



Track I

“Sam & Nellie”

Written by

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Directed by

Jesse Peretz

PRODUCTION DRAFT

March 11, 2018

Full

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CHARACTERS

Sam Campos
Nellie O’Brien
Dante Campos
Joanna
Hugh O’Brien
Margot Weston
Annette Hunter
Gigi Dumont

GUEST CAST

(in order of appearance)

Surly Teen
Levi Gordon
Coworker
Troy Peltier
Leah
Barry Campos
Boss
De’Andra Green
Man
Freshman
Terry Gross (O.S.)
Ajay
Patty
LAPD Officer
Teacher
Voice (O.S.)



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SETS

INTERIORS

Los Feliz Upper Duplex
 Bedroom
 Kitchen
 Bathroom
 Closet Area
 Horace Heidt Apartment
 Los Angeles College of Art & Design
 Office
 Nellie’s Car (Moving)
 Silver Lake General Store
 El Conquistador Restaurant
 High School
 Hallway
 Empty Classroom
 Dive Bar
 Echo Park House
 Sam’s Car (Moving)
 Sam & Barry’s Apartment
 Bedroom
 Transpacific Music Group
 Cubicle
 Boss’ Office
 Server Room
 Gigi’s Apartment
 Nellie’s Room
 Hop Louie Chinatown Restaurant
 Bathroom
 Ritter Elementary School
 Dal Rae Restaurant
 The Echo
 The Echoplex
 Highland Park Bedroom

EXTERIORS

Los Feliz Duplex
 Los Feliz Street
 Elementary School Playground
 Parking Lot
 Alleyway
 Section 8 Housing Development
 Compton Ave. Block Party
 Valet Stand
 Garden Behind House
 Downtown Los Angeles Street
 Studio City Street
 Cesar Chavez Ave.
 Street
 Office Park – Parking Lot
 The Echo
 The Echoplex
 Horace Heidt Apartment – Pool
 Sunset Blvd.
 Silver Lake General Store



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CHRONOLOGY

SCENE	SCRIPT DAY
1, 72-73, 76, 78, 80-81, 84	Day 10 (2018)
2-15	Day 1 (February 2010)
16-19, 27	Night 1 (February 2010)
20	Song 1 (Day 1 – 1992)
21-22	Song 1 (Day 2 – 1999)
23	Song 1 (Night 3 – 1999)
24.1	Song 1 (Day 4 – 1999)
24.2	Song 1 (Night 5 – 2002)
24.3	Song 1 (Night 6 – 2002)
25-A27	Song 1 (Night 7 – 2007)
28-31	Day 1 (2018)
32-33	Night 2 (2018)
34.1	Song 2 (Day 3 – 2018)
34.2-34.3	Song 2 (Night 3 – 2018)
35-36	Song 2 (Day 4 – 2018)
A40	Song 2 (Day 5 – 2018)
40	Song 2 (Day 1 – 2012)



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CHRONOLOGY (CONT'D)

SCENE	SCRIPT DAY
41	Song 2 (Night/Day/Night 5-6 – 2018)
42-43	Song 2 (Day 7 – 2018)
44-45	Day 7 (2018)
46-47	Night 2 (September 2010)
48	Song 3 (Night 2-5 – 2010)
49-52	Night 6 (September 2010)
53-61	Day 8 (2018)
62	Song 4 (Day 8 – 2018)
65-66, 68	Night 7 (September 2010)
67, 69	Night 9 (2018)
70-71	Song 5 (Night 7 – September 2010/Night 9 – 2018)
74, 77, 79	Day 8 (September 2010)
75	Day 10 (2018)/Day 8 (September 2010)



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SONGS

SCENE	SONG TITLE	ARTIST/WRITER	CAST
19-A27	1. “Elastic Heart”	Sia	Nellie
32-43	2. “Between Me and You”	Brandon Flowers	Sam
46-48	3. “Love is a Losing Game”	Amy Winehouse	Nellie
62	4. “Smile”	Mikky Ekko	Sam
70	5. “Supercut”/”Believer”	Lorde; Imagine Dragons	Nellie, Sam

Nellie

Side A

ACT ONE

1 CLOSE ON: the open, bright-eyed, hope-filled face of SAMUEL CAMPOS, 32, looking directly at us somewhere in Los Angeles. We have never met this man, but we feel safe with him. Maybe it's his eyes, or his smile, or the fact that he's just so fucking excited right now to explain that: 1

SAM

Every song is a love song.

He waits for our reaction. Continues.

SAM (CONT'D)

Okay, start with songs about desire, or longing -- those are obvious, right? Then there's songs about the struggle to find love. Falling in it, being tested by it, jealous of it, heartbroken from it. Then there's metaphors and analogues. Songs about God are about the love for him or her or it. Political songs are love for your country. And if you're disillusioned with it? That's just another form of heartbreak, right? Songs about your family, your squad, your regrets, hell, even a diss track -- hate is passion. Biggie loves to hate Tupac, Fleetwood loves hating Mac, Taylor hates, and loves, well, everyone. No one sits at a piano or picks up a guitar or a cello or their sticks with apathy. Only emotion. One emotion. Which is why every song we hear, from the day we're born 'til the day we die, from that first lullaby your mom sang to you to the hymn you won't hear at your funeral, it tells us: love. Whoever, whatever, whenever. It's what we're here for. Everything else is just wasting time.

He waits for whoever's opposite him to agree or disagree.

2 INT. LOS FELIZ UPPER DUPLEX - BEDROOM - MORNING 2

Where NELLIE O'BRIEN, 26, wakes with a smile. She's that dreaded anomaly: a morning person. She carefully rolls out of bed so as to not wake her sleeping boyfriend, the unfairly hot LEVI GORDON, 28. Nellie exits out and into:

3 INT. LOS FELIZ UPPER DUPLEX - KITCHEN - MORNING 3

Where she opens her tiny balcony doors to a standard east side foggy morning. She hits a favorite on her phone and as it rings, we INTERCUT with:

4 INT. HORACE HEIDT APARTMENT - MORNING - INTERCUT 4

Where the sixty-something hand of the still-rakishly handsome HUGH O'BRIEN reaches for his phone on the nightstand.

HUGH
... Hello.

NELLIE
You hit snooze. So you're not up.

HUGH
Of course I am. I'm talking to you.

But that's when his ALARM CLOCK goes off. She smiles:

NELLIE
You hit snooze.

He smiles back; this is their routine.

HUGH
I'm up now.

NELLIE
Love you, Dad.

HUGH
Love you too, honey.

She hangs up. We STAY with Hugh for a moment as he sits up in his sparsely-decorated 400 square-foot, low-ceilinged, parquet-floored prison cell of an apartment.

5 INT. LOS FELIZ UPPER DUPLEX - BATHROOM - MORNING 5

Nellie, still smiling, brushes her teeth in front of the steamed-up mirror. A thought overtakes her. Using her finger, she draws a doodle in the steam. Even this rudimentarily, we see she's talented. She hesitates, then wipes it off. CUT TO:

6 INT. LOS FELIZ UPPER DUPLEX - CLOSET AREA - MORNING 6

Nellie is getting dressed in the cramped dressing area so as to not wake up Levi. As she does, something strikes her. She takes a pencil from wherever and draws the doodle from the mirror on the back of a receipt pulled from her pants pocket. Then the pencil goes in her hair, the receipt in her pocket.

7 EXT. LOS FELIZ DUPLEX - MORNING 7

As Nellie walks down the Spanish steps to the courtyard, she passes the neighborhood feral cat. She stops, tries to get close. The cat runs away. Nellie looks after her.

NELLIE

Some day you'll be mine.

8 EXT. LOS FELIZ STREET - MORNING 8

Nellie gets into her car, turns on the RADIO, which is suddenly way too loud, so she jumps and turns it down. And then: turns it the fuck back up again. She knows this song! Without turning it off, she jumps out of the car and runs back through the courtyard and up the steps and back into:

9 INT. LOS FELIZ UPPER DUPLEX - BEDROOM - MORNING 9

Where she jumps on the bed waking up Levi, yelling:

NELLIE

You're on the radio! You're on the radio!

LEVI

What the hell are you--

As she fumbles for the NPR app on her phone and plays it, Levi is up and jumping with her, kissing her. Then he breaks. This is a major moment for him. For them. The moment could turn into something more private, but then...

NELLIE

You gotta tell the band!

LEVI

(dials, then)

Benj, it's me. Turn on NPR right--
Yeah, can you friggin' believe it?

Nellie looks after him, proud. She loves him.

10 EXT. LOS FELIZ STREET - MORNING 10

As Nellie re-approaches her car, the stray cat is sitting on the hood. *Is today that someday?* But the cat dashes off, revealing it was planted on a parking ticket. As she takes it, she doesn't lose her smile. Nothing can get her down.

11 INT. LOS ANGELES COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN - OFFICE - DAY 11

Nellie's in her janitor's-closet-of-an-office, drawing the doodle from the mirror/receipt on a real piece of paper now. It's grown into something beautiful; she's not just talented, she's exceptional. There's a KNOCK at the door.

COWORKER

Time for the next tour.

As Nellie puts her pencils down, we CUT TO:

12 INT. LOS ANGELES COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN - DAY 12

Nellie leads a prospective STUDENT and her parents on a school tour. Nellie is kind, effervescent, knowledgeable.

