

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

TART

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Final Draft

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FADE IN:

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT EARLY AFTERNOON

Clothes are strewn about. A lump in ruffled sheets, MARCUS dozes. He's thin and wiry, face sallow with dark hair. On the nightstand, his cellphone rings. Marcus startles and answers.

MARCUS
(fighting a yawn)
Hello? What is it?

Marcus rubs at his eyes, blinking blearily. He glances at a clock on the nightstand and flies into action. He puts the phone on speaker.

CLARISSE (O.S.)
(brash)
Marcus! Don't speak to me in that way. I'm your mother. You should hardly be surprised by me calling.

MARCUS
Why is that, exactly?

CLARISSE (O.S.)
It seems you've been slacking off again.

The phone sits on the bed. Marcus rifles through drawers and his closet trying to find something to wear.

MARCUS
Mom. I've been trying plenty hard. You know math has never been my forte. I've been studying when I don't have class.

CLARISSE (O.S.)
I find it rather hard to believe that you've been the perfect little student. I've talked to Addy, Mrs. Thompson's kid. She said you've been dozing off in calculus! Do you want to explain yourself?

Marcus throws a discarded clothing item with frustrated force onto the bed sighing, before choosing a pair of pants he considers.

MARCUS

I'm sorry mom. That was a fluke. I was up late studying for Physics, and I just couldn't keep my eyes open.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

I haven't worked my butt off for years for you to say that you're tired when I've set up this opportunity for you!

MARCUS

I'm sorry-

CLARISSE (O.S.)

I was up doing research and scheduling until three A-M last night, and you don't see me complaining.

Marcus stalks into his closet with some clothes under his arm. Clothes fly out. He's getting dressed.

MARCUS

It won't happen again mom! I'll invest in some coffee or something. Don't worry about it.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

I will absolutely worry about you wasting my hard-earned money on an education that you clearly don't deserve.

MARCUS

It's not like that!

CLARISSE (O.S.)

What's all that rustling? Where are you? Didn't you just get out of your lab?

Marcus stumbles out of the closet pulling on his socks and holding his shoes. He has yet to button his shirt. He sits on the bed and continues getting frantically dressed.

MARCUS

Uh...yes mom. Some thought-provoking stuff today. I'm just walking to get something to eat before my next class.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

At least you've been eating on campus. There's no need for you to be ordering in so much, that's expensive.

Marcus is buttoning up his shirt.

MARCUS

I remember. I've been trying to avoid it. Look, I'm going to have to get going soon so...

He trails off, as he stands and grabs books off his desk, glancing around.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

Don't you try to weasel your way out of talking to me. I'll say when you can go. Take my advice and spend more time studying, or face my full unbridled wrath.

MARCUS

That won't be necessary.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

You need to be setting an example for your brother. Maybe then he'll get inspired to do something worthwhile.

He finds his bag and tosses his books in. He combs his hair with his fingers in the dresser mirror. He frowns at his mom's last statement.

MARCUS

How is Mitchie? You know he's only a high school-er? He has plenty of time to make something of himself. He has good friends. That's more than I can say for myself.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

How's that supposed to help him? He needs to get his act together now.

MARCUS

He's fine, really.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

He'll never make something of himself if he doesn't start to take things a little more seriously. His friends aren't going to get him a job.

Marcus goes to sling his bag over his shoulder and picks up the phone, lingering in the doorway.

MARCUS

Okay, mom I really should get going now.

CLARISSE (O.S.)

What's got you in such a rush? You have time. You never call, and I shouldn't have to drag myself over to your apartment at my inconvenience--

Marcus switches his phone off speaker. There's faint mumbling as he tosses his still-on phone into his backpack.

MARCUS

(mumbling)

I'm going to regret this, but sorry mom.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRANCE TO COLLEGE CLASSROOM-AFTERNOON

Students bustle out doorway. Marcus slowly strolls out. Glancing at a paper in his hand. A girl catches a glance over his shoulder. ANA FARROW, a blond fair model student.

ANA

(unsure)

Hey? Marcus, right?

Marcus turns around to glance at her he quirks a brow, glancing around. She approaches.

MARCUS

Yes? Um, I'm sorry...I can't recall your name. The class is quite big after all.

ANA

Oh, that's fine! I'm Ana. I was just concerned because I haven't seen you in class much lately.

Marcus hastily stuffs the paper in his bag and turns back to Ana.

MARCUS

It's really fine. I've just had some trouble sleeping lately and it's caught up with me.

Ana frowns and hesitates a little before nervously smiling again.

ANA

I...just wanted to offer my help, that's all.

MARCUS

With what?

ANA

Well you've missed some lectures...

Marcus raises eyebrows before they narrow. He crosses his arms in front of himself.

MARCUS

Are you assuming I'm a poor student? That's quite presumptuous of you. I don't go up to people and question their intelligence.

Ana waves her arms frantically.

ANA

N-No! Don't get the wrong idea. I'm just concerned that you may have missed some stuff for the next test. That's all.

Ana looks down. She's flushed. Marcus sighs.

MARCUS

(softly)

Sorry...I didn't mean to be harsh like that. You're just looking out for me. I appreciate your concern. I mean, you're not wrong.

Ana looks back up quickly and flashes a small closed-lipped smile.

ANA

It's okay. I really didn't mean it like that.

(MORE)

ANA (cont'd)

I'm just a tutor, and I take pretty detailed notes. I thought we could study together. If you want, you know.

Marcus considers for a second, still apprehensive.

MARCUS

I just don't think I have the time to even do that. I'm actually working and stuff as well.

ANA

I'm sure there's some time we can work out. You can't be busy all the time.

MARCUS

You'd be surprised. Look I'm going to try to head to the dining hall to get something in-between classes. I need to hurry.

Marcus starts walking down the busy hallway.

INT. CONT. HALLWAY

ANA

(quips)

I can tag along for a while. I don't have class now.

Ana follows Marcus down the hallway. A small smile turns the corners of Marcus' lips

MARCUS

Wow, you really don't give up, do you?

ANA

(Proudly)

Nope. That's not the patented Ana Farrow way. I'm not just going to let you run out on this glorious opportunity to better yourself.

Marcus raises an eyebrow and smiles slightly.

MARCUS

I wouldn't want to infringe on your patent. You're quite confident in your abilities. What are you getting out of this?

ANA

The satisfaction of helping a fellow student. You also seem nice, and I'm trying to put myself out there more.

Marcus' mood has brightened though he's still hesitant.

