

THE SOUND OF SNOW FALLING

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Inspired by true events.

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Logline: After experiencing a school shooting, 16-year-old Patrick struggles to hold onto his dream of being a poet, his relationship with his brother, and a newfound friendship. Unable to escape the constant reminder of the worst day of his life, Patrick must ultimately face the hardest thing of all - himself.

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

LOUD FOOTSTEPS fall fast on fallen snow packed onto the sidewalk. PATRICK (curly brown hair, 16) breathes quickly as he runs by several houses. The sky is overcast and the neighborhood is quiet, the houses are decorated in Christmas lights.

PATRICK (V.O.)
Nobody ever tells you what to do
after your school shooting.

Patrick runs by a MOTHER and SON playing in their front yard, building a snow man. The kid has trouble getting the head to stay on.

PATRICK (V.O.)
There's plenty they tell you about
before. Scenarios and drills.

Patrick weaves through his neighborhood with ease, it's a familiar path, but his eyes are distracted - at almost every house, there are signs in the front yard that read "CENTENNIAL STRONG" in his school colors, black and gold.

PATRICK (V.O.)
And there's plenty they tell you
about during. Scenarios and drills.

Patrick makes his way down a hill, watching for cars as he crosses the street.

PATRICK (V.O.)
But no one talks about after. When
the drills become reality, and the
scenarios don't matter anymore.
When everything just sorta keeps
going and you—

Patrick trips as he stares at one of the school support signs but catches himself. He looks down at his shoes - one of his laces are untied.

Black and gold beads are weaved onto the neon orange laces. Patrick touches one of the beads with his finger and begins to BREATHE HARD.

He rises up and walks in a circle, shaking out his hands, trying to fight off the panic attack as the SOUND DROWNS out until all we can hear is the SNOW CRUNCHING beneath his feet and his breath rattling.

Patrick bends over, hands on his knees, unable to catch his breath.

A WOMAN'S voice breaks the air -

WOMAN
Hey, are you okay?

Patrick stays bent over.

PATRICK
What?

WOMAN
Do you need some water or something?

She reaches for a water bottle strapped to her hip and he finally rises.

PATRICK
No, I'm okay. Thanks.

WOMAN
Of course, no prob-

She notices Patrick's shirt, staring right at it. It says "Centennial Cross Country" across the front.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
(Awkwardly)
Oh my gosh, I'm so sorry.

PATRICK
For what?

The woman clears her throat and puts on a smile.

WOMAN
Merry Christmas!

She starts jogging off in the opposite direction.

Patrick looks down at his shirt and scoffs. He shakes his hands, fighting to stay calm. Finally, he takes a deep breath, takes off his shirt, and starts running again.

INT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - DAY

Patrick opens his front door, still shirtless, and comes face to face with his DAD (50s) whose bundled up and carrying a shovel in each hand.

The two stare awkwardly at each other.

DAD
Did you run shirtless?

PATRICK
Yeah, figured I'd get hot while
running so...you heading out?

DAD
Yeah, figured it'd be pretty cold
out there so...

Patrick's dad does a sort of half shrug in his puffy jacket.

DAD (CONT'D)
I went to pick up a new shovel,
thought maybe you wouldn't mind
helping me tackle the driveway?
Maybe the sidewalk too?

PATRICK
Uh, yeah, but I kinda wanted to
shower.

Patrick begins kicking off his shoes.

DAD
Right, no worries, shoveling snow
is probably the last way you want
to start your...bonus break.

Another awkward silence.

PATRICK
I can help out if you need me.

DAD
No, no worries, that's alright.
Whatever you wanna do.

His dad clears his throat, gestures with the two shovels, and
walks out.

Patrick runs his hand through his hair. He looks small in the
empty house.

INT. PATRICK'S BATHROOM - DAY

Patrick tests the water temperature with his hand.

He turns it hotter and hotter, watching his skin get redder
and redder and redder.

NEWS ANCHOR (PRE LAP)

Well it's already been three days since the shooting at Centennial High School and today students were finally allowed to retrieve their cars from campus.

INT. PATRICK'S BASEMENT - DAY

Patrick sits on the couch, a bowl of cereal in hand, and watches the TV. His hair is still wet and he's wearing a blue hoodie two sizes too big for him.

He puts a spoonful of cereal into his mouth and scrolls through his phone.

ON PATRICK'S PHONE--

Images of flowers and sunrises and people hugging with captions that read "Praying everyday.", "Sun still shining!", and "We're in this together!"

Each of the posts are followed by #CentennialStrong!

Patrick tosses his phone to the side as a news segment starts on the TV. He goes for another spoonful.

NEWS ANCHOR

(On TV)

This morning we've been able to acquire more information regarding the lone shooter and what he was doing before he entered the school that fateful Friday the 13th. We've also learned the sheriff department has obtained security camera footage of the incident.

Patrick's leg starts bouncing up and down. He stops eating his cereal.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

But first, as for updates on the senior girl still fighting for her life, officials say it's most likely she was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time and was not directly targeted -

Patrick picks up the remote and quickly starts changing channels - just rapidly clicking through to anything else.

Patrick's MOM (50s) walks down the stairs with a laundry basket in her hands.

She looks between the flashing TV and her son.

MOM

Hey hon, everything alright?

Patrick shoots her direction.

PATRICK

Yeah!

He puts on a smile.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Just watching some -

He looks back to the TV, it's a Spanish soap opera.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Just practicing my Spanish. In case we still have to take our final when we go back.

(off his mom's look)

Think I might be a little dehydrated from my run.

MOM

Oh - want me to pick up some Gatorade from the store?

PATRICK

No I'm good mom, thanks. I'll grab some water.

She's not as good as disguising her face.

MOM

Okay...Oh! You got some mail, I left in on the kitchen counter.

PATRICK

Thanks.

Patrick holds his smile until his mom turns around. He exhales and drops his head in his hands.

The laundry door slams shut and causes him to FLINCH.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Nice one.

PATRICK (V.O.)
What the fuck do you do after?

He leaves.

TITLE CARD.

INT. PATRICK'S KITCHEN - DAY

Patrick dumps what's left of his half-eaten cereal into the sink.

His older brother, JOHN (18), walks in.

JOHN
That better not be the last of my
Cheerios.

PATRICK
Milk tastes funny.

John pulls out the milk from the fridge and smells it.

JOHN
Smells fine.

PATRICK
Well it tastes funny.

Patrick grabs an envelope from the table and opens it.

Inside is a flyer for a district wide **poetry slam competition** that his school is taking part in.

John walks over with his own bowl.

JOHN
(mouthful)
What's that?

PATRICK
My mail.

John sighs and grabs the flyer.

JOHN
A poetry slam?

PATRICK
Did you not hear the "my" part?

JOHN

Is this one of those things where everyone's wearing black and you have to snap instead of clap?

Patrick yanks the flyer back.

PATRICK

I don't think there's a dress code smart-ass.

JOHN

So just the snapping then? You gonna do it?

PATRICK

Uh, I don't know, maybe. I signed up for a thing saying I was interested in it a couple weeks ago, but I forgot about it after...

John stares at his brother expectantly.

JOHN

(mouth full)

You know you can say it right?

PATRICK

What?

JOHN

You can say it Patrick - we were in a school shooting not attacked by Voldemort.

PATRICK

Yeah I'm aware of what we were in thanks.

John nods and takes another spoonful of cereal.

JOHN

You're very welcome.

Patrick scans the flier and in big bold letters we see, "DEADLINE TO ENTER: JANUARY FIRST."

JOHN (CONT'D)

Huh. Milk does taste a little funny. You wanna come get your car with me and Lee? He's driving me over.

PATRICK

What?

JOHN

You get dumb all the sudden? I said
Lee's taking me to get my car from
school - you wanna come and get
yours too or what?

PATRICK

Oh, yeah, sure.

JOHN

Great! How hard was that?

John leaves.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(mouthful again)

Be ready in 10!

Patrick sits in silence in the kitchen for a moment, his leg
bouncing up and down again, before his mom walks in. He
quickly folds the flyer and puts it in his hoodie pocket.

PATRICK

Hey mom, would you mind taking me
to get my car?

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick walks through his snow covered school parking lot
with his head down.

We SEE what he sees: his feet, laced up in his running shoes,
as he tramples through the snow.

Around him we can HEAR cars going by, a couple distant
voices, and snow crunching.

In the peripherals we can see some yellow caution tape
flapping in the wind.

Patrick takes his keys out from his pocket, which has a
single keychain of a LEGO figurine, and clicks the lock
button. The BEEP is close.

He reaches his car and climbs in.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick throws his hood off and exhales. The outside of the car is covered in snow, making the inside look like an igloo.

He pats the steering wheel and puts the key in the ignition.

As the car comes to life Patrick smiles softly.

Suddenly, his phone buzzes. It's a text from his mom: **Hey bud, all good?**

Patrick sighs and gets out of the car.

EXT. PARKING LOT, PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick looks out into the parking lot and sure enough he spots his mom sitting in her mini van in the distance, looking his direction and waving.

He gives a quick thumbs up and a wave and after a moment she drives out of the lot.

Now we see the action taking place in the parking lot as Patrick begins wiping the snow from his car.

Behind him, other kids are wandering around, looking for their cars, some are cleaning snow off like him, some are hugging each other, some are standing arm in arm starting at the school.

Patrick cleans his car quickly.

A girl, BRIDGEEN (17), walks up to the car next to him.

PATRICK
(To his car)
There you go Cuzco. All ready to go.

BRIDGEEN
So you talk to your car too huh?

Patrick drops his snow brush as he turns around.

PATRICK
Uh, yeah, guess so. His name's Cuzco.

Bridgeen opens her car and pulls out a brush of her own. She's wearing a puffy white jacket that has a giant hood on the back of it. On her head is a light green home-knit hat.

BRIDGEEN
That's a funny name for a car.

PATRICK
Yeah...When I was a kid I used to
pretend I was a soccer player on
the Brazilian national team.

Bridgeen starts clearing the snow off her car. In the
background, as they talk, we can see more of the yellow
caution tape that surrounds the whole school.

BRIDGEEN
Let me guess, your name was Cuzco?

PATRICK
Actually it was Conrad Conway
Cuzco.

BRIDGEEN
Pretty good name for a soccer
player.

PATRICK
Yeah I thought so. My fans called
me 'Triple C'. But since my
imaginary retirement many years
ago, figured it would made a good
name for this bad boy.

Patrick taps his old beat up Honda Civic.

Bridgeen laughs and shakes her head.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Well anyway, car's all clean so.

Patrick starts to climb back into his car.

BRIDGEEN
Ruby.

Patrick hits his head as he climbs back out.

PATRICK
What?

BRIDGEEN
My car's name is Ruby.

PATRICK
Oh cool...is that cause you're a
former retired soccer player named
Ruby?

BRIDGEEN

No. It's because my cars red. You going to the bon fire tonight? Seems like most of the school will be there but I think everyone's just saying that.

PATRICK

Oh, uh, I don't know. Not sure I want to come back again. Like today. But yeah, no. I'll totally, probably go.

BRIDGEEN

You know you don't have to go right? I mean, I barely made it to this today. It's a lot you know?

PATRICK

Yeah...it's a lot.

BRIDGEEN

Well, maybe I'll see you around Cuzco.

She climbs into her car and after a beat starts the engine.

Patrick turns back to his car and climbs in.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

After a moment, he brings his gaze upward and we finally see the school from his perspective.

It's a massive building, mostly brick, and it seems to tower over Patrick. We see the ropes of yellow caution tape surrounding it and the doors.

Off to the side, Patrick see's two guys standing arm in arm and looking up at the school.

Patrick puts his car into drive and begins to weave his way out of the parking lot.

All around him cars are being cleared off, but some still sit completely covered. He notices a girl standing with her father and crying.

As he finally exits the parking lot, we see several local news vans and a reporter interviewing a kid on the sidewalk.

MEDITATION APP (PRE LAP)
Now open your eyes and hands to
what's before you, and
just...breathe.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Patrick sits on his bed with his eyes closed listening to a guided meditation on his phone.

MEDITATION APP
Everything is within your control.
Let yourself be light. Everything
is within your control.

Patrick opens his eyes and scoffs. He turns off the app and tosses his phone onto his bed. Behind him we can see a large landscape poster of footprints walking towards a mountain range.

His leg bounces up and down as he scans his room.

His bedroom is small, containing a twin bed and a couple half bookcases along with one dresser. There's only one overhead light and every wall is covered in posters of some type or another. It's busy.

On top of the bookshelves are a couple of old LEGO sets and figurines encased in dust encrusted display cases.

The wall directly across from him contains a single large window. To his left, the wall is made up almost entirely of two double door mirrors.

Patrick shoots up from his bed.

MONTAGE - KEEPING BUSY

A) Patrick paces back and forth, cracking his knuckles as he goes.

B) Patrick plucks a few strings from a guitar in the corner of the room before putting it down.

C) Patrick tries to straighten a crooked poster but to no avail.

D) Patrick rests his head against his mirror and stares into his face.

E) Patrick takes the crumpled poetry slam flier from his hoodie pocket and stares at it for a moment before looking off screen.

END MONTAGE.

He walks out of frame

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Patrick walks up to the small calendar hanging on the back of his door.

The calendar shows the month of December and the first couple days of January. The boxes for December 1-12 have black "X"'s through them.

Patrick writes "POETRY DEADLINE" on January first.

He pulls out a battered journal from the top drawer of his dresser. We see the pages are filled with doodles and writing.

After a moment Patrick shuts the journal and hits his wall hard with his fist.

Suddenly, the bedroom door opens with John attached to the handle.

JOHN

Do you mind? In case you forgot we share this wall.

PATRICK

Sorry didn't mean to - I fell.

JOHN

You fell?

PATRICK

Yeah, I fell.

JOHN

You fell into the wall?

PATRICK

Yeah I fell into the fucking wall - you never fallen before?

The brother's stare at each other.

JOHN
Right, whatever. You're coming with
me tonight right?

PATRICK
What?

JOHN
The bon fire man, you already
ditched me this morning.

PATRICK
Oh. Right.

Patrick takes time to respond.

JOHN
This is quite literally the easiest
question in the world - you coming
with me or not?

PATRICK
Fine, yeah.

John stares a second longer.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
I promise, I'll go with you! Stop
looking at me like that.

JOHN
Stop banging on my wall. And we're
taking my car.

John exits and moments later beat heavy music can be heard
thumping from his room.

Patrick closes his door.

He looks back at the calendar and picks up the marker again.
He goes to cross out the 13th but hesitates. He puts the
marker back.

INT. JOHN'S CAR - NIGHT

Patrick sits in the passenger seat of his brother's car. The
roads are quiet and the traffic lights reflect off the wet
streets. John's wearing his letterman jacket.

For a few moments, they drive on in silence.

Patrick turns on the radio.

John immediately turns it off.

JOHN
No music tonight man.

PATRICK
You were literally just blasting it
in your room earlier.

JOHN
Yeah, well now were in my car and I
don't want it.

Patrick scoffs.

They drive on in silence until they hit a red light and John
brakes the car hard.

Patrick lurches forward.

PATRICK
You want me to drive?

JOHN
Lights red.

They sit in silence.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Why didn't you come with me this
morning?

Patrick turns to look at his brother who is just staring
straight ahead.

PATRICK
I don't know, guess I just felt
like going with mom.

Patrick faces straight again.

John looks towards him.

JOHN
I looked for you in the parking lot
you know. Thought maybe—

PATRICK
Lights green.

John turns his attention back to the road and drives on.

INT. JOHN'S CAR, SCHOOL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

They get out of the car without another word to each other.

Patrick looks out towards the soccer field. It's filled with hundreds of students and in the middle is a large pile of wood. The school looms large in the background, it's lights off.

EXT. PARKING LOT, SCHOOL - NIGHT

John hugs his best friend, LEE (17), who eventually notices Patrick.

LEE

Hey Patty - it's good to see you man. John was right, you look exhausted my guy.

Lee hugs Patrick which surprises him.

PATRICK

Good to see you too Lee.

JOHN

Get a room. Come on, it's freezing out here.

EXT. PARKING LOT, SCHOOL - NIGHT

The trio walk up to an opening in a fence where two kids are waiting next to a table of boxes.

One of them pulls out a paper cup with a hole in the center and sticks a small candle through it.

The other has a lighter ready to go. They hand the materials to the group, but Patrick doesn't take any.

EXT. SCHOOL FIELD - NIGHT

Patrick walks behind John and Lee through a growing circle of their fellow classmates. Everyone has a lit candle in hand.

In the center of the circle is a large bon fire made out of wooden pallets. The closer you are to the center, the tighter the circle.

As Patrick walks through, there's random shouts every now and then: "Centennial strong!", "We're with you girl!"

Patrick stares at the fire as it burns brighter and several of the pallets crackle and break.

John and Lee stop walking and Patrick nearly bumps into them. Suddenly, everyone starts singing part of the school's fight song.

STUDENTS SINGING

Beneath our colors bold - the black
and the gold - we march right on,
fight, fight!

John and Lee quickly join in.

JOHN & LEE & SINGING STUDENTS

Those who came before we sing to
thee - because you showed us how to
be -

John nudges Patrick and he jokingly pushes him back.

JOHN & LEE & SINGING STUDENTS (CONT'D)

We'll be brave and strong and grow -
because that's the spirit of
Centennial-al-al!

JOHN & LEE & SINGING STUDENTS (CONT'D)

CHS huh!

Patrick looks around at all the faces, half lit and half in shadow, and watches as they put their arms around each other and holler into the night.

Lee answers a phone call and taps John.

JOHN

(To Lee)
Alright yeah.

