

(Name of Project)

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Background sound in Kitchen. Taking a glass out of the dishwasher. Closing dishwasher. Going to the refrigerator. The sound of an ice machine grinding ice and ice falling into an empty cup. Steps out of the kitchen into the living room.

GEORGIA

(still in black) I thought you could use a little bit more ice. It's going to be a hot one today, I can tell already.

Sound of ice dropping from one glass to the next. Beat.

GEORGIA

(still black) I can make you some breakfast if you'd like French toast, an omelete, waffles bacon juice.

Silence.

GEORGIA

Okay then, I'll be reading on the front porch. So just come out and join me if you'd like.

\*

Silence.

GEORGIA

I'll just leave this for you then.

Black: Fade up to a shelf with a bunch of comics in plastic wrap. Hands pull out the comic. Lay it down, pull it out of the plastic sheathing. Spunky Z's Solution. (open each page to reveal other titles)...

FADE OUT.

Camera moves along the baseboard, over an old dusty sock. Twists right and left. Dust balls, some old pizza crust, hovers and moves the crust around, turn the corner of the couch, push through and under the bottom flap, blackness, sound, creaking, push through the otherside light, up along one edge, moving, then pause, a rat jumps out in front of the camera and disappears from view. We rise up into the parlor, revealing the whole room with two adults reading.

JUNE is sitting on the couch wearing her Sunday clothes. A scarf covers her head, which is bald from chemo.

Her eyes look large in her face, clearly she's been ill, but she's relaxed and content now. She's reading the comic section of the Sunday Times. As she does, she takes pills from the Sunday section of her weekly pill box. After each one, she takes a sip of water and looks at Augie. Augie is in his recliner, he's wearing fifties style golf slacks and shirt and reading the sports page. She's humming the song "Afternoon Delight"--(Starland Express)and tapping her feet. She looks up at her husband, he's deep into an article. She looks back down at the comics--at this moment Augie looks up at June who's looking down, he goes back to reading. At that moment a book falls from the shelf, the rat knocks a book on to the ground and hides behind a picture. June looks up at Augie who looks up at June, they both smile--the "I still love you" smile. She blushes and looks back down, he rolls his shoulders and pushes the glasses back up his nose. She looks back at him, (flash, see in her minds eye the superhero of her dreams--we see him sitting in his chair, wearing a James Bond tuxedo, he's holding a martini, shaken, not stirred--- he starts to look up at her--flash back to his Augie self) Cut on the motion looking up and he's in his normal clothes, June looks away not wanting to be caught ogling her husband of 30 years. Flash, June is wearing a sexy, long silky dress showing off her 50 year old figure. He breathes her in. She reads and pulls a long caress up her long silky leg.

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

3

EXT ROAD DAY

3

Cricket, a high school senior, is pedaling in a neighborhood, throwing newspapers up drive ways, and walkways to people's houses. His bike is a tricked out oversized Schwinn wannabe with big tires and baskets filled with newspapers. He winds his way back and forth up the road delivering the Sunday morning news. An occasional person comes out from the house in their bathrobes, acknowledging the paper boy on a job well done. Mix credits in with this sequence.

Montage of strange assorted people--waving to Cricket.

NEIGHBOR BOB

Thank you young man.

NEIGHBOR TRIXIE

(decked out in extreme workout clothes) "Thanks Hon"

NEIGHBOR REX

(xmilitary type) Late again  
Cricket! Three minutes this time.

NEIGHBOR MARCIA  
Cricket. Oh Cricket.

Cricket pulls up and turns his bike around to Marcia's walk way.

CRICKET  
Hi Marcia.

NEIGHBOR MARCIA  
Hi Cricket, I know you're heading into summer and all, I was wondering if you have time to play with Jim some, he likes you an awful lot. You both seem like you could use some friends.

CRICKET  
I'm awful busy with the paper route and my research, I'll try to stop by when I get a chance.

NEIGHBOR MARCIA  
That's all I can ask for hon.

He comes up the road, and spots a young woman, GEORGIA, sitting on her front porch reading a book next to a bowl filled with ice--one cube of which she's sucking on. Sitting on the steps next to her is Georgia's mother, ROSE, wearing a silk bathrobe with seemingly nothing under it, smoking a cigarette waiting for the paper. He chucks the paper up the path and Rose stands up to begin her walk to the delivered Sunday news. He looks back over his shoulder at Georgia who has not looked up from her book (To Kill a Mockingbird).

4 INT DAVIS HALLWAY DAY 4

Loud clanging noise. Augie and June look up.

The door of the basement--both Augie and June just looked at it. Camera passes through the door. \*

CUT TO:

5 INT CRICKET'S LAB DAY 5

The camera passes through the door down the stairs into the basement. Activity. Halfway down the steps a rat is sitting on the handrail. \*

Above the rat is a poster blown up from a comic book of an action hero Spunky Z "Here to save the world NOW!" In the basement a scientist scurries around in a long white lab coat. Instruments from a science lab and mysterious homemade equipment litter the small space. The walls are covered with white boards scribbled with mysterious equations in different colors of marker. Rat cages line the shelves. Beakers and test tubes of "testing" chemicals are on the table. There's a strange object that looks like a human research torture device against one wall.

\*  
\*

CU of the scientist, it's Cricket, --much more than just a boy from his delivery route, a senior in high school, though he looks like a freshman. He pours some concoction into a vial--he opens a small fridge and puts it in. On the exam table is a comic and a hypodermic needle. He flips a few pages of the comic then, absent-mindedly, he scratches his arm, and reaches over and puts a safety cap back on a needle...it's not clear if he just injected himself. He looks up at a big white clock on the wall.

CRICKET

Damn.

He hurries around finishing his stuff. Halfway up the steps he sees the rat.

CRICKET (CONT'D)

There you are.

CUT TO:

6 INT DAVIS PARLOR DAY

6

AUGIE

You're not dressed yet---are you coming to church with us?

CRICKET

Dad! I look stupid in a tie. Besides, the new Spunky Z came out yesterday.

Augie puts his hand on Cricket pointing out that he looks kinda ridiculous the way he dresses now.

AUGIE(CONT'D)

You know what it would it mean to your mother for you to be there.

CUT TO:

7 INT DAVIS LIVING ROOM DAY 7

Cricket watches his family walk to the car, his mother leaning heavily on his father. Then he watches them climb into the car. At the last second he decides to join them. Runs through the house, looks down at his bare feet, runs backs, grabs some shoes, runs out to catch them but they've already pulled out of the driveway and are gone. He looks sad for a moment, then turns, there's a bit of a sparkle in his eye--but why?

CUT TO:

8 INT CRICKET'S BEDROOM DAY 8

Cricket rushes to get dressed. As he approaches the closet, his world slows down, it's like he's crossed some cosmic threshold when he reaches to open the sliding door. When he touches the door it shoots open like magic. The clothes hanging, all shift in a flash to the right, Pause, a clean pair of slacks, with neat shirt, and tie and tucked back against the wall. His head twists right and his eyes narrow, the secret side of Cricket is revealed, the corner of his mouth turns up in a grin. Zip, flash bang, he's spun grabbed the clothes, and in super hero fashion, bang, A black Spunky Z hero shirt is pulled over snapped tight. Bang, his head turned and ready to move. Bang, spin and next thing we know he's in his Sunday best dress clothes. Pullback and reveal that the clothes are dated, and too small--both his arms and legs are too long. He's also wearing shoes that could have been his grandfathers dress shoes, but are way too big for him.

CUT TO:

9 EXT STREET DAY 9

Augie drives June to the Presbyterian church.

CUT TO:

10 EXT CITY STREET DAY 10

Cricket pedals furiously. He pulls up to a small shop. Leans his bike up against the wall. He goes inside--it's a comic book store.

CUT TO:

11 INT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DAY

11

The pews are full. June and Augie are sitting straight up, almost stiff.

REVEREND JOHNSON

Even the adorable little lambs of the field shared the pain of Jesus Christ, our Lord. They felt his pain right down to their very hooves. So who are we, woolly with sin, to think we deserve to have Jesus Christ take away our pain while we continue to cling to our sinful ways?

CUT TO:

12 INT COMIC BOOK STORE DAY

12

Cricket is smelling the aroma of the comic books. He's mesmerized. He closes his eyes and walks up the aisle feeling the pages of the comics in his fingers. Georgia is standing at the end of Cricket's row. She notices him and watches as he feels his way towards her, eyes still closed. She moves back to get out of the way, as he passes her he brushes by her, she leans in to smell the comic book he's smelling. From the front his eyes pop open and he steps one more time and spins around. He's face to face with the neighborhood beauty. He blinks rapidly.

GEORGIA

Hi there!

Cricket blinks. There's a girl talking in front of him but a deep droning and zoning out is happening. It feels like the late night television off the air sound. Georgia's mouth is moving but he can't hear a word she's saying. She reaches out to touch his shoulder. Flash he's back in his reality again.

GEORGIA

Didn't mean to startle you.

CRICKET

Mean to what?

GEORGIA

Interrupt. Licorice?

Cricket blushes. They sit there awkwardly for second.

CRICKET  
You didn't, not really.

GEORGIA  
Oh yes I did. What are you doing?

Cricket blushes. He shrugs. She waits.

CRICKET  
There's a certain feeling I get--

GEORGIA  
Oh like dowsing? A divining rod?  
You were looking for the good  
stuff?

CRICKET  
Not really but kinda, they're all  
good. So maybe--I guess--more just  
like a way to choose--

GEORGIA  
The smell of freshly pressed  
comics, it's like honeysuckle.

He blinks at her and looks back at the comics and has to breathe for a moment. No girl has ever spoken to him for this long before. He closes his eyes as if the conversation is over then they pop open and he responds to her.

CRICKET  
It's not like honeysuckle, it's  
more like the smell of solution  
when it crystallizes.

Georgia smiles and is deeply intrigued.

CRICKET (CONT'D)  
Or like, um, when I wake up in the  
middle of the night, and I have to  
go to the bathroom, but I don't  
want to go, but eventually I do go,  
then I go back to bed and I sleep  
better, that's what a new comic is  
like to me.

\*

He blinks.

CRICKET (CONT'D)

Sorry. I just said that, ummmm. I didn't mean to exactly...

We hear a bit of the drone coming back in, Georgia pulls him back.

GEORGIA

Of course you did! (looks down at the comic section) Ah here it is. What are they doing putting Spunky Z in with Marbles and Chagi the Wonder Dog? (she takes the comic Cricket had taken out)

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Gotta go, late to church.

CRICKET

Um ma'm.

GEORGIA

Oh, sorry I'm The Georgia, and you are???????

CRICKET

Ah, Spunky Z...

GEORGIA

You're NOT Spunky Z! He's Spunky Z! (She holds up the comic---the front of the comic shows Spunky Z--the reluctant Superhero)

CRICKET

That's my comic.

GEORGIA

It is? sorry.

She hands him back the comic, opens a little side satchel bag of hers, pulls out a few pieces of licorice and hands them to him.

They smile. She turns to go. He closes his eyes and leans in close to smell the comics. She turns back to look at him. Georgia leans in next to him to do what he's doing. His eyes pop open and without turning his head he looks at her. She's way too close. He fumbles the new Spunky Z comic and it opens. He looks down at it and Spunky Z is leaning in and smelling some freshly cooked apple pies.

GEORGIA  
HMMMMMM Apple Pie.

CRICKET (CONT'D)  
My mom makes a Sunday lunch.

GEORGIA  
Yeah.

CRICKET  
You could come, well, if you'd  
like.

She smiles and blinks, blinks and takes a bite of licorice.

CUT TO:

13 EXT COMIC BOOKSTORE DAY

13

Cricket comes out of the comic book store. A tall tough looking mid 20s man (JOSH) who is leaning up on the side of the store, watches Cricket watching Georgia. Cricket looks up to see the steely eyes digging into him. Cricket looks down and pulls his bag close.

JOSH  
Can you say "out of your league?"  
Not even your sport,! Sport!

He pushes Cricket hard into the wall to get him out of the way. Josh then walks over in the direction of Georgia.

JOSH  
Hello there, cute cheeks!

Georgia turns as Josh approaches. Cricket looks around frantically, sees a phone booth and sprints to it. As he begins to strip his Sunday clothes to his super hero Spunky Z t-shirt, he is a bit embarrassed by being in a phone booth that's only half open. He rubs his head awkwardly, pushes himself into the booth, and starts to unbutton his dress shirt revealing his Spunky Z superhero t-shirt. He's a big mess and it's not coming undone-- he stops to breathe and sees that Georgia and Josh are laughing together. Not the danger he first thought.

CRICKET  
Rats.

He starts to straighten himself up again, buttoning his shirt.

CUT TO:

14 INT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DAY 14

The sermon is winding down. The back door opens and Georgia sneaks in the back. She goes down a side aisle and finds a seat on the side. She sits but isn't still. Georgia stands up and opens a side window, disregarding the sermon.

CUT TO:

15 INT BAPTIST CHURCH DAY 15

A small, packed church, half the size of the church that Cricket's parent's were in. There's a preacher at the pulpit and he's shaking the congregation down to the bones. Right in the middle of all the ruckus we see Cricket sit down--he's intently focused on the sermon just as in the other church, he's not moving even though the mass of humanity around him is rocking and standing and whooping. He is locked down, mesmerized by the words and the energy. Amens enter the sermon and the crowd is into it. He also pauses in the middle to wink at an attractive young lady

\*  
\*

PREACHER TATE

PAIN! This is how the Lord speaks  
to every one of us. We ask for  
light. We ask for freedom, we ask  
for gifts from the Lord to free us.  
But the Lord says "Wake up,  
children! Feel something!"