MARCUS

I don't know that I'd be much of a friend, with my busy schedule and all, but I'm not going to outright turn you down.

ANA

Well that's a marked improvement from earlier. Pun intended. Look, I'm going to give you my number if you reconsider the tutoring thing.

Ana digs a note card and pen out of her backpack and quickly scrawls out her number, thrusting it into Marcus' hand. Marcus takes it and puts it in his pocket.

MARCUS

Uh thanks? I'll talk to you about it later, I guess.

ANA

See ya!

Ana walks off without looking back. Marcus digs the card out and programs her number in his phone.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR IN DRIVEWAY-NIGHT

MITCHELL ROSS is in the passenger seat shrugging on his bag. He's 17 with light, shaggy brown hair and hazel eyes. A blond boy, DAVID JACOBSON, sits in the driver's seat smiling slightly at him. He's tall and blond.

MITCHELL

(bashful)

So, thanks for the ride and stuff.

DAVID

Don't worry about it. I enjoy any opportunity to hang out with you, Mitchie.

MITCHELL

You know I do too...with you... Ah,
screw it.

Mitchell opens the car door to get out but quickly leans across to peck the caught-off-guard boy on the lips before getting out.

CONT. EXT. ROSS DRIVEWAY-NIGHT

BLOND BOY

O-okay, bye then! Have a good one
then.

The boy backs out of the driveway, nearly hitting the mailbox before driving away. Mitchell smirks and waves in amusement before heading inside the house.

CONT. INT. ROSS LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

GEORGE ROSS turns his head. He's sitting on the couch. He glares at Mitchell and walks up to him. George is mid-forties, casually dressed with a firm exterior.

GEORGE ROSS

So, what brings you home so late? I
wasn't aware that school has started
running until eight P-M.

MITCHELL

(whining)

Dad. I have to do something other
than study. I was just hanging out
with a few friends for a few hours.
That's not going to kill me.

GEORGE ROSS

It may as well, considering how your
mom's going to react. It's a school
night Mitchie! There's no good
excuse. You know that!

MITCHELL

(voice raising)

The excuse is that I'm a human being,
and I deserve to have some time off!
Let me decide my own path. You and
mom can stick to your boring one.

George crosses his arms in front of him, furrowing his eyebrows.

GEORGE ROSS

(stern)

Respect your mom! We pay for you to live under this roof, so for now you need to pay us back by making yourself useful.

MITCHELL

Stop acting like you care! It's not like you even have any of your own opinions! You just steal Mom's.

George visibly tenses, looking furious

GEORGE ROSS

(Grits Out)

My opinion is that you're an ornery brat that can't do anything other than screw around with your worthless, no account friends.

Mitchell looks hurt. A lot of the anger drops from his face.

MITCHELL

(sulking)

I'm sorry that I can't live up to golden child Marcus, but I'm my own person, and I need interaction.

GEORGE ROSS

Marcus isn't doing so well himself, so I wouldn't hold him to such a high standard.

Mitchell's eyes flick back up to meet his dad's, confused.

MITCHELL

What's wrong with Marcus? I thought he was the model child.

George snorts

GEORGE ROSS

He hasn't been that for a long time. We made him grant access to his grades, Mom's headed over to talk to him now. He ignored her on the phone this morning.

Mitchell gapes at the information briefly.

MITCHELL

That seems... odd. Maybe she'll be
all fussed out when she gets to me.

George pushes past Mitchell to make his way to the kitchen
without looking back and snorts.

GEORGE ROSS

You'd be so lucky. Now go to your
room. I don't want to deal with you,
you little delinquent.

George stalks away and Mitchell fishes out his phone. He
quickly opens his contacts and presses call on Marcus' name.
The phone rings.

CUT TO:

INT. CULINARY SCHOOL NIGHT

Marcus walks in the main classroom, dressed in proper chef's
attire he shoves his regular clothes into a duffle bag as he
hurries in. Almost running into the instructor. Her name is
CHEF NESTOR

MARCUS

(stuttered)

O-oh! Hello chef. Sorry about that
and-um-sorry I'm late.

Chef Nestor looks at him with a raised brow and chuckles
slightly.

CHEF NESTOR

You're not late. Watch it though.
There are a lot of ways collision can
go wrong in a kitchen. You don't want
to walk into a knife. I think.

Marcus smiles awkwardly

MARCUS

Yes Chef! Sorry chef.

CHEF NESTOR

You're actually a bit early. I've
been wanting to discuss something
with you actually.

Marcus' eyes widen.

MARCUS

I hope it's nothing bad. If there's something I've been doing wrong, then I swear I'll improve.

CHEF NESTOR

No! It's quite the opposite actually. You're one of my most promising students.

A student shuffles in the door, slipping behind them. They glance towards Marcus briefly with narrowed eyes.

MARCUS

That's very nice of you chef, but I certainly think there's a lot of room for improvement.

CHEF NESTOR

There's always room for improvement, however, you do have outstanding creativity. Which has lead me to consider recommending you.

MARCUS

Recommending me for where exactly?

CHEF NESTOR

I was thinking that you'd be a good fit at The Golden Iris. I have some connections there and happen to know that they're short a few hands.

Marcus quietly gasps. A smile flits across his face before being quickly wiped away.

MARCUS

That's incredible, and I really appreciate it, but do you mind if I think about it?

Chef Nestor's eyebrows furrow

CHEF NESTOR

Marcus. I really don't think this is something that you should linger on for too long. It's a great gig and it won't last forever.

MARCUS

I know! Trust me I know, but I just don't know how much time I can devote to yet another thing.

CHEF NESTOR

If anything should take the priority it is this. There are very few positions as tempting to a new chef.

Marcus' gaze drops to the floor. He sighs.

MARCUS

I know, and I'm so thankful for that opportunity, but I'm not so sure everyone in my life would agree.

CHEF NESTOR

Well, who even cares about them? You're very passionate and talented. Just think about it, okay?

Chef Nestor approaches her counter-top setup at the front of the class. Marcus slowly makes his way to his station.

CHEF NESTOR (cont'd)

Okay, class good evening! As I'm sure you've noticed we've been focusing on the fundamentals of different international cuisine...

Chef Nestor's voice trails off into a background murmur. There's a brief buzz in Marcus' apron pocket, and he subtly fishes out his phone and glances at it. There's a missed call and then a text. It's from Mitchell and reads "Just a heads-up, but Mom's heading over to your place on a mission."