NELLIE

I believe in this school. I believe a good foundation for a career in art starts here. You can learn all the basics and hone your skills while having your dreams nurtured and protected at the same time.

But the teenager is surly. Turns to her parents.

SURLY TEEN

Why should I even go to school?
Every cool artist working today
didn't.

(to Nellie)

Did you?

NELLIE

Of course. I went *here*.

SURLY TEEN

See?

But even that can't get Nellie down. Not today. She smiles.

13 INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY 13

Nellie sits in traffic somewhere, two bags from TJ's in the backseat. She continues to work on the drawing in the car.

14 INT. HORACE HEIDT APARTMENT - DAY 14

Nellie unpacks boxed dinners from Trader Joe's into Hugh's freezer, dumping half-eaten ice cream cartons as she does. Hugh, in his well-worn ill-fitting suit, sits at the counter opposite her taking cartons out of the trash that she's put in, smelling them and then dropping them back.

HUGH

You don't have to take such good care of me.

NELLIE

Just repaying the favor.

HUGH

Speaking of favors... It was my
night to buy the rounds at Hank's.
More people showed than I thought.

Nellie knows this routine. From out of her bag, she fishes
her last 40 bucks. Gives it to him. He sees the drawing
poking out of the bag. He lifts it, she protests--

NELLIE

Don't, it's nothing--

He unfurls it. It takes his breath away. Her work often does.

HUGH

How did someone like me have
someone so talented like you?

NELLIE

You have to say that.

HUGH

Yeah, I do. And also, you are.

NELLIE

I gotta go.

She kisses him goodbye and runs out the door, and we CUT TO:

15

INT. SILVER LAKE GENERAL STORE - DUSK

15

An ornately gel-manicured hand turns the sign from **OPEN** to
CLOSED. The constantly chipper and externally chic GIGI
DUMONT returns to where coworker TROY PELTIER, an all-
American jock who is the best salesman in a woman's clothing
store, stands with Nellie.

GIGI

We told our boss Pandora was down
so we could have KCRW on. They've
played Levi's song at least twice.

TROY

What's it like to date someone
actually talented in LA?

GIGI

I'm just excited we won't have to
man the band's merch table anymore.
VIP section, here we come.

NELLIE

Guys. What if I'm wrong about
tonight?

GIGI

It's your third anniversary and he made the dinner res. Levi's never made a res in his life. If it didn't come from a stand, a box, a bag, or a truck, he wouldn't know what to do. A res is a bold move. A res only means one thing.

TROY

And if you're gonna get a ring on that finger tonight, you're sure as shit gonna have the dress to go with it.

Troy pulls a dress out and holds it to skeptical Nellie.

NELLIE

No way.

TROY

ONLY way.

GIGI

If you get it back to us before we open, no one will know.

NELLIE

It's too beautiful. I couldn't.

GIGI

Neither could Jean Dubrowski from Dearborn. But Gigi Dumont of Silver Lake can. And so can you.

NELLIE

You changed your name to wear dresses?

GIGI

I didn't change. I just stopped holding on to the girl I grew up as and allowed myself to be the woman I should be.

Troy and Gigi look at each other. Time for full honesty:

TROY

Look, babe: The clothes you're wearing right now? They say "Date me. I'm fun and practical." But this dress? It says "*Marry me.*"

GIGI

It says "I will never stop surprising you." It says "I'm the woman you're going to share your life with."

TROY

As do these earrings, these shoes and this bag--

Troy and Gigi toss them to Nellie faster than Cinderella's mice. They guide Nellie to the changing room. Nellie stops at the door. Asks the question that's been plaguing her all day:

NELLIE

Am I allowed to feel this good?

GIGI

Not out loud. But inside? Hell yeah.

As Gigi closes the curtain on us, we CUT TO:

16 INT. EL CONQUISTADOR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

16

Nellie walks into the restaurant, on cloud nine. She's holding the drawing she made, rolled and wrapped with a ribbon. Levi, in *de rigueur* denim on denim, stands and greets her nervously.

LEVI

Hey. You look amazing.

He kisses her on the cheek, then pulls out her chair for her to sit. The full court press -- it's *totally* happening tonight. The waiter brings over a cocktail:

LEVI

I ordered your favorite.

As she holds up the cocktail to cheers with Levi's Stella, she beams, on the biggest high of her life. And we CUT TO:

17 - Appetizers are now on the table. No proposal yet. And not much conversation either.

17

LEVI

How is it?

NELLIE

Good. Great. It's great. And yours?

LEVI

Same. Great. Yeah.

This small talk, akin to a first date, is raising Nellie's hopes, Levi's awkwardness a sign of good to come. CUT TO:

18 - Entrée time. No ring yet. Nellie's now nervous, her leg 18
shaking under the table, TAPPING the terra cotta below.

LEVI

What's that sound?

NELLIE

(stops her leg)

I don't hear anything.

She looks at her phone hidden in her lap. It LIGHTS UP with a returned text from **Gigi** that follows **Nellie's still no: Cut it out. Who proposes pre-dessert? It's coming.** CUT TO:

19 The waiter takes the entrées off the table. No one is 19
talking. Nellie can't handle the tension, so she thrusts her drawing across the table with:

NELLIE

I got you this.

Levi takes it, hesitates, then unfurls it. We see for the first time what it is: Upon first glance it looks like a landscape, but on closer inspection, it's two faceless bodies entwined. It's simple and intricate at the same time, and wholly beautiful. He regards it. Then can't wait any longer.

LEVI

I've been doing a lot of thinking.
I wanted to make sure this was
absolutely the right choice...

She sits up too fast, wine glass wobbling. She stops it. Relaxes. This dress, this moment, will *not* be ruined.

LEVI

Everything is about to get so
crazy. And, when I think about, I
mean *really think about it*, which
I've done a lot... I just don't
think it's fair to either of us if
we continue like this right now.

NELLIE

Continue what?

LEVI

I've worked so long and hard for
this moment. With your amazing
support, of course.

(MORE)

LEVI (CONT'D)

But I need to focus all my
attention on my career right now.
You only get one shot like this.
And I don't see a way to give you
what you deserve and get what I
need, too. I'm so sorry.

He's crying now, like all men do when they don't know how to
take responsibility for the pain they're causing someone
else. Nellie's still not getting it. Still smiling, because
to let go of that smile would mean she's processed it.

LEVI

My mom said I gotta let go of the
duplex since I'll be on the road for
a year. I told the landlord we'd be
out by the end of the month--

That's when the SOUND DROPS, along with the proverbial ground
beneath Nellie's feet. The LIGHTS SHIFT as Nellie stands and
takes off running away in slow motion, the people at the
tables she passes trying to grab her and sling-shot her back
as she lip-synchs our first HUGE PRODUCTION NUMBER.

SONG: ELASTIC HEART (Sia)

NELLIE

AND ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
OH WHY CAN I NOT CONQUER LOVE?
AND I MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT THAT WE WERE ONE
WANTED TO FIGHT THIS WAR WITHOUT WEAPONS
AND I WANTED IT, I WANTED IT BAD
BUT THERE WERE SO MANY RED FLAGS
NOW ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
YEAH, LET'S BE CLEAR, I'LL TRUST NO ONE

She makes it to the door and pushes it. It opens & we CUT TO:

20

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY (**SONG**)

20

CLOSE ON: A group of 8-year-old girls in uniforms jump rope.
A group of 8-year-old boys whisper to each other and point.
Our Nellie appears on the blacktop, looking for something.

NELLIE

YOU DID NOT BREAK ME
I'M STILL FIGHTING FOR PEACE

Which is when she sees the boys and girls are egging on her 8-
year-old self, about to have her first kiss with a classmate.
Our Nellie watches helplessly as young Nellie kisses the boy,
who pushes her away, disgusted, landing her hard on the
blacktop. Our Nellie crosses over and helps young Nellie up.

NELLIE

I'VE GOT A THICK SKIN AND AN ELASTIC HEART
BUT YOUR BLADE, IT MIGHT BE TOO SHARP

The boys and girls laugh at her. Our Nellie turns and is in:

21 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY (**SONG**) 21

Where she moves through a swarm of high schoolers like a ghost. She makes it to a classroom door, looks inside to see:

NELLIE

I'M LIKE A RUBBER BAND UNTIL YOU PULL TOO HARD
YEAH, I MAY SNAP AND I MOVE FAST

22 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - EMPTY CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS (**SONG**) 22

15 y.o. Nellie kisses a 15 y.o. jock, hidden from view.

NELLIE

BUT YOU WON'T SEE ME FALL APART

23 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT (**SONG**) 23

Nellie and the jock make love in his car in an empty lot. Our Nellie watches from a distance. She knows what's coming:

NELLIE

'CAUSE I'VE GOT AN ELASTIC HEART

24 INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY (**SONG**) 24

15-year-old Nellie approaches the jock the next morning, elated, until she sees: He's holding the hand of a different girl. Our Nellie is also there, watching.

NELLIE

I'VE GOT AN ELASTIC HEART
YEAH, I'VE GOT AN ELASTIC HEART

15-year-old Nellie turns and cries on Our Nellie's shoulder.

We CUT TO: a succession of Nellie's bad relationships, all under the watchful eye of Our Nellie on the sidelines:

- 18-year-old Nellie walks in on her boyfriend with her college roommate.