\*

At this moment he walks up and looks at the congregation and and pauses in the middle to wink at an attractive young lady. Another woman (MRS TATE) stands up and gives him a "I'm going to kick your ass look"--he looks at her and smiles and continues with the sermon.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

PREACHER TATE

And when we awaken from our sins,  
from all of that which causes us  
pain...when you find that moment,  
then my children, is when you've  
found Salvation. And that is when  
we know our mission: to heal the  
pain of those around us.

\*  
\*

As he delivers his sermon there's a fly buzzing around the pulpit. He pauses at times before moving forward with his words, thinking, watching the fly. He's lost in his words of God, moving the congregation, and watching the fly. Towards the end, he walks over to the rail, and snatches the fly in his hands (pauses to carry the fly to the window letting it free). The fly takes off and crosses the city and enters the church where the Davis family is. Cricket watches all this from his seat in the back of the church. He notices the fly buzzing and leaving the church and is struck by it.

CUT TO:

16 INT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DAY 16

Georgia pulls out of piece of licorice and starts chomping it down. June looks over at Georgia and winks. Georgia tips her licorice to June as if she's tipping her hat to her. The service winds down. The choir sings its last notes and the church empties- Georgia stays eating her candy. Georgia is still watching the fly, she's swinging her licorice at it, making a bit of a scene in the back. Finally the service finishes. As June and Augie walk out, she goes over to Georgia and they exchange nods, pause. Georgia extends a piece of licorice to June who takes it and sticks it in her mouth--they share secret grins.

CUT TO:

17 EXT BAPTIST CHURCH DAY 17

An elderly African American couple is smiling and hugging Preacher Tate in the reception line. Next in line out the door is Cricket, who is swept up in the culture around him. The preacher takes his hand.

PREACHER TATE

Cricket, the Lord takes you in  
closer every week we see you here.  
(beat before the next question) How  
is your mom holding up?

\*  
\*

Cricket looks shocked.

PREACHER TATE

You know we pray for her and all of  
ya'll every day.

\*

Mrs Tate sucks Cricket into her bosom and holds his small white, geeky head to her large breasts and purple Sunday dress. She grabs his head between her hands and looks deeply into his eyes.

MRS. TATE

Child! I can see the Lord is making his way into your soul. We are here for you anytime! Anytime, you understand?

He pulls out and nods acknowledging the deep love that he's is given from the Tate family. He then hurries down the steps to his bike and hops on.

CUT TO:

18 EXT DIRT ROAD DAY

18

Cricket pedals furiously and his bike turns into a zip rocket and shoots across town in blinding speed. Close up of his face---wind blowing through his hair. He's talking to himself---(is he calling God to him? Is he reciting incantations? Supernatural monkish hymns that give him super powers?

CRICKET

She likes Spunky Z, She likes Spunky Z, She likes Spunky Z.

CUT TO:

19 INT DAVIS DINING ROOM DAY

19

Augie, June and the Reverend Johnson are seated at the table, dressed in their traditional Sunday best, except that June is wearing an outrageous wig.

JUNE

That was such a nice sermon, Reverend. I just loved what you said about the tender lambs in the field.

Minister nods in acceptance of this richly deserved praise.

AUGIE

All I've got to say, Reverend, is that you better be looking out for my wife's tender lamb. You haven't lived...

Flash, Augie looks at June, who's wearing her sexy James Bond woman outfit.

JUNE

Oh Augie.

June flashes back to her normal self.

JUNE

Augie, will you let Cricket know we're about to eat?

AUGIE

Cricket! (yelling)

June swats at him with her napkin. \*

AUGIE \*

Where is that boy? CRICKET! \*

CUT TO:

20 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

20

Cricket comes pedaling up late. He hides behind a bush and sneaks into the garage with his bike. He strips off his Sunday clothes and looks around to find something else to put on. He pulls some items off the shelf. He pauses at the door before entering. Looks around, then starts his super hero change of clothes. The door opens from the inside and Cricket is standing there in a lab coat, 70's style Chucky T basketball shoes and knee length basketball shorts.

CUT TO:

21 INT DAVIS DINING ROOM DAY

21

Cricket comes up the hall and enters the dining room. He's running late and walks in on the prayer.

REVEREND JOHNSON

...to bless, to bless what? We ask to bless what? I suppose to bless our purposes today and every day, that's right to bless our everyday purpose, and we particularly ask you to look with favor on Mrs. Davis, and restore her to health.

AUGIE

Lost track of time?

CRICKET

Sorry, Mom.

JUNE

(to Reverend) )

Cricket doesn't know whether it's  
night or day down there in that lab  
of his.

Cricket looks down and sees a rat scurrying between the legs  
of the chairs of the table. He's distracted and half paying  
attention to the floor, half listening to the Reverend and  
watching the front door.

Everyone starts eating, Augie slips over and snatches up the  
rat into his lap. He reaches over to Cricket and passes him  
the rat (he deflects attention to this motion by asking the  
Reverend a question) Cricket sticks the rat in his lab coat  
pocket under the table.

AUGIE

How's the lamb, Reverend?

REVEREND JOHNSON

A gift from the Lord. I couldn't  
ask for more. Speaking of the Lord,  
(turns to Cricket) when are we  
going to see you in church? You've  
been a bit conspicuous in your  
absence.

JUNE

An excellent question.

At this moment there's a knock at the front door.

CRICKET

I'll get that.

He gets up, pauses, sprints to the front door. Opens it, is  
shocked to see Georgia standing, slams the door on her.  
Sprints back to the table. He sits down and hesitates, turns  
back to the table. Everyone looks at him like..."well?" He  
stands up again and hesitates.

CRICKET (CONT'D)

I invited a friend to lunch, if  
that's all right.

JUNE

I suppose, but I do wish you'd let  
me know in advance.

(MORE)

JUNE (cont'd)  
 (To the Minister) You know teenage  
 boys. Some days I'd rather have  
 locusts at my table!

\*

AUGIE  
 Well where'd you leave him? Bring  
 him in and let's eat!

\*

\*

\*

Cricket looks at them, hesitates and sprints to the front  
 door. He opens it to find Georgia's back to him.

CRICKET  
 Hey.

GEORGIA  
 Forgot to ask your parents? That's  
 all right, I get along with  
 everyone.

She walks past him into the house.

In the dining room the group is looking from one to the other  
 once they realize it's a girl. Cricket and Georgia walk into  
 the dining room. She looks at everyone with a warm  
 comfortable smile. She sees the rat moving in Cricket's  
 pocket and shoots a glance at him. He pauses, hesitates.

JUNE  
 Aren't you going to introduce us,  
 Cricket?

CRICKET  
 Ah, sure, ah, this is um, (forgets  
 her name)

He blinks, his world slows, he freezes up and the TV tone  
 begins to seep into his world, ringing in his ears, his heart  
 is pounding.

GEORGIA  
 Georgia.

Cricket is lost in a fog, he hears them doing introductions  
 but can't get in touch.

\*

AUGIE  
 I'm Augie.

JUNE  
 I'm June and this is Reverend  
 Johnson.

Cricket comes back to reality.

CRICKET

Georgia! Yes, sorry. This is my mom, um June and um Augie dad, I mean my dad, and Reverend Johnson.

They all look at him as if he missed something. Which he did but they forgive him and Georgia doesn't miss a beat.

Georgia shakes hands with everyone. She holds June's hand longer than the rest, with two hands.

GEORGIA

Mrs. Davis, what a truly stunning wig.

JUNE

You think so? I was considering going red. But you know what they say about blondes.

GEORGIA

I liked the one you wore in church today too.

June winks at Augie. Cricket looks mortified.

GEORGIA

Reverend Johnson. Fine sermon today, sir. Nice touch with the lambs.

Cricket is dumbstruck. This is the superheroine, the girl of his fantasies, who's just walked out of the comic book store and into his family. She likes his mom!

REVEREND JOHNSON

You okay, son?

Cricket blinks.

AUGIE

Sit down Cricket and let's eat before what's hot goes cold and what's cold gets warm.

\*

Everyone else digs in, but Cricket remains frozen. June sees he's stuck without the foggiest notion of what to do with this unexpected good fortune. Georgia sticks her hand into her ice water and fishes out a big ice cube and pops it into her mouth.

\*

\*

\*

JUNE

So Georgia, you've just moved to town?

She spits out the ice cube everytime she talks.

\*

GEORGIA

I'm visiting my mom for the summer before I head to the Peace Corps in the fall.

JUNE

Peace Corps, that's wonderful. And how did you two meet?

GEORGIA

At the comic book store.

AUGIE

You like comics? That's great. Our Cricket likes comics, too. Sometimes he thinks he's a superhero.

GEORGIA

I knew it, I saw it the moment we met.

CRICKET

Do you want to see my lab?

GEORGIA

Your lab? sure!

Cricket jumps up and is headed for the basement.

GEORGIA

You mean now?

JUNE

But you haven't eaten anything yet.

Georgia looks around. She gets up and follows Cricket.

GEORGIA

I guess we'll be right back.

They leave the room.

REVEREND JOHNSON

The tender lambs, the tender lambs, they wander where they may.

CUT TO:

22 INT CRICKET'S LAB DAY

22

Cricket enters his lab. He pushes a secret code on the wall alarm system. He pulls a couple of big pull switches as if on a huge electric grid. A large whir and buzz sound begins and light begins to creep into the downstairs room. Cricket pulls the rat out of his pocket and drops it in a cage. He fuddles around shelves, lifting an occasional item, finding a few more rats and putting them back in the rat cage.

GEORGIA

What's with a lab? What do you need it for?

CRICKET

Why does anyone have a lab?

GEORGIA

Good point!

He shrugs.

Beat.

GEORGIA

I guess life is a lab. Piece of licorice? (he declines) Shouldn't we get back up to lunch?

Long beat.

\*

CRICKET

Do you want to see something?

She looks at him for a second.

Cricket opens a freezer and cold frosty air comes out adding mystery to his already mysterious lab. CU on a row of vials of serum in deepening shades of blue. He pulls out a vial of the most intensely blue serum. His eyes become beady and hazy, mesmerized by his invention. He snaps out of it and extends it to Georgia.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

What an amazing thing--great color too!

Cricket seems a bit put off by her enthusiasm before she knows what it is.

CRICKET  
It's a, um it's a serum.

GEORGIA  
A serum? And?

CRICKET  
The color is off.

GEORGIA  
The color is off? Looks great to me.

CRICKET  
Have you ever had a doctor inject you with something that looked like that?

GEORGIA  
Another good point, but what does it do?

CRICKET  
I haven't told anyone about it.

GEORGIA  
Does it work?

CRICKET  
I'm still testing it.

GEORGIA  
What does it do?

Cricket looks at her for a moment. Can he trust her? He starts looking for more rats. She waits knowing that this is an important moment in their relationship--does Cricket trust this strange woman with his secret?

CRICKET  
We should get back to lunch.

Georgia smiles and acknowledges that maybe he's right.

GEORGIA  
This is completely cool stuff.

Cricket turns his head, drops his chin and gives his Spunky Z super hero response.

CRICKET

Affirmative.

GEORGIA

Did you just Spunk me? Huh? I'd know that look anywhere.

He's busted, Cricket freezes and doesn't know how to respond, no one has ever known what he was doing before. She smiles and winks.

Beat, Georgia thinks for a moment then remembers.

GEORGIA

Cricket?

CRICKET

Yeah?

GEORGIA

Your mom?

CRICKET

My mom. Yeah well, She's a little under the weather, um, she hasn't been feeling too well.

Cricket begins writing furious equations on the whiteboard. He looks at what he's written, frustrated, then erases it all with his sleeve, and starts again, with different equations, but the same sum, and the same frustration that he can't make it come out right. Georgia touches him on the shoulder. Flustered, he looks up.

She extends the serum back to him, he takes it, looks at it, wipes their finger prints off the glass and replaces it back in the freezer.

GEORGIA

I'm sorry if I was pushy.

CRICKET

You weren't.

He starts heading up the stairs she follows. At the top of the stairs he turns and looks at her again. She waits.

CRICKET

It ends pain and suffering---it's supposed to cure people.

They lock eyes. His face shows his pain and fear of losing his mom. She nods, swallows. He turns and opens the door to the upstairs.

CUT TO:

23 DAVIS KITCHEN DAY

23

Cricket is finishing up the dishes. June and Augie enter, June leaning heavily on Augie's arm. Cricket motions to help but she waves him off.

CRICKET

Mom, how are you feeling?

JUNE

What? I'm fine, considering. Thanks for asking, sweetie.

Flash on an elegant dress with a train trailing across the kitchen floor. Augie and June tap dancing out of the kitchen--Fred and Ginger. Then they leave, and the tap dance becomes the shuffling sound of June's slippers trudging up the stairs. (this is seen as they pass the wall on the other side of kitchen where Cricket is)

CUT TO:

24 INT CRICKET'S LAB DAY

24

It's the next morning. Cricket has taken the vials out of the refrigerator and lined them up on his work bench. He's tapping them one by one, then tapping the containers of chemicals lined up on the shelf above. Whatever he's looking for, it's not there.