Marcus tilts his head back and quietly groans, slipping his phone back into his pocket.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARCUS' CAR APARTMENT COMPLEX PARKING LOT-NIGHT

Pulling into an apartment complex parking lot, Marcus drives past a lone car parked near the front and groans tilting his head back. Parking his car beside it, he gets out and climbs the steps to one of the doors, opening it. CLARISSE ROSS is on the couch.

INT. MARCUS' APARTMENT LIVING ROOM-NIGHT

CLARISSE
(sarcastic)
Hello Marcus. Fancy seeing you here.

MARCUS
Hi mom. What brings you here?

Clarisse's eyebrows narrow, she abruptly stands from the couch, stomping over to Marcus.

CLARISSE
What brings me here is you being a complete ingrate and not answering your mother when I have something important to discuss with you.

MARCUS
(panicked, defensive)
I'm sorry mom! My phone was on low battery, so I was avoiding using it except for emergencies.

CLARISSE
What would constitute an emergency?

MARCUS
Well...like an earthquake.

CLARISSE
We don't live near a fault line.

Clarisse glances down at Marcus' pants pocket. She snatches his phone from it and glances at it with a deadpan face.

CLARISSE (cont'd)
Why would you lie Marcus? Do you really don't want to see me all that much?

MARCUS
It's really not that mom. I've honestly just have been really busy.

CLARISSE
Busy doing what? Clearly it wasn't school at this time of night.

Clarisse walks over to the couch picking up a stack of papers and returns to thrust them in Marcus' face.

CLARISSE (cont'd)

I printed these out. Remember you granted me access to your grades Marcus? So, why exactly have you been doing so poorly?

Marcus' eyes widen, quick to refute.

MARCUS

I swear he's probably just late with updating grades or something!

CLARISSE

Seventy-one seems a pretty odd grade to put as a placeholder. So, I really do seem to have a lazy, pathological liar on my hands.

MARCUS

I swear it's not like that.

CLARISSE

What's it like then? That seems to be your favorite phrase. I thought you had a head on your shoulders but apparently I was mistaken.

Marcus' eyes well with tears. His breath catches in his throat.

MARCUS

(Voice breaking)

You don't mean that. I've really been trying.

CLARISSE

I do mean that. If you were sorry then you would have been here studying instead of off wherever.

Marcus eyes the floor.

CLARISSE (cont'd)

Nothing to say, huh?

MARCUS

No it'd just be an excuse. You're right, I'm being irresponsible. I'll fix it, don't you worry.

Clarisse nods

CLARISSE

Of course you will. I don't care how tired you may claim to be. There are people doing better than you with less time. Pull out those books.

MARCUS

O-okay. I can do that. I'll do that.

CLARISSE

I sacrifice so much of my time and energy working to put you through school. I borrowed from my Four-oh-one-K. You owe me some work ethic.

MARCUS

You're right mom. I promise I'll make you proud. I do appreciate it. I'm sorry.

Clarisse nods, her face straightening out. She grabs her bag and coat from where they're draped on the couch and walks towards the door.

CLARISSE

Know that if you keep this up, I won't be helping you pay for school. You're getting as bad as Mitchell.

Marcus' face screws up a little. Grimacing.

MARCUS

You shouldn't be too hard on him mom. There are plenty of things he's better than me at.

Clarisse scoffs and shrugs on her coat.

CLARISSE

I've yet to see if any of them are useful. I'll check in on you soon. Get to work.

Marcus holds the door for her, seeing her out.

MARCUS

Yes mom. I love you. Have a good night.

Clarisse leaves in absolute silence. Marcus lets the door fall closed, eyes tearing once again.

CUT TO:

INT. ALL-NIGHTER CAFE- DAYTIME

ANA FARROW is waiting in the corner at a small table with her coffee, laptop and notebook. Marcus rushes through the door, quickly slings his backpack off and sits down.

MARCUS

(breathless)

I'm sorry I'm late! My alarm clock needs new batteries, and I can't just wake up from my phone alarm and-

Ana starts to snicker, holding up a hand

ANA

Marcus, it happens. A cafe is not the worst place to be kept waiting. I got some work done. Chill.

MARCUS

I know. I'm just sorry to keep you waiting, it's rude.

ANA

No worries. Also, do you go by Mark? I don't really meet many Marcus' that don't.

Marcus' eyes widen a little and he hesitates for a second.

MARCUS

Uh I mean. I've never really gone by Mark. My mom thinks Marcus sounds more professional, but I'm not opposed-

ANA

Then I Christen you: Mark, the truant.

Marcus visibly releases tension. He pulls his laptop out of his bag and opens it, along with a notebook.

MARCUS

Okay. I guess we should get to work then. See, I think what's my main concern is-

ANA

Mark? Do you want to just talk for a minute? I don't really know much about you.

Marcus blinks for a second, then straightens up.

MARCUS

Okay, sure, that's fine. That sounds good.

ANA

Cool. So, what's your major?

MARCUS

Biochemical engineering.

ANA

Ah, I figured. Most of us in the class are. So, what brought you to the major?

Marcus sighs. He starts running his hand through his hair.

MARCUS

Honestly, my parents.

ANA

Oh? Are they in the field?

MARCUS

Uh, no. They just wanted me to pursue a "worthwhile" field, so I just-

Ana's brows furrow. She gestures to pause with her hand.

ANA

Wait, so you didn't want to do this? Then why are you even here? Isn't there something else you'd rather do?

MARCUS

Oh sure. There's stuff I want to do, but it's not "worthwhile," so there's no chance there.

Ana's tension on her face increases. Forehead wrinkling, and the creases between her eyebrows deepening.

ANA

So, you're just doing what they tell you to? It's your life, Marcus! Why would you do that.

MARCUS

They're paying for the majority of my education. It's the least I can do. I owe them.

Ana after sipping her coffee, sets it down again with a good deal of force.

ANA

You don't owe them your whole lifetime of happiness! This is what you'll be doing forever! Doesn't that bother you?

MARCUS

(raised voice)

Of course it bothers me, but they matter more to me! All I want to do is cook, but who knows how that will go? I can do it part-time maybe.

ANA

You know for a fact you won't have time in our field. Just do what you want! I don't get that.

Marcus starts throwing his stuff in his backpack.

MARCUS

Look, I didn't come here to have my decisions questioned. Either you leave, or I do.

Ana relaxes and her face drops.

ANA

(soft)

I'll go, but I want you to think about what I said, and if you still need help, just call.

