

WEIGHT OF THE WIND

Written by

Hayden Bownds

Haydenadambownds@gmail.com
512 639 0307

OVER BLACK:

He shall die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray - Proverbs 5:23

FADE IN:

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

A page rips out of a composition book. At the kitchen table, disheveled and writing frantically, is JONAS MACKABEE, (29).

JONAS V.O.

The average person lives for twenty-eight-thousand-two-hundred and fifty-one days. Today's my birthday. If I would've known what this life entailed, I never would've signed up for it.

A broken noose hangs loose from his neck. He finishes his scrawl, then rushes out of the cluttered house.

JONAS V.O.

Of those days, how many can we say we've actually lived?

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Jonas, languid as he wakes, mopes into his -

LIVINGROOM

He checks his e-mail. No messages. He slams the laptop shut.

PORCH

He drags a cigarette, then sips a coffee mug. His spiritless eyes are concentrated.

He tosses his coffee and goes inside.

JONAS V.O.

I've always felt like a spectator watching my life go by.

INT. TONY & LUGIS RESTAURANT - DAY

It's the lunch hour but the place lacks the bustle. As per rote, Jonas, drone-like, approaches one of the few tables.

He sets some drinks down and leans in.

JONAS
Ready to order?

A VOICE becomes audible. Jonas redirects his focus to TAYLOR, (20's). He clears the dishes from his table and walks away.

TAYLOR (PRE-LAP)	CUSTOMERS O.S.
Thank you. It was my pleasure serving you today.	...No garlic, light sauce and lots and lots of cheese. (impatient) Got all that?

Jonas re-faces his eager patrons. Musters a smile, then heads away. Jonas stands behind a computer as Taylor comes back.

TAYLOR
Ya'll made my day. Come back and see me now.

Taylor exchanges smiles with his customers as they exit. Jonas finishes his order, then writes in his book.

He writes a big bulk of text under the title, "Service Industry."

TAYLOR
Three dollars.

JONAS
How'd they make your day? Didn't even leave you a decent tip.

TAYLOR
I made them smile. To me that's worth it.

JONAS
Smiles don't pay the bills.

TAYLOR
Yeah, but remember, this job's not my provider.
(pointing up)
He is. Could be for you too if you'd just open your eyes, Jonas.

Jonas gives a dubious nod, then saunters towards the back.

LATER

Jonas drops the bill at his table and scrambles away.

Time passes.

Taylor hands him his check. A verse replaces the tip. Matthew 6:33.

TAYLOR

Seek first the kingdom of God and
all else will be added to you.

Jonas stands, furious.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Jonas, unobservant, meanders past some homeless men nestled against a fence.

One of the men holds a sign that says, "Change."

EXT./INT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Jonas sprints up the stoop with a sack of beer and enters.

LIVING ROOM

The place is trashed. He checks his email - no messages.

JONAS V.O.

Routine - it's inevitable.

KITCHEN

He un-rings a can and opens the fridge. He throws the beer among an assortment of to-go boxes.

Pops the tab, then sips as if it were the one thing he's been longing for.

MANAGER (PRE-LAP)

Pretty soon you're going to be
running this place.

INT. TONY & LUGIS RESTAURANT - DAY

Taylor chats with the manager. Jonas eavesdrops while holding back a deluge of tears.

He throws cutlery down in an organizer, progressively harder. Taylor nears and notices.

JONAS V.O.

How much longer can I keep doing this? Better get a response soon.

TAYLOR

Got a meeting for management. Everything all right, Jonas?

JONAS

Fine.

TAYLOR

You sure?

JONAS

It's fine, Taylor.

He drops his rag and charges towards the manager.

JONAS

I'm ready for my check out.

INT./EXT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Jonas sits at his laptop, pensive. The cursor blinks on the wordless page.

Moments pass. Nothing. He jolts over to the fridge and snatches a beer.

PORCH

JONAS V.O.

Wish mom was still here. She always had comforting words.

He sips the beer and lights a cigarette.

JONAS V.O.

Maybe I'll never know. Was she confused or was I?

CUT TO:

INT. ELIZA'S HOUSE - NIGHT/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas comes in wearing his work uniform. His mom, ELIZA (50's), lies enfeebled on the couch. She does a double take.

ELIZA
You're back.

JONAS
Told you I'd be over after work.

ELIZA
You were just here. Had on that
denim jacket I got for your
birthday.

Jonas spots several pill bottles. His demeanor is surmise.

JONAS
I haven't worn that jacket since
the fall.

She remembers. He sits on the coffee table, annoyed.

ELIZA
What?

JONAS
Nothing. Feeling any better today?

She takes a pill from one of the bottles.

ELIZA
Thought I was - apparently not.

She throws it into her mouth, then washes it down with water.

JONAS
Maybe if you'd stop self
medicating. Think those pills are
playing with your mind.

ELIZA
Jonas, I'm not crazy. You just came
in, gave me a big hug and told me
you made it.

JONAS
I told you that?

ELIZA
Yes. Just a few minutes ago. You
were acting strange. Still are.

JONAS
Mom, it pains me saying this, but
you're delusional.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Yes, if ever I do sell a poem -
become a published writer - you'll
be the first to know. I promise.

She stares, epiphanized.

ELIZA

You just did...

Jonas, now riled, breaks their concentrated stare. He storms
towards the front.

JONAS

If that were the case, I wouldn't
be working dead end jobs or praying
for my break. And I wouldn't worry
about you getting better.

ELIZA

Speaking of your father, you're
sounding a lot like him. I'll tell
you the same thing I told him - put
your trust...

JONAS

... In the Lord and you'll be
prosperous.

ELIZA

... In the Lord and you'll be
prosperous.

JONAS

When did I say anything about dad?
Quoting scripture all the time was
probably what drove him away.

He edges closer to the door. Hand on the knob - about to
open, but recessed by his mother's compassion.

ELIZA

Jonas, I love you very much. You're
having a bad day - I get it.

JONAS

No, you don't get it. I'm going
nowhere fast - holding on to a
faith I don't have. Dad didn't.

ELIZA

Your father may have left us but
God hasn't.

JONAS

If there is a God, than why wont he
listen? Better chance hearing from
the devil before him.

ELIZA

Don't say that. He is listening,
honey. Even if you can't hear him.
Remember how I got the verse?

JONAS

You found it in one of your pill
bottles and yet, you still take
'em. I don't get it.

ELIZA

It's hard to break cycles we build
for ourselves. Just have faith.

JONAS

You've got your faith - hopefully
that's enough.

The DOOR slams as he exits.

BACK TO:

PORCH/END FLASHBACK:

Jonas zaps back from his memory.

JONAS V.O.

How has my life succumb to this?

He tosses his cigarette and drags himself into the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas snaps twigs from a tree. He gives a melancholic stare
at the stars.

Cozy, next to a fire is, BIRDIE WILSHIRE, (20's). He sets the
kindling among the flames, then sits next to her.

JONAS

Mesmerizing, isn't it?

She rubs the back of his head. He sips a beer.

BIRDIE

It's times like these that all of
our troubles seem to evaporate and
nothing else matters.

JONAS
If only it were that simple.

BIRDIE
It is that simple.

She reaches for his hand. He's reluctant.

JONAS
What are you doing?

BIRDIE
Just give me your hand.

She traces a circle in his palm with her finger.

BIRDIE
This is us. And this is the world.

She curls his fingers into a fist.

BIRDIE
Just clasp your fingers around it.

They linger in each other's eyes.

BIRDIE
Realize how young we truly are and
all the possibilities that await.
The world is at our fingertips - if
we'd just take hold of it.

Jonas pulls back, laughing.

BIRDIE
What? Why are you laughing?

JONAS
You make the world sound so poetic
but it's not. Love, dreams - faith.
They're just illusions.

BIRDIE
You don't believe that. Don't
pretend to be stoic.

Jonas sips his beer, straight-faced.

JONAS
Who's pretending? Still wonder why
you're with me.

He throws his empty can into the blaze. She wraps her arm
around him. He's entranced by the sparks ascending.

JONAS

I'm a nobody going nowhere. I'm
just holding you back.

She redirects his eyes to face hers.

BIRDIE

Stop. I love who you are. I have
faith in us -- In you. So pinch me
because I'm dreaming. Maybe not
tonight, maybe not next week but
one day... One day you're going to
stop looking to the future to
appreciate who you are right now.

Jonas is taken aback.

BIRDIE

Just stop. Because I appreciate you
for who you are today. Someone
determined to achieve his dream.
And you will. Have faith in that.

His eyes glisten. She hugs him firmly.

END FLASH BACK:

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jonas strikes some cacophonous chords on his piano. He shakes
his head in despair, then turns it off.

EXT. RED POPPY LIBRARY - DAY

An ashtray overflows next to Jonas' open composition book.
Only a few words written.

He sips his coffee. SADY MCCLEARY, (25), warm with doleful
eyes, pads over with a coffee pot.

She begins to refill his coffee. Synchronously, he pulls his
cup away. Coffee spills everywhere.

SADY

I'm so sorry.

He leaps up, air-drying his journal. They bump into each
other. Her keys fall to the ground.

SADY

I feel so bad. Let me get a towel.

He picks up her keys and hands them over.

JONAS

I don't know why I moved the cup.

SADY

I hope I didn't ruin whatever you were working on.

Jonas ignores her and sits back at the table. He flips through the book and notices a page missing.

SADY

You know, I intern for Candor Mag... If you ever wanted me to submit something - I could.

She tries to make this awkward encounter less awkward.

SADY

I want to be a publisher someday.

He runs his finger along the torn edge of his book.

JONAS V.O.

I don't remember tearing out a page.

Her dismayed smile fades. She darts back inside. Jonas turns.

JONAS

Sady...

Too late.

JONAS V.O.

She's pretty -- but she's not Birdie.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

The place is slammed. Birdie and Jonas are at a table towards the middle. Dinner's pretty much wrapped up. Jonas rises.

JONAS

(before she can speak)

I know. I know. Eventually I'm gonna quit. Don't need a reminder.

Birdie's put back.

BIRDIE
I wasn't going to say anything.

He gives a small smile and strides away.

PATIO OF RESTAURANT

Jonas smokes and observes the passing cars. He sees Birdie through the window. She's very still with her back to him.

RESTAURANT LOBBY

Jonas heads back to his table. A *guy in a denim jacket* rushes past. They bump shoulders. Jonas is unable to see his face.

TABLE

Jonas arrives back. Birdie holds a delighted smile.

