

---

Senior Projects Spring 2020

Bard Undergraduate Senior Projects

---

Spring 2020

## Fell Awake

Caleb M A Short  
*Bard College*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj\\_s2020](https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_s2020)



Part of the [Film Production Commons](#), and the [Screenwriting Commons](#)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](#).

---

### Recommended Citation

Short, Caleb M A, "Fell Awake" (2020). *Senior Projects Spring 2020*. 182.  
[https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj\\_s2020/182](https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_s2020/182)

This Open Access work is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been provided to you by Bard College's Stevenson Library with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this work in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@bard.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@bard.edu).

Caleb Madison Alexander Short

Artist's Statement

### 'Fell Awake'

"My birthday was yesterday, was it not?"

In my senior thesis film I explore the transience of life, of time, and interpersonal relationship.

We follow our central character, Elias, during the night of his 21st birthday party and the day to follow. In this new day, time, space, and the relationships with those closest to him have changed.

"All time is immemorial. The present is the future ignored, the past not remembered;  
but how can you hold on to thin air?"

awake

Written by  
Caleb M A Short

Copyright (c) 2019

Draft 10 , tivoli

caleb.m.a.short@gmail.com  
32 Broadway, Tivoli, New York, 12583

awake

FROM BLACK

The right eye of ELIAS, a young boy only the age of five. His bright, gleaming blue eye is so vast and beautiful it looks like the home of a lost galaxy.

He blinks.

We see where Elias is looking: a ceiling the color of light blue, and a yellow toy airplane that enters frame left.

The hand of DELILAH, Elias's mother, is revealed in light red nail polish. We hear the sound of wind pressed through her teeth as she steers the plane against the blue ceiling.

DELILAH

There once was a little boy, who  
dreamed he was awake... and when he  
was awake, he dreamed he was asleep.

A slow zoom out reveals Delilah in full frame and the side of Elias, who sits in a bathtub. Elias's father, SAM, stands in the background of the frame watching from the doorway. Suddenly the plane putters, pats, and falls from the sky.

DELILAH (cont'd)

From where he did come from, and  
where was he going? This little  
boy... This little boy.

As the plane travels underwater, we travel with it; bubbles brush up against the plane's yellow body. Elias pushes his head underwater.

ELIAS (AGE 21) (V.O.)

We are all fed on melancholy.

The plane continues to travel underwater.

ELIAS (AGE 21) (V.O.) (cont'd)

The exit. The return.

CUT TO:

INT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- NIGHTTIME

Elias, age 21 now, rapidly brings his head out of a fully drawn sink, breathing in quickly.

The bathroom door swings open and LANA, long black hair, 22, intense and beautiful, grabs Elias by the hand and -

Elias turns back for a moment to flush the toilet.

Lana grabs his hand again and leads him through a series of rooms downstairs; then an upstairs hallway. As they walk they pass by people talking, drinking, smoking; a house party is underway.

The hallway is full of mostly closed doors, separately dubbed on sheets of white printer paper: 'Smoking Only' 'Playing Only' and 'Playing Music Only.' Large paintings of geometrical forms and visceral movements in blue, black, white, purple, and gray line the hallway.

Lana leads Elias into an open door where a large group of Elias's friends are waiting for him. JAMIE, tall with long blonde hair in a strong and tight ponytail, is highlighted among the group.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK CITY -- CHILDHOOD APARTMENT -- GOLDEN HOUR

Delilah holds a birthday cupcake and Sam hovers behind her.

Young Elias stands up in the tub, preparing to blow out the candles.

Delilah sings with a talk-like cadence, an angelic hum.

DELILAH

Haappy birthday to you, haappy  
birthday to you

CUT TO:

INT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- NIGHTTIME

Elias stands with a spectral and ominous nature over the many candles of his 21st birthday cake. Friends surround him cheering and singing, but we still only hear the voice of Delilah.

DELILAH

Haaapy Biiirthday Dear Elias, Haapy  
Biirthday to you.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK CITY -- CHILDHOOD APARTMENT -- GOLDEN HOUR

Young Elias blows out the candles on his cake, and looks above their dying flame.

CUT TO:

INT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- NIGHTTIME

Elias blows out his candles and their large, bending flame fills our view.

FRAME FOR FRAME  
CUT:

INT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- NIGHTTIME

We see Elias in the background; watching from the same place where he formerly blew out his candles. There are other college students present, scattered around the room. In the foreground we see the back of a man's head: his name is R, he possess a certain modern oddity and renaissance elegance in an intimate room lit in reds and blues, before an audience of a couple of handfuls of people. R is holding a toy microphone.

