

LIGHTS

Based on a true story

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FADE IN:

OPENING SCENE:

Lights come on in a street that is pitch black. Title of movie appears in the corner (white text on dark background).

**Scene shift**, Brandon (age 18) plays *Moonlight Sonata* on the piano.

Music: *Moonlight Sonata* - *Beethoven*

Start *Moonlight Sonata*.

**ACT 1. DARKNESS****SCENE: UNAWARE**

Continue *Moonlight Sonata*.

Around the dinner table, Brandon (age: 18) is with his parents and brothers. Brandon is eating dinner non-stop. Mom drinks water. Brandon continues to eat dinner. Dad drinks water. Brandon continues to eat dinner. Kenji drinks water. Brandon continues to eat dinner. Eric drinks water. Brandon continues to eat without noticing.

**Scene shift**, Brandon washes his hands once. He turns off the faucet. He then turns it on again and starts to wash. He turns off the faucet again. He turns on the faucet again. Dad notices and begins to cough. Brandon washes hands. Dad continues coughing. Brandon turns off the faucet. Brandon turns on the faucet again. Dad coughs loudly. Brandon turns off the faucet. Dad coughs. Brandon walks away without noticing.

**Scene shift**, at a family gathering, Brandon walks around kitchen.

Mom: "Where is Dad?"

Brandon: "He's somewhere. He's in the backyard. Wait, he's in the garage."

Mom puts hand through hair and keeps her hand on her head.

**Scene shift**, in the kitchen,

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Brandon says to himself while  
looking outside: "That's such a  
cool bird."

Dad sneezes. Camera shows Brandon just staring straight  
without noticing.

Brandon: "It's just standing."

Dad sneezes again. Brandon does not notice.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is walking with group of friends back  
home from high school. Jon sniffs loudly.

Camera shows Brandon: "What a  
test."

Daniel sniffs loudly.

Camera shows Brandon: "Time to  
destress."

Phil sniffs loudly.

Jon: "Yeah man."

Jon sniffs loudly. Brandon continues walking without sniffing  
or noticing. Daniel sniffs loudly. Phil sniffs loudly. Jon  
coughs then sniffs loudly. Brandon continues without  
noticing.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is at a restaurant with cousins and he  
is zoning out while eating constantly. Cousins are laughing  
while chatting.

Katie claps loudly: "I'm stuffed!"

Brandon keeps eating.

Cousins bang the table while  
talking: "Eat less, drink more!"

Brandon keeps eating without noticing.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is with friends at his house.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Brandon: "I tried out for the golf team today."

Jon rubs his eyes: "Oh, how did it go?"

Brandon: "It went well."

Jon: "Did you play all 18 holes?"

Brandon: "Yeah. It was tough."

Jon rubs his eyes.

SCENE: A CURSE

Continue *Moonlight Sonata*.

Brandon is visibly nervous sitting at his desk in a high school class room (camera shows Brandon's point of view with heart beating and breathing heavily; he plays with his hands which are sweaty). Brandon is not paying attention to the student giving his book report. Brandon just focuses on his lines for his presentation.

Brandon repeats over and over: "In  
this story, the main protagonist is  
a hero for the broken."

End *Moonlight Sonata*.

SCENE: A BRIGHT FUTURE?

Music: *No Surprises* - Ramin Djawadi

Start *No Surprises*.

Outside Royce Hall at UCLA, Brandon walks around with a group of fellow orientation freshmen.

Orientation leader: "This here is Royce Hall, the largest theater on the UCLA campus where many performances are held, including concerts and talks."

Orientation leader gestures as students take pictures.

Orientation leader: "And this concludes our 3-day orientation. You are all welcome to ask questions or roam around campus. You are now officially a bruin!"

Everyone: "Woo!"

Martin: "What's it like to be a bruin now that you're on the other side?"

Orientation leader: "It's pretty damn awesome. UCLA is such an awesome school, it really has everything a college student dreams of having: great academics, diversity, career opportunities, and did I mention we have the most NCAA titles of any other college? If you weren't a sports fan before, UCLA will turn you, I promise."

Jessica: "How is the bioengineering department? I know it's pretty new but it seems quite well-established already."

Orientation leader: "The bioengineering department is quite innovative, we're constantly building new machines and pushing the field forward in terms of research and practicality."

People look around.

Orientation leader: "Alright well,  
if there are no additional  
questions, I'll see you all on  
campus sometime!"

Brandon strolls around and then stops at the top of the  
stairs overlooking campus and takes a photo.

End *No Surprises*.

**Scene shift,**

Music: *Dr. Ford - Ramin Djawadi*

Start *Dr. Ford*.

Brandon is in a lecture hall with the professor giving a  
lecture on molecular biology. Brandon is on his laptop typing  
furiously without paying attention to social cues. People  
sneeze very loudly.

Professor: "And so translation  
occurs when the large ribosomal  
subunit binds to the small subunit  
and translates the protein in a 5'  
to 3' direction. t-RNA bind to the  
codons of the mRNA with an anti-  
codon bringing amino acids with  
them. Achoo! Achoo! Achoo! Excuse  
me."

Brandon keeps typing without noticing.

Professor: "Amino acids attach  
together through peptide bonds with  
the carboxyl group reacting with  
the amino group through a  
dehydration reaction."

Brandon keeps typing.

Professor: "Achoo! Achoo! Achoo!"

Brandon keeps typing.

(MORE)



(CONT'D)

Professor: "Okay class that wraps up today's lecture on protein translation, next lecture we will cover gene mutations and regulatory mechanisms."

Brandon keeps typing. Everyone gets up to leave. Brandon closes laptop and packs bag. Brandon gets up and leaves.

**Scene shift,** Brandon arrives at the MCAT preparation center.

He walks in. The class is sitting ready to take notes.

Brandon walks up to the whiteboard:  
"Sorry class, got out of research late. How's everyone doing?"

Class: "We're good."

Brandon: "Great. Let's jump right in where we left off."

Brandon begins to write on blackboard.

**Scene shift,**

Brandon is with his lab giving a presentation on his molecular biology results: "We pinpointed that mRNA expression in the drosophila embryo was complementary to our sequenced primers."

Professor: "You were able to replicate the mRNA from your targeted primers?"

Brandon: "Yes. And we concluded that this was indeed for the Hunchback protein."

Professor: "Using restriction enzymes, how did you determine that you had the right DNA?"

Brandon: "We found three bands in the gel, one for the entire DNA, and two others for the fragments where the restriction enzymes cut."

Professor: "And how did you know that this embryo had successfully taken up the DNA of interest?"

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Brandon: "We confirmed gene transfer through our plasmid vector and then at the 24-hour stage the embryo expressed the correct mRNA."

Professor: "Great news that this was a success. We will let you know your oral final exam scores by next week."

End *Dr. Ford.*

SCENE: A FORK IN THE ROAD

Music: *Little Ben - Two Steps From Hell*

Start *Little Ben*.

Brandon arrives outside the UCSF hospital. Camera shows  
Langley Porter Institute. Brandon walks up to Josh's office  
and knocks on door.

Josh opens the door: "Hello."

They begin the interview.

Brandon: "Hi, I'm Brandon. Nice to  
meet you."

Josh and Brandon shake hands:  
"Josh. Nice to meet you. Please  
have a seat."

Both Josh and Brandon take a seat.

Josh: "As you know, this is for the  
UCSF psychiatry clinical research  
internship on schizophrenia. The  
research we do here focuses on  
understanding new treatments for  
mental disorders. Why don't you  
tell me about yourself."

Brandon nervously: "So, I just  
graduated from UCLA with a degree  
in molecular biology. I love  
science and research. I worked in a  
lab at UCLA in biochemistry  
observing how actin crosslinks and  
disrupts the cellular cytoskeleton.  
I liked the research there but  
figured that wet lab research  
wasn't really for me and I would  
like to get into clinical research.  
I found out about your lab through  
a friend at UC Berkeley and I found  
your research interesting and  
relevant to my personal goals. My  
dream goal is to become a doctor."

Josh: "Okay. That all sounds good.  
I heard good things about you from  
your mentor Dmitri.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

He said you were hard-working and pick things up quickly."

Brandon: "Those are really kind things for him to say about me."

Josh: "You know, his work and my work are very different. He was talking very passionately about cells and actin and mechanisms at the molecular level. Now that's all good and all, but my work deals with humans and talking to people with severe illnesses. My work looks at behavior through computerized experiments and cool tools like eye-gaze trackers."

Brandon: "That sounds really cool. I was looking for something clinically related and this seems right up my alley."

Josh: "I had one question though and this is concerning to me. Why were you only working in different labs for a short period of time?"

Brandon: "I didn't really enjoy molecular biology lab work. I liked the theory but wet lab work is not my cup of tea. I also wasn't always 100% sure I wanted to do medical school and recently decided I would commit to it."

Josh: "Hm okay. You know medical schools like it when you commit to one thing for a long period of time over having multiple different experiences. It shows that you have the dedication to make it through medical school, which is very tough. I see here that you've taken the MCAT already. Your score is very competitive. I think we scored the same."

Brandon: "Thanks. Yeah, it was tough. But I am ready to commit to a position."

Josh: "Great."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

You'll hear from me in a week or  
so. It was great meeting you  
Brandon."

End *Little Ben*.

SCENE: IT REARS ITS UGLY HEAD

Music: *Stay* - Hans Zimmer

Start *Stay*.

Brandon is in a cubicle working on data with graphs and brain imaging photos pinned on the board next to the computer.

Camera shows Brandon manipulating data in excel.

Hannah knocks on cubicle door: "Hey  
Brandon the participant has  
arrived."

Brandon: "Okay great."

Brandon saves file and turns off monitor. Brandon grabs lab coat and clipboard.

Brandon goes to Silvia: "Hey could  
you grab the oxytocin from the  
pharmacy?"

Silvia: "Yeah I'm on it."

Brandon: "Thanks."

Brandon walks to front door where  
participant is waiting sitting on a  
chair: "Hi, are you Douglas?"

Douglas: "Yes."

Brandon: "Hi, I'm Brandon and I'll  
be running you through the  
experiment today. If you'll follow  
me, we can go ahead and get  
started."

Douglas: "Okay."

Brandon leads Douglas into an experimenter room and closes  
the door behind him.

Brandon: "Okay, so I'm going to go  
over the consenting process with  
you. Basically, we will keep your  
information as private as possible.  
Um, and you have the right to stop  
the experiment at any time you  
become uncomfortable.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Um... yeah... and we will be giving you oxytocin and then test you on multiple tests that assess your social skills. Are you familiar with oxytocin?"

Douglas: "No."

Brandon: "Okay well basically it's a naturally produced hormone that has little side effects. We will be giving it to you in the form of a nasal spray. We will compensate you \$55 for each session and you will come to two sessions: today and next week. Do you have any questions?"

Douglas: "No."

Brandon: "Okay you will need to do a urine drug screen first. We'll need you to pee in this cup. The bathroom is right around the corner."

Brandon hands participant cup. Participant takes it and head out of the room. Brandon gets notification beep from phone. Facebook notification: "It is Ivana's birthday today. Say happy birthday!" shows up on his phone. Brandon looks and pauses.

Brandon whispers: "that's weird."

**Scene shift**, Brandon synchronizes eye tracking computer in room adjacent to experimenter room.

Brandon: "Okay, could you look to your left. Great. Now to your right. Great. Now Up. Okay now down. Great, now I want you to look at the faces presented in front of you in whatever way you feel like."