CUT TO:

25 INT SCHOOL DAY

25

In school the next day, Cricket's walking-down-the-halls montage, to music. People seem never to touch him. Then the music breaks and we see that in fact people are bumping into him, picking on him, trying to trip him, etc., partly through general high school chaos, partly because he's an easy target.

He's wearing a Spunky Z shirt under his all of outfits he wears...as the story progresses the Spunky Z becomes more and more prominent.

CUT TO:

26

EXT ROAD DAY

26

Cricket is pedaling and delivering his papers again. He's got tunnel vision on the big house on the corner---Georgia's house. He pulls his bike over and watches Georgia read her book. She keeps pulling ice from the bowl and slipping it into her mouth. We intercut between him intensely watching her eat her ice and her eating it. Whenever she bites and crunches into an ice cube Cricket shudders. He finally pushes his bike free from the bushes, crosses the street, and leans the bike down. He grabs a newspaper from the rack and walks up towards the house. As he begins up the steps, Georgia sees him and smiles, the front door flies open and standing in the doorway with a gin and tonic is Rose. Her nightgown is half open just about revealing something it shouldn't---she doesn't try to fix it. (can this be shot without dialogue?)

GEORGIA

Hi, Cricket.

CRICKET

I brought you your paper.

ROSE

I'll take that.

Beat.

ROSE

You know what?

She grabs hold of Cricket's arm and pulls him closer. She takes his glasses from his face and gives him a once over.

ROSE

You're a pretty handsome guy when you lose the glasses.

Georgia winks and waves a piece of licorice at the two of them, almost taunting her mother. She takes a piece of ice out of the bowl and chucks it at her mom.

ROSE

Oh cut it out, Georgia, he's almost a grown man. Men like compliments.

(MORE)

ROSE (cont'd)  
 Anyway, thanks for bringing the  
 paper. It was nice of you to walk  
 it up here for us.

CUT TO:

27 INT DAVIS KITCHEN DAY

27

June is alone in the kitchen, unpacking groceries from brown paper bags. She lines up six quarts of blueberries, two quarts of purple Gatorade and five packages of liver, along the counter, and looks at them strangely, as if she has no idea where they came from.

Knock at the kitchen door. June opens it to see Georgia. Her face lights up with pleasure.

JUNE  
 Georgia!

They smile for a second, then without closing the door or inviting her in, June turns and walks back into the house. Georgia looks around, smiles, closes the door and follows her to the kitchen where June is unpacking groceries. She hands a package of liver to Georgia.

GEORGIA  
 I love liver.

She holds up another package of liver.

JUNE  
 Really?

Georgia makes a face.

GEORGIA  
 Honestly, Mrs. Davis. Do you know  
anyone who actually likes liver?

JUNE  
 Cricket ordered it---something for  
 his new experiment.

GEORGIA  
 Is he here?

JUNE  
 In the lab as usual, I'm thinking  
 of moving his bed down there.

Georgia looks at the basement steps.

GEORGIA

Okay if I....?

JUNE

Don't even bother knocking. Cricket could use a few friends his own species.

CUT TO:

28

INT CRICKET'S LAB DAY

28

Cricket is sitting on a twirly stool in his lab, titrating a deep blue solution. Every once in a while, he strokes the rat in his pocket. He hears creaking as someone comes down the steps. He doesn't look to see who it is. Georgia enters. He talks without looking.

CRICKET

I'll be up in a minute, Mom. I promise.

GEORGIA

Fusion?

He looks up, flustered. What's she doing here?

CRICKET

Confusion. (to himself)

Georgia comes up behind Cricket, leaning over his shoulder to see what he's doing. Cricket is completely aware of her. She's so close he can smell her, and feel her breast brushing his back.

He's so aware of her that he can't speak. She steps back and starts picking up jars from a shelf. It's a sort of "One of these things is not like the others" situation: for instance, three jars of specimens and a jar of pickled pigs' feet, or something like that.

GEORGIA

(looking at jar in her hand)

I was just coming over to visit, I hope it's okay--I love being a bother.

CRICKET

You're not (voice breaks. He deepens his voice), you're not bothering me.

Georgia puts down the jar and looks at Cricket.

GEORGIA

Hey, about my mom, she's got this "What's mine is mine and what's yours is mine" thing going.

CRICKET

She's all right.

GEORGIA

Most people learn in kindergarten to keep their hands to themselves, but not my mom, taking your glasses off like that--unfortunately I guess I got some of that from her.

Cricket blinks and stares at her.

GEORGIA

I have to stop her from adjusting my bra straps whenever we go out.

This is clearly too much information for Cricket. He's looking a little faint.

GEORGIA

(switches energy) I did get some of her good traits.--anyway---how's the potion?

CRICKET

Serum. It's a serum.

GEORGIA

Sorry, how's the serum?

CRICKET

I need something to bind with the Mureceptors.

GEORGIA

MOO receptors?

CRICKET

MU--receptors. They're commonly found in narcotics such as morphine, oxycontin, Tylox, Oxycodone---they're federally controlled substances--binding of the narcotic to the mu-receptor causes inhibition of the ascending pain pathways.

GEORGIA  
My mom is on Tylox.

Cricket looks at her.

GEORGIA  
Some back pain thing she's got  
going on. (bites into a piece of  
licorice)

CRICKET  
Yeah, well, it's not the kind of  
thing I can ask my mom to pick up  
at the store.

Beat, he wants to look at her but doesn't have the confidence  
to.

GEORGIA  
Am I bothering you yet? If I'm not  
then I'm outta here?

Beat.

The look at each other for a second.

CRICKET  
Will you come back again?

GEORGIA  
Sure, if I can get in the way.

CRICKET  
You're not. You can...It's just...

GEORGIA  
Yeah?

CRICKET  
I'm not used to it. (beat) The  
company that is.

She smiles. He looks at her and she turns away.

CUT TO:

29

INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY

29

Georgia watches her mom walking out the front door. Rose  
gets in the car and begins to pull out of the drive way.

CUT TO:

30 INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY

30

Opening of medicine cabinet. Georgia grabs a few medicine bottles and reads the label. Puts some of the bottles back. She sees Tylox. Opens the bottle and looks in and sees a bunch of pills. She empties half the pills out into a small baggie.

CUT TO:

31 INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR

31

Georgia and June are sitting on the couch next to each other. Georgia pulls out a brown bag, opens it up and pulls out a handful of licorice.

GEORGIA

I didn't know whether you liked the red or the black so I got both.

JUNE

I love both---depends on the mood. Nowadays I prefer red, try to keep things up beat.

Flash of her wicked movie style outfit...and takes a seductive bite out of her licorice. Flash back.

GEORGIA

I'll leave you both---I always kinda think that the dark side is important to open up to. How are you doing?

JUNE

Frankly, I'm concerned with how you're doing.

GEORGIA

Me? Why?

JUNE

Oh, come on, Georgia girl, you're spending a lot of time with a couple of old fogies and a 16 year old boy.

Beat.

GEORGIA

I've got something for Cricket too.

JUNE

You do? He's not here. Just leave it on the stairs of his lab. He'll get it as soon as he gets home.

Beat

I lost the energy to put on airs a long time ago.

Beat

It's refreshing when you get used to it.

GEORGIA

I guess that's the basic answer of why I'm here-- it seems like you've learned something I want in my life.

JUNE

Thanks. (takes a piece of candy)  
Just be careful with my boy, his heart hasn't been tested yet.

Georgia winks and lets June know that she has nothing to worry about. (either no dialogue or some appropriate line)

CUT TO:

32 INT CRICKETS LAB DAY 32

Georgia opens the door to the stairs and leaves her bag of goodies for Cricket, she leaves three pieces of licorice for him and she puts a big note on top of everything. "hey mr insect, I caught something i thought you could use! Call me if you want to go on a bike ride some day---929-6350!"

\*  
\*  
\*

33 INT CRICKETS LAB DAY 33

31 Cricket is working in his lab, titrating a deep blue solution. All the extra objects from the grocery and the drugs from Georgia are lined up on the work bench, some of them opened. Every once in a while, he strokes the rat in his pocket. On the lab table are a handful of the pills that Georgia has stolen from her mom. Next to the bag that Georgia left are three pieces of licorice---one half eaten. There's a bowl with a crushing grinder and powdery substance that used to be some of the Tylox.

Cricket is decked out in a white research coat. He's holding up a rat. CU of needle and funky colored serum. He moves it to the rat. XCU of rat's face. He puts needle down. He pets the rat and puts it back into a cage. He then makes some notes. Sets a timer on a clock. Then grabs another rat out of another cage. CU of the rat with the injection and passing of time show the cage get full of 5-6 rats.

The timer rings. He looks at it. Reaches over and turns it off. He then goes into the cage and pulls out the first rat he injected. He strokes him.

CRICKET

Shit, ouch!

The rat bit his hand. He shakes his hand and the animal won't let go. He makes a big pitching motion to get the rat off his hand and essentially throws the rat across the room into a brick wall. Splat! The rat slides down the wall, hits the concrete floor--dead. Cricket looks at his cut hand and wraps a piece of cloth around his hand to stop the little bleeding there is. He walks over to pick up the dead animal, as he bends down it becomes clear that the rat isn't dead, it looks at him and scampers away.

CUT TO:

34 INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR DAY 34

Cricket picks up the phone and dials a number.

35 INT CRICKET'S LAB DAY 35

GEORGIA

You're saying the rat should be  
dead and it's not?

Cricket nods. He takes a rat out of a cage and hands it to Georgia.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

This is crazy.

CRICKET

Go ahead.

GEORGIA

No.

Cricket takes Georgia's hand in his and uses both their hands to throw the rodent with all his strength against the brick wall. Splat. The rat falls to the ground.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

Stop!

A few seconds later the rat walks away. Georgia looks stunned. She's shaking her head in disbelief.

CRICKET

Again?

He grabs another rat out of the cage and hands it to Georgia. Splat.

CRICKET (CONT'D)

Again?

Georgia is laughing hysterically and we watch a series of baseball pitches with the furry rodents flying across the room into the brick wall. She is almost crazy with energy, she reaches for another rat.

CRICKET

I think that's enough. \*

GEORGIA

(still giggly) Okay, but you can't just inject a person with this stuff.

CRICKET

The rats are fine.

GEORGIA

I mean it takes years of testing to make sure it's really safe.

CRICKET

We don't have years! I don't have years.

Cricket steps away from her and strokes a rat that he finds behind an instrument on a shelf. Georgia steps closer to him and puts her hand on his arm to comfort him. From the front he becomes hyper aware of her touch. He puts the rat down, spins around towards her.

GEORGIA

It's okay. You know that don't you?

Cricket leans in awkwardly to kiss Georgia. She steps back quickly.

CRICKET

Um I'm...(SORRY)don't really know,  
know what?

GEORGIA

Cricket I should, I have to go.  
It's okay. It'll all be okay.

CUT TO:

36 INT DAVIS KITCHEN DAY

36 \*

Cricket has the phone to his ear. The phone is ringing.

VOICE

Hello?

CRICKET

(squeaking)  
Hey this is me um, I mean Cricket.

Silence.

CRICKET

Are you there?

ROSE

(sultry)  
Hello Cricket.

CRICKET

I was wondering if you'd like to do  
something sometime.

ROSE

You shouldn't be calling the house  
(beat) you can call me on my cell  
phone.

CRICKET

Cell phone? Okay sure.

ROSE

(beat) Ready?

CRICKET

Yes. Ah.

ROSE

260-2023. Do me a favor hon, call me tonight after 11, can you do that?

CRICKET

Ah sure, we can't set a time now?

ROSE

I shouldn't be talking on the home phone. Just call later, ok hon?

CRICKET

Ah sure, okay.

He hangs up. He looks a little perplexed, he's not sure if what just happened actually happened---did Georgia just agree to a date with him? Why did something not feel right?

CUT TO:

37

INT DAVIS HOUSE CRICKET'S ROOM NIGHT

37

Cricket is sitting on his bed. He looks over at his clock. It reads 10:15. We watch a montage of passing of time and Cricket impatiently watches the clock. He flips around in his bed, as it gets closer and closer to 11pm he picks the phone up and puts it back down a few times. At 1059 he dials. The phone rings four times and then clicks into voice mail. Rose's sultry voice is on the recording.

ROSE

Hi, if you've got this number you've got me but haven't got me-- tell me when to call you back and I'll get back to you.

The phone beeps...

CRICKET

Ah hi, this is Cricket, it's a little after 11...I'm sorry I missed you--you really can't call me because my parents are sleeping. We'll have to talk sometime tomorrow--or I can call back, if you want, or you can call me at home during the day or even while I'm in the lab, there's a phone down there you know, anyway, (he gets cut off.)

He looks at the phone. Hangs up.

38 INT DAVIS KITCHEN DAY

38 \*

Cricket is neatly clipping a bunch of flowers and tying them up in a bouquet. June slowly walks into the kitchen wearing a bathrobe and pours herself a cup of coffee.

CRICKET

Let me get that for you, Mom.

She waves him off.

JUNE

It's not like I'm bedridden you know. If I can make dinner I can certainly pour myself a cup of coffee. (beat) Are those from my garden?

He nods, continuing to put them together.

JUNE

Are they for a particular girl? Or are you taking my flowers for some other worthy cause?

