

(Name of Project)
by
(Name of First Writer)

(Based on, If Any)

Revisions by
(Names of Subsequent Writers,
in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by
(Current Writer, date)

Name
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The Only Living Boy In New York

EXT. THE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN/OPENING TITLES - DAY

Fly over the East River... until the privileged cement canyons of the Upper East Side roll by... now the green of Central Park... to the Las Vegas of Times Square... and the charm of Chelsea...

As the grid gives way to the thin doglegs of the West Village... over the stark lofts of Tribeca... to Libeskin's work in progress, Phoenix readying to rise...

Around the thumbnail of the Financial District... to the immigrant-cum-hipster miasma of the Lower East Side... over the multicolored fire escapes of The East Village...

And land on...

UNION SQUARE

amongst the activity, the cars, the throngs of people...

find...

THOMAS WEBB

Early-twenties... a blank canvas of a boy with perfect teeth. Dirty-washed jeans and the famous Lennon New York T.

Thomas stands still in the middle of Union Square with the people around him rushing from one tiny piece of their life to the next. He's collecting himself. Stealing a moment.

As Thomas descends into the subway.

INT. UNION SQUARE STATION - DAY

The uptown 4,5,6 platform. Waiting for his train, Thomas looks down the track. A man in a WOOL HAT turns to him.

WOOL HAT

It's coming.

Thomas breaks his gaze... regards the man.

THOMAS

Yes.

WOOL HAT

Know how I knew?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

Excuse me?

WOOL HAT

The train. How I knew it was coming. Would you like to know?

Thomas shrugs. A dramatic beat, then...

WOOL HAT (CONT'D)

Mice.

THOMAS

Mice?

In proud confirmation...

WOOL HAT

Mice.

INT. THE UPTOWN NO.5 SUBWAY - DAY

Thomas leans against the pole. He's lost in the reverie of his moving reflection until something catches his eye.

A SUBWAY AD

for an exhibit at the met. It shows a statue...

RODIN'S "HAND OF GOD"

A large white marble hand that rises up from the earth. The hand holds a man and a woman in its grasp.

As Thomas holds on the ad...

INT. THE REGGIE SANDERS GALLERY - DAY

A small art gallery in the East Village.

MIMI

She's into him. But he's not into her.

MIMI PASTORI

wears a double dyed pink wife-beater that stops just short of her bumper sticker... the Chinese symbol of balance. She owns a temple of a body built of feminine mesa-morph and displays small diamond stud in her nose.

All of Mimi's attempts to hide her beauty fail miserably.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Mimi points up toward the painting she's looking at.

MIMI

Her love for him is so transparent
it's embarrassing.

Thomas stands at her side. They admire the painting.

We now see that they are looking at a Calderesque abstract painting featuring only a black circle and a purple triangle at opposite ends. Mimi's pointing to the triangle.

MIMI (CONT'D)

And look at how indifferent he is
about it. It's obvious he's not
going to turn.

And Mimi always wears this thing that makes her incredibly sexy... it's called an education.

THOMAS

They never turn.

As she pulls away.

MIMI

Yes, it's sad. She's all alone.
There are no more shapes in the
painting.

They fall into a slow gallery pace.

THOMAS

Will you come with me?

MIMI

No, Thomas, I wouldn't go to
another one of your mother's dinner
parties for all the money in that
room.

THOMAS

You don't care about money.

MIMI

But I care about my sanity.

They walk in silence. Admiring the art work.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Just don't go if it bothers you
that much.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS

I have to. My mother isn't stable.
Throwing dinner parties is how she
medicates.

MIMI

What about the Lithium and Xanax
not to mention the nicotine and
Shiraz?

Thomas thinks about it for a beat, then...

THOMAS

Semantics.

EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK - DAY

They walk through the park. It's a brilliant fall day.

MIMI

Thomas, I have to tell you
something. I might be going to
Zagreb.

THOMAS

Where?

MIMI

It's the largest city in Croatia.
Helmut Graph is running a workshop
and I can transfer the credits back
to NYU.

Thomas puts on a plastic smile. Tries to be happy for her...

THOMAS

That's...

And immediately fails...

THOMAS (CONT'D)

... terrible.

MIMI

Why? Why is that terrible?

THOMAS

Because you're the only thing in my
life I'm settled on. How long is
the program?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI

Six months. Look, I don't even know if Helmut will have me, he's fucking brilliant. He doesn't accept just anybody.

Mimi stops, faces him.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Thomas, just what do you think is happening here? You and I? What do you think this is?

THOMAS

I think... I... August eighth. I think August eighth was real.

MIMI

It was amazing, Thomas, but it was just one night. We were both on ecstasy, I thought I was a pirate and I was vulnerable because Nick left... and it was just one night.

THOMAS

Well, I'm crazy about you.

MIMI

And I'm crazy about you. But--

THOMAS

Don't say "as a friend."

He pulled the words right out of her mouth...

MIMI

Why not, Thomas? Why is that so bad?

THOMAS

Because pretty girls like to recruit their rejections and call them friends.

Mimi considers arguing but defers to sigh in defeat.

MIMI

Yeah, I'm pretty sure ugly girls do it too.

Mimi puts on a mock frown. Then...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIMI (CONT'D)

You know one of the first concepts children learn, Thomas? Justice... fairness. They comprehend it at like two. Their favorite refrain; "Not fair!"

As she pierces into him with her blue eyes.

MIMI (CONT'D)

It's funny -- we learn justice so young but it takes us a lifetime to comprehend injustice.

And she kisses him on the forehead.

MIMI (CONT'D)

We don't turn, Sweetie.

INT. 99 ORCHARD STREET - NIGHT

Thomas heads into the Lower East Side tenement, grabs his mail and stops to sift through it.

A man in his fifties stands in the small foyer with him. This man just stands there... regarding Thomas all the while.

MAN

Anything worth opening?

Thomas looks with a smile.

THOMAS

Just bills and junk.

Thomas returns to his mail but the man doesn't stop staring at him. He's disheveled but not vagrant... more of a cerebrally artistic unkemptness -- an unmade bed of a man.

MAN

I'm W.F. Gerald. I just moved into three C.

Thomas extends his hand.

THOMAS

Thomas Webb.

W.F. shakes it.

W.F.

Why so troubled, Thomas?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

Excuse me.

W.F. looks Thomas up and down. Studies him.

W.F.

I know that color of stress
actually. It's much brighter than
job issues yet much more subdued
than possible disease.

(stops and smiles)

I'm sorry, I'm being rude.

Thomas laughs. Humors the man.

THOMAS

No, I had a bad day. If you can
guess it... be my guest.

W.F.

Women problems.

THOMAS

Bingo.

Thomas sets to go, but...

W.F.

What's her name?

Thomas stops, turns and answers...

THOMAS

Mimi.

W.F.

Ahh Mimi. Derived from Williamina.
It means "the resolute protector."

THOMAS

There you go.

As Thomas smiles, heads for the stairs...

W.F.

And what is it you like about this
Mimi?

... and stops again. Turns once more.

THOMAS

Are you a psychiatrist?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

W.F.

No.

THOMAS

You ask psychiatrist questions.

W.F.

Maybe I can help. Maybe I can help you get Mimi to sleep with you.

THOMAS

How do you know she hasn't already?

W.F.

C'mon, Thomas. It's obvious.

With that... Thomas heads for the stairs.

THOMAS

It was nice meeting you.

As Thomas bounds the stairs, W.F. calls out after him.

W.F.

What is it you like about Mimi, Thomas? Let me help a new neighbor out.

INT. THOMAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lower East Side typical. Thomas lays on his mattress and stares at the ceiling. Frustrated. Eyes wide open.

THOMAS

(to the ceiling)

How is it so obvious?

EXT. 99 ORCHARD STREET/HALLWAY - NIGHT

Thomas knocks on 3C. W.F. answers the door.

THOMAS

The way she bites her lip when she's nervous. The way her incredibly witty remarks have the ability to be optimistic and cynical at the same time. The way she looks at me when I say something stupid and the way she looks at me when I don't. Do you want me to keep going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

W.F.
No, I get it.

THOMAS
Then let me ask you something...
how can I?

INT. W.F.'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The place is empty. Completely void of furniture.

W.F.
Where'd you meet her?

Thomas and W.F. sit on the floor drinking wine.

THOMAS
There's this rare book store called
"The Pale Fire." It's named after--

W.F.
John Shade's 999 line poem.

Thomas confirms, impressed.

THOMAS
Well there are some rare vintage
books in there. I'm into that...
reading off the beaten path. Mimi
works there and she gave me the
greatest recommendations. She's
putting herself through NYU's
Literature program. She reads a
book a week.

W.F.
Sounds like a smart girl.

THOMAS
And beautiful. She's incredibly
beautiful in this really
unexplainable way -- like she's
direct from God... not second
generation if that makes sense.

W.F. slowly smiles.

W.F.
Complete sense.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

We got each other... there was good cadence. Thing was she had a boyfriend named Nick. He's in "Fahrenheit 185" which is this kinda hot band named after--

W.F.

The exact temperature it takes to cook heroin properly.

THOMAS

Right. So Nick goes on tour. Mimi's now available, we're hanging out more... we have this magical night together on August eighth...

And Thomas sighs in wistful defeat.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Then it all goes platonic.

W.F.

How old is Mimi, Thomas?

THOMAS

Twenty-two. She just turned twenty-two.

W.F. thinks about it for a moment, then leans forward... Thomas listens as if it's God telling him the situation.

W.F.

Mimi's young, Thomas. She's at an age where defense mechanisms are very strong. Despite her outer veneer, she's ruled by fear. You just need to make her afraid of something more than being with you.

THOMAS

Which is?

W.F.

Not being with you.

Thomas sips his wine, mulls it over.

THOMAS

How am I supposed to do that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

W.F.

Let life take over. Find a window.
Then... pounce.

Thomas considers it, thinks it through....

THOMAS

That's your sage neighborly advice?
I want my money back.

W.F.

Oh, you're not giving life enough
credit, Thomas. The unpredictable
forces of humanity.

THOMAS

My life is not unpredictable. It's
conventional. And it's boring.

W.F. stands and stretches. Says in a tired sigh...

W.F.

Life is as much of a dream as it is
a nightmare, as random as it is
deliberate, as funny as it is
tragic... and yours is no
exception, Thomas.

Thomas considers W.F.

THOMAS

Who are you?

W.F.

I told you -- I'm W.F. Gerald.

As Thomas simply regards this strange man.

EXT. RIVERSIDE DRIVE BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Looks like an old castle. Recently renovated, the expansive
four story brownstone sits across from Riverside Park as it
hugs the corner of 83rd street.

INT. THE WEBB BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

A dinner party in full swing. Thomas sits at the table with
around ten other NEW YORKERS, all well heeled.

A heated argument is taking place between GEORGE, an
investment banker and a film critic named DAVID.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
Tammany Hall worked.

DAVID
Worked at lining pockets.

Note Thomas' mother, JUDITH WEBB, early 50's, intellectually attractive, as opposed to the reconstructed uptown statues she's friends with. But Judith's always nervous, seems on the verge of a breakdown... precisely because she is.

GEORGE
And you're going to claim Robert Moses was clean?

Note Thomas' father, NATHAN WEBB, 50's. Has that indefinable aura of success to him. Very good looking. When a woman claims she's into older men... she's referring to Nathan.

BARBARA, an art dealer chimes in.

BARBARA
Did anybody read Jeffrey Tobin's article about how New York should secede from the rest of the country?

GEORGE
(back at David)
Robert Moses wanted to turn this city into Los Angeles.

BARBARA
It was very clever. Calvin Klein would design the flag... Giuliani would be on the money.

ANNA, a top magazine editor and a Brit, picks it up...

ANNA
I read an brilliant book on the history of great Mayors.

Nathan speaks up and the table immediately listens.

NATHAN
Speaking of books, Anna, we just commissioned Neil Strauss to do a bio on Jenna Jameson.