John puts his hand on Patrick's shoulder.

JOHN (CONT'D)

We're gonna go find some of our
other friends, you good here?

Patrick just nods. As soon as they're out of sight, he moves toward the outer edges of the circle.

EXT. EDGE OF FIELD, SCHOOL - NIGHT

Patrick walks along the edge of the field, filled with pine trees. Cars drive past on the other side of the fence.

Suddenly, it's quiet. Patrick looks back and sees that the students have entered what seems like a collective prayer or moment of silence.

Patrick's breathing increases.

He takes a fistful of snow from the ground, crushes it in his hand, and runs his hand over his face and through his hair.

He walks back and forth for a moment before running up to a large, fallen pinecone and kicking it as hard as he can.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
Woah wait a minute!

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
Is that Brazilian soccer star
Conrad Conway Cuzco? Must be with a
kick like that.

She notices Patrick's wet face.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
Hey, you okay?

PATRICK
Oh yeah, totally fine.

Patrick wipes his face with his hoodie sleeve.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Just some snow. Wanted to cool
down. That bon fire gets hot. And
pinecones just piss me off
sometimes.

BRIDGEEN
Yeah, the way they just fall to the
ground like they own the place,
bunch of assholes.

PATRICK
Absolutely the worst type of cones.

BRIDGEEN
And pines.

They each lean against the fence.

Patrick looks out towards the bonfire, which has erupted into adolescent chaos again.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
Pretty weird huh?

PATRICK
Yeah. Pretty weird.

BRIDGEEN
Yeah. Kind of makes me sad.

Several cars rush by on the street behind them.

PATRICK
Yeah? I've been feeling kind of
angry lately.

He plays with the snow in front of him.

BRIDGEEN
Yeah?

PATRICK
Yeah.

BRIDGEEN
Yeah, yeah, yeah. Think we've hit
our limit on those. Care to try
another word?

Patrick laughs.

PATRICK
I don't know. I mean, we shouldn't
be here tonight. We should all be
at home, worrying about finals, or
what we're gonna do over break, or
what to get our friends for
Christmas or whatever. But...

BRIDGEEN
But instead we're here.

PATRICK
And I know I'm lucky, I mean, I'm
not the one in the hospital right?
Or dead. Like, we're lucky. And it
all could've been so much worse
but...

BRIDGEEN
It sucks.

PATRICK
It sucks. It really, really, sucks.
And the suckiest sucky part is that
I don't even know how to describe
the suckiest part.

Bridgeen gets off the fence and walks around the pine tree, kicking through the snow as she goes.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Do I sound crazy? Or stupid?

BRIDGEEN
No. Not more than anyone else. All I know is I wish last Friday didn't happen. Is that crazy and stupid?

PATRICK
No.

BRIDGEEN
Right. And it did.

PATRICK
What?

BRIDGEEN
(shrugging)
Happen.

Bridgeen bends down and picks up a big stick. She starts drawing something in the snow.

PATRICK
So what do we...do?

BRIDGEEN
Well, for now, I'm thinking we put your soccer skills to the test.

She gestures toward the snow behind her.

We SEE Bridgeen's drawn a tiny soccer field in the snow.

PATRICK
Alright. But don't say I didn't warn you of my talents.

BRIDGEEN
Ooo I'm practically shaking in my imaginary cleats...

EXT. MAKESHIFT SOCCER FIELD, SCHOOL - NIGHT

Bridgeen puts a large pinecone in the center of the field.

Patrick runs up and kicks it toward the makeshift goal.

Bridgeen beats him to where the pinecone lands and kicks it between his legs.

Patrick slips in the snow as he tries to turn and run after her.

She runs up to the pine cone and kicks it right through the makeshift goal on the other end.

Patrick gets up and brushes the snow off himself.

BRIDGEEN

Did I forget to mention I played soccer for most of my childhood? But like with an actual team and ball and what not.

PATRICK

I suppose that probably beats out my imaginary world cup performances. Guess it really is time to let Cuzco go.

BRIDGEEN

Well it was a truly inspiring career. What are you gonna go by now?

PATRICK

Well, my parents named me Patrick, so I've kind of gotten used to that.

Bridgeen extends her hand.

BRIDGEEN

Nice to finally meet you Patrick.

Patrick shakes her hand.

PATRICK

Yeah you too...

BRIDGEEN

Bridgeen.

PATRICK

Nice to meet you too Bridgeen. Even if you did just shatter my childhood dreams.

Both laugh until suddenly, shouting can be heard coming from the bonfire. They look toward the noise.

Two students are clearly fighting each other. Or more accurately, one student is clearly beating up another.

BRIDGEEN

Oh shit!

Patrick notices the letterman jacket being worn by the attacker.

PATRICK

Oh shit.

He runs off toward the bonfire at full speed.

EXT. BONFIRE, SCHOOL - NIGHT

Patrick runs through the crowd as John hits ANOTHER STUDENT in the stomach.

Just as he pulls back for another hit, Patrick tackles John to the ground. The crowd gasps and shouts some more.

John starts swinging wildly with Patrick on top of him, hitting him once square in the eye.

Patrick hits the ground and Lee comes running over, getting John to his feet and practically dragging him away.

The student that John was attacking is helped as Bridgeen runs up.

BRIDGEEN

You alright?

PATRICK

Fine.

He holds his hand over his eye.

BRIDGEEN

What a fucking douche bag—starting a fight out here tonight! I can't believe it.

PATRICK

That douche bag is my brother.

BRIDGEEN

Oh. I'm sorry, I didn't -

PATRICK

Don't worry about it. Didn't say you were wrong.

Patrick walks off, the crowd staring at him.

He pulls out his phone to see a text from Lee: **We're at the car.**

When he reaches the gate, a voice calls out from behind.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
Ice skating!

Patrick turns around as Bridgeen runs up.

PATRICK
What?

BRIDGEEN
You said you wished you'd be
worrying about normal things, like
what to get your friends for
Christmas.

She catches her breath.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
I like ice skating.

Bridgeen takes Patrick's phone out of his hands, puts in her phone number, and hands it back.

PATRICK
Noted.

He nods and leaves.

EXT. PARKING LOT, SCHOOL - NIGHT

As Patrick approaches the car, we see Lee talking in a low voice to John.

JOHN
Look everyone! The good guy!

John rushes toward Patrick but Lee holds him back.

PATRICK
Actually I was just leaving.

Patrick turns around and starts walking the other way.

JOHN
Like hell you are!

John breaks free from Lee and grabs Patrick into a headlock.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Why the fuck did you tackle me huh?
You wanna defend that piece of shit
too?

Patrick tries to fight back.

PATRICK

You're fucking drunk!

He manages to break free as Lee steps between them.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

And you're being an asshole!

JOHN

I'm the asshole? The fuck you know?
(pointing to the field)
Dude was talking bout the guy like
he didn't just walk into our school
with a shotgun and -

PATRICK

Yeah he went to our school John—he
was on *my* team remember? Lots of
people knew him before he walked in
with a shotgun—you gonna fight all
of them? Or just your little
brother?

Patrick points at his swelling eye.

John rests against his car and catches his breath.

JOHN

Why didn't you come with me this
morning?

Patrick throws his head back in exasperation.

PATRICK

For fuck's sake—seriously? This
again?

JOHN

Why didn't you come with me this
morning to get your car? You go
running to mom, like always. I'm
not good enough to go with? I was
there too Pat, I was right there in
that building same as you!

PATRICK

Well you don't act like it.

Silence.

JOHN

What the fuck did you just say to me?

Lee stands between them again.

PATRICK

I'm sorry, I didn't mean—

JOHN

Where the fuck you think I was? You know where I was? You even asked since it happened? What it was like for me? No.

Lee tries to calm him down but John pushes past him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Let me tell you where I was. I was huddled up in class like everyone else, but I didn't have my phone on me like you Pat, and you know the only thing I was fucking thinking about all those hours? Where's Patrick? Where's Patrick? I couldn't remember your schedule, I couldn't fuckin guess where you were—I was so freaked out and I had no way to check on you. Then we got the news someone had been shot and I just...

Patrick looks away.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I had no idea where you were man.

Silence.

PATRICK

John, I didn't mean—

JOHN

And when we found out it was a girl that was shot you know what I felt? I felt fucking relieved because that meant it wasn't you. A girl had been shot in the head in the hallway and I felt relieved. And when we finally get escorted out, and I grab my phone from my backpack you know what I see?

Patrick's breathing fast and hard.

JOHN (CONT'D)

All these texts, all these messages...but not a single one from you. I think, okay, maybe he didn't get his phone either. Maybe he couldn't text anyone. But you did have your phone Pat.

Patrick looks at his brother.

John's crying.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You sent texts out to mom and dad, to your friends, to the cousins...but not me. Not to your older brother. And days go by and you don't talk to me, you don't ask anything, you don't even have the decency to go pick up your fucking car with me—so fuck you man. Walking around like you're the only one this happened to—like no one understands you!

A couple students walk by quickly, whispering.

PATRICK

Of course I know I'm not the only one this happened to. I'm not the one beating up other students not even a week after it's happened!

JOHN

You can't even say what *it* is!

PATRICK

A shooting! A shooting! We were in a shooting! You fucking happy now you psycho? I don't know what to tell you. You want me to apologize for not texting you when I was scared out of my mind? Fine, I am sorry. I'm sorry I didn't have the hindsight to think about how you were going to take not being texted! I was a little preoccupied! I didn't text you. Boo fuckin hoo. Grow up.

Silence.

JOHN
Get in the car were going home.

PATRICK
You're drunk. I'm walking.

Patrick starts to walk the other direction.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Besides, the cold air feels good on
my fucking black eye!

JOHN
Act like it...I'm sorry I actually
hang out with my friends still!
fucking loser—fuck!

John punches the hood of his car as Patrick leaves the parking lot.

EXT. SUBURBAN SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Patrick walks along the sidewalk of the school exterior.

He passes by a piece of the school's chain link fence and notices a large pile of fresh flowers piled up against it.

He's breathing fast and after a car rushes by him, he stops and pulls out his phone.

He begins scrolling through all the messages he sent that day, during the shooting. Each and every one of them read nearly the same thing in one fashion or another: **"There's a shooter in the building, I think I'm safe"**.

He opens one to his dad: **"Don't know much right now but think I'm safe, love you"**.

There's no texts to John at all. Patrick locks his phone as his breathing increases.

He closes his eyes tight and we HEAR police sirens and kids whispering and helicopters and a fire alarm.

Suddenly, Patrick opens his eyes and slams his phone in frustration.

PATRICK
Shit—idiot!

He picks up his phone, the screen now badly cracked. He runs his hands through his hair and starts walking again. We're in front of him as we—

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY, NIGHTMARE - NIGHT

Patrick walks through the hallway of his school. The lights are dim and the hall is empty. Large vines line the walls.

This is a NIGHTMARE.

Patrick looks down and we see the floor is made of sand. He tries to move faster but this causes him to sink further down.

He looks toward the end of the hallway and sees a set of double doors.

A FLOATING PHONE appears in front of him.

FLOATING PHONE

Not there.

It has John's voice.

PATRICK

Why not?

FLOATING PHONE

The floor isn't clean yet.

PATRICK

But I have class that way! This is my school!

The floating phone swoops in close.

FLOATING PHONE

Shhhhhh!

The floating phone moves around Patrick as the walls stretch taller. Assault rifles line the vines, snoring.

FLOATING PHONE (CONT'D)

This isn't a school.

The phone starts pinging with messages and a fire alarm goes off. Patrick throws his hands over his ears as the rifles wake all around him.

He tries to run but the sand underneath him just folds in front of him over and over.

RIFLE
Student in the open!

The rifles take aim. Patrick runs harder, getting nowhere.

RIFLE (CONT'D)
Clear!

Patrick sinks through the ground.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Patrick shoots straight up in his bed, sweating and breathing hard.

He flicks on the light switch and checks his newly cracked phone; it's nearly 2am.

He walks around his room and shakes himself several times before turning the lights off and climbing back into bed. After a moment he turns the lights on again.

He goes into his closet and digs through until he pulls out an old tv. He quickly hooks it up and places it on a shelf in front of his bed with a rabbit ear antenna on top.

Patrick turns off the lights again and now his room is filled with the dim blue light of the TV and the sound of canned laughter from old sitcoms. He watches from his bed until he falls asleep.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE MORNING NEXT DAY

Patrick enters the kitchen with his fresh black eye. His mom is sitting at the table on her phone.

MOM
Good morning hun, get some good sleep?

PATRICK
Yeah. Was tired from all the festivities and what not.

Patrick picks out a doughnut from a box on the counter.

MOM
I didn't hear you come home last night. How was it?

PATRICK

Good, yeah, lots of kids came. They had candles and stuff and it was good, yeah.

MOM

I saw that. They did a report on the news and showed some images of the big bon fire. It looked...nice.

John walks in and drinks water straight from the tap.

MOM (CONT'D)

Morning sweetie, sleep alright?

John grunts back in response.

Patrick turns around to face his mom.

PATRICK

What did the news say about it?

MOM

Oh my god what happened to your eye?!

Patrick's mom nearly jumps out of her seat as she rushes over to check on Patrick's eye.

He tries to get her off of him. John looks on with concern.

PATRICK

Oh, yeah, nothing, don't worry about it. We were singing our fight song and someone accidentally elbowed me. It's no big deal.

MOM

It looks painful—here.

She grabs an ice pack from the freezer and practically slaps it onto Patrick's face.

She turns to John who is now grabbing his own doughnut.

MOM (CONT'D)

Did you know about this? It's nearly swollen shut!

JOHN

He said it was fine mom. He's icing it isn't he?

MOM

Sometimes I just wish I could keep
both of you with me all the time
like when you were little.

She trails off.

JOHN

If you wanted that you shoulda home
schooled us. Those kids turn out
worse than anyone.

MOM

John!

JOHN

What? It's true. Stage five
clingers.

He holds his hand up like he's making levels.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Homeschool kids at the bottom, then
private, then public like us. You
did right by us, mom, don't worry.

He stuffs doughnut in his mouth.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(mouthful)

We're well rounded.

MOM

(to John)

Seeing Lee again today?

JOHN

No I don't think so. Think I'm just
gonna hang out at home.

Patrick tries to eat his doughnut while holding the ice pack
to his eye. It's not going well.

MOM

Oh, well then maybe the two of you
can do something—

Patrick drops his ice pack. John and mom jump.

PATRICK

Sorry. Slippery.

He picks it up and puts it on the counter. Doughnut still in
hand.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
I'm actually going to a friend's
today.

MOM
Oh that's great!

JOHN
Oh yeah? Who's?

John stares at Patrick and he returns the gaze.

PATRICK
Uh, Jacob's. Yeah. He invited me
over to play some ping pong.

Patrick turns his back on them and quickly sends a text: **Hey,
wanna hang?**

MOM
That should be fun! Try not to be
out too late again though, I can
tell you both need to catch up on
your sleep.

Patrick turns back around.

JOHN
Sleep is for the weak mom.

PATRICK
Like private school kids?

JOHN
Exactly.

MOM
I hope you don't really believe
that.

Patrick's phone buzzes. It's a text from Jacob: **Yeah man -
free all day.**

JOHN
Relax mom. I'm kidding. Going back
to sleep right now in fact.

John leaves the kitchen. Silence for a moment.

Patrick puts his uneaten doughnut back in the box and wipes
his hands on his pants.

PATRICK
Well I should go get ready.

MOM
You barely ate though.

PATRICK
That's alright I'll grab something
on the way—tell dad thanks for the
doughnuts.

EXT. JACOB'S BACK PATIO - DAY

Patrick sits at the other end of a ping pong table in a metal rocking chair with a glass of water in hand.

On the other end is his friend, JACOB (15), who is bouncing a ping pong ball on a paddle.

Patrick is constantly tipping his water glass back and forth, seeing how far he can tip it without any water falling out.

JACOB
All I'm saying is if a shooter came
into my school, I'd kick his ass.

Jacob's phone keeps pinging with texts while he talks but he never checks it.

Patrick keeps eyeing the phone when it pings.

JACOB (CONT'D)
I certainly wouldn't be hiding
under a desk that's for sure. I
mean, the guy was such a pussy he
blew his own brains out which
honestly -

Patrick spills his water.

PATRICK
A wall.

He puts the cup down on the table.

JACOB
What?

PATRICK
A wall. We went against the wall,
not under the desks. And first he
set our library on fire.

He stares at Jacob expectantly.

JACOB

...What does that have to do with anything? It's like I was saying, there wasn't even that big of a threat—

Jacob's phone pings again and Patrick focuses in on it. His leg is bouncing.

JACOB (CONT'D)

It was literally one guy and lasted like, what, a minute? That was the official time line right? I mean, I know you guys were locked in for hours but—

Patrick stands up.

PATRICK

I gotta go.

JACOB

What? I thought we were gonna play another couple games?

PATRICK

What does that have to do with anything?

Patrick throws his hood up and walks past his friend.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick drives fast while gripping his steering wheel hard. He exhales sharply. He runs his hands through his hair and taps his hands, looking out the window, not paying attention.

PATRICK

Shit!

He slams the breaks. A woman crosses the street in front of him with her dog. He gives a wave.

Patrick notices a couple YOUNG KIDS (8, 11) on some swings in a playground. He stares in their direction for a moment before pulling up and parking.

His phone buzzes, it's a text from mom: **How's it going?**

Patrick looks at the message and then throws his phone into the passenger seat. He then picks it up a moment later and shoves it into his glovebox.

Patrick looks towards the swing set one more time before opening his car door.

EXT. SWING SET, PLAYGROUND - DAY

Patrick kicks his legs back and forth in front of him as he swings through the air.