CRICKET

I'll plant some more for you.

JUNE

Don't be ridiculous, nothing would make me happier than to help my you win a girl's heart.

\*

Cricket stares blinking at her.

JUNE

She's a lucky girl to get flowers.

CRICKET

Yeah, I guess.

JUNE

She'll be thrilled by your gesture.

He blinks.

CRICKET

I hope so.

They watch each other for a minute while June sips her hot coffee. She just keeps Cricket company while he quietly gets the flowers perfect. There are some shared moments where they look at each other. Cricket is determined and June looks tired.

\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

39 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

39

Cricket is standing on his front porch. He's wearing neat khaki pants, freshly pressed, and a 50's style collared shirt that looks straight out of the package--over a superhero Spunky Z shirt. He puts the flowers down for a second and straightens his already crisp shirt, making sure things as perfect as possible. He looks up and down the street, picks up his flowers and steps off his front porch.

CUT TO:

40 INT DAVIS PARLOR

40

June is looking out the window as Cricket steps off the porch with his flowers. Augie walks into the room carrying his brief case. and leans forward towards the window to see what June is watching. They're quiet for a moment. June breathes and looks at Augie. Augie gazes back.

\*  
\*

AUGIE

Well I'm off to another glorious day in the cubicle.\

\*  
\*  
\*

No reply from June. He leans forward towards the window to see what June is watching. They're quiet for a moment. June breathes and looks at Augie. Augie gazes back.

\*  
\*  
\*

JUNE

Sometimes when you try your hardest is when you have your hardest lessons.

\*

AUGIE

What the hell is he doing?

JUNE

Learning the only way we can darlin'. Through experience, learning through experience.

Augie blinks. She walks over and kisses him on the cheek.

CUT TO:

41 EXT STREET DAY

41

Cricket turns on his bike and is biking briskly with determination. He keeps shaking his head. Stopping, looking around, starting again.

He comes around a corner and looks up. The camera cuts to his POV and in the long distance, 100-200 yards up we see Georgia's house. OS we hear Cricket mumbling.

He comes biking OS past the camera---he's biking towards Georgia's house. About halfway to the house, the front door opens and Georgia and Rose come out. They walk down the front steps and towards the direction Cricket is biking. They haven't seen him yet. Cricket stops, looks, hesitates, and turns back towards the camera, and bikes halfway back towards the camera, stops, thinks turns, and bikes back in the direction the two women are coming from.

He gets closer to Rose and Georgia. His pace picks up. As he approaches, them the two ladies pull up to stop to talk but he keeps going. (all of this is happening off in the distance towards Georgia's house) The women pause for a second, then continue on towards the camera.

GEORGIA

Hi Cricket.

CRICKET

Ah hi.

ROSE

(to Georgia) What a nice young man.

We watch the women come closer and Cricket get all the way up to Georgia's house. He turns and heads back towards the women. He catches up to them right as they approach the camera.

CRICKET

Hi.

GEORGIA

Cricket, didn't we just see you?

CRICKET

You did, you did.

Rose is stupefied because he's sitting there with the flowers, she can't take her eyes off of them.

GEORGIA

Roses, they sure are pretty. Do they smell?

CRICKET

They are, they're from my mom's garden, I was heading up to your house....

ROSE

Cricket(cutting in, grabs his arm and pulls away from Georgia)  
Cricket, Cricket, Cricket.

Georgia scoots around and catches up to him and puts her arm under Cricket's other arm. And gives Cricket a big smile, like aren't we the luckiest two girls in the world. Rose smirks at Georgia and spins the trio in the opposite direction leading him away from the side where Georgia is.

ROSE

Georgia, why are you following us?

Cricket is looking between the two battling women. Totally trapped.

GEORGIA

Isn't he a doll! Flowers in the morning! Science projects in the afternoon! What more could a gal want? (singing) Do you sing Cricket?

He stares at her for a second and shakes his head no.

GEORGIA

I thought not. You'll have to learn.

Rose pulls up short and looks at Georgia and Cricket.

GEORGIA

The flowers sure are...

Rose cuts in.

ROSE

Give me a minute please, Georgia!  
We have something to talk  
about. (She makes it clear that  
Georgia isn't to follow) Now  
Cricket (under her breath)--young  
man, there are appropriate times  
to do this sort of thing--and this  
is not one of them.

CRICKET

Ah yes Ma'am, I didn't...I tried to  
call I just...

ROSE

Now. When it's more shall we say  
uno a uno---then you can do  
whatever you want...but not now, so  
take your flowers and finish your  
ride.

CRICKET

Yes ma'am.

He looks nervously at Georgia, and Rose is pulling his face  
back to hers. She semi shoos him along---and he gets on his  
bike and slowly rides away.

ROSE

Nice young man, but he's got no  
sense of propriety.

GEORGIA

Oh, come on, Mom. You hardly know  
him, right? Anyhow, he's only  
sixteen.

ROSE

What exactly are you implying?

GEORGIA

He got up the nerve to bring me  
flowers and you wouldn't let him?

ROSE

Bring YOU flowers? That is just  
like you. Everything is about you.  
You are so damned self centered you  
can't even see past yourself---ever  
since you were two it's been Me me  
me.

GEORGIA  
 Mom! When did you become so...so?

Rose watches and waits for what's going to come out.

GEORGIA  
 (sadly) Happy. \*

ROSE  
 Happy? I'm filled with happiness. \*

Georgia walks off. You can't tell if she's about to break apart, if she's in shock, or whether she's just so numb as a person that the fight essentially has had no outward affect on her.

CUT TO:

42 EXT ROAD DAY 42

Georgia is walking fast down the road. Every now and then she stops and leans against a tree. She's made a decision. She starts walking fast in a particular direction.

CUT TO:

43 EXT ROAD DAY 43

Cricket is approaching his house. He's still holding the flowers. He sits at the curb for a moment. He's thinking too. What the hell just happened?

CUT TO:

44 INT DAVIS HALLWAY DAY 44

June is bending over holding her stomach--she's in the kitchen one knee up, one hand on the counter. She's all alone.

CUT TO:

45 EXT ROAD DAY 45

Georgia continues her walk in a different energy. She's walking with determination.

CUT TO:

46 EXT ROAD DAY 46

Cricket stands up, turns to his house and then turns back in the direction he came. He's got determination now. He heads back in the direction he came from.

CUT TO:

47 INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY 47

Rose throws some ice cubes into a glass. She pulls out a bottle of gin and sloshes the glass full, drinks it down, fills it up, drinks it down again, fills it up, and looks at the full glass then puts the bottle down.

CUT TO:

48 EXT ROAD DAY 48

Cricket approaches Georgia's house. He slows and heads towards it then turns back, heads towards it then turns back, then finally gets up the resolve and heads towards it again.

CUT TO:

49 EXT ROAD DAY 49

Georgia approaches Cricket's house. She then walks up to the door and rings the bell. She waits, tries to look in. She rings the bell again and tries the door---it's unlocked. She looks up at the sky and it's dark with rain clouds, looks like a big thunderstorm is on the way.

CUT TO:

50 INT DAVIS HALLWAY DAY 50

Georgia pokes her head into the house.

GEORGIA

Hello? Cricket? You here?  
Cricket?

She enters and walks around a bit. She spots a rat in the corner, walks over and picks it up. She peers into the kitchen and sees June. There's a pot on the floor with tomatoe soup spilled everywhere.

\*  
\*

JUNE  
 (under her breath without sound)  
 Help. Please help me.

GEORGIA  
 June, hold on, oh christ.

CUT TO:

51 EXT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY.

51

Cricket is standing on the porch. He goes to the door and knocks lightly. Then gets confidence and knocks louder and rings the bell. The door swings open. Rose and Cricket are standing face to face.

ROSE  
 Well well. Did you see Georgia?

He shakes his head.

ROSE  
 Come in then, don't just stand out there in front of the whole neighborhood.

He comes in and the door closes with a thud behind him.

CRICKET  
 Is Georgia here?

ROSE  
 Here, give me those.

She takes the flowers and smells them.

ROSE  
 Sweet. I'll get them in water in a little bit.

She throws them onto a vestibule table. She puts her drink down next to the flowers. Cricket is looking awkward.

ROSE  
 So, how old are you exactly? No!  
 Don't tell me. I don't want to know.

She walks forward and he backs up until he runs into the door. She steps in close, trapping him against the door.

CRICKET

Do you know when Georgia's coming home?

ROSE

She's not. (smiles)

There's a long moment where Cricket locks eyes with Rose. He licks his lips, looks around the house, she touches his arm, his eyes shoot back to Rose's face, he looks her up and down and swallows. His eyes get locked in on her neck, he can't look in her eyes and he can't look at her breast yet he's stuck standing in front of this beauty. Rose moves in.

She's got him trapped and she's moving her head twisting it from side to side moving in for the attack. He's squirming and she's moving in and smelling his young virginal skin on the side of his neck...he's shaking and blinking rapidly.

ROSE

You're more than what the doctor ordered.

He spins back towards the door fumbling to get it open. She extends a finger and caresses his neck. He stops, looks over his shoulder in hesitation or terror?? He opens the door, then closes it again. He gulps. Is this what he wants. A wicked smile comes across Rose's lips. Cricket is pushed over the edge, turns towards the door and escapes leaving a smiling Rose in ecstasy.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

He sprints away from the house.

CUT TO:

52 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

52

Cricket rides up to his house sweating and breathless. No car in the driveway, He looks in the garage, stumbling over paint cans and ladders. No car there either. He pauses to catch himself. The sky is dark and it looks at though it may rain.

CUT TO:

53 INT DAVIS KITCHEN DAY

53

The phone is ringing when Cricket enters the kitchen. He's looking at the soup all over the floor---it seems like dried blood.

\*  
\*  
\*

CRICKET

Hello?

AUGIE

Cricket? We're at the hospital. It was lucky Georgia found her.

Cricket wanders off, leaving the wall phone hanging off the hook. He stumbles down the basement stairs.

AUGIE (CONT'D)

54 Now, mom's okay, don't worry, the doctors say she's going to be just fine. We'll be home in just a few... 54

54 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY 54

It's dark out, Clouds roll across the sky threatening a big thunderstorm. We see some flashes of lightening. A cat runs across the front yard, hurrying to avoid the big storm coming.

CUT TO:

55 INT CRICKETS LAB DAY 55

CU of bottom of a metal bar (the gravity device)--Feet step into frame. A flash of bright lights fills the room. A humming and buzz create the feeling of electricity in the air. CRACK thunder from outside and go to fullshot revealing lab with bright lights and beakers and research devices...along with Cricket strapped into a device where he's leaning back. He's wearing modified welding goggles. A bag is resting on his chest. The bag appears to be leaping around, trying to escape.

CRICKET

Hydration!

Cricket reaches over, and prepares to insert the IV into his own arm (he goes through all the procedures of a proper doctor, cleansing the area, slapping the skin to pull up a vein, etc.). He then injects himself and attaches to the IV line.

CRICKET (CONT'D)

Lights!

He claps his hands and a bright light glares into his face. He pulls scary looking welding goggles onto his face.

CRICKET (CONT'D)

Camera!

He claps his hands again, and a movie camera on a tripod starts rolling.

CRICKET (CONT'D)

...and ACTION!

He leans back and the gizmo he's sitting in tips back and flips him upside down. Hanging there, he reaches over and rolls the drip line on the IV. Blue serum begins to make it's way towards his body. XCU of the rats as they watch Cricket inject himself with their serum. Cricket turns his head and gives his Spunky Z super hero look.

Thunder and lightning.

CUT TO:

56

EXT STREET DAY

56

Cricket is riding his bike on his paper route. Bungeed to the rack on the back (or in the basket) is a bunch of flowers from his mom's garden. He's floating and in a haze. His head drifts right and left as he sees the neighbors and he easily grabs a paper as he floats by each house and throws a paper perfectly up the middle of the path to the foot of each house's stairs. Marcia has been watching his unusual progression up the street.

MARCIA

Cricket Davis!

He floats by and looks at her with a dumbass smile on his face. His eyes narrow, he turns forward and becomes Spunky Z.

He leaves Marcia standing there, looking completely puzzled. Once he's out of sight, Cricket rams his bike straight into a tree. He falls in a tangle of boy and bike. He stands up, pats himself all over, grins, then extracts his note pad and pencil from the mess and starts to record notes.

CUT TO:

57 EXT ROAD DAY

57

Cricket leaps up Georgia's front steps to where Georgia is reading on the porch as usual. He's holding the paper and flowers behind him. He sees Rose in the window, which gives him pause, but he shakes off his misgivings and kneels before Georgia.

CRICKET

Georgia.

GEORGIA

Hey Spunky boy, what are you doing?  
Are you bleeding?

He wipes his head and some dried blood flakes free.

CRICKET

I'm okay, I just took a fall on my  
bike.

GEORGIA

A fall? let me take a look at it.

CRICKET

Yes, I'm fine really, I've been  
looking for you.

GEORGIA

And (beat) here I am.

He pulls out the flowers. And holds them in front of her.

CRICKET.

I brought you these. Oh, and  
here's your paper.

GEORGIA

Flowers? Thank you.

She takes the flowers and pulls them apart and starts decorating him with them. He's blinking, getting a bit annoyed by her actions.

CRICKET

They're for you.

She keeps putting the flowers behind his ears, in his buttonholes..., being playful.