Ana picks up her stuff and leaves without another glance. Marcus watches her, groans and lets his face fall in his hands.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA- DAY

MITCHELL sits at a lunch table in a crowded school cafeteria. He's engaged in conversation with those around them. DAVID JACOBSON who dropped him off comes up behind him, puts his hands on his shoulders and rests his head on his.

DAVID
Did I scare you?

Mitchell chuckles, completely relaxed.

MITCHELL
No. You're not as stealthy as you think you are. Plus, I saw you coming.

David releases him, allowing Mitchell to turn and face him.

DAVID
(smiling)
I'll have to up my game then. Clearly my ninja training isn't working.

MITCHELL
Uh huh. Sure. Anyway, what's going on? Aren't you usually busy during lunch?

DAVID
I don't have to be there. I just like to get some work done while I can. I wanted to see you though. Is that too much to ask?

Mitchell arches an eyebrow.

MITCHELL
I don't know. It takes a lot to pull you away from a project. I mean, I'm not even usually enough of an incentive.

David sighs and raises his hands in front of him lazily.

DAVID
Okay, you got me. There is something I wanted to ask you. Not that you're not a good incentive or anything.

MITCHELL
Go on then. Discuss.

DAVID

I was wondering if I could meet your family? We've been dating for like a while, and my family loves you. I just want to get to know you better.

Mitchell stops smiling.

MITCHELL

Uh, I don't think that's such a good idea. They're quite busy.

DAVID

Oh come on! They can't be busy all day everyday. I'm sure we can come up with something.

Mitchell fidgets with his hands. Suddenly unable to keep completely still.

MITCHELL

Well, I'm sure I can work something out with Marcus. He'd probably be down to meet you soon.

David frowns, getting closer to Mitchell's face with a hand on his shoulder. Mitchell doesn't meet his eyes.

DAVID

But your parents won't? Are your parents super homophobic or something? Like why are you so scared?

Mitchell shakes his head rapidly.

MITCHELL

No! No. It's nothing like that. I'm not scared It's just not a great time, is all.

DAVID

Are you hiding something from me? If anything's wrong, you can tell me, you know?

Mitchell nods nearly imperceptibly. Looking at the ground.

MITCHELL

It's no biggie. Maybe someday, but not right now.

Mitchell makes a move to stand, but David grips him lightly by his shirt.

DAVID

(softly)

Why won't you just tell me? Do you not trust me or something?

Mitchell shakes his head again, shrugging off David's hand. He picks up his trash from his lunch and brushes past David.

MITCHELL

It's fine. Don't worry about it. I'll figure it out in time. Go work on your project. I'll see you later.

David stares after him, starting to follow but then stopping abruptly.

CUT TO:

ALL-NIGHTER CAFE-INTERIOR-LATE AFTERNOON

Mitchell walks in the door, glances around. He spots Marcus where he has been working at a table for hours, surrounded by papers and his laptop. Mitchell approaches, tapping him on the shoulder. Marcus turns, eyes brows furrowing.

MITCHELL (cont'd)

Hey, how's it going?

MARCUS

Hey, yourself...How'd you know I was here? Why are you here for that matter?

Mitchell sighs dramatically and sits next to Marcus at the small table.

MITCHELL

Can I not just want to hang out with my big bro? Also, I tracked you dingus, your location's on.

Mitchell briefly holds up his phone. Marcus scoffs and turns back to his work.

MARCUS

Huh. Guess I'll have to fix that then.

MITCHELL

(complaining)

It wasn't even my first thought. I went to your apartment first, then I checked and walked here too, because you won't answer your stupid phone!

Marcus pulls his phone out of his jean pocket, and glances at it, stone-faced. He immediately looks back at his laptop.

MARCUS

(monotonously)

Oops. Sorry.

Mitchell throws his hands in the air, then snatches the laptop from in front of Marcus.

MITCHELL

What are you even working on?! I haven't seen you this focused in a long time. Focused enough that you would ignore your little bro; you wound me.

Marcus lets out a breath and puts his head in his hands, he tugs a little at his hair.

MARCUS

Have you been hanging out with drama kids? I'm trying to do work for my required math course, but I suck at it because I'm stupid.

Mitchell's eyes soften. He picks up the pencil and a piece of paper from Marcus. He glances between the screen and the paper, then starts scrawling.

MARCUS (cont'd)

What are you doing?

MITCHELL

Your calculus homework. You're welcome.

MARCUS

Good luc-

Mitchell slides the paper back in front of Marcus with a small smirk.

MITCHELL

That's how you do problem number one, smartypants.

Marcus snatches the paper and glances over it, mouth opening slightly. He glances back up at Mitchell.

MARCUS

How did you even..? I thought I was the smart one.

Mitchell grins

MITCHELL

Clearly you were mistaken. I'm the smart one. You're just the one that actually cares about being smart.

Marcus glares at Mitchell, thrusting the paper back at him.

MARCUS

That's just unfair. I can't believe you. Why don't you just apply yourself then?

Mitchell shrugs

MITCHELL

Because I'm good at math, but I hate it. It's not that deep. I just have trouble doing anything that doesn't hold my interest.

MARCUS

Maybe we're brothers after all. I was starting to think you were switched at birth.

MITCHELL

(sarcastic)

Thanks for your vote of confidence.

MARCUS

So..do you want to make this a regular thing? Help me in math, please?

Marcus clasps his hands in front of him, dramatically begging.

MITCHELL

Fine. Just stop that. You have nerve to call me dramatic. Also, I didn't come here to help you with this, I have my own motives.

Marcus relaxes and sits back in his seat, he raises an eyebrow. He clasps his hands together.

MARCUS

So, I'll help you in return.
Depending on what it is, though.

MITCHELL

Firstly, I need advice. Secondly, I
need you to meet my boyfriend.

Marcus' eyes widen a bit.

MARCUS

Firstly, since when are you in a
relationship? Secondly, does mom
know? Thirdly, why me?

MITCHELL

Obviously mom doesn't know. That's
why I'm asking you. I need to get him
off my back about meeting my family.
So, here's a compromise.

Marcus' shoulders drop and he relaxes a bit. He extends a
hand forward.

MARCUS

Fine, I'll do it. It's a deal

They shake hands.

CUT TO:

ALL-NIGHTER CAFE-INT.-EVENING

MARCUS glances at his work strewn about on the table while
MITCHELL smirks in return. There are coffee cups and
pastries on the table surrounded by sheets of math work.

MITCHELL

So, what you're going to do is a
little something like this.

Mitchell scribbles on a scrap sheet of paper, then turns it
towards Marcus to look over.

MARCUS

How did you do that? That should be
way above your skill level. You're a
high school student. I still don't
get it.