The sun is starting to set, giving off a beautiful mixture of blue and orange with the mountains peaking their heads over the horizon.

The kids on the other set of swings watch in awe as Patrick swings high.

KID #1

Jump! Jump!

Patrick kicks to go even higher still. The whole swing set is shaking and squeaking and the kids are laughing.

KID #2

Do it! Jump!

Patrick let's go of the chains and pushes off the swing at maximum height. He flies through the orange and blue and for a moment appears to clear even the mountains - before crashing down into the gravel below.

The kids cheer and holler and Patrick gives them a theatrical bow in return.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR, PLAYGROUND - NIGHT

Patrick sits in the car for a moment. The light of the day gone. A soft smile comes across his face.

He starts the engine and takes his phone from the glove box.

His face shifts. He has at least 10 text messages that say things like: **"Turn on the news now!", "They have an update...", "Fuck are you guys watching?", "Fuck..."**.

He drives off.

INT. PATRICK'S HOUSE, ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Patrick bursts through his front door and aims right for the basement stairs. His mom pops out of the kitchen.

MOM
Hey hon, you okay?

PATRICK
Fine!

He doesn't look back as he jumps down the stairs.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

John is sitting on the couch with the news on when Patrick scurries down and cautiously takes a seat. Neither of them look at each other. Their faces are glued to the screen.

NEWS ANCHOR
If you're just joining us we've
just received breaking news
regarding the senior student, shot
at point blank during the shooting
at Centennial High School -

In the background we see mom quietly sit at the top of the basement steps, watching.

Patrick's breathing is rapidly increasing.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)
We've been able to confirm that she
has unfortunately succumbed to her
injuries earlier this evening.

Patrick doesn't hear anything else. The world goes out. He keeps staring straight ahead at the TV as tears build in his eyes.

John has his face buried in a pillow and his mom quickly goes to comfort him.

Patrick shoots to his feet and heads towards the stairs.

INT. TOP OF STAIRS/FRONT ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Patrick walks passed his dad who says something to him that we can't hear. He tries to grab Patrick's shoulder but Patrick brushes it off as he makes his way up to his room.

INT. SECOND STORY STAIRS/UPPER LANDING - NIGHT

We see Dad in the background trying to talk to Patrick as he continues to walk away, using the wall to brace himself.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patrick walks into his bedroom and slams the door shut behind him, locking it as we hear footsteps rushing up the stairs outside.

DAD (O.S.)
Patrick!

Patrick paces rapidly as he runs his hands through his hair. He hits himself in the arm once. He takes big, deep, shaky breaths.

Patrick can barely contain himself. In his head he HEARS a fire alarm and helicopters and police officers shouting and kids crying and the fight song being sung.

DAD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Patrick can you open the door
please?

He punches himself in the arm repeatedly now.

He goes to his door and rips the calendar off the back of it before snapping it in half over his knee.

DAD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Patrick, open the door.

He goes to his bed and screams into his pillow.

DAD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Patrick!

Patrick sinks down to the floor and sits against his bed. Outside the door we can hear another set of heavy footsteps rush up the stairs and John's door slam shut.

Patrick HEARS John crying and his dad's baritone voice talking to him through the shared wall.

We hear another set of footsteps coming up the stairs and then a light knock on Patrick's door.

MOM (O.S.)
Patrick...Are you alright in there?

Her voice is small.

MOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Can you open up please?

Patrick slowly pushes himself up and goes to the door. He stares at it for a moment.

He reaches his hand out and turns off his lights. Patrick can still see the shadow of his mom's feet from underneath the door. After a moment they move away.

Patrick turns on his TV and goes back down to the floor, resting against his mirror, holding his knees up to his chest. He closes his eyes.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - 2ND DREAM SEQUENCE

Patrick opens his eyes and is standing in front of a door at school. A fire alarm light is constantly flashing but no alarm is sounding. He looks around and sees several S.W.A.T officers, their faces blurred, standing behind him. They appear to be waiting for something in a combat formation.

Patrick looks down and notices a phone in the center of the hallway in front of the rifles. They are all pointing at it.

Suddenly, the phones begins to buzz with texts. The officers immediately begin moving.

OFFICER

Stay against the wall! Go, go!

Several officers nudge Patrick even closer to the door. He's sweating like crazy. He tries to talk but no sounds emit from his mouth.

The phone begins to buzz so intensely that it jumps off the floor.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Clear!

An officer pushes Patrick towards the exit.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Hands above your head across the street GO!

Patrick bursts through the door but winds up in the exact same hallway, now empty, with the same exit door at the end of it. He runs with his hands above his head, bursting through the door again only to find himself right back where he started.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

AGAINST THE WALL! MOVE!

He runs faster and faster and bursts through the door every time only to find himself back again and again, running and running.

OFFICER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Hands above your head! CLEAR! GO GO
GO!

Patrick bursts through the door one more time.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM, SEVERAL DAYS LATER - DAY

Patrick pops up from his bed. He looks around his room. It's messier than we've seen it, nothing picked up or organized, random things here and there. It's been a few days since the news of the girl's death.

His black eye looks much better and nearly healed.

INT. PATRICK'S KITCHEN - DAY

The toaster beeps twice before popping up two half-burnt bagels. Patrick covers them in as much cream cheese as possible before putting them on a paper towel and moving quickly towards the stairs.

INT. FRONT ENTRY WAY - DAY

He's cut off by his mom.

MOM
Merry Christmas Eve!

She gives Patrick a hug as he tries to move his bagel out of the way. His eyebrows furrow.

PATRICK
Uh, Merry Christmas Eve.

MOM
I was just about to check on you.
John's still—

JOHN (O.S.)
I'm up.

John comes down the stairs—it's clear he hasn't shaven since last we saw him and his eyes have dark circles under them.

MOM
Oh good!

She hugs him tight.

JOHN
Merry Christmas Eve.

MOM (CONT'D)
Merry Christmas Eve!

MOM (CONT'D)
I'm glad you both got some
sleep—long night ahead I know.

PATRICK
What's tonight?

JOHN
Grandma's dumbass.

MOM
Hey!

PATRICK
We're still going?

MOM
Of course!

JOHN
Tradition man. What'd you expect?

MOM
We're gonna leave around five, and
your dad's gonna need help packing
the car so make sure you're ready.

She heads for the kitchen.

Patrick once again starts to head up the stairs.

JOHN
Where do you think you're going?

PATRICK
To my room.

He holds up his bagel as if the connection is obvious.

JOHN
You heard her say it's Christmas
Eve right? That was clear to you?
That Christmas isn't cancelled?

PATRICK
Yeah...and?

John gives his brother a look.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Oh shit! Presents.

JOHN
There it is. I'm about to head to
the mall. You wanna come?

PATRICK
Sure I'll eat in the car.

JOHN
Oh shit! No you won't. I just had
it cleaned. Get your shoes on let's
go.

John walks out the door and Patrick stands there for a moment
before crumpling his bagel in it's sad paper towel.

INT. JOHN'S CAR - DAY

John's car rumbles as he drives down the snow packed streets
but the sun is shining down and the roads are busy.

JOHN
Hey, uh, I got you something. It's
in the glove box.

Patrick opens the glove box and pulls out a new journal with
a bow on it.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Sorry it's not wrapped.

Patrick flips through the journal.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Didn't know if you needed a new one
but...it comes with a pen, thought
that was neat. Thought maybe you
could like, write some shit or
something.

PATRICK
Thanks. It is *neat*. I'll be sure to
write some shit.

JOHN
You know what I mean.

PATRICK
You didn't have to get me this.

JOHN

Come on, it's Christmas. And I did give you a black eye so. Not to mention, you're gonna need a poem for that slam thing next semester right?

PATRICK

Yeahhh. Right. Your gifts still on the way, of course.

JOHN

Oh yeah? Stuck in transit?

PATRICK

Yeah so stuck it's still on the shelf somewhere. What should we get mom and dad?

JOHN

I don't know, dad could use some new pj shorts that's for sure.

PATRICK

You mean you don't like the holes all over his current ones?

JOHN

Yeah I'm getting a little tired of accidentally catching sight of them. The man rarely wears underwear. I know where I come from - don't need the visual reminder thank you very much.

Patrick laughs. John clears his throat.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You think they're doing alright?

PATRICK

Mom and dad?

JOHN

Yeah, they seem weird. Weirder than usual I mean.

PATRICK

I don't know, I guess so.

John bows his head and shakes it. He scoffs.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What?

JOHN
I'm trying to have a conversation
about real shit here.

PATRICK
Yeah and I'm talking back, that's
how a conversation works.

John scoffs.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
What?

JOHN
I'm trying to talk to you man.

PATRICK
Im here - I'm talking!

PATRICK (CONT'D)	JOHN
Am I going crazy?	Am I that fucking difficult to be around?

PATRICK (CONT'D)
I'm sorry okay I don't know what
you want from me - I don't even
wanna be here right now.

JOHN
Well you are.

John pulls into the mall parking lot.

PATRICK
Then what do you keep pushing me
for - all I want is to be alone
which you never seem to comprehend.

John whips into a parking spot and parks the car quickly,
causing Patrick to lurch forward.

JOHN
You want to be alone? Fine. Stay in
the car.

John gets out and slams the door.

Patrick exhales harshly and watches John walk away. He turns
forward and hits himself in the thigh once.

PATRICK
God damnit - Fuck you - fuck!

Silence.

He looks down at the new journal in his lap. He looks over at John who is almost at the doors of the store.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Fuck.

Patrick stuffs the journal into his front hoodie pocket.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick catches up to John from behind.

PATRICK

You get mom, I'll get dad.

John watches Patrick walk away and shakes his head.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, MALL - DAY

Patrick walks into the department store. It's packed with last minute shoppers. The whole place is decorated head to toe.

JOHN

Can't believe they make people work on Christmas Eve.

PATRICK

Well, we're shopping on Christmas Eve so - not exactly helping the rebellion.

The two go their separate ways.

JOHN

Don't take too long! We gotta be at Grandmas soon--and keep it under fifty!

Patrick throws a wave over his shoulder.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, UPPER LEVEL - DAY

Patrick flips through some shorts on a display and holds a pair up to gauge the size. There's a general murmur of store chaos around him and Christmas music coming out of a crappy speaker system.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, CHECKOUT COUNTER - DAY

Patrick hands a pair of shorts to a CHECKOUT WOMAN (40s) and pulls out his wallet.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
Holiday shopping all done?

PATRICK
Think so yeah.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
Any big plans?

She speaks almost autonomously, as if going through a script.

PATRICK
Just going to see extended family.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
You get to see them often?

PATRICK
I go to school with several of my
cousins so yeah quite a bit
actually.

Patrick hands over some cash.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
Oh well that's nice! What school do
you go to?

PATRICK
Centennial.

The woman stops.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
I'm so sorry.

Her voice is softer now. She really looks at him.

CHECKOUT WOMAN (CONT'D)
I was devastated when I heard about
what happened.

PATRICK
Oh, no need to apologize, wasn't
your fault right?

Patrick gives a half-hearted chuckle.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
That poor girl and her family.

PATRICK
Yeah. Terrible.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
And he seemed like a smart young man - I've followed all the reports about him - I just never understand it. Did you know he went to the bowling alley in the morning? I just don't understand it.

Patrick just nods.

CHECKOUT WOMAN (CONT'D)
Well here, let me see what I can do for you.

She types on her computer, rescans the shorts, and opens her cash register to take out some money.

PATRICK
Oh no, that's alright really you don't have to -

CHECKOUT WOMAN
It's the least I can do.

She hands him back more change than he should've gotten.

CHECKOUT WOMAN (CONT'D)
There you go. Half-off!

Patrick puts on a smile.

PATRICK
Very kind of you, thank you.

She bags the shorts and hands them over.

CHECKOUT WOMAN
I hope you have a wonderful Christmas, okay?

Patrick just smiles and nods. As soon as he turns from her his smile drops. The people in line behind him watch him as he goes. Suddenly the crowd of the mall feels tighter, with more people, and their random murmur starts to sound louder and louder as Patrick's breathing increases.

He wipes his forehead and darts his eyes around. He enters another clothing section and sees a circular clearance rack.

He moves toward it and ducks inside.

INT. MIDDLE OF CLEARANCE RACK CIRCLE - DAY

Patrick sits in the middle of the circular clothing rack, breathing hard and fast, as feet walk around him.

He pulls his hood over his head and puts his hands in his pockets, feeling his journal.

He pulls it out and tentatively opens it up, clicking the pen several times.

He breathes as he brings pen to paper and writes slowly.

PATRICK (V.O.)
Blurry as the world gets, spinning
round and round, encircling me in
waves of motion -

Patrick scribbles out what he just wrote.

PATRICK (V.O.)
Shit shit shit shit terrible.

He breathes and brings his pen back down.

PATRICK (V.O.)
These nights I've been working on
how I can separate my head from my
heart. And these days I just walk
around sleeping because the truth
is...the truth is...

He stops for a moment, clicking the pen several times.

PATRICK (V.O.)
The truth is this I suck and I'm
corny and this is bullshit!

Suddenly, his phone starts buzzing loudly - John's calling. Patrick stands up in the middle of the rack, startling those around him.

PATRICK
Hello?

JOHN (O.S.)
You get lost or something?

PATRICK
Who is this?

JOHN (O.S.)
Ha. Ha. Just meet me at the car.

Patrick hangs up and awkwardly climbs out from the clothes.

PATRICK
Best deals are in the middle. Merry
Christmas.

INT. JOHN'S CAR - DAY

Patrick climbs into the car where John is already waiting.

JOHN
Get some shorts?

He doesn't look at Patrick.

PATRICK
Yep all good. You get something for
mom?

JOHN
Yep all good.

John starts to back out.

PATRICK
Hey can I ask you something?

John stops the car and looks at his brother. He nods.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
...Can I turn on the radio?

John gives a half smile.

JOHN
Sure, but Christmas station only.
Gimme that Cozy 101. Any religious
shit comes on you change it and we
sing ourselves.

John pulls the car out as Patrick fiddles with the station
and they start singing a Christmas song together.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patrick tries to iron out the wrinkles in his shirt with his
hands in front of his mirror. He's wearing a red and blue
flannel that looks like it has been sitting in a ball in his
closet since last Christmas.

He keeps trying to rub out the wrinkles but it's clear that he won't be able to.

He takes off the shirt and notices faded bruises on his upper arms where he hit himself a couple days ago.

There's a knock on the door and Patrick panics, throwing the same wrinkled shirt back on.

MOM (O.S.)

Hey you almost ready? Car's packed.

PATRICK

Yeah I'll be down in a sec!

Patrick can hear his mom walk away and he exhales. He looks down and realizes his shirt is on backwards.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Patrick stands behind his family on the front porch of his Grandma's. All of the lights are on inside and we can see lots of cars on the street behind them. The door opens up and Patrick's GRANDMA (70s) smiles in a red Santa hat.

GRANDMA

Merry Christmas!

MOM

Merry Christmas!

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Grandma pulls both John and Patrick in for a dual hug.

GRANDMA

How are my handsome grandsons doing?

JOHN

Very happy to be here Nana.

PATRICK

Last to arrive as usual.

GRANDMA

Well I've got both of your mugs ready and I think I set a record for sugar cookies baked this year.

John and Patrick follow their grandma into the kitchen.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen is packed with all of Patrick's extended family. There must be over 20 of them. As soon as they walk in everyone looks and hollers.

Patrick goes through saying hi to all his relatives and each of them hug him. There are smiles all around the crowded kitchen. One of his cousins in particular, ASHLEY (17), comes practically running up to him.

ASHLEY

Patrick!

She hugs him.

PATRICK

Ashley! Good to see you.

ASHLEY

SO good to see you!
(playfully hitting his
arm)
Merry Christmas Eve!

PATRICK

Yeah, Merry Christmas Eve.

Ashley goes to hug John and Patrick looks around at the scene. It's happy and warm and merry. He smiles.

BEGIN MONTAGE - THROUGHOUT HOUSE:

In all of these shots Patrick seems happy.

A) Patrick eating food around the kitchen and laughing with his cousins.

B) The adults dancing and turning up music in the corner of the kitchen.

C) Grandma giving a toast with Grandpa by her side.

D) Patrick notices John keeps sneaking out back with some of his cousins.

E) Gifts being opened and given in a living room.

F) Large dining room table being set for dinner.

G) Everyone digging in to eat.

H) Patrick on a couch in the living room watching TV with some family around him and wrapping paper everywhere.

I) We see John come back inside and make his way towards the living room, Patrick follows him with his eyes before eventually getting up.

INT. DINING ROOM, GRANDPARENT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Patrick enters the room with several cookies in hand and sits next to his mom. John's on the other side of her, looking rather distracted by an unused Christmas popper.

There's lots of wine at the table. Lots of empty glasses.

MOM

Tired?

PATRICK

(holding up the cookies)
That's what these are for.

UNCLE STEVE (O.S.)

I just don't understand what
they're still investigating for.

Patrick turns his attention to the conversation. We see AUNT BECKY (40s) and UNCLE STEVE (40s) drunk at the end of the table leading a conversation.

AUNT BECKY

I think they just want to make sure
they've looked at everything. Gotta
get everything right.

UNCLE STEVE

Yeah I get that - I mean someone
should've known something about the
guy. Warning signs.

Patrick looks down at the table cloth and notices a loose thread. He starts to pull at it while ignoring his cookies.

AUNT BECKY

Well, it's not exactly something
you'd expect to happen right? You
can't blame them for being
unprepared sweetie.

UNCLE STEVE

I'm not blaming the school honey -

Patrick tries to quietly get up from his seat and leave the room but its an old house and everything creaks. Aunt Becky notices.