- Nellie, a boy's number drawn on the palm of her hand, walks with a friend who eggs her on to make the call on her cell. As she does, she gets "This number is not in service." Her smile dies.

NELLIE

OH, OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH
OH, OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH

25 INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT (**SONG**) 25

23-year-old Nellie sits at a dive bar table with some friends (including Gigi), smiling up at 26-year-old Levi on stage, playing a song just to her. Our Nellie sings her warning:

NELLIE

OH, OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH

26 INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT (**SONG**) 26

23-year-old Nellie kisses Levi by the stage door as the band exits to load up the van. As he breaks, and she leans against the wall, smiling, Our Nellie walks out into:

NELLIE

OH, OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH OH OH OH OH, OH OH

A27 EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (**SONG**) A27

Where she is just in time to see the van drive off. She turns and sees she's not alone after all: Lines of all the men in her life that disappointed her somehow flank her. She tries to push through them, but there are more and more. She's encircled by the backs of countless men. She has no choice but to start climbing them.

NELLIE

I'VE GOT A THICK SKIN AND AN ELASTIC HEART
BUT YOUR BLADE, IT MIGHT BE TOO SHARP
I'M LIKE A RUBBER BAND UNTIL YOU PULL TOO HARD
YEAH, I MAY SNAP AND I MOVE FAST
BUT YOU WON'T SEE ME FALL APART
'CAUSE I'VE GOT AN ELASTIC HEART
I'VE GOT AN ELASTIC HEART

She's finally reached the top, all her bad relationships beneath her. Just as she gets a foothold, all the men collapse under her and she falls, the song coming to its close as she lands:

27 INT. EL CONQUISTADOR RESTAURANT - NIGHT 27

Right back in her seat at the restaurant just as the waiter, turning away from the table with the dessert and candle, knocks her glass of wine all over her borrowed dress. As Nellie lets out frustrated:

NELLIE

FUUUU--

But since we listen to the FCC, we CUT TO the title card:

END OF ACT ONE

SAM

Side A

ACT TWO

28 INT. ECHO PARK HOUSE - DAY

28

A light-filled house high on the hill, but with all the rooms empty. Sam, our bright-eyed monologist from the opening, leans against a wall, alone, regarding one particular empty room. We can tell from the sun-bleached outlines of bedposts against a wall that this was a bedroom.

Sam checks the emptied closet one last time and finds inside, tucked in a corner: a guitar case. He hesitates reaching for it, which is when the cutest six-year-old ever captured on digital, BARRY CAMPOS, passes the door with a box way too big from him. Sam races to grab it before Barry drops it, but:

BARRY

No. I wanna see how far I can get without putting it down.

Barry passes out of view. Sam calls after him:

SAM

Think you can make it to the car?

The sound of a CRASH tells us the answer is no. Sam smiles, shakes his head. Takes the guitar after all, heading out after Barry 'til he's stopped by something. Sticking out from under a baseboard is a scrap of paper. Sam fishes it out. From his face we know it means something to him. Barry comes back into view with the box:

BARRY

The wall didn't break anything!

SAM

Success!

BARRY

Whatever that is!

Sam pockets the paper, takes the box, and walks out with him.

29 INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

29

The fruit trees and juice joints of former hipster climes have turned to the shitty roads and fast food blocs in lower LA as Sam and Barry drive south. In the backseat, Barry fills out a LYFT DRIVER APPLICATION on Sam's phone.

BARRY

How old are you?

SAM
Thirty-two.

BARRY
That's a number?

SAM
Okay, wise guy, what's next?

BARRY
What's your address?

SAM
Remember the song you memorized?

BARRY
"9320 Compton Avenue. Watts, Calif--"

SAM
Watts isn't a city. It's still LA.

BARRY
(looking out the window)
Are you sure?

SAM
Next question?

BARRY
How many hours do you want to work?

SAM
With my job, I've only got nights
and weekends, so, let's see...
(cringes)
Thirty-six?

BARRY
Married, single, or divorced?

Sam didn't see that coming. He takes the phone from Barry.

SAM
It's called widowed.

BARRY
That wasn't there.

SAM
Because not many people are.

Sam does the parent trick of turning on the radio to end the conversation. It works. As the MUSIC COMES UP it takes us to:

30

EXT. SECTION 8 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - DAY

30

Sam's U-Haul is next to a low-income housing block in South Central. Sam hands his aunt, ANNETTE HUNTER (50, African American, warm, pragmatic) one of the last boxes. She crosses off as he turns to walk with the last box, almost bumping into a passing woman (let's call her JOANNA, 32, beautiful, guarded) as she moves to a coworker's parked car.

JOANNA

Sorry.

SAM

Totally my fault.

Joanna pauses in that way you do when you want to start a conversation but don't know how. But Sam's missed it, 'cause:

BARRY (O.S.)

Dad! It's apartment twelve! You didn't put that in the song!

Sam moves up a flight of stairs to the balcony outside an apartment where Barry is. Joanna moves off to her car, the moment passed. Annette crosses to Barry, standing with her precocious daughter LEAH, 15; hands him a dollar.

ANNETTE

Ice cream truck comes soon.

SAM

What do we say?

BARRY

Thanks, Aunt Annette.

SAM

(heartfelt)

Thanks, Aunt Annette.

ANNETTE

I'm so glad this place came up. You can thank Dante for that. Don't know how he knew, but he did.

LEAH

We share a wall, B-man. We can make a code and knock it at each other.

An LAPD HELICOPTER flies way too low above their heads.

BARRY

Hey dad, look! A helicopter! Wow!

LEAH

You'll be seeing a lot of those.

Barry chases after it along the balcony. Sam and Annette share a look. Leah heads after Barry.

ANNETTE

Your job, how's it been? Any opportunities for your songs?

SAM

I'm a support tech. They don't even know us by name. Which is good, because the way the music industry is, they keep getting laid off, but my job is safe. Client Services is always the last to--

Before Sam can answer, he's tackled and grabbed into a bear hug. Well, a koala bear hug, as the benefactor of said hug is Sam's diminutive cousin, the 5'6" Afro-Latino DANTE CAMPOS, 28, a jittery live wire (and Annette's firstborn).

DANTE

Sam-UEL! You look so *old*. Your eyes are like six inches in, like a sad skull! You need some rest, cuz!

SAM

You don't look nearly as busted as I thought you would.

DANTE

What else you gotta do in the joint but pump all day, you know? You should try it, *gordo*.

He lifts his shirt to show his abs. As well as his chestful of tats. Dante's a tough guy. Sam pulls Dante's shirt down:

SAM

Bear, come meet your cousin. Dante, this is my son, Barry.

Dante bends to skeptical Barry, though he doesn't have to.

DANTE

Sorry to hear about your moms, kid.

BARRY

Why don't I know you?

SAM

It's okay, I'm honest with him.
Dante just got out of prison for
possession and assault. He was in
for four years.

DANTE

Shoulda been five, but the warden
had a thing for me. Having you and
your pops as my neighbors is the best
release present ever.

ANNETTE

Dante's always looked up to you.
You'll be a good influence like
when you were kids, help him stay
on the straight and narrow.

DANTE

Your dad and me, we used to get up
to it, know what I'm saying?

SAM

More like whatever he got up to, I
had to clean up.

BARRY

I thought you were from Mexico?

SAM

I moved back there when I was ten.

A twinge of guilt in this for Sam. Dante senses it, too.

DANTE

If you come to my party, maybe we
can loosen him up again, *chulo*?

LEAH

It's not his party, it's a block
party that just happens to be the
same week he got out.

DANTE

Why you gotta bust me, sis!

SAM

Whatever it is, we'll be ther--

DANTE

(sees something)
Oh damn, crazy legs still lives
here? *Piernas Alocadas en la sala!*
Ejercita esas piernas locas!

And with that, Dante is gone as fast as he arrived. Like most (former?) addicts, you don't have his attention for long. Annette can see Sam's overwhelmed. She motions for Leah.

ANNETTE

Why don't you boys settle in. We'll be next door if you need anything.

Leah KNOCKS twice, then once more. He does the same thing back. She gives him a thumbs up -- they have their code.

31

INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - LATER

31

We find Sam in the bedroom, putting together Barry's bed.

BARRY

Where you gonna sleep?

SAM

The sofa.

BARRY

I can trade with you sometimes?

Sam looks at his son, proud to have raised such a good human. Barry takes something out of a box, look at it intently.

SAM

How 'bout you put that up?
(Barry shakes his head)
It's been over a year, bear. Maybe
it's time to talk about it?

Barry shakes his head, takes the drawing from the box, puts it in the trash, then exits. Sam watches him, concerned. Looks to the drawing in the trash. Should he leave it?

32

EXT. COMPTON AVE. BLOCK PARTY - DUSK

32

A full-on block party is in effect, this extended family of a community in full force. Sam watches Barry, already a star of the under-8 set, showing his dance moves to a group of kids.

VOICE (O.S.)

You can let him out of your sight.

DE'ANDRA GREEN, 29, a fast and feisty spitfire, reaches in with a beer. Though her clothes may leave little to the imagination, you're not getting anywhere without her respect.

DE'ANDRA

South LA isn't the Central of
nineties movies and your childhood
anymore.

