Actually it was pretty  
prestigious. I was competing  
against the best...

JACK  
I remember.

Beat. They stare at each other unsure of what to say or do next. Jack looks like he's about to say something, but stops himself.

QUINN  
What?

JACK  
*What?*

QUINN  
Nothing.

JACK  
So what? I can't get a hug from my  
baby brother?

Quinn nods. He shuffles over to Jack who immediately pulls him into a deep bear hug lifting him off his feet - it looks painful.

QUINN

Ow! Christ-- stop stop stop--!

JACK

We could wrestle.

Jack drops Quinn looking strangely invigorated - Quinn coughs as he catches his breath.

JACK (CONT'D)

Do you want to wrestle?

QUINN

What? No. Grown men don't wrestle.

JACK

Grown men do whatever the fuck they want.

(a shift)

You're getting old. Look all weird.

QUINN

Thanks.

JACK

Why'd you come here?

QUINN

I... It's Christmas.

JACK

Yeah. Sure.

Jack looks out the window as he pulls out a cigarette. He sees Susan in the car below.

QUINN

(re cigarette)

Can you not--?

Quinn's phone buzzes in his pocket - he quickly checks the phone: the call is from someone called ANDY - he denies the call the and shoves the phone back into his pocket as--

JACK

Whose that?

QUINN

It's nothing. It's work.

Jack blows smoke toward Quinn then looks out toward Susan in the car again.

JACK  
Your lady is giving off some vibes. Serious vibes. I'm telling you, bro, you gotta watch out for that broad. She's too sexy. Leads to things, you know?

QUINN (CONT'D)  
(after "vibes")  
What? Vibes? Jesus, man. You gotta-- "Broad" wow, bringing that back-- Why do you have to say that stuff? You can't just sit in a room for five minutes and talk about normal things?

Jack starts unpacking Quinn's bag haphazardly.

JACK (CONT'D)  
The fuck is "normal?" The fuck do brothers gotta talk about "normal" things? --I'm *helping*! You can't see I'm helping here?

QUINN (CONT'D)  
Stop-- Don't-- Quit going through all my things.

QUINN (CONT'D)  
You're not helping! And don't talk about my wife like that! Seriously.

JACK  
Well, don't come crying to me when some other dude is balls deep--

QUINN  
*Inappropriate!* That is-- Also, nobody says "balls deep."

JACK  
I don't understand what you're getting so worked about about-- It's like *real estate*.

QUINN  
*What?*

JACK  
If you build your house on the bank of a river, when it floods you got no one to blame but yourself.

Quinn grabs his bag out of Jack's hands.

JACK (CONT'D)  
*What!* I'm telling you this because I care!

Quinn's phone buzzes once more. He checks again - a voicemail. Jack notices.

JACK (CONT'D)

Come on.

Quinn takes his bag to the other bed and works to organize its contents.

JACK (CONT'D)

Come on... Okay! Fine! I won't talk about your wife.

QUINN

(small beat)

Thank you.

JACK

Or the fact that she has high slut potential.

QUINN

Stop it! Stop! I can't-- I'm not gonna do this with you all week-- I'm not!

JACK (CONT'D)

Okay! Okay! Fine. Fine. Fine! Don't get your panties in a bunch...

A quiet settles in the room once more. Quinn's phone buzzes once more. Quinn pulls his phone out to check - Jack watches. "ANDY: I need you to call me. We need to talk." Quinn swipes the notification away just as Jack snatches the phone out of his hands.

QUINN (CONT'D)

Hey!

Jack starts typing in passcodes on Quinn's phone as Quinn tries to grab the phone.

JACK

It's fucking rude is what it is. I'm gonna help you-- I'm just gonna tell them you're with family-- s'matter? You don't want my help?

QUINN (CONT'D)

Stop-- Stop it! Give me my phone-- I swear to god, I'm gonna-- I don't need your help! I can handle it on my own if you just--

As this is happening Jack works his way to the window, opens it, and climbs out.

JACK (CONT'D)

You want it? Come and get it.

Jack scrambles down off the roof leaving Quinn bewildered at the window.

QUINN  
Shit. Shit!

Quinn judges the danger of the window exit and decides to rush back through the house.

JACK (O.S.)  
What's your birthday?

INT. THE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Linda is in the process of preparing a roast - she has a very no frills approach to this. She hurries over to the fridge and throws it open. Linda whelps-- there's a huge hunk of thawing meat with a knife sticking out of it - the attached note reads: "Ma, ditch the beef roast. Cows are lame. Eat this deer meat I hunted and stashed for us." Linda fumes.

Quinn rushes through the kitchen toward the front of the house.