JONAS
What?

BIRDIE
Sometimes I don't think you appreciate me, but then you do something like that.

He's perplexed.

JONAS V.O.
How could she possibly think that about me? Look how I reacted.

BACK TO:

RED POPPY LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS/END FLASHBACK:

Jonas snaps out of his memory. Perturbed, he grabs his stuff.

JONAS
Stupid.

Sady tacitly watches him lumber away from inside.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

To-go boxes scatter the kitchen table. Jonas habitually refreshes his email.

JONAS V.O.
This can't be my life.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOTS BISTRO - NIGHT/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

A large crowd watches a projection screen. Jonas and Birdie are in the middle.

He focuses on the images. Her on him.

She reaches for his hand. He puts his arm around her, dismissing the moment. She's chagrined.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Jonas' PHONE rings. His eyes flutter awake. Missed it. He listens to the voice mail.

BILL V.O.
Jonas, after careful evaluation of your writing sample, we've determined this wouldn't be the best fit for Candor Magazine. We wish you the best of luck wherever your writing takes you.

Jonas scowls.

INT. TONY & LUGIS RESTAURANT - DAY

Unlike before, the place is brimming. Jonas clears dishes from a large table of elderly patrons.

Pictures adorn a table nearby. One falls over.

He doesn't notice. Hands full, he backs away, then PSSHH! It appears like he ran into an invisible wall.

Shattered dishes scatter the floor. That's it. Last straw. He storms away.

TAYLOR
Where are you going?

Taylor watches as Jonas flounces out of the building.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Jonas strides down the street noticeably more distraught than before. He nears the homeless men once again.

HOMELESS MAN

Change?

Jonas' eyes are moored to the ground as he passes.

JONAS

I don't have any money.

HOMELESS MAN

I was just saying, looks like you could use some change.

He looks over.

JONAS

A bum wants to give me advice?

HOMELESS MAN

That word - so circumstantial.
Appearances are deceiving.

JONAS

Look, I got somewhere to be.

He starts to walk away.

HOMELESS MAN

We all do. But remember, the
decisions we make pave our future.

JONAS

Ugh-huh, looks like you made all
the right decisions.

HOMELESS MAN

Where we are's a circumstance of
how we chose to deal with it. I
just choose to trust in the Lord.

Jonas faces him once again.

JONAS

You talk to God?

HOMELESS MAN

Everyday.

JONAS

Well next time you do, tell Him I'm
tired of waiting on Him.

HOMELESS MAN

Maybe he's waiting on you. Ever
think of that? Can't blame God for
your actions.

JONAS

Here's an action - a good deed.

He pulls out his wallet and rifles through some cash.

JONAS

Get some food, stronger drink.
Better yet, buy yourself some
better advice.

Jonas throws the money at the man, turns and this time,
actually leaves.

HOMELESS MAN

He loves you.

From a distance, Jonas looks back. The homeless man's handing
the money to someone else and praying.

Jonas, disgusted or intrigued, slowly shuffles away.

EXT. SIX HUNDRED PIZZERIA - LATER

From the corner, Jonas watches people gather in camaraderie.

CROSS FADE:

The people become him and his friends. They have a blast.

DISSOLVE - BACK
TO:

His friends fade back into the strangers. Jonas laments for a
moment, then continues on his way.

JONAS V.O.

Making a deal with the devil's
never sounded so appealing. But I
gotta remember, if God doesn't
exist, how can he?

EXT./INT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Jonas tosses his cigarette and ambles up his stoop. A MATCH strikes and a white cap toed shoe extinguishes the cherry. A masculine silhouette ganders as Jonas enters his house.

KITCHEN

Jonas sips a beer and scrolls through previous text messages from Birdie. He Sulks.

PORCH - LATER

Jonas lights a cigarette and stares into the void.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY - DAY/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas stands near a big blue mailbox. He looks around, then paces across the street to ROOTS BISTRO.

JONAS V.O.

Still don't know what I was doing there. It was one of those times when I thought I knew exactly what I was going to say...

INT. ROOTS BISTRO - DAY

Birdie's behind the bar as Jonas comes in.

EMPLOYEE

Speaking of the devil.

BIRDIE

Jonas, I had the strangest dream with you last night.

Her PHONE rings. She's about to answer. Jonas stops her.

JONAS V.O.

...Then I opened my mouth and something different came out.

JONAS

We can't keep doing this.

BIRDIE

Doing what?

JONAS

You're good at taking care of people. I'm just not one to be taken care of.

BIRDIE

Are you breaking up with me?

JONAS

We need to stop fooling ourselves thinking this is going to work out.

BIRDIE

What are you talking about?

Jonas glares, bemoaning.

JONAS

I'm sorry.

He exits the bar. Her PHONE rings again.

BIRDIE

Jonas...

BACK TO:

EXT./INT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT/END FLASHBACK:

PORCH

Jonas finishes his beer. Tears flood his eyes.

JONAS V.O.

Always thought never getting close to anybody would prevent getting hurt. But that isn't true.

LIVINGROOM

He tramps in and throws his empty can against the wall.

JONAS

Here I am God. Can you hear me? Can you see me now? You want change...

KITCHEN

He shoves everything off the table. Trashes his house even more, if you can believe that.

His destructive fit lands him against a wall, bawling in hysterics.

JONAS

What are you waiting for?

INT./EXT. JONAS' HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Jonas takes a shower. Steam fills the room. The door cracks open. The water cuts off.

He opens the curtain and grabs a towel. The gaping door catches his attention.

...But no one's there.

JONAS V.O.

Maybe when you're close to death
someone's trying to tell you
something. Or maybe not.

He steps out of the tub and swings the door shut.

BEDROOM

Jonas buttons his shirt, then sifts through his closet. He finds his denim jacket and stares at briefly.

JONAS V.O.

I tried to think of the best way
that translated my mental anguish.

KITCHEN

He drags a chair from his dinette set through the back door.

BACKYARD

The chair's positioned under a low-hanging tree branch. A noose drops from the limb. Jonas steps atop the chair.

JONAS V.O.

This is all I could come up with.

His hands tremble as he slides the noose down his tear-streaked cheeks. He takes several deep breaths. In. Out.

JONAS V.O.

Happy birthday...

He squeezes his eyes shut - then steps off. The chair falls over. His body left writhing until no more.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - DAY

Jonas jolts awake. He looks around, then springs out of bed.

LIVINGROOM

He pans across the mess he made.

EXT./INT. TONY & LUGIS RESTAURANT - DAY

Jonas rounds the corner, tucking in his work shirt. The parking lot's full. The place is busy.

RESTAURANT LOBBY

Jonas enters. Taylor, now in slacks and a tie, greets him.

TAYLOR

Good afternoon. Just one today?

JONAS

What?

TAYLOR

How many is it going to be?

Jonas steps past him, towards the computer counter.

JONAS

Taylor, what are you talking about?
And why are you dressed like that?

TAYLOR

Excuse me, you can't go back there.

JONAS

What are you doing? It's me, Jonas.

Taylor edges closer to him, very confused.

TAYLOR

Okay, Jonas. I don't know you.

Jonas stares, quizzically.

JONAS

What's going on here?

TAYLOR

I don't know but I think I need you
to leave.

JONAS

What? No. I'm not going anywhere.

TAYLOR

Okay, then I'll call the cops.

Other employees crowd around. Clueless.

JONAS

Okay, I'm going.

He exits.

PATIO

Jonas steps out.

He realizes he's not in uniform, but rather a denim jacket
and jeans.

He darts away.

EXT./INT. THE UPTOWN SOCIAL - VERANDA - NIGHT

Gazing over the city lights, Jonas chugs a beer. He pulls out
his phone and dials Birdie. RING - RING.

BEE V.O.

Jaybird coffee.

JONAS

I - I'm sorry. Who is this?

BEE V.O.

Jaybird coffee. Can I help you?

Confused, he clicks off the phone. He makes sure he dialed
Birdie, then dials another number.

GARLAND V.O.

Hello?

JONAS

Hey, man. I know it's been awhile
but something's happening to me
right now. Can we meet up?

GARLAND V.O.
Who is this?

JONAS
Jonas...

GARLAND V.O.
Whatever game you're trying to
play, it's not funny.

CLICK. Jonas lowers his phone. He gulps the last of his beer.

BAR

Jonas holds his empty bottle across the busy bar. He turns and looks over the crowd. A bartender sets down another beer.

BARTENDER
Here ya' go, Jonas.

With that, the whole place freezes. Everyone's still and gazes at him. Aghast, he slowly backs up and sprints away.

BATHROOM

Jonas careens over the faucet and splashes his face.

SATAN O.S.
I heard you've been looking for me.

Jonas nearly jumps out of his skin. He turns to see SATAN, (40's). He's tall, dapper and sporting a white tuxedo.

There's half of an unlit cigar pressed between his lips.

JONAS
Who are you?

Jonas eyes him up and down.

SATAN
I've got many names - all of which
are the least of importance. What's
important is you called on me. I
heard your cry - here I came.

JONAS
I didn't call on you.

SATAN
I beg to differ.

JONAS
What did I do?

SATAN
Remember...

CUT TO:

EXT. JONAS' HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Jonas kicks the chair aside. His body dangles.

BACK TO:

UPTOWN SOCIAL - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jonas gapes.

JONAS
Oh, God.

SATAN
Not quite.

JONAS
Am I dead?

SATAN
Only on the inside.

JONAS
What do you mean?

SATAN
Come with me.

VERANDA

The doors open. Satan and Jonas mince out. People scatter the balcony, all reading something.

They glance over to Jonas. He and Satan stand at the edge.

SATAN
You were in a bad place. No
friends. No love. You said it
yourself, this can't be your life.

JONAS
How did you?

SATAN

So many prayers. Where was He? I
couldn't watch any longer. So here
I am. For you, Jonas.

JONAS

For me?

SATAN

That's right. To answer your
prayers and give you what you
desire.

JONAS

And what's that?

SATAN

Look around you.

Jonas looks around. People whisper and gawp.

JONAS

What's everyone looking at?

Satan struts over to a table.

SATAN

Why don't you see for yourself?

He jerks a Candor Magazine from someone and hands it to
Jonas. He flips to the middle.

There's a two page spread of a poem that he wrote. He gapes.

JONAS

But how?

Satan STRIKES a match and lights his cigar.

SATAN

I don't have the best reputation,
but I've got feelings too. Maybe
more than Him if He can't see when
people are in pain and suffering.

He throws the match over the edge. People canter over.