BARBARA
Jameson? The pharmacy heiress?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NATHAN

No, she's a porn star, Barb.

DAVID

And people really care about that?

NATHAN

That's all they care about. Our mandate is simple at Kenta; bios of any haircut under forty as long as they're still with-in their fifteen minutes... self help, political rants and weight loss.

With a British sigh...

ANNA

Fiction is dead. It's quite sad.

NATHAN

It's not sad, Anna. It's economics.

GEORGE

I'm sorry, Nathan, but I disagree. Don't you think you're dummifying down America?

NATHAN

America was dummed down years ago. The job's finished, George. Turn on a TV, go to Times Square, have a conversation with a fifteen year old. Fiction may be dead but commerce is not.

Anna tisks.

ANNA

And once a writer... so cynical, Nathan Webb.

Nathan shrugs it off. Judith grabs her husband's hand.

JUDITH

I know, Anna. I want him to sell the company. Launch some sort of magazine that could give exposure to these gifted young writers out there. He says he doesn't want to sell false hope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Nathan kisses Judith.

NATHAN

Her idealism. That's why I married her.

Thomas sheepishly smiles. Admiring his parents' love.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

It's simple... if I had continued with my writing career, we'd all be having this conversation in a two bedroom in Queens and none of you would be here.

DAVID

But Nathan, you're a much better publisher than you ever were a writer.

Nathan shrugs off David's remark then looks over to his son.

NATHAN

Look, if Thomas were to come to me with the desire to become a writer, I'd talk him out of it.

Now the table is looking at Thomas.

BARBARA

How is the restaurant business, Thomas?

THOMAS

I don't work for Union Square Hospitality anymore.

Nathan announces to the table while glaring at Thomas.

NATHAN

He lives on the Lower East Side without any direction. The only thing missing is a marijuana habit.

Seems like a joke, but both Thomas and Nathan know... that was Dad serving a dig. So Thomas returns...

THOMAS

But I'm working on that.

They all laugh. Except for Nathan...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Thomas leans against the granite island. Judith smokes a cigarette. She'd be doing the dishes but she has HELP... so she simply watches them do it.

JUDITH

Our Warhols may not be Warhols.
Well, they're Warhols, rest
assured, but this damn
authentication committee has been
screwing everyone over to raise the
prices of their own pieces.

THOMAS

They'll be authenticated, Mom.
Don't worry.

She's perpetually frantic, seamlessly shuffling from one topic to another. It's how she fits into her skin.

JUDITH

Don't pay any attention to your
father. He thinks if he can
embarrass you in front of our
friends, it'll motivate you.

THOMAS

It's fine, Mom.

Judith takes her son's hand.

JUDITH

You take your time, you weren't
happy working for Danny Meyer.
Andy Warhol personally himself gave
us one of the pieces. Your father
is too hard on you. It's not like
he didn't take his time.

THOMAS

Mom, it's fine.

JUDITH

He didn't build the publishing
house up until after years of
poverty and failure -- he was going
to be the next Salinger.

She takes a long, reflective, benzodiazapine-induced moment, then... looks up... almost crying...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDITH (CONT'D)

I don't know what I'd do without
that man. He's my vein, Thomas.

Thomas just stands there -- knows better than to reward his
mother's drama with affection.

INT. CHARLIE'S SOUTHERN STYLE KITCHEN - DAY

A soul food restaurant in Harlem. Lunch time crowd.

Thomas sits with Mimi.

MIMI

Why don't you just work for Kenta-
Webb?

THOMAS

I don't think I want to work in
publishing and I know I don't want
to work for my father.

She's deep in thought. Working hard to help him.

MIMI

I don't know. What do people do
that they can mindlessly make a lot
of money by producing absolutely
nothing?

(and it comes to her)

Oh! Be an investment banker.

THOMAS

I don't want to be an investment
banker.

She smiles at him for an extra long beat.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

What? Why are you smiling?

MIMI

You're cute.

THOMAS

Your name means resolute protector.

She looks into his eyes.

MIMI

I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They hold the look for an extra long moment, until...

THOMAS

Are you going to go to Croatia?

MIMI

I don't know. I'm still waiting
for an E-mail from Helmut.

As she skims over her menu.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Everybody is saying that Croatia is
the new Prague but it's better than
that... it's more like the old
Paris.

Thomas simply regards her as she bites her lip. Her every
nuance slays him. He gets lost in her sometimes, has to snap
himself back. As he does...

THOMAS

This man moved in across the hall
from me. I don't know what he does
or who he is. But he seems
familiar to me. He's my new
friend.

MIMI

Um-hm

THOMAS

He asked about you.

Mimi looks up from her menu.

MIMI

About me? He knows me?

Thomas sees something at the door that catches his eye.

THOMAS

No. What's my father doing here?

As Nathan Webb walks in.

Thomas stands up to greet his father but stops on the dime.
On the woman Nathan walks in with.

Thomas watches Nathan lead the woman to a table. This woman
is remarkable. She's in her young thirties and put together
almost professionally. Intense beauty... devastating beauty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

And she owns it -- it doesn't own her.

MIMI
Who's he with?

THOMAS
I don't know.

MIMI
She's a model.

THOMAS
Not tall enough.

Thomas gets up. Leans over and whispers to Mimi.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
I'm going to the bathroom. Answer
your cell.

MIMI
(whispering back)
Why?

Thomas doesn't answer as he slides toward the men's room.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Thomas sits in the stall on his phone.

INTERCUT WITH

Mimi... as she watches Nathan and this woman.
She reports what she sees into her cell.

THOMAS
Is it romantic?

MIMI
I can't tell.

Nathan and the woman talk. He leans in close to her.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Thomas, something about this
doesn't seem functional.

THOMAS
Is it romantic, Mimi?

MIMI
Not right now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS
Keep watching.

Mimi looks right at Nathan and his lady-friend.

MIMI
Thomas?

THOMAS
Yes?

MIMI
Your father's hot.

THOMAS
Is it romantic, Mimi?!?

MIMI
Sorry. Hold on.

And there it is. Nathan leans forward and they kiss.

He grabs the woman's hand, looks into her eyes and says something that makes her blush. Mimi bites her lip.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Yes.

THOMAS
Are you kidding?

MIMI
Oh Thomas -- I wish I was.

INT. MIMI'S LOWER EAST SIDE APARTMENT - DAY

Cluttered with books and written-in notebooks and roach filled ash-trays and posters of obscure independent bands.

Thomas lies on the futon. He's in a state.

THOMAS
Do you have any idea what this is going to do to my mother?

Mimi sits down on the futon. She grabs his hand.

MIMI
Thomas, this doesn't mean your father loves you any less.

Thomas just blankly looks at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, that was lame. I'm dispensing therapy from an after school special.

THOMAS

He can't stand me to begin with, I know that, this is about my mother.

Mimi pats his hair back. Trying to sooth him.

MIMI

It's their problem, Thomas. You've got problems of your own.

And he plaintively looks at her.

THOMAS

Like what?

She opens her mouth but he holds up his hand.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Don't answer that! Not now...

She swallows it back. He throws his head into his hands.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm going to be sick.

And Mimi lifts Thomas' head, slowly looks into his eyes and doesn't say anything.

A long silence, and an uncomfortable silence, and their mouths are so close, and it's an uncomfortable silence, a pregnant moment, and she's so pretty, and he goes in...

Kisses her.

She doesn't do a thing. Doesn't kiss back, doesn't pull away, just waits till he's finished kissing before she talks.

MIMI

Don't do this.

And he's up on his feet.

THOMAS

Why not? Am I that disgusting to you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MIMI

Of course not.

THOMAS

You're young and your defense mechanisms are strong. But I think you want this. I really do. Am I wrong? Or are you scared?

As she averts his glare.

MIMI

Thomas, I think you're confused right now.

THOMAS

No Mimi, I'm angry right now! Did you see that woman? Did you see how beautiful she was?

MIMI

Thomas--

THOMAS

I could never get a woman like that. But my cheating father... with his publishing house and his good looks and his key to Gramercy Park.

MIMI

Thomas, you don't know what you're saying.

THOMAS

And she knows he's married!

Thomas takes to a pace.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

And no doubt that woman has a me in her life. A me who is totally in love with her and kind and decent. And she's rejecting this me in order to fuck my father.

MIMI

Jesus Thomas, I can't believe you're turning your father's affair into a confirmation of your inadequacies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THOMAS

No Mimi...

He heads for the door...

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I have you for that.

And he's gone...

INT. W.F. GERALD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Thomas drinks down his wine while sitting on the floor.
W.F.'s apartment still doesn't have much furniture.

THOMAS

This was the most beautiful woman
I've ever seen.

W.F. stands at his desk working something into place.
Perusing documents, collating something, we can't see.

W.F.

Are you going to confront him?

THOMAS

No, I have trouble talking to him.

Not looking up from his project at the desk...

W.F.

Why?

THOMAS

I don't think he likes me much.

And W.F. finally looks up. Interested.

W.F.

Thomas, what exactly is wrong with
your mother?

THOMAS

I'm not sure. Depressed. Bipolar.
She's a depressive bipolar.
(and then, hopeless)
I can't tell her, she'll be
destroyed.

W.F. resumes his attention to the project on his desk.
Thomas looks around the barren apartment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Why don't you furnish this place?

As W.F. finally finishes his project and holds it up with pride... a tightly rolled joint.

W.F.

Because I live in Brooklyn.

W.F. hands Thomas the joint. Thomas lights it. Churning the infidelity as he inhales.

THOMAS

Maybe he's been faithful all these years, maybe she came on to him. I've seen her, it would be nearly impossible to turn her down. Maybe this is an isolated incident.

Thomas exhales, passes the joint to W.F.

W.F.

Thomas. What do you want?

THOMAS

I want my father to stop seeing this woman.

As W.F. takes...

W.F.

No, in life. In your life, Thomas. Do you want more money? Do you want more respect? What is it you want? Think about it. Really think about it.

Thomas does. Takes a deep breath...

THOMAS

I want... someone... like...

W.F.

Yes...

THOMAS

Her.

And W.F. slowly exhales.

W.F.

And you said your life was boring.

INT. BABO - NIGHT

A nice Italian restaurant in Greenwich Village.
Thomas and his father share a two top.

NATHAN

I talked to Danny Meyer, he said
he'd love to have you back at the
company.

THOMAS

I wasn't happy there.

Nathan throws up his arms in frustration.

NATHAN

You always achieved, Thomas, I
don't understand this block.

Thomas nods. Quiet.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I'm glad you set this up. I have
something important that I want to
talk to you about.

Thomas leans forward. Nervously anticipating...

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I want you to move off the Lower
East Side.

Expecting the confession, Thomas sighs... this old topic.

THOMAS

I told you... I'm happy on Orchard.

NATHAN

Why do you insist on living in the
farthest corner of the city from
us? I think it's intentional,
Thomas... I think it's almost
hurtful.

Nathan stands to greet a prominent New Yorker. Nathan
doesn't introduce Thomas to the man or even acknowledge his
son's existence at the table.

After Nathan sits back down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Look, I'm not asking for me, I'm asking for your mother... she'd like you closer to home.

THOMAS

How is Mom, Dad?

NATHAN

Better, I guess. I can't get her to quit smoking.

THOMAS

She's fragile. Anything, even the smallest thing, could create another... incident.

It hangs, until...

NATHAN

I'll pay the difference in rent.

And Thomas glares at his father. Silence.

EXT. BABO - NIGHT

Hailing a cab, Nathan lights up a cigar. Thomas stands idly.

NATHAN

Will you think about it?

THOMAS

Dad...

A cab pulls up.

NATHAN

And think about taking Danny Meyer up on his offer. It was a good job.

Thomas inhales deeply, begs the courage to...

THOMAS

Dad, I know you're--

NATHAN

There are people all over this city who would beg for that job.

