

C'MON C'MON

Written by

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CU ON Johnny thinking and talking into his recorder. Does he try the same question a few different ways? First part probably on black, logos.

JOHNNY

I'm going to ask you a series of questions. There are no right or wrong answers.

NOW see CU of Johnny.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

It's Saturday, November 2nd.

The day mom died.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

When you think about the future, how do you imagine it'll be? What will nature will be like? How will your city change? Will families be the same? What will stay with you, what will you forget? What scares you? What makes you angry? Do you feel alone? What makes you happy?

4 INT/EXT. DETROIT SCHOOL / REC CENTER / KID'S HOMES / VARIOUS LOCATIONS

CUT TO: JOHNNY, and ROXANNE, holding shotgun mics, digital recorders, headphones - INTERVIEWING KIDS.

Q: WE ARE GOING AROUND THE COUNTRY, GOING TO DIFFERENT CITIES, INTERVIEWING KIDS, ABOUT THEIR LIFE, WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE.

Q: IF I ASK YOU ANYTHING THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO ANSWER OR YOU DON'T LIKE THE QUESTION, YOU CAN BE LIKE, NOPE.

Q: I WANT YOU TO JUST FEEL COMFORTABLE AND IF THERE'S ANYTHING I ASK YOU ABOUT THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT, SAY I DON'T REALLY WANT TO TALK ABOUT THAT.

6 INT. DETROIT HOME - LIVING ROOM

6

A new kid being interviewed in her/his REAL home.

Q: WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE, HOW DO YOU IMAGINE IT WILL BE?

7 INT. NEW DETROIT HOME - KID'S BEDROOM 7

A new kid being interviewed in her/his real home.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK ADULTS COULD HAVE DONE TO MAKE SURE WE WENT ON THE RIGHT PATH?

12 INT. DETROIT HIGH SCHOOL 12

IMPROV - Johnny interviews a kid from Detroit.

Q: WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE, DO YOU THINK IT WILL BE BETTER OR WORSE?

IMPROV - Johnny interviews another kid from Detroit in the same school.

**CONTINUE TO INTERWEAVE KIDS' ANSWERS AS VOICE OVER:**

12A INT. DETROIT HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT 12A

Johnny walks back to his hotel room.

R13 INT. DETROIT HOTEL - NIGHT - AFTER DAY OF INTERVIEWS. R13

Johnny listens to interview on his LAP TOP, eats take out food. Spot check on the sound, just making sure it's all in his computer. Should have recorder pack, SD card, laptop there....

CUT TO: Johnny does "Scratch" recording intro for his show. It's like verbal notes to himself, trying out lines, might say lines over and over, quick and light, more improvised than before.

JOHNNY

Detroit was the future, the car was the future, factories were the future? But the future didn't turn out like we thought it would? So we came to Detroit to talk with kids, young people? What do they think things will be like? What are their lives like now?

He turns off his recorder, put's that away.

He's alone.

He's lost in his thoughts more deeply now.

CUT TO MEMORY OF PLAYING MUSIC FOR MOM. His hands dancing, mom's hands dancing, Viv's hands too.

MAYBE WE SEE SOME OF MOM'S THINGS? Balloons, Rabbit, Empty bed.

R15 INT. DETROIT HOTEL / INT. VIV'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAMR15  
NIGHT - A LITTLE LATER

HARD CUT BACK TO HOTEL - JOHNNY'S IN ANOTHER PART OF THE ROOM, SOME TIME HAS PASSED, MAKING A CALL.

VIV

Hey...

SEE VIV IN HER HOUSE, LIVING ROOM, NIGHT.

JOHNNY

Hey.

Something distant between them, something awkward, but there's hope or something in his face.

VIV

This is nice.

Their humor, when their nervous.

JOHNNY

Is it?

VIV

I don't know? Is it?

They laugh cause there's also discomfort, sadness, pain.

JOHNNY

I didn't know if we were finally gonna talk today?

VIV

It's a good day to talk - do you think mom can hear us?

INTERCUT WITH MOMENTS OF MOM IN BED.

JOHNNY

Doesn't seem like a year, does it to you?

VIV

No. It's pretty trippy huh? What are we supposed to do today?

They begin to connect more.

CUT TO VIV AND JOHNNY ARGUING? DOOR SLAM?

JOHNNY

I don't know. If I just work I feel like I'm an asshole...

VIV

I know.

JOHNNY

If I sit in this depressing hotel just thinking about her, it's pretty brutal. So I called you?

That's nice.

VIV

Where are you?

JOHNNY

Detroit. I've been interviewing kids all day...

(You'd be good at that actually).

VIV

Jesse heard you on the radio the other day.

INTERCUT WITH JESSE IN CAR.

JOHNNY

Oh yeah? (some kinda hopeful sound)

VIV

Yeah, you were on the radio, I had to tell him it was you. A year in kid years is like, 3 years? So, you know...

JOHNNY

Right.

Should she say "It's nice you called" but we feel the tension? Johnny feels quite alone, a bit of tension, pause.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

It's nice to hear your voice... you sound like my sister... How's Jesse?

VIV

He's older, he's quite a person,  
He's great - Paul moved to  
Oakland...

JOHNNY

Oh, woah - he did?

VIV

Yeah, It's OK, Jesse's dealing with  
it pretty well. But now I have to  
go all the way up there cause he  
needs a little help, settling.

Johnny knows what that means, feels concern for her, but it's  
not something they easily talk about.

JOHNNY

Yeah?

VIV

Yeah, so I'm about to head up  
there.

JOHNNY

You and Jesse going?

VIV

Just me. (Not that kinda trip)

\*

Either just a look from Johnny or he says.

JOHNNY

Who's taking care of Jesse?

\*

24 EXT. VIV'S STREET - DAY 24

Wide tracking shot - obviously LA. After we establish we're  
in a new place, we find Johnny getting out of a cab, with  
luggage. A little nervous or vulnerable or something.

25 INT/EXT. VIV'S HOUSE - DAY 25

Door opens, a pause - he's not sure what's going to happen.

VIV

Hey.

JOHNNY

Hey.

They don't hug. He would have liked to. Jesse comes to the door, studying him, no one is sure what he remembers.

JESSE

Hi.

VIV

This is Johnny. A man. Your uncle.  
My brother. Standing here.

JOHNNY

Hey, how's it going?

JESSE

Have you been to our house?

JOHNNY

It's been a while.

26 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - DAY

26

IMPROV: Jesse gives a tour, showing every bit of the house, every room, hallway, every small detail. Johnny's immediately taken by this kid, but wants to keep connecting to Viv, make eye contact with her.

INT. VIV'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny, Viv and Jesse sit on Viv's bed.

JESSE

Mom said you're going to sleep up here tonight, in her extra big, cozy bed. The best bed in the house.

27 INT. VIV'S DINING ROOM / OR KITCHEN / NIGHT

27

They eat OR cook dinner. Jesse/Viv IMPROV: about something he's heard on Radiolab - the fungus that connects all tree roots. Viv heard it with him and is equally enthralled - they go back and forth, interrupting and finishing thoughts, describing what they heard together.

RS28 INT. VIV'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

RS28

After bath, Johnny and Viv find a private place to really talk.

JOHNNY

So what's going on with Paul?

VIV

The San Francisco symphony offered him this great position, which is awesome, he so deserves it, but the whole transition's fucked him up, like transitions do, he got a fucking dog he shouldn't have gotten, it's a mess. (laughs)

She laughs, she doesn't know how serious it really is.

He's trying to be on her side, take care of her?

JOHNNY

And you have to clean it up?

Viv cares for Paul, he's a good guy, he's Jesse's dad and there's no one else left.

VIV

Yeah. It's Paul.

OR JUST A LOOK FROM HER.

Johnny accepts that, feels for her. "Yeah".

JOHNNY

What does Jesse know?

VIV

I told him his dad needs some help getting organized, but it's not a big deal and he can go up and see him another time.

JOHNNY

He's gonna be OK with just me?

VIV

Oh god he loves it when I'm not around.

The first time back in her house in over a year.

JOHNNY

It's nice to see you.

They share a look, she nods? They connect.

VIV

You too.



OFF SCREEN

JESSE

Hello???

She looks up, has a look on her face, starts to head downstairs.

VIV

Are you ready for this?

JOHNNY

What?

VIV

There's an orphan that visits me at night. You may get a visit from him yourself. Sometimes he's got this whole story where I have to have dead children that he, the orphan, want's to know all about, and do what they did???

Off his look, as she goes.

VIV (CONT'D)

This is a great moment for you to not be judgy...

29

INT/EXT. VIV'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

29

The door bell rings, Johnny's surprised, Viv's not "damn it". She opens the door, knowing Jesse's gonna be there half dressed on in PJ's.

VIV

Jesus, come in.

In a strange mood, he nods yes.

JESSE

I snuck out of that horrible place. Can I sleep here tonight?

VIV

Sure, you cold? My son's rooms in there, he's not here, you can sleep in his bed.

JESSE

Thank you.

They walk into Jesse's room, Johnny's trying to keep up.

VIV

I asked him to clean up.

JESSE

Do you want me to be messy? Like your son? I could do that.

VIV

That's OK, I'll just have to clean it up. You tired? You want to try on his pajamas and see if they fit?

JESSE

Sure.

He holds them up to himself to see if they fit.

JESSE (CONT'D)

They're just the right size?!

VIV

Johnny's gonna read to you. Hi.  
This is Johnny, he's my brother.

JOHNNY

JESSE

I'm an orphan. I escaped.

He shakes Johnny's hand.

JOHNNY

You seem like you're doing OK.

JESSE

I'm not, it's been hard.

JOHNNY

I'm sorry.

Dead serious look from Jesse. Johnny looks to Viv for help.

VIV

(Yeah don't ask) He's an orphan who's seen some hard times. Who wants to be read to.

She hands him the book and leads him into bed with Jesse. Johnny gets in; Jesse snuggles up next to him, surprising Johnny. He begins to read.

INT. JESSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny reads a book to Jesse.

INT. VIV'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny documents recent events into his recorder.

JOHNNY

She hugged me. She felt different.  
Or I felt different. Jesse, maybe,  
vaguely remembered me. Maybe, maybe  
not. He told me about trees  
communicating with each other, and  
how connected they were. By an  
underground network of fungus.

30 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - DAWN 30

Viv tip-toes through house.

JESSE'S ROOM: She whispers goodbyes to sleepy Jesse. He hugs  
and kisses her and passes back out. She sneaks her way out of  
the house. Looking back once before she goes.

33 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - VIV'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 33

From downstairs, we hear Mozart's "Requiem" blaring. Johnny  
begins to wake up.

JESSE (O.S.)

Johnny? Johnny?!

Disorientated. He gets up, sleepily puts on pants.

JOHNNY

Hey?

JESSE (O.S.)

Are you awake?

JOHNNY

Sort of. I'm coming.

Johnny heads downstairs.

