

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

ST. VINCENT

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
Theodore Melfi



St. Vincent

By: Theodore Melfi

The sex sounds made during...sex.

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A bedroom stuck in the 1970's. Felt wallpaper, cigarette smoke stains, thick dust. Pictures everywhere of a MAN (VINCENT) and a WOMAN (SANDY) in love. They couldn't look happier. Young, full of life.

On the bed, a Russian woman with a tortured Brooklyn accent, DAKA, rides on top of someone we'll soon meet. Daka is lost in her 30s, rough, tattooed, too much makeup, and somewhere underneath it all...beautiful. Furthermore, she's pregnant. Who knows how long, she's so damn skinny.

Grinding away.

DAKA

You eat the breakfast yet?

She's talking to VINCENT (mostly VIN.) Whom she's riding. He's the guy from the pictures, although now in his 60s/70s. Beat-to-hell, raw, irreverent. He gave up on life years ago.

VINCENT

(puffing a cigarette)

You didn't eat?

DAKA

I forget.

VINCENT

How do you forget to eat?

DAKA

It happens so.

Vincent returns his gaze to...the TV on top of his dresser. An old Abbott & Costello movie is playing. Daka adjusts herself, continues grinding on Vincent. Then...

VINCENT

You want go to breakfast?

Sure.

INT. NAT'S BROOKLYN DINER - LATER

A greasy spoon in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Vincent and Daka are in a booth eating breakfast. Daka is scarfing down Huevos Rancheros, like she hasn't eaten in days.

VINCENT

I get reflux just looking at you.

DAKA

They have pill for this.

VINCENT

Bastards have a pill for everything. That's a fact, lady. Killing us all, ten milligrams at a time.

Vincent sifts through his pill pouch. Pulls out a dozen or so...the day's dose.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Where's the water? Didn't I ask for water?

DAKA

Ask fuck again.

VINCENT

Coming here twenty years, still can't get their shit together.

Calling off to a Mexican server (JESUS.)

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Jesus. Aqua. Pills.

Jesus smiles, nods.

DAKA

I never take this pills.

VINCENT

Just crack and meth. That's a better plan.

DAKA

Fuck you, Vin. Stay off me.

She reaches across the table for his toast.

DAKA (CONT'D)

You want this toast.

Jesus returns with a glass of water. Lots of ice.

JESUS

Here you go, Mr. Vincent.

VINCENT

Can you put more ice in it? I want to make sure I choke while I'm swallowing my poison.

Jesus is confused.

Terry shuffles.

TERRY

Uh-huh. Got it. Yes. Let's see...so...with these reverse mortgages you can only borrow a percentage of the equity you have in the house. That's called the loan-to-value.

VINCENT

Don't need a financial seminar. I own the damn thing outright. 40 years.

TERRY

Yes. Yes. Well...you did. But now, since you've been getting monthly payments from us for the last...

(searches the papers)
eight years...you've reached the cash out limit. That's that loan-to-value thing I just mentioned.

VINCENT

The house is worth-

TERRY

It was worth. Whatever it was worth. And I'm sure you know housing prices have fallen dramatically since the financial crisis. Right. Unless you've been living under a rock.

His attempt at humor...not appreciated.

VINCENT

You do stand-up?

Vin rises.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

This is my life here, pal. I need that money.

TERRY

I'm sorry, Mr. Canatella. There's really nothing I can do. It is what it is.

VINCENT

Everybody's says that now. You know what it means, "You're fucked, and will remain fucked."

He walks off.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'm closing my accounts forthwith.
You don't get my business another
day.

THE TELLER LINE - MOMENTS LATER

Vin waits in line, steaming. Ding. An electronic arrow
points him to TELLER WINDOW #23.

TELLER WINDOW #23 - CONTINUOUS

Vin hands TELLER #23 his ATM card.

VINCENT
I want to close this account.

TELLER #23
I'm sorry to hear that, sir. May I
ask why?

VINCENT
Lady. You're just a spoke on a
wheel, trying to make a living like
the rest of us schmucks. I don't
want to tell you to go fuck
yourself. Let's just leave it at
that.

TELLER #23
Okay.

Tap, tap, tap on the keyboard.

TELLER #23 (CONT'D)
That's one hundred twelve dollars
and fourteen cents.

VINCENT
Small bills.

TELLER #23
No, sir...you're overdrawn that
much.

VINCENT
What's that mean?

TELLER #23
It means you don't-

VINCENT
I know what overdrawn means.

TELLER #23
We've sent several notices.

VINCENT

So. I can't close my account.

TELLER #23

You can, when you get it back to zero.

Vin takes his card. What's to say.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin labors into the car. Daka is waiting in the passenger seat. He hands her a few crumpled bills.

DAKA

What's this?

VINCENT

What's what?

DAKA

My shit is not lay-a-way. I am no JC Penny. Fuck face.

VINCENT

I'm a little tight right now. You know I'm good for it.

Daka looks him over.

DAKA

I don't make like before, Vin. Only few freaks like the belly. Understand.

She gets out of the car.

DAKA (CONT'D)

Have to save for maternity leave. You asshole.

She heads off down the sidewalk.

VINCENT

See you next week.

DAKA

Extras when you do.

Daka moves on, bag in hand, adjusting her junk. Vin drives off. A few NEIGHBORHOOD MEN whistle at Daka. She yells back at them.

DAKA (CONT'D)

I'm not dog! Fuck face.

EXT. THE BUCK - NIGHT

The local dive bar. SMOKERS outside litter the sidewalk. The windows are painted with "Happy New Year" greetings.

INT. THE BUCK - CONTINUOUS

Old neon. Older PATRONS. Vin sits at the bar next to LINDA and GUS, a weathered married couple in their late 60s. They're dressed to the nines. The hanging TV set plays New Year's Eve coverage from around the country.

They're all fairly lit...although Vin's in a class by himself. Very thick tongued.

LINDA
You have a good Christmas, Vin?

VINCENT
(slurring)
Best Christmas I ever had. No people. No presents. No bullshit. Just celebrating the birth of the baby Jesus.

Tips his tumbler to heaven.

LINDA
Ah, you don't mean that, Mister.

VINCENT
What do you know what I mean, Linda? You a psychic now?

GUS
Ay, ease up there, Vinny. We're just talking.

VINCENT
You should get a talk show. You're so damn good at it. The "Linda and Gus Just Fucking Talking Talk Show."

Vin flags the bartender, ROGER.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Rog. Another Maker's.

Roger steps over.

ROGER
Vin...we got three hours till the ball drops there. Why don't we give it a break for a minute.

VINCENT
Give what a break?

ROGER
The liquor.

VINCENT
You're not gonna serve me?

ROGER
For a minute.

VINCENT
You know how much money I've spent
in this dump over the years?

Roger tries to keep it smooth.

ROGER
Don't be like that, Vin. I'm
watching out for you here.

VINCENT
Watching out for me?

Vin stands, wobbles. He's drunker than even he realized.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You serve poison to people
everyday. So they can die while
they're alive. Now you're watching
out...is that right?

Gus stands, tries to help Vin.

GUS
Let me give you a ride home.

VINCENT
Don't touch me, Gus. Do not touch
me. I will drive home drunk like
I've done every night Roger here's
been watching out for me.

Vin pushes free, walks to the door.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Happy New Year.

He's out.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

The Spider whips into the driveway. Hits the picket
fence on the neighbor's border. Crash. It topples.
Hits his own mailbox on the other side. Crash. It flies
onto the lawn. He puts the top up.

Vin shuts the car off. Sits for a minute. Then steps
out and swerves to the toppled mailbox. Gets on all
fours, opens the door, gets the mail...pounds of it.

INT. ENTRANCE HALLWAY - LATER

Vin stares at a mountain of unopened mail, overflowing a basket. He empties the basket onto the floor, then tosses the new mail into the empty basket. All sorted.

INT. VIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Vin puts his feet up on a weathered coffee table, watching TV from his paisley patterned couch. The decor is feminine inspired, twenty years ago. Coverage of the Times Square New Year's Eve Celebration plays.

Vin's cat, FELIX THE CAT, jumps onto his lap. Starts to purr.

VINCENT

There you are. Where'd you go tonight, ha? You out catting around...

He rubs the cat all over. His only love.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I bet you're hungry, aren't you?

He takes Felix in his arms, shuffles to the kitchen.

THE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

The kitchen is trashed: dishes to China, mold, stacks of newspapers a decade old. Vin opens a can of gourmet cat food. Dumps it in a bowl. Felix waits patiently on the counter...the food arrives. He eats like there's no tomorrow.

Vin needs another drink. He holds his tumbler to the ice maker in the fridge door. It grinds. No ice. He opens the freezer door and grabs a glob of ice cubes stuck together, puts them on the counter.

Grabs a hammer from the junk drawer.

BANG. BANG. He smashes the ice into pieces, chips fly.

BANG! He hits his finger.

VINCENT

UGHHHH. Shit. AHHHH.

Vin stumbles with the pain. His foot gets ever so close to an ice chip on the tile floor...

Slip. Flip. Smack.

Vin flies up in the air, lands on the floor. Crack! His head hits the tile hard. He's out. Or dead.

Felix looks at his owner. Jumps down beside him. Laps up some blood.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

TV insert. The ball is dropping in Times Square. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Happy New Year. PEOPLE hug, kiss, celebrate.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

MEN screaming in Spanish. We pan away from Vin's house, over towards the source of the racket.

In the neighbor's driveway, a moving truck is backing into the drive and ripping tree limbs along the way. Vin's tree limbs. A LATIN MOVER is screaming instructions to the LATIN DRIVER.

LATIN MOVER
Alto! Alto! You hit the tree,
man. Come on!

LATIN DRIVER
Meda, I can't see it!

He notices the roof: pealed like a sardine can.

LATIN MOVER
You broke the roof! Ay Dios mio!

They fight on.

INT. KITCHEN - VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Vin's where we left him: face down on the kitchen floor. A small pool of blood sits stagnant under his face.

The yelling outside irks him to consciousness.

VINCENT
Shut up out there. People are
sleeping.

He groans. Holds himself up. Felix the Cat stares from a safe distance.

Vin sees the blood.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Ah, piss.

He feels his face, and for the first time we see it: he looks like a prize fighter after the twelfth round.

A gash above his eye is the origin of the blood. It probably needs stitches. He'll never get them.

Vin sits there for a second, collects himself.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Vin walks outside, searching for the commotion. He shields the sun from his eyes. The fighting Movers are still at it.

VINCENT
Hey! Hey! What's the problem?
This is a neighborhood. People are
sleeping.

The Movers stop. Stare.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You comprende?!

Nothing.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Habla English?

LATIN MOVER
We speak English, senor.

VINCENT
What the hell are you doing here?

Vin looks up, notices the tree ripped.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
What the?!? That's my tree you
assholes hit?!

There's a large tree limb sitting on Vin's car and across the fence (which he knocked down last night.)

VINCENT (CONT'D)
And my fence! My damn car!?!

Silence.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Do you speak English!?!

Just then a car pulls up, parks in front of the house. A WOMAN in her late thirties steps out. This is MAGGIE, Vin's new neighbor. She'd be prettier if she weren't always so worried.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I'm calling the cops.

Vin heads inside.

MAGGIE

Excuse me...

He turns.

VINCENT

What do you want?

MAGGIE

I'm Maggie. I guess I'm your new neighbor.

Really.

VINCENT

So.

MAGGIE

Yes. We're moving in today.

VINCENT

I noticed that. These dipshits with you?

MAGGIE

They're with the moving company.

Maggie walks to the fence, stands on her side. Looks around.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Oh, boy.

VINCENT

Oh, shit...more like it. That fence is twenty years old. The car's forty. And the tree's older than me.

MAGGIE

I'm really sorry. I don't know what to...this is not the way to meet.

She turns to the Movers.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Did you guys do this?

VINCENT

Of course, they did it. What are you stupid? Look at the scene.

Maggie doesn't take kindly to being called stupid.

MAGGIE

Excuse me. There's no need to be rude. Okay. I'm just moving in here. I hired this company. Okay. Accidents happen.

A LITTLE BOY comes up to Maggie's side. This is OLIVER. Twelve. Frail. Four eyes. Painfully awkward and very sensitive. He's one of those invisible types.

VINCENT

Accidents happen. What're you a fucking adjuster?

Maggie puts her arm around Oliver.

MAGGIE

Do you mind, mister?

Vin looks at Oliver. Absorbs him.

VINCENT

That car's an antique, missy. Worth a lot of money.

She looks at the car. More like a piece of shit.

MAGGIE

I'll figure out how to-

VINCENT

You. You don't have any money. No offense. You don't look like you do. And I'll bet Chico and the Man over there are "off the books." No, thank you, blondie, I'll sue the moving company.

Vin walks off.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

You can buck up for the tree and the fence.

He hits the front door. Oliver looks up at his mom.

OLIVER

That's our new neighbor.

MAGGIE

Yep.

OLIVER

It's gonna be a long life.

INT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Oliver's bedroom. The room has a bed in it, little else. The evening ritual is in progress: bedtime book time. Although...Oliver is the one reading: "The Giving Tree." Maggie's on a beanbag on the floor, nursing a Chardonnay.

OLIVER

(reading)

"I wish that I could give you something, but I have nothing left." I am just an old stump. "I don't need very much now," said the boy. "Just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired." "Well," said the tree, straightening herself up as much as she could, "Well, an old stump is good for sitting and resting. Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest." And the boy did. And the tree was happy.

Maggie drinks her wine.

MAGGIE

God, that's depressing.

She gets up.

OLIVER

No, it's not. The old tree was made to give. So to be able to give everything and have nothing left is the best life the tree could ever have.

She tucks Oliver into bed. Kisses his forehead.

MAGGIE

That's a nice way to look at it. Need you to catch the bus tomorrow.

OLIVER

It's my first day.

MAGGIE

Mine too. Can't be late.

Maggie goes to turn off the light.