Brandon closes the door and starts the experiment on the computer. While sitting, Brandon's checks facebook. He refreshes news feed and Ivana's posting stays at the top.

Brandon refreshes again and a different posting by Ivana remains on top. Brandon refreshes again and then regular feed comes back. Brandon stares at the feed for a while.

Douglas shouts from other room:  
"I'm finished."

Brandon startled: "Oh, okay great."

Brandon gets up and opens door to experimenter room.

**Scene shift,**

Brandon gives money to Douglas:  
"Here you go, this is for today's session. I'll see you next week for session 2. Take care."

Douglas takes money and leaves. Brandon walks back to cubicle, takes off lab coat, and sits down. Brandon looks at phone, checks facebook, and then checks Ivana's wall. Brandon then changes his facebook password. End *Stay*.



SCENE: UNBLINDED

Music: *Chevaliers De Sangreal* - Hans Zimmer

Start *Chevaliers De Sangreal*.

Brandon on couch across from Josh with Hannah and Silvia at Josh's house.

Josh: "So, we're going to split up the grant into several pieces. I'd like Hannah to work on the abstract. Silvia work on the biosketches. Brandon could you work on the preliminary data?"

Josh puts his hand on his head (exaggerated with arm over head with fingers dropping down into his eyes)

Hannah: "Sounds good."

Brandon: "Do you want me to use the adult study or adolescent study data?"

Josh: "Use both."

Brandon: "Okay."

Josh puts hand on head with fingers dropping down into his eyes exaggeratedly: "Brandon, what does the data say?"

Brandon has realization. Brandon starts to copy Josh's movements with hand on head and then bringing fingers into his eyes.

Brandon: "I'll have to take a look."

Josh: "Great. Go team!"

**Scene shift**, at Dr. Mendes house, research associates are at a table eating dinner and having conversation. Brandon takes a bite. Brandon looks around, people eat. Brandon takes another bite. Paul looks at Brandon and drinks. Patricia

looks at Brandon and drinks. Brandon takes another bite. All research associates around the table take a drink and cough. Brandon then has a realization and picks up his drink and takes a drink. Camera shows Dr. Mendes nodding and then drinking.

Dr. Mendes then says: "Yes, copy  
others that is the key."

**Scene shift**, Brandon at a coffee shop working on computer. Someone coughs and Brandon pauses from his work, looks up, and copies cough. Brandon continues typing. Someone sneezes and Brandon pauses typing and then copies sneeze. Brandon continues typing. Someone breathes deeply while typing. Brandon pauses and then deeply breathes and then resumes typing.

**Scene shift**, Brandon leaves lab building. Brandon walks to car, starts car, and drives off. End *Chevaliers De Sangreal*.

SCENE: DESCENDING INTO DARKNESS

Music: *Mountains* - Hans Zimmer

Start *Mountains*.

Brandon is in the dark of his room on his computer and starts to notice strange things on facebook. First, Brandon refreshes his news feed and it stays the same. Then, Brandon checks his Messenger and a new friend request shows up from: "Lewis Wright". Next, Brandon refreshes news feed and it becomes blank. Messenger error: "Not available" pops up.

Brandon: "Is someone hacking my  
computer?"

Brandon stares intensely at computer screen and refreshes news feed. Nothing shows up again. Another new friend request shows up: "Michelle Chen". Notification pops up in corner, "Harry invites you to Fundraiser for Harry's Volunteer Trip." Notification: "Ivana likes a post by Lisa: 'Trip to Iceland, recommendations? Ready set go.'"

**Scene shift**, Brandon is at Jono's house sitting around a dinner table.

Brandon: "Hey, I have to ask you something. Are you in with her on hacking my computer?"

Jono: "No man, I'm not."

Brandon: "Don't lie to me."

Jono: "Seriously, I don't know what you are talking about."

Brandon: "You're totally in with her. I can tell by your tone."

Jono: "Are you okay?"

Brandon: "Yeah. I think so."  
(MORE)

(CONT'D)

I still think you're lying."

Jono: "I wouldn't lie to you. If I knew about it I would have said something."

Brandon: "Whatever."

Jono: "Have you even talked to her?"

Brandon: "I called her once."

Jono: "What did she say?"

Brandon: "She said that she didn't know what I was talking about. She said that she would let me know though about whether we would go out in the future."

Jono: "Oh."

Brandon: "It just sounds so weird she would say that."

Jono: "I think she was just trying to be nice."

Brandon: "I still think it is fishy. I still think you're not telling me the truth."

Jono: "Maybe I am, maybe I am not."

Brandon: "Stop that man. That is totally what a person who is on the hacking would say."

Jono: "I am just kidding man. Lighten up."

Brandon: "As a friend you really need to be honest."

Jono: "Okay, man, okay. I am. You don't look so good. Do you want some water?"

Brandon: "Yeah sure."

**Scene shift,** Brandon enters coffee shop with bike helmet.

Brandon spots Josh and takes off helmet. Brandon walks over

to Josh and takes a seat across from Josh.

Josh: "Hey Brandon, how are you doing?"

Brandon: "I'm okay."

Josh: "You seem to be a little distracted. You haven't been producing the work you usually do. Is everything okay?"

Brandon: "Actually I'm... having some trouble. I think someone is hacking my facebook."

Josh: "Oh, hmm. That's concerning. Who do you think it is?"

Brandon: "This girl from my college that I am sort of interested in."

Josh: "Oh. How do you know for sure she is hacking your facebook?"

Brandon: "Well it's hard to explain. Sometimes there will be notifications that appear at certain times coincidentally. Like someone will like a post and then simultaneously a friend request will appear. And then sometimes when I refresh, there will be no content. It's weird and hard to explain, but it all just seems too coincidental to be random chance."

Josh: "Hm. That sounds very strange and very unlikely but I guess it is not impossible. How long has this been going on?"

Brandon: "Several months."

Josh: "Do you think I am in on it as well?"

Brandon: "I think so."

Josh: "What makes you think I am in on it as well?"

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Brandon: "The way you are talking just seems sort of like you would be in on it."

Josh: "Hm. How sure are you that I am in on it?"

Brandon: "I think like 80% sure you are in on it."

Josh: "Oh, that is very concerning. Well I am not in on it. How sure are you now?"

Brandon: "Now that you say that a little less, but I still feel like you are in on it because of the way you said that."

Josh: "Is this affecting your ability to focus at work?"

Brandon: "Sort of."

Josh: "I am very concerned. You might have something."

Brandon: "Oh... like schizophrenia?"

Josh: "Well, I'm not exactly certain, but it is a possibility. What you are having seems very much like a delusion to me."

Brandon is silent for a while:  
"...well now that you say that, I think it might be."

Josh: "How do you feel about it?"

Brandon: "...a little sad and scared I guess."

Josh: "It is very scary I understand. Have you been sleeping okay?"

Brandon: "Yeah."

Josh: "How about your eating?"

Brandon: "A little less appetite."  
(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Josh: "How is your mood?"

Brandon: "A little lower than usual."

Josh: "Okay. Well I do think you have something Brandon. I am not sure it is as serious as schizophrenia, but this isn't something that is normal."

Brandon: "How likely do you think it is schizophrenia?"

Josh: "I don't know Brandon, I don't. It is possible though. I hope it isn't, but you can never be sure. I think you should go see a psychiatrist. I am worried. You should tell them what you told me. This isn't something to be taken lightly."

Brandon: "Okay."

Josh: "You should tell your parents about this as well. You don't have to tell them what you told me, but they should know that you need some help. People have these problems and they turn out to be nothing too serious. But you can never be too sure. You should see a psychiatrist right away. You don't need to come into work for the rest of the week. Take a break and take care of your health."

Brandon: "I want to keep working though."

Josh: "I don't think that is a good idea. This could be something very serious. Just don't come in until after you have seen a psychiatrist. I think you should go home to your parents."

Brandon: "Yeah."

Josh: "How sure are you now?"

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Brandon: "Much less, probably like 30%."

Josh: "Okay. That is still high but better. Go home and make an appointment to see a psychiatrist. Hang in there."

Brandon: "Thanks."

Brandon grabs his helmet and bag. Josh puts his laptop away.

Scene fades. End *Mountains*.



**ACT 2. RISE****SCENE: A NEW BEGINNING**

Music *Road To Glory - Audiomachine*

Start *Road To Glory*.

**Scene shift**, Brandon opens the gate outside his apartment in San Francisco. He locks it and then walks down the busy street into a muni bus.

**Scene shift**, camera shows outside of VA medical center. Brandon enters the lab space with his backpack. Brandon walks to cubicle, sits down, and turns on monitor. He pulls out his notebook and works on analyzing the data.

SCENE: INTO THE UNKNOWN

Camera shows Brandon with backpack on and walking along the Great Wall in the mountains in Beijing during his volunteer trip to China.

Brandon stops and gazes out in the distance: "What a view."

Xander: "We made it."

Brandon: "Not yet."

Xander: "Why not?"

Brandon: "When you've made something that can be seen from the heavens, that's when you'll know."

**Scene shift**, Brandon is walking along a busy street downtown in Shanghai at night with the lights brightly shining down on the street.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is with Xander at the New Year countdown outside with crowds of people. Brandon cheers with Xander, "Here's to meeting a stranger across the world, becoming friends, and sharing good memories together."

**Scene shift**, Brandon teaches English to class of students during his volunteer trip to Vietnam.

Brandon: "Adjectives describe nouns. Adjectives are words like brave, tasty, and beautiful. They describe the noun which is a thing in the world such as person, food, or Vietnam."

**Scene shift**, Brandon is wearing a backpack walking on trail near waterfalls. Brandon scales the waterfall with a rope.

**Scene shift**, Brandon on motorped riding through the busy streets of Ho Chi Minh City.

**Scene shift,** Brandon orders pho from the streets. Brandon sits down and digs in to a steaming bowl of pho.

**Scene shift,** Brandon is walking outside the Louvre in Paris taking photos during his solo backpacking trip to Europe.

Brandon asks a stranger to take a photo: "This is pretty epic being in the center of art."

Stranger: "Yes it is, it's quite a place to be."

Brandon: "So many people come to these places. It's dawned on me that I am here now. I feel like I might not appreciate it as much now that I've experienced it."

Stranger: "Well, it's nice that you came to see it, don't you think?"

Brandon: "Yes, it is nice, I think."

**Scene shift,**

Brandon is walking along the cobblestone streets of Ghent with friend: "This feels very antiquated like the middle ages."

Friend: "Yes, it is my home."

Brandon: "Home is nice once in a while. But to see other people's homes, I think that is better."

Friend: "It is."

Brandon: "I think I know more about what home is. Maybe we're not so different you and I. After all, we are researching the same thing."

**Scene shift,** Brandon is in the Alps in Switzerland high up in the snowy mountains overlooking the shadowy valley.

Brandon: "It has been a dream to see the Alps Andres."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Andres: "Maybe it's not such a great dream."

Brandon laughs: "Well now that I'm here I feel rather light-headed. I think I'll need to get down somehow."

Andres: "I know the perfect way."

Brandon screams: "Woo!" as he paraglides over the valley.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is in Berlin in a bar playing a ping pong themed game with international travelers and locals. Everyone circles around a ping pong table with a paddle hitting the ball while drinking beer.

Brandon talks to person next to him while circling the table: "I don't think we'll ever see the winner. It isn't clear to me why I am in this position."