It's the first time they've been alone face to face - they  
check each other out.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Loud.

JESSE

It's Saturday, I get to be loud on  
Saturday.

JOHNNY  
Your mom just left?

JESSE  
She said you might be awkward at first, but you'd get used to things.

JOHNNY  
Can we turn that off for a minute?

Bummed, he goes and turns it off. Johnny's processing, hurt/confused. He goes to kitchen, finds Viv's notes - several typed pages.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Jesus, Viv.

36 INT. JESSE'S BEDROOM - DAY

36

Johnny enters, pulls out his recorder - Jesse's intrigued by the gear.

JOHNNY  
What about I interview you?

JESSE  
Like the questions you ask those kids?

JOHNNY  
Yeah.

Johnny points the mic towards Jesse.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
How do you think the world will be different? By the time you're my age?

JESSE  
I don't want to.

JOHNNY  
O.K.

Stuck. Jesse looks at Johnny's equipment. Johnny sees an in.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
This shows you the recording level - you want it to be strong but not in the red here, see?' I actually have no idea what this button does.  
(MORE)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Oh, don't touch that one cause if  
you do everything disintegrates.

Jesse pushes it. Johnny disintegrates.

(IMPROV: They discuss where they want to record. Jesse says  
"The Beach")

37 EXT. VENICE BEACH / GRASSY MOUND NEAR BOARDWALK - AFTERNOON 37

BEAUTIFUL LONG TRACK SHOT - Johnny follows Jesse recording.  
Just when he thinks Jesse's gonna stop, he continues. Johnny  
has to wait, and follow, and wait - Johnny begins to like it.  
Johnny comes and lifts up Jesse's headphones.

JOHNNY

You OK?

Jesse beams. Signals Johnny to be quiet.

37 EXT. VENICE BEACH CU INSERT 37

Jesse walks with recorder to breakwater, lands in close-up,  
He loves listening to the world like this. Johnny catches up  
to him.

Maybe Johnny gets his attention - "you like it?" Nods YES.  
Smiles, he loves it.

JESSE

Everything sounds so good (real) in  
here. My dad would love this...

Maybe Johnny says "Yeah". Mention of dad makes Johnny think -  
how's this kid doing? What's OK to say about dad? How's he  
dealing with it all.

Jesse senses this and want's to show he knows everything.

JESSE (CONT'D)

My dad's not around all the time  
now. And you're all by yourself.  
That's why my mom asked you to take  
care of me. She does stuff like  
that.

JOHNNY

It was my idea to come.

That surprises Jesse, why? Realizing he doesn't know  
everything...

(Maybe Jesse says "Why did you and my mom stop talking?")

38 INT. VIV'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

38

IMPROV JUMP CUTS: Johnny follows Viv's sheet as he helps Jesse through night routine - running bath, brushing teeth, etc. Johnny doesn't know why he likes all this so much.

CUT TO: Jesse's in the tub. Johnny sits on the floor beside him, still strangers.

JESSE

My mom tells me stories, it can be fiction or non-fiction.

JOHNNY

What about we just - get to know each other?

Awkward silence.

JESSE

Why did my mom stop talking to you?

JOHNNY

We talk.

JESSE

No you don't.

21 INT. CAROL'S HOUSE - DAY

21

QUICK CUTS/GRAPHIC SHOTS: Johnny brings a tray of food into Carol laying in bed. A hospice worker finishes something and leaves.

CAROL

Where've you been? He's coming to get me.

She can't go anywhere. He's confused.

JOHNNY

Who's coming?

CAROL (CONT'D)

I need to get dressed.

She's pointing to a sweater. He's worried.

CAROL (CONT'D)

My dad's taking me to the DMV.

She's so excited, breaks Johnny's heart.

CAROL (CONT'D)  
Gonna get my license.

REVEAL: Viv is there. She makes eye contact with Johnny over Carol's shoulder - she doesn't want to play along with this delusion; but Johnny can't deny her.

He carefully lifts her body off the pillow, threads her weak arms through sweater sleeves. "Hurry, please" "OK, Mom, OK".

MOMENTS LATER: Johnny sits looking at Carol sitting in chair waiting for her dad to come, keeps looking at the door. It's killing him to see her wait like this, she notices Johnny's emotions - a little mean, cold.

CAROL (CONT'D)  
What're you looking at?

Johnny's at a loss. Viv's there too, with empathy for this mess.

VIV  
Let's get back in bed, Mom.

Viv helps her up. Johnny just watches.

He thinks about that.

22 INT. CAROL'S HOUSE - SIDE ROOM - DAY

22

INSERT into MOM MEMORY sequence.

CU of VIV, as if she was in that room in Carols' house. Just her side of conversation.

VIV  
(You want to know what my problem is? It's that for our entire lives, I'm the only one who challenged them.)

JOHNNY  
Really? Our entire lives?

Now calmer, communicating her point.

VIV  
Yes it's always been this way, it's so easy for you, with me it's always a fight, they treated me like I was a crazy person Johnny and you we're never there for me, you couldn't deal with it.

JOHNNY

You didn't make it easy to help you.

VIV

I wanted help. And you couldn't give it to me...  
You're losing a mom who adored you.  
I'm losing a mom who never understood me. (Who made me feel this big).

32

INT. CAROL'S HOUSE - DAY

32

Dolphin-shaped balloons scuttle across ceiling.

Carol has just died. A hospice person leaves the room, closes the door. Louis Armstrong playing. Johnny kneeling on the floor by the bed; he's watching Viv comb her hair, kiss her on forehead? Johnny's surprised she's so sweet to her.

JESSE

Why aren't you married?

JOHNNY

I was with Luisa, we broke up, while my mom was sick.

Johnny pulls up a picture of her on his phone. We see her too.

JESSE

Did you love her?

JOHNNY

I still do.

JESSE

Then why break up?

Jesse leaves to get his pajamas, Johnny half follows.

JOHNNY

(I don't know) We were together a really long time, so it's impossible to tell who did what wrong to who, the line between you and the other person gets very blurry. But you're just not making each other happy anymore. Even when you want to.



39 INT. JESSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

39

Johnny reads a book (TBD) to Jesse in bed.

Jesse begins to lean on him, this blind trust and closeness is new for Johnny. Does Jesse need to show him how the kid fits into the crook of his arm?

JESSE  
Why aren't you married?

JOHNNY  
I was with Luisa, we broke up,  
while my mom was sick.

Johnny pulls up a picture of her on his phone. We see her too.

JESSE  
Did you love her?

JOHNNY  
I still do.

JESSE  
Then why break up?

Jesse leaves to get his pajamas, Johnny half follows.

JOHNNY  
(I don't know) We were together a  
really long time, so it's  
impossible to tell who did what  
wrong to who, the line between you  
and the other person gets very  
blurry. But you're just not making  
each other happy anymore. Even when  
you want to.

CUT TO: Johnny tucking Jesse in.

JESSE  
You can just kiss me on the head,  
put the book away, say sweet  
dreams, leave that one light on,  
and then go.

Johnny does all that.

JOHNNY  
Sweet dreams.

JESSE  
Sweet dreams to you.

As he puts book away, he finds: "Bi-Polar Bear Family Book".  
He takes it with him.

INT. VIV'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Johnny Documents recent events into his recorder.

INT. VIV'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny read's "Bi-Polar Bear Family Book" in bed.

TEXT SUPERS ON : "The Bipolar Bear Family By Angela Holloway"

Johnny's V.O. over:

156 INT. JESSE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 156

CUT TO: Jesse is dancing with Paul. Paul is beautifully lost  
in the music, encouraging Jesse to be more free, more  
intense, to be really into it.

CUT TO: Both breathing hard lying on floor, we half-hear  
Paul's describing the beauty of the music to Jesse.

PAUL

Hear it? AHHHHHHHHH! The way it  
goes from minor to major right  
there, AHHHHHHHHH!

157 INT. VIV'S HOUSE 157

CUT TO: Jesse watching Viv and Paul argue in another room.

41 INT. VIV'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING 41

Jesse is in the living room alone. Johnny enters.

JESSE

Should I call you like? Papa? Dad?  
Or just Johnny.

JOHNNY

We'll whatever feels most  
comfortable to you.

JESSE

I don't know I'm not used to being  
able to pick.

JESSIE

So I might take Johnny? I don't know. What do you want me to call you?

JOHNNY

Well I'm sure this is a difficult transition for you.

JESSE

It is.

JOHNNY

It's new for me also. So we shouldn't force each other to be anything extreme right now, and we can see how it goes after some time passes - that sound OK?

JESSE

Yeah.

JOHNNY

So for now you just call me something personal like, Jesus Christ.

JESSE

I'm not Christian.  
I'm sorry your children died.

That trips Johnny up.

JESSE (CONT'D)

What did they like to do? I'll do that.

JOHNNY

Do we have to do the dead kids part?

Jesse breaks character.

JESSE

Yeah. I told you.

JOHNNY

Yeah, but...

JESSE (CONT'D)

Oh my god, you are so bad at this.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

You don't have to say 'oh my god' like that. I was doing OK, I just, the dead kids thing threw me, it's so sad.

JESSE  
Never-mind.

He walks off, leaving Johnny to wonder about the shortcomings of his performance - and filled with admiration for this kid.

46 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - NIGHT 46

Johnny's working on interviews on his laptop at night. Jesse asleep on couch behind him, wearing his own headphones and with an iPad in his lap. Johnny reads a text.

TEXT SUPERS ON:

Paul's not doing good  
He's been hiding how bad  
He needs go to the hospital again  
But he won't, trying to get him  
into place without doing the whole  
ER room thing.

Johnny reacts to the text, surprised, guilty. He sneaks into the office, away from sleeping Jesse.

44 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT 44

JUMP CUTS / FRAGMENTS: We see Viv trying to negotiate with PAUL, 40s. He's talking manically, looks unhinged, hasn't slept. MOSES, a large rescue dog, is there.

JOHNNY (V.O.)  
What's going on?

47 INT. VIV'S HOME OFFICE / EXT. OAKLAND STREET (NEAR MELROSE 47 LAUNDROMAT) - NIGHT

Moses is pulling Viv throughout.

VIV  
He's all manic again, his brain's eating him up. He hasn't been like this in a long time, and he's totally paranoid about me helping.

JOHNNY

I'm sorry (I didn't believe you).

VIV

He saw me packing his bag, he got so scared. I stopped trying to make him go. Can you stay another day or two? I'll call his school - you can take him actually, I'll add you to that list...I'll talk Paul into checking himself in.

JOHNNY

OK, I can stay.

VIV

Thank you.

JOHNNY

But they set up all these interviews for the weekend. I'm supposed to go back Friday. I told them I'd be there.

Viv knows how much Johnny clings to work.

VIV

I know. Thanks Johnny. Don't tell Jesse, OK? I will later.

JOHNNY

Right.

Johnny hangs up the phone, goes back to the living room. Jesse's sleeping on the couch; Johnny's in a new situation.