(then)

You know that I'm what, Thomas?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A long beat, then...

THOMAS

Tired.

Nathan puffs on his cigar, agrees and gets into the cab.

EXT. THE KENTA-WEBB PUBLISHING BUILDING - DAY

A large building in upper midtown. Thomas shares a bench with Mimi across from the building.

MIMI

I don't think you know how hard a stakeout actually is.

THOMAS

He wants me to move back to the Upper West Side.

MIMI

These private detectives charge by the hour and then just... wait.

THOMAS

He takes in a lover and then he expects me to be on suicide watch.

MIMI

I have to go. I have a class.

THOMAS

Not yet. He'll be out in a minute. I have to see if he meets her again.

She nods. They sit in silence. Thomas turns to study...

MIMI

as she watches the midtown workforce buzz about with her big childlike eyes... as she hums a little song to herself... as she inadvertently bites her lip -- undeniably more beautiful when she doesn't know anyone's looking.

And Thomas can't take it.

THOMAS

You suck.

Mimi smiles to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI

Why?

But before he can answer...

MIMI (CONT'D)

Oh, that's her!

THOMAS

Who?

Mimi points across the way.

MIMI

Her. The other woman.

Thomas sees her. Nathan's mistress leaving the building.

THOMAS

Go back to your class, Mimi.

Thomas stands...

MIMI

I thought you were waiting for your father.

As Thomas moves to take a tail behind this woman.

THOMAS

I'll call you later.

EXT. 50TH STREET SUBWAY STATION - DAY

As this incredibly beautiful woman walks down the stairs, she holds galleys in her hands, maybe five hundred pages.

A beat, then... Thomas bounds down the stairs after her.

INT. THE DOWNTOWN A,C,E LINE - DAY

She sits and reads through the galleys. Thomas watches her from across the car. She looks up, he looks away. She resumes her reading.

EXT. WEST 4TH STREET - DAY

As Nathan's mistress emerges from the subway and heads into the West Village. Thomas on her tail.

INT. THE GREY DOG CAFE - DAY

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She enjoys a coffee and reads.

Thomas sits a few tables away, pretending to read The Post but he's mostly looking at her.

EXT. SPRING STREET - DAY

As she heads into her SOHO loft building.
Thomas looking on from across the street.

EXT. SPRING STREET LOFT - NIGHT

Day has turned into night. She leaves her loft and walks through SOHO. Thomas stands from the bench across the street... and he follows her.

EXT. MEAT PACKING DISTRICT - NIGHT

She walks up to a hot nightclub that has a line around the corner. She kisses the BOUNCER on the cheek and heads right in. Thomas walks up but there is no way he's getting in.

EXT. 50TH STREET SUBWAY STATION - DAY

She emerges from the station and takes to a stride through a crowded midtown.

A beat, then... Thomas Webb emerges and follows.

INT. GREY DOG CAFE - DAY

She sits and reads. Thomas across the way.

EXT. PRINTING HOUSE GYM - DAY

She struts into the fancy gym with her yoga mat under her arm. Across the street, Thomas stops and simply stares at the door she just went into.

INT. RED CAT RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A trendy restaurant in Chelsea.

She sits at a table with two MEN who are very affectionate with each other. Obviously gay.

They all laugh and drink wine. A grand time.
Pull back to be witnessing this from...

10TH AVENUE

Thomas looks on. This might be getting unhealthy.

INT. THE WEST VILLAGE - NIGHT

Thomas and W.F. enjoy the brisk night air.
They both inhale cupcakes down with fresh milk.

THOMAS
This might be getting unhealthy.

W.F.
How long have you been doing this?

THOMAS
Today was my third day.

W.F.
What do you hope to accomplish,
Thomas?

THOMAS
I want to meet her... to tell her
to stop seeing my father. That she
could kill my mother.

W.F.
So do it.

THOMAS
I haven't built up the courage yet.

W.F.
So you stalk her.

Thomas nods. Agreeing. Then...

W.F. (CONT'D)
Thomas, what do you do?

THOMAS
That's my question.

W.F.
No, for a living? How do you make
money?

THOMAS
I don't, I mean, I did. I worked
for a company called Union Square
Hospitality Group for three years.
I quit. I hated it and I quit. I
still have some money left over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

W.F.
When does that run out?

With a sigh...

THOMAS
It already did.

W.F. takes a big bite of his cupcake. Frosting on his chin.

W.F.
You're on Mastercard scholarship?

THOMAS
Yeah.

W.F. suddenly stops and faces Thomas.

W.F.
I don't buy it.

THOMAS
You don't buy what?

Thomas motions to W.F.'s chin, W.F. wipes the frosting off.

W.F.
I don't buy that this is just about
your mother's health. You want
something more here.

THOMAS
Something more what?

With a sinister smile...

W.F.
Provocative.

EXT. SOHO LOFT - DAY

Our beautiful mistress emerges from her building.
Takes to the street. Thomas immediately finds her side.

THOMAS
Excuse me.

She doesn't hear him. A little louder.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MISTRESS

Yes.

She doesn't stop walking.

THOMAS

You don't know who I am.

MISTRESS

Yes, I do.

THOMAS

You do?

MISTRESS

You're the boy who follows me.

THOMAS

I have a good reason.

MISTRESS

You're also Nathan's son.

Now Thomas stops, miffed.

MISTRESS (CONT'D)

He keeps a picture of you on his desk. Are you hungry, Thomas?

Stunned, Thomas just stands there.

INT. GREY DOG CAFE - DAY

She looks up from her turkey burger. Announces to Thomas.

MISTRESS (CONT'D)

Following someone in this city must be very difficult. It's so easy to be anonymous here.

(and then)

You know when they asked Greta Garbo why she chose to live here... she said that New York was the only place where she could be alone.

She finishes her turkey burger while Thomas' sits idle.

THOMAS

Why didn't you say anything when I was following you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MISTRESS
Why didn't you say anything?

THOMAS
Because I didn't know what I was
going to do.

MISTRESS
Do you now?

THOMAS
Yes.

MISTRESS
Is it good?

Thomas stops cold -- doesn't quite have an answer.

JOHANNA
Johanna.

THOMAS
Johanna?

JOHANNA
I'm Johanna.

She stands and puts down a tip. Thomas stands.

THOMAS
Okay, Johanna, how long have you
been fucking my father...

As she heads out of the café and onto...

CARMINE STREET

Thomas struggles to keep pace with Johanna's quick gait.

JOHANNA
Is that kind of vulgarity entirely
necessary here?

THOMAS
And what kind of vulgarity would
you prefer?

JOHANNA
Are we angry and entitled?

THOMAS
Yes, we are.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And he says it with enough conviction to get her to stop, face him and answer the question.

JOHANNA

A little over a year.

THOMAS

(incredulous)

Why are you even with him? He's married.

In mock horror...

JOHANNA

He's married?!?

INT. A,C,E UPTOWN LINE - DAY

Thomas sits next to Johanna. She reads.

THOMAS

Do you work for him?

JOHANNA

Sometimes. I'm a freelance editor, I work for all the houses.

THOMAS

Do you love him?

And she looks up.

JOHANNA

Define love, Thomas.

THOMAS

Do you think you're going to marry him? Is that what you think? Do you think you're going to steal him away from my mother?

JOHANNA

How do you know your mother isn't giving him to me?

THOMAS

What is that supposed to mean?

JOHANNA

People do things all the time without realizing.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

Your mother may be giving Nathan to me without comprehending it.

Thomas thinks about that for a beat...

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

You're doing something right now without realizing it.

THOMAS

And what am I doing?

The train stops. Johanna stands. Her stop.

JOHANNA

Trying to make love to me.

Loudly and unbelieving...

THOMAS

I'm trying to make love to you!?

And overheard by the half of the train.

As she gets off the train... leaving Thomas dumbfounded.

JOHANNA

Like I said... you just don't realize it.

INT. AUREOLE - DAY

Thomas sits across from his mother at this posh restaurant.

JUDITH

Warhol was a personal friend of ours. He gave us one of the pieces and we bought the other two for a very good price. Now this damn committee is going to take all that away.

THOMAS

Mom, it doesn't matter that much. You have Browns, Hockney's, Paschkes.

JUDITH

These people... these bastards in Chelsea are going to wipe away my past? Steal my memories? I want to smoke. Goddamn Bloomberg. Join me outside, Dear.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS
I'll wait here.

JUDITH
But I want to smoke and talk to
you... at the same time, Thomas.
It makes the cigarette better.

EXT. AUREOLE - DAY

Judith smokes as she rapidly spits out words in her daily frenetic state.

JUDITH
It's this perpetual circle of
expectations and disappointments.
The greatest distance in the world,
Thomas, is between how it is and
how you thought it would be. Don't
forget that.

THOMAS
I won't, Mom.

She smiles at her son. Places her hand on his face.

JUDITH
You're my light... you know that.
You and your father. I love you
both so much it hurts.

THOMAS
I love you too, Mom.

As Judith tears up...

JUDITH
This fuckin' Klonopin makes me so
emotional.

EXT. GREY DOG CAFE - DAY

Johanna leaves the café. Thomas immediately sides up to her quick pace.

THOMAS
I want you to stop seeing my
father.

JOHANNA
Oh, hello, Thomas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

You're a very beautiful woman. You could get any man in this city.

JOHANNA

Could I get you?

Thomas stops.

THOMAS

What?

She stops, faces him.

JOHANNA

You said I could get any man in this city. So I ask -- could I get you?

THOMAS

Well, I think that's irrel--

JOHANNA

Which really begs a new question, actually. Are you a man, Thomas?

Johanna resumes her walking.

THOMAS

My mother is a sick woman. She's in a fragile state. This affair could put her over the top.

JOHANNA

How is it that I am responsible for your mother?

THOMAS

Because you're fucking my father.

JOHANNA

Once again with this vulgarity... you know that crudeness does not make one a man. Try again.

THOMAS

I want you to stop seeing him!

JOHANNA

Nor do demands. Try again.

They reach her loft.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS

I'm not trying to be a man. And
I'm not trying to make love to you.
I'm just trying to save my mother.
Can't you understand that?

JOHANNA

You're getting closer.

With that, she disappears into the stairway...

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

An evening stroll though the Lower East Side with W.F.

W.F.

Johanna...

THOMAS

She's not like anyone I've ever
met.

W.F.

It's a beautiful name.

THOMAS

She's mean.

W.F. lights up a joint.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

She said I was trying to make love
to her.

W.F.

Were you?

W.F. offers Thomas a hit, he declines.

THOMAS

No! I want her to stop seeing my
father.

W.F. stops, takes a toke and recedes deep in thought.

W.F.

Isn't that between you and your
father. Why would you contact her?
She's an outsider to what seems to
me to be a family issue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

What are you saying? That I like dealing with her...

W.F. resumes his evening stroll. His thoughts sorted... his conclusions determined.

W.F.

That's precisely what I'm saying. I'm saying you're taken by this woman. I'm saying you think about her all the time. I'm saying she makes you nervous and hot and excited all at once.

THOMAS

That I am trying to make love to her?

W.F.

Would you like to make love to her?

THOMAS

What kind a question is that? That's sick.

W.F.

She's a beautiful woman. Her name's Johanna. How is that sick?

THOMAS

She's sleeping with my father.

And W.F. faces the boy. Slowly repeats the question.

W.F.

Would you like to make love to Johanna?

THOMAS

Give me some credit, this conversation is perverse.

W.F.

Answer the question, Thomas. Stop drowning yourself in this conceived morality... and just answer the question.

Now it is Thomas who stops. Looks down the block... through the rows and rows of tenements, returns his gaze, then...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS

Yes. I would.

And this brings a smile to W.F.'s face...

EXT. NYU CAMPUS - DAY

Thomas wears a tuxedo as he walks the campus. He checks his watch then ducks into one of the old buildings.

INT. NYU BUILDING/BATHROOM - DAY

Thomas washes his face and takes in a deep breath. Checks himself in the mirror. Straightens his bow tie.

