

FADE IN:

EXT. CLIFF - MORNING

Home on the Range plays. We're in a Bob Ross painting. Furthest back: a majestic mountain range scrapes the cerulean sky. Closer: golden fields and forests dotted with herds of elk. Closer: a crystal lake reflects dense forestry. In the foreground: a dirt road, with -

ZOOM. Some 2008 shitbox crashes into frame, blaring MCR or something. It bumps on a stone.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

MIKE

Fuck!

MIKE, 20s, an overweight convenience store worker and the car's passenger, bangs his head on the ceiling and spills coke all over his t-shirt.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Watch the road, dude!

ISAAC, 20s, our hero, is driving. He is emotional, self-centered, neurotic, and naive. He is manic as he speeds recklessly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Just ruined the shit out of my shirt - and wasted my coke.

ISAAC

There's more in the back.

Mike turns around. In the backseat: an EASEL, a CANVAS, BRUSHES, TUBES OF PAINT, and a COKE BOTTLE. Mike reaches back.

MIKE

I was gonna wear this to the Rez,
now I gotta change...

The tips of his fingers just brush the bottle when -

SCREECH. The car comes to a sudden stop. Mike slams into the glove compartment. The coke rolls under his seat.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Jesus, Isaac, again?!

ISAAC
You'll live.

Isaac leaps out of the car. He dashes to the back seat and tears out the art supplies.

Mike leans down and reaches his hand under his seat. Again, the bottle is just barely out of reach.

Isaac sets up his easel and canvas. They're parked on the edge of a cliff, but we can't see yet what he's painting.

Mike is out of the car. Rubbing his head, he reaches under the seat again, still to no avail.

MIKE
Hey, how do you-

ISAAC
Can you hand me the yellow, Mike?

MIKE
How do you shift the seat back?

ISAAC
Get me the yellow and I'll tell you.

Mike scowls and opens the car's back door. He leans down and grabs two tubes of paint.

INSERT - MIKE'S HANDS

The tubes look virtually identical.

MIKE
(under)
Cadmium... lemon...
(yelling)
Do you want Cadmium or lemon?

ISAAC
I don't care! Yellow is yellow!

Isaac is painting feverishly. Mike approaches from behind and hands him a tube of paint.

MIKE
Why do you even have both?

ISAAC
Sometimes I forget. Look at this.

Isaac does that pretentious artist thing where he frames what he sees with his fingers. Through his fingers, we see the subject of his painting:

A BILLBOARD. It reads: "Opioid Addiction *Doesn't* Discriminate."

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I'm gonna call it "The Beauty and Glory of the West!" The sheer contradiction - the most aesthetic place in this whole country, tarnished by the shit behavior of its inhabitants. It's *perfect*.

MIKE

That's great. How do you move the seat?

ISAAC

You don't care about anything, do you? Just press down on the lever.

Mike rolls his eyes and walks away. Isaac brushes over the whole canvas.

Mike leans down next to the seat again. He pulls down on the lever. The seat pushes back. With one trembling hand, he reaches under the seat... and the coke is finally his.

Mike opens the bottle, takes a sip - and gags.

INSERT - LABEL

Diet coke.

MIKE

You've gotta be kidding me.

Isaac is still painting, but more listlessly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Isaac, can we run down to the 7/11 and get some *real* coke?

ISAAC

No? I'm painting.

MIKE

Fine, whatever, just give me the keys.

ISAAC

You think I'm just going to *give*
you my car?

MIKE

What are we even doing here? You
said you'd drop me off at the Rez
so I can see Bella. I didn't
realize we were doing all this. Can
we just go?

Isaac thinks for a second. He looks at his canvas, then back
at Mike.

ISAAC

You know what? Sure. Whatever.
Let's go.

MIKE

Huh?

Isaac knocks over the easel. The canvas crashes on the
ground, but lands face up.

ISAAC

It looks awful anyway.

Isaac gets in the car. Mike hesitates, then follows. They
drive away. When they leave, we see the painting for the
first time. It's stunning.

CUT TO:

EXT. WIND RIVER RESERVATION - ENTRANCE

Wire Fences. Graffiti which reads "No fracking at Wind
River!" Behind them, workers building an oil well.

Two figures, refracted by the heat and windshield, walk away
far in the distance. They're holding hands. From behind, one
is clearly Mike, so the other is presumably BELLA. She's in
her 20s, indigenous. When the audience sees her more clearly,
they will notice that she is far out of Mike's league.

Isaac glares at them darkly. He drives off. We see a massive
sign for the TWIN LAKES INDIAN RESERVATION as he pulls onto a
dirt road and passes into the mountains.