MITCHELL

I'm a very smart high school student that used to take more than a casual interest in math and science. You're not the only prodigy in this family, golden boy.

Marcus blinks up at him.

MARCUS

But I still don't get it... if you're this good at classwork...why are you doing so poorly in school?

Mitchell shrugs and takes a sip of Marcus' forgotten about coffee.

MITCHELL

Like I said, just because I'm good at something doesn't mean I care about studying it any more. There are other things I'd rather devote my attention to.

Marcus scoffs.

MARCUS

Like what, exactly?

MITCHELL

Art. Literature. I'm the creative in the family. It doesn't mean that's my only talent, but it is the only thing I'm interested in.

MARCUS

Mom would kill you if she knew you were capable of this and have been just slacking.

Mitchell snorts.

MITCHELL

There's a lot of things that mom has threatened to kill me for, and yet here I sit before you.

Marcus shakes his head slowly.

MARCUS

What do you even gain from lying to mom about this?

Mitchell stretches.

MITCHELL

Freedom. Unlike some people here, I don't always have her on my case. Well, I do, but I don't think she actually cares anymore.

Marcus frowns.

MARCUS

Well isn't it a downside that she doesn't act like she cares anymore?

Mitchell straightens and quietly flips through Marcus' work pages.

MITCHELL

Is it really all that fulfilling to receive attention from mom only because you work yourself to death?

Marcus stares at his lap.

MITCHELL (cont'd)

That's what I thought. Look, I thought you wanted my help. Question your own life decisions.

Marcus glances up at Mitchell with furrowed eyebrows.

MARCUS

Today, not only did I find out my brother is a secret super-genius... but that he's also a huge liar. Go figure.

Mitchell throws down the pencil and aggressively tugs his own hair.

MITCHELL

I'm not a liar! I only tell white lies to mom to make my life easier.

Marcus sips his coffee.

MARCUS

Yeah, we'll see how that works out for you.

Mitchell clears his throat and starts to gather Marcus' things.

MARCUS (cont'd)
What are you doing? I thought we were
studying here.

MITCHELL
We were, but you see, I kind of told
David that he could come over to your
place tonight.

Marcus stands up, collecting his stuff quickly.

MARCUS
Why would you do that? You didn't
even know what my answer would be!
You had that agenda this whole time?

Mitchell stuffs Marcus' backpack with his belongings then
swings it over his own shoulder.

MITCHELL
I know you can't turn your dearest
brother down. I also couldn't afford
to give you the time to weasel out of
it. Let's go. You're cooking.

Mitchell turns to head out the door.

MARCUS
(incredulous)
Who said?

MITCHELL
I said. Unless you want to flunk out
of college after all.

Marcus groans, grabbing the last of his stuff and following
Mitchell out the cafe door.

CUT TO:

MARCUS' APARTMENT KITCHEN-INT.-NIGHT

Marcus is running about stirring a spaghetti sauce, tending
to boiling noodles and stirring vegetables on the stove. The
doorbell rings and Marcus hurries over across the room
answering. It's Mitchell and DAVID.

MITCHELL
What's cooking tonight?

MARCUS

(sarcastic)

Hello to you too Mitchell. I'm great, how are you?

MITCHELL

Yeah yeah, answer the question. It smells good. Oh! Also, this is David, my boyfriend.

David smiles awkwardly.

DAVID

Um, hello Mr. Ross it's a pleasure to meet you. I've heard very much about you, and I'm sure the meal will be excellent.

Marcus smiles softly.

MARCUS

The pleasure's all mine David, also-

Mitchell cuts him off, giggling as he complains.

MITCHELL

Ew! Don't call him Mr. Ross, he's my brother not my dad. This dork doesn't need you to be all formal with him. Don't give him more of an ego.

Marcus laughs.

MARCUS

It's really fine. Call me what you want, but Marcus is what I go by. Oh!

Marcus startles and runs back towards the kitchen suddenly

MARCUS (cont'd)

(shouting)

Sorry! Food! I don't want to burn anything! Just make yourselves at home, I guess. Dinner will be ready soon.

Mitchell laughs and David follows him in seemingly more comfortable. Mitchell and David sit at the table which is in an open-concept area including the kitchen. Marcus is plating the food.

MITCHELL

You don't need to get all fancy, you know? It's not like I'm really going to know the difference.

David smiles and jabs Mitchell lightly with his elbow

DAVID

It is appreciated though, Marcus. Is this some special type of pasta?

Marcus sets the plates down in front of them, including his own. He sits down to eat with them.

MARCUS

Nope. Just Spaghetti. I didn't figure I had to be a culinary wizard for tonight. It should be good though. If it's bad, that's saying something.

DAVID

Oh. No it's fine. The classics can be good as well. I didn't mean to seem like I expected you to cook a five-course meal or anything.

MITCHELL

Don't worry about it Davie. Sometimes he gets in his culinary artiste moods and makes dinner for us on a Tuesday, and sometimes it's just like this. Such is life with Marcus.

Marcus frowns slightly.

MARCUS

I suppose, but you don't often stay-

Mitchell cuts Marcus off again.

MITCHELL

Yeah, I know. I don't often stay to eat in here with you. I'd rather retreat and play video games or something. You're not always the most riveting company.

Marcus quirks an eyebrow at Mitchell.

MARCUS

Uh, yeah... sure. You certainly leave me all alone more often than not.

(MORE)

MARCUS (cont'd)
Tell me David, what has Mitchell been saying about me?

David is eating, unaware of the tension between the brothers.

DAVID
Just that you're the best brother, even though you're not home a lot. You take care of him when your parents have been mostly out of the picture.

Marcus glances at Mitchell again.

MARCUS
I guess that's not necessarily untrue, but Mitchell-

Mitchell cuts Marcus off.

MITCHELL
David! How are you finding my brother's cooking for tonight? Did he meet your lofty expectations?

David nods.

DAVID
Yeah! It's really good! Thank you for all of this Marcus. It's really nice to get to know Mitchell's family. It makes me feel special.

Marcus smiles slightly with furrowed brows.

MARCUS
Anytime David. Welcome to the family, I guess.

CUT TO:

MARCUS' APARTMENT-INT. NIGHT

Marcus and Mitchell are standing at the door, where David is throwing on a jacket and halfway out the doorway.

DAVID

It's been great getting to know you Marcus! It's good to know that Mitchell has such a good support system despite everything.

Marcus grins halfheartedly, and waves off the compliment.