AUNT BECKY
(to Uncle Steve)
See, you shouldnt've said anything.

UNCLE STEVE
What did I say?

The popper John was holding goes off.

JOHN
Got it!

PATRICK
I just have to use the bathroom,
that's all.

Patrick quickly leaves. John watches him.

INT. HALLWAY, GRANDPARENT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Patrick walks toward the kitchen and we can hear hushed but harsh whispers from the dining room he just left. Music can be heard coming from the kitchen.

INT. BATHROOM, GRANDPARENT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Patrick enters the bathroom and shuts the door behind him. He puts the toilet seat down and sits. Through the walls we can still hear music and chatter and the occasional burst of laughter.

Suddenly, the door opens and Patrick jumps up. John pokes his head in. He's wearing a yellow paper crown.

JOHN
Hey.

PATRICK
Uh, hey!

JOHN
Takin a piss?

Patrick looks down at the closed toilet lid, then his completely not down pants, and then back at his brother.

PATRICK
Uh, no.

JOHN

Didn't think so. Come outside for a second.

John makes to leave.

PATRICK

Isn't it cold out there?

John sighs deeply.

JOHN

You gotta make everything so damn difficult don't you? You can either stay in here and keep pretending to take a shit or whatever or you can come outside for a second and stop *being* such a little shit. Your choice.

EXT. BACK PATIO, GRANDPARENT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John walks outside with Patrick behind him. Patrick looks out and sees his cousins Ashley and KENZIE (18) sitting next to each other at an old wooden picnic table. You can see their breath as they talk.

JOHN

Look who I got!

ASHLEY

Heyyyyyy - you brought Patrick!

KENZIE

Woop woop Patrick!

Kenzie pulls Patrick in for a hug and invites him to sit.

KENZIE (CONT'D)

How are you?

PATRICK

Doing good yeah.

Patrick watches as John disappears for a moment behind an old play-set and reaches into some bushes.

ASHLEY

No but like, really, how are you? You can be honest Pat, cause honestly, I'm feeling pretty fuuuuucked up.

(MORE)

ASHLEY (CONT'D)

Which is okay, because this is all
a little fucked up you know?

Patrick chuckles at the drunken nature of his cousins.

PATRICK

Well, honestly, I guess I don't
feel great.

KENZIE

YES! There you go!

PATRICK

Yeah it's just kind of weird I
guess, I don't know.

ASHLEY

No, yeah, it is weird! Like, super
weird. I didn't even feel like
having Christmas - I didn't feel
like doing anything.

PATRICK

Yeah, I get what you mean actually -

John comes back with a large bottle of whiskey.

JOHN

Alright, you can't tell mom and dad
about this. You're now in the
circle of trust.

ASHLEY

The inner circle woop woop!

KENZIE

The secret square woot!

John puts his arm around Patrick.

JOHN

I could tell you needed this.
We're in this together man.

KENZIE

This isn't a sports team!

Both girls laugh.

ASHLEY

Should it be?! Should we join a
team or something?

John hands the bottle of whiskey to Patrick.

PATRICK
What is it?

JOHN
Bliss, brother. Bliss.

Patrick tilts the bottle back and coughs.

PATRICK
Bliss tastes like shit!

He hands the bottle back to John.

JOHN
You don't sip it. It's bliss man.
Over before you know it.

John takes a quick swig and hands it back to Patrick.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Got it?

Patrick nods and does just as John did.

Woo! ASHLEY Yeah! KENZIE

Patrick laughs and coughs but less than before. He takes another swig.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK YARD - NIGHT

Ashley and Kenzie lay down on the large wooden deck as John sits in a chair and Patrick stands, staring at the Christmas lights on the house. He's doing a sort of dance with himself. The bottle of whiskey is considerably more empty than before.

ASHLEY
So Pat, got anyone...of special
interest?

Ooooooooo JOHN Ooooooooo! KENZIE

Patrick plops down in the snowy grass.

PATRICK
Well, I did meet this girl the
other day, or week, or whatever.
But I don't know. She seems nice.

Kenzie sits up.

KENZIE

What's her name? Does she go to our school?!

PATRICK

Yeah, 'course she goes to our school, fool!

He pulls out his phone as everyone laughs.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Her name's Bridgeen.

Patrick holds up his phone to show everyone her contact info.

JOHN

Atta boyyy - you gonna ask her out?

PATRICK

What? No, I haven't even texted her yet. We're just like, friends.

Ashley sits up.

ASHLEY

She gave you her number for a reason Patrick! You should text her!

KENZIE

No, no, you should call her!

PATRICK

Should I? Should I call her right now?

The groups laughing.

JOHN

Do it!

PATRICK

Okay I'm doin it! I'm fuckin doin it!

ASHLEY

He's fucken doin it!

Ashley falls into Sarah's shoulder laughing. Patrick calls Bridgeen.

PATRICK
It's ringing!

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
Hello?

PATRICK
Hey Bridgeen, it's Patrick.

John, Ash, and Kenzie all huddle close together to watch.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
From school. The, uh, the soccer
star.

John burst out laughing.

JOHN
What?!

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
(laughing)
Yeah I remember. What's up?

Patrick covers the wrong end of the phone with his hand and
looks towards the group.

PATRICK
She asked what's up! What should I
say?

ASHLEY
(whispering)
Wish her Merry Christmas!

Patrick goes back to the phone.

PATRICK
Merry Christmas!—Eve, Merry
Christmas Eve...just wanted to call
and say that.

John gives a big thumbs up.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
Merry Christmas Eve. Are you having
a good night?

Patrick covers the wrong end of the phone again, now barely
even moving it from his mouth.

PATRICK
She wants to know if I'm having a
good night?

KENZIE

Uh, fuck yeah you are!

John and Ashley cheer and holler.

PATRICK

Fuck yeah I'm having a good night!

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)

(laughing)

Certainly sounds like it.

Patrick switches the phone to his other ear.

PATRICK

She's laughing!

JOHN

Ask her now!

The girls shush him. Patrick moves his phone back to his other ear.

PATRICK

Hey, I was thinking, would you like to go ice skating with me? Maybe tomorrow?

John gives a double thumbs up.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)

Oh, well I can't tomorrow, cause of Christmas and all.

Patrick doesn't move the phone from his ear.

PATRICK

She can't tomorrow. It's Christmas.

ASHLEY

Damnit Christmas!

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)

But I could go on Sunday?

PATRICK

(to group)

But she can go Sunday!

The girls cheer.

JOHN

But that's the Lord's day!

Everyone freezes and looks at John before bursting out laughing.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
Hello?

PATRICK
Hello! Sunday is perfect. I'll pick you up.

Ashley jumps to her feet.

ASHLEY
No too soon, meet her there!

PATRICK
Actually I'll meet you there.

John stands up.

JOHN
Wait where are you going?

PATRICK
Wait where are we going?

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
We can figure it all out.

PATRICK
(to group)
We're gonna figure it all out!

The group nods their approval.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
Alright so I'll see you Sunday.

PATRICK
See you Sunday.

Patrick hangs up the phone and gets enveloped in a hug from John who immediately hands him the whiskey bottle.

Patrick takes another swig. It gets quiet.

ASHLEY
I wish I still had my phone. It's still in my stupid backpack.

PATRICK
At school?

Ashley nods her head.

KENZIE

What do you think it'll be like,
going back?

JOHN

I don't know...I almost wish we
didn't have to.

KENZIE

Sometimes I feel like it was all a
dream.

Her voice gets shaky. Ashley comforts her.

KENZIE (CONT'D)

And I keep wondering when I'll wake
up. She was so nice...

ASHLEY

I can't think of anything else most
days.

JOHN

I can't even sleep most days.

Patrick looks at his brother and then back at the group. For
a moment there's silence again.

PATRICK

I can't feel my toes.

INT. PARENT'S CAR - NIGHT

Patrick sits in the back seat of his parent's car as they
drive home. He watches the colorful lights as they pass them.
John is humming to himself and burping every now and then.

We see Patrick's dad look through the rear view mirror at
them but he doesn't say anything.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The car pulls into the driveway and almost as soon as it's
parked John gets out and pukes in the grass. His mom goes to
him. Patrick comes around and watches.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Patrick stands at his family's Christmas tree, staring at it.
The rest of the lights in the room are off. It's beautiful.

But when Patrick walks up to the tree and runs his hand over a branch, almost all of the needles fall off into his hand.

His dad comes up from behind.

DAD
You alright?

Patrick whirls around and nods.

PATRICK
Yeah. Think it needs water.

Patrick's blinking too many times.

DAD
You talk to John recently?

PATRICK
Yeah, of course.

DAD
He doin alright?

PATRICK
Yeah, of course.

Patrick's dad waits for more but nothing comes. He nods.

DAD
Well, uh, look. I know I'm not the best at...if you ever need to talk about...we're here for you, you know that?

PATRICK
Yeah...of course.

Silence.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Think I'm gonna call it a night, let Santa make his rounds. Night pops.

He taps his dad on the shoulder.

DAD
Night son.

Patrick heads toward the stairs.

INT. UPPER STAIRCASE/LANDING - NIGHT

Patrick stops at the top of the stairs. A light from the bathroom streaks into the hallway. We can hear John puking and the sound of his mom's voice through the door.

Patrick turns around and watches as his dad bends under the dying tree with a vase of water in hand and gently pours some water in the base.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patrick leans on the wall of his room to support himself. He clumsily strips down to his underwear and puts a hand over his stomach as he almost loses balance.

He quickly moves to his closet, kneels over his laundry hamper, and pukes into it. Patrick grabs random clothes from above him and wipes his mouth before throwing them into the hamper and closing the closet doors.

He wobbles up and collapses onto his bed. No TV on - only the sound of John dry heaving through the walls.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Patrick sits next to John on the couch with a mess of torn wrapping paper and new presents around them. There's a ton of gifts, more than usual. He's in a pair of PJs.

Mom and Dad are nearby, dad with coffee in hand and mom with her camera up and ready. John is looking worse than ever.

Patrick opens up a shoe box he just unwrapped and pulls out a new pair of running shoes.

MOM

Aren't they sweet? School colors
and everything!

She takes a picture. Patrick stares down at the shoes.

PATRICK

Yeah I noticed.

Dad peeks over.

DAD

Oh wow, you'll be like road-runner
in those.

Patrick doesn't say anything.

MOM

Do you like them? I have a gift
receipt if you want to -

PATRICK

No, I love them, they're awesome!

Patrick goes over and hugs his mom and then his dad.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Thanks Santa.

JOHN

Yeah thanks Santa. Now it's time
for the real gift of Christmas -
getting to sit on the couch doing
nothing.

John pops up off the couch but then quickly steadies himself
before slowly making his way toward the basement.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Patrick holds up one of his new shoes next to one of his old.
He stares at the black and and gold beads on the laces of the
old shoes, his breath beginning to quicken again. Patrick
runs his finger over the beads before putting both the old
and new shoes in the box.

He stands up, shaking out his hands.

He opens his closet to put the shoes inside and immediately
recoils from the smell.

He plugs his nose and peaks into his laundry basket before
shutting the closet door.

Patrick's mom peaks in.

MOM

Hey, were gonna throw on a movie.

He turns around.

PATRICK

Cool, I'll be right down.

His mom starts to walk away.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Hey mom!

She stops and peeks back in

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Is the washer open?

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Patrick tries not to gag as he throws some of his clothes into a trash bag and ties it tight. He empties the rest of his laundry hamper into the washing machine and quickly closes it. He looks into his hamper to check for anything else, grabs a spray bottle off a shelf, and sprays scent into it.

He's back to wearing his sweatpants and oversized blue hoodie and after starting the washer he slides down on the floor and sits there for a moment, watching the clothes spin around.

Patrick reaches into his front hoodie pocket and pulls out his journal. He begins to write.

PATRICK (V.O.)
It's a simple process - open the lid, put the clothes in, add some chemicals, spin it all around with some water and bam you've got clean clothes. Whatever stains came before, they are no match for bleach, no match for water rushing through fibers at high speeds, no match for rinse and repeat.

Outside we can hear his family talking while watching their movie. Patrick looks their direction for a moment before returning to his journal.

PATRICK (V.O.)
How much rinse and repeat, rinse and repeat, rinse and repeat, to clean me? How many chemicals? Keep pouring them on - because right now I'm just spinning, spinning, spinning -

Patrick stops moving his pen and grabs his stomach. He closes his journal and stares at the clothes again as they go round and round and round. He then gets to his feet, tries to steady himself, and then runs into the nearest bathroom across the way and we HEAR him puke into the toilet.

NEWS ANCHOR (PRE LAP)
Students from Centennial High School will be allowed to enter the building for the first time today, just a few days after Christmas.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick drives toward school in his own car and by himself.

Many of the yard signs for Patrick's high school that people had in their lawns have fallen over or are face down in patches of dead grass in the yards he passes.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

None of the students were allowed
to take anything with them when
they were ushered out of the
building by S.W.A.T teams after -

The radio FUZZES OUT right at the name of the shooter. The sun is shining overhead and Patrick squints up at it as he comes up to campus.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

Where he then took his own life.
The whole incident lasted just 80
seconds but students waited for
hours inside these very walls
without knowing whether or not -

Patrick drives past several news vans as he pulls into the parking lot and watches a reporter pointing back at the school as he talks into a camera.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

But now students will be allowed
back inside the building for the
first time to retrieve their
belongings before the start of the
new -

Patrick pulls into a parking spot and quickly kills his engine.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR, SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick sits in his car and looks over at the long chain link fence that lines the main access road and still sees several batches of flowers poking out from the snow. And spelled out of plastic cups in the fence is the word "Love".

We can see kids periodically going into the school empty handed and coming out with arms full of books and backpacks.

Patrick taps his fingers on the steering wheel as he watches. The school looms over his car.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick walks right toward a set of big double doors leading into the school. He walks fast and with purpose.

Reaching the double doors, Patrick passes a group of girls walking arm and arm away from the school and enters the building.

INT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY

The school is large. So are it's hallways. On a typical day, it holds thousands of students at once. Today isn't typical. The hallways are mostly empty.

Everything looks as it should be - there's art on the walls, the lights are on, nothing about it seems anything other than a large public high school sitting in the middle of suburbia.

Patrick passes by a kid coming fast the opposite direction with his head down and his hands full, sniffing as he walks.

INT. CAFETERIA, SCHOOL - DAY

Patrick walks fast through the cafeteria, which is quite full of students, and heads towards a large hallway straight in front of him.

INT. HALLWAY, SCHOOL - DAY

Patrick enters the same hallway we saw in the first nightmare sequence. It's large enough to fit at least five students walking shoulder to shoulder - he looks small walking alone.

He's still moving fast until stopping on a dime and turning towards a small break off hallway with a single classroom door in it. It's the same small hallway we saw in the second nightmare sequence. He walks slowly now.

INT. SMALL HALLWAY, SCHOOL - DAY

Patrick stands just outside the classroom door. It's like he's rooted in place. Some students walk by in the large hallway next to him, laughing with each other.

Suddenly, the door opens and a student walks out, wiping tears from her face with a tissue. She notices Patrick and holds the door open for him.

PATRICK
Oh, thanks.

The girl nods and walks off as Patrick enters the classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

We see his teacher, MR. REER (40s), talking quietly with another student at his desk.

Everything in the classroom is exactly as it was left on the day of the shooting: binders are out and open on the desks, pencils laying there, even some phones sitting out, and backpacks sitting next to chairs on the floor.

It looks like someone took a picture of a busy, active classroom and then photoshopped the students out.

Patrick walks up to his desk and looks down at his binder and backpack. The binder is open to a list of Spanish terms.

Patrick hears SNIFFLES from the student talking to the teacher. He quickly packs up everything without care.

He tosses his backpack over one shoulder and notices the student hug Mr. Reer before leaving the classroom.

MR. REER
Hola Patrick, good to see you.

Mr. Reer sits on the corner of his desk, kicking one leg out in front of him.

PATRICK
Yeah, you too.

MR. REER
How you been holding up?

PATRICK
Good, yeah. Did you have a nice break?

Patrick awkwardly adjusts his backpack.

MR. REER
Well it was certainly different.
Anything I can do for you?

He looks down at the wall closest to him and stares at it.

PATRICK
No, I don't think so - weird being
back of course, but doing good.

MR. REER
Well it was good to see you.

PATRICK
Yeah, you too.

Patrick reaches the door and stops, turning around.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Hey, Mr. Reer...

Mr. Reer raises his head a bit and waits. It looks like he's
residing over a class full of ghosts.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Uh, have a good one.

INT. LARGE HALLWAY - DAY

Patrick walks back into the large hallway and looks around.
He sees kids here and there, some talking with friends, some
going in a group, some all by themselves.

Suddenly, from behind, a familiar voice calls out.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
Hey Patrick!

Patrick whirls around to face Bridgeen, to his surprise she
gives him a hug.

PATRICK
Hey! Didn't expect to see you
today.

Bridgeen is still empty handed.

BRIDGEEN
So I guess that means you really
did forget about going ice skating?

Patrick's eyes widen.

PATRICK
Oh shit is it Sunday?

BRIDGEEN
Yeah. Kinda.

She smiles as Patrick is clearly freaking out.

PATRICK

I didn't forget about the ice skating - I just didn't expect to - think I got distracted with all -

Bridgeen puts her hand on his shoulder.

BRIDGEEN

Hey relax, it's cool, there's been a lot going on.

Patrick breathes.

PATRICK

Yeah, seems to be going on all the time lately.

BRIDGEEN

Already got your stuff?

Patrick adjusts his backpack on his shoulder.