The car blares more emo music. Isaac sighs and turns it off.
He looks down at his cupholder. His CELL PHONE. He looks back
and forth between the phone and the road, then grabs it. He
turns it on and starts tapping on it.

INSERT - PHONE

A google search for the Wyoming crisis hotline. Isaac presses his finger on a phone number.

He steers with one hand, staring straight at the phone, until something catches his eye. He looks up, his eyes widen, and then -

SCREECH. There is a MOOSE standing in the middle of the road, staring straight at Isaac. His phone flies out of his hands and smashes into the windshield - CRACK.

ISAAC

Christ!

The moose calmly meanders into the woods. Isaac breathes in slowly, then exhales in exasperation. He picks up the phone.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Oh my God! Oh my God!

(inaudible response)

I think my guy just *shot* himself!

ISAAC

No- no, I'm here.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Wha- I thought you *died*! Was that a gunshot? Did you just call us and shoot a gun?

ISAAC

I didn't fire a gun, I... uh...
Dropped my phone. I was driving and there was a moose in the road.

WOMAN'S VOICE

A *moose*?!

ISAAC

Yeah.

WOMAN'S VOICE

That's so cool! I wanna see a moose, where do you live?

ISAAC

Uh... Wyoming?

WOMAN'S VOICE

No shit, where in Wyoming?

ISAAC

I don't know, anywhere? Aren't there moose all over this state?

WOMAN'S VOICE

I live in Cheyenne and I've never seen a moose in my life.

ISAAC

They're all over Twosleep.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Wait, really? That's awesome, where do I go to see the moose?

ISAAC

They're just all over the place, they're... I don't know, mating or migrating or something. Is this what the hotline is for? Talking about moose?

Isaac slowly pulls forward. He sees the moose staring back at him from the forest before it turns around and walks away. It has a noticeably clipped ear.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Well, it's working, isn't it? You don't wanna kill yourself anymore, do you?

ISAAC

I never wanted to kill myself, I just... needed someone to talk to.

Isaac drives towards the tiny town visible in the distance.

WOMAN'S VOICE

I get what you're saying. I feel like we live in a culture where we're not allowed to talk about our feelings, you know?

ISAAC

Yeah, it's hard for me because I'm basically the only person I know who isn't happy, so nobody in my life understands what it's like.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Exactly! It's like, how can you talk to someone if they haven't been in your shoes, right?

ISAAC

Well... have you been in my shoes?

During this conversation, Isaac constantly passes more contradictions: gorgeous grasslands, snow-capped mountains, limpid lakes, marred by rusted gas stations, abandoned buildings, billboards advertising fireworks and strip clubs.

WOMAN'S VOICE

If you've been bullied, catcalled, assaulted, raped... then yeah, I've definitely been in your shoes.

ISAAC

Damn... I'm sorry to hear that.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Its fine. Just what it's like to be a woman in America these days.

ISAAC

I don't know about those other things, but I've definitely been bullied.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Yeah, that can cause some real trauma - like, for me, there were times I skipped school for days just to avoid seeing my bullies.

ISAAC

I dropped out of school.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Whoa, me too! That's why I work here! *(laughs)*

By now, Isaac has reached the town: TWOSLEEP, WYOMING. He drives past the dilapidated DOUBLE DECKER DINER.

WOMAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)

So was there something you wanted to talk about?

ISAAC

I don't know, I just... I dropped off my friend with his gorgeous girlfriend and it's like...

(MORE)

ISAAC (CONT'D)
he's got this great life and I have
nothing. I'm a loser who can't get
a job and can't get a date and
that's all I'll ever be.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Hey. No. Don't say that. You're not
a loser.

ISAAC
Uh-huh.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Say it with me. Say "I am not a
loser."

ISAAC
What?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Come on! Say it.

Isaac suppresses a smile. He turns into a neighborhood of
small identical houses. He passes a decrepit sign: *Contrast*.

ISAAC
I am not a loser.

WOMAN'S VOICE
There, was that so hard?

Isaac turns into a driveway and sees a TELSA parked in it.
His expression sours immediately.

ISAAC
(under)
Shit.
Hey, sorry, I've got to go.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Oh, alright. I hope you feel better
soon, then.

ISAAC
Wait - what's your name?

Pause. Isaac sees a silhouette moving in the window.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Melia. My name is Melia.

CLICK. Isaac wrenches his head backwards and groans.

CUT TO:

INT. ISAAC'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A SKETCHBOOK. Incredibly detailed drawings of disturbing subject matter - people hanging, people with heads blown open, cancerous tumors, etc. A gloved hand slowly turns the page, when -

CREAK. The door opens slowly, pushing against piles of clothes and trash. Isaac sneaks in, but -

IAN
(o.s.)
You wanna tell me what this is
about?