INT. NYU BUILDING/HALLWAY - DAY

Thomas heads for the door but something stops him. A poster on the wall promoting the exhibit at The Met. The picture of Rodin's "Hand Of God."

Thomas stares at the picture. Unblinking. Holds on it.

EXT. NYU CAMPUS - DAY

Thomas waits at a fountain. Mimi rushes out of a building.

MIMI

I just had to suffer through this total bullshit lecture on Shopenhauer.

She hands Thomas her books. As they walk...

THOMAS

Shopenhauer?

MIMI

He was like this A-list philosopher.

THOMAS

Oh.

MIMI

Basically Shopenhauer said that there is no good or evil in the world because everything's predetermined. That nothing we do matters... that everything's scripted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They head off the campus and onto lower Broadway.

MIMI (CONT'D)

That everything is nature and
nothing is nurture. Kindness,
addiction, talent... as if it were
all height.

As Thomas hails a cab.

THOMAS

Do you believe it?

MIMI

I can't. None of us can.

THOMAS

Why not?

MIMI

Because it would kill personal
responsibility.

THOMAS

Thank you for being my date.

MIMI

Anytime Thomas. So, I've
decided...

As they slide into the cab.

MIMI (CONT'D)

Shopenhauer was a tool.

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM/THE REVIVAL PARLOR - NIGHT

In the cozy Renaissance Revival Parlor a wedding takes place.
No denomination as far one can tell.

Thomas whispers over to Mimi.

THOMAS

I haven't seen most of these people
since high school.

MIMI

I didn't know people got married in
the Met.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

Rich people can get married
anywhere.

As the groom, HOWARD, kisses the BRIDE.

EXT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM - NIGHT

The main floor of the museum has been converted into a grand
ball. Open bars, candlelit tables and a dance floor.

And of course, New Yorkers... black tied and well heeled.
Champagne flows, the band swings and people dance.

Mimi and Thomas are dancing.

THOMAS

I couldn't have handled this
without you.

MIMI

I got hit on three times going to
the bathroom. I'm quite sure they
were all married.

THOMAS

Then it's a good thing my father
isn't here.

She sadly looks into his eyes. A long moment. Is she about
to kiss him? No. She sees someone over Thomas' shoulder.

MIMI

The groom is coming.

Howard greets Thomas with a hug.

HOWARD

Not a bad showing.

THOMAS

It's amazing, Howard.

HOWARD

I've been seeing a lot of your
mother lately.

THOMAS

My mother? Where?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOWARD

In the Starbucks on ninety-fourth
and Columbus. She's always in
there reading.

Perplexed, Thomas ponders that while Howard smiles to Mimi.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

Thanks for coming.

Howard immediately looks around. This transparent look-
through-you gaze that famous and extremely rich people do
when they want to talk to someone more important.

MIMI

Congratulations.

And Howard sees someone.

HOWARD

Have you guys ever met a
billionaire before?

THOMAS

No.

HOWARD

You guys have to meet Irwin
Rosenthal... he's a close friend of
my father's.

Howard walks them across the dance floor.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

(whispers to Thomas)

Actually he might not be a
billionaire now that he's divorced.

And Howard greets IRWIN ROSENTHAL, 60's, a little overweight.

IRWIN

Howard, how does it feel to be
married?

HOWARD

Great, did you know I'm at Goldman
now?

Howard has neglected to introduce Thomas or Mimi to Irwin.
As Irwin introduces Howard to the woman on his arm...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IRWIN
Howard... this is my friend
Johanna.

AND JOHANNA

gives Thomas a slight smile as she moves to meet Howard.
Thomas' eyes go wide.

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM - NIGHT

Mimi and Thomas dance. Thomas is transfixed on Johanna
sitting at a table with Irwin and others.

MIMI
I need a cigarette.

Irwin tells a story to the table and they're laughing.
Laughing, Johanna looks over and catches Thomas staring, she
doesn't smile or avert... she just holds the look.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Thomas...

He's lost in the lock of Johanna's gaze.

MIMI (CONT'D)
Thomas...

And he snaps back.

THOMAS
Yeah...

MIMI
I'm going to have a cigarette.

Thomas blankly nods. Looking at Johanna all the while.

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM - SAME

The band plays a slow number. Thomas looks on at the couples
embraced on the dance floor. He's drunk. Alone. Sad.

JOHANNA (O.S.)
I'm not dating Irwin.

And she's now at his side.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's not your business and I don't need to explain myself to you but nonetheless -- Irwin's a good friend. Where's your girlfriend?

THOMAS

Outside having a cigarette and she's not my girlfriend... just a good friend.

JOHANNA

Oh, you shouldn't let her do that to you.

Thomas looks ahead. Says nothing, until...

THOMAS

He's thirty years older than you and he's a billionaire. I'm not stupid.

JOHANNA

You are stupid, Thomas. And you don't understand how the world works.

(and then)

And he's not a billionaire anymore because Nancy got half of everything.

THOMAS

It doesn't really matter.

JOHANNA

No, it doesn't.

(then)

You look nice.

He turns to her.

THOMAS

What?

JOHANNA

In a tux. You look very nice. You're not conventionally good looking like your father but you have a certain cerebral appeal that you're going to grow into.

Thomas tries to shrug off the compliment...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

And I don't really think you're
stupid... just confused.

Thomas takes a big swig of his drink. Glares at her.

THOMAS

Irwin's probably looking for you.
I'm sure he paid for the whole
night.

Johanna grabs him by the arm, hard.

JOHANNA

Come here!

She pulls him off to the side... away from everyone.
Right in front of a statue.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

First of all... hooker comments?
Have you really resorted to hooker
comments?

Thomas looks down to his feet.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

Second of all, Irwin divorced Nancy
because he's gay. He loves men.
In fact he loves one man in
particular. A man named Billy
Arnaldi who happens to be an
incredible interior decorator and
one of my closest friends.

She's furious. Keeps going.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

Now, Irwin doesn't want to come out
and that's his prerogative so I
come to events like this with him.
I'm not a glorified hooker, he's
not my sugar daddy -- I'm a beard.

Thomas looks up to see the statue facing him is...

RODIN'S "HAND OF GOD"

The real deal. In the marble. In all its glory.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHANNA

You don't know how the world works.
You're an innocent -- a child.
Okay? We live in shades of gray --
not black and white. Not
everything is what it seems -- not
everything you read is true --
there is no fuckin' Santa Claus!

Thomas is silent. Embarrassed. Then...

THOMAS

For real?

JOHANNA

For real.

THOMAS

He's gay?

JOHANNA

Belle & Sebastian.

And Thomas simply stares at Rodin's masterpiece.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

And you weren't looking out for
your father -- you were jealous.

THOMAS

I wasn't jealous.

Thomas can't look at her. His eyes pasted on the statue.

JOHANNA

It's okay, Thomas.

THOMAS

I don't feel well. I drank too
much.

She walks behind him, faces the statue as well. Like they're
at the same exhibit... in deep in appreciation of the same
piece but don't know each other.

JOHANNA

You don't have to be jealous.

As she lightly brushes his hair from the back of his neck.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

And you can stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS

Stop what?

She steps forward. Whispers into his ear.

JOHANNA

Trying... to...

And she lightly kisses the back of his neck. A baby kiss.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

... make love to me, Thomas.

Thomas' gaze is pasted onto the statue. That giant white marbled hand jutting out from the Earth and holding those two naked people. Protecting them? Or about to squeeze?

She repeats her last line. Only now it's its own sentence.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

Make love to me, Thomas.

AND THOMAS WEBB

Staring straight ahead. Close on... wide eyed. A handful of shock mixed with a pinch of fear. As he fights down a swallow. Says nothing. Closer still... a bead of sweat rolls down the side of his face.

Hold on his deer-in-the-headlight expression, then pull back to be in...

JOHANNA'S LOFT

Spacious. And impeccably decorated. Thomas stands still with that same expression.

Johanna lays down two glasses of red wine on the table, sits on the couch.

JOHANNA

Won't you join me?

THOMAS

This is wrong.

She slowly moves from the couch to him.

JOHANNA

There is no right or wrong.

She touches his lips with hers. Not a kiss... a touch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

There is only is. This is a good
is, Thomas.

She kisses his neck.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

There's this story about a monk who
wanted to know what pure truth was.
So he climbed this really big
mountain and found the head grand
pooh-bah monk who lived there.

Takes his hand, slowly glides it from her face to her neck.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

Now, nobody had made it this far
before, Thomas, so this was a big
deal. And he asked the head monk
what was pure truth. And do you
know what the head monk said?

He has to swallow to fight out the simple word...

THOMAS

No.

JOHANNA

"So it has come to this."

As she glides his hand down the neckline of her dress.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

No judgment. No right or wrong.
Pure truth...

Johanna places Thomas' hand onto her breast as he looks her
tightly in the eyes.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

So it has come to this...

Then suddenly... he RIPS her dress open, throws her back
against the couch. She lets out a surprised moan as he takes
her by the back of neck.

And he kisses her.

Hard... wet... not clean...

And he ravages her.

AND THOMAS WEBB

naked, on top, sweating, thrusting forward, out of breath,
another thrust...

All the cruel cock teases, all the sexless friendzones, all
the nice-guy last place finishes... all of it. Redeemed in a
moment. This moment.

And Thomas Webb closes his eyes and climaxes.

INT. JOHANNA'S LOFT/BEDROOM - MORNING

Thomas opens his eyes. Speaks.

THOMAS

I have to go.

Johanna tussles awake. Places her head on his chest.

JOHANNA

Why do you have to go?

THOMAS

I have to go to a career counselor.
My father set up the appointment.

JOHANNA

Why don't you just go into
journalism? You ran the High
School newspaper.

THOMAS

It doesn't interest me anymore.
How'd you know that?

JOHANNA

Go into advertising... you won that
award in college.

THOMAS

They don't let you work creatively
until after like five years -- how
do you know all this about me?

JOHANNA

You father has all your awards in
his office.

She goes on to list them by rote.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

Yearbook committee, scored 760 on your verbal SATS, President of the debate club, arts editor of the school newspaper, second singles on the college tennis team... it's all very impressive. Trust me, a girl takes notice.

Thomas lifts her head off his stomach, brings it back for a forceful kiss, then...

THOMAS

Here's something you don't know.
Here's something nobody knows.
I wanted to write.

JOHANNA

Really.

She takes his head onto her chest. Traces his hair line.

THOMAS

I wrote these stupid stories in High school, they weren't really stories, they were more like letters.

JOHANNA

Letters?

THOMAS

But not to people. To concepts. Like; "Dear Death; I know I can't avoid you but I don't want to fear you."

As her fingers trace his eyebrows.

JOHANNA

You would personify abstractions then write letters to them.

THOMAS

Yes. But I tried to make the substance of the letters universal, you know... what we all feel.

JOHANNA

That's cool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS

I wrote over thirty of those letters. I thought they could make a book.

JOHANNA

I think so. Very Mitch Albom, Jack Canfield, point of purchase.

THOMAS

Sophomore year I cleaned them up and showed them to my father.

JOHANNA

And what did Nathan say?

THOMAS

Serviceable.

JOHANNA

Ouch.

Thomas stares at the ceiling. Her fingers trace his ears, his chin, his mouth...

THOMAS

That was the exact word. "Nothing special," he said. "Serviceable." He seemed very angry after reading them. You have to understand, he's very bitter he never made it as a writer.

She leans over and kisses him.

JOHANNA

Well, I love the idea. I'd like to read them right away.

He doesn't kiss back. Just vacantly stares at the ceiling.

THOMAS

I threw them out.

She lays back down. Stares at the same ceiling.

JOHANNA

That's so sad. That's so...

She searches for the right word. And finds it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

... lonely.

INT. THOMAS' APARTMENT - DAY

W.F. sits at Thomas' desk, finishes reading something on printed paper then places it on top of a stack of others.