Brandon misses the ball.

Stranger: "Ooh, that's what happens when you take your eye off the prize. Better luck next time bud."

**Scene shift**, camera shows Brandon strolling along the alleyways of Venice above the flooded streets.

Brandon: "Am I a mouse in a maze?"

**Scene shift**, camera captures Brandon from a distance in a museum with the statue of David in Florence.

Brandon: "I am certain that David was smaller in life. I guess as with all myths the legend is portrayed much larger than he actually is."

**Scene shift**, Brandon is in the Coliseum ruins of Rome.

Brandon: "Battle hardened. This is where it all began."

**Scene shift,** Brandon is in the Vatican City under the Sistine Chapel of Michelangelo gazing up.

Brandon: "What a doozy."

*End Road To Glory.*

SCENE: STEPPING UP

Camera shows a new Endgames Improv 101 class standing in a circle.

Tammy: "Great class everyone. That concludes Improv 101! Congratulations to everybody. Performance next week. Get ready to rock it. Drinks at Pop n' Hops after this."

People are chatting getting ready to leave class. Brandon picks up sweatshirt and water bottle and gets ready to leave. He checks himself and decides to stay.

Brandon joins conversation: "Hey you all going to Pop n' Hops after this?"

Helen: "Yeah man, gotta celebrate we're all graduates now!"

Natalie: "Yeah, we're true improvisers now!"

Brandon: "Sweet. We should play big booty but the person who loses each time has to take a shot."

Tom: "Hell yeah. Let's go."

Everyone pounds knees and claps and says: "Big booty big booty big booty, awww yeah!"

Tom: "Big booty number 1!"

Franny: "Big booty number 5!"

Kristopher: "Big booty number 7!"

Priscilla: "Big booty number 3!"

Brandon: "Big booty number 3! Ah damn!"

Everyone laughs.

Music: *Purity of Heart* - Steve Jablonsky

Start *Purity of Heart*.

**Scene shift**, camera shows Brandon standing outside the theater "Stagewerx." Brandon looks at the time on his watch. Camera zooms in on the time 6:57pm. The focus is on Brandon who sighs. Brandon walks to the door and hesitates. He looks inside and sees the group practicing "spotlight singalong."

Margaret is in the center of the group singing: "Rising up, back on the streets, did my time took my chances. Went the distance, now I'm back on my feet. Just a man and his will to survive."

Everyone: "It's the eye of the tiger, it's the thrill of the fight. Rising up to the challenge of our rival. And the last known survivor stalks his prey in the night. And he's watchin' us all with the eye... of the tiger!"

Brandon grips phone tightly, has a look of determination and ferocity. Brandon goes inside and walks toward the group.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is now in the center doing "spotlight singalong."

Brandon: "Tonight, I'm gonna have myself a real good time. I feel alive... and the world. I'll turn it inside out, yeah. And floating around in ecstasy..."

Everyone joins: "So don't stop me now, don't stop me. 'Cause I'm having a good time, having a good time!"

**Scene shift**, group walks into the bright lights on stage. Camera shows the group looking out and seeing the audience.

Helen: "Hello! We are 'Moonwalkers!' Tonight we are going to do some improv for ya'll.  
(MORE)

(CONT'D)

The way it works is we're going to get a suggestion from one of you and do some improv based on that suggestion! To get us started, can we get a suggestion of a location?"

Audience member: "Ship!"

Group does a "scene painting" where members come in and generate ideas through a stage setup.

Brandon: "We are aboard a ship with a galley of random assortment of people all searching for a new life."

Tom: "On the side of the ship is the name 'Dreamweaver.'"

**Scene shift,**

Natalie comes in with Harry using oars rowing: "We got this only 3000 miles left to go!"

Harry: "Last time I came aboard this ship, there were more people."

**Scene shift,** Kristopher walks to the center of the stage.

Kristopher acts freshly dressed by popping his collar: "Where's the captain?"

Margaret: "There ain't no captain on this ship Bobby."

Audience laughs.

**Scene shift,** Brandon steers the wheel into the fog.

He squints with his brow furrowed and hand as a visor: "Ah, land ho. There she is, what a beaut'. Jimmy, call all hands on deck. We're arriving. We've spent years at sea, it's time we've got what we came for."

Harry: "All hands!"

Everyone stomps out: "Yessir!"



Everyone pretends to pull out an anchor and turn the mast.  
Brandon steps out onto the ground and cups some sand in his hands.

Brandon looks disheartened: "No, the sand is not gold! We came for golden sand and treasure troves. Where is it?"

Harry: "Sir, the crew is happy. We've landed. We can make a new life here."

Brandon furious: "This is not what I've expected! I wanted treasures and riches!"

Harry: "No, but you've led these men and women to a new life. They are proud to have made this journey with you."

Brandon: "So be it. We'll start again. The journey isn't over. It will never be."

**Scene shift,**

Two sailors, Kristopher and Priscilla, are sitting next to each other laughing and both saying: "No regrets pal, no regrets! Storm tore her apart but we're going down with the ship!"

Audience laughs. Brandon comes in to swipe the scene.

**Scene shift,** everyone in the group holds hands and bows.

Camera captures students looking out into the audience who are standing up, clapping, and cheering.

End *Purity of Heart*.

SCENE: TABLE TOPICS

Brandon is at a Golden Gate Toastmaster's public speaking meeting in San Francisco. Forty people are sitting around a large table in a meeting room and in several back rows.

Barbara: "Welcome to Toastmasters, the premier group for building public speaking skills. Our meeting will start off with table topics. To fill in the new guests, for table topics, we'll ask a question and then call on a member to answer the question by giving their personal 2-minute improvised story. Today's table topics theme is: If I were a book, what would the main plot be? First question: the title of the book you need to summarize is 'Power, wield it or save it?' And the toastmaster who has to answer this is, Fred."

Fred stands: "Fellow toastmasters, honored guests. 'Power, wield it or save it?' Power is an attribute that everyone desires and it holds together the fabric of society. We respect people with power. Presidents, dictators, and leaders all hold power over others and can alter the course of history. My story of power comes locally. Within my family there is a hierarchy of power. My parents have power over me, my girlfriend has power over me, and I, well, I have power over my dog Snoozer. And Snoozer has power over his bowel movements. I feed Snoozer, and I have the power to alter the course of his meal time. One day, I was out and about, doing great things, out saving mankind, wielding my power. And I came home, to find Snoozer waiting by the door, looking innocent at me with his puppy dog eyes. I remembered right then that I forgot to feed him. Dumb me! I rushed to the fridge, got out his favorite Blue Buffalo dog food.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

I went to feed him an hour late.  
And well, he decided to never  
forgive me. Wielding his power  
instead of saving it and changing  
the course of history, he now shits  
on my favorite mat near the front  
door."

Everyone laughs. Everyone claps at end.

Music: *May It Be - Celtic Woman*

Start *May It Be*.

Barbara: "Second question: the  
title of the book you need to  
summarize is 'Fall from Grace.' And  
the toastmaster who has to answer  
this is, Brandon."

Brandon nervously: "Hi, my name is  
Brandon... so... the title of the  
book is... 'Fall from Grace.' Um,  
let's see..."

Brandon pauses for 10 seconds and looks up thinking  
nervously. People avert eye contact.

"...My 'Fall from Grace' happened...  
when I was diagnosed with  
schizophrenia... I was hospitalized a  
few years ago, and I developed  
symptoms and it was bad... really  
bad. I was stuck in a place I did  
not want to be. People were weird  
and strange kind of like creeps.  
And the food... it tasted bad like  
prison food haha. I hated it. I  
felt as if I were stuck in a  
prison. The medications... they  
slowed me down. I couldn't think,  
couldn't focus. I was like a  
person... well ghost of a person.  
Yeah... and that was... well, my 'Fall  
from Grace.'"

Everyone claps. End *May It Be*.

SCENE: MY MAP

Music: *Time* - Hans Zimmer

Start *Time*.

Camera shows Brandon in a wetsuit holding a surfboard looking out to the ocean during the winter. Waves are crashing into the shore. Brandon walks into the ocean and fights through the waves. Brandon then waits to catch the wave and tries to climb onto board but fails. Again, Brandon tries to catch a wave and fails. Again, Brandon catches and rides the wave but cannot stand up. Finally, Brandon focuses and looks determined. He climbs on for final wave, catches it, stands up, and rides the wave to shore.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is sitting in a circle with a group of 10 people with schizophrenia.

Brandon is facilitating the group of people with schizophrenia: "This therapy group will be mostly free form, but we'll have a loose structure that we'll follow. First, we'll identify triggers that cause the source of stress or symptoms, then we'll relate to each other by sharing our own personal experiences, and then support each other through providing our own strategies for coping."

Barney: "Sometimes I get paranoid thoughts where I think someone is watching me."

Brandon: "That seems very distressing, can anyone relate to this experience?"

Pauline: "I haven't seen my father in several years. It causes me stress so I just avoid anything with him altogether and that works for me."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Brandon: "It sounds like you are losing a possible important connection here. Can anyone think of another way to cope?"

Diana: "You could probably try calling someone who is close to both you and your father, and then try talking through them. That way you won't have to be directly interacting with your father."

Vince: "I've found that remaining indoors when planes are out makes it so that I do not think there will be attacks from above."

Brandon: "That sounds like one possible coping strategy. How about slowly acclimating to the stress by wearing headphones first and then doing short trips outside?"

**Scene shift**, Brandon is in an auditorium room at the head of a group mix of veterans, employees, and research associates.

Camera focuses on Brandon: "Welcome everyone, this is a pilot group for improving mental health through improv comedy. We'll play some group games to get warmed up and then dive into some ways of taking risks in this safe space."

**Scene shift**, Brandon presents his three publications in a large lab meeting including BAND lab, THRIVE lab, and the Vinogradov lab.

Brandon: "Our publications indicate that oxytocin could be a potential treatment for deficits in social cognition in schizophrenia. Our first, (Brandon shows slide with front page of publication) showed that oxytocin remediated deficits in higher level social cognition, or abilities related to mentalizing and understanding sarcasm and lying, in schizophrenia.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Our second, (Brandon shows slide with front page of publication) showed that oxytocin improved sense of smell possibly related to cyclic AMP signaling in schizophrenia. Our third, (Brandon shows slide with front page of publication) showed that oxytocin increased the number of facial expressions in schizophrenia. All of these results point to oxytocin as a possible treatment for these difficult to treat social cognitive deficits in schizophrenia that is well-tolerated and very much needed. I'd like to thank the BAND Lab for their support in seeing these studies go into completion and also, my funding from two diversity grants by the National Institutes of Mental Health."

**Scene shift,** Brandon is at the library with his GRE book open. Camera focuses on Brandon who has brows furrowed taking a practice online GRE test. Brandon reads a passage on his computer and writes key phrases on his notepad. End *Time*.

SCENE: THE OPPORTUNITY

Music: *The Kings And Queens Of Old* - Harry Gregson-Williams

Start *The Kings And Queens of Old*.

Brandon is in a suit in a room full of interviewees at UC Berkeley.

Ann: "Congratulations everyone. You've made the cut. You all are stellar individuals. Now it's just about the program fit. Are we a good match?"

**Scene shift,**

Brandon interviews with Ann: "So you disclosed to us that you have schizophrenia. It's really quite a feat that you've accomplished so much yet have this diagnosis. Can you tell us how your illness might impact your time here with us at Berkeley?"