Isaac looks across the room at IAN, his older and more successful brother, dressed pretentiously in a navigator jacket and leather gloves. Ian slams the sketchbook shut and glares back.

ISAAC
I didn't know you were coming.

IAN
I already knew the condo would be a
disaster. In nineteen years I never
saw you clean your room once.

Isaac wanders into the kitchen and snatches a pack of cigarettes off the counter. He lights one up.

IAN (CONT'D)
It's a giant middle finger to mom
and dad - they're not renting this
place so you can trash it - but we
all knew you would anyway.

Isaac finishes a long drag and puffs out a cloud of smoke without looking at Ian.

ISAAC
You done?

IAN
No. I was asking what's the deal
with this.

Ian holds up the sketchbook. It's titled "On the Border of Normal and Crazy."

ISAAC
Why are you here, Ian?

Isaac rubs his eyes. Ian tosses the sketchbook away.

IAN

I'm here to see if you're wasting
all the money we've given you.

Ian grabs the cigarette out of Isaac's fingers and crushes
the lit end with this glove.

IAN (CONT'D)

No wonder this place smells. How
many of these do you smoke a day?

ISAAC

Okay. I'm an awful person and I'm
breaking mom's heart. You got your
answer, and now you can leave.

IAN

You'll earn the right to talk to me
like a little shit when you're
paying your own rent like an adult.
I'm working remotely - I'm not
leaving until I know exactly how
you're pissing away your life.

ISAAC

Yeah, this is helpful. There are a
lot of things I need right now, and
your criticism isn't one of them.

Ian purses his lips, shaking in rage. He curls his fingers
into a fist.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

You're gonna hit me? That's how
you'll make everything better?

IAN

Do you think I want to be here?
Away from my wife, away from my
daughter? You think I'd choose to
drop everything to go hang out with
my loser brother halfway across the
country?

ISAAC

Then go! Leave! I'm not keeping you
here! You are free from the burden
of my presence!

IAN

I would if I could, okay? Mom and
dad made me come. Now can you clean
off the couch so I have somewhere
to sleep?

ISAAC

Maybe if you told me you were coming, I could have. Do it yourself, I can't be anywhere near you right now.

Isaac grabs his pack of cigarettes and turns to leave.

IAN

Hey, you can't just walk away-

Ian reaches out and grabs Isaac by his left wrist. Isaac pulls it away violently.

ISAAC

Don't touch me!

Isaac's sleeve rides up his arm, revealing a line of crimson red cuts and raised scars all over his wrist. He pulls his sleeve up and looks away sheepishly. Ian takes a moment to process, then pulls an ugly expression.

IAN

Isn't that what girls do?

Ian stares dumbfounded as Isaac storms out.

CUT TO:

INT. DOUBLE DECKER DINER - LATER THAT DAY

Isaac listlessly swipes on his phone while snacking on fries. A waitress approaches his table.

ISAAC

Hey, can I get some fry sauce?

WAITRESS

Huh?

ISAAC

Can I have some fry sauce?

WAITRESS

I don't know what that is, hon.

ISAAC

It's the easiest sauce in the world. Two parts mayo to one part ketchup. May I have some?

WAITRESS

I don't think we have any...

ISAAC
Do you have mayonaise?

WAITRESS
Would you like some?

ISAAC
Do you have ketchup?

WAITRESS
Yeah, of course.

ISAAC
So you have fry sauce.

WAITRESS
That's not on the menu, dear.

ISAAC
Okay. Please bring me one side of
ketchup and two sides of mayo. I
will stir them together, and make
it myself.

The waitress walks off exasperated. Isaac turns his attention
back to his phone.

INSERT - PHONE

Isaac is on Tinder. He aimlessly swipes right on every
profile, matching with no one. Suddenly, the screen goes
blank, followed by a pop-up message - there's no one left in
his area.

GROAN. Isaac holds his head in his hands. The waitress
returns with three small plastic cups of mayo and ketchup.
She drops them nonchalantly on the table. Isaac dips his
finger in the mayo, licks it, and makes a face.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
(under)
Miracle whip.

MIKE
(o.s.)
Isaac!

Isaac's head snaps back up. Standing across from him is Mike,
Bella hanging off his arm. They could not be more mismatched:
Bella's elegance is equal only to Mike's slovenliness. They
slide into the booth across from Isaac.

MIKE (CONT'D)
It's so crazy that we ran into you
here, dude!

Isaac looks out the window. There is a road but no other
trace of human civilization for miles.

ISAAC
Yeah, it's quite the coincidence.

MIKE
I was just taking Bella down to
prepare for the protest.