MARCUS

Pfft! It's really fine. I'm just glad I can be there for Mitchell when our parents clearly haven't been.

Marcus shoots Mitchell a pointed look. Mitchell scratches the back of his head before turning and flashing David a smile.

MITCHELL

You give this bozo too much credit. I've bounced around between relatives' homes. Marcus is like a third choice.

David frowns and pulls Mitchell into a hug.

DAVID

You don't have to worry about that anymore. You know that you'll always have me and my family to give you a home.

Marcus glares at Mitchell over David's shoulder before promptly resuming his previous behavior when David releases Mitchell. Mitchell fidgets.

MITCHELL

Oh I'm sure that won't be necessary. Marcus has got his own job now. He works at a convenience store. He's not just in school anymore.

MARCUS

(forced)

Yeah, I can take care of him. No worries there. He's a handful, but I've got it covered. Unfortunately.

Mitchell lightly slaps Marcus on the arm. He kisses David on the cheek and lightly pushes him out the door.

MITCHELL

(dramatic)

Now go! I don't want your family suspecting Marcus has kidnapped you to replace his brother. I'll see you at school.

DAVID

(lightly chuckling)

Alright, alright. I'll see you then babe. Love you.

Mitchell's smile falters for a second as he closes the door.

MITCHELL

I love you too!

After the door closes, Mitchell turns to find Marcus starting intently at his back. Mitchell struggles to meet his eyes.

MITCHELL (cont'd)

What?

MARCUS

You know what Pinocchio; how long do you think you can keep this up? I thought you loved him?

Mitchell looks at the floor.

MITCHELL

I know. I just needed to buy time. I can't tell mom right now. Maybe when I graduate, but she's already on me for being a failure.

Marcus throws up his hands.

MARCUS

Do you think David's really going to be able to trust you after all of this? You've been lying to his face!

Mitchell's eyes narrow and he glances quickly back up at Marcus.

MITCHELL

That's rich. Doesn't mom still not know about your little cooking classes? How long have you been doing them? Two years?

MARCUS

If you dare say a thing, I will end you. Also, mom's is an obligatory relationship. David is a good kid.

MITCHELL

Please. If you rat me out, then I tell mom about all your little side hustles. See who's in more trouble then?

Marcus grips Mitchell's shoulders.

MARCUS

It's not a competition Mitchell! I just know you care about this guy. He's nice! Don't mess this up.

Mitchell storms out of the apartment slamming the door behind him. He then gently opens the door again and stands there glaring at Marcus.

MITCHELL

As much as I can't stand you right now, I need a ride.

Marcus sighs and runs a hand through his hair.

MARCUS

Just come in. I'll tell mom you're staying with me. It'll be easier. I have a shift at the convenience store. Just behave yourself.

Mitchell stalks past Marcus into the apartment.

MITCHELL

Fine! But I'm staying here because I have to. Not because I want to!

MARCUS

Whatever Mitchell.

CUT TO:

CONVENIENCE STORE- INT. NIGHT

Marcus stands at the cash register reading a magazine. He yawns. He glances out the window. His mom is walking towards the door. He immediately runs towards the back room and watches through a crack in the door. She's wearing a suit with her hotel name tag.

CLARISSE

Hello? Is anyone here? I'd like to buy a lottery ticket. HELLO?

Clarisse walks towards the storage room door. Marcus closes it, but Clarisse bangs on it then swings it open. Her eyes widen and then narrow.

CLARISSE (cont'd)

(progressive louder)

Marcus? What are you doing here? Do you work here?

Marcus stands up slowly, steps out of the room and shuts the door behind him.

MARCUS

Um. Yeah, I work here sometimes. I just need a little extra cash to buy supplies and food sometimes, you know?

CLARISSE

No, I don't KNOW. Marcus it is a school nigh-morning rather! It's three A-M!

Marcus gulps and presses his back up against the door.

MARCUS

I don't usually work these hours, I swear. I'm covering for someone, and I've gotten all my work done ahead of time.

Clarisse jabs her finger at his sternum and her eyes narrow.

CLARISSE

(sarcasm)

Oh I'm sure it's just a fluke that I happened along the one night that you decide to pick up extra hours.

MARCUS

Mom, it's really not like that! You happened into this particular convenience store by chance already. Is that really too unbelievable?

CLARISSE

Yes, it is too unbelievable! The fact that it'd have to rely on two coincidences to be true is what makes it all the more likely to be false!

Marcus shrinks back into himself. Clarisse crosses her arms in front of her.

MARCUS

I don't know what to say to you to make you believe me. It's not out of the realm of possibility.

Clarisse sighs and drops her arms at her sides.

CLARISSE

Why are you even doing this Marcus? If you really needed food and stuff you could've just asked.

MARCUS

I didn't want to burden you. You already do so much for us. It would be a shame to make you work harder.

CLARISSE

I don't want you working unnecessarily when there's more important stuff to focus on.

Marcus straightens up but fiddles with his fingers. Clarisse glances at them with a raised eyebrow.

CLARISSE (cont'd)

You're not telling the truth are you?

Marcus waves his hands in front of himself frantically.

MARCUS

No! I'm absolutely not. I just want the best for you mom that's all it is. I just need a little extra money.

CLARISSE

Your college is covered by me and financial aid, is asking for food really all that much to ask in comparison?

MARCUS

Um. Yes. It's just one more thing,
you know?

CLARISSE

I know you're up to something Marcus,
and that really hurts me as the
person who has done nothing but make
sure you don't go down the same road
I did.

Marcus' eyes narrow and his eyes look watery.

MARCUS

I'm not going to live your life! I'm
not you! I know what's best for me.

CLARISSE

As long as I'm paying your tuition,
I'm the one who knows what's best for
you. Kids think they know everything.
You know nothing.

Clarisse starts to tear up. Marcus softens.

MARCUS

Mom, I'm sorry. I really didn't mean
to upset you. It's really not that
big of a deal.

CLARISSE

It is. I know you're up to something
Marcus! Everything I've ever done has
been for you. Also, don't leave your
brother alone at night.

Clarisse starts to stalks out of the store without saying
goodbye.

MARCUS

Goodbye mom. I'm really sorry.

Marcus slinks back behind the counter and puts his head in
his hands

CUT TO:

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE HIGH SCHOOL-DAY

MITCHELL walks in the door, slowly. His eyebrows furrow together. He glances around before landing on CLARISSE loudly speaking to THE DEAN while aggressively gesturing. They turn to Mitchell. The dean with a smile and wave and his mother with a frown.