W.F.

It's excellent.

THOMAS

Really?

W.F.

I especially liked the one you wrote to disconnection... it rang very true for me.

THOMAS

You're only the second person I ever let read them.

W.F.

And what was the word your father used?

THOMAS

Serviceable.

W.F.

They are so much more than that, Thomas. They're introspective and inspired and collective. You could do a whole series.

THOMAS

Johanna wanted to read them but I could never...

It trails off. Then...

W.F.

Right Johanna.
(and then)
Do you feel guilty?

THOMAS

I think I love her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

W.F.

Love is hard to determine, Thomas.
People think they're in love when
it's often something completely
different. Infatuation, the
righting of childhood wrongs,
companionship...

A beat of silence, until...

W.F. (CONT'D)

But I've found a sure way to know.

THOMAS

A litmus test.

W.F.

Right. My litmus test of love.

But that's it. W.F. stops talking. Doesn't want to give
more information. But he kinda does and it's obvious...

So Thomas waits. Doesn't say anything. W.F. capitulates.

W.F. (CONT'D)

Okay, there was a woman I knew.
She was taken by someone else and
he was a very close friend of mine.
I always had a profound connection
with this woman but she was his
girl. I felt I loved her but I
didn't know.

Thomas. All ears.

W.F. (CONT'D)

I needed to find out. But if I did
love her then I would leave. I
would recede from my friends' lives
and essentially disappear.

THOMAS

That seems so drastic.

W.F.

I was younger then. Not much older
than you are now. At that age the
world is cut and dry... you should
know that. That's how your world
is now.

Thomas thinks about it, then answers an earlier question...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS
But I don't feel guilty. That's
not cut or dry.

W.F.
Congratulations, Thomas. Your
world is growing contextual.

Thomas' phone rings. He picks it up.

THOMAS
(into phone)
Hello.

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY

with Nathan.

NATHAN
I need to see you right away.

THOMAS
What? Now? Why?

NATHAN
Seventy-fifth and Columbus. Right
now.

Nathan hangs up.

THOMAS

as he clicks closed his phone.

THOMAS
My father wants to see me right
away... he sounded angry.

W.F.
How exciting.

EXT. WEST 75TH STREET - DAY

Thomas emerges from a cab. Nathan waits for him.

THOMAS
Dad, what is it?

NATHAN
Just follow me.

Nathan walks quickly... with purpose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS
Why did we meet here?

Thomas can barely breath he's so nervous.

NATHAN
You'll see.

As Nathan quickly walks into a building.

INT. EMPTY CONDO - DAY

Nathan and Thomas stand in the middle of a large living room with an expansive Southern view.

NATHAN
Two bedrooms. Doorman building.
Laundry. Equinox next door.
(then)
I want to buy it for you.

Thomas sighs in relief. Then...

THOMAS
I'm happy where I live, Dad.

NATHAN
Damn it, Thomas!

THOMAS
I'm not going to be on suicide
watch for you Dad. Not while you--

It tapers off.

NATHAN
While I what, Thomas?

THOMAS
Nothing.

NATHAN
No, you were about to say
something. Say it... while I what?

And Thomas takes a deep breath -- here goes...

THOMAS
While you...

Can't bring himself to say it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS (CONT'D)
... work so hard and neglect Mom.

Nathan throws up his arms in frustration.

NATHAN
I'm trying here, Thomas. I'm
trying to connect to you.

THOMAS
I don't like the Upper West Side.
I run into all the people I grew up
with. I see all their parents...
all your friends.

NATHAN
What's wrong with those people?
What's wrong with the world I
worked so hard to give you?

THOMAS
Nothing, it's fine. It's...

As Thomas glares at his father.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
... serviceable.

INT. 99 ORCHARD/HALLWAY - DAY

Thomas knocks W.F.'s door. No answer. He knocks a final time then heads back down the hall and passes the hall window with the fire escape for a view. And he stops.

As Thomas ponders the fire escape...

INT. W.F.'S APARTMENT - DAY

Empty. The fire escape covers the South window.

As Thomas comes into view and works the old window. It's not locked, just paint-stuck. Thomas wedges his hand under and forces it up.

As Thomas gains entry and looks around. He heads into the...

BEDROOM

No bed. No dresser. Just a desk and chair. An ashtray filled with cigar butts and roaches. Open bottles of liquor. A small radio against the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A manual typewriter sits on the desk with a few hundred sheets of paper already written on next to it. A manuscript.

Thomas goes to the desk and turns over the manuscript to see the title page.

"The Only Living Boy In New York" By Julian Stellars.

EXT. 99 ORCHARD - NIGHT

W.F. smokes a cigar on the stoop. Admiring the October night. Thomas joins him.

W.F.

Thomas.

Thomas has a seat.

THOMAS

I broke into your apartment today.

W.F.

I know.

THOMAS

I wanted to find out who you were.

W.F.

And did you?

THOMAS

Yes, you're Julian Stellars.

W.F.

Ahh... my nomdeplum.

W.F. looks straight ahead. Smoking his cigar.

THOMAS

The critics love you. You don't have much mass appeal but you don't seem to mind. You've had seventeen books published... all with Bennett which is a respectable house but can't market for shit. People loved your New Yorker short story about the butcher school.

(a beat then finishes up)

You're an intentional underachiever and you teach from time to time at Columbia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

W.F.
I've been Googled.

Thomas confirms with a nod. Silence, then...

THOMAS
I didn't read your new manuscript.
I wouldn't do that without your
permission.

W.F.
Well, Thomas, I appreciate that.

More silence. They just stare out onto the Orchard street.
Until...

THOMAS
Am I the only living boy in New
York?

W.F. stubs out his cigar and stretches. Takes in a fill of
the night air and heads back in. As he goes...

W.F.
Yes.

EXT. JOHANNA'S LOFT - DAY

Thomas sits outside of a bodega reading The Post. He looks
over to Johanna's loft. He holds a collated stack of papers.
The galleys of his "Letters To Life" manuscript.

He dials a number on his cellular and leaves a message.

THOMAS
(into phone)
I'm outside your loft. You're not
home but I have something for you.

Thomas closes his cellular and looks up to see...

JOHANNA AND NATHAN

rounding the corner. Hands full of shopping bags. Laughing.
Heading Thomas' way.

Thomas ducks into the...

BODEGA

as his father walks right for the store. Thomas pretends to
use the ATM as Nathan heads in and over to the counter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN

(to clerk, points)

Let me have a package of those.

It's a small bodega, Thomas has no room to maneuver, he stands right next to his father but his back is turned.

CLERK

The Trojans?

NATHAN

No, the Durex.

The Clerk throws a package of condoms on the counter. As Thomas' face falls into a depressive seethe.

INT. THE PALE FIRE BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

It's like an Aristocrat's library. Big comfy chairs, thick maple molding and stacks and stacks of old books everywhere.

Mimi is closing up. Punching some figures into the register while periodically returning a book to its designated spot.

MIMI

I just didn't understand why you wanted to leave so suddenly.

THOMAS

I was too drunk. I needed to get out of there. Like I said, I'm sorry.

MIMI

It wasn't my affected childhood friend who got married.

THOMAS

Thank you. Thank you for coming with me.

Mimi places a book on the shelf, then turns to face Thomas.

MIMI

Did you sleep with her?

THOMAS

Who?

MIMI

C'mon, Thomas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS
Johanna? Jesus no... how could you
ask that?

MIMI
They left as suddenly as we did.
I'm oblivious but I'm not stupid.

As she pierces him...

THOMAS
Why do you care?

... with those killer blue eyes.

MIMI
I just do.

THOMAS
Are you jealous?

MIMI
Did you sleep with her, Thomas,
it's a simple question?

THOMAS
No. She's my father's mis-- do you
think I'd do that?

She turns away. Grabs her keys.

MIMI
Of course not. You're sweet.
You're not like them.

THOMAS
Like who?

As they leave...

MIMI
This whole city.

EXT. LUDLOW STREET - NIGHT

Mimi and Thomas walk.

THOMAS
Have you heard anything about
Croatia?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI

Not yet.

THOMAS

And you really want to go?

Thomas looks across the street to a construction site. Pasted on the scaffold are those posters for the Met exhibit... the one with the picture of Rodin's "Hand Of God."

MIMI

Why Thomas? Do you not want me to go?

Thomas doesn't answer. He stops, holds on the "Hand Of God." Mimi stops with him and sucks in a gulp of the crisp night.

MIMI (CONT'D)

You wanna get a drink?

As Thomas snaps back...

THOMAS

Can't.

She bites her lip as she turns to look at him...

MIMI

Do you have a date, Thomas Webb?

THOMAS

Yes.

MIMI

Is she prettier than me?

THOMAS

Yes.

And she looks at him for a long time. Different than she has in the past. There's a new sparkle in her eyes.

MIMI

You like this -- don't you?

THOMAS

Yes.

AND JOHANNA

naked, flushed, determined, on top. Lurching forward and upward. Clutching the sheets tightly as she thrusts once more. And now she's satisfied.

She lies her head down on Thomas' chest.

THOMAS
You lied to me.

JOHANNA
I did?

THOMAS
Irwin Rosenthal isn't gay.

JOHANNA
Who told you that?

THOMAS
I asked a few old friends.

As Johanna kisses his chest lightly.

JOHANNA
That's what he wants people to think. Look, I don't care if you believe me or not.

THOMAS
Because you don't care about anything.

JOHANNA
What?

THOMAS
You obviously don't care about anything at all. My mother. Me.

JOHANNA
You're saying I'm a nihilist.

THOMAS
I don't know what that word means.

JOHANNA
It means someone who doesn't care about anything.

Thomas turns away from her. Almost ashamed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

I saw you yesterday. I saw you
with him.

JOHANNA

Your father?

THOMAS

Yes.

JOHANNA

You're stalking me. You're turning
into "that guy."

THOMAS

I want you to stop seeing him...

JOHANNA

Jesus...

THOMAS

... and start seeing me.

JOHANNA

Thomas...

Johanna climbs over Thomas in order to look into his eyes.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

I don't like "that guy." None of
us do. He creeps us out.

She collapses. They both lay on their backs. Side by side.

THOMAS

I don't even know anything about
you. Where did you grow up?

JOHANNA

Here.

THOMAS

Where did you go to school?

JOHANNA

Spence.

THOMAS

When did you first have sex?

She leans up and stares at him incredulously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHANNA

What the fuck? You want to know about my childhood? I grew up in this city -- just like you... I grew up jaded by one premature experience after another.

She lies back down. They lay in silence, until finally...

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

Fifteen.

More silence...

THOMAS

Why do you sleep with me?

JOHANNA

Because I like you.

THOMAS

What do you like about me?

She thinks about it for a beat.

JOHANNA

Your innocence.

THOMAS

Were you ever innocent?

JOHANNA

I forgot.

THOMAS

No, you didn't. Tell me... tell me about when you were innocent.

JOHANNA

Why, Thomas?

THOMAS

Because I like the idea of it.

JOHANNA

If you want someone who is so pure, then why are you with me?

THOMAS

Because I...

He's about to say love but stops short. Settles on...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Care about you.

They lie in silence. Until...

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Do you? Do you care about me?

JOHANNA
I don't care about anyone, Thomas,
remember?

They both look up to the ceiling, until...

THOMAS
I wish I knew you then. When you
were innocent.

And this resonates with her. Makes her angry.
As she gets up... covers herself with the sheet.

JOHANNA
See Thomas, that's the problem with
men. You all want to fall in love
with Elaine Robinson...
(and then)
... but you just end up fucking her
mother.

EXT. AVE A - NIGHT

W.F. and Thomas enjoy a brisk night stroll through the dodgy-
cum-hipster streets of Alphabet City.

W.F.
It's a reference from "The
Graduate."

THOMAS
I don't understand her. Why isn't
she... softer?

W.F.
Thomas, people are not always clean
and happy. People are layered and
wounded and fragile.