R:  
I've been coming here a long time...  
We've all been coming, back, here, a  
long time haven't we? This strange  
college house. Coming back, here, is  
almost over.

R nods, for himself and himself alone.

R: (cont'd)  
Back, is a funny word.

R looks into the audience.

R: (cont'd)  
You face the future and your back  
points back, in a different time than  
your head. And your head, is a-head

R points ahead of himself.

R: (cont'd)  
Of what you can't get - back.

R slowly bends over to set the toy microphone on the ground.  
Claps and sounds from onlooking friends.

R bends over the mic on the floor.

R: (cont'd)  
Elias, your birthday, your house, how  
about you're up next...

We track Elias, from his seat on top of a dresser with  
Jamie, then as he moves through the crowd to take the stage  
(an area of the room taped off with white tape on black  
floorboards) in the back of the room.

R is looking at Elias, clapping lightly and slowly at an odd  
but consistent pace. He shakes Elias's hand when Elias  
approaches the stage. Elias picks up the microphone.

Elias clears his throat.

ELIAS  
Well.

He takes a breath. He looks around at the audience.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
I don't believe in many things, but,  
I do believe in melancholy. It's  
like, playing fetch with the void...

Elias pauses for a moment.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
We feel meaningless, sad, depraved.  
Stuck in repetition, you tell life to  
run and catch a bone. And there's the  
void: the only thing you'll ever have  
other than yourself; but it floats.

Elias takes another moment.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
You don't die totally alone. You die  
with your alone-ness. And, when life  
comes back at you with a saliva  
smitten grin and a half chewed bone  
its mouth, you know it'll always be  
the same, but at least you can play  
fetch.

Silence. People clap; a hoot, a holler. Elias returns to his seat atop a dresser, next to Jamie. There is a sharpness about Jamie, in his dress, in his disposition.

JAMIE  
Morose fucking poetry for your 21st birthday, mate.

Elias turns to Jamie with a wry smile.

ELIAS  
Thanks, Jamie.

JAMIE  
When'd you write it?

ELIAS  
Yesterday.

Jamie turns toward Elias with a light smile, almost smirk.

JAMIE  
Which yesterday?

Elias chuckles under his breath; he furrows his brow with amused surprise.

ELIAS  
You fucker.

He looks back to the stage.

Lana takes the stage. She turns on the interior lighting of the microphone; a large, blue light surrounds her. She is smoking a cigarette.

LANA  
For Elias. Happy 21. You're that much closer, darling.

Lana stares into the audience in silence. She takes a long time smoking that cigarette.

LANA (cont'd)  
No, I do not have my coffee with cigarettes.

Lana flicks her cigarette into the crowd. Received by a couple of gasps, it lands on a pile of books.

LANA (cont'd)  
I don't kill myself for fun and the price of an apple.

She turns her head to look at Elias and they lock eyes.

LANA (cont'd)

If I killed myself it would be poetic, tragic, with a flair for the absurd and the void coming back at me with the bone its mouth before I bent down... like I never did before, and barked right back at it. Snarling with the tension of the universe, spit and mucus flying from my mouth as my teeth were gnarled away, struggling to outdo the canine's canines -- that void has a sharp, mouth.

Lana laughs under her breath. She walks lengthwise with the stage, far to her right side. We see GUY watching Lana from the audience; he is the embodiment of Northeast prep; there is a clinical precision about his stare; he seems unsettled.

LANA (cont'd)

I'd bark.

Lana does a dance like full turn, before facing the audience again.

LANA (cont'd)

And I'd pout. And I'd probably read something from Shakespeare as I turned over onto the ground and lied in my own grave. So no, I do not have my coffee with cigarettes.

Lana does a light bow to applause from the crowd. She comes down from stage, walking toward Elias. She looks at him sweetly, and says:

LANA (cont'd)

That one was for you... obviously.

She kisses him on the cheek.

LANA (cont'd)

(a whisper into his ear)

Happy Birthday.

R approaches the group.

R:  
 (holding the end of a  
 cigarette)  
 Lana, I believe this is yours.

LANA  
 Thanks R.

Lana grabs the cigarette, then reaching for her lighter to light it.

LANA (cont'd)  
 Why don't you go by a name longer  
 than R again, R?

R:  
 Nothing better suits me.

Lana cocks her head slightly to the side with a quizzical smile.

LANA  
 Makes sense.

Lana takes a puff of her cigarette.

LANA (cont'd)  
 You know Mercury is in retrograde  
 tonight?

R:  
 I heard that.

LANA  
 I'm sure you did R. Does Mercury's  
 period mean anything to you Jamie,  
 Elias?

ELIAS  
 I think it *means* its a relatively  
 arbitrary thing that gives people  
 something to talk about.