Brandon: "Schizophrenia gave me a sense of purpose. It let me know I was put on this earth for a reason. I want to show the world that anything is possible. I think people need to see possibility. Does a person have to be complacent with a life less worthy of themselves or can they take life by the reigns and really have that life they always wanted? The more people rise up to this challenge, the more they will influence others to do so. It will change the way schizophrenia is viewed."

End *The Kings and Queens Of Old*.

SCENE: THE ART OF ROMANCE

Music: *Once Upon a Time in America (Deborah's Theme)* - Ennio Morricone

Start *Once Upon a Time in America (Deborah's Theme)*.

Brandon walks in, everyone is already seated. Brandon makes eye contact with Julie.

Julie walks over: "Hi, I'm Julie.  
Pleased to meet you."

Brandon: "Hi, I'm Brandon. Is this  
the Improv 201 class?"

Julie: "Yes. You can sit wherever  
you like."

Everyone chats and settles in. Julie and Brandon make glances at each other.

Julie comes to the front: "Hey  
class! Welcome to Improv 201! How's  
everyone doing?"

Class: "Good! Great!"

Julie: "Awesome! Who here has done  
improv before?"

People raise hands.

Julie: "That's great, looks like  
all of you have. This is Improv 201  
which focuses on character. It will  
be more of a stretch than Improv  
101 and we will focus more on  
developing character during scenes.  
But first, let's all get up and  
make a circle!"

Everyone gets up and forms a circle.



Julie: "Our first exercise will be making a strong movement and then saying our name. For example..."  
Julie does a lunge with her fist in the air: "Julie! Let's start to the left."

Josh does fist pump and says:  
"Josh!"

Dan puts both hands to his face like home alone and says: "Dan!"

David rubs his belly and says:  
"David!"

Bri does an irish jig: "Bri!"

Cat makes a wizarding motion:  
"Cat!"

Brandon does a snake motion with his arms: "Brandon!"

Beto makes a thumbs up: "Beto!"

Molly does a lunge with her arms at her waist: "Molly!"

Bill makes the tsk tsk motion:  
"Bill!"

Leslie does a ballerina spin:  
"Leslie!"

Julie: "Awesome! Now we're going to do something a little different. I'm going to do my motion and then say my name and then do the motion and say the name of the person I am passing it to. I'll start."

Julie: "Brandon!"

Brandon: "Brandon, Cat!"

Cat: "Cat, Dan!"

Dan: "Dan, Molly!"

Molly: "Molly, Bri!"

Bri: "Bri, Beto!"  
(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Beto: "Beto, David!"

David: "David, Leslie!"

Leslie: "Leslie, Bill!"

Bill: "Bill, Josh!"

Josh: "Josh, Julie!"

Scene fades out.

End *Once Upon a Time in America* (Deborah's Theme).

SCENE: OUR FIRST CHARACTERS

Music: *Tenuous Winners* - James Newton Howard

Start *Tenuous Winners*.

The team is at Julie's class graduation show.

Julie: "Hey everyone! Get ready to rock your socks off, tonight you're going to enjoy the Improv 201 graduation show by the one and only Zipper Dipper! Without further ado, let me introduce to you all, the team!"

Everyone comes out dancing.

Leslie walks out to the front:  
"Hello everyone! We're Zipper Dipper! Tonight we're going to do some improv for ya'll! Can we get a suggestion for anything?"

Audience: "Mona Lisa! Rocket science! Two-faced! Train to Hogwarts!"

Leslie: "I heard Mona Lisa!"

Molly and David are on stage: "It's about time we saw that lovely face of yours."

David: "I've been hiding my true self to you for several years now Jenny."

Molly: "And what is that, honey buns?"

David: "I am not really a billionaire rockstar, but I am actually an artist from modest beginnings."

Molly: "Oh, that's such a disappointment but I am not totally surprised. I saw it in you that you had such talent but also some lack of confidence. It couldn't be that you were a rockstar, at least not yet."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

David: "Well I didn't want to disappoint you Jenny, you've always seen me as this high profile superstar, but I'm not."

Molly: "It doesn't matter Davey, but you're not going anywhere I know you aren't. You love me and I love you."

David: "What is it about me that you love so much then?"

Molly: "You don't know?"

David: "I have some intuition about it, but I'm not so sure."

Molly: "You should know by now."

David: "I've got guts?"

Molly: "No. You're a real hero."

David: "I don't understand."

Molly: "Who do you care about most?"

David: "I don't know. People I guess. No, I think it's people who care."

Molly: "So, where do you want to go?"

David: "Doesn't matter, probably. Well, it would be nice for people to know me. But, if they don't it's cool."

Molly: "You've created something. You should show it to the world."

David: "It's art. My art. Something that is a part of me. I'm not sure that the world wants to see this."

Molly: "Well, maybe they do, maybe they don't. It doesn't matter really, if those who you want to see, see it. Maybe they'll like it. It will probably be worth it."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

David: "It's real though. None of that nonsense fake shit. Will people care?"

Molly: "Everyone is an artist. Everyone likes good art. But there are few people who can make exceptional art. What it comes down to, is do they see what you see?"

David: "I hope so. But probably not. I'm not sure why I care so much. I feel defeated most of the time."

Molly: "Davey, getting down on yourself is the worst thing you could do. Don't feel ashamed of being who you are. You probably care so much because well like I told you, you're a real hero."

Beto comes and swipes the scene.

Beto: "So, looks like the weather is a bit foggy, and overcast, but no rain. Perfect for painting."

Cat: "Indeed. I'm creating something a little different today."

Beto: "Oh, I'm just doing what I'm used to doing. A bit of mountains, some trees, a bit of grass. You know, nothing too serious. It's what people like to see."

Cat: "Well, I had this idea of depicting myself. Not in the usual sense of just painting myself on the portrait. But rather, what do I represent. You know, like something symbolic."

Beto: "Oh, that sounds pretty interesting actually. I'm getting bored and tired of doing the same old thing."

Cat: "You should try it. I'm really enjoying it so far. But it's pretty hard."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Takes some time to really work out the kinks and it takes a lot of self reflection and you have to really work on yourself."

Beto: "Oh. I always just paint what I enjoy. I like scenery. People like scenery. It's enjoyable."

Cat: "Yes. But there's a difference between what is enjoyable and what is meaningful. I'd say don't get caught up in the details. You should really understand what it is that you want, not what others want."

Beto: "I do want to paint scenery though. I like it."

Cat: "No. You can't just like it. Enjoying something is different from really loving something. It takes time, it isn't easy, and most of all, it is timeless."

Beto: "What then is it that you love?"

Cat: "It's hard. I still don't know if I am getting it quite right. I'm still learning. But I think it's the process. Like, what I just said about making great art. It's not just the art but it's also yourself."

Beto: "Hm. I guess painting is a reflection of yourself?"

Cat: "Yes. Don't just do something because it feels like a hobby. You have to really purge your inner demons. That's when your true art comes forth. That's what painting is all about."

Beto: "Oh, I get it now. It's about painting what you really want to paint."

Cat: "Sorta. What do you really want to paint?"

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Beto: "I'm not so sure anymore. I mean I've always liked doing this, but I guess it all looks the same. People don't seem to care though."

Cat: "People will care if you paint something that is really you."

Beto: "I want to paint the stars."

Cat: "You could do that. But I don't think you've really worked at it enough."

Beto: "The stars are really nice though. I always liked looking at the stars."

Cat: "But Trevy, you don't know that. You don't really know who you are yet."

Beto: "I'll get there."

Cat: "Good. Now paint."

Leslie swipes the scene.

Leslie: "This portrait here looks rather smug."

Dan: "I guess you could say that. But it does show personality at least."

Leslie: "It does, doesn't it? Now that I look at it, it does seem to represent something."

Dan: "Yeah, like he's trying to lure you to think about him in one way, but then he pops a surprise on you and is like, hah! Gotcha."

Leslie: "Well, maybe his aim isn't so benevolent. Maybe, he wants you to think something to really get you to do something terrible."

Dan: "Maybe. Or maybe he's actually a good person and wants you to see things the way he sees things."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Leslie: "I don't think so. I really think he's after your money."

Dan: "I guess. I'm pretty poor though. I think there is a safe behind this portrait to be honest."

Leslie: "What do you really think?"

Dan: "I think it's really up to you to decide. Like, should what I say matter?"

Leslie: "Well, everyone has an opinion. Let's get creative. I'm honestly shocked at the amount of ideas I get from something so subtle."

Dan: "I presume there is an antidote in his expression."

Leslie: "Ah, like a cure, a mental cure?"

Dan: "Yes. He wants you to believe something."

Leslie: "Hmm. Believe in yourself?"

Dan: "Maybe. Or believe that connection is the key. He knows something I can feel it. But I don't entirely trust him either."

Leslie: "Good. I don't either. I'm going to throw a hail mary and say that he's a bad person."

Dan: "It's always good to assume that. He could paint the devil."

Leslie: "Yes, he could. But where's the fun in that?"

Dan: "I like it. I think he's doing it to get a good laugh, but also to show how bad things could get if he actually did get what he wanted."

Leslie: "I see what you mean. Live."

(MORE)



(CONT'D)

Dan: "That's his expression."

Leslie: "A good artist knows that he or she can teach you lessons in his or her work."

Dan: "I enjoy good art. Like really enjoy it. There's endless possibility in it."

Leslie: "Interpret your reality no more no less."

Dan: "Do you think he had virtual reality when making this painting?"

Leslie: "You must come here a lot."

Bill swipes the scene.

**Scene shift,**

Josh and Bri finish up a scene: "I think it was written in the stars that we'd all be together."

Everyone bows. End *Tenuous Winners*.

SCENE: IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Music: *The Mission: Gabriel's Oboe* - Yo-Yo Ma

Start *The Mission: Gabriel's Oboe*.

Improv class has ended and people are chatting and heading out. Everyone has left except Brandon and Julie. They both walk outside. Julie starts to lock up the doors.

Brandon: "Oh, here let me help."

Brandon lifts the bar to help Julie.

Julie: "Thanks."

Julie locks the door. Julie looks at her phone. Brandon stands around.

Julie: "Okay well I'll see you next week."

Brandon: "Yeah okay see you."

Both walk in opposite directions. Brandon looks frustrated with himself. End *The Mission: Gabriel's Oboe*.

SCENE: FOR THE LOVE OF IT

Music: *Annyone Can Cook* - Michael Giacchino

Start *Annyone Can Cook*.

Brandon is sleeping in a hostel in Tokyo, traveling alone.

Brandon's alarm goes off at 3am. Brandon rolls off the bed, gets up, and stumbles to the bathroom. Brandon is in a taxi.

Taxi driver says to Brandon in Japanese: "Tsukiji market is over there" as he points and comes to a stop.

Brandon: "Arigato."

Brandon walks over to the corridors of restaurants.

Brandon sees the line for Sushi Dai: "Holy shit."

Brandon walks to the end of the line.

Brandon: "Is this the line for Sushi Dai?"

Stranger: "Yes."

Brandon: "What time did everyone start lining up?"

Stranger: "I think some people were here since midnight."

Brandon: "Wow, so much commitment."

Stranger: "Yeah, I could not do that. But I was very tired when I came just a few minutes ago."

Brandon: "I guess people do crazy things for things they love."

Stranger: "Yeah, everyone is crazy to some extent. Some more crazy than others."