THOMAS
Do you think Johanna is any of
those?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

W.F.

I quite sure she's all of those.

Thomas just stares at W.F. for a long beat, then...

THOMAS

Your litmus test.

W.F. stops.

W.F.

Yes, I didn't finish. My litmus test of love.

W.F. lights up a cigar. Resumes his earlier reminiscence.

W.F. (CONT'D)

If I knew for sure that I was in love with Karen then I would disconnect her and Benny from my life. The thing is... I had no idea if I really loved her or not.

W.F. starts walking again. Thomas at his side.

W.F. (CONT'D)

It happened by accident actually. You know the fountain in Washington Square Park?

Thomas does. W.F. remembers fondly...

W.F. (CONT'D)

It was a very clear night with the kind full moon you could read by. We stopped at that fountain. There were a few people milling about but it was basically ours. And I asked her to dance.

THOMAS

To dance?

W.F.

Yes. There was no music but we danced there. And it came to me. It was so clear. I loved her.

THOMAS

So your litmus test requires a visit to Washington Square Park.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

W.F.

By a bright moon, yes.

They walk in silence. Thomas digesting it. Then...

THOMAS

And Karen?

W.F.

That was the last night I ever talked to her.

THOMAS

How long ago was this?

W.F.

Eighteen days...

Thomas stops, looks at him.

W.F. (CONT'D)

... four months and twenty two years.

INT. THE WEBB RIVERSIDE DRIVE BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

A dinner party of about sixteen with familiar faces. Thomas sits at the head of the table.

GEORGE

Boss Tweed took care of his constituents, he was a fall guy.

DAVID

He was a crook. A dirty criminal. He robbed the city dry.

Thomas looks across the table to where his father sits. Nathan looks distracted. Impatiently playing with his food.

GEORGE

And Robert Moses--

DAVID

Robert Moses gave us that beautiful park across the street. Robert Moses built this city.

GEORGE

He was an egomaniac.

Barbara chimes in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BARBARA

Did anybody read Seymour Hersh's
scathing satirical piece on the new
designs for Lincoln Center?

Anna picks it up...

ANNA

Isn't the new architect from India?
Because I saw this wonderful
documentary on outsourcing.

Nathan bangs his fist on table.

NATHAN

I can't take it!

Everybody quiets and looks over to Nathan.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

This dinner party has been recycled
a thousand times over. Doesn't
anybody see that?

Nathan stands. Circles the table.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

George and David's perpetual
argument over Boss Tweed versus
Robert Moses. Barbara's constant
references to the current New
Yorker. Anna's claims to have read
or watched whatever was hawked on
Charlie Rose the night before.

Judith stands, puts a comforting hand on Nathan's arm.

JUDITH

Darling... what's wrong?

Nathan swipes away her arm.

NATHAN

This! We're all dying... dying.
And to ease the pain we eat
together and talk about things that
we think are important.

JUDITH

You need to lay down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NATHAN

No! I need to get out of here.

Nathan announces to the group of shocked party guests.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry but this isn't working anymore.

Thomas looks on wide-eyed as Nathan storms out.
And Judith... shaking... apologizing... mortified.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Judith chain smokes. She's in a state.

JUDITH

He hasn't been eating. He's stopped reading at night. He just stares at the wall. I think we should cancel the Kenta-Webb anniversary party.

Tears in her eyes.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

I'm the sick one. Not him.

Thomas just stands there. Paralyzed.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

And I think he's in love with someone else.

THOMAS

Mom, don't be ridicules.

JUDITH

It's true. We try to protect our children from our limitations but... You're old enough now.

Thomas sucks in an uncomfortable breath. Then...

THOMAS

Mom, do you read in the Starbucks on Ninety-fourth?

JUDITH

Yes, why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

It seems weird. This is a big house. Why don't you read here?

JUDITH

They have good coffee.

THOMAS

You just don't seem like one of those people whose apartments close in on them every night so they end up at Starbucks.

JUDITH

Well, sometimes a big place is even worse.

Judith shakily lights another cigarette off her last.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

I won't make it. Without him, I won't make it.

Thomas moves toward his mother, trying to be comforting.

THOMAS

Mom, don't talk like that.

Crying now.

JUDITH

Don't you see... it's all falling apart.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

W.F. and Thomas stand under the first storied arch. Manhattan twinkles to one side, Brooklyn to the other. It's late, no people. W.F. chomps on his cigar.

W.F.

Do you think he's in love with her?

THOMAS

I'm in love with her.

W.F.

Is he?

As Thomas stops and ponders the illuminated dotted skyline.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

I think so.

W.F.

You and your father are suffering
from the same disease.

THOMAS

Johanna.

They resume their stroll.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

How come you're writing about me?

W.F.

Because that's what I do. I write
about people I know and thinly veil
it by giving them different names
and professions.

THOMAS

But why me?

W.F.

Because your story interests me.
Look, I got the apartment to get
out of the house and write this
completely other story but it just
didn't come across.

Thomas looks back over to W.F.

THOMAS

And mine did.

W.F.

Yes. Like everything good, it
happened by accident. I had
writer's block. I met you. Now, I
have three hundred and nine pages.

Thomas accepts that. They walk in silence, until...

THOMAS

My father's publishing house is
throwing an anniversary party
tomorrow night... will you come?

W.F.

Why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS

You've heard about all these people
but you've never met them. It'll
help your book. It's a hot event.
Will you come?

W.F.

I don't know.

Thomas walks off into the night...

THOMAS

I'll leave the invitation at your
door.

EXT. MIMI'S LOWER EAST SIDE WALK-UP - NIGHT

A cab pulls up out in front of the old tenement building and
waits. Dressed down but done up, Mimi emerges and runs out
to the cab.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Mimi gets in and smiles to Thomas. No greeting, no words,
just a smile. They ride in silence. Until...

Mimi takes his hand, kisses him on the cheek.

MIMI

You look nice.

And she doesn't let go of his hand.

THOMAS

I thought you never turn.

She whispers into his ear.

MIMI

We only turn when you turn away.
It's maddening.

As he looks out the window.

THOMAS

Then we're never looking at each
other.

INT. THE RAINBOW ROOM - NIGHT

At the top of Rockefeller Plaza. The view is incredible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mimi and Thomas step out of the elevator into the swinging event. The literati energy buzzing palpable.

Commerce meets art. Some are in longhairs in Chuck Taylors while others are polished in Prada. The kind of party where poignant philosophical debates occupy the same table as superficial book deals.

Everybody's drunk. Everybody's table-hoping. Everybody's fabulous. A quiet jazz band provides the music.

Judith and Nathan hold court with some of the partygoers. Thomas stops and looks at them. Mimi at his side.

MIMI

They look so happy.

THOMAS

Doesn't everyone here?

Mimi looks around smiles. This is her vibe.

JUDITH

Thomas. Mimi.

Thomas and Mimi join his parent's group.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

You remember David Remnick.

They join the conversation while Nathan throws on a plastic smile and goes to greet another partygoer.

Thomas takes in the party... sees a familiar face at the bar. Heads over to it.

W.F. GERALD

swirls his Scotch around in the glass as he stands next to the bar... in the shadows... out of everybody's eyesight.

THOMAS

Thanks for coming.

W.F.

It's a great party.

THOMAS

It always is. There's Mimi talking with my mother.

Thomas points over to Mimi. W.F. takes them in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

W.F.
She's beautiful.

THOMAS
I told you she was.

W.F.
I was talking about your mother.

AND JUDITH

talking to a circle of partygoers with Mimi in it. She's put on a healthy face, full of life, entertaining them all with some story. Thomas joins and waits patiently.

Judith finishes. Thomas grabs her attention.

THOMAS
I want you to meet someone.

He leads both his mother and Mimi toward the bar.

JUDITH
Who are we meeting, Thomas?

As Thomas arrives at the bar. Looks around.

THOMAS
My new friend.

W.F. is nowhere to be found.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
He was just here.

Judith sees someone she knows and heads to greet them.

JUDITH
We'll meet him later, Dear.

Thomas is left with Mimi.

THOMAS
He was just here.

As Mimi simply shrugs.

AND JOHANNA

martini in her hand... alone... pondering the buildings below that line 5th avenue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Somebody now stands at her side.

W.F.

"I have looked down upon the city
from high windows. It is then that
the great buildings lose reality
and take on magical powers.
Squares and squares of flame set
and cut into the ether. Here's our
poetry... for we have pulled down
the stars to our will."

Johanna turns. Faces him.

JOHANNA

That's very beautiful. Is it
yours?

W.F.

Ezra Pound.

JOHANNA

I'm Johanna.

W.F.

Ahh, Johanna. Yes, I assumed it
was you.

JOHANNA

Have we met?

W.F.

No but I know you very well.

W.F. looks right at her. Piercing.

W.F. (CONT'D)

You're every girl I've ever loved
and every girl that's ever rejected
me.

JOHANNA

This conversation is growing
strange.

His piercing eyes. Even tone. Dead serious...

W.F.

I know you're having your fun.
He's young and he's easy. But
you'll have me to deal with if he
scars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Johanna's face forms a plastic smile. She speaks through it.

JOHANNA

I don't like strange conversations
so I'm going to walk away now.

Johanna slowly walks away from W.F. who watches her every graceful step.

INT. THE RAINBOW ROOM - LATER

Mimi talks with a FEMALE AUTHOR she admires as Thomas takes in the whole party. Mimi grabs him into a hug and kisses him on the lips. A quick one. It catches him off guard.

MIMI

I just met J.T. Leroy. This is so
much fun.

AND THOMAS

admiring her youthful giddiness. Drinking in its intoxication. As she takes him by the hand.

MIMI

Dance with me, Thomas Webb.

THOMAS

Nobody's dancing.

She leads him in front of the band.

MIMI

I know.

And they dance to a slow number. Swaying back and forth in good cadence with each other. She whispers into his ear.

MIMI (CONT'D)

How long have you wanted me?

THOMAS

Since the moment you recommended
"Taps At Reveille."

MIMI

That was the day we met.

Thomas slowly confirms this. Then...

THOMAS

Are you going to Croatia?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI

Do you want me to stay?

She stops dancing.

MIMI (CONT'D)

I'll stay, Thomas.

And she kisses him. This time it's a longer one.

MIMI (CONT'D)

If you want me to.

Thomas looks to Mimi but over her shoulder... standing alone... staring right at them... Johanna.

Thomas locks eyes with Johanna, then back to Mimi.

THOMAS

You have to excuse me.

Thomas breaks their embrace. Leaves a confused and hurt Mimi. Walks quickly toward Johanna... and past her.

As he passes.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I need to talk to you.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Johanna follows Thomas in.

JOHANNA

I have to talk to you as well.

THOMAS

You're destroying my family.

He glares at her.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

What happened to you? Somewhere in your life, you... I don't know, lost your way. Why are you so...

It trails off. Until...

JOHANNA

Yes, Thomas?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

Inhuman.

JOHANNA

Maybe I didn't lose my way -- maybe
I had it taken from me.

THOMAS

You were... abused.

She looks away and slowly nods.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

And she cracks into a smile. And laughs.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Is something funny?

JOHANNA

Yes. You, Thomas. Your clichéd
world. Your black and white
existence. Your seat in the first
row of psychology one-o-one and
your hand raised so excitedly.

THOMAS

You weren't abused.

JOHANNA

No, Thomas. But I've been
overcharged before so maybe that's
why I don't wear white.

He glares at her. Hurt.

THOMAS

Fuck you.

JOHANNA

I am who I am.

He moves toward her -- determined.

THOMAS

I want you out of our lives. I
thought I loved you but you can't
be loved.

(and then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THOMAS (CONT'D)

You're sick and you lie and you seduce and God made a mistake when he made you beautiful.

JOHANNA

Are you finished?

He takes a breath, thinks about it, then...

THOMAS

Yes.

JOHANNA

I'm sorry you feel that way.