JAMIE  
 Right, no harm in it but, not much  
 use either.

Elias and Jamie exchange a look.

LANA  
 Right. Mr. Elias, newly 21, and he  
 doesn't believe in anything.

ELIAS

Well if I saw it with my own eyes,  
that's a different story.

Lana looks intently at Elias; she passes through Jamie and Elias, gracing Elias's hand.

LANA

Let's see if we can see it then.

Lana pushes through Jamie and Elias, touching Elias's hand.

Lana now fills our view; she stands in the foreground of the red-lit room before the door; it barges open, people are streaming in, laughing, falling -- the diegetic sound of the party starts to fade out, Lana smiles wide.

LANA (cont'd)

(beckoning)

Hmmm?

Intense, hypnotic music overtakes the sound of the party.

Montage: R begins to motion like he is interested in following, Jamie puts his arm around R, saying/mouthing "We'll hang back," Elias starts to walk towards Lana; Lana flashes in and out of view like a phantom as she approaches the door, as she goes downstairs, as she enters the dance-floor; Lana looks back at Elias, Elias gets close to Lana, Lana is pulled away to talk to someone, Elias stands alone, people are drinking, people are smoking, Lana starts dancing, Elias talks to someone but isn't listening, Elias starts to dance, now he and Lana dance together; the whole crowd is dancing.

Montage continued: Lana swan dives backwards in the midst of the crowd, eyes closed. Elias looks up as well. Among the crowd, which undulates like a wave, we notice Guy; he barely dances. Our view is from the ceiling, Elias looking slightly past us. The red, dancing people cross-fade with a deep blue-black, starry sky.

EXT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- NIGHTTIME

A plume of smoke enters and fills our view, rolling through the sky.

Lana leans her head on Elias. They are sitting on the grass, Elias's hands behind him to hold them up. The light of the house party can be seen in the background where a few people talk on the porch and one person is helping another, who's rolling in the grass.

LANA  
I meant what I said.

Lana takes a pull.

LANA (cont'd)  
But I like the release.

An audible "aaahh," Lana breathes out a plume of smoke.

ELIAS  
You like the company. You have  
cigarettes. I have sports teams.

Elias motions Guy, who is rolling on the ground.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
He's got his -

Guy begins to throw up.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
Not anymore.

Lana begins to mush out her cigarette into the grass.

LANA  
Well I'm, going

With each word, a harder mush.

LANA (cont'd)  
To buck -

Again.

LANA (cont'd)  
The trend.

There is almost nothing left of the cigarette.

LANA (cont'd)  
Just dust, just like me. 'For thou  
art ash, and to ash, thou shalt  
return,' Elias.

Lana chuckles.

LANA (cont'd)  
My parents raised me Catholic, can't  
you tell?

ELIAS  
You have a very holy disposition  
Lana, it's no secret.

Silence. Lana and Elias look at one another. Lana touches her golden cross necklace.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
But what about the cross?

LANA  
It's punk, or ironic... or in case  
he's actually real. Don't you ever  
feel alone?

Lana lies back on the grass.

ELIAS  
Yeah, always.

Elias lies back too.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
Candy, crosses, and cigarettes.

Silence. They stare at the stars.

LANA  
You never wanted to hold on to  
anything? What's wrong with that.

Elias looks at Lana. Then back at the sky.

ELIAS  
I did. I always have. When I was a  
kid I wanted order. I wanted things  
to be definite, and real. I wanted Oz  
to pull back the curtain and show me  
that nothing was a lie.

Elias chuckles and takes a breath.

And behind the veil... would fly a  
bird. A wild, yellow bird. My life  
has always had so much movement,  
Lana. New York is a big city and my  
parents were always busy. I wanted  
that bird to just... stay the same, I  
guess.

They're both lying in the grass, staring at the stars.

LANA  
Where are you, little bird?

Elias smiles.

They look at each other.

Elias touches Lana's golden necklace, it twinkles in the moonlight.

Another plume of smoke enters the night sky.

LANA (cont'd)  
You don't believe in God, do you,  
Elias?

Elias smiles at Lana; they're still inches from each others lips. They whisper.

ELIAS  
I don't see him.

LANA  
Well... tell me what you believe in.  
I dare you.

ELIAS  
I---

He looks into her eyes. The tension holds.

Elias is suddenly dragged by two large hands from the ground and thrown towards the street.

Without a word, Guy punches Elias directly in the face with remarkable force.

He stands over Elias, punching him further.

We remain on Elias, who lies on the ground, staring up. His eye bleeding; his face bruised; mouth agape and stunned.

Lana runs up to Guy and pushes him away.