PATRICK

Yeah, yeah...you?

Bridgeen shakes her head.

BRIDGEEN

Not yet. So, seems like you had a good Christmas Eve.

PATRICK

Shit, yeah, I'm sorry about that. I hope I didn't offend you or annoy you or anything like that.

BRIDGEEN

No, no. You made me laugh.

Patrick rocks back and forth in his shoes.

PATRICK

So today's clearly a wash but I don't suppose you'd be open to rescheduling? For ice skating, I mean?

BRIDGEEN

I suppose I would. How about tomorrow? Unless there's a lot going on.

PATRICK
Well unless there's a lot going on,
tomorrow works for me.

Bridgeen nods. Patrick stands there awkwardly for a second longer before saying goodbye and walking on. After a brief moment, Bridgeen calls out to him.

BRIDGEEN
Hey...

Patrick turns around.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
I wanted to go look at the library,
would you mind walking with me?

INT. SCHOOL, IN FRONT OF LIBRARY - DAY

Patrick and Bridgeen stand in front of the library. It's closed, with it's glass doors boarded up and caution tape still wrapped on it.

PATRICK
Think it'll be open by next
semester?

BRIDGEEN
My mom mentioned they're thinking
of redoing it completely.

PATRICK
Really? I hope they keep the quiet
study cubbies.

BRIDGEEN
Yeah I definitely need those as a
reminder to actually do my
homework.

Patrick chuckles. He stares at the boarded up doors.

PATRICK
Those cubbies were a sanctuary for
me.

BRIDGEEN
Sanctuary from what?

Patrick looks at Bridgeen for a second. He goes back to the doors.

PATRICK

I don't know. But I loved those cubbies. If that back corner spot was open where you had the wall to the side and back of you? That was a good day. I'd eat my lunch back there most days.

BRIDGEEN

Even though it had that big sign saying "no food and drink"? You rebel!

They laugh.

PATRICK

Well it beat eating in the bathroom, so.

Bridgeen stops laughing.

BRIDGEEN

You ate lunch in the bathroom?

Patrick realizes his slip. He shakes his head.

PATRICK

Oh, no, I was just making a joke.

BRIDGEEN

It didn't sound like a joke! Did you do that last semester?

PATRICK

No, no. I was just joking I promise.

Awkward silence. Patrick clears his throat.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I should probably head out here soon.

BRIDGEEN

Okay, yeah sure, I still have to grab my stuff so.

PATRICK

Looking forward to tomorrow!

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

Thanks for coming with me.

They chuckle awkwardly.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

I'll see you tomorrow.

PATRICK
Tomorrow!

Patrick waves and walks away as Bridgeen goes down a different hallway. He looks at the doors once more before leaving.

INT. CAFETERIA, SCHOOL - DAY

Patrick walks into the cafeteria and looks towards the men's bathroom before speeding up. He looks around. we SEE some kids crying, some on the phone, several hugging each other, some walking around so casually you'd think they were actually going to class right now.

Patrick's breathing increases. He grips his hands in and out.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick practically bursts through the same double doors he came in and walks to his car. The sun blinding him.

The news vans are still across the street. We see them try to talk to several students who walk right past them.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick enters his car and shuts the door quickly. He stares down at his lap and breathes heavy. He looks up at the school.

He clenches and unclenches his fists, taking big breathes, clearly trying to calm himself down. He shakes his head and laughs.

PATRICK
God you're ridiculous.

He runs his hands through his hair as his leg bounces. He watches some students enter the school.

Patrick grabs his journal from his front pocket. He flips to a new page and clicks his pen. He stares at the lines for a moment, before starting to write.

PATRICK (V.O.)
Books burned in the distance.
Footsteps fell fast on the old tile
floor - wondering when it would end
- but long straight hallways are a
bullet's best friend.

Patrick puts a period after the last word and goes over it again and again and again before continuing.

PATRICK (V.O.)

In this old building - were so many soldiers sat - this old building that was trained to expect this at any moment because these things happen - this old building that used to be a school - only moments ago - before these things happened. Long straight hallways are a bullet's best friend.

Patrick breathes slower as he puts his pen down on the page. He folds his journal up and puts his hand over his mouth, looking at the school. He looks exhausted.

Finally, he starts his car and pulls out of the parking lot.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR, ROAD - DAY

Patrick drives past his school, right by the fence with all the flowers and cups spelling "Love", and notices that most of the flowers are dead. He looks toward the road ahead of him and just drives.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, TOY AISLE - DAY

Patrick stands in the toy aisle. Specifically, he's standing in the LEGO section, scanning over the boxes.

A KID (11) comes practically running into the aisle and starts scanning through the boxes too, clearly looking for a specific set.

The kid stops scanning and looks up at a high shelf where some of the bigger boxes sit.

Patrick follows his gaze.

PATRICK

Need some help?

The kid nods.

Patrick grabs the box for him.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Big fan huh?

KID IN STORE
(without looking away from
box)
Yeah they're cool.

PATRICK
Yeah they are pretty cool.

KID IN STORE
They're easy too.

PATRICK
Yeah? You must be a pro. Any tips?

KID IN STORE
Yeah. You just go piece by piece.

The kid starts walking off with the box, still looking directly down at it. Patrick watches him go for a moment before turning back to the shelf.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patrick sits in the middle of his bedroom floor, hunched over a nearly finished LEGO set.

The only light on is a small lamp in the room.

Patrick flips to the next page in the instructions and sees he has to open the next bag of pieces.

He uses his phone to check the time, it's nearly two in the morning. He gets up and stretches and sees headlights flash through his blinds.

He opens them and looks down, seeing John trying to quietly get out of someone's car and make his way up the front steps.

Patrick backs away from his window and, after a moment, heads toward his door.

INT. UPPER LANDING - NIGHT

Patrick quietly walks out of his room, which is nearly impossible as every floorboard creaks, and hears the front door close. He doesn't turn any lights on and checks to make sure his parent's bedroom door is closed.

He watches as John uses his phone as a flashlight and tries to quietly walk to the kitchen but bumps loudly into the wall.

Patrick chortles. John shines the light right at him.

JOHN
(whispering)
Patty is that you?

PATRICK
(whispering)
Yeah - stop blinding me!

Patrick walks down the stairs.

INT. FRONT ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Patrick pushes John's phone out of his face.

JOHN
(whispering)
What are you doing up?

PATRICK
(whispering)
I could ask you the same question.

JOHN
(whispering)
I was out with some people, didn't
realize how late it was!

PATRICK
(whispering)
Are you drunk?

JOHN
No, I'm John!

John starts laughing and Patrick quickly ushers him towards the kitchen, shushing him.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Patrick turns on a low light above the oven.

PATRICK
You gotta be quieter if you don't
wanna wake mom and dad.

Patrick smells John's shirt.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
And when did you start smoking
weed?

John stands back with wide eyes.

JOHN
Holy shit you can tell??

John's eyes are watery and red. He's sniffing his own shirt now. A large floor crack is heard and Patrick notices a shadow shift approach slowly from the top of the stairs.

PATRICK
Yeah just a bit.

John opens the fridge and starts rummaging through it.

JOHN
You don't think mom and dad heard
me come in do you?

Patrick looks towards the stairs again. No shadow.

PATRICK
No. No, you're good. Do they know
you were gone?

JOHN
Don't think so. Didn't tell them.

John pulls out a carton of chocolate milk.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Bet Molly would've caught me
though.

PATRICK
Yeah...you wouldn't have made it
past the driveway without her
barking and waking the whole house.

John grabs two glasses.

JOHN
Driveway? I wouldn't have made it
down the block without her popping
off.

Patrick laughs. John hands him a glass of milk and sits down at the table with his own.

PATRICK
Uh, thanks.

He takes a sip. John drains nearly half his glass.

JOHN

She was the best dog. I miss her
man...really could've used her
around for all this.

Patrick looks down at his milk and swirls it slightly.

PATRICK

Yeah...I know what you mean.

JOHN

You do?

PATRICK

Yeah—she was the best.

JOHN

Yeah, she was...

Silence.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Well, cheers to good dogs! May they
never know the real us!

John raises his glass.

PATRICK

Cheers brother.

JOHN

That's right—Brother! Hey,
brother, can you tell I'm high?

Patrick looks at John, his face totally relaxed with a milk
mustache dripping onto the table, and smiles. Both of them
start laughing.

John downs the rest of his glass and Patrick takes another
sip.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How was today? At school?

PATRICK

It was fine. Got my stuff and all
that. You?

JOHN

Yeah, same, and all that...think
it's best if I make my way to bed.

Just as John gets up to leave, Patrick steps forward.

PATRICK

I bought a new LEGO set today.

John looks at his brother for a moment.

JOHN

Oh yeah?

PATRICK

Yeah.

JOHN

Well hey, LEGO's are cool.

PATRICK

Yeah.

Silence.

JOHN

Goodnight little bro. Get some good sleep.

Patrick watches his brother go and stands there alone in the kitchen for a moment.

He pours out the rest of his chocolate milk, watching it slowly make its way down the drain.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Dull light fills Patrick's bedroom as he puts his now completely finished LEGO set up on a shelf. He readjusts its position several times before finally leaving it be.

He looks more tired than we've ever seen him - deep, dark circles under his eyes. Patrick stands back and looks at his creation. He yawns. His stomach RUMBLES.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Patrick walks into the kitchen and immediately goes to throw a bagel in the toaster. His mom is sitting there with a cup of coffee in her hand and a grocery list in front of her. She yawns.

MOM

Hey there sleepy head. Just getting up?

PATRICK

No, uh, been up a couple hours
actually.

Patrick puts his bagels in the toaster and goes to set the timer.

MOM

Oh! Meant to tell you—another one
of those fliers came in for your
poetry thing.

Patrick accidentally pushes the toaster timer further without noticing as he faces his mom.

PATRICK

Did you open my mail?

MOM

No, no. This one was from the
school just addressed to the house.
Seems like they're really pushing
it. I didn't know it included the
whole school district!

Patrick pushes down the start lever on the toaster.

PATRICK

Yep, the whole school district.

MOM

You been writing a lot?

PATRICK

Uh yeah, kinda, but I'm not sure
about the competition really.

MOM

What? Why not?

John walks in.

JOHN

Why not what?

John gets a large glass of water and downs it.

PATRICK

Nothing

MOM

The poetry slam thing.

Patrick's mom looks at him and clears her throat.

MOM (CONT'D)

Do you guys need anything from the store.

Patrick turns around as the toaster pops out his bagel—completely burnt.

JOHN

More bagels clearly. Also I won't be going out tonight, told dad I'd help him out with dinner.

MOM

Oh okay, yay! Maybe we can have a little family movie night or something?

Patrick puts his burnt bagel on a paper towel.

PATRICK

I actually won't be home tonight. Meeting a friend, nothing big, just going ice skating.

JOHN

Ice skating?

John looks like he's trying to remember something. Patrick puts as much cream cheese as he can on the bagel.

MOM

Will you be out late?

PATRICK

I don't know. I'm actually supposed to meet her at the mall right now so I'm gonna head out.

He wraps up his ruined breakfast and leaves.

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick pulls into the same mall parking lot from Christmas Eve and parks in a spot far away from the other cars that are there. It's no where near as busy as it was on Christmas Eve but there's a few people here and there walking.

Patrick notices a worker taking down Christmas decorations on a store front.

He sighs and unwraps his bagel, struggling to eat it before eventually spitting it out. He holds his tongue out and looks around his car before opening the door.

INT/EXT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick reaches down and grabs some fresh snow, putting some in his mouth and chewing on it before spitting it back out.

He sits there, halfway out his car, and rests his head back.

He pulls out his phone and we see him go to his messages from Bridgeen. He scrolls to the most recent one from the morning.

BRIDGEEN
(TEXT ON PHONE)
Meet you at the rink around 5:30?

PATRICK
(TEXT ON PHONE)
Yeah sounds great!

He looks at the clock on his car dashboard: 3:30.

He sighs again and puts his phone away before grabbing his uneaten breakfast.

EXT. TRASHCAN OUTSIDE OF ELECTRONICS STORE - DAY

Patrick tosses his bagel in a trashcan and looks up at the store he's in front of. He looks back toward his car and then back toward the store.

INT. ELECTRONICS STORE - DAY

Patrick wanders through the various aisles of the electronic store, not really looking for anything in particular, when suddenly he hears voices.

TEENAGER #1
Holy shit your head just exploded!

TEENAGER #2
Wait this sniper is actually
cracked.

Patrick walks toward the voices and finds himself in the video game section. He stops a few feet behind two TEENAGERS (13, 15) playing a war game at a demo station.

Patrick watches them play and we SEE the game as they play it. Both of their characters are walking around, split screen, with guns shooting at soldiers and trying to get as many kills as possible.

TEENAGER #1

The AR with a red dot might be the play. I hope this shotgun's nerfed soon though.

TEENAGER #2

Fuck I don't. Just got a triple kill with it—might get a chopper gunner with this bad boy.

In the game we see one of the characters get blown up by a grenade.

TEENAGER #1

Fuckin noobtubers man. This games' cheeks, let's get out of here.

TEENAGER #2

How do you always get this tilted dude? Always when I'm top fragging too.

One of the teenagers, the more frustrated one, puts his controller down and grabs his skateboard from where it was resting against a shelf. He skates away in the store and the other follows.

Patrick keeps staring at the screen. The battle is still going on around the characters even though the kids were no longer playing it.

Patrick looks at the left side of the split-screen and watches as the soldier character slowly walks to the left until he hits a wall and continues walking into the wall even though no ones using the controller.

A store WORKER (20s) comes up from behind Patrick.

WORKER

Is there anything I can help you with?

Patrick keeps looking at the game and specifically the character continuously walking into the wall.

PATRICK

I think that controller's broken.

WORKER

What?

PATRICK

The left controller. It looks like it's drifting.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick sits in his driver seat with the seat all the way reclined backwards.

He pulls out his journal from his front pocket. He starts writing.

PATRICK (V.O.)

Kids are loud. Am I like that too?
How come I'm always stressed when I
don't have anything to do? I like
it when it's quiet...but a specific
kind of quiet—the kind of quiet—I
can't write anything bla bla
bla—nerf the shotgun—just the
wrong time wrong place that day—I
have nothing to say.

Patrick stops. He bounces his leg up and down. He brings his pen back down. He writes faster.

PATRICK (V.O.)

You ever get so frustrated you want
to sound out every syllable within
a word very fucking loudly because
the very air won't just shut the
fuck up but you can't tell it to
shut up because then everyone will
think you're crazy and you're not
crazy you're just tired of writing
about the same god damn shit cause
I'm tired of the same god damn shit
you stupid piece of shit fuck shit!

Patrick stabs his notebook several times, breaking through several pages.

He throws his journal at his passenger side window.

Suddenly, his phone buzzes, it's a text from Bridgeen: **Just leaving now - see you soon!**

Patrick takes a deep breath and brings his seat back to its upright position.

He types back: **Same here, see you there!**

Patrick takes his journal and stuffs it into his glove box.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE ICE RINK - NIGHT.

Patrick stands in line with Bridgeen to get their ice skates. The place is packed with people of all different ages. Lots of families as well as couples. There's still Christmas lights up and some of them even hang over the small, intimate rink in the middle of the outdoor mall.

Bridgeen keeps rubbing her arms.

PATRICK

I think I have a blanket in my car
if you're too cold?

BRIDGEEN

We haven't even skated yet and
you're already inviting me back to
your car?

Patrick laughs.

PATRICK

My dad put it in there, he always
says 'you never know.' Says he's
worried about if my car broke down
in a blizzard or my heat stopped
working or I went through that door
in Monster's Inc. That takes you to
the snow land.

BRIDGEEN

He actually said that?

They move up a little in line.

PATRICK

Yeah well, you never know. So,
should I go get it or?

Bridgeen laughs.

BRIDGEEN

No! No, you're good. I get cold
really easily, think it's my
circulation. My fingers always turn
super white—see?

Bridgeen takes off one of her gloves and holds it up to Patrick. Her fingers are indeed super white, almost as if they have no blood at all.

PATRICK

They look like ghost fingers—but
not in a bad way.

BRIDGEEN

Is there a good way to look like a ghost?

They move up in line again, almost at the front now.

PATRICK

Sure, there's lots of ways I imagine.

BRIDGEEN

Enlighten me, please.

PATRICK

Well, they can wear nice clothes, maybe a top hat of some sort. A monocle never hurts.

BRIDGEEN

Are all the ghosts in your head from the 19th century?

PATRICK

I don't know where all the ghosts in my head are from, I just know they at least look good.

They laugh.

BRIDGEEN

So, what did you do today?

Patrick hesitates but he's saved by the GUY (19) at the counter giving out the skates.

GUY

What sizes?

EXT. ICE RINK - NIGHT

Patrick slowly makes his way onto the rink, holding the wall the whole time, while Bridgeen skates on with ease.

She turns around and comes back toward him.

PATRICK

Not your first time I take it?

BRIDGEEN

Come on.

She offers her hand.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
We'll go slow.

Patrick takes it and she helps him to keep balanced but they are still moving at an excruciatingly slow pace. Even the little children are skating around them.

PATRICK
Guess my soccer skills don't transfer.

BRIDGEEN
Well, don't be too hard on yourself, they always give the guys hockey skates instead of figure skates which I think is pretty sexist honestly. They should at least ask people which they prefer.

PATRICK
What's the difference?

BRIDGEEN
Figure skates have this little pick in the front.

Bridgeen kicks the front of her skate in the ice to demonstrate.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
It let's you really cut into the ice. It helps do all their tricks and stuff. Hockey skates are just clean blades. Meant for speed. Easy if you know what you're doing.