CRICKET

No, I got them for you!

She adjusts a flower behind his ear.

CRICKET

Georgia, I got them for YOU!

Georgia steps back and looks at Cricket who is essentially shaking.

GEORGIA

I'm only playing! What's the matter?

CRICKET

Nothing's the matter with me.

Georgia looks closely at him, something is up, he's out of sorts some how.

CRICKET

I'm fine, I'm not feeling anything.  
Nothing, I don't feel anything.

Long beat.

GEORGIA

You finished your potion and you took it? Didn't you?

CRICKET

It's not a potion it's a serum.

Georgia is quiet, feeling out the situation. It's very serious and there's a clear change in Cricket, he's feeling more and more uncomfortable

CRICKET

Who else was I going to test it on?

GEORGIA

The rats! How about the rats?

CRICKET

(impatiently)  
I did that already.

Georgia is stunned. This is the first she's realized that he actually intends to stick this concoction into his mom, and what's more, he thinks it will cure her.

Georgia is quiet and looks sadly at Cricket.

CRICKET

What?

GEORGIA

This isn't going to make your mom better.

CRICKET

It worked on the rats. And I feel great.

Another beat. Cricket is scratching his arm as if he's cold.

GEORGIA

What am I going to tell your mom?

CRICKET

Nothing, you're going to tell her nothing!

He stops and turns. He pulls some of the flowers from his body.

CRICKET

I said, they're for YOU!

He runs down the porch, jumps on his bike and rides crazily away, calling back over his shoulders over and over again---

CRICKET

They're for you, they're for you Georgia!"

58 INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR DAY

58

Knocking on the front door. June walks up to the door, opens it, revealing Georgia.

GEORGIA

Have you seen Cricket today?

June pours a couple of glasses of lemonade for Georgia and herself. She clinks glasses with Georgia.

JUNE

Hmm, he grabbed a biscuit for breakfast on his way out the door.

\*

GEORGIA

Did you notice he's looking kind of--  
-beaten up?

JUNE

You know how boys are.

GEORGIA

Did he seem different to you? Maybe  
a little short-tempered?

June looks at her in disbelief.

JUNE

Cricket? My Cricket? I haven't  
heard a cross word out of him since  
he was two.

GEORGIA

He was pretty strange this morning.  
We got into a fight.

JUNE

You two need to make up. I'm sure  
he's around here somewhere. Crick--

GEORGIA

That's part of the problem. I think  
his idea of making up is "kiss and  
make up."

JUNE

He's still a little young, isn't  
he?

GEORGIA

A little.

JUNE

If you can be his friend, he needs  
a friend like you right now.

CUT TO:

59

INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY

59

Georgia is sitting in a semi-darkened room, facing the sofa. We can't see who's on the sofa, but we can see a highball with half-melted ice. Whenever Georgia speaks, she pauses for a reply, though there isn't one.

## GEORGIA

I wish you could get out to meet June, Cricket's mom. You'd really like her if you got the chance-- it's been tough. You know, getting to know someone when they might not always be there--at least in the immediate future. (beat) Being there, you understand that don't you? You don't mind, do you? I mean, she's not you.

60 INT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DAY 60

June is meeting with the minister. They are sitting in the front pew talking quietly.

CUT TO:

61 INT BAPTIST CHURCH DAY 61

Front Pew. Cricket is sitting with the preacher on the front steps of the Baptist church.

## PREACHER TATE

Cricket, interactions with people can be a complex thing.

## CRICKET

Especially with girls.

## PREACHER TATE

You can say that again, but listen here...(he's interrupted and looks up)...

Preacher Tate is silent and smiling and his head is bobbing up and down. It's like he's having a conversation with himself and ignoring Cricket.

## CRICKET

Mr. Tate?

Preacher Tate elbows Cricket and motions for him to look out towards the road. A pair of stunning young ladies are walking down the street. Cricket is confused--here he is asking for advice for his girl problems and his married mentor is checking out the girls walking down the road.

PREACHER TATE

Ah, I love this time of year--so back to you situation. Yeah, exactly that is exactly my point.

CRICKET

What's exactly your point?

PREACHER TATE

The proof is always in the pudding. You've heard that before right?

CRICKET

Sure.

PREACHER TATE

If you trust your gut and lay it all out in front of you it'll be clear. (he stops) Hey girl! What you're you up to ( waves to the girls) Unfortunately, sometimes faith requires proof. We don't always get proof though.

CRICKET

Proof is not the problem, I can help with that.

\*  
\*

PREACHER TATE

Ultimately it's in the heart, if she doesn't want to believe...(lets it hang)

CRICKET

But you think she'll understand?

PREACHER TATE

There's a good chance.

CRICKET

And my mom, too?

The preacher looks at him as if to say---"it's in God's hands."

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

REVEREND JOHNSON

Have you had the talk with the boy,  
Cricket isn't a slow child, as we  
all know.

JUNE

This isn't just the birds and the  
bees. Talking about losing me,  
it's so, so, difficult.

REVEREND JOHNSON

I understand, I truly understand.  
Cricket, though an insect, is still  
shadowed by his own youth, in need  
of metaphorphis, so to speak. If  
we can just get him in to hear the  
words of God, possibly we'll be  
able to open his heart to some of  
these difficult, shall we say,  
issues.

JUNE

How? He hasn't come to Church in  
ages.

REVEREND JOHNSON

I've seen young Georgia sneaking  
into the back pew. If anyone can  
bring Cricket into the flock...Why  
we could break two glass houses  
with one stone!

He reaches over and puts his hand on her knee. Is he being  
inappropriate? Is she accepting his gesture as friendship?

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

63 INT DAVIS PARLOR DAY

63

June is on the phone.

JUNE

Georgia, I have an idea that will  
make everything all right.

CUT TO:

\*

64 INT DAVIS PARLOR DAY

64

JUNE

Cricket.

CRICKET

Yeah mom.

JUNE

Georgia called for you.

CRICKET

She did?

JUNE

She left a message saying she'd like you to come to church with us next week.

He blinks at her. Doesn't say anything.

JUNE

Cricket, dear, did you hear me?  
Cricket?

Cricket looks at her, then walks out of the room to his lab.

CRICKET

I'll think about it, okay Mom?

CUT TO:

65 INT CRICKET'S LAB NIGHT

65

Cricket is wearing his lab coat, the light is dark, a buzzing is going on in the background. The camera moves around the lab and we see that he's rigging some contraption with a heavy weight. There's a video camera pointing in the direction of his mechanism. He turns and clicks on a bright light that is intensely focused on a spot below a heavy weight. XCU of rats' whiskers--big eyes.

CRICKET

(OS) This isn't going to hurt a bit.

\*

CUT TO:

66 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

66

Cricket is standing looking through his video camera on a tripod. He looks up at the house at the roof. In the next shot we see him on the edge of the roof. He opens his arms up and falls forward off the roof.

Shot from the roof look down at Cricket who's left an indentation in the soft lawn.

CUT TO:

67 EXT HOUSE STREET DAY

67

Cricket knocks on the front door of one of his newspaper clients, Marcia. Marcia opens the door.

MARCIA  
Cricket Davis, what a surprise.

CRICKET  
Is Jim in?

MARCIA  
Of course.

CRICKET  
I was wondering if I could use him for a few hours?

MARCIA  
Use him? He'd love to come out and play.

CUT TO:

68 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

68

Cricket and Jim are in the side yard of his house with a video camera set up. Cricket has just handed Jim a baseball bat. Jim looks a little bit puzzled.

CRICKET  
Go ahead.

JIM  
Just whack you.

CRICKET  
That's what I said, just whack me.

JIM  
Just whack you across the head.

CRICKET  
Just whack me across the head.

Jim pulls the bat back and cracks one across Cricket's head with a stupid grin on his face. His head snaps to the side and he goes down, then pops up off the ground and runs to the video camera. He smiles at Jim.

CRICKET

Now you have to promise you're not going to tell anyone about this right?

We see a series of hits where Cricket gets plastered and then bounces back. CU of video camera with hand turning it off.

CUT TO:

69 EXT MAILBOX DAY 69

Cricket looks around and drops an envelope addressed to Georgia in the mail. He jumps on his bike and rides off.

CUT TO:

70 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY 70

Cricket, Georgia, June and Augie are getting in the car. Cricket looks back longingly at his bike. Even though he's dressed in his awkward going-to-church clothes, he's not going to his own church today.

71 INT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DAY 71

Cricket, Georgia, June and Augie enter the church. June is beaming. Augie is happy because June is happy. Cricket is tugging at his too-small pants and surreptitiously checking his muscles. Every once in a while, he semi-intentionally bumps into a pew, hard, and grins. No pain. He's almost drunk with the glee of it all.

JUNE

Cricket, are you all right?

Georgia grips Cricket's elbow tightly and steers him into the pew after Augie and June. The service starts, a hum in the background. Georgia leans across Cricket to offer June some red licorice. Cricket leans in to smell her hair. When she sits up, she notices and swats him off. He grins.

## REVEREND JOHNSON

Remember the lazy little lilies of the field, that neither toiled nor spun in the darkness of disbelief. It is ever thus, that faith, FAITH! makes all things right, and trust in the Lord brings an end to all pain. The Lord moves in ways that may be mysterious to us, but are always right in the end.

CUT TO:

Rising strains of closing hymn. The congregation begins to mill out of church.

## CRICKET

You wanted to talk to me?

## GEORGIA

It's just that I've been kind of worried about you--

Cricket turns, looking through the crowd out the door. Suddenlly he sprints away.

\*  
\*

CUT TO:

72

EXT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DAY

72

A small child has wandered into traffic.

An after church crowd is milling on the front steps and sidewalk.

Cricket runs into the street, rescues the little boy, but doesn't see a little old lady peering over the steering wheel of a big American car bearing down on him.

June, Augie and Georgia have rushed out behind him and are standing on the curb, staring, alternating between fear (and confusion, since he's in a weird shirt?)when Cricket runs into the street, relief when he rescues the boy and fear again when they see the car.

## GEORGIA

Cricket!

The little old lady hits Cricket straight on. He goes flying and lands, crumpled, to one side, where he lies still.

JUNE  
 (wailing)  
 Cricket!

The crowd panics, freezes, then starts to surge toward the street. Is he all right?

The little old lady driver keeps driving up the street, oblivious. Cricket pops up and dusts himself off, especially his torn trouser knees.

CRICKET  
 Nothing a little needle and thread  
 won't cure, Mom!

The crowd draws back, caught between being awestruck and horrified. Is this an act of the Lord or the work of the Devil?

CUT TO:

73

INT DOCTOR'S OFFICE DAY

73

Cricket is sitting on the edge of an examining table. June and Augie are perched on the edge of their chairs, clearly concerned. The DOCTORS are conferring. Cute, gossipy NURSE is standing beside Doctor 1, handing him things as needed. Doctor 1 is cleaning the dried blood from Cricket's forehead and is looking at the scalp where the cut is (was).

DOCTOR 1  
 I've never seen anything like this.  
 He's perfectly fine.

CRICKET  
 Well, I feel pretty good!

DOCTOR 2  
 And he's healing by the minute.

Nurse hands Doctor 1 X-ray. Doctor inserts X-ray of Cricket's leg into light box. There's a clear crack across the bone.

DOCTOR 1  
 This is the right tibia when the  
 patient first came in.

CRICKET  
 Wow, looks pretty bad, huh?

Nurse hands Doctor 1 second X-ray. Doctor 1 inserts it into light box. The break looks appreciably better.

DOCTOR 1

Two minutes later. (Doctor inserts third X-ray).

DOCTOR 2

The break is barely visible.

DOCTOR 1

And five minutes ago. (points at X-ray) I'd be surprised if he even ends up with a scar.

Cricket pulls up his pants leg, which is pretty well torn. Nurse unprofessionally leans in for a closer look at Cricket's leg.

CRICKET

Nope, not a scratch.

The doctors pull down X-rays and whisper to each other. Doctor 2 scurries off with the X-rays.

June looks stunned, Augie uncomfortable, the nurse googly-eyed, watches Doctor 2 go down the hall, then ratchets her attention to Cricket.

JUNE

Is it a miracle, Doctor?

DOCTOR 1

Well it ain't modern medicine, that's for sure. I'd like to run a few tests on Cricket, if the present company doesn't mind.

Doctor hits Cricket's knee with reflex hammer. Cricket grins. Doctor does an escalating series of other things to test pain threshold. None of them even phase Cricket. The cute nurse is becoming more and more awed. You can just see hero worship flower and bloom in her face. Just as the doctor is about to cut open Cricket's leg with a large looking scalpal... .

NURSE

Doctor!

The doctor comes out of this trance, embarrassed at what he was about to do.

DOCTOR 1

Well, Mrs. Davis, I think we can safely say your boy's feeling no pain. I'd say he's just about a medical miracle.

DOCTOR 1 (CONT'D)

But don't go thinking that's such a good thing, son. Pain's our early warning system. It's what makes sure we don't get in hotter water than we can stand.

AUGIE

My boy can take anything you dish out.

DOCTOR 1

Your boy's not even feeling anything I dish out, Mr. Davis. He's got a good thing going here, no pain, almost immediate healing response. But that's nothing to take for granted. It's pain that keeps us out of trouble. No pain tends to lead to-

Nurse mouths along with doctor behind his back. Cricket winks at her. Nurse melts.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

No gain.