OLIVER

Where's the bus line?

MAGGIE

Get on the internet in the morning. You're good at that. Good night, love.

OLIVER

Night.

She turns the light off. Oliver settles into the darkness.

EXT. CITY STREET - THE NEXT MORNING

Bus stop. Maggie's old Corolla sits in the bus lane. Oliver's outside the door, leaning in the window. He's dressed in a Catholic School uniform. Maggie hands him a lunch box.

MAGGIE
Peanut butter and bananas.

OLIVER
Thanks, mom.

MAGGIE
Snack money in the pocket. You have your key?

OLIVER
Yes.

MAGGIE
Map?

OLIVER
Yes.

MAGGIE
What time you get out?

OLIVER
2:45.

MAGGIE
Straight home, 'kay. Start your homework.

OLIVER
Okay.

A bus pulls up behind Maggie.

MAGGIE
(re: the bus)
This is yours. See you tonight.

OLIVER
Wait. Ma...you're not picking me-

MAGGIE
I'm in the bus lane, Oliver. Be good. Okay. I don't need another ticket.

Maggie blows him a kiss, pulls off.

Oliver backs away from the curb, as the bus pulls in.

INT. BUS - LATER

Riding the bus. Oliver's sandwiched between an OLD JEWISH LADY and a PIERCED HIPSTER. He's looking at a Mapquest print out.

INSERT - THE MAP: AN "X" MARKS THE SCHOOL'S LOCATION - ST. FRANCIS de SALES.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - LATER

PACKS OF STUDENTS mosey towards the campus. A classic brick and stone Catholic School.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

St. Francis de Sales Catholic School is just like any other middle school. Diverse. Modern. Noisy. Dozens of KIDS crowd the hallways, dig through lockers, socialize with FRIENDS.

Oliver can't open his locker. He tries the combination again...no dice. He looks around for help. No one makes eye contact.

The tardy bell chimes.

Oliver gives up, drags all his stuff with him. Rushes down the hallway.

INT. BROTHER CRESPI'S CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Religious Studies class. Brother Crespi stands in front of THIRTY CHATTY PRETEENS. Crespi's in his thirties, preppy and full of new teacher idealism. Oliver stands at his side, he could pass out.

BROTHER CRESPI

Settle down. I know it's hard to come back to school after three weeks of vaca...but your education must continue. Believe me, you need it.

The kids settle in.

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)

This is Oliver. He's joining us mid-stream here at St. Francis. We're happy to have him. Aren't we..?

The CLASS speaks in unison, albeit bored and cynical.

ENTIRE CLASS

Welcome to St. Francis, Oliver.

BROTHER CRESPI
Such genuine caring. Okay, Oliver,
why don't you lead us in morning
prayer?

Shit. Oliver is frozen. The class stares.

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)
Everyone does it sooner or later.

Oliver's turning red. He leans in to Brother Crespi,
whispers something in his ear.

OLIVER
I think I'm Jewish.

BROTHER CRESPI
Okay. That's good.
(to the class)
Oliver thinks he's Jewish.

A few KIDS speak out.

RANDOM KIDS
(on top of each other)
So am I. I'm Buddhist. There is
no God.

Brother Crespi raises his hands before it gets out of
control.

BROTHER CRESPI
We celebrate all religions in this
classroom. That's why we're
called...

The kids complete:

ENTIRE CLASS
(with fun sarcasm)
Religions of the World, with
Brother Cary Crespi.

BROTHER CRESPI
Bravo. Now, I happen to be
Catholic, which is the very best
religion in the world. Because we
have the most rules. But some of
us are Buddhist, Agnostic, Baptist,
Presbyterian, Christian, and "I
don't know." Which seems to be the
fastest growing religion on the
planet. And now we have Oliver.
Who "thinks he's Jewish." Which is
a new one for us as well. But...it
doesn't preclude you from morning
prayer duty. Bow your heads.

Heads down. Oliver has no idea where to begin. Crespi
whispers to him:

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)
 Say anything you want. Doesn't
 have to be special.

Oliver bows his head.

OLIVER
 Dear...

Silence.

BROTHER CRESPI
 (whisper)
 God...etc, etc.

OLIVER
 Dear God. Thank you.

More silence.

BROTHER CRESPI
 (whisper)
 Amen.

OLIVER
 Amen.

The class repeats.

ENTIRE CLASS
 Amen.

Oliver breathes. Crespi smiles at him.

BROTHER CRESPI
 You made it. Go grab your seat.

Oliver walks to his desk.

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)
 Let's wipe the dust off that
 textbook, young ones. Chapter
 twelve. Catholic Saints.

Books shuffle. Pages turn. Oliver sits down. Beyond
 embarrassed.

EXT. YONKERS RACE TRACK - DAY

Horse track. Shitty cars litter the lot.

THE TRACK BREEZEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Vin's filing out his race form. He closes his eyes, puts
 the form to his temple. Channels the racing gods. It's
 his ritual.

TRACKSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

A TRUMPETER sounds the BUGLE CALL as JOCKEY'S on HORSES settle in their stalls. The gates open...and they're off.

Vin's sitting in "his" booth. Eating lunch. Drinking. He's always drinking.

VINCENT

Come on. Come on. Dig in.

The horses fly around the track.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Dig. One time. One damn time.

And just like that, Vincent's horse...loses.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Son of a bitch.

He crumples up his race form. Throws it on the floor. It lands at a MAN'S FEET.

MAN (O.S.)

No need to get pissy, Vincenzo.
You lose all the time. Should be comfortable by now.

Vincent looks up and sees...Zucko. His bookie. Dirty fingernails. Hairy eyeballs.

VINCENT

Yeah. Rough day.

Zucko sits. Takes a pull of Vin's Maker's.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Help yourself.

ZUCKO

I'm thirsty, Vin. And you owe me.

VINCENT

I don't have it right now, kid.
Got a situation I'm working out.

ZUCKO

The thing is, if you're breathing, we all have situation. I'm not a sole proprietor here, Vinny. Got my own people to answer to. You know that.

VINCENT

I just need a little time, you know.

ZUCKO
What do I tell 'em?

VINCENT
A month.

ZUCKO
I always loved your jokes. They
kill me. You're funny, Vin.

VINCENT
I always pay, don't I?

Zucko hits Vin's Makers again.

ZUCKO
Split the difference. Ya got two
weeks.

Zucko stands.

ZUCKO (CONT'D)
I hear the inside on the fifth is
"Lucky By Numbers." Right. But
you got your luck. So. Go the
other way.

He leaves. Vin pushes his lunch aside. Appetite gone.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Gym class. Oliver's straining with all his might, trying
to do a sit-up. A PARTNER holds his feet.

On the mat next to him, ROBERT OZINSKI, the school bully
reps through sit-ups like a rabid Marine.

COACH MITCHELL blows the whistle, asks the PARTNERS for
the count. Oliver's Partner holds up one finger.

THE TRACK - LATER

Relay races. Ozinski sprints past the finish line. He's
a specimen for a twelve-year-old.

Oliver is at the farthest end of the track. Running in
slow motion. He's lapped by a SMALL ASIAN GIRL.

CHIN-UP BARS - LATER

Ozinski's ripping off chin-ups like a baboon. As a-
matter-of-fact, he looks like one. KIDS count off:
fifteen, sixteen, seventeen.

Oliver's on the next bar, shaking like a leaf. He may
die.

Finally, COACH MITCHELL blows the whistle. Oliver's Partner holds up a goose egg.

COACH MITCHELL
Time. All right. Good job,
kiddos.

Ozinski drops to the floor.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
We're done.

Exodus towards the lockers. Coach Mitchell taps Oliver, who's still hell-bent on getting his chin to that bar. It's not going to happen.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
You can let go now.

Oliver looks down at the drop. He's chicken shit. Coach grabs him by the back, lowers him like a feather.

OLIVER
Thank you.

COACH MITCHELL
You have PE at your last school?

OLIVER
Yes, sir.

COACH MITCHELL
Did you take it?

OLIVER
Yes, sir.

Hmm.

COACH MITCHELL
Go get changed.

Oliver walks away, in the wrong direction.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)
The other way. Those doors.

He stops, looks. Changes direction.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver enters the locker room. Most of the KIDS are fully dressed already, and leaving. Ozinski starts heckling the moment he sees Oliver.

OZINSKI
There's the strong man.

Laughs. One of Ozinski's buddies (BROOKLYN) chimes in.

BROOKLYN

"I think I'm Jewish."

More laughs. Oliver takes a seat in front of his locker.

OLIVER

My name is Oliver.

OZINSKI

(like a retard)

My name is Oliver.

Just then Coach walks in.

COACH MITCHELL

You guys hear that bell?

Silence.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)

That means get moving.

Shuffling.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)

Go on. Get to class.

They're off.

COACH MITCHELL (CONT'D)

(to Oliver)

You need a map?

Oliver nods.

OLIVER

No, sir.

COACH MITCHELL

Double time it or you'll be late.

Oliver nods. Coach walks off.

He opens his locker. It's empty. His pants, uniform...everything's gone.

OLIVER

Shit.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS - LATER

School's out. KIDS everywhere: jumping in cars, riding bikes, walking home.

It's easy to spot Oliver in the crowd, he's the only student wearing short gym shorts, a tank top and sneakers.

As expected, STUDENTS comment, laugh, text, chide. It's not been a good first day for Oliver.

He reaches the crosswalk. Looks up at the street sign, it doesn't look vaguely familiar. He crosses anyway.

MONTAGE OF OLIVER WALKING - LOST

-- Oliver crosses a major Boulevard. Cars everywhere.

-- He stops in the middle of a block. Looks around. Then turns and goes back in the direction from whence he came.

-- Oliver walks in front of a row of houses. A DOG tears up and jumps on the picket fence, barking. Oliver runs off.

-- Oliver reads a street sign. Thinks. Walks on.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin's driving through major traffic. He pulls up next to a bus load of PUBLIC SCHOOL KIDS. They stare at him. He stares back. The light turns green, the bus pulls off.

Then in tandem, the WHOLE WINDOW ROW OF KIDS flip him off. Damn kids. Vin lights a cigarette.

OLIVER WALKING - CONTINUOUS

Finally, Oliver recognizes his block. He runs towards what he thinks is his house. Looks...that's it. He's home.

EXT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver, at the front door, reaches into his pocket for the key. Damn. He's not wearing his pants. His key and phone were in the pockets of his stolen uniform.

He could cry. But he's not the type. He slumps down in resignation and sits on the cold concrete steps.

VIN'S DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Vin's car pulls in haphazardly. He runs over some of the toppled fence. Curses, with the windows up...so it sounds like Charlie Brown's parents.

Vin climbs out of the car. Walks to the fallen mailbox, lowers himself onto the lawn, pulls mail out until...

OLIVER

Sir?

Vin hears something. Stops, looks around. Confused.

VINCENT

Take me, God. Don't play with me.

Oliver steps forward, down the walk.

OLIVER

It's me, sir.

Vin squints. Finally sees the kid.

VINCENT

Yeah. What?

OLIVER

I was wondering if I could use your phone?

VINCENT

My phone?

OLIVER

Yes.

VINCENT

In my house?

OLIVER

Yes.

VINCENT

For what?

OLIVER

To call my mom. I'm locked out. I was in gym class and these kids took my pants and I had my-

Vin cuts him off.

VINCENT

I don't need the whole story.

Vin stares at the little shit. Pulls himself up off the lawn.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

One call.

Vin walks away. Oliver walks across the lawn and through the demolished fence into Vin's yard.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Oliver's on an old rotary phone in the kitchen. Vin's fixing a Maker's Mark in the background.

Ring. Ring. Ring. Voicemail.

OLIVER
Hi, Mom. I...ah...lost my key for
the house. So, I'm at the old
guy's next door.

Oliver turns to Vin.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Sir...what's your name?

VINCENT
Vincent.

OLIVER
Vincent.
(whispers)
The mean one...

The conversation trails.

VIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Vin's sitting in his La-Z-Boy, facing Oliver on the couch. Felix the Cat is sitting in Vin's lap, staring at Oliver. They don't get much company around here.

The silence lasts forever. And ever.

A little longer.

Then...

VINCENT
What's your name?

OLIVER
Oliver.

More silence.

VINCENT
Don't you think it's a little cold
for shorts?

OLIVER
It's a long story, sir.

VINCENT
I'm sure it is.

Silence.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
I don't like "sir."

OLIVER
Sorry, sir.

VINCENT
It's okay.

Hmm. The phone rings.

THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Vin picks up the phone.

VINCENT
Yes.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

The CAT scan lab. Maggie's in scrubs, whispering in the corner of the room. ANOTHER NURSE is manning the controls, as a PATIENT (seen through the glass) is slid into the tube.

MAGGIE
This is Maggie, Oliver's mom. Is this Vincent?

INTERCUT WITH VIN IN THE KITCHEN

VINCENT
Your kid's here.

MAGGIE
Yes. I just got his message. Is that all right?

VINCENT
Is what all right?

MAGGIE
That he stays there?

VINCENT
Stays here. Like what, stays here?

MAGGIE
I'm at work and...we got a few more cases. So, I don't get off for a couple of hours and I can't get him the key anyway. I'm in a little bit of a bind right now...

VINCENT
You want me to baby-sit?

MAGGIE

Well, he's hardly a baby. He won't bother you. He'll just do his homework.

Oliver walks into the kitchen.

OLIVER

Sir?

Vin holds up his hand, shushes Oliver.

VINCENT

What're you paying?

MAGGIE

Excuse me?

VINCENT

For baby-sitting. I'm not a philanthropy.

MAGGIE

Okay...ten dollars an hour.

VINCENT

Twelve.

Maggie is amazed.

MAGGIE

Fine. Great. Can I talk to him?

Vin puts the phone down on the counter, walks off.

VINCENT

Hey. It's for you.

Oliver walks to the phone, picks it up.

VIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Oliver and Vin are sitting on the couch watching an old Abbott & Costello movie. Vin's smoking, drinking.