SATAN

I'm just trying to perform a
service and clear my name. After
all, He didn't answer.

MALE STRANGER

It's you. Will you sign this?

He holds out the magazine. A small crowd culls around Jonas.

JONAS

Is this a joke? This can't really
be happening.

SATAN

No games. No gimmicks. This is real
and this is really happening right
now. They're here for you, Jonas.

Jonas lives the moment. Smiling. Happy. Oblivious as Satan
ebbs into the crowd.

SATAN

There is just one matter of
business, but we'll get to that at
another time.

Satan vanishes. Jonas just keeps signing magazines. The
moment he's been waiting for.

EXT. SQUARE - DAY

RING. RING. Jonas has his phone to his ear.

BEE V.O.

Jaybird coffee...

He lowers his phone, revealing the establishment.

INT./EXT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE/JAYBIRD - DAY

JAY MAC, (40's), sits in the back with his laptop. He spots
Jonas outside and looks at his watch expectantly.

His wife BEE, (40's), rings up a patron.

BEE

Have a glorious day.

She smiles. The patron walks away. Jay comes around.

JAY

Why don't you relax for awhile?

BEE

You sure?

JAY

Yeah. I'll take over for a bit.

He kisses her cheek. She leaves. Jonas strolls up to the counter and surveys the place.

JAY

Wasn't sure when to expect you.

JONAS

Guess this is gonna take some gettin' used to.

JAY

What's that?

JONAS

People knowing who I am.

JAY

Coffee?

JONAS

Sure.

Jay turns and begins pouring the coffee.

JONAS

Place looks different than I remember.

JAY

Wife and I made some changes when we bought it years ago.

CUT TO:

INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE - DAY/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas and Birdie walk through the front door. They appear happy. The place looks different now.

A "for sale" sign hangs in the window.

BIRDIE

Wouldn't it be cool if, when we got married, we ran a shop like this?

He's indifferent.

BIRDIE

You'd sit over there writing your poems, possibly a book, and I'd run the place.

She grabs his hand.

BIRDIE

Doesn't that sound nice?

He smiles and kisses her hand, then steps over to the counter. Her heart sinks.

BACK TO:

CIANFRANI'S/JAYBIRD - CONTINUOUS/END FLASHBACK:

Jay places the coffee on the counter. Jonas shakes his head.

JAY

Looks like you've got a lot going on behind those eyes.

JONAS

You have no idea. Probably wouldn't even believe me if I told you.

JAY

I'm an old man, Jonas. Not much you can say that I wouldn't believe.

CIANFRANI'S/JAYBIRD PATIO

Jay and Jonas sip coffee at a table. There's a crucifix around Jay's neck. Jonas motions to Jay with his cigarettes.

JAY

Quit long ago.

Lighting his cigarette.

JONAS

I've quit quitting.

JAY

You will. The greatest day of your life.

Jonas notices his necklace. Jay holds it up.

JAY

Birthday present from my wife. Seems like a lifetime ago.

JONAS

You religious?

JAY

Not traditionally, but I can tell you, He's real. Assuming you're not.

JONAS

Not really. Guess that's kind of how I got here.

JAY

Why do you say that?

Jonas sips his coffee and leans in.

JONAS

Ever feel like you can't distinguish between a dream and reality?

JAY

Like deja vu?

JONAS

I mean like us coming out here. We both remember doing it, right?

JAY

I suppose so.

JONAS

Well, who's not to say we've been out here the whole time? Maybe our memories only serve to comfort us.

JAY

How do you mean?

JONAS

I keep replaying a memory in my head over and over again and I can't seem to figure it out. I was at the end of my rope - ready to end it all. And just when I thought I did, I woke up here.

JAY

Believe it or not, I was in your shoes once. Had lost hope. No faith. Ready to call it quits just like you -- then I met someone.

JONAS

Your wife?

JAY

No. I'd pushed her, along with everyone else, away. Was burdened with regret. Until someone told me something I'll never forget.

Jonas gazes, intently.

JAY

It was right here. He sat across from me just like you and said, We may wear our scars but they don't define who we are. Life is the gift of joy and once we realize that, we can live every minute and love every second.

He holds up the crucifix.

JAY

...And He makes it all possible.

JONAS

If that were the case than He would have shown up. And I wouldn't be living this - blessing or curse.

JAY

Blessing or curse, it's what you choose to do with it. Remember though, you bite at the devils heals and eventually he'll bite back. Just have to have courage.

JONAS

I've never had a courageous heart.

JAY

It's something that comes in time. And when that time comes, you have a choice to make. Whose side are you going to stand behind?

Jonas ruminates and sees Birdie ride her bike past. Jay notices and stands from his chair.

JAY

I better get back in there.

Jonas toggles his vision from Jay to Birdie. She's chaining her bike to a rack across the street at Roots Bistro.

JONAS
Just realized I don't know your
name.

JAY
You can call me Jay.

He holds out his hand. Jonas rises. They shake.

JAY
Come back and see me. Anytime.

He turns and heads for the door.

JAY
Remember Jonas, even if you've
given up on Him, doesn't mean He's
given up on you.

Jay's about to enter.

JONAS
Who was it that you met?

JAY
Everybody. And believe me, finding
that one person to share it with,
makes it that much more worth it.

JONAS
Where is she - your wife?

Jay looks over to Birdie, then to Jonas.

JAY
Around here -- Somewhere.

He smiles again, then walks inside.

INT. ROOTS BISTRO - DAY

The place is empty. Birdie replaces a keg behind the bar.
Jonas ambles over.

JONAS
Tell me you know me.

She rises and inspects him.

BIRDIE
You do look familiar, but I don't
believe we've met. Wait a minute,
you're that guy from the magazine.

She snatches a magazine from below and throws it down in front of him. Jonas' smile fades.

BIRDIE

Don't let the sudden rush of fame
get to your head, Jonas.

JONAS

I was being serious.

BIRDIE

When are you ever serious?

JONAS

Things are really crazy right now.

BIRDIE

Overnight success can be
overwhelming. But what would I know
about that?

JONAS

I just wish it didn't happen the
way it did.

She shrugs.

BIRDIE

Do you want a drink or something?

He points to the tap she just replaced. She fills a pint.

JONAS

Glad to see you still working here.

BIRDIE

Only until I can open my own place.

JONAS

The coffee shop - you always loved
taking care of people.

She sets the beer down. He sips the foam.

BIRDIE

What are you doing here?

JONAS

Needed to see a familiar face.

She rolls her eyes and steps to the other side of the bar.
She wipes it down with a rag. Jonas follows her.

BIRDIE

Now that you've made it, you think you can waltz back in here and pick up where you left off?

JONAS

I know things ended badly. And I know it probably doesn't mean anything now, but I'm sorry.

She stops wiping the counter and faces him.

BIRDIE

You hurt me, Jonas. You cut me deep. And a lousy apology isn't going to heal the pain. Besides, things are different now.

She begins unloading a rack of glasses. Jonas rushes over.

JONAS

I know things are different -- I'm different now.

BIRDIE

It's not who you become after you've made it. It's who you are while you're trying to get there.

JONAS

Believe me, I'd go back and fix things if I could.

A customer approaches the counter.

BIRDIE

It's too late to fix things.

She holds up her left hand. There's a ring on her finger. Jonas swallows hard.

BIRDIE

(to customer)

What can I get for you?

CUSTOMER

I'll take a pint, please.

She fills a glass with beer. Jonas picks up the magazine.

JONAS

It's the small things you learn to appreciate once you know they're gone for good.

JONAS (CONT'D)

As much as it doesn't come across
sincere, truly I am happy for you.

Jonas finishes his beer. He opens his wallet and takes out
some money.

JONAS

Let me get this.

CUSTOMER

Hey, you're that guy.

JONAS

Yeah. I'm that guy.

CUSTOMER

Cheers.

The customer heads off.

JONAS

Suppose I'll be here for awhile.
Maybe we can get together. I'd love
to catch up.

He smiles. Her eyes are fixed on him until he's gone.

EXT. RED POPPY LIBRARY - NIGHT

Jonas writes in his book alone at a table. Sady ankles over
and sets down a cup of coffee.

JONAS

Do you - know who I am?

She smirks.

SADY

Don't flatter yourself.

She turns to go back inside, then spins back around.

SADY

Don't do what?

Jonas shrugs. Sady glares, then marches away. Jonas sits
back, shocked.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - DAY

Jonas springs up in bed.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN THE SQUARE - DAY

Jonas paces through the crowd. A PIANO becomes audible that only he seems to hear. It leads to a staircase. He ascends.

INT. A PREMIUM BLEND - DAY

Jonas reaches the top of the stairs. It opens to a large empty room. The MUSIC'S behind him.

He turns to see a suave man who looks oddly familiar.

JONAS

I'm sorry if I'm interrupting. I heard music and wanted to see where it was coming from.

PIANIST

Not at all. Come in.

Jonas stands next to the Pianist. He continues to play.

JONAS

I'm surprised nobody else heard it.

PIANIST

Surprising what you'll hear when you're actually listening. You play?

JONAS

Not really. Never had the patience or talent.

PIANIST

We've all got a talent in us somewhere. We just have to realize what it is and what to do with it.

JONAS

Yeah, it's beautiful.

PIANIST

The piano's just like everything else. Relationships - work ethic, they all require one thing if they're going to prosper.

JONAS

What's that?

PIANIST

Come give it a shot.

Jonas sits beside him.

JONAS
I don't know what to play.

PIANIST
Play this...

He demonstrates some notes. Jonas plays along with him. It sounds great.

PIANIST
You're a natural.

They play together. Time passes. They both come to a stop.

JONAS
That was fun. Wish I would've taken
the time to learn.

PIANIST
Many things we can learn. But until
we master the art of patience; we
can't succeed in anything.

JONAS
You'll never fail that way.

PIANIST
You'll never fail if you never try.
And if you don't ever try, you'll
never know what could've been.

Jonas smirks with realization and stands.

JONAS
Well, thank you. And for the -

He mimics playing the piano.

PIANIST
Anytime. With the right heart, you
can do anything.

Jonas heads back down the stairs. The MUSIC stops. He turns and eases up a few steps.

There's no trace of the pianist. He turns and descends.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN THE SQUARE - DAY

Jonas steps out, stirred by what just transpired. He pulls out the magazine from his back pocket and deliberates.

INT./EXT. CANDOR MAGAZINE - DAY

Desks fill the small lobby. Jonas surveys the place. BILL GUNTHER, (40's) swaggers out of an office.