THOMAS

Well, I do.

As Johanna lets out a superficial sigh...

JOHANNA

Well, you surely won't be the first little boy who hates his stepmother.

THOMAS

What?

JOHANNA

That's right, Thomas. Your father and I are to get married. He proposed to me yesterday.

Thomas violently shakes his head.

THOMAS

No, he's going through a mid-life crises. You're a symptom... you're not permanent.

JOHANNA

But I am. He's leaving your mother. That's why he wants you to live closer to home.

Thomas stands in shock.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

It was his decision. See, despite everything...

She draws in a long drag. Then...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JOHANNA (CONT'D)

I can be loved.

THOMAS

What do you think is going to happen? That you guys are going to get married, have the obligatory second family and live happily ever after?

JOHANNA

Well, that obviously can't happen.

THOMAS

What is that supposed to mean?

JOHANNA

Think about it.

He stands there, very befuddled.

THOMAS

You're infertile?

And she says it very slowly.

JOHANNA

No.

Johanna turns to go but Thomas grabs her by the arm... turns her back around.

THOMAS

I'll tell him about us. I'll tell him everything!

JOHANNA

I don't think you have the balls, Let's face it... you're not your father.

As she rips away from his grasp...

INT. THE RAINBOW ROOM - NIGHT

Thomas returns to the party. He looks across the room to see his mother being introduced to Johanna by another guest.

And Thomas Webb can't take it anymore.

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT

Thomas rushes out of the building. Quickly walks down 5th Avenue. In the light drizzle of rain.

Mimi emerges from the building and runs after him.

MIMI
Thomas! Thomas!

He stops and turns.

MIMI (CONT'D)
It's raining.

He nods. They hold the moment.

MIMI (CONT'D)
And I think I'm falling in love
with you.

THOMAS
Shopenhauer was right, Mimi.
Nothing we do matters.

MIMI
It's not true, Thomas.

She steps toward him.

THOMAS
I slept with her. I slept with
Johanna.

Mimi stands still. In the rain. As her face washes white...

MIMI
No.

THOMAS
And I thought I loved her.

MIMI
No. Thomas... your not like that.
You're good.

THOMAS
No, Mimi, I'm not good. I'm
just...

And it trails off... and it rains... and she stands there...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Crushed, Mimi just looks at him. Tears being washed down her face from the rain. And she turns around and runs.

Thomas takes in a breath, then...

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Mimi... wait.

He runs after her. Runs in the rain down 5th Avenue and catches her, turns her around.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Mimi, you're all I wanted.

Her mascara running down her face.

MIMI
Let me go! I thought you were someone else. But you're just like them.

THOMAS
Mimi, please...

MIMI
They've won, Thomas... they've bankrupted you.

She rips away from him, flags down a cab.

And he lets her go.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

Under the light rain, Thomas walks into the park.

And he walks. And it rains. And he walks.

Until Thomas stops. He stops and simply stands there... and lets the sky piss down on him.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - MORNING

Thomas awakens on a bench. As he stands and stretches.

INT. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM - MORNING

Wet and dirty, Thomas stares at Rodin's "Hand Of God." He doesn't move. As a TOUR GUIDE brings through a group of about fifteen CHILDREN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOUR GUIDE

Rodin had a deep knowledge of the art of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

(a beat)

People have debated since its creation whether this hand of God is coddling the man and woman or whether it's about to squeeze them.

Thomas loudly exclaims.

THOMAS

It's about to squeeze them.

TOUR GUIDE

Well, that's the debate.

Thomas turns to the group of children...

THOMAS

No debate... it's about to squeeze the shit out of them.

Tour Guide regards Thomas then smiles over to her group...

TOUR GUIDE

Okay, let's move on to the French Impressionists.

INT. WEBB'S RIVERSIDE DRIVE BROWNSTONE/KITCHEN - DAY

Judith smokes. She's frantic.

JUDITH

He left early this morning. He said he had to get some files from the office.

THOMAS

I need to talk to him.

Judith regards her son.

JUDITH

What's going on, Thomas?

THOMAS

Nothing, Mom. I just need his advice on something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDITH
Father, son stuff?

THOMAS
Right.

This makes her smile.

JUDITH
I've planned a trip to Grand
Caymen. He needs it. He's most at
peace when he's diving.

THOMAS
I don't know if that--

She interrupts her son.

JUDITH
Oh, but don't tell him... I want it
to be a surprise.

She's giddy with her plan. Thomas capitulates to her mania.

THOMAS
I won't, Mom.

EXT. KENTA-WEBB OFFICES - DAY

Thomas stands with a SECURITY GUARD outside the offices.

SECURITY GUARD
It's Sunday.

THOMAS
I know but I think my father came
in to get some files.

SECURITY GUARD
I'll have to escort you in.

INT. NATHAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Thomas stands with the Guard. Nobody is in the office. Thomas walks over to the desk. He looks at the pictures on it. Pictures taken throughout the years of Nathan and Judith. And pictures of Thomas from baby to present.

And he looks over to a corkboard wall where there are articles on Kenta-Webb and its rise within the publishing world. And Thomas' accomplishments and awards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECURITY GUARD

I gotta lock up.

Transfixed, Thomas slowly nods. But he sees something in one of the pictures. He takes it off the board and looks at it intensely. We now see it.

THOMAS WINNING A TENNIS MATCH IN HIGH SCHOOL

A long shot of him throwing his racket up in the air after hitting the winning point. And in the crowd, behind Thomas, stands W.F. Gerald. Younger but it's clearly him.

Shocked, Thomas shoves the picture in his pocket.

INT. 99 ORCHARD STREET/HALLWAY - DAY

Thomas bangs on W.F.'s door. No answer.

THOMAS

Where the fuck are you?

He kicks it. Kicks again. Asks a different question.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Who the fuck are you?

EXT. JOHANNA'S SPRING STREET LOFT - DAY

Thomas frantically rings the button. As the door buzzes.

INT. JOHANNA'S SPRING STREET LOFT/HALLWAY - DAY

Thomas bangs on the door. It opens. Nathan stands there.

NATHAN

Thomas, come in.

INT. JOHANNA'S LOFT - DAY

Nathan leads Thomas in.

THOMAS

Dad, I can explain how I knew you were here.

NATHAN

There's no need. I know everything.

THOMAS

You know everything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN
I'm sorry to drag you through this.

THOMAS
What did she say?

NATHAN
You shouldn't have had to find out
that way.

THOMAS
What did she say?

Nathan sighs and has a seat.

NATHAN
She told me you saw us. And that
you followed her and asked her to
stop seeing me. I'm not angry at
you, Thomas.

Thomas laughs.

THOMAS
You're not angry at me? You're not
angry at me? What else did she
say?

NATHAN
That you're hurt. That you're
worried about your mother.

And Thomas looks over to the kitchen where Johanna stands.

JOHANNA
Hello, Thomas.

THOMAS
Did she tell you we slept together?
Did she tell you that she seduced
me at the Metropolitan Museum and
took me back here and slept with
me?

Nathan sadly shakes his head...

NATHAN
I understand this hurts you.

THOMAS
It's true.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NATHAN
Please... Thomas.

Thomas steps forward. Steely determined. Says it again.

THOMAS
It's true.

NATHAN
No, Thomas, it's not. It can't be true.

Thomas just stands there. Silence. An uncomfortable one.

JOHANNA
Can I offer you a Poland Springs,
Thomas?

Thomas just looks at her. She shrugs.

JOHANNA (CONT'D)
It's cold.

He regards her a moment then looks back to his father.

THOMAS
Why not? Why can't it be true?

NATHAN
I don't think she'd do that to me
and I know you wouldn't.

THOMAS
Well, we did. Six times.

Nathan looks to Johanna who grimaces as if Thomas is so delusional that she actually feels sorry for him.

NATHAN
C'mon, Thomas. Let it go. Look,
it can't be true because...

And Nathan's thought trails off.

THOMAS
Finish it. What were you going to
say?

NATHAN
Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THOMAS
Finish it. "It can't be true
because... because...

Nathan simply sighs.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Because... I could never get a girl
like Johanna."

NATHAN
I didn't say that.

THOMAS
But it's how you think.

And as he lets himself out...

THOMAS (CONT'D)
And that's so fucking sad.

INT. 99 ORCHARD/HALLWAY - NIGHT

Thomas bangs on W.F.'s door. No answer.

INT. W.F.'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Empty, until that window off the fire escape opens and Thomas
heads in, makes his way to the...

BEDROOM

which is empty. No desk or typewriter or manuscript or
anything. Completely empty.

INT. MIMI'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Mimi lets him in. Her stuff is all scattered about with a
few suitcases opened. She's packing.

MIMI
(re: suitcases)
Helmut said yes.

THOMAS
Don't go.

She frenetically packs. Never to look up at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIMI

Thomas, you have issues... granted we all do... but I think yours may need some immediate consideration.

THOMAS

No, Mimi--

MIMI

Croatia is a great opportunity for me and I really need to get off of Manhattan.

THOMAS

When do you go?

MIMI

Tonight.

THOMAS

Tonight? This is crazy. This is-- what about what you said?

MIMI

What did I say?

THOMAS

That you loved me.

MIMI

Well, Thomas, I don't know if I do anymore... or if I ever even did.

He takes a beat. Takes a breath. Then...

THOMAS

I love you.

She keeps packing. Not looking back at him.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I love you.

MIMI

I heard you, Thomas.
(and with a sigh)
But I'm still going to Croatia.

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE — DAY

Thomas heads down 83rd street. He reaches his home. He rings the bell. No answer. He reaches into his pocket for his keys.

INT. WEBB RIVERSIDE BROWNSTONE — DAY

Thomas wanders through the home.

THOMAS
Mom... hello... Mom.

And when he gets into the kitchen, he stops cold.

JUDITH WEBB

crouched on the floor. Shaking. Weeping.

THOMAS
Mom...

JUDITH
(crying)
Oh, Thomas.

He scans the counter, for knives... for empty pill bottles.

THOMAS
Mom. I'm so sorry. We're going to
make it through this.

And she cries out...

JUDITH
Why, Thomas? Why?

THOMAS
It's okay. I'm here for you.

JUDITH
But they were real.

THOMAS
I'll move back in, I'll-- what?

JUDITH
They were real Warhols, damn it!

As she shakily gets to her feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDITH (CONT'D)

How dare they? How dare they claim
they weren't authentic?

And it washes over Thomas.

THOMAS

That's what this is about?

Her makeup smeared all over her face. Horror in her eyes.

JUDITH

How dare they?

EXT. THE CONDE NAST BUILDING/LOBBY- DAY

Thomas greets ARI WOLF, Thomas' age, in the manse foyer of 4
Times Square.

ARI

Thomas. I was surprised when my
receptionist told me you were here
to see me.

THOMAS

I know, it's been awhile.

They walk to a coffee stand.

ARI

Riverdale.

Ari orders. Thomas waits. Then...

ARI (CONT'D)

How can I help you?

THOMAS

I'm at Kenta now.

ARI

Working for Dad.

THOMAS

Yeah... anyway we're interested in
a writer who is with Bennett that
you interviewed last year.

Ari sips his coffee.

ARI

Ahh... Julian Stellars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

No address on the guy or anything.

Ari heads back toward the elevator bank. Thomas with him.

ARI

His real name is W.F. Gerald.

THOMAS

I know. I got nothing.

Ari calls for the elevator.

ARI

I can't tell you where he lives,
Thomas, that'd be unethical.

THOMAS

Unethical? Ari, you used to steal
your mother's Valium and sell them
to Sophomores.

Ari smiles, the elevator doors open and he gets in.

ARI

I really can't. But listen,
there's a bar in Williamsburg
called "The Red Lion." Have a
drink there.

As the doors close.

ARI (CONT'D)

Have a few.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

Thomas waits for the train. He scans down the black tunnel.
Nothing but the still darkness. Then he sees something on
the track... a mouse.