(MORE)

DE'ANDRA (CONT'D)

Roy Choi opened a restaurant here.
Jordan Downs is an "urban village."
We've got charter schools, public
transportation, one of the best
hospitals in the county.

SAM

If you believe all that, how come
you moved to Highland Park, D?

DE'ANDRA

It's closer to my hospice?

SAM

Closer to other things, too. You
gonna tell him?

Before she can answer, Dante runs in, calling off-screen to:

DANTE

Yo, Snuffy! What'd I tell you 'bout
no Drill? Turn up some John Legend,
make my white cuz COMFY.

(fake holds his chest)

De'Andra Green, you know how to stop
a brother's heart from beatin'!

(they kiss)

For real tho, thought you had night
school tonight?

DE'ANDRA

It's Friday. And it's not "night
school," it's med school, dumbass.

DANTE

How could I forget my girl's gonna
be a fancy doc; set me up for life.

He kisses her again. Her knees go weak a little. She loves
him, in spite of better judgment. To wit, when they break:

DANTE

Yo, doc, you got any funds? Juana's
Tamales pulled up and I'm tapped.

DE'ANDRA

Only if you bring me a tamale back.

DANTE

Un puerco en hoja de platano comin'
up.

As soon as he's gone, Sam snarks, with smile:

SAM

You know there's no tamale truck,
right?

DE'ANDRA

All this time I thought prison
wouldn't change him. Nothing else
had. But what if it did?

We can feel this is a major concern for her. Sam squeezes her
arm, knows there's more going on here than they can even say.
Their eyes fall on Barry, having the time of his life.

SAM

He still won't talk about her.

DE'ANDRA

He'll talk when he's ready.

Annette butts in, buzzed from her many Solo cups of beer. She
puts her arms around Sam and De'Andra and hangs there.

ANNETTE

Ready for what? Dating? Now I *know*
you're not talkin' 'bout that, 'cause
this man has joined the priesthood.
Sammy, saint of celibacy.

SAM

You only get one great love in your
life, and that's if you're *lucky*. I
had mine.

ANNETTE

Oh please. That was the line they
used so people stayed in bad
marriages like their parents. Now
we know better. There are *many*
"ones" out there. How many times
have I been married?

DE'ANDRA

Three?

ANNETTE

(Sam mouths "four")
And those are just the ones I told
you about.

SAM

You've also been widowed or
divorced four times.

ANNETTE

I was in love four times. *That's* what counts. Not how it ends.

SAM

It's too soon. For Barry's sake.

ANNETTE

Barry wants what every child wants: their parent to be happy. Maybe he isn't talking about Eleanor not 'cause he can't face it, but because he's trying to help you move on from it? When's the last time you even picked up your guitar?

SAM

I need to provide for my son.

ANNETTE

(points to his heart)

You need to provide for you too. You helped her go after her dreams. But now she's gone, and all that's left is yours. It's your turn.

Sam's PHONE DINGS. He looks at it, not sure if it's good news:

SAM

Lyft just came through.

DE'ANDRA

There go your nights and weekends.

ANNETTE

Leah and I'll take good care of B.

Annette squeezes Sam's hand; she knows how hard this all is. As she moves off, De'Andra pats Sam on the shoulder:

DE'ANDRA

I'm gonna go find *myself* a tamale.

She exits. Sam, alone, sees Dante break off from a few members of his former gang. As Dante passes Sam, he smiles. Sam looks at him, wary. Dante reads it, and:

DANTE

All good, bruh. They try to reel me back but I ain't biting. Just gotta look like it, y'know? Where's D at?

He holds up a tamale. Sam looks at it, feels instantly bad for judging Dante. Dante moves off, leaving Sam alone. As he watches Barry play, his PERSONAL SONG begins.

SONG: BETWEEN ME AND YOU (Brandon Flowers)

SAM

BETWEEN ME AND YOU
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE AND
BETWEEN ME AND YOU
I THINK I'M LOSING IT NOW

Barry runs by with the other kids, smiling.

KIDS

HEY!

33 INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT (**SONG**) 33

Sam has put Barry to bed. He watches his tucked-in son sleep.

SAM

BETWEEN ME AND YOU
I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT THE FUTURE AND
BETWEEN ME AND YOU
I THINK I'M LOSING IT NOW

34 INT./EXT. MONTAGE - DAY/DUSK/NIGHT (**SONG**) 34

- Sam in his cubicle at a company like Universal Music Group, in a uniform like the other techs around him.

- Sam driving his car with Lyft passengers in the backseat.

- Sam the valet getting tossed a car's keys by a patron and hopping in to park it.

- A drained Sam fixes his boss's computer as his boss practices his golf putt as if Sam's not even there.

- A depleted Sam drives his car with passengers in the back.

- A bushed Sam gets out of someone's car and gives them their keys at the restaurant.

SAM

ALL MY LIFE
I'VE BEEN TOLD
FOLLOW YOUR DREAM
BUT THE TRAIL WENT COLD
AND THE HEART DON'T LIE
AND THAT'S A GOOD LUCK CHARM
BUT I'M WATCHING IT TEAR OUT OF MY ARMS

35 EXT. SECTION 8 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - MORNING (SONG) 35

Sam walks up to the apartment after a night of working.

SAM

AND THERE'S A POWER IN LETTING GO
I GUESS I DIDN'T WANT TO LET YOU KNOW

36 INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - DAY (SONG) 36

Sam enters, dead on his feet. Barry's already gone to school.
Sam starts to change into his uniform for work.

SAM

THESE HOURS I'M WORKING AIN'T NEARLY ENOUGH
SOMETIMES IT'S LIKE A BULLET CAME
AND BLASTED ME RIGHT OF OUT OF THE BLUE

37-39 OMITTED 37-39

A40 INT. OFFICE - DAY (SONG) A40

Sam is falling asleep at his desk.

SAM

BUT I'M DOING MY BEST
NOT TO LET IT GET
BETWEEN ME AND YOU

40 EXT. GARDEN BEHIND HOUSE - DAY (SONG) 40

Sam's memory of his wedding day in a spectacular English
country garden somewhere. He stands, beaming, under an arbor
watching a beautiful woman walk toward him down the aisle.

SAM

I REMEMBER YOU IN WHITE IN THE GARDEN
IT'S BEEN TRIAL AFTER TRIAL
THROUGH THE RINGER IN THE BACK
OUT THE WINDOW, OFF THIS TRACK
I WAS JUST TOO PROUD TO KNOW

MAN

COME ON CHILD!

Sam wakes up with a start at the valet stand where a MAN is
waiting with his ticket, pissed. Sam hops to it.

41 INT. SAM'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT/DAY/NIGHT AGAIN (SONG) 41

And now we're back with Sam, as he drives with a succession
of people in the backseat.

The passengers look at their phones, make calls, eat, fight, vape, make out, puke, sing to the radio, sleep, dance. Sam never looks back, just gets more and more tired, the days and nights taking their toll:

SAM

THESE HOURS I'M WORKING AIN'T NEARLY ENOUGH
SOMETIMES IT'S LIKE A BULLET CAME
AND BLASTED ME RIGHT OF OUT OF THE BLUE
AND I FEEL LIKE I'VE GOT NOTHING TO SHOW
FOR THIS LIFE AND I'VE BEEN WONDERING
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO

42 But what Sam *doesn't* notice is that his last passenger is 42
Joanna, the woman he almost bumped into outside of his
apartment. She, however, recognizes *him*. As he doesn't notice
her trying to work up the courage to say something:

SAM

BUT I'M DOING MY BEST NOT TO LET IT GET
AND I'M DOING MY BEST NOT TO LET IT GET
YES I'M DOING MY BEST NOT TO LET IT GET

43 EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES STREET - MORNING (**SONG**) 43

Sam pulls over, the ride concluded. Joanna doesn't move.

SAM

BETWEEN ME AND YOU

The song ends, but Joanna's still sitting there. Sam, just
wanting to get home to his son, doesn't even turn around:

SAM

This is it, right?

JOANNA

It is. Yeah. Th-- Thanks.

And again, unable to summon the courage to talk to Sam, she
gets out. In the car, Sam takes one moment to himself to
breathe. He texts **Annette: coming home now**. **Annette** texts
back: **Barry just left**. Sam shakes his head and drives off.

44 ANGLE ON: Joanna, still on the curb. She sees Sam drive off. 44
As she opens the Lyft APP to look at his profile, she sees
his name: **Sam** -- and his photo. As she moves her fingers
across the screen to see if the photo opens wider, she
touches the star ratings by mistake, giving Sam one star.

JOANNA

Oh no!

She tries to go back but it's not possible. (Truly: It's not possible. Someone should fix that.)

45 IN THE CAR: Sam's APP registers the low rating -- he lurches a little on the brake. Shakes his head. Another fucking ding on his shit life. That's when his PHONE RINGS. He answers. What he hears is abject panic: 45

BOSS (ON PHONE)
Campos! Thank God you're there.

SAM
What's going on?

BOSS (ON PHONE)
I was right; we are launching our own streaming service. The COO wants to run a test Thursday to see if the servers can take it. I asked everyone but no one can get here before ten. If you do, I'll put you up for analyst when it launches?

Even though it's clear Sam's boss doesn't want him, Sam straightens up at this potential way to get back to his and Barry's home. He smiles for the first time in days. Fuck yes:

SAM
I'll be right there.