Brandon: "I'm not that crazy, but I guess here I am at 5am waiting to eat sushi for breakfast."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Stranger: "You don't look that crazy."

Brandon: "Well, I'm not. I'm glad you could tell. I'm just another person who loves sushi. And, well I guess I have a soft spot for things that make a difference."

Stranger: "Yeah, that doesn't make you crazy."

Brandon: "I guess. I like to think it as if I am really selective of what I do in my life. Doesn't make me insane, or have a mental illness or anything."

Stranger: "I didn't say you had a mental illness."

Brandon: "Good. I might or might not, does it really matter?"

Stranger: "No. I don't think so."

Brandon: "People are people regardless of their disabilities. I can still enjoy things that other people enjoy and do things that other people do. I can still do amazing things."

Stranger: "You have a mental illness don't you."

Brandon: "I have schizophrenia."

Stranger: "I would have never guessed. It doesn't make any sense."

Brandon: "Like I told you, it shouldn't matter. We're all a little crazy, but having a mental illness does not make you crazier."

Stranger: "No, I can tell it doesn't."

Brandon: "I just really love sushi."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Stranger: "Me too."

Brandon: "What was your name?"

Stranger: "Andy."

Brandon: "Brandon. Nice to meet  
you."

Both shake hands.

Andy: "Nice to meet you."

End *Annyone Can Cook*.

SCENE: A MILESTONE THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING

Music: *Carl Goes Up* - Michael Giacchino

Start *Carl Goes Up*.

Brandon working in cubicle sees phone call from number UC Berkeley Psychology.

Brandon: "Hello?"

Ann: "Hi, is this Brandon?"

Brandon: "Yes, this is him."

Ann: "Hi, this is Ann Kring from UC Berkeley. How are you doing?"

Brandon excited: "Doing well. How are you?"

Ann: "Doing great. We had a great conversation during our interview and everyone in the program enjoyed interacting with you. As you know we do not accept very many people into the program."

Brandon a little disheartened: "Oh, yes I know it's very competitive."

Ann: "Yes, but everyone thinks you would be a great fit into our program. I wanted to congratulate you and accept you into our clinical psychology PhD program for this coming fall."

Brandon acts like his heart exploded: "Wow this is such an honor. I am totally speechless. Thank you."

Ann: "My pleasure. I'll see you in the fall."

They hang up. Brandon puts down phone.

Brandon walks to co-workers: "Guess what guys? I'm going to be a Cal Bear!"

Everyone: "WHAT?! Congratulations!"

Everyone hugs Brandon.

End *Carl Goes Up*.

Scene: It only happens in great strides

Music: *What Are You Going To Do When You Are Not Saving The World? - Man Of Steel*

Start *What Are You Going To Do When You Are Not Saving The World?*.

Camera shows room full of 500 people at the National Alliance of Mental Illness National Conference. Slide on projector:

"NAMI National Conference." Camera shifts to focus on Brandon who is sitting on the panel looking nervous.

Moderator: "And now, let me introduce our next speaker, Brandon Chuang."

Everyone claps.

Brandon walks to podium and uses clicker for slides: "A fire, at first small. In childhood, there were signs. The fire could have been extinguished; the parents thought things would have worked out themselves. But it grew. It became more and more serious, but this was no normal fire. It was a dark fire, a black fire. In the shadows it burned and people from the outside could feel the heat but were not sure that this was indeed something that could wreak havoc. Within himself, he had no idea that this blackness would consume him at the peak of his youth. And it did. In a cataclysmic whirlwind, this storm built up and I was torn apart in my early twenties. I was at home, living with my parents, no job, few relationships, and a bleak future. But a storm settles, and if you survive the storm, you can rebuild. You can overcome. Here I am today to tell you that nothing should stand in your way.

(MORE)



(CONT'D)

When devastation rips you apart,  
you can still heal, you can still  
triumph, and you can still light up  
the world."

**Scene shift,** Brandon is interviewing with Usha McFarling, a  
Pulitzer Prize winning author, at UCSF inside a lab room.

Usha: "STAT is delighted to write  
an article about you Brandon. My  
name is Usha McFarling, I'm one of  
the correspondents at STAT. Here at  
STAT we focus on stories on health  
and science. Your story is right up  
the alley for STAT. I'd like to  
understand more about  
schizophrenia, what is it like?"

Brandon: "On my off days, I'm  
really grumpy and scowl at  
passerby's. But on my on days I'm  
trying to make it like everyone  
else."

Usha laughs: "Sounds like you don't  
let it get to you. Seems like a  
normal day for most of us. How'd  
you decide that you wanted to  
disclose to us? There are a lot of  
people in your shoes, having a  
serious mental illness is more  
prevalent than we'd expect."

Brandon: "I'd like to say a few  
things. Schizophrenia or not, do.  
There is no reason to hide your  
illness or anything for that  
matter. You can achieve anything  
beyond your wildest imaginations  
despite having a mental illness. It  
is merely a label. You can do  
better no matter where you are.  
Don't let your mental illness limit  
you because in your mind it is very  
easy to attribute whatever problems  
you are having to your mental  
illness.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

You could say, 'I don't have that kind of career because of my mental illness.' Or, 'I don't have those kinds of relationships because of my mental illness.' You could say this for anything for that matter, it doesn't have to be your mental illness that in your mind is holding you back. It all comes down to you. So, whatever it is that is holding you back, you need to do it if you want that life you always desired. The time is now. Mental illness should mean nothing to you. To me it once did. I thought I was a certain way because I had schizophrenia. I thought I was special because I had schizophrenia, so anything difficult I excused myself from because I was that special person who had an illness. But I know now that anything is possible. No matter what illness or thing you are struggling with, you can do it. All it takes is for you to turn on that mental switch and keep going at it. That wall will erode if you keep giving it all that you have. Don't let your mental illness be that cloak of deception that makes you feel that wall is unbreakable. Break that damn wall."

Usha: "A call to action, of sorts. Brandon, where do you see the future of mental health?"

Brandon: "Self-reliance. Nothing will cure you but yourself. You have to witness the miracle within yourself that will make you into the person you want to be."

Usha: "Why are you in this field?"

Brandon: "There are so many different ways to tackle this issue. We are not using our best methods to take on the multitude of challenges that mental illness presents. We need to move away from seeing mental illness as something strictly clinical."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Usha: "How do you propose we take on these obstacles?"

Brandon: "Those who are cursed with these setbacks need to take up the mantle and show the world it is possible to see the light. We need to deeply influence people to be brilliant. It starts with doing things you thought were impossible."

**Scene shift,** final scene shows front page of STAT article:

<https://www.statnews.com/2016/06/14/schizophrenia-journey/>

End *What Are You Going To Do When You Are Not Saving The World?*.

SCENE: BLUEPRINTS: WRITTEN OR UNWRITTEN?

Music: *Juditha Triumphans Devicta Holofernes Barbarie*,  
*Oratorio In 2 Parts, Rv 644: Quanto Magis Generosa* -  
*Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra*

Start *Juditha Triumphans Devicta Holofernes Barbarie*,  
*Oratorio In 2 Parts, Rv 644: Quanto Magis Generosa*.

Camera shows Brandon on campus, walking the path leading to the psychology building. Everyone sits facing each other in socratic fashion in the clinical psychology proseminar class.

Camera focuses on Steve Hinshaw:  
 "Gene by environment interactions. We know that this serves as the foundation of mental illness. How do genes and environment play a role in the development of mental illness? Where do we go from here?"

Manon: "Genes are the sole embodiment of our biological makeup. Without genes, we would not have illness. Genetic illness is responsible for mental illnesses. People are not responsible for why mental illnesses develop, at least not primarily. We can trace mental illness back to our genetic ancestry. Schizophrenia does not develop randomly; there are trace genes that contribute to the development of schizophrenia, for instance."

Courtney: "There is some truth to that. However, I believe we need to take into account other factors. Environment, for instance, is also a major contributor to the development of diseases such as schizophrenia. However, I do agree that there is a genetic component. Without those predispositions, one may never develop schizophrenia. Thus, we can put no fault to those who develop mental illness. It is partly biological.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Like two pieces to a whole. I think of it like a recipe. Biology is the ingredient and environment is like the process of making the dish."

Kaley: "Why then is it that some people don't develop mental illness even though all the signs point to yes? And alternatively, why is it that some people develop mental illness who shouldn't? I think that it can't all be explained through environment and genes. Do we know why some people are able to successfully battle mental illness? I am astounded by the fact that people can still function normally even with a serious diagnosis. The environment in which they are raised could be a factor, but maybe there is something else, like some sort of internal switch that can really propel people in a certain direction towards a positive outcome. I know this all sounds a bit wishy-washy but I don't think we should all put it down to science to explain mental illness."

Garret: "What is the point of science then? We have to have models of how illness develops or we cannot provide treatment to people. Everything must come down to a hard science and must be evidence based."

Jenna: "I know we're kind of getting away from the exact nature of genetics and environment, but I like the idea of thinking outside the box with recovery for people with mental illness. I think there is some truth behind thinking about why some people recover better than others controlling for the fact that they may have the same genetic makeup and are raised in similar environments. Take twins for example, both who develop mental illness, and are raised in very similar environments but one develops a more severe case and the other is able to recover.

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This could mean that people could develop motivation or some ability to harness their emotions to overcome their disability. Like a fire in the belly kind of thing. I really do not think this is genetically based, but could be something worth looking into as a scientific question."

Peter: "That is really interesting. I would like to keep my comments more constrained to scientific discussion given that we are scientists, but I think there is some value to considering everything there is to consider about how illness, particularly mental illness as a model develops. Science cannot explain why some people end up changing and conquering their illness. If there were a scientific model for this, it should work all the time, but time and again we see that there is no remedy for mental illness."

Lauren: "I like the idea of thinking outside the box. Science really needs to learn from thinkers across all disciplines if we are to move forward in the treatment of mental illness. There is no fate that has decided your ability to overcome mental illness. The cards may not be in your favor, but that does not mean you cannot still win the pot. I think anyone can overcome their predispositions."

Brandon: "Genetics may determine how a person's biology can make things more difficult for them. For instance, a person may have a predisposition to not be able to handle social situations very well, a person with schizophrenia for instance. It does not mean they cannot live a successful life.

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While there are some limits, that does not mean you cannot find your strengths and apply them to make that contribution to the world that genetics and environment would say otherwise. I don't believe in restraints. Motivation for instance to defy expectations could also be a way to live. Be a hero, that could be a cure for mental illness. Not all heroes are mentally healthy anyway."

Steve Hinshaw: "That's a great point Brandon. I don't want to put you on the spot Brandon but I think everyone has read the profile on you from UC Berkeley. Brandon, you're an example of realistic aspiration. You're not a super-genius like John Nash, but what you've accomplished is not impossible for a regular person with mental illness."

Brandon: "Thanks."

Steve Hinshaw: "Great discussion class. It's Friday 4pm, it's a sauna in here and I know it's perfect time for happy hour. Get out of here." Everyone packs up to leave.

Scene fades out. End *Juditha Triumphans Devicta Holofernes*

*Barbarie, Oratorio In 2 Parts, Rv 644: Quanto Magis Generosa.*

SCENE: FELLOWSHIP FRUITION

Music: *The Mission: The Falls* - Yo-Yo Ma

Start *The Mission: The Falls*.

Brandon is in his office at UC Berkeley. He pulls out his laptop and goes online to check his email. At the top of the list is an email: "Congratulations! NSF fellowship award granted."