He also has a striking resemblance to someone else.

BILL

Mr. Mackabee, how ya' doing, baby?

JONAS

Good, I guess.

BILL

See your spread? Nice, huh?

JONAS

Better than what I could've imagined.

Sady rounds a corner and drops a large stack of magazines. She looks flustered as she kneels down and picks them up.

BILL

(to Sady)

Try to be worth the time here.

(to jonas)

Don't know where we keep getting these useless interns.

Jonas starts to head over but Bill grips his shoulder.

BILL

We're prepping this months issue. When can we expect another awe-inspiring prolific prose piece from the hot, unattainable, Jonas Mackabee?

Bill's remark excites him. He glances to Sady, back to Bill.

JONAS

Soon.

Still gripping his shoulder, Bill directs him toward the front door.

BILL

Sooner the better. Know what I mean? Sales are up by fifty percent. Oh, which reminds me.

(to Sady)

Sady, get that envelope off of my desk.

BILL (CONT'D)
(to Jonas)
This magazine's lucky to have you.

Sady plods over and hands the envelope to Bill.

JONAS
Hey, Sady.

No response. She scuffs away. Bill hands Jonas the envelope.

BILL
Saves me the effort of mailing it
to you. Well, waste no time, my
friend. Get back to it.

Jonas turns to exit.

BILL
Oh, Jonas, you're contract's going
to have to be resigned in a few
days. Don't forget.

Bill winks to him, then turns and heads for his office. He picks up one of the magazines. Jonas looks at Sady once more.

BILL
I told you not to print this. This
is totally useless now. Just
wasting my time here.

Sady looks over with somber eyes, then slinks into Bill's office.

CANDOR FRONT

Jonas opens the envelope and beams. There's a check for fifty thousand dollars. He COUGHS lightly.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

At the table, Jonas types vigorously on his computer. He stops and holds up the check.

JONAS
Is this really happening?

CUT TO:

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas stops typing on his computer and leans back in thought.
GARLAND CARSON, (20's), strums a GUITAR loudly behind him.

GARLAND

You going to buy me recording time
with your first big check?

JONAS

Not going to be getting any checks
if I can't write. Can you just -
take a break or something?

GARLAND

Jeez. Sorry, man.

He sets the guitar aside and packs up his stuff.

GARLAND

I should get going anyway. You're
coming to the show tonight, right?

JONAS

I've got too much to do. I don't
know why you keep wasting your time
playing free shows at bars.

GARLAND

Is that what you think I'm doing?
Wasting my time?

JONAS

C'mon, Garland. Quit romanticizing
a musicians life. Chances of you
actually making it are pretty slim.

Garland grabs his guitar case.

GARLAND

You know the difference between you
and me? I support you in your
dreams. Even if you are going
nowhere with it.

Garland charges out of the house.

BACK TO:

JONAS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS/END FLASHBACK:

Afflicted, Jonas lowers the check and tosses it on the table.

JONAS

I did it mom. If only you could see
me now.

He shuts his eyes.

EXT./INT. ELIZA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

PATIO

Jonas opens his eyes. He's outside his mothers house. He
looks around, bemused.

JONAS

This is too real to be just a
memory. Can I actually be here?

He touches the bushes, then slowly enters the house.

LIVINGROOM

Eliza lays on the couch, drifting in and out of sleep.

JONAS

Wait. I remember this night.

Tears streak his cheeks as he anxiously edges closer to her.

JONAS

Mom?

ELIZA

Hey, honey. What's the matter?

She becomes alert and sits up. Jonas breaks down and lunges
at her. He gives her a backbreaking hug.

JONAS

I can't believe it.

ELIZA

What is it?

He lets her go and sits on the edge of the coffee table.

JONAS

I just missed you, that's all.

ELIZA

I miss you too, babe.

JONAS

I always wanted you to be the first person I told when I made it - and I did it.

ELIZA

Honey, that's great. I always knew you would.

He holds a smile through the tears and grabs her hand.

JONAS

It's so good to see you.

ELIZA

I always love when you come visit me. You know that.

JONAS

I just want to tell you that I love you so much. And I am so proud of who you were. You were a great mom.

Jonas leans down and gives her another big hug.

JONAS

Please forgive me for what I said about dad.

She's aporetic as they break from the hug.

ELIZA

Honey, what are you talking about?

He sees the pill bottles on the table. A CAR pulls up outside. He runs over to the window and looks out.

ELIZA O.S.

Why are you using past tense?

Someone's in a familiar car, finishing a cigarette. He turns back to his mom.

JONAS

Mom, do me a favor - take your own advice. Trust in the Lord.

ELIZA

My trust's always in the Lord. Honey, is everything all right?

He looks out the window again.

JONAS

I'm not sure, but I love you very
much.

He roves onto the -

PATIO

And crouches behind the bushes. His actual self, in his work
uniform, gets out of the car and treads toward the house.

He runs over. He and his actual self walk right through each
other.

Jonas is freaked. His other self doesn't notice and enters
the house.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Jonas bounces awake, practically hyperventilating. He looks
around, then checks his hands and the rest of his body.

EXT. RED POPPY LIBRARY - DAY

A near-empty ashtray sits beside Jonas as he writes furiously
in his journal. Sady totters over with a pot of coffee.

JONAS

Hey, what was all that about the
other day?

SADY

What do you care?

She tops off his cup.

JONAS

What do you mean?

SADY

Don't pretend to like me.

JONAS

I'm not pretending.

SADY

You think I'm worthless just like
everyone else.

JONAS

Sady, I don't think that.

SADY

I know you're riding this wave of adoration right now, but I've got news for you, Jonas. Your not as world-class as you think you are.

She storms away.

JONAS

Sady, wait.

SATAN O.S.

How's everything going?

Startled, Jonas swings around to see Satan sitting across from him smoking a cigar.

JONAS

Jesus!

SATAN

No, just me.

JONAS

You scared me.

SATAN

I can have that affect sometimes.

JONAS

I should go talk to her.

Jonas motions to rise. Satan snuffs out his cigar.

SATAN

Don't worry about her. You've got your own problems to worry about. Getting some work done, I hope.

JONAS

Haven't had inspiration like this in a long time.

SATAN

Just wanted to check on you. Make sure everything's satisfactory.

JONAS

Honestly, it's all a bit overwhelming.

SATAN

That'll pass.

JONAS

Can you at least explain to me
what's happening?

SATAN

What needs explaining? This is the
life you wanted. Live it. Worry
about nothing else. There is,
however, one small matter of
business that needs attention.

JONAS

What is it? I'm just so confused.

SATAN

Life is confusing, isn't it? But as
the old adage suggests, the devil's
in the details. I won't take up your
time with that right now - You've
got company.

JONAS

Who?

Satan steps aside. Birdie heads towards them.

SATAN

See you in due time.

JONAS

Wait, what business?

Jonas turns to speak but COUGHS lightly. Satan's already
gone. Birdie approaches the table.

BIRDIE

Thought I'd find you here. Who were
you talking to?

JONAS

Nobody.

BIRDIE

It's a beautiful day, I was
thinking of going for a walk.
Thought you'd like to walk with me.

Jonas smiles.

JONAS

I'd like that.

He collects his stuff. He puts his lighter into his pocket,
then stops and looks curious. He pulls out a key.

BIRDIE
What's that for?

JONAS
I'm not sure. C'mon.

He puts the key back into his pocket. They walk away.

EXT. SAN GABRIEL PARK - DAY

Jonas and Birdie stroll along the edge of the river.

JONAS
So, Birdie got married. Sounds like
a title of a poem or something.

BIRDIE
You would say something like that.

JONAS
You were the bird I couldn't tame.

BIRDIE
That's not how I remember it.

She looks into his eyes. He stares to the ground.

JONAS
I'm still kicking myself about
that, so you know.

BIRDIE
What can I say? I'm a great catch.

JONAS
Some birds aren't meant to be
caught.

BIRDIE
Don't write us off like that. This
isn't one of your poems, Jonas.

JONAS
I know. I'm sorry.

Realizing this could be a moment, Birdie reacts.

BIRDIE
So, your writing took off...

JONAS
Surprisingly so.

They sit at a pick-nick table.

BIRDIE

When's your next public appearance?
Any speeches or a book signing in
the future?

JONAS

God, I hope not. I've got a meager
oratory at best, as you know.
Completely and utterly afraid.

BIRDIE

I remember.

She notices an elderly couple on a bench in the distance. She
looks back to Jonas. He's transfixed on her.

BIRDIE

Always thought that'd be us
someday.

JONAS

We're still young.

BIRDIE

But there's no time left.

JONAS

Where's your guy at?

BIRDIE

He's not here right now. You and
him are a lot alike, yet different
in many ways.

JONAS

We cling to what's familiar.
Perhaps that's why I pushed you
away. Fear of the unknown.

BIRDIE

One day you'll understand; fear's
only an obstacle to be overcome.

JONAS

I'm working on it.

He gives a sullen smile. She shifts her focus from the
elderly couple back to him.

BIRDIE

I've an idea.

INT. ROOTS BISTRO - NIGHT

The place is elbow-to-elbow. A POET reads from on a stage. Oddly enough, he looks familiar too - but who is he?

Jonas and Birdie stand at the back of the crowd.

POET

We count the stars, innumerable in sight. Those tiny specs of dust that illuminate the night. Though our path may not be clear, each step is aligned, fulfilling our destiny of ethereal design

PEOPLE applaud. The poet steps down. Birdie glances at Jonas.

JONAS

What?

BIRDIE

What do you mean, what? This is what you've been waiting for.

JONAS

No way.

BIRDIE

Get up there.

JONAS

I can't. When I said meager, what I really meant was not at all.

BIRDIE

You're a famous writer now. Let's hear those words in action.

He's apprehensive.

JONAS

You first.

With no hesitation, she hastens onto the stage.

BIRDIE

Hello. My name's Birdie and this is something I wrote back in time. It's kind of stupid but I don't care. It's called service industry.

She clears her throat, takes a breath, then reads quickly.