Felix the Cat is sitting in Oliver's lap. Vin's not thrilled.

VINCENT

He doesn't like many people.

OLIVER

I'm good with animals, sir.

VINCENT

Yeah. He doesn't usually like people who say they're good with animals.

Oliver laughs at the movie. It's rare.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You've never seen Abbott &
Costello?

OLIVER
No, sir. Are they old?

VINCENT
No. They're dead. That's the
oldest you can be.

OLIVER
Or the youngest. Time freezes when
you die.

Hmm.

VINCENT
Where'd you learn that?

OLIVER
A book.

VINCENT
What book?

OLIVER
A kid's book, sir. I doubt you
know it.

Little shit. Then...

VINCENT
It's dinner time. You hungry or
something?

Oliver looks at Vin, studies his face.

OLIVER
A little, sir.

Vincent looks annoyed. He's the kind of guy that gets
annoyed when someone wants something, even if he offered.

VINCENT
That figures.

KITCHEN - VIN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Vin's scouring the kitchen, looking for something to feed
the kid. All he finds is a tin of sardines and a package
of Saltines. He cracks the sardines open. Arranges like
it's sushi. Decorates a dirty plate with concentric
circles of sardines and stale crackers. Not bad.

VIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Oliver's eating a sardine cracker sandwich. Watching the movie. Perfectly at home.

Vin's drinking his dinner, a huge stack of mail sitting on his lap. Bank statements, overdraft notices. He rips them up, one by one. His idea of filing.

The doorbell rings.

VINCENT
Probably your mother.

OLIVER
Probably, sir.

Oliver doesn't move.

VINCENT
I guess I'll get that.

OLIVER
Thank you, sir.

Vin aches his way out of the recliner.

THE FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Vin peeks out the peep hole, then opens the door for...Maggie.

MAGGIE
Hi. Vincent.

VINCENT
Yep.

He doesn't instinctively let her in.

MAGGIE
Thank you so much for watching Oliver. I just started a new job and...

VINCENT
I don't need the whole story.

MAGGIE
Ok. Right.

Maggie digs in her purse and pulls out some cash.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Here. Three hours. Twelve dollars an hour-

VINCENT
Thirty six.

MAGGIE

Yes, I know.

She hands him two twenties.

VINCENT

I don't have change. Of course.

Really.

MAGGIE

That's...fine.

Vin counts the money, puts it in his shirt's breast pocket.

VINCENT

Where's his father?

That's personal.

MAGGIE

Well. That's a long story...see...

VINCENT

Don't worry about it then.

A beat. We hear Oliver laughing in the background. Maggie smiles.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

How come you don't have anyone to watch this kid after school?

MAGGIE

We just moved in-

VINCENT

I was there.

MAGGIE

Right.

VINCENT

You gonna pay for my fence?

MAGGIE

Of course.

VINCENT

And the tree?

MAGGIE

The tree? How-

VINCENT

Everything has a price. You're an adult, you should know that.

MAGGIE

Okay. How much?

VINCENT

I'll figure out something fair.

A beat.

MAGGIE

Let me know.

VINCENT

I can the watch the kid too. After school for a few hours. Same price.

Maggie is speechless.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I'll do eleven bucks an hour if you supply the snacks. Little shit ate my last can of sardines.

INT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - LATER

Maggie and Oliver sit at a tiny round table, off the kitchen. Oliver is chowing down on a frozen dinner.

MAGGIE

You ate at Vincent's house, no?

OLIVER

Can we buy some sardines, ma?

MAGGIE

Sure. Remind me next time we're at the store.

OLIVER

Okay.

MAGGIE

You like him?

OLIVER

Who?

MAGGIE

Vincent.

OLIVER

He's interesting. In an old, grouchy sort of way.

MAGGIE

That he is.

A beat.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

You know, he offered to watch you after school.

OLIVER

He did?

MAGGIE

Yep. I was thinking maybe that's not such a horrible idea. It's right next door. Would save me having to find a baby-sitter.

OLIVER

You'll be home though. Right.

MAGGIE

Late mostly, baby. We have to eat. I have to work. Your father's...not helpful. The new school isn't cheap.

Oliver eats, thinks.

OLIVER

I guess he's too old to be dangerous and not too old to be too dangerous either. If you know what I mean.

MAGGIE

That's what I thought. Maybe we'll give it a whirl. See what happens.

OLIVER

Sure.

Then...

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Ma, are we still Jewish?

INT. BROTHER CRESPI'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Crespi, teaching.

BROTHER CRESPI

What is a saint?

Hands go up. Never Oliver's. He's doodling.

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)

Rachele.

A tiny ASIAN GIRL answers.

RACHELE

Individuals who display and act out of exceptional holiness.

Damn.

BROTHER CRESPI
Okay. That's pretty perfect,
Rachele. Thank you. Who can name
a saint?

Hands.

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)
Keesha.

KEESHA
St. Michael the Archangel.

BROTHER CRESPI
Great. He's a classic. Jeremiah?

A LATIN BOY answers.

JERMIAH
St. Jude.

BROTHER CRESPI
Good one. What's he known for?

JERMIAH
He has a hospital.

Laughs.

BROTHER CRESPI
He sure does. Okay, anyone know a
modern day saint? Bridgette?

A tall, athletic girl pipes up.

BRIDGETTE
Mother Theresa.

BROTHER CRESPI
Excellent. So...saints are human
beings we celebrate for their
dedication and commitment to other
human beings. For their
sacrifices. Their work to make
society better for those around
them and those that'll come after
them.

A KID calls out from the back.

ANOTHER KID
You're a saint, Brother Crespi.

BROTHER CRESPI
Yes. I am. Thank you.

Crespi turns on the Smart Board. The title on the
presentation: "Saints Among Us."

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)

And so, our semester project is thus aptly named: "Saints Among Us." You're going to research an actual Catholic saint that inspires you...

Oliver doodles a word: "Saint."

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - LATER

Lockers. Maggie is packing up to go home after a long shift. Her supervisor, GLEN, finds her.

GLEN

Maggie.

MAGGIE

Hi.

GLEN

Robin called in sick today. Got about six cases backed up.

MAGGIE

I'm sorry. I have to pick up my son.

GLEN

Ah. Got it. It's double time, you know.

She needs the money.

GLEN (CONT'D)

Doesn't happen that often.

Thinks.

MAGGIE

Let me see what I can do.

INT. VIN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Vin's sleeping in his recliner. The phone rings. He opens his eyes, agitated.

THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Vin picks up the phone.

VINCENT

Yeah?

INTERCUT WITH MAGGIE IN THE HOSPITAL BREAK ROOM

Maggie's on her cell phone. She hears Vin's voice, hangs up.

Vin hears the click.

VINCENT
Cowards. Try to sell me something,
go ahead.

He hangs up. Moseys back.

HOSPITAL BREAK / SNACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maggie can't do it. Glen the Supervisor comes in.

GLEN
You ready? We're seven deep now.

MAGGIE
Oh. I'm-

GLEN
All good, right? I already told
scheduling we're all set.

MAGGIE
Yeah. It's good. Let me just-
(motions to the phone)
Finalize...

Glen exits.

GLEN
No problem.

Maggie is stuck.

INT. VIN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Vin's almost sleeping again...when that fucking phone rings. His eyes pop open.

VIN'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Vin picks up the phone, battle ready.

VINCENT
What!?

INTERCUT WITH MAGGIE IN THE HOSPITAL BREAK ROOM

MAGGIE
Vincent?

VINCENT
I'm gonna wait till you give your
whole spiel before I hang up.

Maggie has no idea how to respond.

MAGGIE
Vincent?

Vin's equally confused.

VINCENT
Who is this?

MAGGIE
Maggie.

VINCENT
Maggie? That's a good one.

MAGGIE
Your next door neighbor?

VINCENT
Who? Oh. What the hell do you
want?

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - CARPOOL - LATER

School pickup. Oliver's an ant amongst the THRONGS OF KIDS waiting for a ride home. He's buried in a book, when Vin's car puttters in. A thorn amongst the black Crossovers.

Vin scans the CROWD OF KIDS, spots Oliver. Honks his horn. Way too long. Everyone stares. Oliver looks up. Mortified.

INT. VIN'S CAR - LATER

Vin's driving. Oliver's still recovering. A large basket of clean laundry sits between them.

VINCENT
Better buckle up.

OLIVER
You're not buckled.

VINCENT
My life is my problem.

Oliver buckles.

OLIVER
This the way home?

VINCENT

No.

Then...

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Let's lay down some S.O.P. here.

OLIVER

I don't know what S.O.P. means,
sir.

VINCENT

Standard Operating Procedure. You
go where I go. Do what I say. Get
your homework done somewhere along
the way. And most importantly,
don't annoy me. I'm not happy when
I'm annoyed.

OLIVER

Are you annoyed right now?

VINCENT

Not particularly.

OLIVER

Really.

Vin stares at him. Smart ass.

EXT. SEVEN ELEVEN STORE - LATER

Vin pulls into a convenience store.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Parks.

VINCENT

Here's a quarter. Call your mom,
tell her you're wearing your seat
belt.

OLIVER

Costs more than a quarter.

VINCENT

Since when.

OLIVER

Since before I was born.

VINCENT

What's wrong with this country.

Vin digs some more change out of the ashtray.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 If it's more than that, call
 collect.

Vin's out, to the 7-Eleven.

EXT. SIDE OF THE STORE - LATER

Oliver's dialing a number, when FOUR KIDS ON SKATEBOARDS
 round the corner. It's Ozinski, Brooklyn and TWO OTHER
 PUNKS.

Oliver turns his back. That won't work. They wheel
 right up.

OZINSKI
 Hey. It's dipshit.

BROOKLYN
 You live in this neighborhood?

Oliver doesn't talk.

OZINSKI
 Probably got detention cause a you.
 Asshole.

OLIVER
 You probably got detention because
 you took my stuff.

OZINSKI
 How do you know I took it?

Ozinski flips his skateboard into his hand, moves in.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)
 Fucking narc.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin's back at the car. Leaning on his door, smoking a
 cigarette. Watching Oliver get knocked around. It's
 entertaining for him. And embarrassing.

EXT. SIDE OF THE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Ozinski slams Oliver hard into the payphone. His nose
 starts bleeding.

OZINSKI
 You're a bleeder.

BROOKLYN
 I got a band-aid.

Oliver does the unimaginable: he swings at Ozinski. Well, rather, he slaps him in the face. Ozinski barely moves.

OZINSKI

What was that supposed to be?

BROOKLYN

He just slapped you.

Oliver tries to run. Brooklyn slides his skateboard under him, and the little guy goes flying to the pavement.

Ozinski rolls up. Wheelies his board, pins Oliver's chest.

OLIVER

Please...that hurts.

From around the corner, Vin's voice.

VINCENT (V.O.)

What're you little shit heels doing?

They turn to see Vincent, holding a tire iron.

VINCENT

That you Robert Ozinski?

OZINSKI

No, sir. My name's John.

VINCENT

Bullshit, you little prick. You're Reesa's kid. Reesa Ozinski. I recognize you from your fat Polish nose.

Vin walks towards them.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Just like your prick father's nose. Guess the apple doesn't fall too far from the rotten tree.

Vin lights a cigarette.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I got a deal for you little bully shits. Whatever you do to the little guy there...I'm going to all of your mothers.

Vin smashes a skateboard with the tire iron. It shatters.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Ride this!

Scared to shit, the four haul-ass out of there.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Get on, pencil dicks!

Vin walks up to Oliver. Looks down at him. Offers his hand. Oliver hesitates.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You need a paper invitation?

Oliver takes his hand. Vin pulls him up to his feet, heads to the car.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Driving.

VINCENT
Who taught you...how to slap?

OLIVER
I don't know. Just an instinct, I guess.

VINCENT
Well, you should unlearn that.

Vin lights a cigarette.

OLIVER
I'm allergic, sir.

VINCENT
To what?

OLIVER
Cigarette smoke.

Vin rolls down his window, hangs his cigarette outside. Keeps smoking.

VINCENT
Your father never taught you how to take care of yourself?

OLIVER
No, sir. He's a pacifist.

VINCENT
Kid, this country wasn't founded by tree huggers. That's for sure. You gotta stand up for yourself or you get mowed down.

OLIVER
I'm small, if you haven't noticed.

VINCENT

So was Hitler.

OLIVER

That's not a great comparison.

VINCENT

Indeed. Making a point though, fella. Small means nothing. It's what you got in here.

Vin points to his head.

OLIVER

Or here, sir.

Oliver points to his heart. Vin looks at the little fella. This kid's got something.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - DAY

An expensive, well-kept convalescent center. Vin's car pulls in and parks in a handicapped spot.

INT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - CONTINUOUS

Vin and Oliver are walking down the hallway. Oliver's carrying the laundry basket. Vin's putting on a lab coat, carrying an old-school, leather doctor's bag.

OLIVER

This is like a mansion.

VINCENT

When we get in there, don't talk.

OLIVER

Where are we going?

VINCENT

How about you practice not talking now.

Vin turns a corner.

PATIENT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A WOMAN lies in a bed, watching TV. This is Vin's wife. SANDY. She has advanced Alzheimer's. Vin and Oliver enter.

SANDY

There you are, doctor.

VINCENT

Good to see you, Sandy.

Vin puts his doctor's bag on the foot of her bed, digs in it.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
How're we feeling?

SANDY
Today's my birthday.

It's not. Vin pulls out an old stethoscope.

VINCENT
Okay. Well, happy birthday.
(to Oliver)
Put that stuff in the drawers over there.

Oliver complies.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Let's see what the old ticker sounds like.

Vin moves bedside, puts the stethoscope to Sandy's chest.

SANDY
Can you tell them I don't like the green beans, when they put the bacon bits chopped up in there with them. It's too greasy for me.

Vin moves some hair off Sandy's face. Lightly touches her cheek.