ISAAC
There's a protest?

MIKE
The mayor wants to run a pipeline
through the rez. He thinks it'll
revitalize the town.

BELLA
We tired of people making money by
stealing our land!

Mike flags down the waitress.

MIKE
Hey, can we get a diet coke and -
(to Bella)
What do you want, babe?

BELLA
Uh, I dunno... I'll just have a
water I guess.

The waitress steps away and Bella roots around in her purse.
Giggling, she extracts some trashy booze, like a FOUR LOKO.

BELLA (CONT'D)
Check what I got!

ISAAC
Uh, liquid poison?

Bella pops the can and takes a long gulp.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Hey, you can't have outside drinks
in a restaurant!

BELLA

Why do you care? It's not hurting
no one, is it?

ISAAC

There exists a set of basic social
customs to which we all agree in
order to function as a culture, and
one of them is that we respect
businesses by using their space for
the intended purpose.

(to Mike)

How would you feel if someone went
to your gas station and, I don't
know, pumped gas from home?

MIKE

I literally wouldn't care less.

The waitress returns with a coke and a water.

ISAAC

Ma'am, could you please tell this
young lady that she can't bring
outside drink into this restaurant?

WAITRESS

I could care less. It's not hurting
anyone.

She sets down the drinks and leaves.

ISAAC

See, this is why everything's
falling apart these days. No one
feels any accountability to the
social order. Plus, if you're gonna
drink in public, why not at least
drink something respectable instead
of that crap?

BELLA

Oh? What kind of drink you think is
good enough?

ISAAC

I don't know, a beer, or a bottle
of wine, or something. Whatever
happened to the golden age of
teenagers skipping school and
drinking full bottles of wine in
the playground?

MIKE
Is something wrong?

ISAAC
What?

MIKE
You always ramble when you're upset. Did you get rejected again?

ISAAC
I mean... not recently. My asshole brother's in town.

MIKE
I didn't even know you had a brother.

ISAAC
Yeah, there's a reason for that. He has the perfect life and he can't help but shove it in my face every time we're together. I don't like talking about him.

Isaac dips a fry into the ketchup and eats it, then winces.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Cocktail sauce?

BELLA
Today is not your day, is it?

ISAAC
I need to have a smoke - which I'm going to do *outside*, because I respect my places of commerce.

BELLA
Oh, I'm coming with!

Isaac and Bella rise from their seats and walk away. Mike watches. After they're sufficiently far away, he snatches a large handful of Isaac's fries.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOUBLE DECKER DINER - MOMENTS LATER

A PUFF OF SMOKE. Grey nicotine clouds gently caress the sky, producing twisted tentacles that reach upwards and dissolve into nothing.

Isaac stares into the smoke as it vanishes, meditating, then takes another puff of his cigarette. Bella emerges out of the smoke, waving it away.

BELLA
I'm tryna get a hit.

Isaac hands her his cigarette. She kisses the butt and sucks in a lungful of tobacco.

BELLA (CONT'D)
I know things is awkward between us, but you doing alright, man?

ISAAC
You know what I can't stop thinking about? This place used to be a tourist attraction.

Isaac stares up at the rusty DOUBLE DECKER DINER SIGN. It reads "Tallest Building in Wyoming!" It's two stories tall.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Just a novelty, sure, but it was *something*. It's better to be something stupid than to be nothing. And that's what it is now: nothing. Not even a blip on the world's radar.

Bella drops the cigarette and crushes it under her foot. A cloud of dust escapes into the air and mingles with the clouds of smoke.

BELLA
I ain't following.

ISAAC
It just feels like, when something's so irrelevant, it stops being real. And that's how I feel. Nothing's real. Dropping out of college, seeing you and Mike together, my brother visiting - none of that's even a bad thing because I'm not real anymore. I'm not a person, I'm just nothing.

Isaac bends over and plucks a weed out of the ground, then stares at it intently.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

There's some sort of poetic justice
that I'm having this crisis here,
of all places.

COUGH. Bella can't respond because she's hacking dust and smoke particles out of her throat. Tearing up, she chokes out a response to Isaac.

BELLA

Shit, man, I've been there. When my
sister died and all that went down.
I was like, "I ain't even want to
be around no more," you know what I
mean? But you just gotta power
through, know I'm saying? Like
crying about it won't get you
nowhere. It's harsh but it's facts.

Bella breaks out in another coughing fit. Isaac looks back at the sign, then turns to see the beautiful landscape before it.

BELLA (CONT'D)

I'm going back, I need water.

ISAAC

(under)

Yeah. It's harsh, but it's facts.