Almost on cue, Patrick stumbles and nearly falls.

PATRICK
Well it's a good thing I know what I'm doing.

Bridgeen laughs.

BRIDGEEN
You just sorta push out and back with your feet.

She demonstrates.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
And keep your knees bent.

PATRICK

Okay...

They stop holding hands so Patrick can try.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Like this?

Patrick is able to mimic the motion and glide forward a bit.

BRIDGEEN

That's it yeah!

PATRICK

I guess I see why people like this.

BRIDGEEN

That's right 'ol timer—this is
what the kids call ice skating!

Patrick laughs. Bridgeen starts skating backward while she watches Patrick inch his way forward and a steady stream of people are still having to move around him.

PATRICK

Now you're just showing off!

Bridgeen smiles before skating faster and doing a full loop around the small ice rink.

Patrick watches her and laughs as she does various dance moves while weaving in and out of the crowd—then she's completely lost in it.

Patrick scans the crowd but can't see her anymore. He focuses on his own skating and keeps inching forward.

The noises of the ice rink seem to become LOUDER as he continues. Patrick looks up again into the crowd, it feels BIGGER, closer, tighter all around him.

There doesn't seem to be an exit anywhere, just this loud sea of people. Patrick find himself looking at the solo skaters, watching the people who are also looking around, the men who don't look happy, he gets bumped into and starts breathing heavier.

Patrick tries to make his way to the rink wall but too many people are beside him and moving in the opposite direction. Someone skates by him FAST and Patrick completely loses his balance. He goes down quick, smacking his head on the ice.

The world goes fuzzy.

Suddenly, Bridgeen is above him.

BRIDGEEN
Patrick can you hear me?

Patrick looks at her. The world starts coming back.

PATRICK
My ass is cold.

Bridgeen slowly helps Patrick get to his feet and successfully gets him over to the rink wall.

Patrick looks around somewhat frantically at the people passing by.

BRIDGEEN
Are you okay? Can you see straight?

Bridgeen feels his head and Patrick winces.

PATRICK
I don't think I'm a very good skater.

BRIDGEEN
I'm more worried about your head at the moment.

PATRICK
But.

BRIDGEEN
But no, you're not a very good skater.

Patrick chuckles.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - NIGHT

Patrick climbs into the back of his car and lays out across the seats, groaning and propping his head up against the far door. Bridgeen climbs into the driver's seat and rests with her back against the door.

It's dark out, only a few street lamps above them causing a few streaks of light to hit both of their faces.

BRIDGEEN
You sure you're okay?

PATRICK

Yeah. I just need to rest a moment.
Sorry we had to cut it short.

BRIDGEEN

Stop apologizing. If you start
getting sleepy let me know because
I might have to take you to a
doctor.

PATRICK

Just need some time to chill, I'm
good I promise.

Silence.

BRIDGEEN

Got any music?

Bridgeen reaches over and opens Patrick's glovebox, revealing
his journal. She picks it up and flips to the last used page.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

What's this?

PATRICK

What's what?

BRIDGEEN

(Reading)

I like it when it's quiet, but a
specific kind of quiet -

Patrick shoots up and tears the journal out of her hands.

PATRICK

That's private.

Silence.

BRIDGEEN

Sorry I didn't mean to snoop.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Sorry it's just unfinished.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

It sounded pretty good so far.

PATRICK

It's just a poem—or something like
one I guess. I might do this
competition thing, the poetry slam
at the start of next semester, I
don't know. Still gotta write
something for it.

BRIDGEEN

I remember the posters in school for that! Looked interesting. I'll have to go for sure now.

PATRICK

Yeah, you should. Even if I don't end up doing it.

BRIDGEEN

You should!

Silence. Some small snowflakes start to fall outside.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

I saw you before you fell. I was skating back over to you. You looked a little...freaked out.

Silence.

PATRICK

I came to the mall a little early, just felt like looking around I guess...saw these two kids playing this new game, Call to War 3, shooting the shit out of each other.

BRIDGEEN

And it triggered you?

PATRICK

I guess so—but not in the way it was supposed to.

BRIDGEEN

The way it was supposed to?

PATRICK

Yeah, like. I watched them play for a while—using all types of guns, getting kills, getting killed...but it didn't bother me at all. Not one bit. I saw it and I expected to be...I don't know but I wasn't. All I wanted was to play the game. I own the rest of the series, so it wasn't to get out some newfound anger or some bullshit like that—I saw these two guys playing and having fun and I wanted to play.

Patrick sits himself up to a seated position against the door, diagonal from Bridgeen.

BRIDGEEN

That's what triggered you? That you wanted to play a video game? You said you won the series, right? So you've played them before.

PATRICK

Yeah but that was *before* you know? And I guess I just thought there was something wrong with me for *not* being upset about it. Like I should hate it now or something.

BRIDGEEN

Well, not everything has to change.

PATRICK

That's the thing—things have changed. I can't even hang around my family without feeling like I'm attending a pitty party. I can't sleep without my TV on. I can't write about anything good anymore. I can't go ice skating without imagining a shooter walking up and blowing the whole rink away...I can't even look at my old running shoes without freaking the fuck out cause they have these beads that the team captains used to pass out on the cross country team. You got one for getting a new best time or for being a good teammate in practice...and I keep thinking about how *he* got some of those beads too—even helped pass them out each week—yet he did what he did—walked into school intending to kill who knows how many—killed a girl he barely knew—but he got the same beads I did. They freak me out when I see them now. But I hated a new pair of shoes I got cause they didn't have the beads! Isn't that insane? And it's all just so stupid because it was one moment—just 80 fucking seconds of my life—

BRIDGEEN

It wasn't *just* 80 seconds—

PATRICK

And I didn't even know her and I barely knew him and I got this pair of shorts for my dad half off for Christmas. I was in a school shooting and it got me half off a pair of shorts. What am I even supposed to do with that?

Patrick looks out the window at the snow passing through the orange light of the street lamps.

BRIDGEEN

You know...I always used to imagine a shooter coming into school all the time.

Patrick looks Bridgeen's way, he can barely make her out anymore it's so dark.

PATRICK

Yeah?

BRIDGEEN

Yeah. I'd seen it in so many shows I used to watch you know? Still watch. The teen drama type. I always wanted to be an actress. So I'd play it out when I was alone in my room. A special school shooting episode. Imagined myself winning awards for it. How messed up is that? I always play out how I'd save some kids or even talk down the shooter or die a hero or some bullshit like that. Then some pop song comes on or something that's totally out of place and the next episode or two everything back to the way it was.

Patrick chuckles.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

But you know what I did the day it actually happened? Absolutely nothing. I did exactly what I was told. I got against the wall and didn't make a sound.

(MORE)

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

And every day since I can't help but think the whole thing was somehow my fault—like I called this upon us because I used to play pretend in my room. You know what I was thinking the night of the shooting before passing out in my parent's bed?

Silence.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

I thought, 'look what you did'.

Silence.

PATRICK

Well...that's just silly.

Bridgeen chuckles.

BRIDGEEN

Yeah, I guess it is. So is beating yourself up for still liking video games. And for beads on shoes.

Patrick chuckles. Snow begins to fall hard outside as a single car passes by them.

PATRICK

Sometimes I think I don't even have the right to be upset. Being in a 'small' school shooting. Two deaths. Middle class, lil white suburbia. Maybe people are right and it should be easier to just move on and not make a big deal.

BRIDGEEN

Or maybe you were in a school shooting and people can go fuck themselves.

After a moment they both laugh. Silence.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

You ever think it happened for a reason?

PATRICK

I don't know...I'm not sure if I believe in that sort of thing.

BRIDGEEN
I'd like to.

Silence.

PATRICK
Do you think it happened for a
reason?

Silence.

BRIDGEEN
I'd like to...

Patrick doesn't respond. He just looks in the direction of Bridgeen, now a mere shadow, and watches the snow fall behind her. It's heavy, and frequent, and all encompassing.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Patrick wakes up at a time he doesn't know—late enough that most of his room is lit up—and whips off his sheets, turns off his tv, and opens his blinds. The morning routine has become depressingly monotonous. His room a mess.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Patrick looks for something in the fridge. His toasted plain bagel is sitting out on the counter. Dad walks in.

DAD
Hey, you're up early.

PATRICK
Am I? Didn't realize.

His dad puts down grocery bags.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Did you happen to get cream cheese?

DAD
Uh, no, sorry, didn't know we
needed any. We should have butter
though.

Patrick goes back to the fridge. John comes strutting in.

JOHN
Gooooood morning!

He's clearly in a pretty good mood.

DAD

Wow, two for two this morning.

Patrick gives up his search and sits down with his sad plain bagel.

JOHN

I've actually been up for a couple hours, benefit of having a smart phone pops—can do everything while doing nothing.

John sits down at the table and starts peeling an orange. He looks at Patrick.

JOHN (CONT'D)

A plain bagel? You doing alright man? That's some serial killer shit.

PATRICK

We're out of butter.

JOHN

We still got cream cheese in the back of the top shelf you animal.

PATRICK

No we don't I just—

DAD

What would I even do with a smart phone? My dumb phone works fine.

Dad sits down having put all the groceries away.

DAD (CONT'D)

Should we expect either of you tonight.

Patrick looks confused.

JOHN

I don't think so. I think we should take the same car tonight Pat. You can even drive if you want—can take your car too I don't care.

Patrick opens his mouth but Mom walks in.

MOM

Well, isn't this nice? Good morning!

She's carrying a coffee in one hand and a paper bag in the other with several bottles clanging around.

JOHN

Thanks for the champagne mom, you didn't have to do that.

John's orange is splayed out on the table in front of him.

MOM

Very funny, this is for your dad and I tonight.

Patrick's leg is bouncing fast underneath the table.

JOHN

I'm not sure what time we'll be back but—

PATRICK

Will someone please tell me what the hell tonight is?

Everyone looks at Patrick with concern.

JOHN

It's New Years Eve man. The hell's the matter with you? Someone shit on your bagel this morning or what?

DAD

Hey, language, the both of you.

PATRICK

What's so special about New Years?

JOHN

It's a *new year* dumbass!

DAD

Language!

JOHN

New year. New opportunities. A fresh start.

MOM

Love the positivity!

PATRICK

What difference does a number make? It's not gonna change shit.

DAD
Alright come on now.

JOHN
Love the positivity sweetie.

MOM
Be nice it's new years!

JOHN
Don't be such a party pooper.
Besides, the vigil's tonight at the
park. That special enough for you
or you forget about that too?
(off Patrick's look)
Oh for fuck's sake.

DAD
Am I invisible?

MOM
Jesus John!

JOHN
You forgot about the vigil?

PATRICK
I wasn't gonna go anyway so what
does it matter.

JOHN
Are you serious?

PATRICK
Yeah I'm serious. I'm staying home.

JOHN
Is it cause I said we should go
together?

PATRICK
No it's because I don't want to go
to another damn event and we're
fucking out of butter and cream
cheese!

Dad smacks the table with his hand.

DAD
I'm serious—no more potty words!

JOHN
Fine. Enjoy your night.

John gets up from the table, taking his orange with him.

JOHN (CONT'D)
And here's a new topping for you.

He squeezes his orange out onto Patrick's bagel.

Patrick leaps up and tackles John into the fridge. The two of them start wrestling and Dad quickly jumps up and separates them before any serious damage is done.

DAD

Alright enough! Enough of this
shit! You fucking kidding me right
now? You're brothers goddamnit!

Mom starts sniffing and everyone looks to her.

MOM

Sorry.

Silence. Dad puts his arms down.

DAD

Don't worry. It was probably my
cursing.

The three men stand there in the kitchen, an arms length from each other.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patrick stands in the entrance way of his bedroom and looks around. He looks down and picks up the broken calendar. He scans his finger over the dates, sure enough it's new years eve. He moves his finger one more square to the word "DEADLINE".

He takes out his laptop.

We SEE Patrick's screen as he goes to the poetry slam website. He moves to the "SUBMIT" tab.

He scrolls through the page and we see a lot of blank boxes that want simple information: name, name of school, and finally, transcription of poem to perform.

From behind, we SEE John come to the door and peek in.

Patrick grabs his journal and flips through some pages, looking through what he's written, not stopping on any of them for a particularly long amount of time.

Patrick shakes his head and closes out of the tab, closes his laptop, and pops up from the bed.

He goes to a top drawer of his dresser and puts his journal inside it. We see John walk away behind.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Patrick sits on the couch in his basement with his parents on the other end. He has a new years hat on and the TV is playing coverage from Times Square.

His parents each have a champagne glass and a bottle is nearby. Patrick has sparkling cider.

MOM

(to dad quietly)

Have you heard from John yet?

Patrick can see dad shake his head out of his peripherals. The hosts of the new years coverage take some shots of alcohol and react dramatically.

Patrick's phone buzzes, it's a text from Bridgeen with a photo of a ship deck with stars in the sky: **View from the top deck! Cruise is going well so far. No ice burgs yet.**

Patrick types back several responses but deletes them and tosses his phone.

MOM (CONT'D)

Ooo it's almost time. Get your poppers come on!

She gets up and hands both Patrick and Dad some poppers and puts on some new years glasses herself. The ball begins to drop.

TV HOST

Ten, nine, eight!

Patrick moves a bit closer to the TV, his parents are already counting down but he's still just watching.

TV HOST (CONT'D)

Seven, six, five!

Patrick's parents are getting louder. He finally joins in.

EVERYONE

Three, two, one! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Patrick and his parents set off the poppers and cheer and holler as music plays on the TV and confetti falls.

Patrick hugs both his parents and they clink their glasses.

He downs most of his apple cider and then looks around, the abrupt energy of the new year now already passed, and his smile fades away like the confetti falling quickly to the ground. He stares at the fallen ball on the TV.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

The champagne glasses are empty and confetti lies all over the floor. The coverage on the TV is done and Patrick's mom gives a big yawn. We SEE Patrick's parents hug him goodnight and then head upstairs.

BEGIN MONTAGE - NEW YEARS CRISIS

A) Patrick walks over to the champagne bottle left behind and swirls it around to see how much is left.

B) Patrick kicks around some of the confetti on the floor.

C) Patrick pours a full glass of champagne and downs the whole thing.

D) Patrick throws some confetti over his head.

E) Patrick drinks straight from the bottle of champagne until it's empty

F) Patrick goes up the stairs

G) Patrick comes back down quietly with a new bottle and pours another full glass which he starts drinking.

END MONTAGE

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Patrick lays in the middle of a confetti snow angel with the two bottles of champagne by his head. He has his phone up to his ear.

PATRICK

Hey again, Bridgeen, it's Patrick, again. I think this is my third voicemail now. I can't remember what I was talking about before. I might've accidentally hung up on the last one I can't remember.

Patrick reaches up and knocks over one of the empty bottles.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Anyway you know what sucks? You said you'd have spotty service out there on your cruiseeee, and it appears that's trueeee. You know what else sucks? Champagne. Tastes horrible. Now I know why my parents only had half a glass. Apple cider tastes way better—but it doesn't make your toes tingly.

He looks at his toes as he wiggles them.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
I didn't go to the vigil tonight...did you know about that? I didn't want to go. Didn't want to be there. To feel all that. Again. It's a lot to feel you know? And I don't think I feel things right, right now. Maybe ever.

We HEAR the front door open and someone walk inside. Patrick is staring up at the ceiling but we can SEE John quietly come over and look down at him from the top of the stairs.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
But I hope you're having a good time! Is it new years on the boat yet? How does that work? Is the boat just constantly outrunning the ball or do you guys drop your own? Hey! I remember now—last voicemail—you're on a boat! That's what I was talking about.

Patrick props himself against the TV cabinet. John ducks back a little.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Pretty crazy thing being on a boat. They're cool. It's like they're just constantly not sinking...

Patrick chuckles.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
I think I might be sinking...

He hangs up. We HEAR the stairs creak as John goes up them. Patrick hears it too. He puts some confetti in his pocket and starts to clean up clumsily.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM/UPPER LANDING - NIGHT

Patrick walks up to his bedroom and stands in the doorway. He sees John standing at his dresser.

PATRICK

What are you doing here?

John quickly puts something back in the drawer, shuts it, and turns around. He has his phone in his hand.

JOHN

Just needed to borrow a pair of socks. Mine got wet.

Patrick stares at him for a moment.

PATRICK

Bottom drawer. Dummy.

Patrick goes to his bed and crawls into it, laying face down.

John grabs a pair of socks before heading to his room.

JOHN

Happy new years brother.

Patrick doesn't respond. John shuts his own door.

After a moment, Patrick slings himself upward and starts stripping down. He goes to John's door and puts the confetti from his pocket in a line across the bottom of it.

He goes back to his room and turns the lights off. A second later the TV is turned on and we see Patrick sitting against the wall with his bed sheets wrapped all around him.

We PUSH in on his face being lit from the TV screen.

This begins a SERIES OF SHOTS in which Patrick's background changes around him but the camera's position as well as his own remains the same. We stay in these shots as multiple days pass and Patrick becomes more and more tired looking. Eventually he falls backwards into black and when he comes back up...

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM, 3RD DREAM SEQUENCE - DAY

We SEE a single stick holding out a carrot a few feet in front of the camera. We PULL BACK and see Patrick sitting against the wall in front of it. The lights are off but sunlight streaks in through a window with the shades drawn. He's in his Spanish classroom.

He looks around some more; there's no rifles on the walls but the vines where they slept are still there. He tries to look out the window but the light keeps blinding him.