VINCENT
You bet, Sandy.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE GROUNDS - LATER

"Doctor" Vin and Oliver are sitting on a bench next to Sandy (in a wheelchair,) in front of a gorgeous pond, cluttered with ducks.

SANDY
They say I'm going home next week.

They don't.

VINCENT
That's the plan.

It's not.

SANDY
Is that your grandson?

VINCENT
Nope.

Sandy looks Oliver over.

SANDY
Is he a doctor?

VINCENT
Sure.

SANDY
What's his specialty?

Vin looks him over too.

VINCENT
I don't know.

NURSE'S STATION - LATER

Vin's talking with Sandy's nurse, ANA, a kind-eyed Filipino lady in her forties. She hands him a bundle of dirty laundry.

ANA
You know, we can do the laundry here, Mr. Vincent. We have the service.

VINCENT
Gives me something to do.

Vin hands the laundry off to Oliver.

ANA
Who's your helper?

VINCENT
He's twelve bucks an hour.

OLIVER
It's Oliver actually.

ANA
Nice to meet you, Oliver. I'm Ana.

Vin heads off. Stops.

VINCENT
She doesn't like the green beans.

ANA
I'll make a note, Mr. Vincent.

Ana writes in a pad.

VINCENT
She always liked broccoli.
Broccoli's good.

Vin walks off. Oliver catches up.

INT. VINCENT'S GARAGE - LATER

Oliver's standing in a fight stance across from Vin, who's wearing a bandana, holding a Maker's Mark in one hand while leaning against a hanging heavy bag.

Oliver punches the bag. It's like a butterfly kiss.

VINCENT

That's just going to get you beat up real bad.

OLIVER

I don't want to fight anyway.

VINCENT

No one wants to fight, kid. You think I wanted to go to war? You think an eighteen year old wants to sit in a rice paddy while bullets are screaming past his ears on both sides?

OLIVER

When was that?

VINCENT

Vietnam.

OLIVER

You were there?

VINCENT

No, I'm imagining it.

Vincent steps back, thinks.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

All right. I'll teach you one thing, it's probably the only hope you got. If you do it right, you'll break his nose with one shot.

Oliver is rattled.

OLIVER

Break his nose.

VINCENT

Relax, you won't do it right.

EXT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - NIGHT - LATER

Maggie's walking to her car after work. She's exhausted. Just as she puts her key in the door...a MAN walks up.

MAN

Maggie?

She turns, clutches her purse.

MAGGIE

I have mace.

MAN

I have papers.

The man holds up an envelope. Moves closer.

MAN (CONT'D)

LA County Family court.

He hands the papers to Maggie. She hates taking them.

MAN (CONT'D)

As they say, "You've been served."

He turns off, stops.

MAN (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to scare you. Just a job.

Maggie nods, leans against the car.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

It's late. Maggie knocks on Vin's door.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Vin's leading Maggie into the den.

VINCENT

I'm working up an estimate on the fence. And we're looking at three hundred on the tree. Not gonna negotiate with myself.

MAGGIE

I get paid at end of next week.

VINCENT

That's nice for you. Working for a living. Rough out there.

In the den, we find Oliver asleep on the couch. Felix the Cat is curled up on top of him.

MAGGIE

I'll pay you of course for the extra time.

VINCENT

I wasn't offering a rebate.

Maggie scoops up a sleeping Oliver.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
What you been crying about?

It's very obvious that Maggie's been bawling.

MAGGIE
It's a long story.

VINCENT
'Kay. What's the punchline?

MAGGIE
Oliver's father wants custody.

Vin thinks.

VINCENT
There goes my job security.

Maggie smiles.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
That could've gone either way.

EXT. THE PINK CADILLAC - STRIP CLUB - THE NEXT DAY

Classic dumpy titty-bar in a rundown industrial strip. Vin's sitting in his car in the parking lot. Waiting.

Daka eventually comes rolling out a side door. Spots Vin. Walks his way.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Daka hops in, pissed.

VINCENT
Who pissed in your Cheerios?

DAKA
I can dance no more.

VINCENT
That a surprise?

DAKA
Fuck you, Vin. I need this money.

VINCENT
The self-employed racket is a tough road, I'll say that.

DAKA
I should sue these. It's...the
word...discrimination. Against the
pregnant woman. Yes?

VINCENT
I think you have case.

DAKA
(rubs belly)
This bump costing me much money.

VINCENT
Nowhere near what he's gonna cost
ya.

DAKA
It's not a "he."

VINCENT
It's a she?

DAKA
I do not wish for boy. Boys are
fucks.

VINCENT
You don't know?

DAKA
What do I know?

VINCENT
The sex of the baby?

DAKA
How do I know this, Vin? I look
like the psychic to you?

VINCENT
They have technologies-

DAKA
I know what they have. Maybe I ask
"employer" to fax insurance card to
pay ultrasound. Yes?

Vin gets it.

INT. OBGYN'S EXAMINING ROOM - LATER

Daka has her legs up in stirrups, as an ULTRASOUND TECH
squirts gel on her belly in preparation for an
ultrasound.

DAKA
This is cold.

ULTRASOUND TECH
 Sorry. Forgot to tell you that.
 It's cold. But just for a minute.

The Tech places the wand on Daka's belly.

ULTRASOUND TECH (CONT'D)
 I'm gonna move this around here and
 take some pictures of the baby.

DAKA
 For taking pictures?

ULTRASOUND TECH
 Well. Sort of. More like images.
 (motions to the monitor)

Daka looks at the monitor.

ULTRASOUND TECH (CONT'D)
 It's pretty cool. See...there...
 Right...there. That's the head.

DAKA
 This is very big head. Maybe good.

ULTRASOUND TECH
 Biggest part at this age.

Adjusts the wand.

ULTRASOUND TECH (CONT'D)
 And these are her little legs.

DAKA
 She? You see this?

ULTRASOUND TECH
 Oh, it's a girl. You didn't know?
 I'm sorry, did you not want to
 know?

Daka could cry. But she won't, she's far too tough.

DAKA
 No. It's good to know.

INT. OBGYN'S LOBBY - LATER

Vin and Daka are checking out with a MEDICAL
 RECEPTIONIST. Vin is digging through his wallet.

VINCENT
 What's my deductible running?

MEDICAL RECEPTIONIST
 I couldn't verify her with your
 insurance, Mr. Canatella.

Oliver runs for the ball, as fast as his fawn legs will take him. It's like slow motion.

At the half line...the ball is feet away from crossing back onto Ozinski's side. Oliver dives for it.

Thud. He lands hard on the gym floor, his face smacks the half line.

Ozinski grabs the ball. Smiles. Runs toward Oliver.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Say your prayers, you little pussy.

Ozinski winds up. Oliver stands, trying to get the hell out of there.

Ozinski's a few feet away. He hurls the ball at Oliver's mug...

Thwappppppp. Right on the kisser. This is bad. Oliver's glasses fly off his head. He crashes to the floor in a heap. Both hands over his face.

Silence. You could hear a pin drop. KIDS gather around Oliver, concerned, curious, scared. He's not moving.

Even Ozinski looks worried. He walks over, closer to Oliver.

A whistle blows. Coach Mitchell runs across the gym towards the scene. He gets there, just as Oliver lifts his head, uncovers his face. Blood everywhere.

Coach Mitchell pushes through the crowd. Ozinski backs up. Out of nowhere, Oliver screams, a guttural kind of attack call.

OLIVER

You mother fucking, ass-face, dick bag...

He has the wildest, animalistic look in his eyes. And he's running directly at Ozinski.

The entire class is frozen in disbelief...what the hell is he doing?

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Asshole, cock sucking, son-of-a-whore...

With his hand in a sort of death grip-blow, he hits Ozinski square in the nose...driving his schnoz up into his brain.

Splickkkk! Ozinski's nose explodes with blood. He falls flat backwards, passing out along the way.

Thud. Ozinski smacks down on the gym floor. Game over.

VINCENT

Odds. Some bookie outta Vegas thinks that horse has a one in twenty chance of winning.

OLIVER

And what do you get if he does?

VINCENT

Twenty times your money.

OLIVER

That's a good deal.

VINCENT

If you win. Sure.

THE ENCLOSURE - LATER

Vin and Oliver stand at the fence, watching HORSES and JOCKEYS walk.

VINCENT

(re: a horse)

That one there with the wraps...is a dog.

OLIVER

Doesn't sound like a compliment.

VINCENT

The odds of him winning are astronomical.

Beat.

OLIVER

We should take him across the board.

The kid is fast.

VINCENT

Don't get ahead of yourself.

TRACKSIDE - LATER

Vin's in his "booth." Eyes closed, holding his racing form to his temple. Oliver's studying his own race form.

OLIVER

What's a-

VINCENT

You see what I'm doing here?

OLIVER

Praying?

VINCENT

Praying?

OLIVER

That's what it looks like.

VINCENT

I thought we talked about talking.

Vin opens his eyes. Annoyed. Oliver could care.

OLIVER

What's a trifecta?

VINCENT

You pick three horses to finish 1-2-3, in the order they come in. High risk, high reward.

OLIVER

Sounds improbable.

VINCENT

If you're gonna gamble, you might as well have the chance to win big.

Oliver scans the form, thinks.

OLIVER

Wishful Thinking. Sweeter Lady. Champagne Flute. One, two, three. 800 to 1.

VINCENT

How much money you got?

Oliver un-Velcros his wallet.

OLIVER

Seven dollars.

VINCENT

Lunch money?

OLIVER

Yes, sir.

VINCENT

You might as well learn the hard way.

Vin pulls some cash from his wallet. Stands.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I'll go in with you. That's called mitigation.

They're off to the betting window.

THE FINISH LINE - LATER

The HORSES fly across. One. Two. Three. We whip over to Vin and Oliver standing at the rail, screaming like school kids. They hit it! The trifecta. For the first time we see Vin's smile. It's the kind of smile that lights up a life.

As Oliver jumps up and down...Vin catches Zucko in the stands. He crumples his race form and starts to throw his usual "just lost" tantrum. It's a good act. Oliver's confused.

OLIVER
We won? Didn't we win?

VINCENT
Roll with it, kid.

Without missing a beat, Oliver throws his hands in the air. Tosses his race form.

OLIVER
Son-of-a-bitch.

Damn good.

VINCENT
Son-of-a-bitch.

Vin kicks his chair, walks off. Oliver follows.

OLIVER
Mother fuckers.

Zucko shakes his head at the losers.

VINCENT
(under)
Ease up there.

EXT. RACETRACK - PARKING LOT

Vin's practically running. Ducking in, out, around and between cars, a plastic shopping bag in his hand. Oliver's on his tail.

INT. VIN'S CAR - LATER

A wad of cash sits between the two. \$5,600 to be exact.

VINCENT
Your mom can't know about this.

OLIVER
Exactly.

Oliver nods.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
She could really use it though.

VINCENT
Not if she knows where it came
from.

OLIVER
You keep my half for me?

Vin knows that's not smart.

VINCENT
Well. I don't want. Let's not go
there.

OLIVER
What am I going to do with it?

INT. THE BANK - CONTINUOUS

Vin and Oliver sit at the banker's desk, waiting. Terry
strolls up.

TERRY
Good afternoon.

He recognizes Vincent.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Mr. Canatella.

VINCENT
Kind of you to remember. Need to
open up a savings account for my
grandson here.

Terry has a seat. Vin slides a stack of cash across the
desk.

TERRY
Never too young to start banking.

Vin slides over a few more bills

VINCENT
And this'll get my account back to
zero. Close me out, while you're
tapping away there.

Vin smiles a fuck you at him.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
(to Oliver)
Don't grow up to be a pencil
pusher, kiddo. They're spineless.

INT. THE BUCK - NIGHT - LATER

Vin is dancing solo to Steely Dan's, "Do It Again." He's wasted. Maker's in one hand, a smoke in the other. His dance is a bizarre mix of slow-motion Tai Chi moves and yoga poses. In it we see the punch he taught Oliver.

From the bar, Oliver watches. Perplexed.

BAR - LATER

Celebration dinner. Vin and Oliver are bellied up to the bar, eating a feast of bar food. Burgers, fries, mozzarella sticks, onion rings, Coke, a few Maker's Marks.

Oliver slurps his drink to the bottom.

VINCENT

You want another?

OLIVER

Yes, please.

VINCENT

Go for it. We're living today.

Oliver calls out weakly to the bartender (Roger.)

OLIVER

Excuse me, sir.

VINCENT

You kids. Damn small talkers. No point in yapping if nobody's listening. Let's hear it.

Oliver belts out.

OLIVER

Excuse me, sir.

VINCENT

Can't get nothing in this life without being heard.

Roger walks over.

OLIVER

Another Coke, please.

VINCENT

You can hit me while you're at it there to, Rog.

Roger knows Vin is wasted.

ROGER
I'm all out Maker's, Vin. You
cleaned me out.

VINCENT
Don't lie to me, Roger. Be a man.

ROGER
Vin. And he shouldn't be sitting
at the bar.

Vin digs some cash out of his pocket. It's a slow
process. He tosses too much on the bar. Grabs his
drink.

VINCENT
We're going to find another place
to our spend money.

OLIVER
He's just doing his job, Vin.

Vin stares at Oliver.

VINCENT
Turncoats. Everywhere you look.
No loyalty anymore. Everyone
taking care of themselves in the
old U.S. of A. That's why we're
falling apart.

Vin drains his wet ice, then smashes his glass on the
bar. It shatters. His hand is ripped open.

ROGER
Damn it, Vin.

VINCENT
Just a cut, pal. I've had a lot of
them.

Vin gets woozy, leans into Oliver.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Let's get you home, kiddo. Got
homework to do.

He passes out.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

A taxi pulls into the driveway. The headlights
illuminate a very pissed off Maggie, standing on Vin's
lawn.

Vin and Oliver climb out of the car. Vin's hand is
bandaged.

OLIVER
Hi, mom.