CUT TO:

INT. ISAAC'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM

A GARBAGE BAG slumps unceremoniously to the floor. Ian dusts off his hands, then turns to look at the couch. It's clear of trash. He unfolds a blanket and lays it down across the couch, then puts a pillow against one of the arms.

CLICK. Ian turns to see Isaac closing the door.

IAN

I made myself somewhere to sleep.

Isaac picks up his SKETCHBOOK off the coffee table without acknowledging Ian. He's walking to his bedroom when-

IAN (CONT'D)

The clock's broken.

Isaac jerks his gaze to Ian. Ian points at a small ornate ANTIQUE CLOCK lying unceremoniously on the ground.

Its hands are stuck at 2:22. The minute hand jumps forward, then immediately jerks back.

IAN (CONT'D)
How'd that happen?

ISAAC
That's a good question.

Isaac slips his book into his armpit so he can hold the clock in both hands. He lifts it up to the light and wipes a streak of dust off of it.

IAN
Do you always just leave it sitting out on the floor?

ISAAC
Christ, that's gonna be hard to fix. This thing is ancient.

IAN
There's no way you can do it by yourself. I know a good watch repairman, I can get it appraised.

Isaac clutches the clock defensively.

ISAAC
Don't. I'll take care of it.

IAN
How?

ISAAC
I don't know, but I want to make it right, okay? I'll get it fixed.

IAN
It's gonna be repaired with our money either way, so you're not really making anything right.

ISAAC
I'll pay for it myself. I sold a painting.

IAN
Really?

ISAAC
Can you please let me do this? I feel bad for letting it break.

Ian takes a second to think, playing with his watch.

IAN

Fine. Thank you, Isaac.

Isaac takes the clock and sketchbook into his room.

CUT TO:

INT. ISAAC'S CONDO - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Isaac sets the clock down gingerly on his desk. The bedroom is messy, but the desk is notably tidier. It's covered in nicely organized tubes of oil paint, various drawing utensils, sheets of paper, etc. Isaac gently dusts the clock with his hand.

MEOW. JANUS, Isaac's jet black cat, crawls out from under his bed.

ISAAC

What's up, man?

Janus pounces on Isaac's chest. Isaac attempts to cradle him in his arms, but Janus crawls up Isaac's shirt and starts grooming his neck.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Aw, geez. You're too sweet.

Isaac reaches into a JAR OF CAT TREATS on his desk and clumsily scoops out one or two.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Time to go down, little man.

Isaac sets down Janus despite protests. He offers the treat, which Janus begrudgingly accepts.

Isaac falls into his bed. He stares at his sketchbook, pen in hand. At first, he can't decide what to draw, but then he gets an idea. He opens a page and hastily draws a rectangle. Then another smaller rectangle inside of it, and some more details. He's inadvertently drawn a smartphone. After a brief pause, he draws hungrily, covering the page in doodles. Rotary phones, flip phones, smartphones - every type of phone you can imagine, leaving no space on the page. When the page is completely covered, he looks at his own PHONE, taunting him. He wants to pick it up - but no, that's ridiculous. Then again, it can't hurt, right? He reaches out hesitantly, but he is decisive when he clutches the phone. He types in 998.

While the phone rings, Janus leaps on top of the desk. He approaches the jar of cat treats and bats it with his paw. SNAP. Isaac warns him and Janus jumps back down the table.

MELIA

Hey, thanks for calling the Wyoming
Crisis Hotline! My name is Melia,
how can I help you today?

Isaac's eyes go wide.

ISAAC

Melia?

MELIA

Haha, yeah, I know, it's a weird
name. M-E-L-I-A. Like Amelia,
without the A.

ISAAC

It's me, Isaac!

MELIA

Uh... Isaac? Have we met?

ISAAC

Yeah, we talked this morning! I
can't believe this is happening!

MELIA

Oh, I remember! I don't think you
told me your name!

Isaac paces his room, holding his head in disbelief. Janus, seeing his chance, jumps back on the desk. He expertly dodges the art supplies as he crawls towards the treats.

ISAAC

I just can't imagine it! What an
unbelievable coincidence!

MELIA

Oh, well, it's not really that
strange, actually.

ISAAC

Sure it is! I mean, what are the
odds?

MELIA

You called twice on a Friday, so
I'd say the odds of speaking to me
twice are... one to one.

ISAAC

Huh?

Isaac is so shocked that he stops dead in his tracks. His footsteps go silent, allowing him to hear Janus reach the treats and nudge the jar with his snout again.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Oh, Janus!

MELIA

What?

Isaac picks Janus up, meowing, and drops him to the ground.

ISAAC

My dumb cat's bothering me.

MELIA

He's named Janus? Like, the god of transitions?