CUT TO:

74

INT NURSE'S STATION DAY

74

The nurse, eyes big as petri dishes, is dishing over the phone, constantly keeping an eye out for the doctor so she doesn't get in trouble.

NURSE

You wouldn't believe it! Not a scratch on him by the time he left, and he walked in with a broken leg. He's like the bionic man, if you ask me. And cu-u-ute! I think he looks a lot older than sixteen, don't you? (pauses to listen)

NURSE (CONT'D)

Let me tell you, Lydia, if he liked me-

We follow the phone line to Lydia, who dials Mary Pat.

LYDIA

He wasn't even bleeding by the time he got to the hospital, and he walked in with two broken legs. What a guy. I'm telling you, Mary Pat, if he was interested in me-

We follow the phone line to Mary Pat, who dials Doreen.

MARY PAT

I mean he came crawling in to the hospital on two shattered legs, not to mention both arms broken. It was a miracle he wasn't killed. He's a miracle! And awfully attractive for his age.

CUT TO: \*

75 INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR

75 \*

The Reverend is counseling Cricket. June and Augie are hovering.

REVEREND JOHNSON

Now Cricket, we're all quite pleased at this turn of events. It's not every day that a miracle happens right in my little church-

CRICKET

Well, actually, Reverend-

JUNE

Don't interrupt Cricket.

REVEREND JOHNSON

As I was saying, a miracle, right in my congregation.  
(pauses to preen)

AUGIE

Reverend? Sir?

REVEREND JOHNSON

Yes, ahem, but the Lord, the Lord cautions us, the lambs of the field (gives a quick almost-wink to June who simpers), against--well, he cautions us against getting too big for our britches.

The Reverend looks around the room for approval. Cricket, June and Augie just look baffled.

REVEREND JOHNSON

Well, he doesn't exactly put it that way, but what I'm trying to say, son, is that you may have been the beneficiary of a miracle, but you, sir, are no Jesus Christ.

CUT TO:

76 INT DAVIS DINING ROOM EVENING

76

The family is eating dinner.

AUGIE

And bless our food, and we give thanks to you for the miracle you performed in saving our boy Cricket from certain death today.

Doorbell rings.

JUNE

Who on earth could that possibly be, in the middle of supper?

June gets up and opens the front door. The nurse is standing in the door, trying to peer around June to see Cricket. She's dressed up in Friday night clothes and make-up and is barely recognizable from the doctor's office.

NURSE

Is he here?

JUNE

I beg your pardon?

NURSE

Cricket. Is he still okay? Can I see him?

June comes back to the table, mystified.

JUNE

Cricket? There's a young lady at the door, and she wants to see you.

CRICKET

Georgia?

June shakes her head. Cricket starts to walk to the door.

JUNE

Were you expecting someone?

Cricket opens the door. The nurse throws herself into his arms.

NURSE

Oh, Cricket.

CRICKET

Uh, miss?

NURSE

You need me, Cricket. Someone who knows what a miracle you are.

Cricket backs away from her. She stumbles and rights herself, still googly-eyed, then launches herself back into his arms.

CRICKET

Um, miss-

NURSE

Marilyn, Cricket. Say it. Marilyn.

CRICKET

Miss Marilyn, um, you've got it all wrong. I really didn't do anything.

Cricket wanders to the front door.

NURSE

(mooning) Cricket! You need a woman, one who can recognize-

The nurse pushes him against the wall. There's movement somewhere around his middle, but not because he's happy to see her. There's a moment where the nurse thinks she's turning Cricket on. Cricket has to maneuver her to adjust himself, to get closer? No. He reaches down and pulls out a rat. She screams and jumps back.

June ushers her out.

JUNE

There, there, dear.

CUT TO:

EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

The front door opens and Augie emerges in his pajamas, yawning, hair mussed. He looks up to see...

The camera pans out to reveal all of white lower- to middle-class America, lined up outside the Davis family door. The line stretches around the block, and snakes through the neighborhood, with people ranging from children on crutches to wan invalids in hospital johnnies, to perfectly healthy-seeming people in suits, jeans and ball gowns. They're all clamoring for Cricket's attention.

Augie leans back against the door, locking himself out. He pulls at the doorknob, knocks, but to no avail. PHAEDRA slouches up to him.

PHAEDRA

Phaedra, MTV. Where's that little cutie beauty, Jiminy Cricket? Oooh, I could just eat him up!

AUGIE

Good morning!

Augie walks past a line of people and up the drive towards his newspaper. At his paper he slowly bends down and picks it up. When he pops up there's a nun standing in front of him.

NUN

Hi! Do you live here?

AUGIE

I thought so. What is going on here?

NUN

We're waiting for Cricket.

AUGIE

Cricket? Hmmmmmm. I'm not sure if he's up yet. I can check for you.

NUN

Do you know him?

AUGIE

Don't be absurd. I'm his father.

COWBOY

You're Cricket's father?

The crowd moves in on him. He backs up to the door, his eyes getting larger. He turns to enter his house only to find the door locked. He turns back to the crowd. He turns again and pounds on the door this time. He spins out and away from the group. Longer shot of him sprinting up the side of the house with the group in hot pursuit.

77

INT DAVIS HOUSE FRONT HALL DAY

77

A man knocks precisely at the front door. June answers the door.

JUNE

Augie, did you lock yourself...

\*

Dressed in a dark suit, white shirt, narrow tie, everything about the man June sees is precise.

AGENT MOORE

Special Agent Moore, FBI. May I have a word with your son, James Davis, ma'am? AKA Cricket.

Dumbstruck, June lets him in. She seats him in the living room.

JUNE

Cricket, someone to see you.

There's a second knock at the door. She opens the door to a woman, dressed almost identically to Agent Moore.

AGENT MOST

Special Agent Most, CIA. I need to speak with your son, James Crichton Davis.

Even more puzzled, June lets Most in. She seats her in the living room, on the sofa next to Moore.

JUNE

Cricket?

There's a third knock at the door. She opens the door to a third man, almost identical to Moore and Most.

MR. SANDERSON

Sanderson, IRS. There are some issues I need to discuss with Augie and June Davis about some questionable prospective financial dealings of their son James Davis, who happens to be a minor. I believe they reside at this residence?

This is starting to wear a little thin for June. She lets Sanderson in, seating him on the sofa next to Moore and Most. The doorbell rings insistently. June hesitates a moment, afraid to find out who else has arrived, then opens the door, to find PHAEDRA slouching on the other side, dressed in jeans that barely cover her crotch, a cropped top and spike-heeled boots. She slams the door, holds it. Outside the door, an onslaught of news people from every television affiliate competes for attention.

CHORUS

Cricket! Mr. Davis! ABC! CBS! NBC!  
New York Times! National Enquirer!  
Tell us about this amazing new--

Cricket trudges into the kitchen in his pajamas, still half-asleep, hair sticking every which way.

CRICKET

Mom?

Cricket looks from his mom to the three strange people on the couch and the people outside his front door. \*

CRICKET \*

That looks like Phaedra from TV... \*

All three wait for his entrance. Whenever they speak, they all three lean forward, as if they're Siamese triplets. Through the occasional window we get a glimpse of Augie jumping up and trying to be spied by the people on the inside. June regains focus and immediately launches into hostess mode. \*

JUNE

Can I get anyone a cup of coffee?  
Some fresh-baked sugar cookies?

The agents ignore her.

MOORE  
Mr. James Crichton Davis?

CRICKET  
Yes, sir.

Cricket blinks.

MOORE  
The president is very concerned  
over the recent turn of events, or,  
should we say, your recent turn of  
events. \*

CRICKET  
My recent turn of events?

MOST  
Yes, Mr. Davis. Perhaps you're not  
aware of this but the entire global  
balance is maintained through the  
threat of mutually assured  
destruction. (spoken like agent  
from Matrix)

June and Cricket exchange baffled, panicky looks. We see  
Augie running past the back doors pounding on the windows to  
get let back in.

CRICKET  
You've got the wrong guy. I don't  
know anything about mutually  
assured destruction.

JUNE  
I have some nice cold lemonade, I  
could just-

MOST  
What you know, what you represent-

MOORE  
what you are-

MOST  
is more than enough to upset that  
balance.

MOORE  
If the Russians-

MOST  
the Iraqi insurgents-

MOORE  
the Iranians-

MOST  
the Koreans-

MOORE  
the Chinese-

SANDERSON  
the taxpayers-

MOST  
the international terrorists  
discover that you've invented some  
sort of serum that allows citizens  
of any country to heal practically  
instantaneously, such knowledge  
could easily lead to-

\*

MOORE  
Kaboom!

SANDERSON  
KAPOW!

MOST  
Nuclear holocaust decimating the  
entire planet.

CRICKET  
Just because I don't need Band  
Aids any more?

JUNE  
Is anyone warm in here, or is it  
just me?

MOORE  
Or something much worse.

CRICKET  
Worse could be what? (like what?)

MOST  
Imagine an entire army of soldiers  
that can be maimed and instantly  
mended.

MOORE  
Whoever controls this technology  
controls the entire worldwide  
defense industry.

(MORE)

MOORE (cont'd)

If this falls into the wrong hands,  
it could mean...

MOST

The end of war.

MOORE

Which is why, in the interest of  
national security, your government  
would like you to turn over the  
formula and your entire supply of  
serum immediately to the FBI.

MOST

The CIA.

They glare at each other.

MOORE

For which we are prepared to offer  
you-(looks at Most. Both nod)  
One trillion dollars. (pulls out a  
big looking check book)

SANDERSON

And the federal income tax on that  
will amount to (does quick  
computations on a calculator)-

JUNE

Thank you all so much for dropping  
by. It's been lovely meeting you.  
I do hope you have a safe trip  
home. (standing, suddenly firmly  
polite)

June opens the door. Augie is backed up to the door with  
Phaedra leading the way. The three agents, unwilling to be  
caught on camera, cover their faces like defendants leaving  
the courthouse after an ugly trial, holding up their  
briefcases as if to say, "You'll be hearing from us soon!"

\*  
\*

AUGIE

Can't anyone open a door around  
here?

\*  
\*  
\*

A plate of food, mashed potatoes, a pork chop with gravy, and  
string beans. Not too much food set down right next to a  
tall clear glass with iced tea and a lemon. In the  
background (os) we hear the news yammering away.

## NEWSPERSON

The alleged discovery of a new solve-it-all drug has brought big attention to this otherwise quiet small town. The inventor, a young man who lives in this house, has been inundated with people who want a taste of the new discovery.

CUT TO:

79

EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

79

A series of interviews follow. Starts with a speckled haired man in his late thirties--He hiccups every ten seconds or so. The Nurse from earlier keeps trying to butt in and be seen in the back ground--waving, trying to get attention. \*

## NEWSPERSON

So why are you here in line?

## JASON

I read about it in (hic) the daily news and needed to see if this-hicup--new drug could help me.

## NEWSPERSON

What exactly is your ailment?

## JASON

I've had hiccups (hiccup) since I was born. I've tried everything and I'm holding-hicup-out hope.

The nurse is jumping up and down in the background, trying to get in the picture.

## NEWSPERSON

And you ma'am? Why are you waiting in line?

## TABITHA

I just know that chemotherapy is not the only solution.

## NEWSPERSON

Absolutely. I understand completely. And how about you, ma'am? Why are you waiting in this line?

## CHRISTINA

I know, that if this is what they say it is, that God is somehow involved. I have to see what this is all about because I want to be as close to God as possible. If god is involved I'm there. Know what I mean? Besides, I bet I could auction off some of that stuff for a good price online.

CUT TO:

80 INT PREACHER'S HOUSE DAY 80

Reaction shot of the couple watching TV.

CUT TO:

81 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY 81

Cricket is on the television being interviewed.

## CRICKET

There are times in world history when man comes across something that's been in front of us all the time. Oil, penicillin, ---imagine where we'd be without them?

## NEWSPERSON

So you've heard it here. A young man, Cricket Davis, (shows picture of young boy on the screen) may have the answers for these people, from hiccups to finding God to a cure for cancer. Stay tuned.

CUT TO:

82 INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY 82

Rose is sitting up on her couch looking at the tv broadcast of Cricket (with everyone else in town). Georgia walks into the room. Rose looks at Georgia and twirls her glass with the ice cubes and no drink. Georgia goes in close to look at Cricket's eyes. Something is wrong with his eyes.

CUT

83 INT PREACHER'S HOUSE DAY 83

Mrs Tate looks at her husband.

MRS TATE

Now, we need to do something for that boy. No, you need to do something for that boy. That boy is going to need some help.

Preacher Tate is cutting up his pork chop and looking at his wife. There's a knowing look as if "yep, I know, and in the meantime I'm going to eat this delicious dinner you've just made me."

CUT TO:

84 INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR DAY 84

June comes walking into the living room, Cricket can be seen outside with the reporter doing on interview. Augie is watching his son on tv. He stupidly points to Cricket on tv. June walks over to the tv and turns it off. She stares down Augie.

JUNE

It's time you put your pants on and talk to Cricket, this is starting to go too far. You talk to Cricket, I'll handle our visitors.

CUT TO:

85 INT PREACHER'S HOUSE 85

The television is still on the Cricket interview. We see June step into scene, Cricket looks at her, his head drops because he knows his mother's looks, she points to the house. He smiles meekly.

NEWSPERSON

One more question.