34 INT. KITCHEN / DINING - LATER 34

They eat together.

48 EXT. SANTA MONICA MUSCLE BEACH - DAY 48

(Time permitting, quick call from Roxanne about work in NYC on the way, or in VO over wide shot)

49 EXT. BEACH / SANTA MONICA PIER - EVENING 49

Johnny and Jesse sit on the sand, underneath Johnny's feeling taxed by all this - how's he gonna stay here and do his work?

He has a plan.

JOHNNY  
You've never been to New York?

JESSE  
No.

JOHNNY  
Maybe you should come with me?

JESSE  
Really?

We see Jesse really want this - a vulnerable, open child.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
Like now?

JOHNNY  
Yeah? I have to do more interviews,  
but maybe you could help me? Do  
ambient sound?

JESSE  
I'd love that.

Johnny sees the purity, sees he's manipulated a kid.  
Something conflicted, something more complicated growing  
inside him.

INT JESSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny reads to Jesse in bed.

51 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY 51

Viv and Moses walk around, call out - no one there. SHOTS OF  
empty rooms at Paul's.

I can't find Paul  
He's not at his house  
Not answering phone.

51A INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - LATER 51A

CUT TO: Viv now on the phone in Paul's.

VIV  
Can you stay longer?

JOHNNY

Maybe he just doesn't want to get better. He just wants you back taking care of him.

VIV

Nobody would want to feel what he's feeling.

51B EXT. SCHOOL - INTERCUT WITH/VIV

51B

Johnny is waiting for Jesse to get out of school.

JOHNNY

What if Jesse just come with me to New York? He said he wanted to go.

VIV

You invited him?? Johnny?

JOHNNY

I want to help - this is how I can help.

VIV

That's not gonna work.

JOHNNY

Viv...

VIV

No. I'll call some friends, I'll call you back.

IMPROV Goodbyes: She hangs up as Jesse appears from the building. IMPROV asks if Johnny talked to Viv about going to New York.

JESSE

What did she say?

JOHNNY

She said she loves you.

INT. VIV'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Johnny documents recent events into recorder.

52 INT. VIV'S KITCHEN / INT/EXT. BODEGA - NIGHT

52

Johnny's cooking with Jesse. Johnny's looking at Jesse like he's already lost all of this - and misses it. His phone rings.

He goes outside/other room, out of hearing range. Viv walks down the aisle of the Bodega, talking to Johnny. Hard for her, but with some kinda love for Johnny too...

VIV

Can you get someone to watch him while you work? Can you make a realistic plan for that to happen?

He didn't think it was going to go this way. It means more to him than he understood it would.

JOHNNY

Yes.

VIV

Who will that person be?

JOHNNY

Viv, I'll figure it out, I'll get someone.

ON: Viv's face, stuck between bad choices.

IMPROV: Viv standing in front of Butcher Case, looking at steaks. A customer gives Viv grief about bringing Moses into the Bodega.

Viv fights back.

53 INT. VIV'S OFFICE - DAY

53

Johnny finds a "Mother's" book on Viv's desk. He begins to read it.

JOHNNY OR VIV (V.O.)

"Motherhood is the place in our culture where we lodge, or rather bury, the reality of our own conflicts, of what it means to be fully human.

TITLE SUPERS: Mothers: An Essay on Love and Cruelty by Jacqueline Rose



160 INT. VIV'S LECTURE HALL 160

Viv talks to a student as class leaves. She's confident and filled with life.

JOHNNY OR VIV (V.O.)

"It is the ultimate scapegoat for our personal and political failings,

204 INT. VIV'S HOUSE 204

CUT TO: Jesse and Viv at the dining table.

JOHNNY OR VIV (V.O.)

"For everything that is wrong with the world, which it becomes the task - unrealizable, of course - of mothers to repair.

INT. VIV'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

CUT TO: Jesse and Viv having Saturday morning Mozart listening party.

What are we doing to mothers when we expect them to carry the burden of everything that is hardest to contemplate about our society and ourselves? Mothers cannot help but be in touch with the most difficult aspects of any fully lived life. Why on earth should it fall to them to paint things bright and innocent and safe?"

57 EXT. DRONE SHOTS - NYC CHINATOWN 57

Maybe from water to city.

61 EXT. NYC - MANHATTAN BRIDGE AREA - LATER AFTERNOON 61

CUTS: Johnny watches Jesse recording the very busy world of sound that's NYC - the huge booming sound of the subway crossing the bridge. Sometimes, Jesse closes his eyes as he listens; Johnny takes a picture/video of him recording...

CUT TO Baseball field with Manhattan Bridge in distance. Johnny watches Jesse; Johnny loves watching Jesse record.

Jesse puts the mic up to Johnny's face. Jesse smiles. Johnny pulls up his headphones.

JOHNNY  
You like New York?

JESSE  
Yes.

JOHNNY  
Recordings, for me - you get to  
keep the sounds, they don't go away  
- that's what I like about it.

It's Johnny's way of saying "everything's gonna be OK" - Jesse senses something, and walks off.

Johnny watches, concerned, not knowing what to do.

EXT. WATERFRONT - DAY

Johnny and Jesse walk along the bikepath.

TEXT SUPER'S ON:

Your kid says he likes NYC better than LA

Little traitor

Wish I could see him there

62

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

62

Jesse walks with Johnny and Roxeanne. She doesn't know what to make of this Johnny. The one who's not all work - it's touching and confusing.

Johnny is texting with and they're all looking for Fernando who approaches from the other direction.

IMPROV hello's and introductions. Something like:

JOHNNY  
This is Fernando, he's a  
friend of ours, he's gonna  
help take care of you while  
we're recording.

FERNANDO  
Hey. Or you can take care of  
me.

JESSE  
I don't need that.



They are taken by Jesse, he eats up the attention. Johnny sees that Jesse's had the whole dessert, clocking that something is changing.

JOHNNY

I thought we were gonna share that?

JESSE

Yeah, and then I just ate it.

Roxy and Fern laugh. Jesse loves the attention. Jesse continues to IMPROV about Parasite brain, one of his other obsessions.

64 EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

64

They all walk home after dinner - Jesse still cranked up.

ROXANNE

Do your friends talk like you do?

JESSE

No, not really.

Johnny's increasingly worried for Jesse, feeling out of control.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Johnny records memories of the day's event into recorder, intercut with:

65 INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

65

Johnny brushes teeth; Jesse talks and paces back and forth in and out of the bathroom, very revved up.

JESSE

How could I get my recordings on the radio?

JOHNNY

I don't know.

JESSE

When you went to school, they taught kids that white people are just like, innocent, or (uses air quotes) "normal".

JOHNNY  
I know, I was there.

JESSE  
Do you think you're racist?

Johnny thinks, "On a level every white person in America is racist, but what do I say to this kid?"

JOHNNY  
No...

JESSE  
White people never think they are,  
especially older people like you.

JOHNNY  
Right. Where's your toothbrush?

JESSE  
I don't have one.

JOHNNY  
You didn't pack your toothbrush?  
I told you to pack it?

JESSE  
Do you have trouble expressing your  
emotions?

JOHNNY  
I'm feeling pretty frustrated right  
now.

JESSE  
That's good - it's good to just say  
what you're feeling.

Johnny gets down to Jesse's eye level; Jesse doesn't want to make eye contact. Johnny keeps at it, trying to like see inside Jesse. Jesse bounds out of the bathroom; Johnny's in over his head.

66 INT. JOHNNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

66

Dark room - Johnny's sleeping. Door opens; Jesse enters IMPROVISING about something, waking him up.

JESSE  
My friends don't talk like me,  
because I don't really have any  
friends.

JOHNNY  
 Jesse. It's time to be asleep.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
 I mostly hang out with adults.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
 How much does Pro-Tools cost?

JOHNNY  
 We can talk about that in the morning. You don't need Pro-Tools right now, it's too complicated for you.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
 Let's talk about it now.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
 I'm better at Pro-Tools than you. Just tell me how much it costs. .

67 INT. JOHNNY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

67

IMPROV: Johnny walks Jesse back to his couch; on the way, Jesse pretends he is the orphan, marveling at this wonderful house, this wonderful furniture.

JESSE  
 You have such beautiful things. I've never seen furniture like this.

JOHNNY  
 Please stop.

JESSE  
 We just have wooden benches we have to share with mean children. Don't take me back to the mean children.

68 INT. JOHNNY'S LIVING ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

68

CUT TO: Johnny's lying with Jesse on his couch bed. Seems like Jesse's finally asleep - he begins to slowly escape. First silently sitting up, then a foot on the ground, then slowly up off the couch, then tiptoeing out to leave, he's almost made it - and something creaks. Jesse sits up.

JESSE  
 Can I just sleep with you?

Johnny - to have almost made it out. Johnny marveling at his tenacity, changes course.

JOHNNY

OK.

69 INT. JOHNNY'S ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

69

CUT TO: Johnny's room - they are now both in Johnny's bed, it's feeling more like a sleep over now, Johnny has given up trying to get him to sleep.

JESSE

You had me eat all that sugar. My mom would never let me eat that.

A sense of humor about it all.

JOHNNY

Oh my god. You said she'd let you.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Of course she wouldn't let me eat all that sugar - didn't you read her thing?

JESSE (CONT'D)

Can't you tell me a story?

JOHNNY

No, Jesse - we're done.

JESSE

TELL ME A STORY!

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

OH MY GOD, I'M NOT GOOD AT FICTION.

JESSE (CONT'D)

Tell me about mom when she was little.

Johnny's so tired he doesn't know what he's saying, half asleep.

JOHNNY

She was really cute.

JESSE

Was she crazy?

JOHNNY

What? No.

JESSE

I heard about her boyfriends. That she ran away... got in trouble all the time.

Johnny tries to educate the boy about women.

JOHNNY

Just cause a woman does something wild, or doesn't follow other people's rules doesn't make her crazy, it's real important not to call women crazy...

JESSE

And she got an abortion.

Oops. How did we get here? What to say?

JOHNNY

A woman has a much more complicated deal... A woman's body...

His incomplete attempt hanging in the air. Jesse can feel his failure in the air, takes care of things.

JESSE

I'll show you how my mom puts me to sleep. Just be still. Now rest your feet, and your legs, and your hands, your arms, let your stomach relax.

JOHNNY

My mom would never do this.

JESSE

Shhh. Rest your eyes, your mouth, your jaw. Rest your mind, no more thoughts tonight, no more questions, no worries, just stars in the sky -

Jesse realizes Johnny's asleep.

IMPROV: Jesse puts himself to sleep.

71

INT. JOHNNY'S ROOM - DAWN

71

CUT TO: Towards dawn. Johnny's awake, holding Jesse's hand, listening to his breathing, watching early light coming up - When was the last time he was this present? Hearing the cars outside, people talking, wind in trees.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

He was impossible, I tried everything, I couldn't get him to sleep.