ISAAC

Yeah, how'd you know?

MELIA

I was a *big* Percy Jackson girl back in middle school.

ISAAC

Hey, I was a big Percy Jackson girl too! ...anyway, what were you saying earlier?

MELIA

So, the way it works is like, you call the state-wide crisis center, but there are all these smaller crisis centers scattered around. When you call us, you're automatically forwarded to the closest local center, which for you is Twosleep.

ISAAC

Uh-huh.

Janus is trying a new strategy now. He slowly sneaks his way up the chair's legs, unnoticed by Isaac.

MELIA

But since there's hardly any people in Twosleep, there are hardly any crisis workers. In fact, on Fridays, I'm the only one.

ISAAC

Is that really how that works?

MELIA

Isn't it wild? I talk to lots of the same people all the time.

ISAAC

So if I call on a Friday, I'll be sure to get you?

MELIA

Uh... yeah, I guess!

Isaac picks Janus up off his desk and hastily writes down:

INSERT - NOTE

"MELIA - CALL 988 ON FRIDAYS"

ISAAC

Thanks for letting me know.

MELIA

So, was there something you wanted to talk about?

ISAAC

What?

MELIA

It is a hotline.

ISAAC

Oh! Right, I, uh, forgot. But yeah, there's stuff I want to talk about.

MELIA

I'm listening. Literally my job.

Janus attempts a daring escape, wriggling in Isaac's arm. Isaac can barely hold him.

ISAAC

God, where do I begin? I'm a painter, but I'm no good. Nobody wants to buy my work, so I have no money. I can't get a date.

(MORE)

ISAAC (CONT'D)

My best friend is dating the girl
of my dreams. And now my asshole
brother is in town, rubbing it all
in my face. It's just... um...
uh...

MELIA

You good?

Janus finagles his way out of Isaac's grasp and darts
underneath the desk, where Isaac can't reach.

ISAAC

Yeah, my cat's just being a dick. I
don't know how to say it, I
guess... It's like all these
problems in my life are happening
at the same time, and I just want
someone to come in and fix them,
since I know I can't do it myself.

Isaac starts to cry, and covers his eyes with his hand. This
is the perfect opportunity. Janus catapults onto the desk,
surely to be successful this time.

MELIA

Wow. That *sucks*, man.

Isaac pauses, then bursts out laughing.

ISAAC

What- really! That's all you can
say? So many hours of training, and
you go with "That sucks, man?!"

MELIA

Well it does suck, doesn't it?

ISAAC

I- yeah, I can't deny that. It does
in fact suck!

MELIA

So it's an appropriate thing to
say! It's the truest assessment of
your situation!

Isaac is so distracted that he doesn't notice Janus reaching
out for the treats, almost- almost- yes! He's got them.

MELIA (CONT'D)

Look, if I can give you any advice,
it's that dying won't change
anything.

(MORE)

MELIA (CONT'D)

It won't make anything better. You have to be around to make things better. And you seem like such a smart, fun guy. I bet lots of people would miss you if you were gone.

ISAAC

You're really sweet.

After repeated pawing, Janus opens the lid. The treasure is just within reach.

MELIA

Can you promise me you'll stay around, for all of us who like you?

ISAAC

Melia-

CLINK CLINK CLINK. The distinct sound of a cat getting into a treat jar. Isaac looks up. Janus is feasting.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

No!

MELIA

Wait, really?

Isaac jumps out of bed and reaches for the jar. Janus jumps back in shock, landing on Isaac's easel that holds his UNFINISHED PAINTING.

ISAAC

Hold on, yes, I can, but- Janus, get down!

Isaac drops the jar and motions to grab Janus. CRASH. Janus shrieks and falls down the easel, scratching it as he goes. The ruined painting and easel clatter to the floor. Ian bursts in the room.

IAN

What the hell is going on in here?!

MELIA

Is everything okay?

It's too much. Isaac can't take it all in at once.

ISAAC

Yeah, everything's fine, but I've got to go, okay?

MELIA

Oh, alright. Take care of yourself,
and if you ever need to talk...

CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD BOOT - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

MELIA

You can always call me.

A CELL PHONE pressed against an ear. A pair of pitch black nails slide to the power button. CLICK. We follow as they slowly, deliberately pull the cap off a TUBE OF LIPSTICK. Blood red. After applying it, she leans forward and kisses the bathroom mirror.

BAR OWNER

(o.s.)

Melia!

Melia leans back, leaving a LIP STAIN on the mirror. We see her in full for the first time. Black everything, dyed hair, fishnets, torn jeans. She's an alt girl paradise.

The bar owner sticks his head through the girl's bathroom door. He is a smarmy, distasteful type.