DEAN

Ah, Mitchell. We were just speaking about you. Would you like to have a seat? We were just discussing-

As the Dean gestures for Mitchell to sit in front of his desk, Clarisse cuts him off.

CLARISSE

What is wrong with you?

Mitchell stops in his tracks.

MITCHELL

I'm sorry? Did I... do something?

CLARISSE

It's more of what you haven't done at this point. I've worked my tail off to give you a chance at a future, and how do you repay that effort? With a C.

DEAN

(good-natured)

You also have three B's and two A's, so it's not really all that pressing of a concern. Your mom is just a little worried-

Clarisse glares at the dean before returning her gaze to Mitchell when his voice falls silent.

CLARISSE

His mother can speak for herself, and considering our circumstances, his performance is a great concern of mine.

MITCHELL

So, you're just here about my grades? Did I miss something? I thought you had already given up on berating me. I thought Marcus was catching all of that concern lately.

Mitchell shoves his hands in his pockets and reclines against the wall.

CLARISSE

Oh trust me, Marcus is never out of the woods. I do have two sons though. Which means two chances not to create complete screw-ups.

The dean's expression is tense. He goes to stand with his hand placed loudly on the table. Clarisse glances at him.

DEAN

Ms. Ross! I am in no way here to tell you how to parent your children, but I do think you're way too hard on Mitchell of all people.

Clarisse stalks over to the dean with her arms crossed. He shrinks back a little.

CLARISSE

It seems like you are telling me how to parent my children. He needs to get into college, and I can't afford that if he's not willing to step up.

The dean straightens and composes himself.

DEAN

You shouldn't worry. There are many ways Mitchell can cover his college expenses. Kids and teachers alike are quite fond of him.

CLARISSE

I don't care how fond of him inconsequential people are. I fail to see how it's likely that they will be of any assistance.

DEAN

Well, it just shows his skill set. He's a good kid, from a low-income family, and he plays sports. He's looking good for some scholarships.

Clarisse sighs, looking at Mitchell skeptically with a raised brow.

CLARISSE

Being poor in school doesn't help his chances though, does it?

(MORE)

CLARISSE (cont'd)

Neither does the time he wastes
around those friends of his.

DEAN

It's conducive towards achieving
better versatility as a person, and
being charismatic is a skill. I mean,
I'm sure David is great support,
isn't he?

Mitchell stiffens, a frown deepening. He glances down.
Clarisse shoots him narrowed eyebrows.

CLARISSE

I don't know who this David is, but
if he's not helping you study, you
best distance yourself from him.
Focus on what matters here.

MITCHELL

(quietly)

But...I like David. He's nice, and
he's smart.

CLARISSE

Yet if he's not helping the problem,
I don't want to hear about him again.
Go back to class and pay attention
for once in your life. I'm going to
work from here; to support you.

Clarisse straightens, grabbing her back from where it's
resting on the floor. She stalks out nearly running into
DAVID, who she sneers at. The Dean looks at Mitchell with a
frown and large droopy eyes.

DEAN

Don't take all that to heart
Mitchell. I mean, do well in class,
but all that other stuff, well...

Mitchell shoots him a lazy finger salute as he exits the
office.

MITCHELL

Will do.

Mitchell joins David outside the door.

DAVID

(confused)

Who was that lady? Was that your mom? I saw you were walking to the office when I was heading to the bathroom, and I thought I'd surprise your when I got out.

MITCHELL

(tersely)

Yep. That's my mom. Doubt she cares who you are though. Just drop it.

Mitchell brushes past David. David grips the back of his shirt in his first to stop him. His face hardens.

DAVID

I thought your parents had hardly any role in your life Mitchie. Was that just a lie?

MITCHELL

Sorry. She might as well not, though.

DAVID

(louder)

I don't care what she's like. Why can't you just trust me with this? Why would you lie?

MITCHELL

I said drop it. You wanted to meet her, well there you go. You got one great first-impression right there. I'm going back to class.

DAVID

Why are you like this? Why can't you just talk to me?

MITCHELL

You know what David? I don't know why I'm like this. It's the second time today I've been asked that, and I have no better answer than maybe I'm more like my parents than I thought.

DAVID

(louder)

What's that supposed to mean?

MITCHELL

(quietly)

Maybe in all my effort to protect you, I was just being selfish. I'll see you later.

David watches him go. Brows quirked. No longer angry, but stopped in his tracks.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM-DAY

Professor lectures at the front of a packed classroom. Marcus is sleeping with his head on the desk. Ana sits next to him and starts lightly shaking him.

ANA

(whisper shouting)

Marcus. Marcus? Yo Mark!

Marcus stirs awake and slowly looks at Ana wiping his eyes and then takes in where he is with a start.

MARCUS

Oh! Thanks for waking me up.

ANA

It's fine.

Marcus scrambles to start taking notes then slowly puts his pencil down and turns to Ana.

MARCUS

Look, I'm really sorry about how I acted the other day. You were just expressing your opinion, and I shut you down.

Ana smiles tightly and looks back down at her paper absently.

ANA

It wasn't my place to tell you what to do. Don't sweat it.

MARCUS

It's really not a big deal. You were just trying to be honest.

Ana looks back at his face.

ANA

Yes, and I still honestly think your best course of action is just to do what you want to do.

Marcus sighs and plays with his sleeve.

MARCUS

I still honestly think that is easier said than done.

Ana tilts and lifts her head, quirking an eyebrow.

ANA

I don't know. I did it, and I'm thriving if I do say so myself.

Marcus stops fidgeting and smiles slightly.

MARCUS

Yeah, well you probably don't have my family situation. People are different Ana. I need you to respect that.

Ana's eyebrows furrow and she looks down.

ANA

Oh yeah. Our familial situations are quite different. I don't even associate with mine.

Marcus looks at her with wide eyes.

MARCUS

I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to-

Ana waves a hand to stop him.

ANA

It's fine. You didn't know, but don't assume. I worked my butt off to get here.

MARCUS

Yeah, I hear that a lot-

ANA

I live in the sketchiest apartment known to man and work two jobs to pay my tuition which isn't totally covered by my financial aid.

MARCUS

I really am sorry though. Shouldn't your parents be proud of you? I'm sure mine would love to have you as their kid.

Ana snorts and stares in the teacher's direction, not really looking at him.

ANA

Not likely that they are. They wanted me to stay home. They never wanted me to go to college. I was supposed to just help support the family, by working at their business.

Marcus glances down and starts fidgeting again.