Patrick turns his attention back ahead of him and we now see a handful of other STUDENTS hidden mostly in shadow, with their backs against the wall and whispering frantically to each other. Patrick backs up quickly until he hits something. He whirls around and the carrot on the string has been replaced by a gun. As soon as Patrick sees it, he inhales sharply and the fire alarm goes off. The kids start to panic and as Patrick tries to hide against the wall he falls backward into a VOID.

We stay with him as he falls, flipping over, and when he comes back right way around...

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Patrick's eyes open. He's propped up in his bed with his sheets wrapped around him.

Several knocks at his door.

MOM

Hey hon, you up? Don't wanna be late!

Patrick gets up from bed and goes to his mirror. He looks like he feels. A complete mess. His room even more so.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - DAY

Patrick drives toward school. His backpack is sitting in his passenger seat. No snow is on the ground and the sky is blue overhead.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

Students are returning to Centennial High School today to begin their new semester.

Patrick looks at the houses as he goes by. Some of the lawns that had signs before are now blank. Some of the remaining signs are just face down. Some are still proudly displayed.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

One can only imagine what they must be feeling, especially as new reports continue to come out regarding the actions taken by school officials that day and the potential negligence in the weeks leading up to the incident.

Patrick pulls up to school and we see that all of the flowers that had gathered along the fence line are dead. The cups that used to spell "Love" now just barely spell out "ov".

INT. PATRICK'S CAR, PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick drives through the parking lot and it's noticeably not full. He finds a spot and pulls in.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

But one thing is clear, today will most likely be approached with trepidation and sensitivity.

For a minute he watches as kids enter with their backpacks on, talking to friends, looking at their phones. It all looks like a normal day at school.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

Be sure to stay with us as we've also received security cam footage from within the school the day of the shooting and will be premiering it—

Patrick POPS open his door.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

He looks at the news vans parked in their usual spot across the street, a couple kids talking to them with their backpacks on.

Patrick walks up to the same big double doors we've seen him enter before and walks right through.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Patrick is immediately met with the SOUNDS of hundreds of kids chattering away inside closed quarters. He walks through the hallway and has to weave in and out of the crowds.

Kids are at their lockers, kids are shouting at each other in the hall, kids are making their way to class. It's school.

INT. MATH CLASSROOM - DAY

Patrick sits in the back corner of his Math class and looks around him. Everyone is either talking to the person next to them or on their phone.

The teacher, Mrs. PULE, comes in.

MRS. PULE

Alright everyone, I hope you all were able to rest well over break and are excited to be back.

Some kids nod.

MRS. PULE (CONT'D)

They've been telling us that the best thing to do is to just try and get back to our normal schedule. So, I'm going to pass around the syllabus and we can just go through it together.

Mrs. Pule hands the syllabus down row by row and everyone takes one and passes it along.

MRS. PULE (CONT'D)

Anyone feel like reading it out loud?

INT. GYM CLASS - DAY

Patrick sits with the rest of his class on some bleachers while their gym teacher, MRS. BIRD, talks to the class.

MRS. BIRD

So I just want to see if there's anything anyone wanted to talk about or get off their chest? I know this isn't a normal week.

No one raises their hand for a moment. One kid finally reaches up. Everyone turns to him. She calls on him.

GYM STUDENT

Do we actually have to wear shorts with no pockets like it says in the syllabus?

Everyone turns from the kid to Mrs. Bird, awaiting the answer. She seems thrown off and takes a moment.

INT. HALLWAY, LUNCH TIME - DAY

Patrick walks through the crowded hallway. He has his car keys in his hand. He notices a girl crying at her locker and a friend attending to her and he accidentally bumps into someone.

PATRICK
Sorry, my bad.

It's Bridgeen.

BRIDGEEN
Patrick—hey!

PATRICK
Oh, hey! Sorry about that, must've tripped or something.

The two move slightly off to the side.

BRIDGEEN
You off to class?

PATRICK
Uh, no, lunch actually.

BRIDGEEN
Oh!

Bridgeen looks back behind her, it's toward the exit, while behind Patrick is the cafeteria.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
You going out to eat?

PATRICK
Oh!

Patrick puts his keys back in his pocket.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
No, actually, brought my lunch.
Must've got turned around—

He points back toward the cafeteria over his shoulder.

BRIDGEEN
When you tripped?

Patrick puts on a smile.

PATRICK

Yeah. Are you going to lunch right now?

His posture straightens.

BRIDGEEN

No I have first lunch this semester.

Patrick's posture drops back down.

PATRICK

Gotcha.

BRIDGEEN

I'm on my way to class actually. It's biology. Definitely not looking forward to it. Apparently there's gonna be a test at the end of the week already so that's pretty much ruined my whole day.

PATRICK

Yeah a test week one, I'm like 99% sure that's illegal.

Bridgeen laughs.

BRIDGEEN

I've been meaning to ask, are you doing alright?

PATRICK

Yeah, why?

BRIDGEEN

Well all those voice mails on new years—

PATRICK

Oh yeah sorry about that.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

I was worried about you.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I shouldn't have called so many times. That was dumb of me.

BRIDGEEN

Oh no, I didn't mind - sorry I didn't reply.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about that - it's okay - was the cruise good?

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
 Sorry, what did you say?

PATRICK
 Oh, just, was the cruise good?

BRIDGEEN
 Oh, yeah, it was long. But I think
 my parents enjoyed it.

A bell rings.

PATRICK
 Well I don't wanna make you late
 for class.

BRIDGEEN
 Yeah I should get going. It was
 good seeing you. Don't be a
 stranger okay?

PATRICK
 Yeah, no, definitely.

Bridgeen walks away.

Patrick watches her for a second before turning and heading
 toward the cafeteria.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

The cafeteria is the opposite of when we last saw it. Instead
 of a couple groups of highly emotional kids it's now packed
 to the brim with too much noise to make any sense of.

Patrick walks through the crowded area without even scanning
 it and walks right into the men's room—like he's done it a
 thousand times before.

INT. BATHROOM STALL - DAY

Patrick locks the door behind him using his shirt over his
 fingers and pulls out a brown sack lunch from his backpack.

Digging through his lunch, he pulls out a blue sticky note:
Love you! - Mom.

Patrick stares at the note for a solid moment. Tears start to
 well up in his eyes. He shakes his head and blinks before
 putting the note back and pulling out an apple.

As soon as he takes his first bite, someone in the stall next to him flushes and Patrick immediately pulls his hoodie over his nose while he chews.

EXT. PARKING LOT, AFTER SCHOOL - DAY

The final bell of the day rings and Patrick moves with the crowd out into the parking lot toward his car.

A car pulls along side Patrick as he walks. The passenger side window rolls down and we see John sitting in it while Lee is driving.

JOHN
(doing a New Zealand
accent)
Hey man. Good first day?

Patrick keeps walking and the car follows.

PATRICK
Mom tell you to check on me?

JOHN
Of course, but I wanted to anyway.
Classes good?

PATRICK
Yeah, pretty good. What's with the
accent?

JOHN
It's called havin' fun. Should try
it out. Got homework?

PATRICK
Yeah, not much though.

JOHN
Want a ride to your car?

Patrick looks over John's car at the school's track where some people are running.

PATRICK
Actually, I think I'm gonna run a
few laps.

John looks over at Lee and then back at Patrick.

JOHN
Right now?

PATRICK

Yeah, why not? Feel like running
and I don't wanna wait in line.

He nods toward the sea of cars trying to exit.

JOHN

Sure, sure. Or you could come do
your homework over at Lee's house?

Patrick gives John a skeptical look.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(dropping the accent)

Alright, fine—we're gonna play
some Xbox. You want in?

PATRICK

No I'm good - gonna run.

The car inches along.

JOHN

Alright man, see you at home I
guess.

Patrick heads to the track.

EXT. SCHOOL TRACK - DAY

Patrick finishes a lap, coming in fast, and stops to catch his breath. He checks his watch and curses under his breath, clearly unhappy with his time. Most of the cars have left the lot and it's getting darker out.

He notices his shoe is untied and reaches down to tie it. He touches the beads on his old shoes and sighs.

INT. PATRICK'S CAR - NIGHT

Patrick pulls up to his house but doesn't put the car in park. We can see John's car as well as their parent's.

Patrick looks up toward the lit up house and his breathing increases. His knuckles go white on the steering wheel. He closes his eyes.

PATRICK (V.O.)

Stop.

He hits his steering wheel. He hits it again. He bangs around his car, accidentally turning on the overhead light.

PATRICK
(to himself)
Stop!

Patrick bounces in his seat and accidentally hits the gas, lurching backwards before slamming on his breaks.

He runs his hands through his hair and reverses before putting his car in park and quickly killing the engine.

He grabs his backpack, and exits. We SEE the overhead light is still on in the car.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Patrick sits on the couch with his still steaming dinner plate on his lap. Mom sits on the other end and John sits in between. The TV is playing a game show.

Patrick pushes his food around with his fork.

MOM
So, how was the first day back?

PATRICK
Good, yeah. Nothing to report really.

MOM
Like your new classes?

PATRICK
Yeah so far. I need pocketless shorts for gym class though.

MOM
Why?

Patrick shrugs. She turns to John.

MOM (CONT'D)
And how was your day?

JOHN
Well I didn't get any homework.

John talks between mouthfuls.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Probably just the teacher's being nice though because I know other people got homework.

MOM

Well I'm sure it was a weird day
for a lot of them too.

JOHN

If it means no homework all good
with me.

John turns his attention to Patrick.

JOHN (CONT'D)

How was the track?

MOM

Oh did you get a workout in?

PATRICK

Yeah, just seeing how much speed I
lost over break.

Patrick looks back towards the TV. John keeps his gaze.

JOHN

Still using your old shoes huh?

PATRICK

What?

JOHN

You were in your old shoes when I
saw you...haven't broke in the new
ones yet?

PATRICK

Not yet.

Mom clears her throat.

MOM

You know I still have the gift
receipt if you want to exchange
them.

PATRICK

No, I like the shoes.

JOHN

Just don't wanna get em dirty?

MOM

Actually I think the receipts in
the box.

JOHN

Which are where the shoes still are
too, right Pat?

Patrick puts his fork and knife down and stares daggers at John. Just then, Dad walks down stairs singing a sea shanty.

DAD

(singing)

What do you do with a drunken
sailor, what do you do with a
drunken sailor—Everything taste
alright?

He sits down with a grunt and takes the remote. Both brothers go back to watching the TV. Mom is playing with her food now.

JOHN

Yeah dad, it's delicious.

PATRICK

Really good dad, thanks.

DAD

So, what I miss?

John shoves food into his mouth and Patrick shrugs while keeping his eyes on the TV.

MOM

Patrick needs pocketless shorts for
gym class.

Silence for a moment besides the sounds of silverware on plates. Dad's brows furrow.

DAD

Why?

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patrick opens his top dresser drawer and pulls out his journal. He sits on his bed and flips through some pages. He brings his pen down to write but doesn't move his hand. He scoffs and puts the journal back in the drawer, shutting it hard.

He turns on his TV and climbs into his bed. We're CLOSE on his face.

PATRICK

(to himself)

What the fuck is wrong with you
man? You fuckity fu—

INT. PATRICK'S CAR, MORNING - DAY

Patrick's car won't start.

PATRICK

Fuck!

Patrick turns the ignition several times but no luck.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Fuck...

He looks up and sees John about to get into his car.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Shit.

INT. JOHN'S CAR - DAY

It's a familiar scene. John driving while Patrick stares out the window. For awhile they drive in silence.

JOHN

So, new classes today?

PATRICK

Don't do that.

JOHN

Do what?

PATRICK

Talk like mom.

JOHN

Oookay. Starting on a good note today huh. Got it.

They stop at a red light.

PATRICK

Why'd you have to do that? Bring up the shoes last night?

JOHN

Why don't you talk to me?

PATRICK

I don't know how to talk to you.

John looks over at Patrick. A car honks behind them. John waves and drives on.

JOHN

Well, maybe if you did, you
wouldn't be so angsty all the time.

PATRICK

Angsty? Says the one always
starting shit?

JOHN

Yep, real fuckin angsty. And if I'm
honest, I'm getting pretty tired of
it.

PATRICK

Thanks, I'll add that to the list
of things I need to apologize for.

JOHN

Why don't you just talk to me, man?

John keeps looking at Patrick and the car swerves.

PATRICK

Why don't you keep your eyes on the
road so we don't die on the way to
school.

JOHN

Come on. Just listen to me for
once! You don't text me, you don't
go out with me—

PATRICK

You want me to talk to you? Maybe
don't try and stir shit up with
mom. I'm tired of this same stupid
conversation over and over.

JOHN

(In New Zealand accent
again)

Aw yeah! That's it! now we're
gettin' somewhere!

School is coming into view up ahead.

PATRICK

You want me to tell you how shitty
I feel?

JOHN

(back to normal voice)

Yes!

PATRICK

How I feel bad for not feeling bad
and when I do feel bad I feel like
I'm losing my fucking mind!

JOHN

Yes!

PATRICK

Or maybe you want me to tell you
about lunch yesterday when I ate
alone in a goddamn bathroom stall
for the hundredth time because I'm
a loser—just like you said—is
that what you want me to talk
about?

John doesn't respond. He pulls into the school parking lot.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I don't go out with you—
I don't know how to be around you
sometimes okay? Sometimes I feel
like we couldn't be more different
and if we weren't siblings—I'm
sorry I didn't text you that day or
ever but you know what? You just
didn't come to mind okay? I don't
know why but you just didn't. And I
know that makes me sound like the
world's shittiest brother but
that's the honest to god truth. I
didn't think about you! I'm sorry!
Happy? You're good and I'm bad.
There you go. All I want right now
is to get to class on time but I
guess that's too much to fucking
ask for because my stupid car died
and I had no choice but to suffer
through you!

John pulls the car into a parking spot and parks the car
quickly. Patrick lurches forward. He looks around, almost
surprised that he's at school. John doesn't look at him.

JOHN

Get out of the car.

Patrick doesn't move.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Get out of the fucking car!

Patrick quickly leaves.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 (from the car)
 And you're walking home!

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- A) Patrick walking away from the car without looking back.
- B) Patrick breathing fast as he walks through the crowded hallways, getting pushed around every now and then.
- C) Patrick sitting down in his classroom, the bell ringing along with his ears. Someone walks in front of the camera.

INT. POETRY CLASSROOM.

MR. A (30s) walks up in front of the class. Patrick is staring down at his blank desk.

MR. A
 So, I thought we'd start by just
 checking in with everyone because I
 feel like it's important we
 acknowledge how this is kind of a
 weird week and in this class
 especially, it's important that we
 be honest.

Mr. A goes to the white board and writes the word "Poetry".

MR. A (CONT'D)
 Cause that's what this is all
 about.

He points at the board.

MR. A (CONT'D)
 So I thought we could all take out
 a piece of paper—whatever
 works—you're not turning it in.

Patrick's attention is grabbed by the sudden movement of students. He follows their leads.

MR. A (CONT'D)
 All I want you to do is write down
 how you're feeling about this week
 or today or right now. I'll do one
 too.

Some kids start writing, Patrick looks down at his blank piece of paper.

MR. A (CONT'D)

It can be anything from a word to a paragraph—don't feel like you have to stop yourself if you stumble onto something.

After a moment, Patrick writes down a single word: **Shitty**.

Most of the students look up from their papers.

MR. A (CONT'D)

Alright, so, anybody want to share?

Everyone looks around but no one raises their hand.

MR. A (CONT'D)

Alright well, I can start us off. I feel nervous. That's what I wrote.

He turns a notecard around to show the class he isn't lying.

MR. A (CONT'D)

I only had one class yesterday and the whole time I didn't know if I was doing the thing I should've been doing. That's how I've been feeling this week.

The class looks around. Another student, ANDREW (15) raises his hand.

ANDREW

I wrote, 'funny'.

Some people laugh.

MR. A

How do you mean that?

ANDREW

I don't know. Guess it just feels funny being back. Everything went by kinda fast and now we're just back and I don't know. It's a funny feeling I guess.

No one is laughing now. Another student, MIRANDA (14) pipes up.

MIRANDA

I wrote scared.

Another student, DAVIS.

DAVIS

I wrote happy to be with my
friends.

Another student, REGI.

REGI

I wrote—freaked the fuck out.

Some of the class laughs, some nod, and Mr. A immediately
praises the honesty.

MR. A

Anybody else?

Patrick starts to move his hand but stops.

MR. A (CONT'D)

Alright well then let's do the
whole syllabus routine to get it
over with I guess and then do some
more writing.

Patrick stares down at his paper.

INT. BATHROOM STALL - DAY

Patrick eats his lunch quickly. Someone enters the stall next
to him and immediately starts shitting as loud as possible.

Patrick covers his face with his shirt, shoves his lunch
away, and frantically gets out of the stall.

INT. CHEMISTRY CLASS - DAY

Patrick stands around a lab table with three other students,
JAKE (17), ETHAN (16), and KAYLA (16).

They are supposed to be testing chemicals over a bunsen
burner but are instead locked in heated conversation as
Patrick tries to fill out a work sheet.

ETHAN

That was absolutely the worst part.
Not knowing what was coming next. I
was close enough to hear the shots
man, it was wild.

Ethan turns on the bunsen burner.

JAKE

The worst part for me was feeling helpless. I was on my way back into school cause I had fourth period off. All I see were SWAT cars everywhere—couldn't believe it.

KAYLA

A girl came back from the bathroom and was white as a ghost—she immediately goes, 'I think I just heard gunshots', and everyone thought she was crazy. Then the lockdown announcement came. I'll never forget that.

Jake and Ethan nod.

ETHAN

(turning to Patrick)

What was the worst part for you?

Patrick looks around at the three of them, waiting expectantly for his answer.