BAR OWNER (CONT'D)

Melia, you gotta get on stage! You
done with your makeup?

Melia unscrews an eyeliner pen.

MELIA

Almost.

BAR OWNER

Let's get moving, babe, you're
already late.

Melia finishes her makeup and leans down to grab her ELECTRIC GUITAR, which is caked in tacky political stickers.

CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD BOOT - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Melia passes through the dingy backstage. Blaring music, sticky surfaces, grime everywhere. She's accosted by-

BAR OWNER

Took you long enough, now you're gonna be late.

MELIA

I had to talk to somebody.

BAR OWNER

I don't get you. You wanna be a big rockstar, but we can hardly drag you out to play.

MELIA

I want three meals a day and a roof over my head. The rest is extra.

BAR OWNER

Yeah, well - you cause another disaster like that fight a few weeks back, and you'll need to get your three meals somewhere else.

MELIA

She started it! Besides, I was drunk, you can't blame me for what happened. Did you ever hear back from the electrician?

BAR OWNER

Too expensive, I got my brother to do it.

Melia climbs the stairs to the stage. The bar is bustling. Melia grips her guitar and rears up - BWAAAAM. She plays a chord at an ear-splitting volume. The bar goes silent.

MELIA

(screaming)

Who wants to have a good time tonight, Twosleep?

The crowd cheers. The stereo opens up with the beat to some girly pop punk, like Paramore. Melia joins in. The energy is palpable - the crowd is dancing, drinking, singing along.

Enter Isaac and Ian.

IAN

I don't get how you crack the *inside* of your windshield.

ISAAC

Yeah, it's pretty crazy, isn't it?

IAN
I hope you know how much those cost
to replace.

They walk by the bar. Isaac taps the table.

ISAAC
Can I get a rum and coke?

IAN
You're gonna drink?

ISAAC
Are you not?

IAN
One of us has to drive.

The bartender slides ISAAC'S DRINK over. Isaac and Ian take a
seat at the bar.

IAN (CONT'D)
What is this place, anyway?

ISAAC
The Old Boot. It's the only cool
bar here, so it gets pretty busy.

Isaac stares into his drink. Ian is turned towards the stage,
captivated by Melia's show.

IAN
The band's good.

ISAAC
Is that so?

IAN
Something on your mind?

Isaac plays with the ice in his glass.

ISAAC
How'd you meet Kaitlyn?

IAN
Work. Why?

ISAAC
How'd you ask her out?

IAN
Are you... interested in someone?

Isaac stutters and chugs his drink.

ISAAC

Maybe. I don't really think she's interested in me, though.

IAN

You can hardly take care of yourself. Why are you looking for a relationship right now?

ISAAC

Another rum and coke, please.

Silence passes between the two. The band is blaring.

IAN

What makes you think she's not interested?

ISAAC

We just don't know each other very well. I want her more than anything, but I'm scared that she'll reject me, or think I'm being too creepy. Girls always think I'm being too creepy.

IAN

Then get to know her.

Isaac gets up. The room is spinning already.

ISAAC

I gotta pee.

Isaac walks towards the bathroom. He gets in a long line, right next to the stage. Melia gets her solo here: she can't contain herself. Her piercings and pitch black hair bob up and down as she dances and freestyles a hardcore melody.

The line moves forward. Isaac stumbles and grabs on the edge of the stage. As he does, he trips on a wire and unplugs it from the wall. We follow it to the other end... Melia's amp. CHINK CHINK CHINK. Melia looks down. Her guitar isn't playing music anymore. The crowd boos.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Ah, shit, let me...

Isaac bends over and plugs the wire back in. BEEEEEOOOOO. The power goes out completely. The crowd boos even harder. Ian covers his face with his palm.

Isaac plugs it back in. Then he pulls it back out. He repeats this at greater and greater speed to no avail. The crowd keeps getting rowdier. Behind him, something lights up.

It's Melia. She's wearing a GLOWSTICK around her neck. SNAP. More green glowing in the dark, wrapped around wrists, ankles, waists... and the neck of an ACOUSTIC GUITAR. Melia strums it once. The crowd goes silent. Then she breaks into an acoustic rendition of the original song. Everyone cheers.

Isaac disappears into the crowd and reappears next to Ian.

IAN

You were right, this place *is* cool.

Melia finishes her set, then bows to roaring applause.

MELIA

Thank you, Twosleep!

Melia steps off the stage. The Bar Owner is talking on his phone, and Melia approaches ready for a fist bump.

MELIA (CONT'D)

This is why I always say glowsticks are magic! They can solve any problem, any time.

The bar owner hangs up, and glares at Melia. Her fist drops.