BIRDIE

Quick paced and amiable, I approach your table. A fake smile and a murmur for speech - Hi my name is, it doesn't matter you're only here to eat. Moments pass and no ones speaking, so I think cleverly of suggestive selling. Would you like wine or a cocktail - something other than water or tea? Having no clear thought surface, I say I'll grab some waters while you look it over, then I'll be right back to take your order. Now coming back and carrying a tray of drinks, I get flagged down and stopped by another waiters patron. He holds out a pen and grumbles, do you have one with ink? I roll my eyes and keep my left hand balanced while fishing through the pocket of my apron, then I pull out one that writes. He takes it with a smile, thanks me, then says goodnight. At another table in my section, they've given a flimsy browse through our extensive menu selections, then comes the bombardment of question after question. They're concerned about what we offer regarding their dietary needs and give me a laundry list of all their allergies. No garlic, no salt, light sauce and cheese on cheese on cheese. Annoyed yet still smiling, I say I'll tell the chef. Done with this one, on to the next. Who am I fooling? I'm a server, it's my job to wait on egocentric people so grueling. Year after year, it should come less astonishing. After all, this is the career you strive to find the passion through the awkward interactions. The profession I didn't choose but it chose me, the ever so favorable - service industry. Thank you.

APPLAUSE fills the room. Birdie rushes back to Jonas.

JONAS

That was amazing.

BIRDIE

Your turn. Get up there.

JONAS

No. Birdie, I can't. You were great, I can't follow that.

BIRDIE

C'mon. It's time to face your fears. Just do it already.

She grabs his hands, guiding him towards the stage. Jonas steps up. Crickets - a pen drop; the place is silent.

He takes out his journal and speaks into the mic.

JONAS

Hi, my name's Jonas Mackabee. This is my first time doing this so bare with me. Oh, God. Here we go.

He folds back the cover and begins reading.

JONAS

I've met some people recently, one of which who offered some advice. Does it get any easier I cried, with grief in my eyes. He tilted his head and sighed as he caressed his throat and his lips began to curl. Out came a lamenting reply, mumbling a subtle no, then a nimble hand to my shoulder. An overwhelming embrace and as the tears welled, the truth became unveiled. He explained, this is it kid. Better familiarize yourself with the elusive side of life. Elicit your interests, but not just for momentary instants. It's time to make up your mind and defeat your strife. Realize your potential and forget about the adverse memories that cause affliction interminable. He took a step back and held a curious smile. We aren't much different, you and me. It comes and goes - the cheerful laughs and unwilling sorrows. The only difference is, I've found relief.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Put down your tongue and open your heart for the internal war isn't finished, it's only begun and you're toe-to-line at the start. Your advice has been cut and dry and has given me something to ponder. Do I know you from before? He extended his hand for me to shake and said, my child more than you think. I am you and you are me. As I grasped his hand in wonder, he dissipated into an electric mist - holding the remnants of a memory.

The silence is deafening. He closes his book.

JONAS

Thank you.

He steps down. A progressive CLAP morphs into an Olympic CHEER. He stands next to Birdie.

BIRDIE

Wow, where'd that come from?

JONAS

I guess that was my epitaph.

BIRDIE

Whatever it was, you killed it.

JONAS

That was so exhilarating. I could never have done that without you.

BIRDIE

Tearing down those walls one fear at a time.

They're eyes are tethered. If Birdie wasn't married this would be the start to an enduring relationship.

EXT. SIX HUNDRED PIZZERIA - NIGHT

The place is sparse with patrons. Birdie and Jonas sit alone in a corner.

BIRDIE

Wish there were more times like this.

JONAS

There should have been. I was just too focused on myself to let you in. Which is still no excuse.

BIRDIE

That's always been your problem.

He stares back in question.

BIRDIE

You worry too much.

JONAS

I was too afraid I wouldn't impress you. That I wasn't good enough.

BIRDIE

Impress me? I just wanted to spend time with you. I would've been happy at the edge of a dried creek bed as long as we were together.

JONAS

A creek bed? Really?

BIRDIE

I would've taken that over fancy dinners anyday.

JONAS

Guess that's what I got from my father after all. Get out before you can get hurt.

BIRDIE

Sometimes it takes getting hurt to understand how to live.

JONAS

Keep that in mind for my next life.

Garland walks out. He doesn't recognize Jonas, be Jonas recognizes him. He approaches the table.

GARLAND

It's not often we get local celebrities. I'd like to take care of the bill tonight.

JONAS

Oh, no. Thank you, but you don't have to do that.

GARLAND

I'd like to. My best friend wanted to be a writer once, but called it quits too early. I'd feel like I was honoring him in some way.

Jonas is lifeless.

BIRDIE

Thank you very much.

GARLAND

You guys have a great night.

Garland shuffles away. Jonas hurries after him.

JONAS

Hey, wait a minute. Thank you for that. That's incredibly generous.

GARLAND

You're welcome.

JONAS

I want to ask you, if there's one thing you could say to your friend again, what would it be?

Garland ponders.

GARLAND

I'd say pick up the phone. Distance is only as far as we make it and I was only a phone call away.

JONAS

You still playing music?

GARLAND

How'd you know I played?

JONAS

Saw you once or twice.

GARLAND

It was fun for awhile. But then I realized making it was probably unrealistic. Life's just too short.

JONAS

Life's not too short, man. We just wait too long to start living. Keep playing. Go for it. You never know what the future holds.

Garland considers his advice.

GARLAND
Thanks, man.

He smiles and heads inside. Jonas watches, revitalized.

EXT. RED POPPY LIBRARY - NIGHT

Jonas scribbles in his journal. An unfamiliar face warms up his coffee. He looks quizzical as they walk away.

EXT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE/JAYBIRD - DAY

Jonas, with a new glow about him, scours over the city's square. Jay ends a call on his phone and walks over.

JAY
My publisher -- She's a sweet girl.

JONAS
You're an author?

JAY
I've written a thing or two.

JONAS
I didn't know that.

JAY
Some things you only realize in
time.
(He sits)
What were you saying?

JONAS
It was like I was really there. We
were talking and interacting. Do
you think it's possible?

JAY
Is what possible?

JONAS
Could time be allowing me to go
back and alter the past? You're
religious, what's the bible say
about this stuff?

JAY

God exists outside of our understanding of time. Maybe He's trying to show you something.

JONAS

When I was a kid I remember seeing a shadow walk past my bedroom door. My mom tried to convince me it was nothing, but what if -

JAY

What if what?

JONAS

What if I'm a ghost?

JAY

We are our own ghosts, Jonas. Remember that.

JONAS

Well, maybe it's finally my turn to get something I want in this state of paramnesia.

JAY

What's something that you want?

Jonas mulls, then faces Jay.

JONAS

There is something I think I should do more of.

(Jay leans in)

Say you're welcome more often.

JAY

There's an idea. But, in order to do that - gotta make more occasions for people to thank you. The key's perseverance.

Bee sets down two cups of coffee in front of them.

BEE

Hey, Jonas. Thought you boys could use some coffee.

JONAS

Thank you.

JAY

Thank you.

Jay shoots Jonas a look, then quickly touches Bee's arm.

JAY

Thank you, sweetheart. I'll be back
in shortly.

She looks over the both of them, then walks back inside.

JONAS

Was that your wife?

JAY

Mhm.

JONAS

She seems nice. Kind of looks
familiar, too.

JAY

Said the same thing years ago.

They silently sip their coffee.

JONAS

What would you do if you were me?

JAY

If I was you, I'd make use of this
gift and realize what's important.

JONAS

How do I know what's important?

JAY

If you find yourself in another
situation you think you can change,
that might be a good indication.

JONAS

What if it doesn't work like that?
What if I can't change it?

JAY

God reveals what we need to change
in our life. But until we're ready
to be changed, nothing can change.

Jonas leans back.

JONAS

What if it's too late?

JAY

Be encouraged, it's never too late
to foster the relationships of
those who love you.

JAY (CONT'D)
But understand, to love somebody -
you must first learn to love
yourself.

Jonas sits back, taking this in.

EXT./INT. JONAS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jonas types on his computer. He comes to a stop.

PORCH

Jonas smokes a cigarette in self-reflection.

JONAS V.O.
Did I never love myself?

He shuts his eyes, then -

CUT TO:

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - DAY/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

HALLWAY

Jonas finds himself in his hallway. Light seeps through the bottom of the bathroom door.

The SHOWER runs. He edges forward - twisting the doorknob - Steam pours out as the door opens wider.

His clothes are on the counter. Frightened, he runs away.

The water cuts off. HE opens the curtain.

:Same scene from before.

BACK TO:

EXT./INT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT/END FLASHBACK:

PORCH

Jonas' eyes wide. His cigarette's burned to the filter. He tosses it, then scurries inside.

HALL

He bursts through the bathroom door.

BATHROOM

He flips on the light. No one. He stares at his reflection, grief in his eyes.

JONAS

What's happening to me?

Revelation washes over him. He flips off the light.

EXT. ROOTS BISTRO - NIGHT

A film's being projected to a large crowd. Jonas and Birdie sit in the middle.

He focuses on her. She on the screen.

He slowly reaches for her hand. His index finger grazes hers. She briefly allows it, then retracts.

The moments dismissed.

ALLEY WAY

Birdie and Jonas huddle together. They appear to be a couple but they're not. They turn down -

EXT. STREET THROUGH THE SQUARE - NIGHT

They walk closely, then stop at the corner.

BIRDIE

Why do you do this to me, jonas?

Jonas gazes into her eyes.

BIRDIE

I want to get lost with you, but I can't.

He reaches out to touch her. She tilts her head away.

JONAS

I just want to feel you again.

She shuts her eyes and mimics his hand grazing her cheek.

BIRDIE
Just remember...

JONAS
It was the memories that killed me.

She reopens her eyes.

JONAS
If we met in the future, would you
remember me in the past?

BIRDIE
If this was the future, we'd be
together in the past.

JONAS
I have to tell you something.

He steps away in a concentrated pace, then looks back to her.

JONAS
After I lost you I tried to kill
myself.

BIRDIE
Jonas, oh my God.

JONAS
I couldn't even do that right. I'm
still here - but everything's
different.

He steps closer to her.

JONAS
I think I'm alternating between the
future and the past. Or I'm a
ghost.

BIRDIE
What are you talking about?

JONAS
I know it's crazy, but it's real.
What would you say if I told you I
could change things?

BIRDIE
I'd say your crazy. This is the
present and there's no going back.

JONAS
What if I could?

She's agitated.

BIRDIE

You know, you're not the only one you tried to kill. A part of me died the day you said goodbye. If you could go back, I'd say change that. Save us both the pain.

Without hesitation, Jonas grabs her hands and shuts his eyes. She's nonplussed.

He reopens his eyes. Nothing's changed. He closes his eyes again. Birdie glares.

JONAS

Something's not right. It's not working this time.

Off her look.