PATRICK

Uh, I don't know...not having my car for those couple days after sucked a lot.

The group half-heartedly nods back but no one responds directly.

ETHAN

Did you hear there's gonna be some sort of trial?

Patrick goes back to his worksheet.

KAYLA

For who? He's fucking dea-

Suddenly, the fire alarm goes off and everyone looks around frantically. Patrick freezes where he is, goosebumps rising on his arm.

The teacher, MR. COY (40s) stands in the middle of the classroom. He looks just as confused as everyone else.

MR. COY

Alright, everyone stay calm. It's probably just a drill. Leave your stuff and follow me alright?

Nearly every kid in the room goes to their backpacks first and grabs their phones.

Some students are moving faster than others, going past Mr. Coy and making their own way out. Patrick moves steadily, his heart pounding.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Patrick moves with what's left of his class out into the hallway where throngs of other classes are being led out too. Teachers are shouting to their students, telling them to stay calm. Most of the students are already outside, some are holding each other's hands, and a lot are completely calm about the whole thing.

Patrick's breathing is quicker and quicker.

EXT. JUT OUTSIDE SCHOOL - DAY

As soon as he gets outside, Patrick lifts his head above the crowd and takes in as much air as he can. He makes space for himself near the lineup of his class and looks around.

All the other classes are getting lined up with their teachers in front of them but some are clearly not handling it well either—being attended to by other students or teachers.

The fire alarm is quieter but still assaults the air.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)

Patrick!

Patrick turns and sees Bridgeen coming up to him.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)

Hey! What class are you in?

His focus is clearly elsewhere.

PATRICK

Uh, history—or Chemistry actually.

BRIDGEEN

Nice, I was in art. How was your day?

Patrick focuses on her. The alarm still blares.

PATRICK

What?

BRIDGEEN
Besides this I mean.

Patrick looks over at a girl who is sobbing while her teacher talks to her.

PATRICK
Fine.

BRIDGEEN
I have that big biology test
tomorrow. Turns out rumors were
true about it.

Patrick keeps looking at the girl who is being attended to, then at all the kids looking at her and talking.

The doors open for a moment as more kids come out, causing the alarm to get louder for a second. Patrick closes his eyes and clenches his jaw. In his head he HEARS sirens and helicopters and SWAT officers yelling, and kids whispering.

Bridgeen is twirling her hair as she talks, looking down at the ground.

BRIDGEEN (CONT'D)
I hope it goes well, I'm really
nervous about it and—

Patrick's eyes burst open.

PATRICK
Who fucking cares?! It's just a
test Bridgeen, God!

Bridgeen looks up at him with big eyes. Tears beginning to form. Patrick looks around and sees some students close to him looking at him before looking away.

He turns on his heels and heads straight for the parking lot without looking back. He starts running. Fast.

EXT. PATRICK'S NEIGHBORHOOD

SERIES OF SHOTS on Patrick running as the sounds from the day of the shooting get louder and louder and we push in closer and closer until suddenly were—

EXT. FRONT LAWN - DAY

At Patrick's house. Patrick sprints to the front door, grabbing a key from under the mat and practically throwing the door open.

John's car whips into the driveway in the background.

INT. FRONT ENTRY WAY - DAY

Patrick moves to the steps, his hearing MUFFLED and his heartbeat fast, and enters his house frantically.

John races out of his car behind in pursuit.

INT. UPPER LANDING, PATRICK'S HOUSE - DAY

Patrick braces himself against the wall as he goes towards his bedroom door, his face breaking with each step. In the background we can SEE John at the bottom of the steps shouting something we can't hear.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Patrick walks through his bedroom door and slams it behind him. We HEAR John rushing up the steps. Patrick quickly locks his door and backs up, grabbing his hair with both hands.

JOHN (O.S.)
(muffled)
Patrick!

John knocks on the door and tries to open it.

Patrick's practically dry heaving as he punches himself in the arm several times.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I need you to open this door!

The door jiggles with more intensity but doesn't open.

Patrick paces back and forth quickly. He sees his LEGO creation sitting on the shelf and tosses it across the room, causing it to shatter into pieces. He's sweating and panting and can't calm down.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I'll fucking break this door down
Patrick I swear to God!

Patrick goes to his bed and shakes out a pillowcase as we hear John presumably throwing his shoulder into the door.

Patrick wraps the pillowcase around his neck and pulls and pulls as the door is hit and hit until he finally collapses onto the floor.

SOUND CUTS for a moment as Patrick writhes on the ground, his face red and his muscles twitching until—suddenly—a BURST of breath as Patrick lifts his head from the carpet.

He gasps for air as he rolls around on his bedroom floor.

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

Patrick.

Patrick's body shakes as oxygen recirculates.

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

Please.

Patrick lies on his back and looks up at his ceiling. An overhead fan moving slow. He reaches his arm underneath his back and pulls out a LEGO brick.

He breathes heavily and looks at it while twirling the piece in his hands gently.

We hear something heavy hit the door and slink down to the floor.

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

I'm here, man.

Slowly, Patrick begins to push himself to his knees. He breathes, and slowly gets to his feet. He puts his hand against the door and hangs his head.

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

I'm here...

Patrick puts his hand on the door knob and hesitates before finally, pulling it open. John falls backward onto the floor.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Ouch.

Patrick looks down at him and tears well in his eyes.

PATRICK

I don't know what's wrong with me.

John gets to his feet and wraps his brother in his arms. Patrick cries hard.

INT. PATRICK'S ROOM - DAY

Patrick sits next to John against the back wall of his room. The light of the day is dimmer. They're both staring straight ahead into Patrick's double door mirrors. Their faces red.

PATRICK

You know the worst part of it for me?

John looks at his brother.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

It wasn't those hours sitting in the classroom, or waiting for mom and dad to pick me up from that church...it was the morning after. I had this funny feeling. And every day since it's grown and grown and you know what I've come to realize? You know what that funny feeling was?

Silence.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

That I was already fucked up before all this...and I don't know what to do with that. And I don't know what to do with all this now either.

Silence. John looks at their reflection.

JOHN

I'm not gonna sit here and pretend to have any answers, cause I don't. But you know what the hardest part of my day is? Every day, the hardest fucking part?

Patrick looks at his brother.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Getting out of bed.

Patrick holds his gaze. John stares ahead.

JOHN (CONT'D)

But you know what I do every single day?

John looks at Patrick. They finally meet each other's eyes.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I get out of bed.

Patrick takes a moment.

PATRICK
(emotional)
Why?

Silence.

JOHN
Because it's that or give up...

John looks back at the mirrors and Patrick does the same.

JOHN (CONT'D)
And I can get out of bed. That's
easy. I can do that. Which means, I
can keep going.

Patrick pulls his legs into his chest. John puts his arm over
Patrick's shoulder. They sit together in uncertainty.

PATRICK
I feel shitty.

John laughs.

JOHN
That's alright.

PATRICK
That's how I've felt pretty much
all week. Maybe for the past couple
weeks or maybe for the past couple
years, and I'm sorry for yesterday.

JOHN
That's alright too.

PATRICK
I don't do stuff with you because
sometimes...it's just easier. And I
didn't know how to tell you that. I
know it's selfish. I know I'm
selfish. But I just need it to be
easy right now.

John stares ahead.

JOHN
I just want to be close with you—I
don't mean to overwhelm you.

PATRICK

I know. And...I'm okay with that, being close. But we're different people—and you have to be okay with that too.

Silence. John nods.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I mean, I know you're there for me...I know that. Maybe that's why I didn't text you that day—maybe I knew you were there or maybe—

JOHN

You just didn't think of me?

PATRICK

Yeah.

John nods.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

But I like having you *there*. Even if I never open up, even if we were never super close, I like having you there. Like having you *here*. And I'm here too.

Silence.

JOHN

You know you can eat lunch with me whenever you want right?

PATRICK

Thanks. I'll keep that in mind.

They both just stare at themselves in the mirror.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

John?

JOHN

Yeah?

PATRICK

I think I need help.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

John sits on the basement steps next to Patrick as the garage door opens and both of their parents walk in the door.

Patrick gets up from the stairs and says something to them. We CAN'T hear what is it is but we know it's serious.

His parents listen as John sits silently on the stairs. Patrick finishes talking and hugs his mom and his dad puts a hand on his shoulder. Everyone crying. John joins them.

A tableau of a family trying not to drown.

INT. JOHN'S CAR - DAY

Patrick sits in John's passenger seat on the way to school.

They pull into the school parking lot. Patrick notices that both the flowers and the cups in the fence are being picked up by one of the school's janitors and put in the trash. The sidewalk looks like any other sidewalk now.

JOHN

You gonna be alright today?

PATRICK

What? Yeah, I'm gonna be fine.

JOHN

Alright. Just you know with blowing up on your girl—

PATRICK

She's not my girl—

JOHN

Having a major panic attack—

PATRICK

Yep, that was fun—

JOHN

The poetry slam tonight. Lots going on.

PATRICK

First, thanks for the reminders. Second, I'm not doing the poetry slam. I didn't sign up for it.

John looks over at Patrick.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What?

JOHN
Oh shit.

EXT. JOHN'S CAR, PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick hits his head on the hood of John's car with his hood pulled over his face.

PATRICK
You signed me up for the slam?!

JOHN
For the third time, yes! On New Years Eve. I heard you on the phone and I felt bad. So I found your journal.

PATRICK
Oh my god.

Patrick drops to the ground in a squat.

JOHN
And signed you up! You were there! Remember?

Patrick pops up.

PATRICK
You said you needed fucking socks! Why didn't you tell me?!

JOHN
I'm sorry, I was drunk!

PATRICK
Fuck!

JOHN
Are you happy or mad about this?

PATRICK
I don't know yet!

Silence.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
What did you submit? From my journal?

JOHN
I don't remember.

PATRICK

What?!

JOHN

I'm sorry, I was high!

PATRICK

I thought you were drunk?!

JOHN

I was high and drunk! I was dry man, dry as shit! I shouldn't be held accountable for crystal clear memory.

PATRICK

So, I've got until school ends to come up with what I'm gonna perform?

John shrugs.

JOHN

Either that or back out but.

PATRICK

But what? You also gamble my soul to the devil on this or something!?

JOHN

No. I was gonna say—but we both know you want to do it! Here's your chance, man. Who cares what I submitted just get up there and say whatever you want. You're gonna crush it. I know it.

Patrick looks at his brother for a moment before giving a half-shout/half-scream and walking off.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Patrick walks toward school quickly. John stands in the background with his arms out.

JOHN

(shouting)

Happy or mad!?

PATRICK

I still haven't decided!

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- A) Patrick writes in his journal in math and gym class.
- B) Patrick looks through the halls for Bridgeen, seeing her just as she enters a class but not able to get to her.
- C) Patrick eats lunch with John on the hood of John's car and has his journal in hand.
- D) Patrick sees Bridgeen and has a nearby student take a sticky note and hand it to her before she goes into another class.
- E) Patrick frantically writes in his journal before a bell rings and everyone gets up from their desks. He looks up at the clock, exhales and shuts his journal. He looks up at the bright fluorescent light above him, as if praying.

ANOUNCER (PRE LAP)
 Alright! What another stellar
 performance! And I just want to
 thank everyone again for attending
 tonight's slam. You're support
 helps keep the arts alive in
 schools and—

INT. SMALL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Patrick paces back stage as bright fluorescent lights shine above him. The announcer fades out in the background. Patrick peaks out from behind a curtain into the full crowd. We can see John and Mom and Dad.

Patrick paces again, his journal in front of him, repeating silent words over and over—moving his hands and he does so.

BRIDGEEN (O.S.)
 I didn't realize miming counted as
 poetry.

Patrick whips around and sees Bridgeen standing there. He smiles but doesn't go over to her.

PATRICK
 Yeah, they really take anything
 these days. Poets can be pretty
 desperate.

BRIDGEEN
 Is that so?

PATRICK
And lousy friends.

In the background, an announcer brings up the next poet and people clap.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Uh, I've been trying to say—I've
texted but I know you probably, I
mean, after—I thought maybe I
should call but I figured I should
take a break from shitty
voicemails. What I'm trying to say
is, I'm so sorry for the other day
and for being a total asshole and
the world's worst friend ever and I
know I've probably ruined
everything but I'm really glad you
came.

After a moment Bridgeen takes a step forward.

BRIDGEEN
Me too.

PATRICK
Yeah?

BRIDGEEN
Yeah.

Patrick nods.

PATRICK
Cool, cool. So...how did that test
go?

Bridgeen shakes her head and scoffs.

BRIDGEEN
It went fine I think. Though,
that's never really what I was
worried about.

PATRICK
Yeah...yeah, I think some part of
me knew that.

BRIDGEEN
Yeah? Cause you never asked.

PATRICK

Yeah...I think some part of me knew that too. But I can ask now—how are you?

Bridgeen smiles.

BRIDGEEN

Not great. But doing better. You?

PATRICK

About the same, I think. I asked my parents to help me find a therapist so...I think that's something.

BRIDGEEN

It's certainly not nothing.

Patrick nods.

PATRICK

Are we friends, still? I mean, can we be?

BRIDGEEN

I hope so. But don't ever expect me to help you study for any tests. And I expect a couple more apologies.

Patrick laughs.

PATRICK

Good thing that's my specialty.

Bridgeen holds out her hand and Patrick shakes it.

BRIDGEEN

Well, good luck. I'll be out there, ready to snap away!

PATRICK

Yes, please do. Snaps are like cocaine to poets. Were total attention whores.

Bridgeen laughs. She turns and walks away.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I'm going to a party tonight!

She turns around.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

By the way. It's at my brother's friend's house. Nothing crazy. I don't think. It's actually my first party ever—I can send you the address—I think a decent amount of people are going—not like too many though but—

BRIDGEEN

I'll be there. Now, go get em, slut!

Bridgeen leaves and Patrick laughs. He sits on a chair, looking down at his journal. His leg starts to bounce and he runs his hands through his hair.

Mr. A comes up to Patrick.

MR. A

Alright, Patrick you're up next, ready?

Patrick looks like he's gonna puke.

MR. A (CONT'D)

You alright?

PATRICK

What if I don't have anything worth saying?

MR. A

Of course you do.

Patrick nods. His leg still bouncing.

PATRICK

What if it's not good?

Mr. A shrugs.

MR. A

I don't think that matters. It's yours.

Patrick stares at Mr. A for a second before hearing another large round of applause. The poet before walks off the stage. Patrick takes a deep breath.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

Patrick slowly walks into a single spotlight. A microphone is waiting for him. His breathing is fast as he looks out into the near faceless crowd—blocked out by the bright lights.

He steps up to the mic and clears his throat, holding his journal out in front of him. His hand shakes as he holds it.

He begins:

PATRICK

Nobody ever tells you what to do after your school shooting. There's plenty they tell you about before. Scenarios and drills. And there's plenty they tell you about during. Scenarios and drills. But no one talks about after. When the drills become reality, and the scenarios don't matter. When everything just sorta keeps going and you're just stuck there, in the after.

EXT. PATRICK'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY.

Patrick runs through his neighborhood, breathing hard, and keeping a steady pace as he weaves the familiar path. SNOW FALLS gently down.

PATRICK (V.O.)

Stuck there in the during too,
stuck there to bear witness. Books
burned in the distance. Footsteps
fell fast on the old tile
floor—the little soldiers cowering
beside the door—wondering when it
would end. Long straight hallways
are a bullets best friend.

We SEE he's wearing his new shoes, his old beads laced on them.

PATRICK (V.O.)

And hey, these things happen. Like
accidentally bleaching clothes.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

Patrick's voice is steady, and low.

PATRICK
I wonder how many cycles it would
take to get the stains out of me?
How many chemicals would I need?

EXT. PATRICK'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Patrick's breath can be seen on the air as he runs, faster,
harder, making his way up a hill back towards his house.

PATRICK (V.O.)
I don't have the answer—so keep
pouring them on thick—send me
spinning and spinning—

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

Patrick stands alone in the spotlight. Nothing but black
around him. But he glows as he speaks.

PATRICK
Carrot on a stick—gun in a
hallway.

The faceless crowd is silent, nothing but shadows in the
ground.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Keep me spinning and spinning in
this old building,

Patrick's hand is no longer shaking as he reads.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Where so many soldiers sharpened
their tools. This old building that
used to be a school! Before the
students became soldiers—before
these things happened.

John and Bridgeen watch on.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Before the world got so loud it
became blurry—please give me
something to take—

EXT. PATRICK'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Patrick reaches his house, sprinting to his driveway and then quickly walking around on the lawn, trying to catch his breath, his hands above his head.

PATRICK (V.O.)

At night I lay awake—at day I
sleep walk pretending everything's
okay, but the truth is I've yet to
leave that place.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

We're ON Patrick's face, lit by the spotlight.

PATRICK

The truth is I like it when the
world moves slow. A friend asked if
it happened for a reason and I told
her I didn't know but the truth is
I don't like the question—I don't
like the answers either—I like it
when it's quiet...

EXT. PATRICK'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Patrick can't seem to catch his breath, he bends over, putting his hands on his knees like when we first met him.

PATRICK (V.O.)

The kind of quiet when everything
is calling, and you didn't mean to
answer—but everything is calling—

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

Patrick stands tall, his voice strong.

PATRICK

Books burnt in the distance—the
sound of snow falling...slowly,
then faster—recognizing that
you're still here...in the quiet of
the after.

We go BEHIND Patrick—nothing but a silhouette amongst shadows...

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - DAY.

We hear nothing but Patrick's breathing as the snow falls around him.

He picks himself up, breathes in deep, standing tall and straight under the weight of it all...and exhales.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.