Then another and another. As the mice scurry from the tunnel
and disburse to both sides.

THOMAS

Train's coming.

Just then he looks down the tunnel to see the headlights.

INT. THE RED LION - NIGHT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A small dark neighborhood bar. Thomas heads in, looks around. The obligatory alcoholics with their tired eyes.

Thomas checks his watch, spies a "Golden Tee" machine, orders a beer and gets change. He grabs his beer and makes his way to the machine.

As Thomas fills the machine with quarters, he can't but help notice the man painted with TATOOS staring.

This man may want to kill him.

INT. RED LION - LATER

Thomas and Tattoos are rapt in the game.

TATTOOS
I should use a three wood here.

THOMAS
Too much club, look at the wind.

Thomas looks away from the machine to see W.F. head in and take a seat at the bar. The bartender doesn't have to ask what he wants, just drops it down.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
He's here.

Tattoos looks over to W.F. then shakes Thomas' hand.

TATOOS
Good luck, my man.

W.F.

blankly stares ahead at the muted TV droning sports highlights. Drinks his drink. In his world. Until...

THOMAS
Did you finish it?

W.F. turns to Thomas. Smiles.

W.F.
Yes. I did.

THOMAS
You didn't say goodbye.

W.F.
I should've never said hello.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

Why?

W.F. lets out a deep sigh, knows where this is going to go...

W.F.

Because it wouldn't be fair.

THOMAS

To Karen and Benny?

Thomas slides over the picture of him winning the tennis match, W.F. looks down at the picture with no expression.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Tell me about "The Only Living Boy
In New York."

W.F. nods in an order for another round.

W.F.

It's about three people. Two
artists and a beautiful woman. One
of the artists has talent and the
other doesn't. No matter how hard
he tries, no matter how badly he
wants it... he just wasn't kissed
by God in that way.

THOMAS

But he has the girl.

W.F.

Yes, they're married and they plan
to start a family... only they have
a little problem.

As the bartender places down the drinks.

THOMAS

He's infertile and they ask their
talented friend for help.

W.F.

You've a knack for story, Thomas.

And Thomas pierces the look right at W.F.

THOMAS

I get it from my father.

W.F. lets it hang, until...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

W.F.

Well, the story takes place in the seventies and they don't use invitro fertilization in those days. They use a cheap bottle of Cabernet and a Van Morrison record.

THOMAS

And the husband's on board?

W.F.

They want someone they know.
Someone they love.

W.F. takes a swig of his drink. Continues...

W.F. (CONT'D)

Of course this artist... the one with the talent, he's flattered. Of course he agrees.

(and then)

He and the girl walk the city for hours that night. Both of them so nervous. They end up at Washington Square Park, they dance to no music and then the rest comes easy.

THOMAS

And that's where he realizes he loves her. At the fountain in Washington Square.

W.F.

Yes, Thomas, you've figured it all out.

After W.F. finishes his drink.

W.F. (CONT'D)

So the couple gives birth to a wonderful son. The husband gives up art and becomes a very successful art dealer. And they fall into Upper-Manhattan and all that means.

THOMAS

And the other artist?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

W.F.

He sees critical success, never marries, takes on many lovers but never love. He watches the boy grow from a far, sees his talent alive with-in this child.

W.F. takes a breath. Lights a cigar. The bartender slides over an ashtray from under the "No Smoking" sign.

W.F. (CONT'D)

And he so desperately wants to connect with his son. To tell him everything, to show the boy his genetic gift... to teach him how to use it.

(and then)

But of course... he never does make contact.

THOMAS

Until?

W.F.

Until he does something selfish. Until he decides it's all going to be his next book.

THOMAS

I thought he was an artist?

W.F.

He is, Thomas... I'm not. Like I said... thinly veiled.

THOMAS

So he contacts his son.

W.F.

Yes, actually moves in next-door. To write this story. His story.

And W.F. Gerald, aka Julian Stellars, looks right at Thomas... looks right at his son.

W.F. (CONT'D)

Your story.

EXT. LOWER BROADWAY - NIGHT

Thomas walks. It rains. He stops and looks at the city. Ponders it. It all thinks it's so important.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Thomas looks up at a poster on a scaffold for that exhibit at the Met. The poster with Rodin's "Hand Of God".

As the rain falls down on him... as his eyes narrow in on it...

THOMAS

So it has come to this...

And he just stands there. Just staring at the picture...

INT. 99 ORCHARD/THOMAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Darkness. Then a loud KNOCK. Thomas turns on the lights and moves to the door.

THOMAS

Who is it?

NATHAN

Thomas.

Thomas opens the door but doesn't let him in.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

You need to get uptown.

THOMAS

Did you tell her?

Nathan looks spent... completely exhausted.

NATHAN

She found out.

As Thomas quickly gets dressed.

THOMAS

How?

NATHAN

Rene Bradford told her, it's a long story. I called the police, I'm afraid she might try--

Thomas is already out the door. Heading down the...

HALLWAY

THOMAS

Jesus.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN

I'd go but... I don't think it'll help.

And Thomas turns to face Nathan...

THOMAS

I agree... Dad.

With that, Thomas bounds down the stairs.

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - NIGHT

Thomas runs in the rain from the subway down Broadway.

EXT. WEBB RIVERSIDE DRIVE BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Thomas runs around the corner. Stops on the dime. Ambulances scream outside of his parents brownstone.

And Thomas sees his mother on the stretcher being carted off into the ambulance. She is unconscious and has an oxygen mask on her face. The sight is crippling.

As Thomas falls to his knees. His tears being washed away by the rain.

INT. ST LUKES HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Nathan greets Thomas in the waiting room.

THOMAS

They pumped her stomach. She's going to live.

Exhausted and emotionally drained, Nathan sits, throws his head in his hands.

NATHAN

What was I supposed to do? Keep living a lie? Allow myself to be hijacked by her threats of this?

Thomas stares blankly ahead.

THOMAS

No.

NATHAN

I wasn't in love with her anymore. You have to answer to love, Thomas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

I agree. Just make sure Johanna
loves you before you marry her.

Nathan looks up.

NATHAN

I think she does.

Thomas nods and heads for the door.

THOMAS

You might want to ask her about
Irwin Rosenthal.

NATHAN

What's that suppose to mean?
Thomas?

Thomas just keeps walking.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Where the hell are you going?

Without looking back.

THOMAS

To answer to love.

And with that, Thomas is gone.

EXT. MIDTOWN - NIGHT

Pouring rain. Thomas tries to hail a cab but they're all
filled. And he starts to run. Through midtown...

And Thomas runs... through the Las Vegas of Times Square...
and it rains... on the charm of Chelsea... and Thomas runs...
through the thin doglegs of the West Village... and it
rains... on the multicolored fire escapes of The East
Village... and Thomas runs... into the immigrant-cum-hipster
miasma of the Lower East Side. And Thomas finally stops.

EXT. MIMI'S WALK-UP - NIGHT

Thomas frantically hits the buzzer. Mimi appears.

MIMI

Thomas, what are you doing?

THOMAS

Mimi!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thomas looks up at the rain clouds yielding to the full moon.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Will you walk with me?

As she steps out onto the stoop.

MIMI
My flight leaves in two hours.

THOMAS
I'm not perfect Mimi. I didn't
even know who I was until tonight.
I was hurt that you wouldn't have
me and shocked that she would.

As he catches his breath.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
The world isn't black and white,
it's gray. It's gray, Mimi.

MIMI
Okay, Thomas. It's okay.

Thomas looks up to the sky.

THOMAS
It's not raining anymore.

She nods.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
And I love you.

He offers his hand.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Will you come with me?

As she takes it.

MIMI
Where?

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK/FOUNTAIN - NIGHT

A moon so bright you could read by it.

AS MIMI AND THOMAS

dance by the fountain... to no music.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

It's a test, Mimi. A litmus test.
To know if you're in love.

She bites her lip, looks into his eyes.

MIMI

And are you, Thomas?

THOMAS

This test wasn't for me.

She nods... slight but determined. And she slowly kisses him. And he kisses her back.

As they continue to dance by the light of the moon...

INT. ROLLING ACRES CENTER FOR WELL BEING/JUDITH'S ROOM - DAY

We're in an inpatient center. A nice one. The room is comfortable and private. Time has past.

Judith lies in her bed and reads. A hard copy of "The Only Living Boy In New York." A knock on the door.

Thomas slowly heads in. Judith puts down the book.

THOMAS

Hi Mom.

JUDITH

Thomas...

She's obviously medicated.

THOMAS

I brought somebody. Remember that friend I wanted you to meet.

Thomas opens the door to reveal.

W.F. GERALD

holding a bouquet of flowers. Nervous as hell.

JUDITH

Walter.

W.F.

Judith.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMAS

Walter?

W.F. brings the flowers over.

W.F.

That's what the "W" stands for.

Judith holds out both hands. W.F. takes them.

JUDITH

Oh, Walter, it's been so long.
I haven't been well.

W.F.

But Thomas said you're getting
better.

She dotes on her son...

JUDITH

He's a good boy.

Thomas leans against the door.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

I've read every one of your books.
They're all terrific except
"Remembering Kyla." I hated the
ending of that one.

W.F. accepts that. And Judith whispers...

JUDITH (CONT'D)

I had to go to Starbucks to read
them so Nathan wouldn't see.

And she holds up his newest.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

Walter, you've finally found an
mass audience.

She turns to the door.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

Thomas-- ?

But Thomas isn't there. He's slipped out of the room.

JUDITH (CONT'D)

He seems to have left us alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

With a smile...

W.F.
Yes, he has.

EXT. BRYANT PARK - DUSK

Thomas walks through the park. With confidence, he greets...

NATHAN
Thanks for meeting me here.

Nathan is dressed down, looks like shit, unshaved.

THOMAS
Did you find an apartment yet?

They walk.

NATHAN
I just looked at something on
Allen.

THOMAS
The Lower East Side?

NATHAN
It's affordable. Your mother's
lawyer's a maniac. They've frozen
almost everything.

Nathan produces the "The Only Living Boy In New York."

NATHAN (CONT'D)
People are reading fiction again.

THOMAS
What do you think of it?

With a defeated sigh...

NATHAN
Riveting, brilliant, accessible...

THOMAS
My book is getting published.

NATHAN
I know. Someone slid me the
galleys. I loved the letter you
wrote to loss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Nathan stops and takes a breath.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

I'm selfish, Thomas. It's how I became so successful. But you should know... I loved you. I just didn't like you very much.

THOMAS

I know.

NATHAN

It was his talent. I hated it. It was so fucking effortless. And when I saw it inside of you...

His word trail off into thoughts, until...

NATHAN (CONT'D)

It's over with Johanna. She was sleeping with that billionaire.

THOMAS

He's not a billionaire anymore since his divorce.

NATHAN

She was going to marry me all the while keep it going with him. Does that make any sense?

THOMAS

People are not always clean and happy, Dad. People are layered and wounded and fragile.

And they walk in silence, until...

NATHAN

Did you buy it?

Thomas stops and removes something from his pocket. A ring box. He opens it and shows Nathan.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

It's beautiful.

EXT. GOTHAM BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

The busy restaurant illuminates out onto 12th street. We stay outside while Thomas goes in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHAN (V.O.)
(broken and cheerless)
I don't know, Thomas.

We watch through the window as Thomas makes his way through the tables to find Mimi.

THOMAS (V.O.)
You'll survive, Dad.

As she greets him with a hug and a kiss.
And we pull back... it's a warm spring night.

The traffic stalled in a symphony of horns... a Nigerian sells shotty DVD's of current movies on the sidewalk... a woman walks her dogs... three teenagers inhale Tasty Delight on a stoop... downtown buzzing with people...

THOMAS(V.O.)(CONT'D)
It's what this city does and it's
what we do inside of it.

AND MANHATTAN

breathing... living... as it always has and as it always
will... while we...

FADE TO BLACK

THE END