JONAS

I'm telling you I went back. It'll work. Just give me a second.

He clenches his eyes closed again.

BIRDIE

Well, it's been fun and wistfully entertaining.

She backs away.

JONAS

Wait, Birdie. This is real.

She faces him.

BIRDIE

No. What's real is you can't take anything serious.

JONAS

I'm being serious. I just haven't figured out how to do it yet.

BIRDIE

Whenever we start taking things further, you walk the other way. But you know what? Not this time, Jonas. It's my turn to walk away.

She turns and darts around the corner.

JONAS
Birdie, wait!

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Jonas lumbers through his front door, straight into his -

KITCHEN

Jonas plops down at his dinette table, deplored. He spots many checks covering the table top.

He picks them up, stares hard, then aggressively shreds them. He tosses the remains amidst his trashed house.

INT. SQUARE - DAY

Jonas mopes aimlessly through the busy sidewalks of people. Everyone seems to have a destination.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jonas sits at a table alone. Head against the wall. A stranger comes up to him with one of the magazines and a pen.

Jonas slowly uncaps the pen, stares hard at his picture and poem, about to sign - but doesn't.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jonas is at his table writing on his computer. Nothing much. He comes to a stop and reaches for an unopened beer.

He's about to pull the tab, but doesn't. He sets it aside and scrolls through photos of him and Birdie on his phone.

EXT. SAN GABRIEL PARK - DAY

Jonas sits alone at the same pick-nick table from earlier. He watches happy couples walk past.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Jonas abruptly wakes in his bed. He doesn't want to get up, but he does.

EXT. RED POPPY LIBRARY - DAY

Jonas absent-mindedly scribbles in his book. An unfamiliar barista approaches and sets down a cup of coffee.

JONAS
Where's Sady at?

BARISTA
You didn't hear?

JONAS
Hear what?

EXT. SADY'S HOUSE - DAY

Police tape lines her house. Jonas breathes deep.

JONAS
Oh, God. No.

He COUGHS heavily.

INT. CANDOR MAGAZINE - DAY

Jonas rushes through the front door. Bill's hunched over a desk. He turns to face him.

BILL
Jonas, issues' almost finished.
Still don't have your piece, yet.

JONAS
What happened to Sady?

BILL
Who?

JONAS
Your intern...

BILL
Oh, yeah. I let her go. Girl was
worthless. Wasting my time here.

JONAS
She's dead. She killed herself.

BILL
That's tragic. Oh, while you're
here; your new contract.

He grabs the contract from his desk and eagerly hands it out.

JONAS
A girl's dead and all you're
thinking about's money?

BILL
That's the business, baby. Here,
there isn't much time left.

Jonas ignores the contract and glowers.

JONAS
Nobody's worthless.

EXT. SIDEWALK IN THE SQUARE - DAY

Jonas dawdles among the crowds of people. He sits on a bench.

JONAS V.O.
Why, Sady? Why'd you do it? I
should have been nicer to you.

Jonas sits up straight.

JONAS
Wait a minute. When was the last
time I saw her?

He shuts his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. RED POPPY LIBRARY - NIGHT/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas finds himself sitting at his usual table. Sady's
walking away.

He realizes this is the past and blurts out -

JONAS
Don't do it, Sady!

She briskly turns back.

SADY
Don't do what?

JONAS
Wait, too early.

He closes his eyes again.

BACK TO:

SIDEWALK IN THE SQUARE - CONTINUOUS/END FLASHBACK:

Jonas reopens his eyes and stands from the bench.

JONAS

Further. What happened after this?

He shuts his eyes again.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANDOR MAGAZINE - DAY

Jonas stands at a breadth. Sady rushes out crying.

JONAS

Okay, this is really happening.

He runs to catch her.

Too late.

She's in her car and speeds away.

He watches her disappear in the distance.

EXT./INT. SADY'S HOUSE - DAY

Jonas rushes up to her house, now devoid of the police tape. He tries the door. It's locked.

He runs around to the back. Tries that door - locked.

He grabs a rock - about to smash the window, then reaches into his pocket.

He drops the rock and takes out the key. The door unlocks. Amazed, he walks into the -

LIVINGROOM

And rushes through the darkened room.

JONAS

Sady! Where are you, Sady?

Her bedroom door's cracked. He pushes it open.

BEDROOM

Sady lies in her bed unconscious. Jonas rushes over.

He bumps into the night stand, knocking over some pill bottles.

The prescription is for Eliza Mackabee. He doesn't notice.

JONAS

Oh my God. Sady! Wake up -- C'mon.

He leans over, grabbing her head and slapping her cheeks.

JONAS

Wake up, Sady.

She MOANS lightly. He carries her into the -

BATHROOM

And leans her head over the toilet.

JONAS

Spit it up, Sady. C'mon.

She retches as she becomes more conscious. She leans over the toilet and violently VOMITS. Jonas holds her hair back.

JONAS

There ya' go. Get it out.

She has full function of her faculties. Jonas rests against the door, relieved. She props against the toilet.

SADY

How did you know?

JONAS

I just did.

SADY

You must think I'm stupid.

JONAS

I do not think you're stupid.

She cries.

SADY

Everyone think's I'm worthless.
Nobody believes in me. I don't want
to feel like this anymore.

JONAS

I know how you feel. I've been here
before, myself. Come here.

He gives her a hug as she SOBS.

JONAS

We can't allow others to determine
our worth. If they can't see the
value in you, then they're the ones
who are worthless.

She wipes her tears.

SADY

Guess I blew my chances with the
magazine.

JONAS

No, you didn't. I believe in you.
You can do anything. You just have
to believe in yourself.

She smiles through the tears. He brushes her hair back.

JONAS

Hey, when I make it big, there's
going to be a job waiting for you.

SADY

Promise?

JONAS

I promise.

SADY

Thank you.

JONAS

You're welcome.

He stares at her, revelatory, then smiles.

JONAS

We're going to be all right.

He rises and starts to dart off.

SADY

Jonas, I was wrong about you.

Looking back to her.

JONAS

No. You weren't.

SADY

Where are you going?

JONAS

I know what's important now.

He rushes away.

INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE/JAYBIRD - DAY

Jay cleans a table, then heads towards the back. Bee's behind the counter. Jonas runs through the door. Jay faces him.

JONAS

Jay!

JAY

Hey, Jonas.

JONAS

I did it. I figured out what I'm supposed to do.

JAY

I knew you would eventually.

Jonas starts COUGHING really hard.

JAY

That's not sounding too good. Must be about that time.

JONAS

I'm fine. And everything's going to be fine.

Jonas holds out his hand. They shake.

JONAS

This is probably the last time I'm going to see you, isn't it?

JAY

I'm sure we'll meet each other
again - in the future. It was nice
seeing you, Jonas.

JONAS

You too, old man.

Jay heads towards the back, then turns to Jonas.

JAY

Remember, Jonas. Always put
your trust in the Lord. Only
then will you be prosperous.

JONAS

...Prosperous.

Jonas chimes in to himself.

JONAS

Deja vu.

JAY

Have courage. He may not show up
when you expect Him, but He shows
up on time. Always.

Jonas turns to Bee.

JONAS

You got a good guy there. Make sure
you take care of him.

Jonas smiles and passes a picture as he exits.

It's of Jay holding a book entitled, "How God revealed my
past by showing me my future."

Jonas Mackabee is engraved on the picture frame.

Bee walks over to Jay.

BEE

What was that about?

JAY

He just needed a little help.

He wraps his arm around her. They turn and walk away.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Jonas COUGHS violently as he enters. He clutches his neck. It
settles.

He wanders into the -

KITCHEN

The checks that he tore up lie on the table - fully intact.
He inspects them.

JONAS

What...

LIVING ROOM

Jonas ambulates back and forth, concentrated.

JONAS

How to do this? Think - think. The
last date with Birdie.

He shuts his eyes in reverie.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK IN THE SQUARE - NIGHT

At a distance, Jonas sees Birdie and himself talking at the
street corner the night she walked away.

JONAS

It's too late for this. I have to
go back earlier.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOTS BISTRO - NIGHT

Jonas eases around the corner. He spots Birdie and himself
among the crowd.

Behind them, he sees himself controlling the projector.

It's images of him and Birdie. They don't notice.

JONAS

What? I don't remember doing this.

He turns the corner and slumps against the wall.

JONAS

What was our last date?

He clinches his eyes shut.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

This is Jonas and Birdie's date from his earlier memory. He sees himself get up from the table and walk outside.

He slowly approaches behind her and carefully places his hands over her eyes.

JONAS

Don't move. Don't say anything.
There should never have been a day
that I didn't tell you how
beautiful you are.

EXT. RESTAURANT - PATIO - SAME

Jonas smokes his cigarette. He looks inside seeing only Birdie.

He tosses his cigarette and heads for the door.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Jonas still has his hands over her eyes. She melts inside.

JONAS

You were great. Always. And I'm a
fool for not realizing it then. Not
being able to articulate my
feelings will never be an excuse
for not telling you that. You
didn't deserve the way I treated
you and I'm so sorry.

BIRDIE

Jonas...

He slowly lowers his hands and rushes away. His actual self rounds the corner. They bump shoulders.

His actual self goes to the table. His other self exits.

EXT. RESTAURANT - CORNER - NIGHT

Jonas peers behind the corner. His actual self and Birdie walk out and prepare to cross the street.

JONAS

Kiss her. C'mon. Stupid. Kiss her.

She looks like she wants him to kiss her, but he doesn't. They walk across the street, get into his car and drive away.

JONAS

No -- No! You're so stupid.

He watches until the car disappears.

Yards away, he sees himself again watching from a different angle.

As puzzling as this is, he runs off.

He sees Birdie and himself walking her bike in an another direction. He stops and stares for a moment. Then...

EXT. RESTAURANT PATIO - NIGHT

He and Birdie are at a table near a big window laughing and talking.

He edges closer. His head spins. They don't notice him. He turns and stumbles away.

COURTYARD

He and Birdie sit at a bench at the corner of the lot talking. He walks past, very confused at this point.

JONAS

What's happening?

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

Jonas edges near a cliff that overlooks a dried creek bed below. With tears in his eyes, he looks up to the stars.

The moonlight reflects off of his face as he calls out -

JONAS

What am I supposed to do?

(beat)

If I can't change anything, then
what am I supposed to do?

He COUGHS hard and looks down. On the ground lies a crushed pack of cigarettes.

It's the same pack he smokes. He inspects it, then tosses it aside.