MAGGIE
(to Vin)
Where the hell's your car?

OLIVER
It broke down.

VINCENT
It broke down.

MAGGIE
Really. I don't appreciate you
taking him anywhere without asking
me.

VINCENT
This is gonna be fun.

MAGGIE
Don't be a smart ass for once. I
need to know where my son is at all
times, okay?

OLIVER
We went to eat.

VINCENT
He should starve?

MAGGIE
Get inside Oliver.

OLIVER
Mom-

MAGGIE
Go on.

Oliver slumps off.

OLIVER
Good night, Vin.

VINCENT
We'll see.

Oliver goes inside.

MAGGIE
He's fighting at school. You know
about this?

VINCENT
Mentioned something like that.

MAGGIE

Great. He tells you. Not his mother.

VINCENT

If you haven't noticed...you're not home much. Kinda hard to have a conversation with someone who's not there.

MAGGIE

I love it when people like you give people like me advice. Especially parenting advice.

VINCENT

I didn't sign on for hormones here, deary. That'll cost you 15 bucks an hour.

MAGGIE

You don't have kids. You don't have anything to think about but yourself.

Vin starts to walk away.

VINCENT

What do you know about me? Really? Tell me. I'd love it.

Vin stops. Maggie thinks.

MAGGIE

Okay. You're right. I don't know a whole lot about you. Because you don't want much known. So you act like a prick and everyone stays away.

VINCENT

If it ain't broken...

MAGGIE

It is broken. Look at it.

Vin goes into his house. Gets the last word in before he closes the door.

VINCENT

I'm up to 40 hours this week. 41 starts time-and-a-half.

He's gone.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Oliver's sitting on a bench outside the Principal's office.

Across from him, Ozinski's sitting with his MOTHER (REESA.) Ozinski's nose is bandaged like a prize fighter's.

REESA
(to Oliver)
You're a real tiny fella, aren't ya.

OLIVER
Yes, ma'am.

REESA
You take Judo or something.

Ozinski is embarrassed.

OZINSKI
Ma.

REESA
Shut your face. You don't talk for a month.

Ozinski slumps.

REESA (CONT'D)
I'm glad it was a little shit that knocked the snot outta-ya. Now ya got no excuses.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Maggie's sitting across from PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN, a puffy-faced official looking gent in his fifties. Maggie's reading a report.

MAGGIE
I can't even say these words.

PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN
They're...creative.

MAGGIE
That's one way to put it.

PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN
Adjusting to a new school is tough on children at this age. At any age. So, I don't want to minimize that...but is there anything else going on that we should be aware of?

MAGGIE
I don't even know where to start.

PRINCIPAL O'BRIEN
How about his father?

MAGGIE

Oh. Well. Please. That'll take up your whole day. We're in the middle of a divorce. Oliver's father...was sleeping with his assistant. And our accountant. And her assistant. And my hairdresser. While she was still cutting my hair. That was fun. Now he's filed for custody of Oliver. Full custody. And he won't pay support till he gets his way. You see. Plus he's a lawyer, so. So. I just took Oliver away as fast as I could and took this job at Mission Hills. I'm a CAT scan tech, so I see a lot of rough situations. Tumors. Cancer. Cysts. Clots. All that. And of course, I know what I see and I can't say anything to people. Which is miserable, as you can imagine. And I work really late, trying to get our act together. Give Oliver a better education and a semi-normal life. And fight David and this custody shit. Excuse me. That's his name. David. My ex. He never wanted kids anyway. He just doesn't want me to be happy. Oliver's adopted. Do you know that? How would you. I'm not able to have kids. Something about my Fallopian tubes being twisted. I think they were just recoiling from David's sperm.

Maggie reaches for a tissue.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Do you mind?

Principal O'Brien shakes his head "no." He has no words.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I'm sure all of this has permeated into Oliver's little being. And as they do in these situations...he's acting out. Right?

Principal O'Brien smiles. Maggie blows her nose.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - BATHROOM - LATER

Detention. Two adjacent bathroom stalls. Oliver's in one, Ozinski in the other. They're scrubbing the shitters, floors, walls, et al with scouring pads, toothbrushes.

Quiet. Finally Ozinski breaks the silence.

OZINSKI

My real name's Robert. Ozinski is my last name. People call me Ozinski cause Crespi called me that last year. Now everyone calls me that.

Oliver stops scrubbing.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

I don't really like it. Ozinski. Just too many kids call me that now, so it's not like I can go 'round all day and tell 'em, "Dick wad, don't call me Ozinski, my name's Robert." Cause I would spend my whole life doin' that.

Oliver stands, takes a piss.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

You takin a wiz?

OLIVER

Sorry, can't hold it.

Then.

OZINSKI

Robert was my dad's name. So, I'm a junior. He's not around though. I don't really know him, cause he left when I was a baby.

OLIVER

My dad's not around either. He did some bad things to my mom and so we left and I haven't seen him in a while.

OZINSKI

No shit.

Oliver flushes. Ozinski shuffles around. Then, Oliver's cell phone slides under the stall, followed by his house keys.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Your dad the one that taught ya how ta fight?

Oliver takes his stuff.

OLIVER

No. My baby sitter.

INT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - DAY - LATER

Tacky office. Vin's sitting across from the rehab director, SHIRLEY JORSTIN, a tight-lipped, tough egg in her 50s.

SHIRLEY

There's plenty of affordable health care options, Mr. Canatella. Sunnyside's pricey. It's not for everyone.

VINCENT

My Sandy, she's gotta have the best. So, I'll just figure this thing out.

She hands him a folder: invoices, bills, statements.

SHIRLEY

You're months behind. We're not in the credit business, as you know.

VINCENT

I get that.

Vin looks inside, just a glance is enough to know he's fucked.

SHIRLEY

So...

VINCENT

So, what's that mean?

SHIRLEY

We need payment in full and three months in advance.

VINCENT

Got it.

SHIRLEY

By tomorrow.

VINCENT

Tomorrow.

SHIRLEY

We'll transfer her wherever you decide to put her.

VINCENT

Put her. That's it. Or we get the boot?

SHIRLEY

That's not the best way to phrase what's happening.

Vin stands, pissed.

VINCENT
What is the best way to phrase it?

SHIRLEY
It is what it is.

Vin takes a deep breath. Exhales slowly.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE GROUNDS - LATER

Vin's pushing Sandy around the pond. He's wearing his doctor's getup.

SANDY
I can't wait for autumn. They
plant the most beautiful mums all
around the water.

VINCENT
Yep.

Vin parks in front of their bench.

SANDY
Every color you can imagine. I
don't know where they get them all.

VINCENT
At the garden store.

Sandy laughs. Touches his hand.

SANDY
You've always been so funny, Vin.

Vin...she said Vin.

VINCENT
Sandy.

A beat. Sandy looks confused.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
It's me, babe. Vin.

And just like that, she's gone.

SANDY
The ducks eat them though. We have
to shoo them away. It's such a
shame.

Vin could die. It's just too much.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Vin gets the dirty laundry bag from Ana. The ritual.

VINCENT
It's a lot lighter.

ANA
She didn't change much this week.

VINCENT
Easier on my back.

Vin reaches into his pocket, pulls out some cash. A few wrinkled bills. He hands them to Ana.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
You think we can get some plants or something for the room.

ANA
Sure. I can have the concierge order something.

VINCENT
Mums. Or the like. I'm not a florist.

He gets a few more bucks.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
Here. For the trouble.

ANA
No. No, sir, Mr. Vincent. This is my job. I take care of people. Please.

VINCENT
You go way beyond doing your job, Ana. You been an angel for my Sandy.

He puts the money in her smock pocket. Ana's practically blushing.

ANA
Okay, Mr. Vincent. We don't make habit now. Okay?

VINCENT
Deal. I'm shit broke anyway.

She laughs on her way out.

ANA
I go tell the concierge.

VINCENT
Thanks, doll.

Ana disappears behind the station.

Vin looks at the cabinet on the wall behind the counter: full of meds. He looks around.

EXT. SHITTY NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

The neighborhood is lined with decrepid houses, iron gates shielding every window and door. Vin sits in his car outside one of the more indigent shacks. Sunglasses and a hat conceal his mug.

After too long...Daka comes waddling out of the house with a paper bag. Leans into the window.

DAKA
Hundred dollars.

VINCENT
Hundred bucks? I pay more than that for one prescription.

Daka pulls bottles of meds out of the bag. Names them.

DAKA
For the epilepsy. Prostate flaring. To soften the shitting.

VINCENT
That should have some value.

DAKA
And to piss stronger.

VINCENT
Five hundred bucks. That stuff is high dollar.

DAKA
He say one hundred, take or leave it. You can't sell this to get high. You must to find some freak or old fuck.

Vin just stares at her.

VINCENT
I'll take the hundred.

INT. TELLER WINDOW NUMBER 23 - LATER

Vin's at the bank, standing at TELLER WIDOW #23 again.

TELLER #23
You're account's closed, Mr. Canatella.

VINCENT
I know that. Withdraw from my
grandson's account there. I should
be on it.

Vin hands her his ID. She doesn't think anything about
it.

TELLER #23
How much, sir?

VINCENT
What's the balance?

THE TRACK BREEZEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Vin's standing below the board, holding his race form to
his temple. Communicating with the racing gods.

INT. RACETRACK - CONTINUOUS

Vin slides a wad of cash through the window. Huge bet.

VINCENT
Lucky Lincoln. New Dime and
Sammy's Savior. One, two, three in
the third.

The ATTENDANT takes the cash.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
That's going to make me all better,
my friend.

Vin collects the ticket. Rubs it for good luck.

INT. RACETRACK - BAR

Vin's watching the race on the bar TV.

The race trumpet blows. The HORSES writhe in their
stalls. The buzzer sounds. The gates fly open.
And...they're off.

Vin can't watch, he closes his eyes. Takes a long drink
of his Maker's. Puffs his cigarette. Listens.

The ANNOUNCER calls the race.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
And that's New Dime taking the
early lead on the rails, followed
by Pretty Patty and Lucky Lincoln.

The Announcer keeps barking in the background. Vin never
opens his eyes.

EXT. RACETRACK - LATER

Vin's walking towards his car. He lost. It's in his gait.

INT. THE BUCK - LATER

Vin's slumped, ruined in his mind. Head down. Cigarette dangling from his lips. Gus and Linda are sitting on their regular stools, playing Kino.

GUS
Vin give me a number?

VINCENT
Five grand.

GUS
A Kino number.

VINCENT
You got five grand I can borrow, Gus? I'll probably die before I pay you back even.

GUS
You serious?

VINCENT
Dead serious.

GUS
If I had five grand, I wouldn't be sitting here. Let me tell ya. We'd be on that Carnival Cruise ship somewhere.

LINDA
The Alaskan one, Gus. They say that one's the prettiest.

GUS
Whatever one. Eating the buffet. They say those buffets are like something else. Endless crab and lobster and salad bar.

LINDA
The drinks are gratis too. Champagne in the morning with orange juice. They gotta name for it...

VINCENT
Mimosa.

LINDA
That's it.

Vin stands, lays some money on the bar.

VINCENT
 (calls out to Roger)
 Rog. Get these two some Mimosas on
 me.

LINDA
 (surprised in the least)
 Oh. That's sweet of ya, Vin.

Vin walks off.

VINCENT
 I hope you two get to that cruise
 one day.

He leaves. Gus and Linda are in shock.

LINDA
 That was real nice a him.

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Vin's car labors through traffic. Endless traffic.

EXT. VIN'S DRIVEWAY - LATER

He pulls into his driveway. Parks.

INT. VIN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vin sits there. Looking at his house. His life. What
 now?

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Vin walks in. Shuts the door behind him. Turns when he
 hears...

ZUCKO
 You must think I'm not a very
 serious person, Vinny.

How the hell did he get here?

VINCENT
 You broke into my house?

ZUCKO
 The back door was "ajar."

VINCENT
 You have no right to be here. How
 the hell do you know where I live?

ZUCKO

I do homework on assholes that owe money.

Another THUG walks into the room from the bedroom. This is ANTWAN. Big, dirty. He's carrying an antique jewelry box.

VINCENT

That's my wife's, you son-of-a-bitch.

Vin makes a move for the kitchen.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I'm calling the police.

Zucko stands, pulls out a gun.

ZUCKO

You think that's realistic? We're just gonna sit here and let you pick up a phone and dial 911. Are you that old? Or that stupid?

Vin turns to Antwan, yanks the jewelry box out of his hands.

VINCENT

Get the hell away from that.

Antwan pushes Vin. He flies across the room. Hits the fireplace wall. Jewelry everywhere.

ZUCKO

You always have to take the hard way, Vin. Why is that?

VINCENT

It's more interesting.

Vin rolls up his sleeves. Preparing to fight.

ZUCKO

It's more painful. Even I know that.

Vin takes a step towards Antwan.

VINCENT

Let's do it then.

ANTWAN

This mother fucker's crazy.

ZUCKO

Don't kill him. But do get close.

Vin takes another step. Stops. Something's wrong. He's wobbly. He grabs his head. Shakes it.

ZUCKO (CONT'D)
What are you doing, old man?

Vin is blurry eyed. He drops to his knees. Hard. His eyes roll back in his head. It looks like a seizure.

ANTWAN
He's dying, man.

Vin falls face first onto the floor. Thud.

BLACK OUT.

ZUCKO (V.O.)
(in the darkness)
Don't touch him. Leave that shit.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS

Oliver's walking out of the school with Ozinski.

OZINSKI
I have a cousin that's Jewish. He had a big shit party when he turned 13.

OLIVER
A barmitzah.

OZINSKI
Yeah. That's it. Biggest party I ever seen.

OLIVER
It's a coming-of-age ceremony. Supposedly a boy becomes a man at that age.

Ozinski thinks long and hard. It hurts.

OZINSKI
Nah. My cousin ain't no man. He's a little pussy. His wiener ain't even shaved.

OLIVER
Circumcised.