END OF ACT TWO

Nellie

Side B

ACT THREE

46 CLOSE UP ON: A SCREEN 46

... as someone types **Levi Gordon** and hits enter. A NEWS ITEM pops up with his photo: **Phillips 66 announce arena tour**. We PULL BACK to REVEAL Nellie, getting ready in her new bedroom in Gigi's apartment. The confusion and pain of her breakup is still roiling within her as she lip-synchs her PERSONAL SONG:

SONG: LOVE IS A LOSING GAME (Amy Winehouse)

NELLIE

FOR YOU I WAS A FLAME
LOVE IS A LOSING GAME
FIVE STORY FIRE AS YOU CAME
LOVE IS A LOSING GAME

The apartment: a wall-to-wall-carpeted, vertical-blinded, 70s Studio City monstrosity. As Nellie exits, grabbing her bag, she passes the living room (where Gigi and Troy are on the couch with face masks). They look after her with concern.

47 EXT. STUDIO CITY STREET - DUSK (**SONG**) 47

Nellie comes to her car. A different stray on the hood. This one wants a pet. But she passes it and gets into her car.

NELLIE

ONE I WISH I NEVER PLAYED
OH WHAT A MESS WE MADE
AND NOW THE FINAL FRAME
LOVE IS A LOSING GAME

48 INT. HOP LOUIE CHINATOWN RESTAURANT - NIGHT (**SONG**) 48

Nellie sits in a chair as it moves around a restaurant, landing at one table after another, a succession of different first dates opposite her, but she doesn't connect. She changes her clothes as she moves, days passing, her hair messier, her makeup less careful, her mood more IDGAF.

NELLIE

PLAYED OUT BY THE BAND
LOVE IS A LOSING HAND
MORE THAN I COULD STAND
LOVE IS A LOSING HAND
SELF PROFESSED, PROFOUND
'TIL THE CHIPS WERE DOWN
KNOW YOU'RE A GAMBLING MAN
LOVE IS A LOSING HAND

The song ends at:

49 INT. HOP LOUIE CHINATOWN RESTAURANT - NIGHT 49

Where Nellie waits for her next (last?) date. An 18-year-old FRESHMAN in a Supreme hoodie enters and walks toward Nellie with confidence, even as his Nikes SQUEAK.

FRESHMAN
Nellie?

NELLIE
... Maybe?

He nods -- *Alright!* -- and sits opposite her. She looks around.

FRESHMAN
It's Cam. You probably don't recognize me; I shaved.

NELLIE
Are you in *high school*?

FRESHMAN
Nah, man, I'm a frosh at SC.

NELLIE
This is so not happening.

She stands, fast, knocks over her water glass and it spills directly into her open purse still on her chair. She heads to the bathroom as the Freshman shrugs and downs her wine.

50 INT. HOP LOUIE CHINATOWN RESTAURANT - BATHROOM - NIGHT 50

Nellie enters the ladies' room, dumps the water from her purse, drip-drains her cell.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Rice. If you put your phone in rice, it should be okay.

She looks down the mirror to where the beautifully sad Joanna is staring at herself in the mirror.

NELLIE
Good tip, thank you.

There's a pause. Nellie sees how closely Joanna is examining herself. It's not the good kind of examining. It's the kind you do when you're trying to see the thing someone else said.

NELLIE
This is none of my business, but...
you look awesome.

JOANNA

Why is it I can love myself all day;
wake up and not need coffee, get to
work in a *real* twenty, not an LA one,
empty my inbox by noon -- but the
wrong look from some rando guy and
it's back at one. A total do-over.

NELLIE

That bad, huh?

JOANNA

Stood up bad. And not by some blind
date, if those even exist anymore.
By someone I've been chatting with
for weeks. Clearly he came, he saw
me, and he ran. Better than most of
my dates, which usually feel like a
Groundlings showcase: two people
yelling topics across a table at
each other hoping one sticks.

A beat. Nellie holds up her pot of lip gloss to Joanna.
Joanna takes some, tries it on her lips. It looks good.

JOANNA

Whatever happened to passing someone
on a street, or catching their eye
at a club, or from your car and
feeling that thing? The hairs-on-the-
back-of-your-neck adrenaline rush,
an instant connection? Like if you
just *talked* to that person, they'd
be the one? We know so much about
each other now, before we even show
up, there's no *chance* for that head
rush, and even if there was, our
arms are always in front of our
faces we can't even see who's
passing by. Does anyone ever meet
anyone anymore? Or do we all just
kinda know each other so why bother?

*

NELLIE

No one really knows anyone. I was
with someone for years, and on
Monday it was great, and on Tuesday
it was over. Nobody could have seen
it coming. Even half a year later
it makes no sense. Did he not love
me? I know he did. Was he not ready
to settle down? Seemed like he was.
Did I put too much pressure on him?
Did I miss some signals? Did I--

Someone else walks into the bathroom, shattering the moment.

NELLIE
I guess I should grab that rice.

JOANNA
(a beat)
Hey. I got something I think you
might need more than me.

She hands Nellie the fortune from her fortune cookie.

JOANNA
Family tradition. Pass to the left.

Nellie looks at it. It reads: **Your luck is about to change.**

NELLIE
God, I hope so.

As the two women smile, and walk out together, then move off separately, we CUT TO:

51 INT. NELLIE'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT 51

Nellie is driving her dented car home from her "date" when she turns on the RADIO. And wouldn't you know it:

TERRY GROSS (ON RADIO)
Up next on Fresh Air, Grammy
nominee Levi Gordon of Phillips 66.

Nellie tries desperately to turn off the radio, but her fingers don't find the knob. Looking down for a *millisecond*, the car jumps the curb, the tire POPS, and the radio goes FULL BLAST. After a beat, she takes out her cell.

52 EXT. CESAR CHAVEZ AVENUE - NIGHT 52

Nellie is sitting on the curb next to her car when another car pulls to a stop behind her. She rolls her eyes.

NELLIE
Of course you didn't send someone.

HUGH
I answer the phones at Triple-A.
I'm someone. Besides, this is the
only way I get to see you. You
have't called or come by in weeks;
you just text. I don't have a
daughter anymore, I have an emoji.
(beat)
You don't look so hot, kiddo.

NELLIE

'Cause I'm not so hot, Dad.

Nellie helps her dad roll the spare to her car.

NELLIE

No matter where I go, Levi seems to follow me.

HUGH

That's a bit of an exaggeration, don't you think?

She points to a billboard of Levi and his band over their heads. Hugh shrugs; okay, maybe not. As they change the tire:

NELLIE

I don't know what to do. I don't seem to be able to connect to anyone or anything. I've stopped drawing. I don't eat.

HUGH

You haven't showered...

NELLIE

I haven't showered. I've given up at work. Hard to tell kids their dreams can come true when mine clearly haven't. Worst thing of all? What if Levi was right? What if I was holding him back?

HUGH

You weren't holding anyone back with him but yourself. You were halfway through your book when you met and then... What happened!

NELLIE

They're not called books; they're graphic novels. And it was a graphic *memoir*, actually--

HUGH

Whatever it was, you gave it up for *him* when you should've been a team. He dreams a little, you wait. You dream a little, he waits. That was the problem with me and your mom. There was never any room for my dreams. We had to get divorced for me to become who I am today.

NELLIE

Minus the fraud and embezzlement?

HUGH

Who knows? Maybe time'll show even
that was worth it for some reason.
So I can no longer work where I used
to. Just means I'm not meant to.

NELLIE

Bright side all you want. I still
need to know why. I want the answer. *

HUGH

And you'll get it. But clarity
comes with time. It doesn't come
when you need it.

But Nellie has stopped listening. Because she's received a
GOOGLE ALERT on her phone: **Grammy Nominee Levi Gordon
announces engagement to supermodel Lina Carr...**

NELLIE

(shows phone to Hugh)

So he *was* ready to settle down. With
the woman he was clearly sleeping
with while we were together!

HUGH

Great! You got your answer. Now you
can move on.

But Nell's already on her phone, a devilish glint in her eye.

NELLIE

Troy. Does that couple you used to
sleep with still work at Atlantic?
There's a show we need to get into
tomorrow night...

She's moving on, alright. Moving on to the fight of her life!

END OF ACT THREE

SAM

Side B

ACT FOUR

A PAIR OF SPOTLESS VALENTINO HEELS

... walk across broken pavement & up a flight of stairs.

53 EXT. SECTION 8 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - MORNING 53

Sam, parking his car after his long night of driving, sees the woman with the shoes enter his apartment. Shit.

54 INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - MORNING 54

Sam's elegant and beautiful 50-something mother-in-law, MARGOT WESTON, is helping Barry tie his shoes.

MARGOT

Nice to see you, Annette. And this guy, of course.

She hugs Barry. He hugs her back. They are very close. Margot looks at the place, tries to hide her distaste.

SAM (O.S.)

What do you think, Margot?

BARRY

Dad!

Barry releases his hold on Margot to run to Sam, having entered behind her. Despite her abundant warmth and regal calm, Margot and Sam have a complicated relationship.

MARGOT

It's... smaller than I expected.

SAM

We prefer "homey."

(to Barry)

Hey, bud, why don't you grab a sweater? It's chilly today.

Annette takes Barry into the bedroom; she knows what's going on. Sam sees Margot's eyes land on his guitar in the closet. He steps in front of her so she has to change her focus.