Brandon clicks on the email and reads: "Dear Mr. Chuang, You have been awarded a National Science Foundation research fellowship that will provide \$49,000 per year for three years funding your research and cost of tuition. Congratulations!"

Brandon jumps up screams: "Woo!" and does a dance.

**Scene shift,** Brandon is in Ann's office.

Ann: "Brandon, congratulations on the NSF and the William and Dorothy Bevan scholarship. Those two grants are quite selective, less than 10% of applicants get them."

Brandon: "Thank you."

Ann: "You'll have to put them to good use. You'll need to start your Master's project right away."

Brandon: "Yes I'll get started on writing the IRB protocol right away."

Ann: "Great. How are you holding up?"

Brandon: "I am doing well. Teaching is going smoothly, most of the material I have a handle on and students are not struggling. Quite a few show up at office hours for advice on their assignments.

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Classes are going well, I've been learning a bit on statistical methodologies as well as models that best fit certain clinical data. I've also been seeing a client in the clinic. Starting to dive into clinical assessments."

Ann: "Sounds good. How are your research associates doing on your current research project?"

Brandon: "They are very pumped up to dig into the coding. They enjoy the research process."

Ann: "You said you wanted to enroll more research associates?"

Brandon: "Yeah. I would like to pick up a few more to help out with my NSF project. Also, I am going to start running a journal club during meetings."

Ann: "Okay. You should start interviewing now."

Brandon: "Yes I've posted a listing on the research apprenticeship website and have several responses. I'll begin interviewing later this week."

Ann: "Good. You are also writing an article for the American Scientist. How is that coming along?"

Brandon: "I've submitted a draft to my corresponding editor. Waiting to hear back from her."

Ann: "Fantastic. How is your preparation for the Society for Affective Science conference talk going?"

Brandon: "I've been practicing so much in front of a mirror that I think I see my mouth move even when I'm not saying anything. I'll be giving a practice talk in front of the lab next week."

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Ann: "Good to hear. How is the website for mental health in youth going?"

Brandon: "We just launched and have been receiving good responses from youth who are going through health crises. We decided our name would be Strong 365."

Ann: "Great! How were your talks in front of the UCSF medical school class and the World Conference of Science Journalists?"

Brandon: "They went great. I was asked questions about my own point of view on the future of people with mental illness and why I chose this path."

Ann: "And what did you say?"

Brandon: "I said that my goal is to make it a thing of the past."

*End The Mission: The Falls.*

SCENE: BATTLING THE SENSES

Music: *Evacuating London* - Harry Gregson-Williams

Start *Evacuating London*.

Brandon is with Garret, Manon, and Kaley as they are heading to Joshua Tree National Park.

Brandon: "There aren't very many camping sites are there?"

Manon: "This is what we get for not planning ahead of time."

Garret: "I'm not used to seeing so many camping spots already taken."

Kaley: "Well, we learned our lesson. No camping on spring break unless we wake up at 4am."

Brandon: "Let's just park in the shade somewhere and explore a bit. I don't think we'll get to camp."

Kaley: "Yeah we're wasting time."

Garret and Manon: "Sounds good."

Brandon: "We can head back after. Let's just park here."

Brandon drives his SUV to the side of the road near some rock formations. Everyone gets out of the car.

Manon: "Woo, nice to get some fresh air. We've been nerding out too much at school. Grad school is seriously taxing."

Garret: "Yeah I've been in the office too long, I feel atrophied."

Kaley: "There are some nice rocks we can trek across, should be fun."

Brandon puts on his sunglasses and locks his car: "Shall we?"

Everyone sets out towards the formations.

**Scene shift**, camera overviews everyone hiking up and down the rock formations. Camera shows everyone posing on an overhanging rock. Camera shows everyone relaxing and sitting down on a boulder partly shaded.

Brandon: "Well, well, well I think we've seen it all guys and gals. Rocks and trees and a ton of sand."

Manon: "Glad to just take a short break out here."

Garret: "Reminds me of my camping and climbing days. I think I'll take that up again."

Kaley: "I'm just thinking about how I'm going to beat you guys at board games later tonight."

Manon: "Not going to happen."

Brandon: "Nope."

Garret: "We could make some snacks and play. It will be our own little retreat."

Brandon: "Honestly though. I know we're all going to be grading and writing our papers for the most part. Maybe analyzing a data set or two."

Manon: "Don't remind me Brandon."

Everyone takes some time to look out into the distance.

Kaley: "Let's go a bit longer everyone, sun is going to set soon."

Garret: "Sure."

Everyone gets up ready to leave, but Brandon remains seated staring at the ground.

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Brandon: "Hey, I'm just going to chill here for a bit, you guys go ahead."

Kaley: "Oh, are you sure? Are you okay?"

Brandon: "Yeah. It's just that my senses are fried. I'll meet you back at the car."

Manon: "Okay, well take care. Let us know if you need anything."

Everyone heads out. Brandon sits in the shade as he marks a line in the sand where the light meets the shade. The light slowly leaves as the shade encroaches over the line.

Brandon's point of view is blurry as he stares at the line.

He looks around into the sunset. He gets up to leave.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is in the car resting. He hears a knock on the door. Garret, Kaley, and Manon have arrived back at the car.

They open up, Manon: "That was a fun trek. Board games guys, board games. Brandon are you okay?"

Brandon: "Yeah."

He adjusts his glasses. Camera shows Brandon's point of view is no longer blurry.

Brandon: "I'm good. Let's go."

Everyone: "Great!"

Everyone closes their doors. Brandon drives off into the sunset. Scene fades. End *Evacuating London*.

SCENE: SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING

Music: *Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major - Johann Sebastian Bach*

Start *Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major*.

Camera shows a row of posters with doctors and students standing by each poster. Brandon is standing by his, which is in the middle of the line of posters.

A professor comes by and stops by the poster and reads the methods:  
"Ah, so you used a measure of persistence by having people decide whether or not to continue?"

Brandon: "Yes, I wanted to see whether people who were stressed out by the experiment would quit because it was too much for them. Or if people did persist, whether that would have decreased their negative emotion and increased positive emotion."

Professor: "That seems very novel to me. I would assume that most people would just do all three tasks, since most people aren't given the option to choose their tasks in most laboratory paradigms."

Brandon: "I think it's true that most people just follow the directions, however, by giving people the option and freedom around their decisions in experiments, it makes the experiment more demanding and people will be more focused and use more of their energy to attend to different aspects of the experiment. They'll probably be wondering what the experiment is about, and examine internally how they feel more so and be more aware, rather than just going through the motions.

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(CONT'D)

That's what I was trying to get at by having people be serious about this experiment but at the same time having fun and trying their best at something challenging."

Professor: "It seems like you want people to be motivated internally, to overcome obstacles, perhaps as a method of treatment?"

Brandon: "Yes, I want people to really use their emotions and feed their burning desire to overcome their circumstances. It's not really a treatment though, I like to think of it as a way for people to cure themselves. Not because of others, but it was yourself that you pulled through."

Professor: "So you don't think that people need others in order to be able to overcome their situations, say a mental illness?"

Brandon: "No, they don't. I think it is a lie that people need to rely on others. It means they do not think they are competent in their own ability."

Professor: "People get really sick though. They need medications and other forms of treatment that professionals can provide for them."

Brandon: "To some extent that is true. People do need medications to treat some of the biochemical imbalances. However, beyond that, and more importantly, is the determination to succeed. People need to really have the courage to face their roadblocks and pull themselves out of the mental illness trap. When people are given these labels, they rely so much on it and use it as an excuse for not being able to make a life for themselves. It is so sad and that is why I think inherent motivation and drive is so important."

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Professor: "I guess that is the question then, how can science or any field for this matter really influence people to overcome. There are limitations to our models of how to really get at this issue."

Brandon: "Science is limited in the way that it deals with this because a majority of people think of these people who are sick as 'patients.' This is a huge pitfall, because once people feel this way, they are stuck on relying on their doctors for a lifeline. People need to learn how to tread water, and not rely on a float to survive."

Professor: "What then is your solution?"

Brandon: "Hmm... I've been thinking about this. It has to do with character."

Professor: "Are you saying that those who face their difficulties have stronger character?"

Brandon: "Yes."

Professor: "I've enjoyed this conversation. Best of luck to you Brandon."

They shake hands. Professor walks off.

Ann comes by: "Great work. I'm gathering orders for drinks. Would you like wine or beer?"

Brandon: "Nah I'm okay. Thanks."

Ann: "Alright. Meet in front after. We're heading out to dinner with Sheri's group."

Brandon: "Okay sounds good."

*End Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major.*



SCENE: PACK OF WOLVES

Music: *Clair De Lune* - Steven Sharp Nelson

Start *Clair De Lune*.

Zipper Dipper after show. Everyone heads backstage to green room.

Molly: "That was so much fun guys.  
It was a pleasure being a part of  
this magic together."

Josh: "Yes, I agree, so much fun.  
You know we should totally start up  
a team together after this. I think  
we could get a coach from  
Endgames."

Everyone: "Yes!"

Bill: "Let's keep our name, Zipper  
Dipper!"

Everyone: "Zip dips we wear the  
pants!"

David: "We should have our own tag  
line only zippers allowed no  
buttons."

Everyone laughs.

Brandon: "Zippendales?"

Everyone laughs.

Beto: "We should all get zipper  
tattoos."

Cat: "I wouldn't mind a zipper  
tattoo."

Leslie: "We're going to need a  
space to practice everyone, making  
zippers ain't easy. We're going to  
set the world on fire."

Bill: "My garage is open too, it's  
really big and spacious."  
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Dan: "Guys, I think the real question is when we're going to meet again."

Bri: "Let's meet next Monday at Bill or Leslie's? We are family now, guys."

Everyone group hugs: "I got your back."

Brandon: "The search is over guys and gals. I wanna live, I wanna give. I've been a miner for a heart of gold."

Everyone: "It's these expressions I never give, keep me searching for a heart of gold, and I'm getting old. Keep me searching for a heart of gold, and I'm getting old."

Leslie: "Well we're not really that old guys."

Everyone laughs. End *Clair De Lune*.

SCENE: HER ART

Music: *Swan Lake* - *Tchaikovsky*

Start *Swan Lake*.

Everyone is in a circle at an Improv 301 class at Endgames.

Julie: "Great class, good work.  
I'll see you all next week!"

People go to get their things, chatting with each other.

Brandon goes to get his stuff. Brandon notices Julie packing her bags. Brandon takes a deep breath and goes over to Julie.

Brandon: "Hey congrats on having  
your own show. That's pretty  
awesome."

Julie: "Thanks!"

Brandon: "You said you had a flier  
for it?"

Julie: "Yes, I have some here if  
you'd like one."

Brandon: "Yeah that'd be great."

Julie rummages through her bag. Grabs one and gives it to  
Brandon.

Brandon: "Cool, thanks. See you  
next week."

Julie: "Thanks! See you."

Brandon walks outside of the classroom, waits a few moments  
looks at the flier. Camera zooms out. End *Swan Lake*.

**ACT 3. HEROES****SCENE: THE WINGS ARE NOT YET READY**

Music: *Amon Hen* – *Howard Shore*

Start *Amon Hen*.

Brandon is outside on a bright day on the streets of Barcelona, with a crowd of tourists during a free tour.

Camera zooms on Brandon, who has a pained look on his face as if feeling empty on the inside.