75 EXT. NEW YORK STREETS - MORNING

75

Exhausted Johnny walks with perky Jesse on a busy street. They're carrying shopping bags.

VIV (O.S.)

Did he have sugar? Or screen time?  
He might be overstimulated, he gets  
all cranked up when he's tired.

JOHNNY

You're used to this.

A river of feeling, tears?

VIV (O.S.)

I'm not used to it.

75A EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - SIDE YARD - INTERCUT WITH JOHNNY ON STREET 75A

Viv on phone, Moses with her.

VIV

I fucking hate it. I even hate him  
sometimes. I don't want to clean up  
a mess ever again, make lunch one  
more time in my life, one more  
interrupted thought, just fucking  
picking up shit all day and putting  
it back, talking about some random  
nothing that's so random my mind  
just can't repair itself.

Johnny did not see that coming. He feels for her.

VIV (CONT'D)

You think I'm horrible?

JOHNNY

No.

VIV

He loves those gross little salami-  
and-cheese tube things - you just  
gotta somehow give him protein. Or  
let him to listen to his music.

On Johnny processing how complicated this love is.

JESSE

Look! Balloons!

77 INT/EXT. 5-7 NYC HOMES / REC CENTERS 77

WE SEE: Johnny, Roxanne, go to 5-7 DIFFERENT NYC HOMES over a few days

WE SEE: Kids giving tours of their homes, interviews in bedrooms. Johnny and Roxanne are equals - both record, both ask questions. Some of the homes are wealthy, some not.

WE SEE: Children of emigrants from diverse parts of the world, diverse economic situations.

Q: "HISTORICALLY NEW YORK REPRESENTS THE FUTURE AND POSSIBILITIES FOR SO MANY IMMIGRANTS. WE ASKED TODAY'S CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS WHAT THEY THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE AND THE WORLD THEY LIVE IN NOW..."

WE SEE: Jesse's with them, and Fernando is taking care of him. They are often outside on stoop or in a hallway or bench or park across the street, drawing, listening to something. Jesse does his own ambient recording. We see Johnny checking in, Johnny needing to go off and do interview

**EXT. NEW YORK CITY STOOP:** Fernando and Jesse hang out; Jesse reads a book, waits. Johnny comes out of interview and checks in with Jesse. He's stressed and torn between wanting to take care of Jesse and the pressures of his work.

78 EXT. NYC CVS-TYPE CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT 78

Johnny and Jesse walk down the street, enter store. Johnny on phone/texting with Roxanne as they head in. SOMETHING PLAYFUL, physical going on between the two of them. Maybe Jesse is imitating Johnny and Johnny imitates himself back.

79 INT. NYC CVS-TYPE CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT 79

They enter, Johnny still texting or on phone, Jesse still teasing, they are having fun.

JOHNNY

Find a toothbrush you want. What kinda toothpaste you use?

Jesse runs ahead. Johnny keeps texting, absently walking down aisle. He turns - Jesse's gone. Worried, puts phone away, finds him in another aisle. Jesse holds up brightly-colored toothbrush, it plays a crazy pop song - "I AM YOUR TOOTHBRUSH, CALL ME YOUR FUNKY BRUSH".

Johnny laughing at how much Viv would hate this?

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Your mom would totally flip out.  
This would be like (X) to her.

JESSE  
She's not here.

JOHNNY  
We'll she's actually right.

JESSE I want it.	JOHNNY (CONT'D) We're not getting that - you don't need a song to brush your teeth? Next thing you know you'll -
---------------------	--

Jesse walks away and makes a turn, disappearing. Johnny continues talking over the shelves, then follows.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
You'll need some kind of electronic  
stimuli to do anything, and it's  
important to just live through it,  
peace and quiet, boredom is an  
important thing...

He turns down the aisle that Jesse should be in, but he's not there. Johnny's surprised, but maintains calm.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Jesse?

Down another aisle, and no Jesse - Johnny's more freaked.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Jesse?

Down another aisle, no Jesse. A WORKER comes down the aisle.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Have you seen a little kid?

WORKER  
No.

Johnny turns and runs the other way. Down another aisle - now very worried.

JOHNNY  
JESSE!

He turns, surprised by Jesse behind him with a huge smile.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
What're you doing?

JESSE  
You should see your face!

Jesse laughs. Johnny loses it.

JOHNNY  
Jesse! You can't do that!! YOU  
UNDERSTAND?!

Jesse's laughing more and more.

JESSE  
Oh my god, you're losing it.

JOHNNY  
STOP IT!

JESSE  
STOP IT.

Johnny, a bit out of control, takes hold of Jesse's shoulders, pushes him against a wall, or pulls his arms down towards the ground, until they're both sitting, awkward and not good.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
Stop that!

Johnny stops, wakes up to what he's doing, horrified. Is someone there watching? Johnny lets him go, deals with how out of control that got.

80 EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

80

Busy NYC street, Jesse storms out. Johnny catches up with him. Jesse doesn't want to hold his hand or wait or get eye contact with him, they walk through big city, mad at each other.

80A INT. CHEAT FOR JOHNNY'S NYC APT / INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - ~~SMALL~~  
BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny against the wall of his bathroom we haven't seen.

INTERCUTS WITH INT. PAUL'S HOUSE NIGHT - VIV ALONE IN SMALL ROOM. Maybe intercut with Jesse brewing on the couch in the living room MCU.

Johnny's not as freaked out, confused over-retelling, and confessing everything to Viv. WE MAY ENTER IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS...

JOHNNY

I- I was so scared looking for him, I thought he was gone. And then he jumped out at me - and I was like filled with anger - Viv, I yelled at him.

\*  
\*

VIV

Yeah... I've done it. It's the worst, but it's OK, you just explain to him why you yelled, tell him you were scared, you know, be honest with him. And then apologize to him. It's called a repair, you can look it up. Let me talk to him.

Johnny vulnerable.

JOHNNY

Everything's been going so great.

Helping him out, 'It's OK'.

VIV

He's done it with me before, when he was mad or overwhelmed, Let me talk to him...

Viv waits as Johnny brings the phone to Jesse.

MCU on Jesse on the couch.

VIV (CONT'D)

Sweetie, are you okay?

JESSE

Yeah.

VIV

I miss you.

JESSE

I'm OK. I was just joking around, he didn't need to call you.

VIV

Jesse, you really scared him. You can't do that.

JESSE  
 Mom? Why are you on his side?

VIV  
 There are no sides You gotta listen  
 to Johnny. You're at his place,  
 he's taking care of you.

A pause, Jesse's thinking about something...

JESSE  
 Why? Why's he taking care of me?

81 INT. JOHNNY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

81

Jesse starts up "I AM YOUR TOOTHBRUSH". Johnny sits on the toilet in disbelief. Jesse dances around to the beat of the electronic toothbrush, dances around the house.

JESSE  
 I don't even know you. Why'd my mom  
 let me come with you?

JOHNNY  
 You wanted to come.

JESSE  
 I didn't really have a choice  
 She's a horrible mother.

JOHNNY  
 You don't feel that.

JESSE  
 I know what I feel, you can't say  
 that.

JOHNNY  
 That's true, that's so true - your  
 mom taught you that right?

JESSE  
 She just does what she wants.

JOHNNY  
 We'll no, she doesn't. She needed  
 to help your dad, he needed some  
 help.

Jesse gets more angry.

JESSE

You don't know what you're talking about.

JOHNNY

Why do you think you're here, cause she needs to be there helping him.

Long pause while he takes that in.

JESSE

Is he staying in a place where they make you wear a uniform or a place you can wear your own clothes?

That slugs Johnny, he's in over his head.

JOHNNY

He's not there yet. Your mom's trying to get him to go.

Something turns in Jesse. He becomes calm, puts on his pajamas. Johnny watches him, but Jesse won't give eye contact.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

You OK? I didn't mean to tell you that.

JESSE

I'm tired.

JOHNNY

Talk to me a little?

JESSE

I'm OK.

Jesse leaves. Johnny waits for him to come back. Johnny checks on him. To his surprise, he's asleep, or at least pretending.

156	INT. JESSE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY	156
	Jesse and Paul play on the living room floor.	
83	EXT. NYC STREET / INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - MORNING	83
	Johnny is walking behind Jesse, out of hearing range.	

JOHNNY

He was mad at me about this toothbrush and then he got really mad at you, and I was explaining why you weren't with him cause you were helping Paul and I (guess he knows everything).

VIV

~~He knows.~~ Let me talk to him.

Johnny catches up to Jesse.

JOHNNY

Here, It's your mom.

JESSE

Tell her I'm fine.

JOHNNY

Jesse, c'mon.

JESSE (CONT'D)

She's impossible.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Hey.

VIV

Johnny don't force him.

Johnny puts the phone on speaker, holds it out.

JESSE

I don't wanna talk.

VIV

Jess, babe. Your dad's fine, he's gonna be fine. He's gotten a little out of control, I didn't get it, how he was. But he's gonna be fine.

JESSE

Is he like before?

VIV

Yeah. But he's gonna get better. I didn't want you to worry, but I messed up, I should have told you. I was, I...

JESSE

Are you home now?

VIV

Not yet.

To Johnny.



JESSE  
Just tell her I'm fine.

Johnny puts phone off speaker, back to his ear.

JOHNNY  
He says he's fine.

VIV  
Tell him I miss him and I love him.

JOHNNY  
She says she loves you and she misses you.

Jesse tunes it out, starts walking away. Johnny looking at him, on the phone with Viv. This all kills her, but she's thinking of how to make it not so hard for him.

VIV  
He might want to listen to the Nutcracker now - you might offer him that.

84 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - LATER 84

NUTCRACKER PLAYS. Jesse, wearing the big headphones, is walking ahead of Johnny on the avenue alongside the park. Johnny follows.

CUT TO: They're walking through Central Park, Jesse ahead of Johnny, not looking back. NUTCRACKER PLAYS.

87 INT. JOHNNY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 87

Jesse's in the tub, still aloof. Johnny sits on bathroom floor.

JESSE  
Did your child fight about washing his hair? Do you want me to do that?

JOHNNY  
Do you want to talk?

JESSE  
At the orphanage, we have to wash our own hair.

JOHNNY  
That's harsh.

JESSE  
What did your kid like to do?

JOHNNY  
Don't have a kid.

JESSE  
Why not?

Thinks. Somehow sincere and playful at same time. A list of potential answers.

JOHNNY  
I'm too selfish?  
Only an insane person would have a kid?  
It requires another person to have a kid?  
All the steps it takes to get that to happen, I never got through all the steps. I always thought I would.

Jesse appreciates the honesty, even if he doesn't get all the details. Changes something inside him.

JESSE  
You still can. But a woman your age probably couldn't.

JOHNNY  
Thank you.

Johnny studies this strange secret person.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Do you want to fight about washing your hair and then I'll wash your hair?