He walks away.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - DAY

He bounces up in bed. He lethargically moseys into his -

LIVINGROOM

And looks around his filthy house. Moments later, he has a trash bag and cleans.

KITCHEN

On the table, next to the checks, lies the contract from Candor Mag. He looks it over, then throws it into the bag.

EXT./INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE - DAY

Jonas approaches the coffee house.

The sign says Cianfrani's. He notices and spurts in.

FRONT

The place had a face lift. Jay's nowhere in sight. ANN, (40's), walks behind the counter.

JONAS
You're not Jay's wife.

ANN
Who?

JONAS
Jay. The owner.

ANN
Never heard of him. I'm Ann. I own this place.

JONAS
What? No, I've been coming here the past few days meeting with Jay.

ANN

I've never seen ya'. I've been here
everyday for the last ten years.

Jonas is taken aback.

ANN

It's for sale. Maybe he was
interested in buying the place.

She trots off. Jonas whirls.

INT. ROOTS BISTRO - DAY

Jonas rushes up to the bar. Another unfamiliar face.

JONAS

Is Birdie here?

EMPLOYEE

Never heard of her.

Jonas slowly backs away and exits.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

A man paints a picture on an easel at the corner of the
street.

Paintings litter the ground below. He also looks very
familiar.

Jonas drags his leaden body past.

PAINTER

Why the long face?

Jonas gives a small glance.

JONAS

I'm not sure what's going on
anymore. I thought I did but I'm
just as clueless as before.

PAINTER

I know the feeling - everyone
knowing your name, but not who you
are. You paint?

JONAS

I've never tried.

The painter holds out a paint brush.

PAINTER
Never know unless you try.

JONAS
No thanks. I'll just mess up your picture.

PAINTER
Nonsense. Here take it. Take your mind off things.

Jonas takes the brush and steps behind the canvass.

PAINTER
The great thing about painting is you've got a blank canvass. What you do with it - it's your choice. Go on, give it a shot.

JONAS
I don't know what to paint.

PAINTER
Here, we'll do it together.

The painter places a second canvass on the easel.

PAINTER
Just do what I do.

He starts painting. Jonas imitates every stroke.

PAINTER
Any mistakes you think are permanent can always be corrected.

Time passes. Jonas is lost in the moment. He paints a final stroke, then steps back.

PAINTER
Beautiful, isn't it?

JONAS
I can't tell what it is.

PAINTER
Sometimes we're too focused on the details. We think we've got it figured out, but there's always a bigger picture.

The painter sets his painting down. He picks three others off the ground and places them side by side.

Together, they make one big picture of Jesus on the cross.

PAINTER

...And it all points to him. You just have to have faith.

JONAS

I don't think I know how.

PAINTER

When you admit you can't do it alone. He made the ultimate sacrifice, laying down his life to take your burdens - your regrets and give you - a blank canvass.

JONAS

I want a blank canvass. I want to start over.

PAINTER

It's with our praise that the earth moves and the heavens shake. And we're just waiting for you, Jonas.

JONAS

What do I do?

PAINTER

Surrender. The time here is short. He died for us. The least we can do is live for Him. He's waiting for you. Whenever you're ready.

JONAS

I think I'm ready.

They exchange smiles. Jonas paces away. From a distance, he turns back.

The painter's vanished.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Jonas promenades through the crowds of people. He notices everyone smiling at him as they pass by.

Encouraged, he plumps to his knees and raises his hands to the heavens. In his complete reckless abandon, Satan appears.

SATAN

What are you doing?

JONAS

I'm doing it right this time. I'm starting over.

SATAN

There is no starting over. We had a deal.

JONAS

There is no deal.

Jonas stands and faces him.

SATAN

You wanted riches, fame, a writing career - I gave that to you.

JONAS

I may have wanted that in the past, but I know what's important now. I'm writing a new future.

SATAN

Jonas, I think there's something you need to see.

They stare eye to eye and suddenly get taken away to -

INT./EXT. TONY & LUIGIS RESTAURANT - DAY

The place is brimming. Jonas spots himself waiting on a large table. This time the patrons are millennials.

Many pictures still adorn the nearby table.

:This is the same scene from earlier.

JONAS

I remember this day.

SATAN

Do you remember?

JONAS

This is the day I quit.

SATAN

Recognize anyone?

Jonas realizes Birdie and Garland are at the table with his other friends. He grabs a picture off the table.

It's of him. They're all of him. Fear-stricken, he drops the picture.

Meanwhile, other Jonas clears the dishes. He doesn't notice the picture has fallen over, just as it did previously.

Hands full, he backs away. They both run into each other.
PSSHH!

JONAS
This can't be happening.

SATAN
It already did.

Jonas looks up, rattled. Satan laughs hysterically.

SATAN
You're dead.

JONAS
No - no.

He runs from Satan.

PATIO

Jonas bursts out of the doors. He doesn't know where to run. Satan leans against the building.

SATAN
Where are you going, Jonas?

Jonas darts off.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Jonas races up to the homeless men. Satan's handing them a liquor bottle.

There's no trace of the man with the cardboard sign.

SATAN
You may have run away from
everything in your life, but you
can't run away from this.

INT./EXT. JONAS' HOUSE - DAY

Jonas burst through his door. The house is trashed again.

JONAS

What? No...

Satan strides in, kicking beer cans.

KITCHEN

Satan grabs the checks and contract off of the table.

SATAN

This might interest you now.

Satan holds them out, but Jonas runs out the back door.

BACKYARD

Jonas edges towards the tree where his body becomes visible.
Satan comes up behind him.

SATAN

Just how you left yourself.

JONAS

This isn't real. I can change.

SATAN

There is no changing. You're
decisions led you here now it's
time to go.

JONAS

Go where?

SATAN

Where do you think?

JONAS

No...

SATAN

Yes. You wanted this. Now you're
coming with me.

JONAS

No!

He runs away from the site, leaving Satan in the dust.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Jonas runs like he's never ran before. Fierce, frightened and determined.

Satan meets him at a street corner.

SATAN

There's nowhere to run. It's time
to face your destiny.

JONAS

This isn't my destiny.

He runs out of site.

EXT. DAM - DAY

Jonas approaches the edge of the dam and peers down below. He steps onto the railing. Takes a breath, then COUGHS hard.

HOMELESS MAN O.S.

Isn't that what got you in this
mess in the first place?

Jonas jerks his attention to the homeless man behind him. This is who the pianist, painter and poet resemble.

JONAS

You -- I know you.

HOMELESS MAN

You may have talked to me a few
times, but you don't know me. Come
down from there.

JONAS

This is a dream. I have to wake up.

HOMELESS MAN

This isn't a dream, Jonas.

Jonas shoots him a look.

JONAS

Who are you?

HOMELESS MAN

I am Him. He you thought was never
listening.

JONAS

God? You're not how I imagined you.

HOMELESS MAN

You see me the way you saw everyone else. Insignificant and inferior to yourself.

Jonas descends the railing.

JONAS

What's happening to me?

HOMELESS MAN

You asked for a change in your life. You were tired of waiting on me, as you said.

JONAS

I didn't mean like this.

HOMELESS MAN

How else did you expect to see what you needed to change? You had to experience it.

JONAS

Why me?

HOMELESS MAN

Why not you? YOU - weren't listening.

JONAS

I couldn't hear you.

HOMELESS MAN

Isn't it written, the birds don't sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them? You, Jonas, are of much more value. I just allowed you to see what it's like on your own.

JONAS

I don't want to do it on my own anymore. I can't.

HOMELESS MAN

I know, son. At times it may seem like I'm not around. But I know the plans I have for you. Plans to give you hope and a future. Just as long as you're willing to listen.

JONAS

But it's too late, isn't it? I'm
already dead.

HOMELESS MAN

Do you want to be?

JONAS

I thought I did, but not anymore.
I'm ready to listen now.

HOMELESS MAN

Then let's finish this.

JONAS

Tell me what to do?

HOMELESS MAN

Jump.

Jonas is stunned. He toggles his vision between the homeless
man and the ground below.

HOMELESS MAN

Just joking.

Jonas LAUGHS, relieved, then COUGHS violently.

JONAS

Why can't I breathe?

HOMELESS MAN

You will soon.

JONAS

How will I remember any of this?

HOMELESS MAN

Use the talent I've instilled in
you. Write it down. Come here, son.

The man holds out his hand. Through the COUGHS, Jonas takes
it. They hug firmly.

HOMELESS MAN

Remember my words. This life is
nothing but a vapor. Cherish it.
When you run into tough times, know
that I am here to guide you through
it. Always.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT./INT. JONAS' HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Silence. Jonas twists and jolts, hanging from the tree. The wind picks up as some birds fly past.

A gust of wind snaps the rope. He falls to the ground. He clasps his throat and scrambles into the -

KITCHEN

The noose is still around his neck. He rips a page out of his book. At the table, he writes vigorously.

JONAS V.O.

You won't believe this unless you read it for yourself. One day you're going to meet somebody who's lost and broken. Someone who just needs to hear that they're worth something. Remember these words. Burn them into your mind and imprint them on your heart.

INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE/JAYBIRD - OFFICE - DAY

Jay unlocks a safe on a shelf. He retrieves a folded piece of paper with a torn edge.

He stands near a coat rack with Jonas' denim jacket and begins to read.

JAY O.S.

We may wear our scars, but they don't define who we are.

EXT. SQUARE - DAY

This is the same scene from earlier. Jonas stands near a big blue mailbox. He looks around, still unsure why he's there.

JONAS V.O.

God chooses not to reveal some things to us at the time to provide hope for our future.

INT./EXT. TONY & LUGIS RESTAURANT - DAY

Jonas flies through the front door and sees Taylor. He's now back in regular work attire.

TAYLOR

Jonas, I didn't know you were working today.

JONAS

Come here.

Jonas gives him a big hug. Taylor's surprised. He sets him back down and looks into his eyes.

JONAS

Keep shinning like the star you are. You're a great person and you have a great outlook on life.

TAYLOR

What happened to you?

JONAS

I opened my eyes.

He exits.

INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE/JAYBIRD - OFFICE - SAME

Jay continues to read the page. Bee comes near.

BEE

Still holding on to that thing? Did it help whomever it was intended for?

JAY

I think it did.

EXT. TONY & LUGIS RESTAURANT - PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Jonas pulls out his phone and dials a number.

GARLAND V.O.

Jonas?

JONAS

Yeah, man. I just wanted to call and tell you how much I miss you.