MARGOT

There's a great house for rent in Echo Park, one block from your old one. You could work on your music there, rent-free. Guilt-free.

SAM

And my son?

MARGOT

You and I have our differences, but I know how much you love Barry. I know you want what's best for him.

SAM

And he has that living here, with his father. We've been over this...

MARGOT

Do you really think Eleanor would have allowed this, Sam? The crime statistics for this neighborhood alone. The education attainment level. I looked it up. *Six percent* of kids go to college.

SAM

Then he'll be one of the six.

MARGOT

You'd see him all the time if he lived with me. He'd just have the right school in Brentwood, better housing, a yard, full-time care.

SAM

By a revolving door of strangers while you're off doing your next Hallmark movie in Alberta?

MARGOT

I'm just trying to help. You lost your wife; you don't have to lose your dreams, too.

SAM

Well, I don't want to lose my son, either. I appreciate the offer, Margot. I know it comes from your heart. But I'm on track for a promotion at work that'll give me more time here, and--

MARGOT

More time?

Up 'til that moment, Sam forgot Margot doesn't know how hard he's working. How he's never home. It adds instant fuel to the fire of Margot's fears for Barry. Annette comes back in.

ANNETTE

You're going to be late.

MARGOT

Didn't you just get home?

BARRY

Dad's a superhero. He has three jobs.

MARGOT

Who picks up Barry from school?

ANNETTE

(nods to Leah in the doorway)
Me and my daughter live next door.

LEAH

Just a reminder, I have SAT prep today.

Sam and Annette clearly forgot. Annette to Sam:

ANNETTE

The hostess is on maternity leave.

Sam doesn't want to look like he doesn't have this handled.

ANNETTE

That's why we asked Dante.
(to Margot)
My firstborn. Just moved back in.

Dante, having his morning smoke al fresco, hears his name.
Sam looks to Annette; this a good idea? Annette nods, small.

ANNETTE

You're picking up Barry from school
today, remember?

Dante understands what's going on fast; no fool he. He also
is buoyed by this; means a lot to be considered trustworthy.

DANTE

See you at two, B-man?

SAM/LEAH/ANNETTE

Three.

They look at each other -- oops. Margot takes Barry's hand.

MARGOT

Want to put the address into the
GPS for after we have breakfast?

BARRY

I know how to go. Dad taught me.

A wary Margot leaves with Barry. Sam turns to Dante. Clearly worried he may be making a mistake. But Dante isn't worried.

DANTE

I'll do you proud, cuz. I got you.

Sam's PHONE DINGS with a text from his boss: **on your way?**
Grabbing his uniform from the closet, we CUT TO:

55

INT. TRANSPACIFIC MUSIC GROUP - SERVER ROOM - DAY

55

It's vast, hot, and full of machines making MACHINE NOISES, as an exhausted but hopeful Sam checks the stability of one server after another. His coworkers/friends PATTY (45) and AJAY (25) take a coffee (Ajay) and vape break (Patty).

AJAY

Awful lot of work for one human. Is he testing the servers, or you?

PATTY

He's always had it out for you.

SAM

And while he may be a racist prick, I'm going to get the promotion and get far away from him.

PATTY

You're lucky you're in here, anyway. The interns are listening to unsolicited demos in CR3.

AJAY

They're looking for new voices for a writing camp; I overheard Shelley in A&R. Must really be dire if they had to open it up to unsoliciteds.

PATTY

What's a writing camp?

AJAY

It's when a bunch of songwriters get put up in a hotel for a weekend so an artist like Drake or Rihanna can go room to room looking for hooks, lyrics, new collaborators. It's how Madjid Jordan, Ingrid, even Charli XCX got started.

SAM

The writers who get to go to camps
are famous. I have no chance.

PATTY

I've literally never heard of
anyone he just said.

SAM

Point is you don't get to audition
without being someone. What do you
want me to do, break into Shelley's
email, find out where the camp is
and crash it? I'd get fired.

That's when JAKE, their boss, lands. An unctuous man just a
few years older than Sam, he has a habit of not making eye
contact -- but only with Sam.

BOSS

What's going on in here?

SAM

I'm about halfway.

BOSS

You'll be all the way by five?

SAM

Five... Thursday?

BOSS

Don't screw with me, Sam. Get it
done. I'm counting on you.

As he exits, shoulders still hunched, Sam shakes his head.
Ajay covers his mouth:

AJAY

OH MY GOD he *set you up!* He told
you Thursday when he meant today!

Sam's CELL RINGS. As he reaches for it:

SAM

I'm sure I just misheard him this
morning; I was barely awake. I'll
get it done. It's only thre--

VOICE (ON PHONE)

Mr. Campos? This is Joy from Ritter
Elementary. It's fifteen minutes
past pickup and your son's still--

SAM

I'll get *right* back to you.

He hangs up, pissed, pulls up Dante's contact, dials.
Straight to VM. Tries again, same thing. Worried, he calls:

SAM

D, it's me. Dante hasn't picked up
Barry like he was supposed to--

DE'ANDRA (ON PHONE)

I spoke to him an hour ago; he was
getting ready to leave.

SAM

Damn. Damn damn damn.

He hangs up and stands. Looks to Ajay and Patty.

PATTY

I'll take over. We got you covered. *

SAM

I'll be back within an hour.

56 INT. RITTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

56

Sam races into the school looking for Barry. But he's not in
the classroom. He's not on the playground. He's not in the
principal's office. He sees the school LAPD OFFICER:

SAM

Have you seen Barry Campos, he's
new, he's-- This is him:
(holds up a photo on his phone)

OFFICER

Yes, he was here a little while
ago. You sure he wasn't picked up?

SAM

I don't know. Maybe he was by now--

Sam sees a TEACHER round the corner, with none other than
Joanna, looking professional in a smart suit, with a
supervisor she works with and a distraught parent and child.

JOANNA

*'ana asif, lakaniy 'aeaduk 'an
hadha hu al'iijra' almueyari--*

Joanna stops when she sees Sam. He's too busy panicking to
notice her notice him, even as he runs over and interrupts,
turning to the Teacher, with:

SAM

Have you seen my son? My son, from
your class--

TEACHER

Excuse me, I'm in the middle of--

SAM

I don't CARE what you're in the
middle of, YOU lost him--

JOANNA

It's okay. We can help find...

SAM

Barry.

JOANNA

Barry. That's a more urgent matter.
My supervisor here can stay with
Mrs. Hamdi. Okay?

Sam looks at Joanna, feeling calmed by her. They start walking. It's an odd moment for Joanna, having seen this man so many times before. Sam doesn't notice, just feels relieved having Joanna by his side. Until he sees Dante, however, also looking for Barry. He sees Sam, explains, fast:

DANTE

Did they call you? Do you have him?

SAM

What the hell, Dante?

DANTE

It's not my fault, man. You know
how busted my car is, it didn't
start. I called and told them I was
late 'cause I had to walk--

SAM

They didn't tell me you'd called.
(he looks in Dante's eyes)
Are you *high* right now?

Joanna hears that, wishes she hadn't. Her supervisor heard it too, having come to find her. The Officer circles back:

OFFICER

Mr. Campos, an aide said she saw
Barry on the playground five min--

Sam starts to run. Dante does too, but Sam stops him.

SAM

No. Go home.

And he runs, Joanna left behind. She looks to Dante, then takes out a pad, writes a note she wishes she didn't have to.

57 EXT. STREET - DAY

57

Sam drives down alleyways, main avenues, side streets, looking for Barry. And then he screeches to a stop, because in an alley he sees Barry walking, like nothing in the world is wrong. He reverses the car fast, yells out the window:

SAM

BARRY!

Barry jumps as Sam leaps out of the car.

SAM

What the HELL are you doing?

BARRY

Wa-- Walking home.

Sam grabs Barry, tight. Sam's fear immediately scares Barry.

SAM

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THAT!

BARRY

Dad-- Daddy, you're scaring me!

SAM

I'm sorry. I'm not mad at you, I'm mad at myself. This never would've happened if your mom was here.

BARRY

(pushes Sam off him)

Why do you keep talking about her?
Stop talking about her!

Sam looks at Barry; still with this? He climbs into the car, pissed, and tries to strap himself into the booster again. But he can't clip the clip. Of course. Sam's PHONE DINGS with a text from **Patty: He's looking for you. Trying to stall.**

58 INT. DAL RAE RESTAURANT - DAY

58

Sam deposits Barry with Annette in her cramped general manager's office at the restaurant.

ANNETTE

Hey baby, wanna help me put the specials in the menu for tonight?

BARRY

I'm not a baby.
(but he starts anyway)
Flounder? Like in the *movie*?

ANNETTE

I'll bring him home when I get off.
Get that promotion!

59 EXT. OFFICE PARK - PARKING LOT - DAY 59

Sam pulls his car into his spot and runs. Trips a little, but catches himself. Slows down. He's running on the fumes of fumes, but he can do this. As soon as he gets the door, his Boss is waiting for him. Sam stops running.

60 OMITTED 60

61 INT. TRANSPACIFIC MUSIC GROUP - BOSS' OFFICE - A MINUTE LATER 61

Jake the Boss sits across from Sam. As predicted, there's a gross smug smile on his face.

BOSS

So of course I had to finish it myself.

SAM

My son was missing.