Jesse nods yes, and then they don't fight but Johnny does wash his hair. OR IMPROV: They fight and Johnny washes his hair. Jesse is disassociating but also enjoying the care and touch.

87A INT. PAUL'S HOUSE / JOHNNY'S NYC APT - NIGHT

87A

Viv reads Wizard of Oz into phone, to Johnny and Jesse sitting on couch in NYC.

Viv is leaning against bed in little bedroom.

VIV  
 (After reading a while) You guys  
 still there?

JOHNNY  
 Yeah.

JESSE  
 Keep reading mama.

95 INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 95

CUT TO: Jesse asleep, or pretending to be asleep. Johnny  
 takes a photo and sends it to Viv.

88 EXT. NYC STREET - MANHATTAN BRIDGE AREA - DAY 88

Jesse record ambient sound under the Manhattan Bridge.  
 Reveal Johnny and Roxanne watching him.

JOHNNY  
 He's talking about what's going on  
 in this totally indirect way. He's  
 reacting to it all but not being  
 direct with me so I'm struggling  
 with how to help him. When I try to  
 address it he makes me feel stupid  
 cause he see's right through it  
 all, and then he just says he's  
 fine.

ROXANNE  
 Remember when your mom was dying  
 and we were on the phone all the  
 time and I didn't even know you  
 were with her? (OR: and when I'd  
 try to help you'd make me feel  
 stupid) Or when Luisa left, and you  
 were, 'fine'. (He's like you?)

Johnny thinks about that.

WE HEAR: INTERVIEWS in V.O.

Q: SAY THERE WAS SOMEBODY YOUR AGE THAT WAS COMING FROM  
 ANOTHER COUNTRY. WHAT WOULD YOU TELL THEM ABOUT THE U.S.?

INTERCUT WITH: SHOTS OF THESE KIDS IN THEIR REAL WORLDS -  
 THEIR REAL HOMES, WHERE THEY HANG OUT IN NYC.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jesse does homework at the table while Johnny edits interviews on his laptop.

TITLE SUPERS: "AN INCOMPLETE LIST OF WHAT THE CAMERAPERSON ENABLES BY KRISTEN JOHNSON"

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I ask for trust, cooperation and permission without knowing where the experience will lead the subject.

WE SEE: Scenes from Johnny and Roxanne's work life, interviewing kids.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I can and will leave a place, a situation, a problem, but the people I interview cannot. The work offers the interviewer access and a reason to stay in a world not my own, complete distraction from my own life, a sense of invincibility, a sense on invisibility. I traffic and hope without the ability to know what will happen in the future. The work offers the subject a chance to speak of things they have never spoken of. A chance to see themselves as subjects worthy of time and attention. The work offers the subjects the creation of an image of self, the distributions of which they cannot control, on a global scale, in perpetuity.

91 EXT. NYC PARK- EVENING

91

Jesse walks with Johnny through the park. Johnny has Viv on speaker phone.

VIV (O.S.)

You let Johnny interview you yet?

JESSE

Oh god no.

VIV (O.S.)

That seems like a smart move. Too many questions with that guy right?

(MORE)

VIV (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Not enough answers. Aw, I miss you  
so much babe.

JESSE  
I miss you too mama.

91A EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT 91A  
Johnny and Jesse walk into a pizza place.

92 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT 92  
Jesse and Johnny sit at a counter. Jesse pulls out the  
recording equipment; Johnny watches, wary. Jesse puts the mic  
up to Johnny's mouth.

JESSE  
Can I interview you?

Unsure, but always proud of Jesse's recording interest.

JOHNNY  
Sure.

JESSE  
Do you think this restaurant will  
be here in the future?

JOHNNY  
No.

JESSE  
By the end of your life, what do  
you think the natural world will be  
like?

Johnny doesn't want to say the truth in front of Jesse.

JOHNNY  
Probably, less good.

JESSE  
Why?

He's strangely not good at answering, even Jesse's surprised.

JOHNNY  
Cause, you know.

JESSE  
What are you afraid of happening in  
the future?

JOHNNY  
Lots of things.

JESSE  
Why don't you and my mom act like  
brother and sister?

He doesn't answer, just looks at Jesse...

JESSE (CONT'D)  
Why are you alone?

JOHNNY  
You're not my therapist.

Jesse's stares him down. Johnny thinks he's being very honest  
and revealing.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
When I'm not working, I'm not very  
good at talking to people, keeping  
up with them. And I spend my time  
doing my thing, which people  
notice, so people stop trying.

JESSE  
Blah blah blah.

JOHNNY  
Blah blah blah.

JESSE  
Did you tell my mom to leave my dad  
when he first got sick?

How much to say?

JESSE (CONT'D)  
Did you?

JOHNNY  
I told your mom to take care of  
herself. She sometimes had a  
tendency of loving these  
interesting but chaotic guys. I  
wasn't trying to take your mom away  
from your dad I was trying to take  
care of my sister.

Jesse's just looking at him.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

And your mom would say I don't know what's good for her, and that I turned her sadness into some scary problem just like our parents did, and Paul understood her like I never did, loved her, I don't get him, and she's probably right.

Older waitress comes up to them.

WAITRESS

You two guys all done here?

The waitress obviously thinks they're so cute together.

JESSE

He's not my dad.

Defeated.

JOHNNY

I'm his uncle. We can still be cute together.

93 EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT 93

Jesse's ahead as they walk home; Johnny's watching him, feeling like a failure. Then, to his surprise, Jesse stops, gestures for Johnny to catch up. When he does, Jesse holds out his hand for Johnny to take - he does, not understanding, but it's no big deal to Jesse. They walk home hand-in-hand.

CUT TO: Johnny and Jesse pretend to do professional wrestling match after shower.

96 INT./EXT PAUL'S HOUSE - DAY 96

MOS: Viv packs up a bag. See her and Paul leave the house.

VIV V.O.

Get my stuff together, just take me to the hospital, if you don't take me I'll run away again won't I?

97 INT. ER ROOM - ROOM - DAY OR NIGHT 97

Viv is with Paul while he's vitals are taken and a Medical Doctor is asking him routine questions.

DR. HARA

Hello Paul, my name is Dr. Hara. I understand you aren't feeling well. Have you been sleeping? Have you been eating? Have you been drinking or taking drugs? I understand you have been hospitalized for bi polar before...

CUT TO: 30 minutes later. Now a ER PSYCH DOCTOR is now interviewing Paul. Doctor's questions and Pauls IMPROV answers fade below Viv's call sound.

DR. RAO

I understanding you were in the hospital for a manic episode several years ago, your partner Viv is reporting that you are not eating or sleeping and that you are displaying similar symptoms, is that correct? I understand you got angry the other night and were in an agitated state that scared Viv, can you tell me what happened? When was the last time you slept, how much on average have you been sleeping a night, have you been eating regularly, have you had any big changes? Have you recently lost your job or had any big shifts in your life. Have you ever hurt yourself or tried to hurt yourself before. Is there any family history of completed suicide.

VIV (V.O.)

He had to go to ER, it's so humiliating, they just ask the same things over and over and it makes him so scared. Finally got him into the real treatment place. But no one else will visit him, I need to stay up here a few more days.

98

INT. RICHMOND KERR MEDICAL CENTER - PAUL'S ROOM - DAY

98

Nurse is going through his bags, doing contraband check and logging all his items. "No drawstrings, no clothes with logos" See Viv help Paul pull the drawstrings out of his sweatpants. "No mirrors" "Why no mirrors?" No answer.

He signs consent forms.



"No shoelaces" See Viv and Paul take shoelaces out of his shoes. "No flat irons, curling irons, no items with cords"

Someone takes phone, other things out of Paul's bag.

No shoes with laces. No metal  
containers. No belts no mirrors no  
phone no money.

Nurse; "Bring a list of phone numbers, you can't bring your cell phone, she can take your wallet".

See them write down some numbers, Paul gives her his wallet and phone.

VIV (V.O.)

He wants me to stay until he's a  
little better?

I can visit between 6-7  
He can only call for 10 minutes a  
time. He's so freaked out.

101 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT 101

Viv laying on floor, talking on phone.

VIV

Don't want him in pain, so afraid.  
I want Jesse to have his dad.

101A INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT WITH VIV'S SIDE 101A

Johnny opens his door, Jesse sleeps on his couch. He takes call in kitchen or windowsill.

JOHNNY

He's OK here, he can stay with me.

106 EXT. DIVISION ST TRIANGLE NYC STREET - LATER 106

Johnny's a little stressed on the phone with Roxeanne, Jesse's been bugging him to go to the park for a while now.

JESSE

Johnny, Johnny, Johnny. Let's  
go to the park.

JOHNNY

What? Every time you say my  
name it just means you want  
something.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
Get off the phone.

JOHNNY  
Hang on a fucking second OK?  
Just let me finish this call.

ROXANNE  
(teasing) Hang on a fucking a  
second?

Johnny gets away from Jesse. Jesse begins to play with sound recording in Division street triangle, many people milling about heading to work. We stay close on Johnny on the phone.

ROXANNE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
They want the South, or something rural.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
This's such bad timing...

ROXANNE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I know an amazing person in New Orleans. She could hook us up with some kids there.

Johnny turns and doesn't see Jesse. Concerned but also thinking maybe Jesse's just hiding from him again, doesn't want to be fooled like at the pharmacy. He starts looking, heading towards Seward Park, but stays on the phone...

JOHNNY  
Fuck, do we need to add in another city? We have good stuff, and I got Jesse.

As Johnny gets increasingly worried, walking towards the park, getting up to a trot. Does he call out once, "Jesse stop hiding".

ROXANNE  
This is a great opportunity. This is good news.

JOHNNY  
Can you just go?

ROXANNE  
Uhm, we said we'd do this together?

He's now fully worried, can't find Jesse.

JOHNNY  
Rox, I have to go....

He runs back from the corner of Essex towards the Division triangle. He gets there now Jesse.

He heads west on Canal looking, no Jesse.

He see's Jesse across the street.

JOHNNY RUNS ACROSS THE STREET.

JUST AFTER HE DOES A BUS PULLS INTO BUST STOP, JUST UP THE BLOCK FROM JOHNNY AND JESSE.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Jesse.

Jesse looks terrified. Angry. Wild.

JESSE

Where'd you go?!

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I was right there.

They dodge in and out of people as they argue.

JESSE IS HEADING TOWARDS THE STATIONARY BUS WHICH LANDED JUST UP THE BLOCK.

JESSE (CONT'D)

No you weren't.

JOHNNY

I was right there on the phone and I said gimme me a second and I turned around and you ran off.

JESSE

You lost me!

JOHNNY

I didn't.

JESSE (CONT'D)

You did.

THE BUS DOORS OPEN, PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO COME OUT.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I'M SORRY IF I LOST YOU. I WAS TRYING TO FUCKING TAKE CARE OF THINGS.