JUNE

And for you. No more visitors with out first recieving written permission from myself or my husband. And that includes interviews.

## PREACHER TATE

Now that woman. That woman reminds  
me of you!

Mrs. Tate looks over at her husband and hrmphs him--"eat your  
damned food her look says"

They continue to watch as the camera follows June into their  
yard where she informs the crowd that the party is over and  
that the Davis family will not be taking "visitors" anytime  
in the near future. (the newsperson motions the camera to  
follow)

\*  
\*

## JUNE

I promise we'll have a clipboard  
with a sign up sheet by this  
afternoon. We'll get back to you  
first in the morning--as soon as we  
know something further.

\*

## NUN

Is it true that he speaks directly  
to God?

## JUNE

Lady, we all speak directly to God.  
Now will you please get off my  
property.

## NEWSPERSON

You're watching live as the growing  
infamy of Cricket Davis is causing  
his mother June Davis to take  
drastic measures to protect her  
childs==huh?

The Camera swings to the right to reveal June with a stern  
look on her face and point to the Newsperson to get the F off  
her property.

## NEWSPERSON

OS---Yes ma'm, we were just  
leaving. Come on John. We've got  
just about enough.

The Preacher and his wife exchange looks like--"this is  
crazy." And it is.

\*  
\*

86

INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR DAY

86

Cricket and Augie are sitting side by side. Cricket is hovered over rocking a little bit, looking at his dad who frowns a disapproving frown from moment to moment. Augie is searching for the right words.

AUGIE

Cricket, your mom is a bit concerned about where things are headed.

CRICKET

She is?

AUGIE

Well, you know things have been a little bit different around here recently.

Cricket blinks and looks up on the wall at his cape, waiting patiently to get out of his meeting. He looks back at his dad.

AUGIE

You know how your mom is.

He watches his dad.

AUGIE

So are we clear?

Cricket nods.

AUGIE

Try to keep it between the ditches, okay Cricket. It doesn't mean I don't love you, just, you know.

CRICKET

Sure, Dad.

AUGIE

I'm glad we could have this talk.

CRICKET

Can I go now?

AUGIE

You betcha.

\*

Cricket twists his head, a gleam in his eye. He pops up, cape is gone, door opens, he's gone. Wham bam Spunky Z to the rescue.

CUT TO:

87 INT COMIC BOOK STORE

87

Cricket steps up to the comic book store counter. There's a cute girl LEXIE, with spiky dark hair. Josh is leaning on the counter, in her space. Lexie seems annoyed.

LEXIE

Hi Cricket.

CRICKET

Lexie.

JOSH

This kid knows your name but you won't tell me?

The three look at each other. Cricket pulls out money to pay and stares Josh down.

CRICKET

Lexie, this guy bothering you?

JOSH

Lexie, this guy bothering you?

Cricket turns his head and gets that super hero sparkle.

LEXIE

Cricket, it's okay.

CRICKET

No it's not okay, someone needs a lesson in manners. (beat)---let's take it outside, shall we?

The two men (the boy and the man) walk outside.

CUT TO:

88 EXT COMIC BOOKSTORE DAY

88

Cricket steps into the sunlight. He flips open Spunky Z and at that moment looks up to see Josh hurling towards him. He turns his head in his superhero mode. His eyes blink.

Zip, he shoots over to Josh. Josh looks at him, amused. Josh is on him, picks him up and throws him up against the wall. He slides down the wall. Josh dusts his hands off and turns to go. Cricket pops up next to him. (maybe have Georgia in this scene watching and disapproving)

CRICKET

Leaving already?

Josh turns, a bit stunned. He throttles Cricket to the ground and punches him multiple times---Cricket grunts and covers himself up. He bounces up again. Kids, all comic book geeks and computer whiz kids start coming out of the comic book store---Lexie in tow.

CRICKET

Like I was saying.

He opens his Spunky Z comic and reads a section as Josh grabs him in a full head lock dragging him forward. He's getting how he's handling Josh from the Spunky Z comic.

CRICKET

Not really my style, to wrestle that is.

JOSH

Shut your trap you little twerp.

He throws Cricket down again. And up he pops. Cricket reads a line from his superhero page. (the crowds ohhs and ahhs as Cricket gets thrown around)

CRICKET

Then leave the girl. Take me instead.

JOSH

What?

CRICKET

Depart doer of evil, you're vanquished.

Josh shakes his head and walks away, backing away more like it. What is up with this freak.

CRICKET

And don't let me find you back in this part of town again.

A kid walks up.

GEEK ONE

Aren't you that miracle kid?

The crowd comes in with pens and congratulations, asking for autographs.

CUT TO:

89

EXT HIGH SCHOOL DAY

89

Cricket rides his bike to school. As he approaches the school, students and teachers begin to gather around him. At first he looks a little nervous. But people are high-fiving him, calling him by name, applauding him. Gradually, the crowd slows him down until he's at a walking pace. The closer he gets to the school, the larger the mob becomes until he disappears.

Then he reappears, surfing toward the front. His bicycle follows him. People convey them both with reverence. At the top of the school steps, Cricket and his bike are reunited. The top of the steps has become an impromptu stage.

CROWD

Crick-ET! Crick-ET!

CROWD

Speech! Speech!

CHEERLEADERS

Cricket, Cricket, he's our man!  
If he can't do it, nobody can!

The cheerleaders form a pyramid that erupts into more applause from everybody. People begin lighting their cell phones and holding them aloft like lighters at a concert.

CROWD

All we are sa-a-aying, is give  
Cricket a chance...

Secretary emerges from school, whispers something to someone, who whispers something to someone, and so on and so forth, until it finally reaches Cricket.

PERSON BESIDE CRICKET

Hey Crick, man, the principal wants  
to see you in his office.

Cricket looks nervous, glances one more time at the crowd, then bolts inside.

CUT TO:

90

INT PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE DAY

90

Cricket is scrunched into the chair facing principal's desk. Principal is twirling gently back and forth in his rolling chair behind the desk, clearly aware of his advantage.

PRINCIPAL

Well, young man, it appears you've become quite the celebrity.

Cricket begins blinking rapidly.

PRINCIPAL

I'm afraid, though, that you've created a bit of a ruckus.

CRICKET

Sir, I-

PRINCIPAL

And we can't have a ruckus here at Edwin G. Holmes High School, can we?

CRICKET

Uh, no sir.

PRINCIPAL (CONFIDING)

Son, do you have an agent?

CRICKET

An agent?

PRINCIPAL

Anyone looking out for your interests?

CRICKET

Well, my father-

PRINCIPAL

Ah, Augie Davis. I remember him well.

(MORE)

PRINCIPAL (cont'd)

Nice young man, but, hmm, I think you need someone savvy, someone knowledgeable in the ways of the world, someone who can make sure you're well supplied with materials to make this potion of yours, and who can take care of the distribution for you-for a modest percentage, of course.

CRICKET

It's a serum.

PRINCIPAL

Ah yes, serum.

Cricket blinks. Principal whips out a piece of paper and a fancy fountain pen.

PRINCIPAL

Now what ingredients did you say you used to make this serum?

Secretary peeks through the door.

SECRETARY

Dr. Dellwood, you have GLAXO Wellcome waiting on line three.

PRINCIPAL

Thank you, Marjorie, that will be all.

SECRETARY

And Bristol-Myers Squibb on line four.

CUT TO:

91 EXT HIGH SCHOOL DAY

91

Cricket is practically skipping down the high school steps. He's going to cure everybody! He'll make serum for the whole world! The line from around his block has migrated to the high school and now includes people of all races. He grabs his bike and rides down the line, slapping high fives.

CRICKET

Take two aspirin and call me in the morning!

The people in the line are thrilled to see him. He's their own personal superhero.

Superhero music is playing The sky is perfect blue. His jacket flies out after him like a cape. Suddenly he—and the music—screech to a halt. At the end of the line stands Georgia, with her bike.

CRICKET

Georgia?

Georgia pedals up. Lays her bike down as Cricket comes out towards her. He turns his head, in the way only a super hero does when the lady of the hour shows up and there's no time to gab.

GEORGIA

Cricket, getting pretty busy huh?

CRICKET

Preparing for the day that's all.

GEORGIA

I came by to see if you wanted to go for a bike ride?

CRICKET

A bike ride ma'm? People are in need. No time for play today.

GEORGIA

The world is in need, Cricket.  
Your mom is in need. Are you okay?

CRICKET

Affirmative.

He jumps on his bike and shoots off.

92

EXT ROAD DAY

92

A long group of kids (3-5 years old) are lined up with teachers leading them along. They're waiting at a stop sign but no cars are stopping. Cricket pulls up on his bike. Drops his bike.

CRICKET

Stand back, stand back, keep your distance little ones.

He turns and walks out into the middle of the road and holds his hands up and a car stops. He turns and faces the women and kids.

## CRICKET

You can now cross the road in safety. Come along now, can't hold up commerce. Come along.

CUT TO:

93 EXT COMERCIAL BUILDING DAY

93 \*

There's a building with a chain link fence running to the corner of it. Cricket is standing below the fence and the building looking up with his hands on his waist elbows out in a super hero pose. We watch a montage of Cricket running up the wall and the fence---trying to use his "super hero" skills---he keeps falling down and busting his ass---getting up and running up the fence again, getting a little bit higher every attempt.

CUT TO:

94 INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY

94

Georgia opens the package Cricket sent her. She goes into the living room, turns on the TV, puts the tape in the VCR. While we watch scenes of Cricket "maiming" himself, Georgia is talking to her mom again.

## GEORGIA

You know my friend Cricket?, You've only met him a few times. I think he's my friend, though I'm not sure. Things are strange now.

Silence.

## GEORGIA

You're right I should talk to him. I just can't let him do this to himself---a true friend wouldn't just turn her back.

95 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY

95

Georgia parks her car outside the house. As she's emerging, she sees Preacher Tate wander up. He pauses and takes a gander at Georgia.

PREACHER TATE

Afternoon, ma'am. And how are you on this beautiful day given to us by the Lord?

GEORGIA

As far as I'm concerned, the Lord can have this one back.

PREACHER TATE

Rough going?

GEORGIA

I've had better.

PREACHER TATE

Funny thing, so has the young man I've come to call on.

GEORGIA

Cricket?

PREACHER TATE

Seems he's getting a little too much of the wrong kind of attention. The Lord helps those who help themselves, and young Cricket seems to have helped himself to a whole load of trouble.

GEORGIA

How do you know Cricket?

PREACHER TATE

I don't suppose you're the Georgia he talks so much about? \*

GEORGIA

He's been talking about me?

PREACHER TATE

Oh yeah. And I see why too!! \*

At this moment Cricket comes up on his bike. He turns to go.

PREACHER TATE

Cricket?

Cricket gets off his bike and walks back over to the two people who are going to talk with him straight.

PREACHER TATE

I take it that things have not been going to well for you.

Cricket looks back and forth between Georgia and the Preacher.

CRICKET

You two know each other?

They nod.

GEORGIA

We just met, seems like we may have some common concerns.

CRICKET

Great. I'm sure my mom's here if you'd like to meet her.

PREACHER TATE

Cricket, it'd be great to sit down with your mom. If she's here she can join us, how does that sound to you?

CRICKET

I'm heading out, just had to change shirts---I'm already running late.

PREACHER TATE

Before you go we should chat.

CRICKET

Really I don't have time.

PREACHER TATE

Cricket, the direction you've been going is not going to help save or heal your mom.

GEORGIA

We're concerned about you.

CRICKET

Nothing to worry about. Mom'll be fine really. And you know, just wait here---I'll be back in a second.

\*  
\*  
\*

Cricket drops his bike and runs up to his house. He looks over at Preacher Tate and Georgia. Plus a few people signing in on the clipboard in the yard. He darts inside.

CUT TO:

96 INT DAVIS HALLWAY DAY 96

Cricket runs slam into his mom. She bends over and coughs.

CRICKET

Ah sorry mom.

JUNE

Cricket, what's going on? Slow down!

He looks at her and sprints around the corner and goes down the stairs to his lab.

CUT TO:

97 INT CRICKETS LAB DAY 97

Cricket hits the lights. He enters his lab and accidentally knocks some glass off the table---he ignores it. He pauses to look at the rats--still alive. He opens the frig and sees that there's one vial left. He takes it out and considers it for a moment. He scratches his arm then looks up at the spunky Z poster. Put puts the vial back into the frig.

CUT TO:

98 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY 98

Cricket bounds down the steps to find Preacher Tate and Georgia still there. He picks up his bike to leave.

GEORGIA

Cricket wait we have to talk.

He stops and faces her.

CRICKET

You know Georgia, go back to your own house why don't you---I don't need your advice.

He jumps on his bike and pedals off. The preacher and Georgia watch as he slips through their fingers.

As this all happens assorted people pull up and go to the sign up sheet in the front yard. Big signs say "keep out!"

99 EXT ROAD DAY

99

Cricket is pedalling furiously, getting away from that scene at his house. He goes through down town, pauses at a pharmacy, looks up at the sign, and bikes on. Next thing we know he's at Georgia's house. He leans the bike up against the fence and goes to the porch. He looks in the window of the house. He doesn't see anyone. He tries the door, locked. He runs to the side door, open. He enters.