LANA (O.S.)  
What the fuck?!

Guy looks at Lana, hurt. He shakes his head.

Elias watches from the ground. He begins to get up as Guy too starts to walk away.

The shadow of Guy looks back at Elias.

Guy keeps walking down the long driveway.

Some people from the party, R and Jamie included, have now come outside to observe the commotion.

Lana tries to talk to Elias. Elias is dizzy, his eye is bleeding. He doesn't listen to Lana, and follows after Guy.

Elias presses his hand over his bleeding eye.

ELIAS

Hey!

Guy doesn't look back; he keeps walking.

Elias is still trailing him from some 10-20 feet behind. Elias musters the strength to speak, resisting the urge to fall over.

ELIAS (cont'd)

Heeyy. Hey.

Guy crosses the road and passes onto the sidewalk bridge, and Elias continues to follow him from the edge of the driveway.

He speaks as if Guy is two feet away.

ELIAS (cont'd)

Where are you going?

Elias has stumbled into the middle of the road; practically fallen over, he looks across the road in a daze.

His gaze wanders to something closer to him.

A yellow, hovering object. It looks like a bird.

At closer glance, it is a bird; floating there before him in the white-yellow lamplight.

Elias stares at it, stunned, suspended in time.

Then he looks up, a car's yellow headlights storm down the bridge. It looks like Elias is about to be hit.

CUT TO:

EXT. SWIMMING POOL -- ELIAS'S CHILDHOOD -- MID DAY SUN

Elias's father, Sam, pulls young Elias, age 8, up through the brightly blue saturated water of a swimming pool; Elias is gleeful and laughing; his father lifts him into the air.

Delilah watches from her seat outside the pool.

Sam starts to dunk him underwater again; Elias's eyes are wide open as he stares from underwater, he wriggles away and starts to swim to the end of the lane.

We see Elias swim from angles both above water and underwater.

His mother and father look on smiling.

Elias bobs his head above the water, breathing in, looking at his mother and father.

Young Elias looks up as the mid-day sun rotates into prominence above the pool.

The pool, and Elias, are filled by a brilliant yellow light.

Elias squints, starting to close his eyes.

EXT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- ELIAS'S ROOM -- DAYTIME

Elias wakes up in a vibrant yellow haze of light.

He gets out of bed and approaches the window. He observes the bright daylight and the cars passing over the bridge.

A bell rings.

He hears it again.

He tracks the sound of the bell to the corner of his room adjacent to the staircase. He grabs hold of its line and begins walking downstairs. The stairwell now is noticeably cleaner.

INT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- KITCHEN -- DAYTIME

Elias reaches the kitchen; which, too, is noticeably cleaner and updated.

He walks towards the window and looks outside. We see his view of outside from his perspective.

We see his reflection in the window; he does too; his eye, which is now no longer black, has a small scar at the ridge of his orbital bone.

Elias turns to the refrigerator; he stoops down and opens it; it is stocked with fresh ingredients. Suddenly his mother has entered the kitchen, and kisses him on the cheek.

DELILAH

Hi Honey. How's the morning treating you?

Elias doesn't respond.

Delilah goes to the stove where bacon is sizzling.

DELILAH (cont'd)

Not one for words on your special day, are we?

ELIAS

I -

DELILAH

What was that?

Elias goes to take a seat at the dining room table.

ELIAS

Why aren't you in the city?

DELILAH

New York! It's a washing machine honey, of sights, and sounds, and smells. You start off so pure! You're like this, white linen dress, from wherever the hell it is your from, and, all of a sudden your marauded by all of the glass and concrete and other peoples illnesses and grievances, their *punk concerts* and failed stand up comedy "hobbies."

Delilah turns to Elias, waving her spatula as she does so.

DELILAH (cont'd)

Poor people who wanna be rich, rich people who wanna be poor, aesthetic... status... rebellion, I mean who gives a fuck, Elias! I don't anymore.

ELIAS

Mom. Why are you her-

DELILAH

And the whole point, Elias, of people in New York is to look like they don't care, so much... but that's because all they *want you to do* is care. They've been on the heavy cycle of humanity wishing and washing around thinking that if they define themselves so **loudly!**- Then the world will have to make sense, and listen, and care. And believe them that they're not just another New Yorker -... but that's what makes them all the same. All these cool, lusty, dreamy eyed... *lost* New Yorkers.

A pick up truck rolls into the driveway. The door slams shut. A man begins walking toward the house. He wears a khaki workman's suit and a yellow hard hat.

DELILAH (cont'd)

I've had my fill. You know, the wishing and the washing. I just want to be put in the fucking dryer for god's sake! High heat! Put me in the dryer.