BAR OWNER

You realize your equipment blew the fuse out in my bar?

MELIA

Huh?

BAR OWNER

Your stupid amp used so much power that we blacked out.

MELIA

That's not how that works!

BAR OWNER

Look at the big mess I have to fix now. I got to get the electricity back, I have to deal with all these people... get your three meals somewhere else - you're fired.

Melia stares stunned as her former employer walks away.

CUT TO:

INT. ISAAC'S CONDO - LIVING ROOM - NEXT DAY

Ian watches the news while Isaac uses his sketchbook.

IAN
Have you heard about this?

INSERT - NEWS

ANCHOR
Debate raging in at the Wind River
Indian Reservation: will fracking
enrich the region or endanger its
inhabitants?

ISAAC
Oh, yeah. My friend is going to a
protest about that.

INSERT - SKETCHBOOK

A drawing of phones, surrounded by the word "SATURDAY."

BEGIN MONTAGE (Basket Case? American Idiot?)

SUNDAY: Melia making a call.

MELIA
I need somewhere to stay, mom...

MONDAY: Bella putting up anti-fracking signs.

TUESDAY: Mike working at the gas station.

WEDNESDAY: Ian looking at a picture of his family.

THURSDAY: The moose watches as protestors amass holding signs
and chanting at the reservation.

BELLA
Get the frack off our land!

FRIDAY: Isaac picks up his cell phone and makes a call.

PAUSE MONTAGE

MELIA
Hey, thanks for calling the Wyoming
Crisis Hotline! My name is Melia,
how can I help you today?

ISAAC
Hey Melia, it's Isaac!

MELIA

Um, hey, Isaac, how's it going?

ISAAC

I'm doing okay! It's pretty busy out here though, between the moose migration and the protests at the reservation.

MELIA

You're by the reservation? You must be really far out west.

ISAAC

Oh yeah, I live in Vibrance.

MELIA

The condos? Weren't they shut down?

ISAAC

Practically. I think I'm the only one living here anymore.

Isaac falls back onto his bed. He flips through his sketchbook and he starts drawing a new "Friday" doodle.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

What about you? How are you doing?

MELIA

I got fired, Isaac.

Isaac stops drawing.

ISAAC

Oh. Wait, then how are we talking?

MELIA

Not from this. I got fired from my real job. I'm a live musician.

ISAAC

You were a live musician.

MELIA

Isaac.

ISAAC

Sorry! Sorry, weird sense of humor. That sucks, are you doing okay?

MELIA
Honestly, no. I don't know where
I'm going to stay or what I'm going
to do. I feel pretty screwed.

Silence. Isaac doodles.

MELIA (CONT'D)
Why do you keep calling me, Isaac?

Isaac grips his pencil much harder.

ISAAC
Huh?

MELIA
It's obvious you're not in crisis.
Why do you keep using the crisis
line?

ISAAC
Ehh... well...

MELIA
Do you have feelings for me?

Isaac grips his pencil so hard it snaps.

ISAAC
Melia...

MELIA
It's okay. It wouldn't be the first
time. But I need to know.

ISAAC
I mean... the thing is... I've been
grappling with some feelings for a
long time, and I'm just not sure...

MELIA
Isaac. You need to give me an
answer. Do you like me or not?

Isaac's sweating. His eyes dart around the room, until -

ISAAC
Yes. Yes, I like you.

MELIA
Okay. Why?

ISAAC

I don't know, it's just - you're really nice, and you're a good listener, and you make me happy when I get to talk to you.

MELIA

But you hardly know me.

ISAAC

I want to get to know you. I like talking to you.

MELIA

Isaac...

ISAAC

Sorry. I know, it's stupid. I should go-

Isaac's finger hovers over the hang up button-

MELIA

I like talking to you too.

Isaac drops his phone. It strikes the corner of the coffee table, cracking the screen and hitting the hang up button.

ISAAC

Shit! Shit! Shit!

Isaac scrabbles for the phone, tossing it and letting it flounder between his hands before he finally gets a grip and redials the hotline.

MELIA

Uh, hello?

ISAAC

Sorry! Sorry! I dropped my phone!

MELIA

Oh, I was worried I said something wrong. But I'm glad I didn't.

ISAAC

No, you couldn't have said anything better.

Isaac talks on the phone as his voice drowns out.

CONTINUE MONTAGE

FRIDAY. FRIDAY. FRIDAY. FRIDAY. Isaac calling Melia over and over again. Smiling, laughing, having fun.

END MONTAGE

CUT TO:

EXT. WIND RIVER RESERVATION - DRILL SITE - MORNING

BELLA

We will not go away, native land is
here to stay! We will not go away,
native land is here to stay!