They stop at Ozinski's bike, chained to a rack.

OZINSKI
You know a lotta fancy words. You're like an Einstein.

Oliver smiles.

OLIVER
I read a lot.

OZINSKI
That's cool. See ya tomorrow.

OLIVER
Yep. Bye, Robert.

Ozinski nods. Oliver walks away. Then...

OZINSKI
Hey, how come ya don't have a bike?

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Oliver's riding on the back of Ozinski's bike. Scared for his life, but loving every minute of it.

EXT. RESEDENTIAL STREET - LATER

Ozinski and Oliver arrive in front of Vin's house. Oliver jumps off the bike.

OZINSKI
Ya think I could meet the old bastard?

OLIVER
Sure. Just know he's not real friendly at first. It takes him a long time to warm up.

Ozinski parks his bike.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver keys in. Ozinski right on his tail. Something's not right, the house, the energy.

FELIX THE CAT
Meow. Meow.

Felix rushes up to Oliver, hides behind his legs.

Oliver walks into the room...and sees...Vin. Sprawled out on the floor, face first. Still.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - LATER

CAT Scan lab. Maggie and ANOTHER NURSE are strapping Vin in. His eyes are open, but no one's home.

MAGGIE
Hi, Vincent. It's me Maggie.
Oliver's mom.

He looks blankly at her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

We're going to put you in this machine here and run some tests, okay? It won't hurt a bit.

ANOTHER NURSE

He can't understand you, Maggie.

Maggie nods. Upset. Vincent grabs her hand. Holds it. He understands.

MAGGIE

There you are. This takes about thirty minutes, okay?

Vin says, "I understand" with his eyes.

THE WAITING ROOM - LATER

Oliver's sitting in the waiting area. Amongst STRANGERS. Maggie walks in, worried, looking for her son. Finally she sees him...

OLIVER

He okay, ma?

She puts her arms around him.

MAGGIE

You're such a brave little man.

OLIVER

We thought he was dead.

MAGGIE

Who's we?

OLIVER

Robert Ozinski and I.

MAGGIE

The bully kid?

OLIVER

We're friends. Since I broke his nose.

MAGGIE

I don't even know what you're doing anymore.

Maggie starts to get teary, she rubs Oliver's head.

OLIVER

Mother. Stop feeling sorry for me. And yourself. We're doing good. You're working hard, every day and we need the money. It's okay.

Holy shit. Maggie is speechless, he's a grown-up all of a sudden.

MAGGIE

I think he's had a stroke. You know what that is?

OLIVER

I've seen some billboards. "Know the signs of a stroke and call 911 immediately." But they never say what the signs are so...

MAGGIE

It's a blockage in a brain artery.

Oliver knows this is serious.

OLIVER

That's not good.

Maggie puts her arm around him.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - DAY

Crespi's class. Oliver's standing in front of the darkened classroom, presenting, using the Smart Board.

OLIVER

I chose Saint William of Rochester, the patron saint of adopted children.

Oliver clicks the Smart Board and a picture of Saint William pops up on the screen.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

As a young man, William led a "wild and misspent youth." Which included gambling, womanizing, drinking and other things considered inappropriate-

Brother Crespi interrupts (from the back of the room.)

BROTHER CRESPI

Why did you chose Saint William?

Throughout, Oliver clicks through slides on the Smart Board.

OLIVER

Well, he found a baby on the church steps and took it in and raised it as his own. He named him David.

Click.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

And then years later he went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with his son. And David went, like...crazy, and clubbed Saint William and cut his throat and then robbed the body.

The slides are stock footage pictures of a crime scene. Blood. Mayhem.

BROTHER CRESPI

Ouch. Okay. Didn't see that coming.

OLIVER

It's a pretty interesting story. Which is why I chose it. The other saints I looked at were all so... "saintly" I guess.

BROTHER CRESPI

What does "saintly" mean to you?

OLIVER

I don't know. I don't really believe in saints and all that stuff. I mean, it seems like St. William gets to be a saint just because he was killed by the boy he adopted. These days people get killed all the time. They don't get to be saint for it.

BROTHER CRESPI

So you don't think we have saints living amongst us?

OLIVER

I don't know any.

BROTHER CRESPI

Thank you, Oliver.

Oliver walks to his seat. Brother Crespi moves to the front of the class.

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)

Despite young Oliver's reticence. I believe there are saints all around us today. They might never be recognized as such by a religion, but they're every bit as important to our society as the saints in the textbook.

He flips on the Smart Board: "Modern Day Saints" is the heading.

BROTHER CRESPI (CONT'D)

Thus, you're going to research someone you know, or know of, and determine if they have the qualities of a saint. Hence the catchy title: Modern Day Saints.

Hands go up, lots of questions.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Oliver's walking home from school. He sees SOMEONE sitting on Vin's steps. It's Daka.

DAKA

Where's is he? The car is there.

OLIVER

He's in the hospital.

DAKA

Why for?

Oliver just stares at her.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - LATER

Maggie, Oliver and Daka are walking down a hallway of PATIENT rooms.

MAGGIE

How do you and Vincent know each other?

DAKA

I work for this man.

MAGGIE

Doing what?

DAKA

Working for him.

Maggie looks at Oliver. He's buttoned up.

INT. VIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Vin's lying in bed, wide-eyed. He looks pissed. A SPEECH THERAPIST is trying to "therapize" Vin.

The stroke has caused Aphasia and language apraxia. It's a struggle for Vin to talk, and hard to understand.

The Speech Therapist holds up a flash card with the word "Dog" printed on it.

SPEECH THERAPIST

Try to sound it out.

Vin pretends to think, then holds up his middle finger.

SPEECH THERAPIST (CONT'D)

Not quite.

Vin holds up the other middle finger. Double bird.

SPEECH THERAPIST (CONT'D)

You didn't lose your sense of humor.

Maggie, Oliver and Daka walk in.

MAGGIE

You have some company, Vin.

DAKA

I say hello only. The hospital is shit place.

Oliver walks to Vin's bedside.

OLIVER

You look a lot better.

VINCENT

(slurred, re: Therapist)
Getttt this dippppshitt outta here.

Oliver's confused with Vin's slurred speech.

OLIVER

Wha'dya say?

VINCENT

Getttt this...dipppppp...

Vin gets frustrated, his mouth won't work. He swipes hospital effects off the bedside table.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Getttttt outtta herrrrr.

Maggie interrupts.

MAGGIE

Okay, Oli. Let's let Vin work with the therapist.

SPEECH THERAPIST

Thank you. We'll be about an hour.

VINCENT

Fuccckkk you, annnnn hour.

SPEECH THERAPIST

Maybe less.

Baby? OLIVER

Yea. MAGGIE

OLIVER
I don't know. I avoid the whole situation. It's not polite to ask a woman if she's pregnant. So.

MAGGIE
Well. She's obviously pregnant. So...

OLIVER
Vin's like 90 something. That would be inappropriate.

Daka returns with two chocolate bars. She offers one to Oliver.

DAKA
If you hit this machine as first candy drops, you can get two to come down. Good?

Oliver takes it. Unwraps. The three of them sit awkwardly comfortable together.

EXT. BROOKLYN - DAY

Time passes. Spring is in the air.

-- A Homeless Guy, wearing shorts, soaks up the sun from a bus stop bench.

-- The Buck. An ARTIST is painting the front window for St. Patty's Day.

-- Doctor's Office. Ozinski gets his nose bandage removed. His nose is completely crooked.

-- Vin's House. The lawn is out of control. A foot high. A MAILMAN bends down and puts mail in the toppled mailbox.

INT. VIN'S KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

Daka is feeding Felix the Cat the usual: gourmet cat food.

DAKA
Don't eat fast, shit. I don't come for till tomorrow.

Daka looks at the stacks of dishes, mold, dirt, grime, shit everywhere. Fuck it. She rolls up her sleeves, turns the sink on. Starts to clean.

INT. VIN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - ANOTHER DAY

Vin's perched in a recliner. Oliver is sitting on his bed shuffling a stack of flash cards.

OLIVER

Try this one.

He holds up a card. It reads: "I want fresh crab." Vin studies the card. Then:

VINCENT

I waannnnnt fressssh crap.

Oliver looks at the card. Damn Vin.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - ANOTHER DAY

Crespi's class. Ozinski is presenting in front of the class. His voice is nasally, due to the "new" nose alignment.

OZINSKI

And for my real-life saint, I picked...

He clicks the Smart Board. A picture of Oliver pops up.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Oliver Bronstein. He's like one a them martyrs. Cause he was persecuted too, when he first got here. Mostly by me. And a few others, who I'm not gonna rat out. You know who you are.

Ozinski stares directly at a few FELLAS in class. Brooklyn sinks in his chair.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

Anyways. He's my saint. Cause he forgave me for being such a dingleberry, when I was acting like an a-hole.

The CLASS laughs. Oliver is all smiles. He's a hundred feet tall.

IMAGES OVER MUSIC:

-- Daka is vacuuming Vin's living room. It sounds like she's sucking up marbles. It's so damn dirty.

-- Vin and Oliver are racing down a hallway in wheelchairs. It's neck and neck. Vin's lit cigarette drops in his lap. Oliver wins.

-- At a grocery store, Maggie and Oliver are buying cat food. Lots.

-- Oliver wheels a piece of carryon luggage into Vin's room. He lays the luggage carefully on the bed and unzips. Felix the Cat climbs out unaffected.

-- Vin's sitting in a wheelchair outside the hospital (in street clothes.) A NURSE stands behind him. Daka pulls up in Vin's car. Honks. Vin stands up, walks to the car using a cane.

-- Driving. Daka can barely steer the car over her about-to-pop belly. Vin lights a cigarette. Daka snatches it out of his hand.

DAKA

What is wrong with you?

She tosses it out the window.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Living room. Daka leads Vin inside. The place is spotless.

VINCENT

Wherrre's mmmmmmy dirt?

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Vin's sitting on his couch, looking around. The place is foreign to him.

Daka waddles in with a plate of food. A turkey sandwich with a side of carrots. Healthy. Vin inspects.

VINCENT

Whhhhhattt're these?

DAKA

Vegetables, what. You don't see these?

VINCENT

Donnnnn't eeeeat them.

DAKA

You do now, fuck.

Vin picks up the sandwich. Takes a damn bite. What choice does he have?

DAKA (CONT'D)

You pay me for the hours now, papa.

VINCENT

Whaaaattt for?

DAKA

What, for what? I take care of your ass. And we don't bump the ugly parts no more. So don't ask. I'm too fat for this and you're too old.

Vin thinks. Shakes his head in agreement. The sandwich is pretty good.

DAKA (CONT'D)

Fifteen dollars for the hours.
Plus the room and food.

Daka walks out. Vin damn near chokes.

EXT. LA COUNTY FAMILY COURT - ANOTHER DAY

A gray stone court house. A gray day.

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maggie, Oliver and their attorney, RICHARD WALTERS are on one side. On the other side: Oliver's father, DAVID BRONSTEIN, tall, dark and disconnected, sits next to his attorney BARRY BRILLSTERN.

JUDGE REYNOLDS presides, he's examining a file full of photos.

JUDGE REYNOLDS

(directed to Richard)

Who is Vincent Canatella?

Richard is stumped. He turns to Maggie.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.

You know him?

MAGGIE

He's our next door neighbor. He watches Oliver sometimes.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.

Your honor, he's my client's neighbor. He occasionally watches Oliver. Sometimes.

JUDGE REYNOLDS

He's a baby sitter?

Again, Richard turns to Maggie.

MAGGIE

Yes. Of sorts. I pay him. And Oliver goes there after school for a few hours while I'm at work.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.

(to Judge)

He's a baby sitter, your honor. Of sorts. A paid position. May I ask why this is relevant?

Judge Reynolds flips through more pictures.

JUDGE REYNOLDS

Is your client aware that Mr. Canatella takes her son to a race track and they gamble? He also takes him to a local bar, The Buck? And a strip club, The Pink Cadillac?

Maggie is lost. She looks to Oliver.

OLIVER

We went to see the horses a few times.

Maggie could die. She turns back to Richard.

MAGGIE

I...this...is news to me.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.

My client is unaware of these events. As am I. Which is a big surprise, I must say, right now.

JUDGE REYNOLDS

I'll bet there are quite a few surprises in this folder then.

Judge Reynolds holds up a pound of pictures. Maggie gasps.

MAGGIE

Oh, God.

JUDGE REYNOLDS

Daka Parimova? Are you aware of her occupation?

Richard turns to Maggie. Maggie turns to Oliver. Oliver whispers in Maggie's ear. She turns pale white. Maggie whispers in Richard's ear. He goes blank.

RICHARD WALTERS, ESQ.

Your honor, I need a few minutes to confer with my client.

INT. MAGGIE'S COROLLA - LATER

Driving. Maggie's so mad, she's past mad. Oliver's avoiding eye contact.

MAGGIE

I guess gambling at the horse track is like a math lesson. Have to figure out how to bet and all that.

OLIVER

The odds.

MAGGIE

Thank you. And the bar...well I imagine that could fall under current events.

OLIVER

More like social studies.

MAGGIE

Nice. It's the strip club and the hooker that are the ones I can't wrap my head around.

OLIVER

Commerce. And biology?

MAGGIE

Don't talk anymore.

VIN'S BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Vin's wearing only underwear, watering the dirt pit he calls a lawn. It hasn't seen water in a month. Maggie yells out from behind him.

MAGGIE

Vin!

She yells louder.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Vin!

He turns.

VINCENT

Whyyy do you people think mmmmy people cannn't hear?

MAGGIE

What kind of man takes a child gambling, drinking, smoking?

VINCENT

Oh. Goodie.

MAGGIE

Hanging out with prostitutes.

VINCENT

What kind of mother leaves her son with a mannnnn like that?

Ouch.

MAGGIE

Fuck you, Vin.

VINCENT

Now we're talkinnng.

MAGGIE

Fifty-fifty custody with his asshole father now. I have you to thank for that.