The door opens and swings shut.

Sam begins to enter the kitchen.

DELILAH (cont'd)

How was work, dear?

Sam is walking to the refrigerator. He stops, and Delilah's red lipstick plants a kiss firmly on the side of his cheek. Sam then turns to Elias, who is clearly very confused.

SAM

Elias.

ELIAS

Hi, Dad...

Sam takes off his coat and places it on the seat next to Elias; it bears his name, stitched.

SAM

Work was fine.

Standing just a couple of feet from Elias, Sam smiles a small close lipped smile.

Sam turns to the refrigerator and grabs a beer.

SAM (cont'd)  
I'll be upstairs.

DELILAH  
Alright, dear, don't be a stranger.  
I'll have dinner ready soon.

Delilah turns off the stove-top range.

ELIAS  
Dinner?

DELILAH  
Well it's 3pm honey, you slept a very long time.

Delilah looks at him intently, inquisitively. She's searching for something in his eyes. She pauses.

DELILAH (cont'd)  
Here's your breakfast.

Delilah slides two eggs as eyes, with a slit at the bottom as a smile, and bacon for eyebrows onto a plate that she puts before Elias.

She wipes her hands on her apron as she walks across the room.

DELILAH (cont'd)  
And now *I* am going to go and get food for dinner.

Elias walks across the room and stops her. He looks intently into her eyes.

ELIAS  
Mom. Why are you here. Why is dad in a fucking hardhat?

DELILAH  
What?

ELIAS  
You didn't tell me you were coming.

DELILAH

You.- are, *confusing* me, Elias. I  
don't know what you're talking about.

Delilah turns and grabs her coat. She shakes her head;  
concerned.

DELILAH (cont'd)

I don't know what you've been talking  
about all morning.

Delilah realizes she may have hurt Elias; she may have been  
too curt just now.

DELILAH (cont'd)

But I love you, honey. Now eat your  
breakfast, and I'll be back soon.

Delilah leaves the house.

Elias looks at his breakfast but instead walks throughout  
the house. He notices how much it's changed; cleaner, and in  
some ways updated.

He looks out a window, seeing his mom walk across the wintry  
bridge. He looks out again from another window. He notices  
she looks back, in her white boots.

He keeps walking until he finds the staircase.

He can hear classical music from the base of the stairs.

Elias walks up the stairs.

He sees his father, alone, in the room.

INT. TIVOLI NY -- COLLEGE HOME -- SAM'S STUDY -- DAYTIME

Classical music from a vinyl record player fills the study.

Elias enters the study.

Sam is taking off his second jacket; his back to Elias, he  
walks to his chair, brown and worn, set before a triad of  
windows that look outside to the town bridge. He looks back  
toward Elias for a moment; then back to his chair. The back  
of his hair is matted; the back of his neck, black with ash  
resin and coal smut.

Elias stands behind watching; he looks around the room, at the objects and trinkets that characterize this new version of the father he formerly knew.

Sam, now seated, places the needle of a vinyl record player on a record of classical music.

Elias remains in the back of the frame, watching his father. His father lights incense from mantles on his desk that sit on either side of him.

ELIAS

Dad?

Sam does not turn around; instead, the music picks up; Sam cranes his head back in his chair.

SAM

One second, Elias.

Sam turns around in his chair to look at Elias.

SAM (cont'd)

I'm tired.

The music builds. Sam's eyes remain tightly shut, he breathes in deeply through his mouth.

Elias remains unsettled, confused; he begins to pace, lightly, around the room.

We see outside the triad of windows a young woman approach the house.

We see Elias again walking around the study, observing the books, the knick-knacks that belong to his father.

The young woman is Lana; she enters the house. She wears austere clothing of black and a large white, lace hat, and dark red lipstick. She closes her eyes and breathes in deeply.

We see Elias's father again, his eyes and mouth closed. He breathes in deeply, subtly, through his nose. Elias stands behind him against a wall of books in the right of the frame.

Lana begins to dance and twirl to the classical score as she moves through the bottom of the house towards the stairwell.

Elias's father turns around in his chair, and, without looking at Elias, begins to get up to exit the room.

Elias reaches out to grab his shoulder.

ELIAS

Da-

Elias's father pushes away his hand.

SAM

Elias. Look. I've had a long day. I'm going to wash,.. up.

He begins to walk away. Before grabbing a towel hanging near the door, he turns back to look at him.

SAM (cont'd)

Okay?... Do you have a problem with that.

ELIAS

I just want to talk! Okay? I went to bed-

Sam hangs his head down.

SAM

Please.