JESSE HEADS UP THE BLOCK INTO THE CROWD OF PEOPLE GETTING OFF THE BUS. JESSE'S HEADING TOWARDS THE DOOR OF THE BUS.

THEY SHARE A LOOK LIKE, 'YOU WOULDN'T / I WOULD'. JOHNNY GRABS HIM FROM BEHIND MAYBE? MAYBE JOHNNY SAYS MORE AS HE'S HOLDING JESSE.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
DO YOU KNOW HOW IMPOSSIBLE YOU  
ARE?! YOU ARE OUT OF CONTROL AND YOU  
HAVE NO IDEA HOW OUT OF CONTROL.

Jesse's squirms away, pushes through crowd away from Johnny,  
onto the bus.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Hey! Come back.

Jesse doesn't, Johnny follows him onto the bus. The doors  
close behind him. Jesse sits, Johnny sits next to him.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Why did you do that?

Jesse doesn't answer at first, then.

JESSE  
I don't know.

Johnny's a little out of his mind.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
I don't need you.

JOHNNY  
I lost you. You understand I'm  
responsible for you? That could've  
been really really bad. Do you  
understand?

JESSE  
I don't need you.

JOHNNY  
You so need me. (Your mom so needs  
you).

Nothing from Jesse. Johnny feels bad.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry I lost you.

Nothing from Jesse.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Could you say you're sorry?

JESSE  
My head wants to apologize but my  
body doesn't.

Johnny's impressed, but wonders if he can really take care of this kid.

108 INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

108

Johnny away from Jesse in a room, pacing, disturbed.

JOHNNY

I lost him. It was terrifying. I get he was mad at me, but to walk off into the city, get on a fucking bus? (That's insane?!)

VIV (V.O.)

He's a kid, you're the adult and you said you'd take care of him.

108A INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT / EXT. PARKED CAR NEAR PAUL'S - ~~NIGHT~~

Johnny's torn up, on phone with Viv.

JOHNNY

I know.

Viv hears his pain, understanding, but also exhausted.

VIV

Jesse's feeling things are really out of control, right? This situation *really is* out of control, and he's saying in his kid way, 'I'm feeling out of control - can you handle how out of control I am? Am I gonna be OK? Even if I hide? Even if I jump on this bus? Is everything gonna be OK? Can you handle it? Can you handle me??'

JOHNNY

I yelled at him Viv.

VIV

I've done that. It's horrible, right?

Johnny thinks he's seeing himself clearly now.

JOHNNY

I'm in this fantasy I've got it under control.

VIV

Everyone fucks up, you just admit it to him and explain your needs and feelings and what happened. (It's called doing a 'repair', look it up).

JOHNNY

What if I can't?

She'd crack?

VIV

OK, so you thought you were the hero and now it's rough and so you're gonna bail?

JOHNNY

I came to see *you*.

She can't even really talk to him if he's gonna pull that?

VIV

And you got Jesse who's so much sweeter.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Johnny documents recent events into his recorder.

JOHNNY

I ran up and down the street calling out his name. I saw him from across the street as a bus crossed in front of me. I ran towards him, screaming out his name - "JESSE." He was mad at me. He was scared. He turned and walked away and got onto a bus. I don't like feeling this, but I feel like he's spoiled. Or I am.

109

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

109

Johnny is packing Jesse's bag. Jesse won't help, won't look at him. Johnny has resigned himself, is going through with this. Johnny takes Jesse's bag and his bag to the door.

CUT TO: Johnny's returned, Jesse still lying on the bed, not moving. Johnny lays next to him on the bed.

JESSE

I can't believe you're doing this.

JOHNNY

I'm sorry. You didn't do anything wrong. It's not your fault. I'm not able to take care of you, in the right way. As soon as I'm done with work I'll come to LA. We can do whatever you want. I'd love to do that.

Jesse just stares him down.

110 EXT. NYC STREETS

110

Johnny and Jesse in back seat of a cab.

Long moment, Jesse maybe sneaking peaks at Johnny.

Silent, Jesse more and more angry at Johnny. Johnny determined.

JESSE

My stomach hurts.

JOHNNY

Yeah?

He doesn't answer for a bit...

JESSE

Yes. I have to go poop I think.

JOHNNY

Really?

JESSE

Like now.

JOHNNY

You can't wait?

JESSE

No.

110A EXT. RESTAURANT ON BROADWAY ON THE WAY TO JFK - DAY

110A

The cab pulls over next to a restaurant.

Johnny asks the cab driver to wait and takes Jesse inside.

110B INT. RESTAURANT ON THE WAY TO JFK - DAY

110B

Johnny and Jesse enter the empty restaurant. Johnny asks someone working there where the bathroom is. They get pointed to the back.

Jesse enters a stall. Johnny waits outside the door. After a beat.

JOHNNY

You okay?

JESSE

No.

JOHNNY

Okay, well hurry up because we gotta go to the airport.

JESSE

No.

JOHNNY

What?

On Jesse in bathroom.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Are you going poop?

JESSE

No.

JOHNNY

Do you even have to go to the bathroom? (No response.) Huh?

On Johnny in restaurant.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Ohh, you got me, you got me. You got me, you... All right, fun time's over, let's go, time to come out.

JESSE

No.

JOHNNY

Jesse, come out right now.

JESSE

No.

Cut to inside bathroom.



JESSE (CONT'D)

I want to stay with you. I'm sorry  
I hid on the street. I heard you  
talking on the phone, you can't  
just take care of me. I'm sorry  
Johnny. I'm sorry I hid, I'm sorry  
I ran onto the bus. I AM sorry. I  
don't want to go home. My mom's  
just gonna be sad about my dad -  
and my dad's not even there.

110C EXT. RESTAURANT ON WAY TO JFK 110C

Johnny runs back outside to the cab, pays the driver and  
brings their bags into the restaurant.

112 INT. RESTAURANT/I/E MEDICAL CENTER - INTERCUT 112

CUT TO: Jesse sitting at a table happily eating something.  
Johnny's away from him, in a dance floor area on phone with  
Viv.

JOHNNY

I think he should come with me.

DOES? Johnny walks the phone to Jesse, he turns away to talk  
with his mom. On Johnny's face watching the call happen.

114 EXT DRONE OR DRIVING SHOT - DAY 114

We fly up Mississippi, or over the city, we arrive in NOLA.

V.O. Interviews with kids from New Orleans.

INT. NEW ORELANS KID'S HOME - DAY

We see Johnny interviewing.

115 EXT/INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - DAY 115

Jump cuts: Johnny, Jesse, Rox and Fern arrive.

They are greeted by Johnny and Rox's friend, SUNNI. They're  
all staying at Sunni's they find where they'll crash.

Jesse explores, unpacks, does some of his Orphan routine.

126 INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY 26

JOHNNY WORKS WITH ROX AND FERN, SUNNI TELLS THEM ABOUT NOLA. JESSE LYING BORED ON THE FLOOR IN HIS ROOM, BIG HEADPHONES ON, LISTENING TO NUTCRACKER/MOZART.

121 INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Johnny and Jesse are on their beds. Johnny's reading from his laptop.

JOHNNY

How this happens will depend on your personality, as some people prefer to talk... Calmly invite your child to hear you out. You can try, (Johnny acts this out to Jesse) "Hey, I made a mistake and would like to talk to you about that. May I come in?"

JESSE

Sure.

Johnny goes between reading and performing to Jesse. Comes over to Jesse's bed, they're side by side now.

JOHNNY

Try something like... "Did you feel scared when I shouted?" "Did you feel like I let you down when I was going to take you home?"

JESSE

I did.

JOHNNY

Yeah. Then I say, "I feel badly about how I behaved. Are you feeling mad at me? It's okay if you are. I'd like to hear whatever you're feeling and thinking."

JESSE

I thought were being a pain in the ass.

JOHNNY

Right. (Then back to reading) "I am feeling very - use a feeling word..."

Johnny thinks about what he's feeling. Jesse's getting more and more into this, leaning into Johnny.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Shitty, Stupid, out of touch. Sad.  
"Share with your child what you  
were feeling and what you needed."  
I was overwhelmed. When I lost you  
I thought something horrible was  
gonna happen to you, and I couldn't  
handle that?

JESSE

What did you need?

JOHNNY

I needed to be in control.

Back to reading.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

"Don't defend yourself with phrases  
like 'but you were acting crazy'" -  
right, my mom was really good at  
doing that.

JESSE

My mom doesn't do that.

JOHNNY

"Then, from the bottom of your  
heart, look your child in the eye,  
and say you are sorry."

Johnny is surprised - that hits in the heart.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I'm really sorry, Jesse - I didn't  
know what to do.

JESSE

It's OK.

JOHNNY

Your mom does all this?

JESSE

Yeah. But she doesn't read it from  
a computer.

NT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

CUT TO: The room is now dark, then Jesse turns on the light, waking Johnny up. "Turn off the light, Jesse."

Jesse can't sleep - IMPROV: continues to talk about something in granular detail. Johnny tries to get him back into bed, but Jesse keeps talking.

JESSE

Can I be the orphan now?

JOHNNY

Sure.

He takes a moment to change... He's a little different somehow.

JESSE

Is it OK if I sleep with you?

JOHNNY

Sure.

He snuggles with Johnny.

JESSE

Is there anything about my past you'd like to ask me?

JOHNNY

What was your mom like?

He thinks for a beat then begins...

JESSE

She was very nice.

JOHNNY

Really - you remember her?

153 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - BATHROOM

153

CUT TO BATHROOM: VIV READING IN BATH.

JESSE (V.O.)

She liked baths. She'd act like she never got to take one even though she took them all the time.

151 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - KITCHEN 151

CUT TO KITCHEN: VIV CLEANING AS SHE LISTENS TO A PODCAST.

JESSE (V.O.)

When she got home after work she'd always say 'OK time to clean up' and she'd clean the kitchen, and the rest of the house all bangy loud. And I'd say, 'why are you so loud are you mad??' And she'd say, 'I'm not loud.'

159 INT. VIV'S OFFICE 159

CUT TO: Viv writes at her office.

JESSE (V.O.)

She wrote books. Fiction and Non-Fiction.

INT. VIV'S OFFICE - DAY

CUT TO: Jesse sits on the couch, Viv sings.

JESSE (V.O.)

She's always singing old songs from when she was a kid.

155 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - JESSE'S ROOM - NIGHT 155

CUT TO: Viv helps Jesse get ready for bed.

JESSE (V.O.)

She thought about weird things.

Viv kind of feeling the air?

VIV

All the things that have ever been said in this house? All the families that lived here before us. Can you feel them? All the loves and hatreds and confusions, people's big dreams and hopes and all that? All the things that happened on this piece of land - good things, bad things - some people can feel that. Can you feel it?

160A INT. VIV'S SMALLER CLASSROOM 160A

CUT TO: Viv teaches a seminar style class with a few students.

JESSE (V.O.)  
She taught her classes.

52A INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT 52A

CUT TO: Viv eats a steak.