BOSS

I assume you found him?

Sam starts to answer, but the Boss wasn't really asking.

BOSS

I know things have been hard for you since... But I've given you time, and your work has not improved. You come in looking like a zombie, leave looking worse. This job is too stressful for you.

SAM

That's not true. I just need to sleep more. I can find more focus. I need this. Anything you want me to do, I'll do it. Please. I can't lose my benefits. My kid--

BOSS
Sam, Sam, stop. There's nothing you
can do. I'm sorry, but you're--

But before he can say the word "fired," Sam starts singing:

62 **SONG: SMILE (Mikky Ekko)**

62

SAM
SMILE
THE WORST IS YET TO COME
WE'LL BE LUCKY IF WE EVER SEE THE SUN
GOT NOWHERE TO GO
WE COULD BE HERE FOR A WHILE
BUT THE FUTURE IS FORGIVEN, SO SMILE

As his Boss drones on, Sam stands and crosses to him, singing in his ear, in his face. He spins his Boss' chair.

SAM
WE'RE TRYING SO HARD
TO GET IT ALL RIGHT
BUT ONLY FEEL LONELY AT THE END OF THE NIGHT
WELL I WANNA BE SOMEWHERE
AWAY FROM THIS PLACE
SOMEWHERE JUST A LITTLE CLOSER TO GRACE

Sam pushes his Boss out of his way. Then he clears the desk with his hands. Then the bookcase. The art from the walls. Takes a golf club, smashes the picture frames. Then the computer on his desk. Patty and Ajay and other assistants cheer him on from outside the window.

SAM
I'LL SMILE, THE WORST IS YET TO COME
WE'LL BE LUCKY IF WE EVER SEE THE SUN
GOT NOWHERE TO GO
WE COULD BE HERE FOR A WHILE
BUT THE FUTURE IS FORGIVEN, SO SMILE

As Sam takes a prized signed baseball from its perch and throws it at the floor-to-ceiling glass window, we CUT TO:

Sam, back where he was in his seat, in front of his Boss.

BOSS
--fired.

SAM
Thank you. Thank you for your time.

And he gets up, and walks out.

63-64 OMITTED

63-64

MASHUP

ACT FIVE

65 EXT. THE ECHO - NIGHT 65

A live music venue off Sunset Blvd. in Echo Park. A line leans down the block for cancellation tix to what the marquee calls **Phillips 66 Grammy Nom Party**. Nellie and Gigi, looking hotter than hell and primed for a fight, walk to the front where Troy is waiting for them.

TROY

Here they are. Peltier, plus two.

The A&R asst. at the door nods and lets them, and us, into:

66 INT. THE ECHO - NIGHT 66

Dark, crowded, loud. N, G & T walk past the merch table with tons of Phillips 66 shit laid out.

GIGI

Ghost of literal Christmases past,
nine o'clock.

Nellie picks up a T-shirt, incredulous:

NELLIE

He's still using my art?

Troy takes it out of her hands. Gigi steers them away.

TROY

What's the plan here, babe? Mezcal
to the face before he goes on?
Death glare from the floor so he
screws up his solo? Or full onstage
knock-down-drag-out 'til you're
pulled off?

NELLIE

I just need to see his face.
That'll tell me what happens next.

GIGI

Whatever it is, you can't be sober
for it. Come on.

As they walk toward the bar, we CUT TO:

67 EXT. THE ECHOPLEX - NIGHT 67

Around the corner is The Echo's sister club, more nightclub dive bar than a venue. Sam walks up to find De'Andra waiting.

SAM

Dante's inside, isn't he.

De'Andra smiles a guilty smile:

DE'ANDRA

Don't be mad. He wanted to apologize in person. I thought someplace neutral was best.

(off Sam's face)

He got to school late. That's all. You saw him there yourself. He *has* changed. But if the people he cares about most don't believe that, why should he stay that way?

SAM

On one condition: If you believe he's changed, tell him. Or break it off before he finds out.

Which is when Sam's tackled in another shock hug from Dante.

DANTE

Thank you thank you thank you for showin'. *Ahora la fiesta ya puede empezar!*

68 INT. THE ECHO - NIGHT

68

Troy, Gigi and Nellie look for Levi, drinks in hand. Nellie grows a little pale before our eyes.

NELLIE

Okay, I'm having second thoughts.

Troy and Gigi hand Nellie their drinks. She downs them.

NELLIE

Do I do this, or do we leave? I can't tell if I need a pep talk or our parking validated.

GIGI

It's now or never, whatever it is. You gotta burn it down before you can rise from it, right? So do it.

Nellie looks at Gigi; she's right. As they move to find Levi:

TROY

Gotta thank my guys. I'll find you.

69

INT. THE ECHOPLEX - NIGHT

69

Dante, with Sam, has found a quiet(er) area by the bar. Behind them, a band sets up on stage.

DANTE

It never shoulda happened. I'm spending all my gate money to get the car fixed so it never happens again. I get you probs won't ever ask me again, but just in case--

SAM

I appreciate that.

DANTE

I appreciate *you*, man. You getting out, you don't know what that did for me. Watching you get the house, the family, reach for your dreams.

Sam winces, small; he'll always feel guilty for leaving Dante behind.

DANTE

You inspired me, man. That's why I got released sooner. Then when I heard Eleanor died--

SAM

If it inspired you, why've you been hanging with your old crew?

DANTE

I dabbled with them a little, but they offered. I can't say no right away. You got out, so you don't know what it's like here. They stood by me. Looked out for my moms and sis while I was in. For you, too. Who do you think got rid 'a those people so you could move in?

SAM

What? Got rid of who?

DANTE

I'm on the hook, bro, but it'll be okay. I just gotta pretend I'm still with 'em before I pull away. I don't want anything to happen to you. 'Specially Barry.

Sam grabs Dante, a bit too hard.

SAM

What are you talking about? Did you put me and my son in danger?

DANTE

Of course not, cuz. I'm out in front of it. It's all good.

Before Sam can ask more, his CELL RINGS: **Annette**. Sam answers and moves toward the door where he can hear:

ANNETTE (ON PHONE)

Leah just got home. Told me someone from Child Protective Services was at school today to see Barry.

SAM

What? Why? I don't under--

ANNETTE (ON PHONE)

Apparently they were at the school yesterday when you were there, dealing with another student, and they overheard something? Now they have questions about Barry's care. They can take Barry away from you, do you understand? They can put him in foster care...

Sam's world spins. Dante smiles at him from the bar. A smile that cuts Sam to the core. Does Dante know what he's wrought?

70 INT. THE ECHO - NIGHT/INT. ECHOPLEX - NIGHT - INTERCUT (**SONG**) 70

Gigi and Nellie have made it close to the stage, pushing through a crowd of bodies. And then she sees him. Levi, talking to his A&R rep by the stairs to the stage, his truly beautiful fiancée standing with him.

Nellie's face falls. This is the truth, right in front of her. And it hurts. Before she knows what she's doing, she moves straight for Levi. He sees Nellie crossing through the crowded dance floor to him, and gets his hackles up. Suddenly the last song begins, our MASHUP, with Nellie and Sam, each in their private moments. Nellie sings to Levi, starting our **MASHUP: SUPERCUT (Lorde)/BELIEVER (Imagine Dragons)**

NELLIE

IN MY HEAD I PLAY A SUPERCUT OF US
ALL THE MAGIC WE GAVE OFF
ALL THE LOVE WE HAD AND LOST
IN MY HEAD THE VISIONS NEVER STOP
THESE RIBBONS WRAP ME UP
BUT WHEN I REACH FOR YOU THERE'S JUST A SUPERCUT

As Levi looks at her, dancers from the crowd back her up.

AT THE ECHOPLEX: Sam approaches Dante, trying to keep his rage in check:

SAM

FIRST THINGS FIRST I'MA SAY ALL THE WORDS INSIDE MY HEAD
I'M FIRED UP AND TIRED OF THE WAY THAT THINGS HAVE BEEN
OOH-OOH
THE WAY THAT THINGS HAVE BEEN, OOH-OOH

NELLIE

I PLAY A SUPERCUT OF US

SAM

I WAS CHOKING IN THE CROWD
LIVING MY BRAIN UP IN THE CLOUD
FALLING LIKE ASHES TO THE GROUND
HOPING MY FEELINGS THEY WOULD DROWN
BUT THEY NEVER DID, EVER LIVED, EBBING AND FLOWING
INHIBITED, LIMITED 'TIL IT BROKE UP AND IT RAINED DOWN
IT RAINED DOWN LIKE -- PAIN
YOU MADE ME A, YOU MADE ME A BELIEVER, BELIEVER
YOU BREAK ME DOWN AND BUILD ME UP, BELIEVER, BELIEVER
OH LET THE BULLETS FLY, OH LET THEM RAIN
MY LIFE, MY LOVE, MY DRIVE, IT CAME FROM PAIN!
YOU MADE ME A, YOU MADE ME A BELIEVER, BELIEVER

NELLIE

IN MY HEAD, IN MY HEAD I DO EVERYTHING RIGHT
WHEN YOU CALL I'LL FORGIVE AND NOT FIGHT
BECAUSE OURS ARE THE MOMENTS I PLAY IN THE DARK
WE WERE WILD AND FLUORESCENT
COME HOME TO MY HEART

We CROSS-CUT between our leads, as Nellie tells Levi exactly how she feels, and Sam the same to Dante. They are exorcising their demons. The more Nell sings, the less angry she is. She feels stronger, more alive. It's cathartic for Sam, too, expressing his anger & disappointment over his life. The dancers back Nellie up, feeling her same catharsis.