ELIAS

-last night, and when I woke up

SAM

(terse, very loud)  
Elias shut up. Shut up.

ELIAS

I-

SAM

Stop talking.

Sam grabs his towel.

SAM (cont'd)

I'm going to take a shower.

Elias looks ahead, disoriented and vulnerable as his father exits the room and the door swings shut.

Elias walks to his father's desk, where the record player continues to play.

He picks the needle up and down, watching as it scratches the record, as sound scratches the air -- the music should stop with every elevation of the needle, yet the music we formerly understood to be diegetic -- continues to play in Elias's mind.

LANA

Why'd you turn it off?

Elias turns around quickly. The music swells. Lana is standing in the frame of the door.

She walks in.

ELIAS

(confused)

Hey.

LANA

It's good to see you, Elias.

ELIAS

Lana, what are you doing here?

LANA

Oh.

Lana doesn't say anything more. She walks up to Elias.

She's standing a foot away from him; she brushes one of his bangs to the side.

LANA (cont'd)

Don't worry about that.

They look at each other. Lana has a tight, but warm smile.

She turns and walks a couple of paces, gingerly, towards the other side of the room. She stops in front of the towel rack where Sam's towel formerly hung. She stares at it quietly.

LANA (cont'd)

Where's your father?

ELIAS

(confused, perturbed)

I believe he's in the shower.

Lana smiles.

LANA

Mmmm.

ELIAS

Why?

Lana tilts here head to the side.

LANA

Well because I want to see him,  
that's why.

Lana begins to exit the room.

Elias follows.

ELIAS

Lana what the fuck are you talking  
about?

They walk toward the bathroom. Lana gets closer to the  
bathroom door; she looks back at Elias.

LANA

He's such a hard worker, your father.  
Working *all* day in those mines. I  
love it, the coal, the smut. He's all  
covered in it.

Lana drags her finger across the top of the shower doorknob  
(covered in black smut after being opened by the hand of  
Sam); she brings her finger to her mouth.

LANA (cont'd)

The dirt. It's like direct *testament*  
to his will, to his strength.

She closes her eyes and leans her head back, biting her lip,  
her hand on her chest.

She puts her finger to her mouth and sucks off the smut.

LANA (cont'd)

I'll be inside.

Lana opens the door to the bathroom and dips inside.

Elias can overhear from the bathroom the sounds of Lana and  
Sam's conversation, laughter, a kiss.

Elias walks away, down the staircase, pained by these  
unexpected events.

He passes his mother unloading groceries; he walks by just  
in time for her not to notice him.

It's very cold outside.

EXT. TIVOLI NY -- RIVER BRIDGE AND ONWARD -- GOLDEN HOUR

Elias walks with his hands in his pockets down the driveway of his home, bracing against the cold.

He approaches the road, as he does so, a pack of 10-12 bicyclists pass by.

Among them include some people from the party. Guy rides in the middle of the pack in a bright lime green vest. He passes a glance at Elias. Other bicyclists look at Elias too.

GUY  
(calling out)  
Eyes ahead.

Elias continues walking up the street.

As Elias approaches Broadway Pizza, CHARLIE, age 25, an all American man with a disconcerting pep in his gait.

Charlie looks at Elias as if he knows him. Elias doesn't look at Charlie; he just keeps walking.

CHARLIE  
Elias! Elias, it's me, Charlie!

Elias keeps walking.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
(visibly perturbed)  
Hey!

Elias stops for a moment; then he turns around.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
(now cheerful)  
So I decided to go ahead with your recommendation after my last appointment.

ELIAS  
I'm sorry, what are you talking about?

CHARLIE  
At the dentist's office. We talked about my teeth as I was leaving, silly.  
(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Also, you said you'd email me my  
medical records, but I never got  
them.

ELIAS  
(as if to end the  
conversation)  
I'm sorry.

Elias turns away and begins to walk the other direction.

Charlie approaches from behind, gesturing to his wide open  
mouth of white teeth as he talks.

CHARLIE  
Oh it's not that big of a deal, but  
look, I went ahead and got the work  
done anyway. First *and* second pre-  
molars replaced, and I decided to  
polish off the canines. I wanted your  
professional opinion.

Elias and Charlie stop at the end of the block.

Elias peers into Charlie's mouth.

ELIAS  
They look great. Really, they do.

Charlie smiles.

CHARLIE  
Thank you.

Charlie pauses a moment.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Anyways, you look busy. I just  
thought I'd say something.

Elias nods.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
You want the rest of this pizza?

Elias looks at the pizza, he looks at Charlie.

Charlie is still standing there smiling, with the pizza box  
extended out.

ELIAS  
Yes.

Charlie hands over the pizza box.