JESSE (V.O.)  
When she was stressed out, she would just cook herself a big steak. And just eat it.

161 INT. VIV'S HOUSE 161

CUT TO HOUSE: VIV LAUGHS WITH FRIENDS.

JESSE (V.O.)  
She loved hanging out with her friends.

204 INT. VIV'S HOUSE 204

CUT TO: Jesse and Viv having Saturday morning Mozart listening party.

JESSE (V.O.)  
She says, she'll never know everything about me, and I'll never know everything about her, that's just the way it is.

128 EXT. 7TH WARD KID INTERVIEW HOME / RENTAL VAN - DAY 128

IMPROV: Johnny gets Jesse and Fern set up with art supplies, headphones in rental minivan.

129 INT/EXT. 7TH WARD KID INTERVIEW HOME - LATER 129

INSIDE: Johnny and Roxanne interview a kid.

IMPROV: DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR HOMES. BEING INTERVIEWED BY JOHNNY AND ROXANNE.

Q: DO YOU FEEL LIKE ADULTS UNDERSTAND WHAT KIDS ARE GOING THROUGH?

Q: YOU SAID THIS WAS ONE OF THE HARDEST HIT AREAS OF KATRINA, WHAT ARE THE STORIES YOU'VE HEARD?

INTERCUT WITH OUTSIDE: Jesse is already a bit bored, explores outside the car, headphones on. Fern is busy, watching Jesse while on phone arranging other interviews.

MAYBE Jesse comes to the house, looks through open door, or window? Watches Johnny interview from a distance - that's also boring.

130 INT. 2ND KID INTERVIEW HOME - SAME DAY 130

New home, ROXEANNE AND SUNNI interviews a new kid.

131 INT. SCHOOL / COMMUNITY CENTER NEAR CITY PARK - LATER SAME DAY 131

Roxanne interviews a kid.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENS TO YOU AFTER YOU DIE?

INT. SCHOOL / COMMUNITY CENTER NEAR CITY PARK

Johnny, feeling rushed, checks on Jesse and Fern between interviews.

132 INT. SCHOOL / COMMUNITY CENTER NEAR CITY PARK - LATER 132

In a room Johnny does an interview.

Q: DO YOU THINK THAT THE WORLD IS FAIR?

INT. KID INTERVIEW HOME - DAY

Sunni and Johnny interview a kid.

Q: WHAT CAUSES FLOODING? WITHIN YOURSELF? IN YOUR MIND? IN YOUR HEART? IN YOUR SPIRIT? WHAT CAUSES FLOODING, WITHIN YOU?

130 INT. NEW KID INTERVIEW HOME - SAME DAY 130

Sunni and Roxanne interview a new kid at the dining table.

Q: SAY IF YOUR PARENTS WERE YOUR CHILDREN, WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU WOULD WANT THEM TO LEARN?

INT. HOMMER PLESSY CLASSROOM

Johnny sits with a kid in classroom.

Q: IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT YOURSELF, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

136

INT. HALLWAY OR ADJOINING ROOM AT HOMER PLESSY

136

Johnny exits the room, exhausted from interviews, finds Jesse - eating snacks and reading a book with Fern

JOHNNY

Thank you.

It went great, but Johnny's more in touch with the costs.

FERN

Go good? Good stuff?

JOHNNY

Yeah, really good. You guys OK?

Johnny notices that Jesse looks upset, spent, he's cried?

FERN

We're doing better, he ran out of snacks, and the iPad battery died. Some tears were shed, we went to the bookstore and got some snacks.

JESSE

I'm sorry.

JOHNNY

Fuck, I'm sorry. I should've planned better.

JESSE

Don't cuss.

Johnny sits down next to Jesse, hugs him. Fern lets them be.

JOHNNY

You OK?

JESSE

Can you finish this?



Johnny sits down next to him, gets the book, begins reading "Star Child". Jesse slowly, unconsciously leans into him.

JOHNNY

To visit planet earth you will have  
to be born as a human child.

147 INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 147

Johnny's reading to Jesse, side-by-side in bed.

JOHNNY

At first you will have to learn to  
use your new body to move your arms  
and legs, and to pull yourself  
upright.

CREDIT SUPERS "STAR CHILD BY CLAIRE A. NIVOLA"

We see scenes from Jesse and Johnny's time together, moments we haven't seen in the film so far, moments the audience missed.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

You will learn to run, to use your  
hands, to make sounds and form  
words. Slowly you will learn to  
take care of yourself. Here it is  
still and peaceful but there  
the colors, sensations and sounds  
will wash over you constantly.  
You will see so many living things-  
plants and animals beyond  
imagining! Here it is always  
the same, but there, everything is  
in motion. Everything is always  
changing. You will be plunged into  
earth's river of time. There will  
be so much for you to learn and so  
much for you to feel - pleasure and  
fear; joy and disappointment;  
sadness and wonder. In your  
confusion and delight you will  
forget where you came from. You  
will grow up, travel, work, perhaps  
have children of your own.

INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

JOHNNY

Over the years you will try to make sense of that happy sad full empty always shifting life you are in. And when the time comes to return to your star, it may be hard to say goodbye to that strangely beautiful world.

End of book. Johnny's moved; Jesse notices.

JESSE

You crying?

Yes.

JOHNNY

It's true, we forget, we forget everything.

JESSE

No we don't - you do.

JOHNNY

You'll barely remember all this. You'll have like a few blurry memories of this whole trip.

JESSE

That's stupid.

Fake Italian.

JOHNNY

Ti amo, scimmia.

Jesse turns away. CU on his face - worried.

145

INT. FRIENDS' HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

145

JESSE BRUSHES TEETH WITH ELECTRONIC BRUSH. JOHNNY NONPLUSSED.

162A

INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT / INT. PAUL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

JOHNNY

So you eat steaks now? Didn't you used to give mom all kinds of shit for that?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

VIV

He needs to learn how to keep secrets. What are you still doing up?

JOHNNY

I'm so exhausted but I can't sleep, haven't slept right in days. I lay in bed thinking of all the things I have to do for him tomorrow.

He knows she knows, they connect over this.

VIV

Oh yes, I know that one.

JOHNNY

Taking care of him and working at the same time is, as you know, like a little much - and I promised we'd go to a parade Sunni told us about.

VIV

That'll be fun.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Yeah, super fun, restful.

VIV (CONT'D)

You're doing great.

163 EXT. NOLA PARADE STREETS - DAY

163

CUT TO: A BIG, ROWDY PARADE OF SOME KIND. CHANTING, DRUMMING, SOME PEOPLE DANCING IN A CIRCLE WITH HORNS. TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE. JUBILANT CHAOS.

FIND: Jesse and Johnny in the throng. Jesse's recording, getting bounced around, shouting along, they're both loving it. Johnny's laughing, taken by Jesse's bravery and that he loves recording everything.

162A INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT / INT. PAUL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

JOHNNY

Thanks. You know he keeps asking me why we stopped talking.

VIV

I like this kid. What did you say?

JOHNNY

Apparently some bullshit.

163

EXT. NOLA PARADE STREETS - DAY

163

Jesse grabs Johnny's hand and pulls him deeper into the crowd. Phones videoing in front of lens. LOUD OVERWHELMING DRUMS AND THROBBING CROWD.

MOMENTS LATER: The parade has intensified. JOHNNY, SWEATING, PICKS UP JESSE IN THE DENSE CROWD, CARRIES HIM PIGGY BACK.

INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT / INT. PAUL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

VIV

He didn't let you get away with that did he?

JOHNNY

No.

VIV

Tell him the truth.

How? Grasping, this all spills out quick, laughing at himself, the impossibility of the situation, laughter mixed with real confusion and vulnerability. She might laugh but spiked with real hurt and anger at some of the points...

JOHNNY

To your 9 year old? OK, sure, but what? What was it? Which thing? I messed up with you and Paul? I got in the middle of something I didn't understand? That part?

VIV

That's good. That's a good place to start.

JOHNNY

Or when mom died? And we got into all that weird shit when mom died? Is that it?

VIV

You mean the weird shit of our entire lives?

JOHNNY

(Yeah) Our entire lives.

VIV

Yeah we got into that...

JOHNNY

And then Luisa left me and the  
space ship exploded.

VIV

You know that's the first time you  
said that.

JOHNNY

Which part?

VIV

All of it.

VIV (CONT'D)

I was so mad at you.  
I get especially mad at you don't  
I?

JOHNNY

Yeah.

VIV

I'm so sorry Luisa left. Maybe I  
never said that.

JOHNNY

It's been a long year.

VIV

I know.

Surprises himself.

JOHNNY

I like taking care of Jesse. I like  
being with him, watching his face,  
wondering what he's thinking.

163 EXT. NOLA PARADE STREETS - DAY

163

Dancing, chanting with Jesse on his back, he's starting to  
look a bit crazed, or exhausted, or something. In the dense  
crowd he suddenly falters, starts coming down to the ground.

JESSE

Keep going?!

JOHNNY

One sec.

Johnny has to stop, let Jesse down - when he goes to stand up, he crumples down on himself - is he passed out? Forearms, knees, head on the ground.

JESSE  
JOHNNY! JOHNNY!

JOHNNY'S NOT RESPONDING. MIXTURE OF VOICES "JOHNNY! - HELP HIM UP - IS HE OK? - ARE YOU WITH HIM?"

CUT TO: Johnny, half sitting up, eyes crushed closed, blinding headache, not moving. People around him - Jesse's by his side - confusion - all very fast.

JOHNNY  
Jesse? Jesse? You here?

JESSE  
Johnny!

JOHNNY  
I'm OK, I'm OK.

BYSTANDER 1  
Is this your dad?

Jesse looks at that question, intense. More gather around.

JESSE  
Johnny?!

BYSTANDER  
You OK man? Anyone call 911?

Eyes still closed.

JOHNNY  
No. I'm fine.

BYSTANDER 3  
Let him sit up.

His denials just make Jesse more aggravated. Johnny tries to get up. Dizzy, piercing headache. Tries to get away from Jesse - Johnny throws up.

JESSE  
You fainted!

JOHNNY  
No, I'm fine.

Johnny on ground.

165 INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - LATER

165

Jesse follows Johnny down hall towards their room.

JESSE  
We should call Roxanne.

JOHNNY  
It's not that big a deal.

JESSE  
You fainted.

166 INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S ROOM 166

Johnny lays down on the bed, Jesse watches him, mad at him.  
Johnny looks at Jesse for a while, something changing inside.

JOHNNY  
O.K. I fainted.

JESSE  
Yeah.

JOHNNY  
And I threw up.

They share a look.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
That must've been scary.

JESSE  
I was fine.

JOHNNY  
Really? I blacked out. You were alone. You weren't fine, I wasn't fine.

JESSE  
Well yeah.