MARCUS

O-oh. I'm not sure that I get their reasoning, but they're clearly not looking out for your best interests.

Ana sighs and turns to Marcus again.

ANA

When are you going to realize that your parents aren't after your best interests as well.

MARCUS

It's not like th-

Ana cuts him off with a sharp look

ANA

Isn't it though? They both just want us to do whatever they want us to do. Those are their dreams, not ours.

MARCUS

Either way, at least yours aren't always there to constantly berate you. Your parents aren't down your neck constantly.

Ana grabs Marcus' wrist from where he's fiddling with his sleeve and holds eye-contact for a moment.

ANA

I sort of wish they were though. You don't want to cut them out like I did. It'll just make things harder. Try to win them over. Please.

Marcus pulls his wrist away. People around them start packing up and heading out the door.

MARCUS

I don't think that's going to work. I've only been trying to explain all my life.

Ana shoves her stuff into her bag and stands to leave.

ANA

Find a way to make them understand. Show them.

With that Ana leaves the room, which is nearly empty. Marcus sits for a few more seconds before absently gathering his belongings.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE CULINARY CLASSROOM-NIGHT

CHEF NESTOR is checking her phone by the door to the classroom. She looks up to greet others as they enter. Marcus approaches her.

MARCUS

Uh. Hello Chef Nestor.

Chef Nestor smiles politely.

CHEF NESTOR

Hi Marcus. Have you given any thought to my proposition from last class?

MARCUS

That's actually what I was going to ask about. Is that recommendation for The Golden Iris still available?

Chef Nestor perks up, smile widening.

CHEF NESTOR

It absolutely is! So, you've decided to do something with that talent of yours?

Marcus gives a small smile.

MARCUS
Something like that.

Chef Nestor's smile drops a little.

CHEF NESTOR
You don't sound very sure. You don't have to accept, you know? It's just an offer. I don't want to pressure you into anything.

Marcus looks at her and shakes his head vigorously and smiles again.

MARCUS
No! I mean, no. That's not the case at all. I just had someone enlighten me a little, I guess. Made me stop feeling sorry for myself.

Chef Nestor relaxes and looks at him with a soft expression.

CHEF NESTOR
Well, in that case, I'm glad. You seemed concerned about scheduling though. Where do you stand on that?

Marcus looks away and sighs.

MARCUS
I'm still pressed for time, but I wanted this to take priority in my life for once. This is what I want to do.

CHEF NESTOR
I'm sure my friend and I can work something out if it's that much of a concern of yours.

MARCUS
You don't have to do that.

CHEF NESTOR
I just want to see you succeed. You really are talented. You add just that bit of ingenuity to every dish.

Marcus glances at his feet.

MARCUS

Thank you for saying so. I'm glad you think that. I would really appreciate all of that.

Chef Nestor waves him off.

CHEF NESTOR

Ah, it's not that big of a deal. I'm in an advantageous position. My career's going well enough. The least I can do is pass the torch.

MARCUS

It still doesn't go unappreciated. Thank you.

Chef Nestor shoos him in the room.

CHEF NESTOR

Yeah, yeah. Get in the room and get ready for class before you make me cry or something.

Marcus laughs and walks into the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE SCHOOL-AFTERNOON

Mitchell walks hunched over with his large backpack. Eventually a car drives up beside him. It's David.

DAVID

Need a ride?

Mitchell glances in the car and keeps walking.

MITCHELL

I thought you didn't give rides to liars, so I guess I'm out of luck.

David comes to a complete stop and throws open the passenger door. David sighs.

DAVID

Look, I get it. Just get in. You don't need to walk miles away just to make a point.

Mitchell groans then throws his bag in the car and sits reluctantly, pulling the door shut behind him.

MITCHELL

What? You clearly came to talk. So...
what? You have something to say to
me?

David starts to slowly drive away.

CONT. INT. DAVID'S CAR-AFTERNOON

DAVID

I'm sorry. I'm sure you had reasons
for not telling me. I shouldn't have
been so hateful about it.

Mitchell sighs, face softening before looking at David's
profile and slumping in his seat.

MITCHELL

It's good. You're right too. I
shouldn't have been dishonest. You
just seriously wouldn't want to meet
my parents. They're the worst.

DAVID

I get that impression. You did say
you realized you were more like them
than you thought.

Mitchell lightly hits David and they both crack a smile.

DAVID (cont'd)

Hey! Don't hit the person driving!

MITCHELL

The person driving shouldn't be
saying stuff like that about their
passenger then.

David's expression is softer, but his smile straightens out
again.

DAVID

I should have listened. So, here I
am, listening. Tell me about them,
and be honest this time.

Mitchell slumps further in his seat.

MITCHELL

Well... I guess it's mainly my mom.
You saw her. She came to yell at the
dean and me because I dared to have
B's and C's.

David gasps dramatically.

DAVID
(sarcastic)
Oh! The horror!

Mitchell's mouth quirks up on one side.

MITCHELL
That's basically her whole shtick.
She only wants me to do things that
look good to colleges, so I can get a
free ride and a well-paying job.

DAVID
I mean...That doesn't seem so bad.

MITCHELL
It's bad when it's all she wants me
to do. She told me to distance myself
from you.

David snorts.

DAVID
Well it seems you took her advice to
heart rather quickly.

Mitchell runs his hands through his hair and groans again.

MITCHELL
You don't get how bad it is. I can
have no friends. My dad's just a yes
man too, so when he's around it's
just more of the same garbage.

David hums in assent.

DAVID
Gotcha. I'm sorry. If that's all
there is to it, why didn't you just
say this in the first place?

Mitchell glances out the window.

MITCHELL
I want to be your boyfriend, not a
charity case. Your family is so nice
and normal. I just want that.

DAVID

Aw, baby. I would never think less of you because your family is a train wreck. Besides your brother, I guess.

MITCHELL

No, my brother's still a train wreck, just not in a bad sense.

DAVID

(incredulous)

How can that not be in a bad sense?

They both laugh.

MITCHELL

Well, I guess that's just not a good analogy.

David pulls into Mitchell's driveway and leans over to steal a kiss still smiling when they pull back.

DAVID

We're here. So, that's settled. I won't pressure you about it, and you're still my boyfriend?

Mitchell smiles as he gets out of the car.

MITCHELL

As far as I know! Thanks for the ride babe!

David waves as he's backing up, and ends up backing into the Ross' mailbox. Mitchell groans. GEORGE ROSS rushes out of the house in a rage.

GEORGE

Mitchell! What's going on now?

FADE OUT