Tour guide: "Our final stop, if you look across this pond you will see Gaudi's most famous architectural accomplishment, at least in my eyes, the Sagrada Familia." (Camera shows Sagrada Familia in background).

**Scene shift,**

Tour guide: "As we come to a close, I'd like to say a few words of thanks. You have all been a wonderful group, if you would like to take a picture, I would be happy to take one of you in front of the Sagrada Familia."

Brandon is away from the group and looks around with an emptiness in his eyes.

Brandon talking in narration: "Day 366, I am still having trouble focusing and I am feeling an emptiness still driven by what I think is a compulsion. I feel fearful, and I am uncertain if this feeling will ever go away. It is painful, extreme despair, I can only move forward and try to find out a way to end this curse."

**Scene shift,** Brandon is overlooking Madrid from the high rise, his gaze is unsteady as he looks over the city. He

walks away down the stairs.

Narration: "I feel hopeless. I must climb out of this horrifying torment. Anything I do does not seem to drive away this abhorrent feeling."

**Scene shift**, Brandon is at the hostel with a group of travelers preparing to go out for the night. People are drinking alcohol, chatting, playing games, and having fun. Brandon stands to the side.

Narration: "People are having fun. I wish I could be that way. Once there was a time I was like this, but now I feel like a shell of a person. The pain is excruciating. My hands feel sweaty, shaky, and I am tense and reactive to every movement and sound. Why did this happen to me?"

**Scene shift**, Brandon is at a bar at night with some travelers. People are in a group chatting. Brandon is off to the side, drinking a cup of water.

Narration: "This is not just a fleeting feeling. It is absolute torture. I feel like no matter what I do, it will not end. Perhaps a risk. But then it still comes back. I cannot feel whole, my body feels disconnected, my head feels empty. Complete emptiness. I feel like I am descending again."

End *Amon Hen*.

SCENE: INTO THE DARKNESS AGAIN

Music: Lothlorien - *Howard Shore*

Start *Lothlorien*.

Brandon is sitting across from Ann in Ann's office at UC Berkeley.

Ann: "Brandon, your illness seems to be taking over again. Your performance is lackluster, your ability to focus has declined, and you've become a danger to other students. We cannot allow this at the university."

Brandon, with an empty stare: "I apologize for what has been going on. I think I can handle the work. I really want to be a part of Berkeley."

Ann: "Brandon, this is very serious. We want to make sure you are healthy and can finish your degree in the future. This is a long-term solution. Right now, you are in no shape to be at Berkeley. You need to figure out how to manage your symptoms or you won't ever be able to come back. This medical leave is necessary for the long run."

Brandon: "I understand but I feel like I can be here and still make it work out. I can be productive and I won't let this get in the way."

Ann: "No, we gave you some time and several chances. What you are going through is very serious and I am very worried that something terrible will happen and you will not be able to come back ever. This is for your own good."

Brandon is disappointed but also in pain: "I promise that I will get it handled during the medical leave."

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Ann: "I know. But Brandon, you need to understand that you have to be healthy in order to continue here. When you come back, you need to be at 100%. If you are not, then the clinical faculty will not let you back. Take your time to recover. I'll be in touch with you."

End *Lothlorien*.

SCENE: KILLING THE FEAR WHISPERERS

Music: *One Day* - Hans Zimmer

Start *One Day*.

Brandon is outside at night along the river that runs through the center of Budapest. He notices the brightly lit city and its reflection in the water. He picks up a stone and skips the rock along the river.

Brandon: "Just like that, a leap."

Brandon picks up another stone and skips it along the water.

Brandon feels for other rocks, throws some out.

Brandon: "Has to be the right kind  
or it won't work."

Brandon picks up another stone:  
"Like this one."

Brandon throws the rock, it makes a giant bounce and skips off into the distance.

Brandon: "I must keep traveling."

Brandon picks up his bag and walks off into the busy streets.

**Scene shift**, Brandon is outside a theater waiting at the front of the line to enter in Edinburgh. A string of white lights are out and a worker is unscrewing a bulb for one of the lights.

Brandon: "Light went out?"

Worker: "Yep, these things feed off each other, when one light goes out, several others do too. But when you have one strong light it'll fix all the rest."

Brandon: "Bulb went out, probably something like being worn down. Replace it with something brand new. A fresh start."

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Worker: "Yep. Our theater here is kind of the same way. We've been going for several years and replaying the same shows over and over. People started to lose interest. Then we did some major reworking and revamped our energy and message. Now we've got people lining up with not enough seats for everyone."

Brandon: "Lucky I caught this randomly. Just been here for a few days traveling here in Edinburgh."

Worker: "Oh you'll enjoy it. I guarantee it."

**Scene shift**, Brandon at the opera house in Sydney. Camera shows the outside of the opera house. Camera then shows Brandon at the back deck. His arms are on the rails as he stares out into the harbor.

Brandon: "I cannot keep running. My travels have trained me. But I know now that she is the one. I am ready to come home."

Brandon looks out and camera shows the harbor with traversing ships. End *One Day*.

SCENE: THE LEAP

Music: *Giuseppe Tornatore Suite: Malena - Yo-Yo-Ma*

Start *Giuseppe Tornatore Suite: Malena*.

At Stagewerx in San Francisco at night, Julie is with "The Recchia" team performing their show. They finish the last scene.

Max: "Go for it man, this is your destiny."

The lights black out. Everyone applauds. Camera shows Brandon in the stands.

**Scene shift**, "The Recchia" is out at the front of the theater collecting donations and giving thanks. Brandon walks towards the exit. He makes eye contact with Julie. She looks down and smiles. Brandon walks towards her; she looks away. Brandon shifts his direction to walk out the door.

He hesitates, says: "Fuck it" and then rushes in and kisses Julie on the lips.

Scene fades out. End *Giuseppe Tornatore Suite: Malena*.

SCENE: OUR OWN

Music: *Honor (From "The Pacific") - Hans Zimmer*

Start *Honor*.

The lights come on. The audience is full at Stagewerx.

The intercom comes on: "And now, ladies and gentlemen, let us welcome to the stage, your hosts for tonight's show, Bri and David of Zipper Dipper!"

Bri and David come out from behind the stage. They wave and walk into the lights.

Bri: "Welcome! Welcome! Thank you!"

Audience is cheering.

Bri: "I'm Bri."

David: "And I'm David!"

Bri: "Tonight you're in for a wonderful treat. Aren't they David?"

David: "Oh yes indeed. We've got something really special for you guys. Something to the order of the spirit realm. Fate is here today and it's coming for one of you."

Bri: "Yes, one of you lucky people will basically learn how to turn your future into an improv show."

David: "Yup, that's what we're here for. Your life will be turned upside and sideways, whatever which way. We're going to let the God's of Tarot seep into your life. What is Tarot? It's a card reading thing. One of you will ask a yes/no question of the cards, such as: 'Is it worth it to pursue that dream of mine?' or 'Should I ask that cute girl/guy sitting in front of me out for a date?' We'll pull a card and interpret its message to the question."

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Bri: "Yes, our show, the Divination Intervention will do just that. We've been sent here from the heavens, where we trained with angelic monks in temples how to read Tarot. And now, we bring it to you, the people of the world. If you should so dare to volunteer, your life may be translated into something divine. Hence the name Divination Intervention. Okay, if that hasn't got you excited enough, that's okay because it will."

David: "Yes, we haven't ever had anyone leave here without at least letting out their guts from laughing. So, don't worry. We've got the treatment for your blues. And now without further ado, let us bring out the rest of the spirit team: Zipper Dipper!"

Zipper Dipper comes out dancing. Brandon comes out last and pulls up a seat at the Taro table.

Brandon: "Hello everyone! My name is Brandon and I am going to be reading one of your fates through the Tarot cards today. I have been blessed with wisdom which I will now put into the cards with this sage."

Brandon waves the sage around.

Brandon: "Okay, now, which one of you has a question they would like to ask the cards?"

A few audience members raise their hands.

Brandon: "Ah, you in the front, what is your name?"

Audience member: "Hi, my name is Irene."

Brandon: "Great! Everyone give a round of applause to Irene for volunteering."

Audience claps, Zipper Dipper claps.

Brandon: "So, what would you like to ask the cards today?"

Irene: "Do all heroes have a villain counterpart?"

Brandon: "That is a great question. I'm sure the cards will have an answer to that. But first, are you referring to any specific hero and villain combinations?"

Irene: "I think Batman and Joker and Superman and Lex Luthor. Spiderman and Venom are also another pair that come to mind."

Brandon: "Those are great pairs. Brings back memories from childhood watching Saturday morning cartoons. Is there a specific villain archetype that you're thinking of?"

Irene: "I think that all villains should have a sinister plan. They all have some sort of goal in mind of changing the world, but in a bad way. They're all really only looking out for themselves. Somehow they've let sorrow and despair get to them and they weren't strong enough to overcome it, so they decided to do evil things because it's much easier."

Brandon: "I like where this is going. Do you have a particular villain in mind that represents this archetype?"

Irene: "Yes, I think of the typical loser. The person that broods over their circumstances and decides to take it out on the world because they believed they were not capable of rising above it. It's really pathetic."

Brandon: "Wow you really don't like villains do you?"

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If you paint villains in that way I think all villains are trash. Is there any other type of villain that you can think of?"

Irene: "Yes, villains can also be people who stand by and watch these things happen when they know something could have been done. They can also be people who try to manipulate others to get what they want out of their own interest. They could be people who step on others to get what they want. There are many sorts of villains that I can think of. And to be honest, they're all losers."

Brandon: "Lots of villains. Could be a person you know. Alright let's see if anyone on Zipper Dipper has a question for you. Team?"

Dan: "Yeah I have one. How do heroes and villains get along?"

Irene: "It happens when heroes give a hand to the villain even though the villain has wronged the hero. They could become friends. The dynamic could change. A villain is not always a villain forever."

Brandon: "Great. I'm enjoying all this hero-villain talk. Now I'm going to pull a card to see if all heroes do indeed have a villain counterpart. And... we have the king of cups! This card shows that there isn't a villain counterpart to every hero. The king represents a very high number indicating that there could be many villains but very few heroes. King is the highest number we have, which shows how rare heroes are. Heroes are drinking from the cups indicating how they are willing to drink to constantly cleanse themselves of evil. It is a never-ending process. Cups are also representative of emotion, meaning that they can use their heart to help others.

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Villains for instance could use their hearts to become heroes someday. The cup is golden, showing how much of a treasure it is to have this heart. Obtaining something like it is not easy. He is floating on the sea, on his throne. This represents his journey of traveling has changed his heart. He can go anywhere in the world, into any dangers and still have that burning desire to save others. The sea has serpents, and these represent villains who are trying to pull the hero down. It is treacherous for him but he remains willing to put himself in life's danger in order to rid the world of villains. He is on his throne, alone, meaning he is not the king of anybody. Alone, he does this because he knows it matters to himself to be a hero to others. His throne is sturdy, because he has built it after working diligently and arduously hardened by time and effort. He has risked himself at sea through only his own creation, it is a major risk but it is one he is willing to take. He makes a sacrifice of pain and torture for others so that they may be able to save themselves and rise up to take the same cup of courage one day. Okay, that's all the cards are communicating to me. Now, we're ready to do our show."

End *Honor*.

**Scene shift,**

Music: *Chorale (Five) - Iskra String Quartet*

Start *Chorale (Five)*.