VINCENT

You have yourrrrrrrself to thank for that. He needs someone besides his deadbeat mother.

That's rough.

MAGGIE

Good one. Maybe I deserve it. I left him with you. What the hell was I thinking?

VINCENT

Mmmmy sentiments exactly.

MAGGIE

He can't come over here anymore. That's a given. I'll get that fence money to you real soon.

VINCENT

They'll be sommmme interest.

Maggie shakes her head, walks off. Vin squirts the hose, it hits Maggie's back.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Sorrrryy. I'm a littttle slower with the reaction time these days.

MAGGIE

You were never fast. Just stupid.

INT. VIN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Vin sits at his counter. Looking at the biggest pile of bills and mail. He fishes through, tossing most aside. Eventually the answering machine comes into view. The red light is blinking.

Vin hits play.

ANA (V.O.)
Hello, Mr. Vincent. This is Ana
from Sunnyside. I have some news
about your wife, Sandy, sir.

INT. VIN'S CAR - THE NEXT DAY

Daka is driving. Vin riding. The answering machine
plays under.

ANA (V.O.)
(another message)
Mr. Vincent, this is Ana again at
Sunnyside, sir. I've left you a
few messages now. I hope that you
are okay...

INT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - CONTINUOUS

Vin's walking down the hallway. The answering machine
continues.

SHIRLEY (V.O.)
Mr. Canatella, this is Shirley
Jorstin over here at Sunnyside.
Sir, I hate to be the bearer of bad
news, but your wife is dead. And
she's been dead for a few weeks
now. And we haven't heard from
you. Which is concerning as well.

SHIRLEY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Vin's sitting at Shirley's desk. Shirley enters with a
box of personal items.

SHIRLEY
Oookay, Mr. Canatella. Here we go.

Shirley sits. Puts the box on her desk.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
All her personal items are in
there, sir.

Vin looks at the box.

VINCENT
Where is shhhee?

SHIRLEY
Who?

VINCENT
My wwwife.

SHIRLEY
She died, Mr. Canatella.

VINCENT
I know that. Where isss she?

SHIRLEY
(indicates the box)
She's in there, sir.

VINCENT
Where?

SHIRLEY
In the box. Her remains.

Vin is speechless. For once.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
She died a few weeks ago, Mr. Canatella. We tried to contact you several times. So there's that. And when we didn't hear back from you. Well. We just went ahead and followed your death directives, sir.

She pushes a signed paper towards, Vin.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
You did want her cremated. That's what's on the signed directives there.

Vin looks at the paper, then back at the box.

VINCENT
She's in that bbbox?

SHIRLEY
Her remains are, sir. Yes. In a box inside that box. We can't just keep a body lying around. I'm sure you understand. That would be inappropriate. And legally we just can't do that, of course. You could imagine the litigation potential.

Vin stands. Takes the box.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry for your loss, Mr. Canatella.

Vin stares at here, then walks away.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
 There is the other matter of your
 outstanding balance we should
 discuss.

Vin keeps walking.

VINCENT
 (over his back)
 I'll maiilll it to you.

He's gone.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE GROUNDS - LATER

Vin's sitting on the bench in front of the pond. Sandy's
 spot. Daka sits next to him. The box in the middle.

DAKA
 This place is peace.

VINCENT
 It wwwwas.

He lights a smoke.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 Telllll mme what's in there, would
 ya.

Daka opens the lid on the box.

DAKA
 A photo picture of...

Inspects it. Pulls it out. It's Vin and Sandy's wedding
 picture.

DAKA (CONT'D)
 Is this you?

Vin nods.

DAKA (CONT'D)
 This is her?

He nods again.

DAKA (CONT'D)
 You go downhill.

VINCENT
 You'lll ggget there.

She digs around in the box.

DAKA
 There is another box. Like a suede
 or leather kind cover.

VINCENT

Don't touch that one.

Fishes. Pulls out an envelope.

DAKA

This has "Vincent" on writing.

Vin takes the envelope. Opens it. Official looking paperwork...and a key. Hmm.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - GYMNASIUM - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver and Ozinski are sitting against a wall. A dodge ball game in progress in front of them.

OZINSKI

Being with your dad ain't so bad. Least he's around. And wants to see ya.

OLIVER

My mom's the one who hates it.

OZINSKI

That's her problem. These woman gotta learn to let go.

Oliver is impressed with the rare deep thought.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)

I'm seeing a shrink.

OLIVER

That's cool.

OZINSKI

My Ma's makin' me. Thinks me acting out all the time is due to the fact that my father left us and I got no positive male role model in my life. So I do bad shit to get attention.

OLIVER

What's the shrink say?

OZINSKI

He thinks my Ma is overbearing and controlling and actually I'm acting out to rebel against her.

OLIVER

That makes more sense.

OZINSKI

That's what I'm fucking thinkin'.

OLIVER
You talk to her about it.

OZINSKI
No. She'd whop my ass.

A whistle blows. The dodge ball game is over. Next up.

OZINSKI (CONT'D)
Let's tag team these ass fags. You
go high, I'll shoot for the nuts.

Oliver and Ozinski run onto the court.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS

After school. KIDS everywhere. Oliver's walking out
with Ozinski. A HORN honks. Maggie's sitting in her car
in parent pickup.

INT. MAGGIE'S COROLLA - LATER

Maggie's driving. Oliver's riding. And a strange Latin
lady is sitting quietly in the backseat. This is AMELDA.
Oliver's new nanny. Short, stout, pointless.

MAGGIE
It's your father's idea of safer
child care.

OLIVER
Does she speak English?

MAGGIE
(to Amelda)
Poquito?

AMELDA
Si.

MAGGIE
Guess that's good enough.

AMELDA
Si.

MAGGIE
Yes. Si.

OLIVER
Everyday?

MAGGIE
And every other weekend when you go
to your dad's.

Oliver's not thrilled.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
That's the deal now. You get
shuffled back and forth between
your father and I.

OLIVER
He is my dad.

Maggie takes this in.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I know he cheated on you. A bunch
of times. And that why we left.

MAGGIE
You know that?

OLIVER
It's a secret? You tell anybody
who'll listen. Grandma, Aunt Judy,
all the cousins. It's also your
Facebook status.

MAGGIE
I been meaning to change that

Maggie considers this.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I'll just say that I'm single.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - DAY

Backyard. Vin's sitting on a beach chair, staring at the
box with Sandy in it, perched on the lawn table in front
of him.

Oliver walks around the side of the house. Amelda's
right behind him.

VINCENT
You cannnn't be here.

OLIVER
Mom said I could say goodbye.

Oliver just stands there. Not knowing what to say.

VINCENT
That mmmmy replacement?

OLIVER
Yea. I guess so.

VINCENT
She llllllegal?

Amelda chimes in.

AMELDA

Si.

VINCENT

Hate to havvvve to report your
mother to the immagrrrrration and
naatturallllllll-

(to fucking hard to say)

(for Amelda)

She comprendes.

Amelda bulls up.

AMELDA

Mr. Oliver, vamanos.

She makes her way back from where she came.

OLIVER

What's in the box?

VINCENT

Mmmmy wife.

OLIVER

She...died?

VINCENT

No. Sssshe shrunk herself and now
she's living in there rent free.

OLIVER

Oh. I'm really sorry, Vin.

VINCENT

Never understood wwwwwhy people
sssssay that.

OLIVER

They don't know what else to say.

VINCENT

Welllll, it's a shit saying. How
'bout, "What was she like?" "Do
you miss her?" "What're ya gonna
do now?"

Oliver has no words.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Listennnn. Do yourself a favor,
kid, and get a life. Ookay. Stop
living mine. It hasn't been for
shit.

OLIVER

That's not true.

Vin lashes out.

VINCENT

The hhhell do you know about me?
You act like I'm some kinda role
model. Are you stupid?

Oliver strikes back.

OLIVER

Yeah, I'm stupid. Mostly for
thinking you were more than just a
drunk, mean, old man.

Oliver starts to tear.

VINCENT

Don't cry while your fighting.

OLIVER

Don't teach me any more gems, Vin.
Save 'em for the nobody left in
your life.

Toe to toe. Vin backs down.

VINCENT

I guess that's goodbye. Very
touching.

OLIVER

Your sad.

Oliver walks off. Vin stares at the box.

VIN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Vin's sitting on the bed. The box, next to him. He
talks to it.

VINCENT

I loved you to the moon there,
Sandy.

Then...

VINCENT (CONT'D)

So...what nnnnnow?

Vin inspects the room: packed full of shit, memories,
pictures. It hasn't been touched since she left.

Vin grabs a picture of himself and a FEW MARINES posing
in Ho Chi Minh. He studies it. Then throws it in a bag.
He grabs another picture. Then another. Throwing
everything in site, all the memories, pictures,
knickknacks into the bag. Purging.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Vin drags two full trash bag loads of junk across the lawn. He dumps them into trash barrels.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Oliver watches Vin from his bedroom window. He shuts the blinds and sits on his bed. Thinking.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - LIBRARY - DAY

Computer lab. Oliver, Ozinski and OTHER STUDENTS are working on computers, wearing headsets. Oliver digs in his backpack and pulls out Vin's Vietnam picture. The one Vin tossed in the trash.

He flips the picture over, reads the handwritten inscription: "la Drang, Vietnam, 1965. Sgt. Vincent Canatella."

Oliver pecks on his keyboard:

Insert - Google search bar typing: "Sgt. Vincent Canatella."

The search reveals several pages with headings: "War Hero," "Bronze Star," "Sgt. Canatella Rescues Two Officers," "The Battle of la Drang." Etc.

Oliver clicks on the first link and starts reading. A picture of a younger Vin pops up. He's a proud looking soldier.

Oliver hits Ozinski. He leans over and looks.

OZINSKI
(too loud)
That's the old fucker.

Oliver nods. Everyone and their mother heard that.

INT. CRESPI'S CLASS - LATER

Crespi's concluding class. As kids shuffle out.

CRESPI
Two weeks, children. The grand stage, as they say. Our "Saints" assembly. Don't forget to invite your parents, significant others, etc., etc.

Crespi stops Oliver and Ozinski.

CRESPI (CONT'D)
 No expletives in your presentation,
 Ozinski.

OZINSKI
 My name's Robert, sir.

OLIVER
 He doesn't like Ozinski, Brother
 Crespi. Never has.

And with that the two boys walk off.

INT. BANK - DAY

Vin's being escorted through the vault by his favorite
 banker, Terry. He's looking through a file.

TERRY
 She rented the box about eight
 years ago, Mr. Canatella. Prepaid
 to the end of this year actually.

They stop in front of a row of safety deposit boxes.

TERRY (CONT'D)
 I have to key in with you.

Terry puts his key in the slot of a small box. Vin pulls
 his key out of his jacket. Keys in. It opens.

Vin stares at Terry until...

TERRY (CONT'D)
 I'll be outside, sir.

Vin opens the door to the box. There's only one thing
 inside of it: a trifold pamphlet. He pulls it out.
 Unfolds it.

It's a life insurance policy. Vin leans against the
 boxes. Shakes his head at the blessing.

MONTAGE OF OLIVER RESEARCHING, VIN MOVING ON

EXT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - DAY

Ozinski waits on his bike outside Oliver's house. Oliver
 comes running out, jumps on the back of the bike. Amelda
 waddles out after him, holding a jacket. She puts the
 jacket on Oliver. And they take off.

STREETS - LATER

Oliver and Ozinski ride through traffic. Hauling ass.

EXT. THE BUCK - NIGHT

Ozinski's bike is parked in front of the bar.

INT. THE BUCK - NIGHT

Oliver and Ozinski are sitting at the bar drinking Shirley Temples. Oliver is interviewing Gus and Linda.

GUS

Oh heck, he won the Bronze Star in Vietnam. Pulled two officers out of an ambush in Ia Drang. Only a few got outta there.

LINDA

It's famous. He never told ya about it?

OLIVER

No, ma'am.

Oliver takes notes.

EXT. RACETRACK - PARKING LOT - DAY

Vin's car. Daka is driving. Vin directs.

VINCENT

Therrrrre's a spot.

It's handicapped.

DAKA

We don't park this spot.

Vin pulls a handicapped parking placard from the glove box. Hangs it on the rear-view mirror.

VINCENT

Best thing that ever happened to me.

Daka pulls in.

INT. RACETRACK - BREEZEWAY - LATER

Zucko's walking down a quiet breezeway, whistling. He turns a corner.

CRACK! He's hit in the face with a cane. Falls backwards, dazed, bleeding from the mouth. Teeth are gone.

Vin hovers above him, waving his cane.

VINCENT

That'ssss the for the elder abuse,
asshole.

Vin tosses an envelope on Zucko's chest.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

There's my dues. Plus interest.
Don't come around no more. I'm
done with the horses.

Vin walks off, a spring in his step.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - GYMNASIUM - ANOTHER DAY

The chin-up bar. Oliver's pulling with all his might. A
CROWD OF CLASSMATES, lead by Ozinski, scream him on from
the ground.

OZINSKI & CLASSMATES

Oliver! Oliver! Oliver! Oliver!

Coach Mitchell smiles, watching in anticipation.

Oliver strains, pulls, twists. And finally, his chin
goes over the bar. The kids erupt in cheers. Oliver
drops like a sack of potatoes.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - SIDEWALKS - DAY

Oliver is walking towards a new Jaguar parked in parent
pickup. It's his dad, David, waiting.

INT. FROZEN YOGURT SHOP - LATER

Oliver and David are sitting in the window eating frozen
yogurt. David's trying to connect.

DAVID

So. How's things?

OLIVER

Good. Can't complain.

DAVID

Mom. Good?

OLIVER

Yep.

DAVID

Friends?

OLIVER

Dad. We don't have to small talk.
Whatever happened between you and
mom, that's your deal.

(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)
I don't want to be in the middle.
We can just be us. Okay?

DAVID
Got it.