EXT. SIX HUNDRED PIZZERIA - PATIO - DAY

Jonas shines now. He exits onto the patio. Garland looks over. They rush into a big hug, smiling from ear to ear.

JONAS

I'm sorry. I've missed you so much.
I should've been a better friend.

GARLAND

Now and then we get caught up on
the small things and forget who we
are for a second. Sometimes an
absence puts things into
perspective.

JONAS

Couldn't say it better. Don't let
other people influence your dreams.

They break from the hug. Jonas notices more of his friends. They're all smiles and hugs.

Garland passes out beers from a side table. He hands one over to Jonas.

JONAS

You go ahead, man. I'm done with
that life. From this point forward,
I'm starting over.

GARLAND

Good for you.

Jonas appears to have an epiphany. He beams bright as he exits.

INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE/JAYBIRD - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jay and Bee stand side by side.

BEE

You still never told me how you got
that thing? Did that boy have
something to do with it?

Jay glances over the letter, remembering.

CUT TO:

EXT. SQUARE - DAY/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas stands at the blue mailbox. He's about to shove the letter in, then stops.

He brings it near and closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIZA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jonas, as a little boy, sits in his room. His bedroom door is cracked.

A shadow glides past. He's spooked.

YOUNG JONAS
Mommy! There's a ghost.

He runs out. Older Jonas steps in, reminiscing.

ELIZA O.S.
Honey, there aren't any ghosts.

YOUNG JONAS O.S.
Come here. I'll show you.

Their VOICES get closer. Jonas opens a photo album and sets the letter inside.

Eliza and his younger self walk in.

ELIZA
I don't see any ghosts, do you?

She checks under his bed.

ELIZA
None under here...

Older Jonas watches from a cracked door.

She walks over to the closet.

Nothing.

ELIZA
None in here...

He's outside the bedroom. She kneels down beside younger Jonas. He continues to watch and is affected by her words.

ELIZA

Ghosts can only exist if we allow them to. And we're not going to allow that, are we?

She tickles him. He's relaxed now. Older Jonas smiles, then darts into the -

KITCHEN

He dumps Eliza's pills down the drain. He grabs a pen and piece of paper, then writes -

"Trust in the Lord and you'll prosper."

He leaves the note in place of the pills.

BEDROOM

Eliza is still knelt down beside his younger self. Older Jonas edges back to the cracked door and peers in.

ELIZA

Sometimes we create ghosts because we're afraid of something. And that's okay. It shows us what we need to overcome.

She touches over his heart.

ELIZA

What does the bible say?

ELIZA

Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart.

JONAS

Wait on the Lord, be of good courage and He shall strengthen your heart.

She hugs him tightly.

JAY O.S.

We can't move forward in this life until we realize that we are our own ghosts who haunt the memories of our past and future - unless we come to terms with them right here, now in our present.

Older Jonas runs away.

END FLASH BACK:

INT. ROOTS BISTRO - DAY

Jonas runs in. Birdie stands behind the bar with a fellow employee. Her PHONE rings as Jonas approaches.

EMPLOYEE
Speaking of the devil.

JONAS
Don't answer that!

BIRDIE
Jonas, I had the strangest dream
with you last night.

JONAS
Wait, Birdie -

He runs around the side and grabs her hand. They run out.

BIRDIE
What's gotten into you?

He smiles big as they exit.

JAY O.S.
Only then will we be able to live
every moment and love every second.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Jonas and Birdie stand at the edge of the cliff above the dried creek bed below.

They watch the sun set in the distance.

BIRDIE
Deja vu.

Jonas looks at her, intently.

BIRDIE
The dream I had. You broke up with
me, then killed yourself and were
alternating between the past and
future. In the dream I told you to
bring me here.

Jonas grabs her hand and looks deep into her eyes.

JONAS

The past - the future - a parallel universe - whatever it was, I was in a bad place, unhappy without you. But here, now - together. I couldn't be happier.

He lifts up their folded hands and kisses hers.

BIRDIE

That's unusual.

JONAS

What now?

BIRDIE

Normally you're surrounded by a cloud of smoke.

He pulls his cigarettes out of his denim jacket. He crushes the pack and throws it on the ground.

JONAS

No longer will I beckon death. I've got plenty to live for right here.

They kiss as the sun goes down.

INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE/JAYBIRD - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jay finishes reading the letter. He folds it and puts it back into the safe. Bee's at his side.

BEE

Seeing that boy reminded me of somebody. I just can't think of who right now.

Jay looks deep into her eyes.

BEE

I can't seem to recall where you were when we were first married. You were away from me. Just like in my dream.

JAY

There was something I had to learn. In order to love you, I first had to understand how to love myself. But I never left you.

A big smile creeps across her face.

BEE

I know who he reminds me of.

He stares into her eyes, then touches her cheek in the same fashion Jonas tried with Birdie in the earlier scene.

BEE

It's you. It was always you.

CUT TO:

EXT. RED POPPY LIBRARY - DAY/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Jonas is at his usual table. Sady walks over with a pot of coffee.

JAY V.O.

The average person lives for twenty-eight-thousand-two-hundred-and-fifty-one-days.

She begins to pour it, but he intentionally moves the cup. It spills all over his book.

He jumps up and bumps into her. She drops her keys in the ruckus. He grabs them.

He turns, takes a key off the ring and pockets it.

JONAS V.O.

What if a simple decision could change the fate of your destiny?

JAY V.O.

We're all heading in a direction. Wherever the wind blows us. And even so, there is weight to every word spoken. We've got one shot at this life, better do it right the first time. Put Him above everything and be someone for someone else. Believe in them because you never know, the life you end up saving could be your own.

END FLASHBACK:

INT./EXT. ROOTS BISTRO - NIGHT

The marquee highlights, "THE GARLAND CARSON BAND."

MAIN

It's packed and dimly lit. GARLAND'S full band plays on the stage. Jonas and Birdie stand in the back of the crowd.

BIRDIE

Do you ever feel like this is all
just a dream?

Jonas LAUGHS hard. Sady legs over.

SADY

Okay, Jonas. If we're going to work
together, you've got to get more
organized.

JONAS

Sady! It's so good to see you.

He gives her a big hug. She's addled.

SADY

It's good to see you too. Not like
I don't see you everyday.

BIRDIE

He's like a brand new person all of
a sudden.

JONAS

Wait. Watch this.

He runs onto the stage. Garland smiles to him while he sings.

Jonas stands at a piano and plays beautifully to the song.

Birdie and Sady stand back, awestruck.

INT. JONAS' HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Jonas wakes in bed, the same as he always has. He looks
around quizzically, then darts up.

He runs into the -

KITCHEN

Birdie wears his shirt while making breakfast. Relief. He
stands in the threshold and watches her, smiling.

JONAS V.O.

...And of those days, how many can we say we've actually lived? You have to decide, would you rather die for yourself or would you be willing to live for someone else? And once you find that one person to share it with, it makes it that much more worth it.

Birdie smiles to him.

BIRDIE

We need to get going soon.

She gives him a kiss. He stares, blankly.

BIRDIE

Don't tell me you're having second thoughts.

JONAS

Never again.

He gives her another kiss, then ambles away.

BIRDIE

Your phone was blowing up this morning. I think your mom called.

He flies back around.

JONAS

What did you say?

BIRDIE

I didn't want to wake you. I think she left a message.

He grabs his phone from the counter and puts it to his ear.

ELIZA V.O.

Happy birthday, honey. Twenty nine. My baby's growing up. Call me later. I love you.

A giant smile covers his face. Before he can lower his phone, the next message begins to play.

BILL V.O.

Mr. Mackabee, this is Bill from Candor Magazine. We've reviewed your writing sample and would love to talk. Call me.

Jonas' gaiety says it all.

EXT./INT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE - DAY

Jonas and Birdie approach the entrance of Cianfranie's.
There's a for sale sign in the window.

Jonas smiles at the sign. It's all starting to make sense.

BIRDIE
Ready to do this?

JONAS
Let's do it.

BIRDIE
Oh, I almost forgot.

She reaches into her purse and pulls out a gift-wrapped box.

JONAS
What's this?

He opens it.

BIRDIE
I meant to give this to you last
night. Happy birthday, yesterday.

It's Jay's crucifix necklace. Jonas pulls it out, joyously.
Birdie helps him put it on.

BIRDIE
I saw it and immediately knew I had
to get it for you.

JONAS
It's great. Thank you.

They hug.

INT./EXT. CIANFRANI'S COFFEE - DAY

Birdie and Jonas fill out a form at a table.

BIRDIE
Sign your initials here.

He takes the pen and signs the blank.

BIRDIE
Think we'll get it?

JONAS

We just have to believe.

BIRDIE

What are we going to call it?

She smiles to him, hopeful. He looks over the form where they just signed their initials, then up at her.

JONAS

You and me - Jay Bird.

BIRDIE

I love that.

Jonas kisses her forehead, then rises from the table. He starts to walk away, but stops.

He looks back to her.

JONAS

I love you, Birdie.

She looks up at him.

BIRDIE

I love you too, Jonas.

He exits.

CIANFRANI'S PATIO

A rejuvenated Jonas looks out among the square. His attention is drawn to a bench across the courtyard.

There, Satan sits next to a troubled man. He's whispering inaudibly into his ear.

Satan looks over to Jonas and winks.

Jonas' heart almost drops, but two birds fly by.

His eyes follow them as they fly past the homeless man with the cardboard sign in the opposite direction.

He shines with a comforting smile.

You wouldn't be able to smack the smile off Jonas' face.

Birdie walks out with the form they just signed.

BIRDIE

I just need your signature here.

He drags his eyes from the homeless man to the form. He pulls out his composition book from his back pocket for support.

He signs the form and hands it back to her. Then he looks back to the homeless man.

BIRDIE

What are you looking at?

He looks epiphanized as he quickly opens his book to a large bulk of text. He writes a title at the top.

"How God revealed my past by showing me my future."

The same title of Jay's book. Jonas looks back to the homeless man, then to Birdie with a smile.

JONAS

The joy of life.

Birdie looks out, but doesn't see anyone. Jonas faces her.

JONAS

C'mon, let's go.

He puts his arm around her. They walk back inside.

The homeless man smiles, turns and begins walking away. He drops the cardboard sign as he passes a tree.

He comes out the other side, now well-groomed.

He's Jesus.

He walks past another tree and that's the last we see of Him.

The sign on the ground becomes visible.

It reads, Matthew - 6:33.

FADE OUT:

THE END