Avoiding, like something he's memorized, performed before - he mimes out all the gestures listed.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
We have a zone of resiliency. When you are out of your zone you can meditate, think about something that brings you joy. If you're stressed out you can use some of these techniques; tapping shoulders, rock tossing. Finger touching. Mindful breathing.  
(MORE)

JESSE (CONT'D)  
(demonstrates) Or, like an animal -  
you can shake it off...

Jesse shakes it off.

JOHNNY  
That's amazing.

Jesse leans into Johnny. Johnny's moved by this closeness.  
Does he say, or just feel...

JOHNNY (CONT'D)  
Do you think we're similar?

JESSE  
Oh my god - no.

166A INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S BEDROOM - DAY 166A

AFTER ZONE OF RESILIANCY SCENE

CU on Jesse, DAY.

Johnny is asleep, Jesse sitting against the bed or in bed,  
steals a listen to Johnny's interviews and then makes a  
recording.

JESSE  
(Imitating Johnny) Do you ever  
think about the future?  
Uh, yeah. But whatever you planned  
on happening, that doesn't happen.  
Other stuff you never thought of  
happens. So just - c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

Johnny Johnny Johnny. Johnny,  
Johnny, Johnny. Johnny, Johnny,  
Johnny.

173 EXT. CITY PARK - PERISTYLE - DAY 173

Johnny and Jesse make their way across the Peristyle.

INT/EXT - CHEAT FOR TREATMENT CENTER - DAY

Viv is on the phone.



VIV

He slept for two nights in a row. He seems to be responding to the new meds. I just talked to his doctor, and he thinks he's ready for outpatient care. He said he can go home.

JOHNNY

He did?

VIV

Yeah.

JOHNNY

How are you? Are you doing all right?

VIV

I don't know, yeah.

JOHNNY

You want to tell Jesse now?

VIV

Yeah, thanks. Thank you.

JOHNNY

I loved it.

He gives the phone back to Jesse.

JESSE

Hey.

VIV

Hi, sweetie, how are you?

JESSE

I'm good.

VIV

Oh, good. So listen, your dad's doing so much better. The doctors are gonna keep helping him, but they thought he was well enough to go home. So, I'm gonna come get you, okay? I'm just driving Moses home and then I'm gonna be on the first flight out tomorrow. Ugh, I'm so excited, I can't wait to see you.

(MORE)

VIV (CONT'D)

Jesse? Jesse, sweetie, are you  
okay? Jesse?

174 EXT. CITY PARK / COUTURIE FOREST - AFTERNOON

174

Afternoon light. Johnny and Jesse cross a bridge into a more wild area, Jesse's ahead still brewing, mysterious, Johnny trying to figure out how to help. Does Jesse blast music in his headphones?

RS175 EXT. NOLA CITY PARK - DAY

RS175

They come to a new section of park. Maybe Johnny "Hey wait up?"

JESSE

Why are you following me?

A long dark look from Jesse. Johnny waits it out.

JESSE (CONT'D)

He's always gonna be like this,  
isn't he?

JOHNNY

I don't really know. I'm so sorry  
you have to think about that.

JESSE

He'll never be a normal dad.

JOHNNY

Your dad's an awesome guy, he just  
can't always take care of himself.  
But he loves you. I know that.

JESSE

I'm fine.

JOHNNY

You can be not fine.

JESSE

I'm fine.

JOHNNY

(Okay, when you're out of your zone  
of resiliency) You can be not fine,  
you can be angry, confused, sad,  
lost and it'll be okay.

(MORE)

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

You can like kick the air, you can throw a fit (does?), you can yell (does?), and you'll be okay. It's a totally reasonable response.

JESSE

I'm fine.

JOHNNY

I AM NOT FINE AND THAT'S A TOTALLY REASONABLE RESPONSE!

Still resisting, but Jesse's matching Johnny's intensity.

JESSE

I'M FINE!!!

JOHNNY

YOU ARE NOT FINE AND THAT'S TOTALLY REASONABLE! - C'mon.

JESSE

AHHHHHH.

Johnny gives him a look, C'mon C'mon.

JESSE (CONT'D)

I'M NOT FINE AND THAT'S A TOTALLY REASONABLE RESPONSE!

JOHNNY

THIS IS FUCKED UP AND THAT MAKES SENSE!

JESSE

THIS IS FUCKED UP AND THAT MAKES SENSE!

JOHNNY

(yells)

JESSE

(yells)

JOHNNY

(yells differently)

JESSE

YELLS

(yells differently)

Does Jesse end up on the ground? Johnny tries to get him to go, "C'mon, time to go".

Johnny offers his back for a ride.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
Are you going to faint?

JOHNNY  
No, I got my finger touching, my  
rock tossing...

Jesse gets on and they start walking.

176 EXT. NEW PART OF TRAIL

176

Jesse rides on Johnny's back.

JESSE  
Do you think I'm like, half my mom  
and half my dad?

JOHNNY  
I think you're also half just  
yourself - stuff that's not from  
either of your parents, that's from  
wherever that comes from.

JESSE  
That's three halves.

JOHNNY  
I know.

JESSE  
Do you think I'll be like him?

Johnny's trying to figure out what to say.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
Do you?

JOHNNY  
No.

JESSE  
Why not?

JOHNNY  
Your mom. Your mom's not like that.  
She's helped you figure out what  
you're really feeling, so you're  
way ahead of the game. You're lucky  
you got her.

JESSE

Do you think later I won't know him anymore?

JOHNNY

That's such a sad thought Jesse. I just don't think that's gonna happen.

But he doesn't know for sure.

The stuff you love about him, I think you get to keep that.

JESSE

Blah blah blah.

JOHNNY

Blah blah blah.

JESSE

Be funny - comma - when you can - period.

JOHNNY

He says that?

JESSE

Yeah.

JOHNNY

That's very funny.

181 EXT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - DAY

181

Wide shot, a cab pulls up. Viv gets out and we see Jesse run to her; Viv and Jesse hug and reunite.

Johnny watches from a distance.

Then Viv walks to him, we're not sure what will happen, but they hug, first time we see them hug.

182 EXT. NOLA SPOT 'THE END OF THE WORLD' - DAY

182

Johnny, Jesse, Viv, Rox, Fern and Sunni all walk out to the Mississippi river. Maybe have a picnic?

IMPROV: They eat and talk, Johnny on the other side of the table from them, watching them eat off the same plate, how Jesse unconsciously leans on her. There's still some tension in the air, but they're hanging out.

183 EXT. SUNNI'S HOUSE

183

Johnny gets Jesse's bag and walks them to waiting taxi/car. They've become nervous around saying goodbye. Why does it all of a sudden feel so strange for all of them?

JOHNNY

Plenty of snacks with protein, he only gets to watch screens for one hour on Saturday and Sunday,

Viv hugs Johnny.

VIV

I love you.

JOHNNY

I love you.

Johnny goes to say goodbye to Jesse, who's all cranked up and excited. They look at each other, the kids knows it's supposed to be gushy moment.

JESSE

Blah, blah, blah.

Johnny smiles, but is already sad this is over.

JOHNNY

Blah, blah, blah.

Jesse gets in, and the car heads out - he's gone.

187 EXT. NYC STREET JOHNNY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

187

VERY WIDE SHOT of Johnny, walking with his bags.

188 EXT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - DAY

188

Johnny heads up the stairs to his building.

WE HEAR: Jesse's recording from New Orleans.

189 INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - DAY

189

Johnny's listening to Jesse's recordings on his computer.

JESSE (O.S.)

Have you ever nought about the future? Uh, yeah.

(MORE)

JESSE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

But whatever you planned on happening, that doesn't happen. Other stuff you never thought of happens.

So just - c'mon, c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon,  
c'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

Johnny Johnny Johnny. Johnny,  
Johnny, Johnny. Johnny, Johnny,  
Johnny.

Johnny's surprised and moved to hear this?!

167 INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S ROOM - NIGHT 167

CUT TO: Johnny is asleep, Jesse is on the floor, talking into recording equipment.

JESSE

Johnny is a bit strange. He's really fun. He makes me laugh. He's really funny when he wrestles. He might be my best friend. Because he only has two friends. But he might be might best friend. I don't know.

Blah blah blah blah blah blah.

193 INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - DAY 193

Johnny paces in his apartment. HEAR THE AMBIENT SOUNDS FROM THE TRIP PLAYING on speakers. He gets his microphone and begins to record.

JOHNNY

Blah blah blah blah blah...

194 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - JESSE'S BEDROOM 194

Jesse is listening to Johnny's recording, Moses beside him - either on big headphones or laptop speakers.

JOHNNY (O.S.)

Hey Jesse, this is Mozart, you're intense and overly emotional uncle.

(MORE)

JOHNNY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

When I woke up, you were blairing  
crazy opera music. I was surprised  
your mom had left. But you didn't  
seem bothered by it. You just  
pretty much accepted me.

CUT TO: MOMENTS WHILE JOHNNY THINKS OF WHAT TO SAY: pacing,  
lying on couch, looking out window. MIX SOUND WITH: Waves of  
Jesse's ambient recordings. WE'LL FADE IN AND OUT OF THESE  
MEMORIES.

197 INT. VIV'S HOME - LIVING ROOM 197

Jesse sits, big headphones on, listening.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I showed you my recorder but you  
didn't want to be interviewed. You  
recorded the beach, sounds of the  
city...

205 INT. RESTAURANT (SAME AS SC. 92) 205

CUT TO: Johnny, Roxanne, and Fernando working.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

I had to go back to New York, and I  
asked you to come with me...

196 EXT. JOHNNY'S STREET 196

Johnny walking down busy street.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

...and you just said - I'd love  
that.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Johnny continues recording his message.

JOHNNY

And you couldn't sleep and you were  
talking a mile a minute and you had  
so many things to say...

207 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - BATHROOM 207

CUT TO: Jesse and Viv in bathroom, Viv giving him a bath.



200 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - KITCHEN 200

CUT TO: Jesse and Viv eating dinner together.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

...and I could never actually stop you, and I kept trying, and I wish I wouldn't have. I want to hear all your crazy thoughts and cool Ideas...

178 INT. SUNNI'S HOUSE - JOHNNY AND JESSE'S ROOM - NIGHT 178

JOHNNY (V.O.)

...And then we were in bed and you asked:

JESSE

Are you gonna remember any of this?

What? JOHNNY

JESSE (CONT'D)  
You said you won't.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

I said you won't - I'll remember this, believe me.

Jesse's disturbed, confused, afraid.

JESSE

I won't remember?

201 INT. VIV'S HOUSE - VIV'S BEDROOM 201

CUT TO: Viv's house now Viv and Jesse are listening to the tape. CU ON VIV, TAKING IT ALL IN.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

...and I said I hope you do...

193 INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - DAY 193

Johnny recording.

...and you got so upset, so I said, I'd remind you of everything.

CUT TO BLACK - KIDS VOICES CONTINUE TO BUILD, A SEA OF VOICES THAT CARRY US INTO CREDITS.