LINDA  
No running in the house!

She turns back to the meat.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Jack! What's this doing in my fridge?

EXT. THE HOUSE - DRIVEWAY

Susan is just getting out of the tricked out Escalade, phone in hand.

SUSAN  
(into phone)  
Yeah... I know! I'm excited to see you too... Well-- the train is supposed to get in around ten-thirty so--? Great!...I know! It'll be great to see you all. Especially with-- Iz, they're-- there's no describing them, really.

Jack appears around the side of the house poking at the phone in his hands. Susan clocks this as she continues.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
(phone)  
I'll give you all the gory details tomorrow...

Quinn bursts through the front door. Jack turns and runs the other way. Quinn gives chase.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
(phone)  
Oh yes, very gory.--  
Okay love you bye!

She hangs up and starts toward the house to follow the guys when she hears Linda yelling.

LINDA (O.S.)  
(from inside)  
Okay, that's it-- you want to keep  
avoiding me? Say goodbye to your  
meat!

Susan walks around the side of the house to find the kitchen window open then--

LINDA (CONT'D)  
(from the kitchen window)  
Sayonara!

A hunk of deer meat, knife still in place, goes hurling through the air right past Susan a landing a few feet away from her in a bloody heap.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
Susan. Hello.

Susan looks to Linda.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
I could use some help with potatoes  
if you can manage it.

They both look out and see Quinn slam into Jack and Jack throw Quinn into the snow.

LINDA (CONT'D)  
(off Susan's look)  
Better not to ask. Boys need time  
to be boys. Get inside - I won't  
have your death of pneumonia on my  
conscience.

Susan watches Quinn and Jack wrestling for a moment longer. Then turns to go inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack has Quinn pinned in the snow who struggles beneath him.

<p>JACK</p> <p>Calm down. Calm down, man. It was a little wrestle, that's all. I'm just fucking with you. Alright?</p>	<p>QUINN</p> <p>Get off of me! Get <i>off</i>! Fucking-- will you--</p>
--	---

Jack gives Quinn his phone and stands up. Quinn pops to his feet, breathing hard.

JACK (CONT'D)

You feel that?

QUINN

What the fuck is your problem?

JACK

You *feel* that?

Quinn paces as he checks his phone.

QUINN

Great. You locked me out of my phone!

JACK

Stop. Stop. Look at me. Look at my eyes. You see that?

QUINN

What are you talking about.

JACK

Vitality.

Quinn takes a step toward Jack.

<p>JACK (CONT'D)</p> <p>Yeah, that's it, man.</p>	<p>QUINN</p> <p>You're a fucking menace. Seriously.</p>
---	---

Quinn stops.

JACK (CONT'D)

It's there in you. The buffalo.

QUINN

Shut up! Shut up! God. You really are-- you're-- I mean I always knew you were crazy but-- you're--



JACK  
It's not crazy. We got the buffalo  
from dad. He had them too.

Quinn looks at Jack, adrenalin still pumping. A moment passes  
between them.

QUINN  
Just leave me alone. Alright.

Quinn turns and heads back toward the house.

JACK  
(calling after)  
You gotta let them out or they'll  
kill you. I can show you how.

QUINN  
No, thank you.

JACK  
Let's go to the woods!

Quinn doesn't answer. Jack watches him go.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The table is set - food is laid out. It looks good - like,  
midwest good. Jack, Susan, and Linda are seated and waiting.  
Quinn is conspicuously absent.

Jack reaches for the food. Linda smacks his hand.

LINDA  
Don't you dare.

JACK  
What are we waiting for?

LINDA  
We will eat as a *family*.

JACK  
Since when do we--

LINDA  
We will eat as a family.

Susan's phone chimes, she pulls it out to check--

LINDA (CONT'D)  
No phones at the table.

Susan quietly puts the phone back in her bag.

JACK  
Yeah, *Susan*.

SUSAN  
Maybe I should check--

LINDA  
He's a big boy, he don't need you  
wiping his tushy for him.

On Susan's look...

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Quinn is finishing a set of push-ups. He hops to his feet, blood pumping, and looking a little intense.

QUINN  
(into the mirror)  
He can't touch you. He can't  
fucking touch you now. You got  
this.

He fixes his hair and looks himself in the mirror for a moment, then strides out of the bathroom, the door slamming shut behind him.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

The meal is in full swing now. Susan pushes the lack-luster vegetables around her plate, Linda is pouring a large glass of wine for herself - Susan registers this - Jack shovels food onto his plate, and Quinn is holding court:

LINDA  
Dubai? You didn't tell me you were  
in Dubai?

QUINN  
Didn't I?