CHARLIE

Bon voyage.

ELIAS

Merci.

Charlie turns and starts walking away. Then he stops.

CHARLIE

Oh! And if you assistants' ever  
happen to get keys to the laughing  
gas, you know where to find me.

Charlie laughs and waves.

Elias, confused, nods and waves.

He turns and walks away. He opens the pizza box but throws  
it into a trash can along the side of the street.

He approaches the Tivoli Schoolhouse apartments.

There is a car parked outside, and a man loading the car  
with moving boxes.

The man is R, his head is completely shaved. He doesn't look  
at Elias as he walks to the car.

Elias watches from the sidewalk for a moment. On his way  
back into the house, R passes a glance at Elias with a  
stern, straight face and an unwelcoming glare. R walks into  
the apartment.

Elias follows.

INT. TIVOLI NY -- JAMIE'S APARTMENT -- DUSK

The door to Jamie's apartment is propped open by a doorstop.  
Elias walks in.

Elias stands in the shadow of the door-frame. R crosses the  
room, sparing a glance at Elias as he reveals Jamie, hunched  
over, packing books from his window sill bookshelf.

ELIAS

Jamie when did I become a dentist?

Silence, Jamie packs another couple of books.

JAMIE  
So you're officially a dentist now?  
That happened fast. I thought you  
were an assistant.

R's head is turned, watching, mute, while packing things  
from the other side of the room

Elias laughs with sardonic disbelief.

ELIAS  
What are you fucking talking about  
man?

Silence, Jamie continues packing boxes.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
Why isn't R saying anything?

Jamie gets up and turns around.

JAMIE  
Hey. Don't bring that energy in the  
room, please.

Jamie starts walking to the other side of the room.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
I thought you might have come to say  
goodbye.

Elias closes the gap between himself and Jamie and R,  
creating a triangle. He's out of breath with emotion.

ELIAS  
Say goodbye?

Jamie looks at him; trying to decipher what Elias is doing.  
His silence evokes a glimmer of sympathy, but nothing more.  
R remains staring.

JAMIE  
Well you've been silent for some  
time, Elias. I haven't heard from  
you. R hasn't heard from you.

Jamie walks up to Elias.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
Where have you been?

Jamie lets out a pained chuckle -- his expression quickly  
becomes morose.

ELIAS  
(in quiet disbelief)  
Jamie...

JAMIE  
You know, it almost does feel like  
you died that night, Elias.  
Everything's changed. Everything.

Elias interjects, pained.

ELIAS  
Excuse me?

Jamie takes a moment.

Jamie looks Elias in the eyes.

JAMIE  
We're moving today, Elias. Me and R.

Consternation fills Elias's face.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
This house..- is made of *glass*,  
Elias. And the mind can forget things  
it doesn't want to remember.

Jamie takes a moment.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
I think your soul still has something  
to settle. But I can't help you.  
Neither can R.

Jamie puts a hand on Elias's right shoulder.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
We have to go.

Jamie motions Elias out of the apartment. Before closing the  
door:

ELIAS  
I-

JAMIE  
Remember, Elias. Remember.

ELIAS  
(defeated, confused)  
Remember what.

Jamie shuts the door.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
 Hey! Hey open the fucking door!  
 Jamie!!... fucking hell. JAMIE!!!  
 Jamie.

Elias stops, aghast before the door.

The main doors to the schoolhouse apartment building swing open.

Elias looks in their direction and walks to them.

He walks outside.

EXT. TIVOLI NY -- BROADWAY -- DUSK

Elias catches a cold breeze from the brisk winter air.

Elias sees Guy across the street. He is going to mount his parked bike.

ELIAS  
 Hey! You!

Guy doesn't turn to look at Elias. He finishes mounting his bike. Then, right before kicking off to begin riding, he stops, and looks right at Elias.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
 Tell me what happened that night.  
 Okay? Hey... tell me what happened,  
 please.

Guy takes off. He pedals, glances over his shoulder, but just for a moment. He looks away, eyes ahead, continuing down the street.

ELIAS (cont'd)  
 LOOK AT ME!

Elias follows. He grits his teeth. Cold winter wind blows against his face.

EXT. TIVOLI -- BROADWAY -- DOWN THE ROAD -- NEAR NO SUN

Elias walks into the wind. Down the road.

We cut to Elias further down the road.

And further. Down a hill.

A car's headlights gleam -- passing by, going the same way as Elias.

We cut to Elias still walking; he is enshrouded by forest trees on either side of the road.

Another car's bright headlights gleam as they pass, going the same way as Elias.

Elias approaches an outlook from the road from where he can see the Hudson River.