CUT TO: \*

100 INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY

100

He pauses in the kitchen. Goes to the front room, looks into the living room and doesn't see anyone. He bounds up the stairs. He pokes his head into a few rooms. He's sweating. In the master suite he makes a B-line for the bathroom. In the bathroom he tears open the medicine cabinet and pulls the drugs into the sink. He finally locates what he's looking for. He hears a noise and turns. He bounds down the stairs.

ROSE \*

Georgia is that you? \*

She walks from the kitchen into the front of the house where the front door is. Cricket is busted, trapped at the front door. \*

ROSE \*

It's locked. \*

He looks at her, terrified. \*

ROSE \*

I at least have enough sense to lock my doors when I'm away, makes it tougher to get in, and to get out. \*

Cricket is looking and almost shaking. \*

CRICKET \*

Ah, Ah Georgia. \*

ROSE \*

I haven't seen her all day, have you changed your mind? \*

Cricket shakes his head. Rose walks up to him, but is too bitchy to mess with him. She's right on him, he's frozen, sure to God he's going to prison. She unlocks the door, turns the handle and frees the scared animal.

ROSE

I'll let her know you came by,  
shall I?

CUT TO:

101 EXT STREET DAY

101

Cricket pulls up to a four way stop with his bike. A car goes flying through the stop sign without even hitting the brakes. Cricket turns to chase after the car. A police car sees the car fail to stop and goes after the car too. Up ahead in the distance the car pulls over. The policeman approaches the drivers side and Cricket pedals up.

OFFICER CHUCK

License and registration please.

Cricket leans his bike over and walks around the Honda.

CRICKET

Officer. (nods at the passenger (Mary Pat) and the other officer who gets out of the car to see if things are okay)

OFFICER CHUCK

May I help you?

CRICKET

That's all right officer. I'll take things from here.

He turns cutting off Officer Chuck and faces Mary Pat.

CRICKET

Ma'm you know you ran that stop sign back there?

Mary Pat is confused looking back and forth from the Officer to this teen age kid who's wearing a Spunky Z tshirt.

CRICKET

In fact you almost hit me.

OFFICER CHUCK

Son, what are you doing?

CRICKET

Officer (looks at badge) Officer  
Chuck, really, I've got the  
situation under control.

OFFICER CHUCK

What situation is that?

CRICKET

This individual ran a stop sign,  
almost hitting me and you...

OFFICER WHALEN

Hey, aren't you that miracle kid?

MARY PAT

You're Cricket. You're the  
Cricket!

\*  
\*  
\*

CRICKET

Um well, yeah. I am. Now, about  
the stop sign.

MARY PAT

Can I have your autograph? I've  
heard all about you. You're  
amazing, You're just, you're just.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

OFFICER CHUCK

Ma'm please, calm down.

\*  
\*

CRICKET

Do you have a pen?

OFFICER CHUCK

What is your name, son?

OFFICER WHALEN

I have a pen, here, can you give me  
a signature for my wife too, she's  
been following you from day one.

OFFICER CHUCK

May I please do my job?

Cricket finishes signing the driver's piece of scrap paper.

CRICKET

I'll let you off with just a  
warning this time sir. Please slow  
down and stop when you should,  
there's small children who live in  
this neighborhood.

OFFICER CHUCK  
Hold on hold on hold on. Not so  
fast.

The Mary Pat starts to drive away. \*

OFFICER CHUCK  
Stop!

She stops. He turns to Cricket. \*

OFFICER CHUCK  
Don't say anything!

CRICKET  
She's okay officer. I'm sure she  
won't do it again. \*

OFFICER CHUCK  
Son, don't test me.

CRICKET  
I'll vouch for her. \*

OFFICER WHALEN  
Give the kid a break Chuck!

MARY PAT  
I can't wait to tell the girls I  
have your autograph, do you think,  
do you think, well, can I have a  
few more, you know, collectors  
items and all. \*

OFFICER CHUCK  
Everyone, just shut up! Please!

CRICKET  
Sorry, one per customer but it's  
It's okay to go ma'm, I'll handle  
this, (ignoring officer Chuck) \*

Mary Pat waves and takes off. The two officers turn on  
Cricket who's walking over to his bike. \*

CRICKET  
You two are doing a fine job. Keep  
up the good work.

Flash, cut to Cricket in the back of the police car with his  
bike in the trunk.

CUT TO:

102 INT DAVIS PARLOR DAY. 102

June is at the front window, watching Augie drive off. She picks up a child's handmade piece of pottery, all wobbly, and turns it around in her hand. Then she seems to make a decision. She goes to the stairs to Cricket's lab and descends. Facing her is a door plastered with "PRIVATE" and "DANGER" and "NO TRESPASSING" signs and yellow "CAUTION" tape.

She opens the door.

CUT TO:

103 INT DAVIS CAR DAY 103

Augie driving Cricket home from the police station.

CUT TO:

104 INT DAVIS KITCHEN DAY 104

There's a clamor outside the kitchen door, like a minor struggle. June enters the kitchen from downstairs in time to see Cricket, wildly flailing and shouting, with Augie behind him, trying to calm him down.

CRICKET

False arrest! Dirty stinkin' cops!

AUGIE

Cricket. Settle down, son, settle down.

Cricket continues to flail and shout.

CRICKET

How dare they! How dare they!  
Geniuses are always misunderstood  
in their own lifetimes!

JUNE

Cricket, what's going on? You're not yourself.

CRICKET

(still shouting)  
I am myself! I'm my best self.  
Myself without pain!

\*

JUNE

Cricket, we all feel pain now and then.

CRICKET

Not me! Not any more! And not you, either. Not anyone in the world. Not with my serum.

JUNE

Is that what this is all about?

CRICKET

Yup, I did it. I did it for you.

JUNE

You did what for me?

CRICKET

I invented the serum. Tested it on myself. Proved that it's perfect. Now you can take it, and you'll be all better.

JUNE

You call this perfect? Cricket, look at yourself. You're acting crazy, you've gotten yourself arrested, you're not speaking to a girl who could be the best friend you've ever had, and you're, you're--

-

She pauses, at a loss for words, then speaks softly.

JUNE

Cricket, I'm not going to take your serum.

CRICKET

But you have to! I made it for you. For you to get better.

JUNE

(more firmly)

Cricket, sweetheart, I'm not going to--

CRICKET

You have to! You have to.

AUGIE

Cricket, listen to your mother.

June shakes her head. Cricket looks from June to Augie and back again to June.

CRICKET  
(yelling, crazy)  
Then you're going to DIE!

Cricket runs out of the kitchen, grabs his bike and rides crazily, recklessly away.

CUT TO:

105

INT GEORGIA'S HOUSE DAY

105

Cricket bikes over to Georgia's house. He knocks on the door. Looks around. Tries the door handle and goes inside.

CRICKET  
Hello?

He hears music coming from the other room. He enters the living room, walks around the couch and finds Rose stretched out with a half empty bottle of whisky.

CRICKET  
I'm sorry.

Rose half opens her eyes.

ROSE  
Cricket, sweetheart, you're a doll.  
(to herself) Cricket, Cricket  
Cricket. (mumbling eyes closed)

Cricket stares at her for a second. He reaches forward and touches her cheek. Her eyes pop open. He jumps back startled.

ROSE  
Cricket. You are handsome when you lose those glasses. (beat) Cricket, I've been wanting to, I've been wanting to tell you. Your mom. (beat) I'm so sorry to hear about your mom. She sounds like an amazing woman. Do you know that? I hope you know how lucky you are to have her, she's, she's special, take as much time with her as you can hon, okay?  
(MORE)

ROSE (cont'd)

Can you do that for me..(eyes  
closed again, mumbling) thanks  
doll, she's, she's, she's, (beat)  
over at the shop and stop she's...

There's a sound, someone's coming down the stairs. Cricket  
backs to the edge of the room. He stands next to some long  
drapes in the shadows.

Georgia walks into the kitchen, we hear the same sounds we  
heard at the begining of the movie (OS) of her getting a  
glass with ice. She's moving around. Georgia comes into the  
room. She walks over to the stereo and turns it off. She  
takes the whisky bottle and puts it up on the shelf, puts the  
top back on the bottle. Then she grabs her mom's glass and  
drops some ice into it. She strokes her mom's hair for  
asecond. The camera moves back and Georgia pops a piece of  
ice into her mouth. She walks a circle around the couch.  
She pulls out a piece off licorice and begins eating it.

GEORGIA

Mom, the thing is this, I can't  
keep doing this. No matter how  
much ice I put in your glass,  
(beat) I just can't dilude myself  
anymore. Okay mom? I just can't do  
it. I want to love you, I do, and  
I try. It's just that at some  
point, at some point your realize  
what a real family is and whether  
you have it or not...

She hears a noise and turns and sees Cricket standing. She  
glares at him for a moment. Both of their eyes blinking.  
Cricket runs out of room, out of the house, to the street,  
gets on his bike and is gone. Georgia sits there watching  
him.

ROSE

Georgia?

GEORGIA

Yes mom.

ROSE

Will you get something for me?

GEORGIA

No, mom, I can't anymore. I'm  
sorry.

ROSE

Can I have a piece of licorice  
please.

Georgia pulls out a handful of licorice and leaves it in her mom's hands.

CUT TO:

106 INT BAPTIST CHURCH NIGHT 106

Cricket is sleeping in the pew at the church. He's curled up, exhausted. Preacher Tate walks in, watches Cricket sleep for a moment, then walks over and gently rests his hand on Cricket's shoulder.

PREACHER TATE

It's time for you to go home.

CUT TO:

107 EXT PREACHER TATE'S CAR 107

The preacher is driving along a slow road, his wife (wearing her Sunday hat) beside him in the front seat, Cricket sitting upright in the back seat like a suspect in a police car. In the distance a figure is walking resolutely on the road in the same direction.

CUT TO:

108 INT PREACHER TATE'S CAR 108

Cricket leans forward and touches the preacher on the shoulder.

CRICKET

Can we stop? For just a minute?

The car pulls up alongside the person walking. It's Georgia. She's carrying a bouquet of flowers from her front yard interspersed with red licorice. Cricket opens the door (which opens, as opposed to the back door of a police car).

CRICKET

Want a ride?

Georgia looks to the preacher and his wife.

MRS TATE

Hop in, child.

Georgia gets in and reaches across the seat to take Cricket's hand.

CUT TO:

109 EXT DAVIS HOUSE DAY 109

The preacher's car pulls up in front of Cricket's house. The front door is closed, and looks a bit forbidding.

PREACHER TATE

This is your stop, Cricket. \*

Cricket nods. He knows this is his to do on his own. He gets out of the car, gives them all a smile of thanks, then walks slowly up the path. He looks back and they smile at him in encouragement. Then he moves on, and up the front steps. He reaches for the door handle, and the door opens. His mother and father stand in the doorway. They look at each other for the briefest moment, then June gathers him in and holds him tightly, as much for her as for him. Augie puts his arms around both of them, and we can see first Cricket, then June, then Augie shake with tears they've waited so long to release.

CUT TO:

110 EXT ROAD DAY 110

Cricket delivering papers just like the beginning.

CUT TO:

111 INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR DAY 111

There's a strange sound and the couch is moving. Up pops June with a broom, she's wearing the dark welding goggles that Cricket had on his head, she's also holding a frog giggering stick in the other hand.

CRICKET

Mom?

JUNE

You know, if you'd clean up after yourself I wouldn't have to be doing this.

CRICKET

I need to use the phone for a while.

CUT TO:

112 INT DAVIS HOUSE PARLOR DAY

112

June and Cricket are looking at each other. Cricket is holding a clipboard. June looks down as a rat runs out of the room. She yells and strikes out after the rat.

CRICKET

Hello, is this Mr. Meeker? (on the phone lifts his legs while his mom shuffles under them after the rat) what? I'll hold. Mom, it's not bothering anyone.

JUNE

The devil!

CRICKET

Mom!

JUNE

They're vermin!

CRICKET

Besides you can't hurt them.

JUNE

I know, that's why it's so much fun.

She chases the rat out of the parlor.

CRICKET

Hello, Mr. Meeker? Yeah, this is Cricket Davis. No, no no, sorry I've got some bad news. Yep, initial tests have been showing some negative side affects so for now all orders are on hold. Sorry to get your hopes up.

He looks at his long list and crosses off Meeker. At this moment his mom yells and runs across the front of the parlor wearing her rat attack uniform.

A few seconds later a scourge of rats come running after her. Cricket watches this scene and dials another number.

CUT TO:

113 EXT BAPTIST CHURCH DAY

113

Preacher Tate is shaking hands with the congregation after the service. Everyone's hugging everyone. Before reaching for the preacher's hand, Cricket reaches into his pocket and palms a small vial. When he shakes hands with Preacher Tate, the preacher looks startled.

CRICKET

Last dose. I'd rather you have it than anyone else. Of all the people I know, you're the one who seems to have the best grip on the real meaning of pain. Use it wisely. Or better yet, don't use it at all.

The preacher nods solemnly. He knows what's been entrusted to him. The preacher's wife smushes Cricket to her breasts. After the hug, he steps back and includes them both in his gaze.

CRICKET

And for smaller pains-

Cricket reaches under his fedora and pulls out a red hot water bottle.

CRICKET

Use this.

CUT TO:

114 EXT ROAD DAY

114

Cricket and Georgia are on their bikes riding and smiling. Augie is pedaling a bike and June is riding on the handlebars. They're both dressed in their movie star outfits...waving...