Beto steps into the light on the front of the stage: "There was a time when I was a boy. People did not notice me, I did not notice people. I went through life looking through a lens tainted by my life experiences. I saw what I wanted to see.

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(CONT'D)

I thought I was better than others. People did not deserve me. I was arrogant. No, worse, I was a villain. I knew how to use people to get what I wanted. I was smart. Well, I thought I was. I was so full of myself because I wasn't able to face my fears or my past. These things twisted me. I became so afraid of them, I never even looked at them when they presented themselves. I ran and hid and built a fortress of air around myself to give me a false sense of security. I hurt others so I wouldn't have to hurt myself. I took the easy road."

Dan comes in and takes Beto's place: "I hated people. I did not like how they treated me so I treated them badly. It was like a vicious cycle, and a reflection of my own true self at the time. I felt like a victim of others because I did not have the inner capability to steer my own life's course. I was an immature child. I was pathetic. I cared only for myself and had no concern for others. I gave in to my fears. I crippled myself because I did not face them. My demons controlled me, I had no power over them. I was pitiful. I was a pussy. I was a villain."

Bri comes in and takes Dan's place: "But why should I blame myself? It wasn't my fault right? My circumstances and my situation led me to become this way. I didn't have a great family who cared about me. I didn't have those friends who have your back or would sacrifice for you. I had nothing, at least so I thought."

Cat comes in and takes Beto's place: "But then something changed like a light switch. Someone, a stranger, helped me. Not just your usual act of kindness, but really helped me.

(MORE)



(CONT'D)

She showed me to the person that she loved most and they both looked at me with eyes that said they knew I would someday do a great thing in this world."

Molly comes in and takes Cat's place: "I changed. I saw the world now, as a place to soar rather than wither and retreat. I faced my fears and still do. I began to dream again, of things beyond my wildest imaginations. I started to live my dreams, they became my reality. I started to like people. My energy changed, and people responded differently. People noticed me. I noticed others, the good in others. I wanted to save others from misery, the kind of misery that I had suffered from. I wanted others to see what I now saw. I could give others the gift that I had been given. I could change the world. I had become my own hero."

Leslie comes in and takes Molly's place: "It was the hardest thing I have ever done."

Bill and Josh start a scene.

Bill: "Stories have nothing to do with our character."

Josh: "No they do. People want their stories to have meaning, like a book, a novel, a story for mankind."

Bill: "Everyone does, yes. People enjoy the spotlight. People tell them in different ways though. Everyone wants their own flavor. What is your flavor?"

Josh: "It's about having an impact. I don't want my name to be lost."

Bill: "Well that's pretty standard. I like to rub in a little evil with mine. I want to be different you see. A story with a villain."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Josh: "Oh, well that's pretty cool I guess. What kind of things would you be doing?"

Bill: "Hm... well a villain always looks out for himself."

Josh: "That's... cool. What else?"

Bill: "A villain has style, he always gets what he wants. He has a crew of henchmen."

Josh: "Okay. Sounds more like a cartoon story. I'm talking about real stories."

Bill: "People want to hear about something cool, something unique that has never been done before. A villain is perfect for this."

Josh: "So, like killing people or getting your selfish needs is cool and unique?"

Bill: "Hm I guess people don't want to hear about that."

Josh: "They don't. Look I used to be that way too. I was a villain once. Nobody wants to hear that shit honestly, Benny."

Bill: "They do though. I want to be a villain. They're so cool man."

Josh: "Up to you. I've been through it. Everyone has been a villain man. Everyone. It isn't special or unique because it's so damn easy."

Bill: "Oh, really? Villains are common?"

Josh: "Yes. You want to be a loner who looks after only himself and harms others? That's the recipe for a villain. It's so boring because everyone did that at some point. Only few have risen past that though."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Bill: "Rising past that takes a lot I guess."

Josh: "Yes it isn't easy. Looking after others isn't easy. Having a good heart isn't easy. Being a hero isn't easy."

Bill: "I always thought villains were more of a rarity than heroes."

Josh: "That's the cartoon way. Very few people are heroes, Benny, but I see good in you. You could be a hero if you tried."

Bill: "I don't like being good. It seems so, well, boring."

Josh: "It isn't. Saving lives isn't boring. It makes for a cool story. A very cool one. And it shows you have something more."

Bill: "I don't care."

Josh: "Then don't. No one will care about what you do in this life. A villain will end up as all people who don't matter do, in the trash."

Scene black out. End *Chorale (Five)*.

SCENE: FORGING A NEW PATH

Music: *Exile* - Enya

Start *Exile*.

Brandon is sitting on a bench under a tree in Golden Gate park. He has a journal with him.

Camera zooms on Brandon: "I think  
I'll share my story."

Brandon gazes out. Camera shows the park, with Brandon in the distance, on a bright day.

SCENE: SEASON FINALE

Continue *Exile*.

Bill: "Lost amidst the sea of trees again aren't we honey?"

Bri: "Probable outcome isn't too high, but we managed to survive last time."

Bill: "We've got our spirits and well, let's see, some packages of salt jerky left. Probable outcome is mighty good I must say."

Bri: "The Phantobeasts are roaming in the thickets. I saw some the other day. Managed to nip one but he got away."

Bill: "A Phantobeast!? Now that's a rare sight indeed. Those are very hard to catch."

Bri: "We came for glory Milchap. That's why we're out here on our own in the thick of the unknown. We ain't going back empty handed."

Bill: "No darling we ain't. But it is a difficult path we have taken. I'm not sure our backs can take anymore of this hunting lifestyle."

Bri: "I said we ain't leaving until the deed is done. We either get this or we're as good as gone. We journeyed into uncharted territory. We sacrificed everything."

Bill: "We did sacrifice everything. I'm glad you're my partner. You see the way I do, but we're as good as gone in a few days."

Bri: "Good as gone... what do you mean?"

Bill: "Well, Kipplin and his crew are coming up. They've got much more firepower than we do. Not only that, they've got many horses.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

We've got just our own two feet and a couple of bayonets."

Bri: "That's not good news at all."

Bill: "Yep. But we got each other and our own firepower. Right here in the heart."

Bri: "Now yer talking. Phantobeasts are smart. Ain't no guns gonna be able to handle them."

Bill: "Nope. But time ain't on our side. Something about risking it is what lures them out."

Bri: "They know when you're sitting watching planning out your moves. Can't get em that way."

Bill: "Gotta jump into the light and charge em head on. That's what causes em to stop just enough to get the job done."

Bri: "Well seems like we followed this path for quite some time now. We could turn back. It's not out of the option. But we won't cause we got the lives of our name counting on us."

Bill: "No, we won't turn back. We can't. This is our namesake and if we did turn back, we'd be turning back on everything we stand for."

Josh swipes the scene.

Josh: "Jeb, we're here now."

Brandon: "Burt, I know."

Josh: "We were made for this."

Brandon: "In all my years, I would have never guessed it would come down to this, but it did. I don't like crying but I just can't seem to hold it in."

Josh: "Buddy, can't see me in this pitch black but I'm watering too."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Brandon: "Our lives are at stake."

Josh: "Yeah, the prisoners here.  
They look up to us."

Brandon: "Broken by the cruelty of  
life, tormented in their chambers  
by unimaginable things. No one  
thought they had a chance."

Josh: "No, but they do. They knew  
we were the same. They knew if  
given the chance, they could break  
their chains and storm into the  
light. They could do what we did."

Brandon: "And what, stand up to the  
entirety of mankind? Are we fools?"

Josh: "Well, if we can get them to  
say it. Not us, but them, then  
maybe we aren't so foolish."

Brandon: "It would take a miracle."

Josh: "No, there aren't any  
miracles. This is something else."

Brandon: "This is hope."

Josh: "We planted a seed. Let's see  
what it becomes. I think we've got  
thousands behind us."

Brandon: "No, I think more."

Josh: "Some turned back. I saw."

Brandon: "Goddamn it man. After  
everything. All the sacrifice and  
hope. They just gave it up."

Josh: "You can't get everyone to  
break free. You just can't."

Brandon: "Yeah, I know. It's just...  
after all this. Why?"

Josh: "They didn't believe."

Brandon: "Well, maybe after this,  
when these prisoners break free, it  
may set off a chain reaction."

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

Josh: "They'll choose to go to other's chambers and do what we did."

Brandon: "Yes. I think they're ready."

Josh pauses: "Nothing. They're not ready yet."

Brandon: "We showed them. We put our hearts in it. No, our entire spirit."

Josh: "Are they not human?"

Brandon: "They were twisted by fate. Maybe they aren't capable. We thought wrong."

Josh: "I don't believe it."

Brandon: "More time?"

Josh: "No. They were given enough time. The time is now."

Brandon: "I have faith."

Josh: "Our opening is closing. We need to go. If we don't go, then we're goners. But we can't leave them."

Brandon: "No, I won't leave until they all go. Everyone who has believed in themselves."

Josh: "Jeb, we're going to die."

Brandon: "I know, that's why I'm crying."

Josh: "No, we're crying because we put faith into these prisoners and they did not return the favor."

Brandon: "It was nice knowing you. We did all that we could."

Josh: "Wait, I think there's stirring in the back."

(MORE)



(CONT'D)

Brandon and Josh turn back:  
"They've said it. I can't believe  
it! Now we can."

Josh and Brandon: "Tallyho!"

End *Exile*.

SCENE: A STORY FOR MANKIND

Music: *Redeemer (Feat. Paul Cardall) - Steven Sharp Nelson*

Start *Redeemer (Feat. Paul Cardall)*.

Zoom in on script: "I was put on this earth not to treat mental illness, but to cure it."

Brandon narrates: "Hello everyone. My name is Brandon Chuang. I am a 31-year old researcher at the University of California, Berkeley. I study schizophrenia. Who am I? What I just told you is what I tell most people. But it is a lie. It is not who I am. I am something much more than that. In some sense, I may be that 31-year old researcher that studies schizophrenia for a living. But everyone has their own backstory. Here is mine. I am a person with schizophrenia. It has changed me. I am not the person who I was before. Something like schizophrenia changes you. In fact, any serious mental illness changes who you are. But just because it changes you, it does not mean you are changed for the better. Sometimes, this change can be catastrophic. It can alter your life, deform it, and make you a shadow of who you may have become. I want to tell you to not let that happen. You cannot let that happen. The world needs you to rise above your illness. People need you to rise. Actually, letting yourself fall into the trap of blaming your mental illness for your shortcomings, is selfish. Don't let it wear you down. Instead, let it forge you into a hero. You were meant to do great things in this world. Every single one of you. It won't be easy. It will be very difficult and the road will be paved with pain and in some cases torture.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

There is a reason to it though. Without this experience, you cannot see the brightness in the world. True brightness is blinding. It is so bright that it washes away all darkness. I am saddened to the fact that many people will not be able to see this kind of brightness, the kind that warms your heart and soul and allows you to accomplish anything. In order to see it you have to dive head first into the darkness and be bold. Anything worth doing in this life takes that kind of courage to stand up to your mental illness and say that it will not dictate your life. Not now, not ever. Don't become a shadow. Instead, be that brightness that washes away sorrow in others. But to do this, you have to be willing to face your own darkness; it will not be easy. My hope is that others will see your light and brighten up the world. One light is not enough. Thank you."

(Show scenes of cold-calling and querying, pitching the script to a production company, and then filming the movie all while saying this last monologue).

FADE TO BLACK.

Show credit roll. End *Redeemer* (Feat. Paul Cardall).