JACK  
Nope.

QUINN

It's been really busy lately. I beat out a few top dogs for that promotion. It was a pretty deal. They're gonna do a full write up about me in the alumni newsletter.

LINDA

Well that's wonderful. I've always wanted to go to India.

SUSAN

United Arab Emirates.

LINDA

What?

SUSAN

United Arab Emirates. Dubai is in UAE.

JACK

Oh, you go too?

SUSAN

On that one, yeah.

QUINN

They put us up in the four seasons. Incredible accommodations. They had--

JACK

I don't really care.

LINDA

A hotel is a hotel, right?

QUINN

Well--

SUSAN

This one is one of the best in the world.

JACK

Fancy fucks over here.

Linda tosses a roll at him

LINDA

Watch your language at the table.

JACK  
Jokes on you. I wanted a roll.

LINDA  
You get to go on these trips too then?

SUSAN  
When it doesn't conflict with my work, yeah.

LINDA  
I thought Dubai was the capitol of India.

SUSAN  
That's New Dehli.

QUINN  
You might be thinking of Mumbai.

LINDA  
No no, I know what I'm thinking. I was thinking of Dubai.

JACK  
Can't beat those intellectuals.

QUINN  
I wouldn't call that intellectual, it's just basic geography.

LINDA  
I know geography! I was just mixed up!

QUINN  
Should we change the subject?

JACK  
(to Susan)  
Whatdyou do again?

SUSAN  
I'm a malpractice attorney.

QUINN  
Best in the city.

JACK  
Suing doctors and shit?

Linda chucks another roll.

SUSAN

Well--

LINDA

I hear that's why our healthcare system is so crappy.

JACK

That and Obamacare--

SUSAN

I'm sorry, what?

LINDA

All those malpractice law suits drive up the costs for hospitals and doctors, so the costs get passed to insurance companies which get passed to us.

SUSAN

That is one small piece of a very big complicated puzzle.

LINDA

I heard a whole thing about it on the news.

JACK

Leeches.

QUINN

Don't.

SUSAN

What news?

QUINN

Suzy, let's not--

LINDA

Fox.

SUSAN

That's not news.

LINDA

Oh don't get me started

SUSAN

It was literally classified as entertainment television.

LINDA

By who?

SUSAN  
The courts. Following a lawsuit.  
It's not news.

JACK  
Fucking leeches.

Linda reaches for the rolls but Jack snatches the basket first.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Ha!

LINDA  
Can you be pleasant for one meal?

JACK  
I am pleasant!

QUINN  
Let's change the subject, right?

SUSAN  
Yeah. Yeah, sure.

Quinn pours himself a glass of wine.

QUINN  
You seeing anybody, Jack?

Jack opens his mouth to answer but is interrupted--

LINDA  
No. He's not. Nobody worth seeing.

QUINN  
Probably just hasn't found "the one" yet.

JACK  
I'm doing just fine.

LINDA  
S'that why you're watching Alexa's house like a goddamn peeping tom?

JACK	QUINN
I am not! It was one time!	(to Susan)
And she doesn't even live there anymore!	High school girlfriend.

LINDA

Her mother told me at church that  
she sees Jack out there all the  
time.

QUINN

(to Jack)

Trying to rekindle the old spark,  
huh?

Jack points his knife at Quinn.

JACK

Why don't you shut up and eat your  
meat.

QUINN

Fine fine fine. How's work these  
days?

LINDA

What work! He doesn't work.

JACK

MA! I can speak for myself!  
(small beat)  
I've got irons in the fire.

LINDA

What irons?

JACK

Irons, ma, *irons*!

LINDA

Stop saying irons, ya freeloader.

JACK

I provide! I hunted deer for this  
meal.

LINDA

This is beef!

JACK

Because you threw my meat out the  
window.

LINDA

I didn't ask for your meat.

QUINN

You can't just give someone your meat when they haven't asked for it. They need to consent to your meat.

JACK

Are you laughing at me?

QUINN

Of course not. Consent is no laughing matter.

LINDA

He got fired.

QUINN

Oh?

JACK

Don't, ma, come on.

QUINN

When was this?

LINDA

You remember Gary at ABC Hardware?

JACK

Gary's an asshole!

LINDA

He gave you a job didn't he?

QUINN

I always liked Gary.

JACK

You would.

LINDA

Well, Gary gave Jack a job at the store as a favor to me--

(to Susan)

He's a member of the parish--

(to Quinn)

Do you know what Jack did?

QUINN

I'm on the edge of my seat.

JACK

Don't you do it don't you tell him-- MA!

LINDA

He stole a sixteen-hundred dollar chainsaw.