They eat in comfortable silence. Then...

DAVID (CONT'D)
How's school?

Oliver smiles.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE RESIDENCE FOR THE ELDERLY - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver is interviewing Nurse Ana. David's sitting on the lawn a few feet away, waiting. Oliver scribbles in his notebook, lots of notes.

EXT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David carries a sleeping Oliver into the house. Maggie holds the door open.

INT. OLIVER'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

David puts Oliver in bed. Maggie flips the light off.

EXT. MAGGIE & OLIVER'S HOUSE - LATER

Maggie and David stand by David's car. Awkwardness is all they know.

DAVID
I can pick him up after school on Friday.

MAGGIE
Sure.

DAVID
Okay, then.

MAGGIE
Yep.

David gets into the car. Maggie knocks on the passenger window.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
You know, this is okay. I'm okay with it. You're his father. An asshole. But still his father. So. I'll get over it. Just going to take some time.

DAVID

Good night.

MAGGIE

That's all you're going to say?

DAVID

I don't disagree with anything you said. So.

MAGGIE

Even the asshole part.

DAVID

Yes. Even that.

Maggie thinks.

MAGGIE

Alright. Good night.

DAVID

Good night.

David drives off.

INT. HOME DEPOT - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver and Ozinski are loading a cart full of fence building materials. Pickets, posts, nails, etc.

CHECK OUT COUNTER - MOMENTS LATER

David pays for the supplies.

EXT. STREETS - LATER

David's SUV cruises down the road. Fencing supplies tied haphazardly to the roof.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - LATER

Vin is peeking out the living room blinds. Watching Oliver, Ozinski and Amelda fixing his fence.

VINCENT

(re: the fence)
Ttthat'll be straight.

He shuts the blinds.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Oliver, Ozinski and Amelda are working on the fence. Amelda's the "foreman," as she's the only one who knows what she's doing.

Daka pulls up in Vin's car. Lumbers down the driveway with a bag of groceries.

DAKA
Does he know you fix this?

OLIVER
He peeks through the blinds every few minutes.

DAKA
He don't come looking?

OLIVER
Nope.

DAKA
(disgusted)
This one. Still play the stroke card.

INT. NAT'S BROOKLYN DINER - ANOTHER DAY

Oliver is interviewing Daka. Amelda is eating, along for the ride. Daka is holding a flier for Oliver's school assembly: "Saints Among Us."

DAKA
Why you want him come see this?
He's big asshole.

OLIVER
I think he's just misunderstood.
By himself mostly.

DAKA
Cause asshole, yes?

OLIVER
That's a possibility.

Jesus comes over, refills Daka's coffee.

DAKA
(to Jesus)
Jesus. I look for job application.
You have this?

JESUS
Si.

DAKA
You bring for me?

JESUS

Si.

Jesus is off. Oliver's impressed.

DAKA

They need someone speak English for here.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. OLIVER'S HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

Oliver's room is full of Vin's pictures. The memories rescued from the trash. Oliver's getting ready for school. Standing in front of a mirror, tying a Windsor Knot on his tie. Maggie calls from the kitchen.

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Oliver. Breakfast is ready.

Oliver furrows with confusion.

THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Oliver walks in to find a full pancake breakfast. Bacon. Toast. The works. A big surprise in this household. Maggie's pouring OJ.

MAGGIE

Gotta have fuel for your big day.

Oliver is touched.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I took the day off.

He hugs his mom.

OLIVER

Thanks, mom.

MAGGIE

You're welcome, bub.

Somehow Maggie's become a mother.

OLIVER

I love you.

MAGGIE

Don't get sentimental on me.

She kisses his head.

INT. VIN'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Vin's sitting is his Lazy Boy, zoned out on Abbott & Costello. Daka rushes into the room.

DAKA

I think my water is broken.

VINCENT

Callllll a plumber.

She kicks his chair.

DAKA

Get up. Fuck.

Vin climbs out of his chair. Damn baby.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The auditorium is packed to the gills with STUDENTS, TEACHERS, PARENTS and GUESTS. The curtain opens and Brother Crespi's entire class walks out and takes seats behind the on-stage podium. Oliver and Ozinski sit next to each other. Friends for life.

A projection screen displays the banner, "Saints Among Us." The CROWD applauds.

INT. VIN'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Daka is driving like a nut. Vin's white knuckled. He tries to light a cigarette. Daka swipes it from his mouth, tosses it out the window.

DAKA

When you become like man?

She shakes her head in disgust, then goes back to fake deep breathing.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Brother Crespi steps up to the podium and announces the next speaker.

BROTHER CRESPI

Our next speaker is Mr. Oliver Bronstein.

The CROWD claps. Maggie hoots from her seat. She's sitting next to ex-husband David. They may end up civil.

Oliver walks up to the podium. Strong. Courageous. A different kid than the one who couldn't utter a word in front of his class. He clears his throat.

OLIVER

Saints are human beings we
celebrate for their dedication and
commitment to other human beings.
Brother Cary Crespi, circa around
January...

Laughs.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - CONTINUOUS

Daka whips the car into the school's lot. Pulls into a
handicapped spot. Vin is suspect.

VINCENT

This isn't the hospital.

Daka tosses the flier in his lap.

DAKA

Get inside.

Daka steps out of the car, moves on. Vin looks at the
flier.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Oliver's in mid-presentation. On the massive projection
screen behind him, we see a portrait of St. William of
Rochester. Click. The screen refreshes, and a picture
of Vin pops up.

OLIVER

For my modern day saint, I chose a
man who shares many of the same
qualities as St. William of
Rochester: Mr. Vincent Canatella.

He continues.

INT. ST. FRANCIS DE SALES - CONTINUOUS

Outside the auditorium. Vincent stands in front of a
marquee board. It's the "Saint Wall." Under each
student's name are two pictures: a real Saint next to a
Modern Day Saint.

Under Oliver Bornstein, we find: St. William of Rochester
and...Vincent Canatella. And he's one fucked-up looking
"saint." Eyes black, face distorted, assuredly on drugs,
lying in his hospital bed.

Vin stares at the picture of himself.

He hears Oliver's voice within. Walks to the auditorium
doors.

OLIVER (O.S.)
 Mr. Canatella was born in Newark,
 NJ, in 1950, the son of first
 generation Italian immigrants.

Vin cracks the door open. Just as he's doing this a
 PRIEST comes up behind him and opens it the rest of the
 way.

FATHER
 (whispers)
 After you...

Vin defaults. Walks in first. He stands at the back of
 the auditorium. Oliver continues:

OLIVER
 Growing up poor on the streets of
 New Jersey, Vincent learned all the
 things a kid shouldn't need to
 know. Fighting, cursing and
 gambling.

The slide show shuffles images of VINCENT AS A BABY.
 Then a YOUNG BOY. Poor. Tough. Street. Pictures of a
 hard life. All the memories Vin had tossed in the trash.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 In 1965, as a member of United
 States Army's 5th Regiment, Vincent
 was among the 450 soldiers dropped
 into the la Drang Valley, and
 immediately ambushed by 2000 enemy
 troops.

A headshot of Vincent as a young Marine in Vietnam.
 Smoking a cigarette, proud, strong.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 There he heroically saved the lives
 of two wounded officers pinned down
 by enemy fire and carried them to
 safety.

Newspaper clippings of Vin's heroics. A picture of Vin
 receiving the Bronze Star. In the back of the
 auditorium, Vin is frozen...seeing his life through the
 eyes of another.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 I imagine the best way I can tell
 you who Vincent Canatella is...is
 to tell you what he's done for me.

For the first time, Oliver sees Vin standing in back.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 When my mom and I first moved here,
 we knew no one.

(MORE)

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 And Mr. Canatella took me in. When
 he didn't have to. And probably
 didn't want to.

Laughter.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 But he did it anyhow. That's what
 saints do.

A wedding picture of Vin and Sandy pops up on the screen.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 We visited his wife of forty years,
 Sandy, who recently passed away.
 Vin's done her laundry every week
 for the past eight years, long
 after she no longer recognized him.

Another picture of Vin and Sandy.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Because saints never give up.

A picture of VIN AS A FIGHTER, with boxing gloves on.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 He taught me how to fight. How to
 stand my ground and be brave. How
 to speak up and be bold.

Maggie is crying. David hands her a tissue.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Because saints fight for themselves
 and others. So that they might be
 heard.

Vin is glued, hearing what he means to another, is the
 warmth that melts an iceberg.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 He taught me how to gamble. Horse
 racing, Keno, the over and under.
 Which is a big reason why I'm
 grounded till I'm eighteen.

Laughs.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 But in that I learned how to take
 risks and go for broke. Because in
 life the odds can be stacked
 against you.

A picture of Vin's cat, Felix.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 This is Vin's cat, Felix, who eats
 gourmet cat food. While Vin eats
 sardines.

The CROWD loves it.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Because saints make sacrifices.

Maggie, David and Daka are mesmerized, proud, inspired.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Mr. Vincent Canatella is flawed.
 He's rough, drinks too much, smokes
 and curses. He's angry, mad at the
 world, and I'm sure full of
 regrets.

Vin takes it in.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Because after all, saints are human
 beings. Very human beings.

The picture of St. William next to Vincent replays on the
 projection screen.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Courage, sacrifice, compassion and
 humanity. These are the markings
 of a saint. And what makes Mr.
 Vincent Canatella not so far
 removed from St. William of
 Rochester...

Vin's picture solos on the presentation.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 And with that, I'd like to present
 my friend and baby sitter, Mr.
 Vincent Canatella for sainthood.
 And hereby proclaim him St. Vincent
 of Van Wyck street.

The place is wild with applause.

Vin doesn't know what to do. People are looking around
 for him. Finally...he starts walking down the aisle.

Brother Crespi helps Vin up the steps. And towards
 Oliver, who's holding the "Saint Medal."

Vin steps in front of Oliver. He leans over as Oliver
 puts the medal around his neck.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Thank you, sir.

VINCENT

Thanks, kkkid.

And...without warning...Vin gets a tear in his eye.
Maybe for the first time in his life.

PEOPLE rise in their seats to applaud him.

Oliver hugs Vin.

INT. MISSION HILLS HOSPITAL - ANOTHER DAY

The break room. Oliver and Vin stand in front of a vending machine, considering their options. Vin's wearing scrubs. His speech impediment is not so abstruse.

VINCENT

They got the same selection from
when I was a kid.

OLIVER

Surely not. They'd be really
rotten by now.

VINCENT

Nah. They're all jacked up on
preservatives. Crap has the half
life of plutonium.

Oliver digs in his pocket for change.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I got it. I owe you money anyhow.
What's it going to be?

OLIVER

The hard pretzels.

VINCENT

Just what I was looking at.

Vin puts coins in the slot.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Hit the buttons would ya. If I do
it, we'll end up with Twinkies.

Oliver keys in the selection.

OLIVER

If you hit it just right...you
can...

Oliver hits the machine just as the bag of pretzels is
about to drop.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

...get two for the price of one.

A second bag of pretzels drops down behind the first.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Pretty cool.

Oliver grabs both bags, hands one to Vin.

VINCENT
And we call that stealing.

Oliver thinks about it. A NURSE pops her head into the room.

NURSE
Mr. Canatella, it's about that time.

Vin rushes off.

VINCENT
Hold your horses.

Oliver stands there, eating his pretzels. He digs into his pockets, grabs some change and slips it in the coin slot. He walks off.

INT. LABOR & DELIVERY ROOM - LATER

Daka is in the final stages of giving birth. She's calm and focused. A DOCTOR between her legs calls out the final push. The BABY is crowning.

DOCTOR
One more time. Big breath. Big push.

DAKA
You say one more time every time you say.

DOCTOR
This time I mean it. You're almost there.

Daka pushes. And a BABY is born. The doctor does his thing, suctioning, inspecting.

DAKA
Let me look.

The doctor holds her up.

DOCTOR
Here she is.

The baby cries. A voice from the corner breaks the moment:

VINCENT (O.S.)

What is it?

Vin has one foot in the room, one out.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Black, white, ugly?

DAKA

Get out now. Fuck.

VINCENT

What's wrong with asking?

A Nurse takes the baby.

NURSE

(to Daka)

You want him to cut the cord?

DAKA

No. No touch the child.

VINCENT

I'm a little shaky. Let a professional handle that.

The Nurse cuts the cord. Vin sneaks a closer look at the baby.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Sure aren't pretty when they pop out.

DAKA

Get out of here.

Vin walks off. Mumbles.

VINCENT

When she's doped up...no sense 'a humor.

The doctor rests the baby on Daka's bosom.

DAKA

Come here. My little princessa.
Let me hold you.

INT. VIN'S HOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

A "family" dinner. Daka is serving a homemade meal of spaghetti and green beans. Fancy it's not.

Oliver and Ozinski sit on one side of the table. Maggie on the opposite side. The baby's in a bassinet, set within a high chair. And Vin is in the captain's seat.

VINCENT
 (re: the food)
 It's colorful. I'll say that.

DAKA
 How you try don't say nothing.

MAGGIE
 I love green beans.

Oliver jumps in.

OLIVER
 You do?

MAGGIE
 Sure. Don't get 'em that often.

OZINSKI
 My ma makes 'em out of the can.

VINCENT
 That's why your brain is stilted.

Daka sits. Vin starts to dig in.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
 Well. Beats hunger. By a hair.

Everyone just stares at him.

OLIVER
 Don't you want to say something?

VINCENT
 Like what?

OLIVER
 A blessing or something.

Vin thinks. Lowers his head, closes his eyes. Thinks better.

VINCENT
 I better not.

Figures.

EXT. VIN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The camera pulls back from the house, as the MAILMAN, on all fours on the front lawn, shoves mail in the felled box.

VINCENT (O.S.)
 You waiting for a paper invitation?
 This crap ain't good enough to eat cold.

We float past the "fixed" fence and up into the atmosphere above Brooklyn.

FADE TO BLACK.

The end.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION
BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
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