EXT. TIVOLI -- END OF BROADWAY, HUDSON RIVER -- NIGHT

Elias walks on the shore.

He sees a flashlight, lying on the rocky shore, he kicks it closer to the water.

Elias picks up the flashlight. He turns it on. He shines it on the water and catches his reflection. Lights off.

Elias breathes. He closes his eyes.

Frame for frame cut -- and behind Elias is now a small fire, and Lana, Jamie, R, Sam, and Delilah.

LANA

I... I don't know what I miss about him, really. It sounds cliché, but everything happened so quickly...

Elias turns to face everyone, the fire lights his face.

LANA (cont'd)

I met him. I knew him. And now he's dead.

Lana takes a puff of her cigarette.

LANA (cont'd)

I like to think he still exists... Somehow, as a memory... But I'm not sure that will ever be enough... I, I hope he enjoys his rest.

Lana touches her golden cross necklace, her hand across her chest.

No one says anything.

LANA (cont'd)  
Who's next?

Lana looks at Jamie.

JAMIE  
What, should I say something?...

Lana takes another puff of her cigarette; she's looking into the stars.

Jamie clears his throat.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
Dead men... can't speak. If Elias was here...- I'm sure he'd love to do the talking. But he's not.

Jamie looks down for a moment; then back up again.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
I think a lot of us are asking 'why,' right now. 'Why did he die?' But, the right question...

Jamie clears his throat again.

He looks directly at Elias; directly into our point of view.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
- I think... the right question to ask... is why did he live.

Elias watches on. Mute, a monotone expression on his face.

JAMIE (cont'd)  
Why?..

The flame flicks.

Embers burn.

DELILAH  
He was such a beautiful boy. Elias.

SAM  
He was good.

DELILAH  
I miss him...

Jamie silently nods his head. Lana looks down, thoughtful. R looks ahead, sympathetic.

DELILAH (cont'd)  
 Goodnight dear. Goodnight, Elias.

Delilah gets up. As does Sam, with an arm around her shoulder.

Lana, Jamie and R get up as well.

They all pass Elias, walking right beside him.

Delilah pulls from her jacket pocket the same yellow airplane from Elias's childhood.

Elias watches from behind, still near the fire.

Delilah bends over, and places the airplane into the river. It starts to get carried away.

Elias runs into the water, running until he's thigh deep. He falls in after the plane.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIVOLI NY -- RIVER BRIDGE -- THE NIGHT OF THE PARTY

Elias is stumbling towards the street, going after Guy.

ELIAS (V.O.)  
 My birthday was yesterday... was it not?

CUT TO:

EXT. SWIMMING POOL -- ELIAS'S CHILDHOOD -- MID DAY SUN

Elias, age 21, fully clothed, falls underwater -- his hand grasping at a sinking yellow propeller airplane. His eyes are wide.

ELIAS (V.O.)  
 A yesterday gone... like all the others. A time immemorial... all time is immemorial - the present is the future ignored, the past not remembered. But how can you hold on to thin air?

CUT TO:

EXT. TIVOLI NY -- RIVER BRIDGE -- THE NIGHT OF THE PARTY

Elias, still stumbling, is in the road, and the oncoming car's headlights come closer in the distance

ELIAS (V.O.)  
Gone, but here... Life is a funeral  
march... I suppose I just got to cut  
the line.

CUT TO:

INT. TIVOLI NY -- AT HUDSON -- NIGHT

The fire roars large behind Delilah, Sam, Lana, Jamie, and R.

CUT TO:

EXT. TIVOLI -- RIVER BRIDGE -- THE NIGHT OF THE PARTY

The oncoming cars headlights beam brighter. Elias looks into the beams.

ELIAS (V.O.)  
Return...

The car's horns blare in synchronicity with a final swelling of the rapturous score.

CUT TO:

EXT. SWIMMING POOL -- ELIAS'S CHILDHOOD -- MID DAY SUN

Elias's hand almost grasps the airplane -- but his mouth opens, bubbles rush out and he gasps for air -- rising out of the pool; his head now above water.

He looks around; his parents aren't there.

INT. NEW YORK CITY -- CHILDHOOD APARTMENT -- GOLDEN HOUR

Young Elias brings his head out of the water in his bathtub. His yellow airplane sits above the water in front of him.

He looks; he is alone; his parents are not in the room.

He gets out of the bathtub and walks to the door. He exits the bathroom; looking to his left, he sees his parents in the kitchen.

But he also hears the sound of a bird... tweeting.

He walks to his right, where he looks at something out of his apartment window.

He gets on his tip toes and continues to look at it, tracking it into the sky.

In the reflection of Elias's eye -- we see his yellow bird, soar.