Jack starts cutting his meat aggressively and shoveling food into his mouth.

QUINN  
Why would you steal a chainsaw?

LINDA  
On his *first* day!

QUINN  
Wow.

LINDA  
(to Jack)  
You're lucky he didn't press charges.

JACK  
(mouth full)  
MMM so fuggin good, whada delishush meal  
(to Susan)  
Wouldn't you agree?

Susan stares wide eyed at the chaos.

LINDA  
Maybe you could get him a job at your company?

QUINN  
Oh, well, after that glowing recommendation--

JACK  
I don't want a job with him!

LINDA  
He's got his life together! He can provide for himself and his wife-- what are you!

SUSAN  
I earn a very good living myself actually

JACK  
I'VE GOT IRONS. IN THE FIRE!

QUINN  
He's been hunting meat apparently.

JACK  
(snapping)  
What would you know about it?

QUINN  
(cold)  
Look, Jack, you want a job?

JACK

What?

QUINN

Do you. Want a job.

SUSAN

*Quinn.*

JACK

Don't do that.

QUINN

I'm just saying. If you need *help*.  
You can ask me. I have connections.  
Get you something in... custodial?

JACK

Have you always been such an  
asshole? Trick question! Because  
you have!

LINDA

Hey! He's actually trying to  
help you! Do you have any  
idea how much people try to  
do to help your sorry ass?  
And what do you do, huh? You  
spit in the face of everyone--  
- you do!

QUINN

I'm just trying to help.  
Really. I know it can be hard  
to admit you need help, man,  
but talk about biting the  
hand--  
(to Susan)  
I'm not doing anything. You  
see how he is, there's no  
winning--

JACK

(overlapped)  
He *is*! Ma, he's being a  
prick-- I'm not doing  
anything-- I'm just trying to  
eat in a little bit of  
friggin peace and like--  
QUIET! Christ almighty!

SUSAN

(trying to get Quinn's  
attention)  
Quinn. *Quinn*. Hey, let's not--  
- You're doing that *thing*.  
Just leave it.-- It's not  
about winning that's the  
*point*.

Jack slams his fist on the table - every dish rattles at the  
force of his hand. The effect is immediate, everyone shuts  
up, a little shocked. They all look at Jack, somewhere  
between disgust and fear. A long silence. Then...

QUINN

Look--

JACK

Why the fuck are you here?

QUINN

It's Christmas. Isn't this what family is supposed to do?

LINDA

(to Jack)  
I am at my wits end here. What am I supposed to do with you?

JACK

Didn't mean anything last year. Or the year before that. Now you roll in and start flashing your dick everywhere like some big fucking man and I gotta wonder just what the fuck you're doing here, man.  
(to Linda)  
I wouldn't know because you drove him away!

LINDA (CONT'D)

(to Jack)  
You are an embarrassment. Are you happy? Are you happy with yourself? You've ruined another perfectly good evening.  
(venomous)  
*You are just like your father.*

Linda stands looking ready to strike, then--

SUSAN

I'm pregnant!

Beat. Everyone stops and looks at her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I'm pregnant. We-- we're going to have a baby. We wanted to tell you in person.

QUINN

...Surprise.

Linda sits back down. She reaches out and grips Quinn's hand.

LINDA

That's good. Good. Good for you.

JACK

Yeah. Good job.

Jack takes a huge bite of food. Linda fights something back. Quinn and Susan look at each other - was that it?

JACK (CONT'D)

(with a mouthful of food)  
Are you sure it's yours?

Something wells up in Susan and she quickly gets up--

Linda gets up and grabs Jack's plate out from under him.

LINDA  
(to Jack)  
Happy?

She leaves the room. Quinn and Jack stare at each other for a moment. Quinn slowly rises and follows after Susan leaving Jack alone at the table. He reaches over to Quinn's plate and drags it toward himself, then starts eating...

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Susan is in the tub, submerged to her nose - steam licking up her face. Quinn sits on the floor beside the tub, his head rested against the wall. The cabinet under the sink hangs open - there about two dozen bath bombs haphazardly hanging out of a basket.

QUINN  
Is this better?

SUSAN  
Mm-hmm.

He dips his hand into the tub and retrieves hers.

QUINN  
You okay?

SUSAN  
Mm-hmm.  
(small beat)  
I thought they'd be happy.

QUINN  
Yeah...

Susan pulls her hand away and looks to Quinn.

SUSAN  
You were doing the thing. Show  
boating thing.

Quinn chews on this...

QUINN  
I... I mean, I... How am I supposed  
to react to him? You know?

SUSAN  
You mean instead of rubbing your  
life in his face?