NELLIE

'CAUSE IN MY HEAD
IN MY HEAD
I DO EVERYTHING RIGHT
WHEN YOU CALL
WHEN YOU CALL
I'LL FORGIVE AND NOT FIGHT
BECAUSE OURS ARE THE MOMENTS
I PLAY IN THE DARK
WE WERE WILD AND FLUORESCENT
COME HOME TO MY HEART

SAM

YOU MADE ME A, YOU MADE ME A
BELIEVER, BELIEVER
YOU BREAK ME DOWN, I'LL BUILD
ME UP, BELIEVER, BELIEVER
PAIN!
OH LET THE BULLETS FLY, OH
LET THEM RAIN
MY LIFE, MY LOVE, MY DRIVE,
IT CAME FROM PAIN!
YOU MADE ME A, YOU MADE ME A--

SAM

LAST THINGS LAST
BY THE GRACE OF THE FIRE AND THE FLAME
YOU'RE THE FACE OF THE FUTURE
THE BLOOD IN MY VEINS, OH
THE BLOOD IN MY VEINS, OH

As the song ends, Sam, six inches from Dante, looks down at him. Has he gotten his message through? He pushes his finger into Dante's chest.

SAM

Get your house in order. 'Cause
it's my damn house now, too.

AT THE ECHO: Gigi sees Echo security coming and dives in to grab Nellie, pulling her away from the stunned Levi. As they pass us -- and a stunned Troy -- we see the huge grin on Nellie's face.

IN THE ECHOPLEX: A bouncer appears and pulls Sam away from Dante, even as De'Andra tries to intervene. But it's no use. Sam's thrown out into:

71 EXT. ECHO/ECHOPLEX - NIGHT

71

Out on Sunset, Troy rushes out after Nellie and Gigi.

TROY

Guess I'm never sleeping with them
again! But who cares: You okay?

NELLIE

Okay? I'm *AMAZING!* Guys... That life
is done. I'm ready for what's next.

As they run off, laughing, we PAN DOWN to find, under the overpass, a pissed and despondent Sam walking away from where Nellie just was, his world crumbling around him...

72 INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - DAWN

72

A fired-up Sam sits on the sofa. Sees his guitar in the corner. An emblem of brighter, more hopeful days. One he has to destroy right away. He grabs it, opens the door, gets ready to hurl it, but:

BARRY (O.S.)

Dad? What're you doing?

Sam turns. Barry is standing in the bedroom doorway. Sam catches his breath, trying not to show Barry his anger.

SAM

I-- I didn't mean to wake you.

BARRY

I want to show you something.

He takes Sam's hand, and leads him into:

73

INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

73

As soon as they enter, Sam immediately sees: Barry has put up the drawing of him, Sam, and Eleanor. Sam can't hold back. His eyes fill with tears. He tries to be strong, but it's not possible. He breaks down. Through his tears to Barry:

SAM

Sorry. I'm sorry.

BARRY

It's okay to cry. That's what you say, right? It's okay. Are you crying for Mommy, 'cause she's not here anymore? I do that sometimes too.

Sam is overwhelmed at his son finally talking. He holds him tight. They both cry.

BARRY

Tell me how you and Mommy met.

Sam collects himself. Has an idea.

SAM

How 'bout I show you instead?

74

EXT. HORACE HEIDT APARTMENT - POOL - MORNING

74

Nellie and Hugh are having breakfast burritos, their feet in the pool. They eat in silence for bit, until Hugh puts his burrito down, fixes her with his dad look.

NELLIE

Food down? I know what that means.

HUGH

I think it's time you got your life in order.

NELLIE

Funny coming from you. I pay your rent.

HUGH

Hey. I'm parenting you right now.

NELLIE

What makes you think my life isn't
in order?

He takes out his phone and holds it up so she can see herself. She sees her now-streaky smokey eyes, unkempt hair. She grabs the phone from his hands.

NELLIE

Point taken. But I feel much better
than I look, just so you know.

She wipes her eyes with her napkin, smoothes her hair down.

HUGH

When's the last time you spoke to
your mom?

NELLIE

Around the last time *you* did?

HUGH

You've rejected everything that
ever came from her, even the name
she gave you. If she weren't here,
that'd be one thing. But she's
three miles away...

NELLIE

I don't want to think about Mom
right now. Which works for her too,
'cause she doesn't *think* of herself
as a mom. What I need is a fresh
start. Something's coming. I've
cleared the way. Once I know what
it is, *then* maybe I'll call. Maybe.

HUGH

Finish your book at least, can you
promise me that?
(she can't)
Oh, and before I forget...

NELLIE

How much? Forty? Sixty?

As she takes her wallet out of her purse, she notices:

NELLIE

Wait. Where's my-- Did I leave my
credit card at the club last night?
(she did)
I kept my tab open but was thrown
out before I paid...

HUGH

This is really good for my thesis
about your life.

NELLIE

I'll come by tomorrow. Here.

She hands him a wad of cash and rushes off.

75 EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - MORNING

75

Sam and Barry walk down Sunset Boulevard. They stop in front
of The Echo. Barry looks up at it, confused.

SAM

See this club? Eight years ago, I'd
been out with friends -- including
your Uncle Dante -- all night. He'd
gotten us into a party we weren't
invited to, some after-hours thing.
We were leaving here at eight in
the morning when I bumped into your
mother. Literally. The door opened,
and *wham!* Right into her. Like
something out of a dumb movie. And
the second I reached to help her,
the second we touched, we both felt
it. Like we were supposed to be
there at that moment, even if it
made no sense. Like when you hear a
song for the first time and without
even knowing the words, something
about it hits you *right here*.

(touches Barry's chest)

BARRY

(giggles)

I don't know what you're saying.

SAM

You will. And when you do, it'll be
the best feeling you've ever had.

BARRY

Okay, but Dad? I have to pee.

SAM

There's a bathroom inside.

BARRY

I want to do it myself.

As he opens the door for Barry to head in, the door hits
Nellie!

Standing right behind it, having been putting her credit card back in her wallet. As the contents of her wallet fly to the ground, she and Sam both bend down to pick them up. Their hands meet over her driver's license -- and it's like a shock goes through both of them. The good kind.

SAM

My God, I'm so sorry. That was so stupid of me.

But Nellie doesn't hear it. She's too busy feeling that feeling Joanna talked about. *We* feel it too. But we also notice: Barry is gone. Not only that, but Sam looks different: different haircut, different clothes, younger. And there's Dante, coming out of the club, also younger, cleaner.

DANTE

Yo Sam, man, I'm thinking pancak--

He's about to pull Sam away when he sees Nellie. He knows enough to stand out of the way. As Sam picks up Nellie's driver's license from the ground, he reads it.

SAM

That's not a name you hear anymore.

NELLIE

I don't use it. Haven't since I was a kid. Most people call me Nellie. But... I've been thinking about going back to it. Maybe.

SAM

I like it. Eleanor.

If we didn't know by now, it's just clicked for us: Nellie is Sam's future late wife, Eleanor. Her story has been in 2010. And Sam and Barry's is in 2018. We haven't just been looking at a love that's about to start, we've also been looking at it after it's over. You can't have a Side A without a Side B. Sam and Nellie/Eleanor feel a pull toward each other.

DANTE

Get her number man, call her later. I really need some food.

SAM

I'm going to do something I promise I've never done: ask a complete stranger for their number.

NELLIE

I'll put it in your phone?

SAM

I don't have a smartphone...

NELLIE

Now I *know* I like you.

She fishes in her bag for paper, finds a scrap, and takes out one of her pencils. Draws a cartoon of her number on the back of the scrap. As she hands it to Sam:

NELLIE

That piece of paper's done well for me. Think it might for you too.

As he looks at it, we see it's the scrap he picked up in the house. And as he turns it over, it's also the fortune Joanna gave Nellie at the restaurant. **Your luck is about to change.**

Sam watches Nellie go, but we see it's 2018 Sam, and Nellie is gone. Barry comes out of the club.

BARRY

I did it myself!

SAM

I'm so proud of you! Let's go home?

OVER WITH NELLIE, the smile on her face as she walks away from 2010 Sam is real. It's huge. And it's not going away.

CLOSE ON: a guitar case unzipping. PULL BACK to REVEAL:

76 INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - DAY (2018)

76

Sam enthusiastically holds his guitar, laptop open in front of him. Barry lies on the floor nearby, drawing.

BARRY

What are you going to play?

SAM

I'm not going to play, I'm going to write. Something new. Something great. And get it heard.

And now we see: He's hacked into **Shelley** from A&R's inbox and found the email about the music camp. He's going to crash it!

77 EXT. SILVER LAKE GENERAL STORE - DAY (2010)

77

Gigi is opening up as Nellie runs up, grabs her, spins her.

GIGI

What the-- Are you on something?

NELLIE

No. Yes. I dunno, the future, maybe?
Gige: I think I just met *my guy*.

As Gigi opens the door, the store RADIO is playing Levi.

GIGI

Wait here, I'll turn it off.

NELLIE

Don't! Turn it up! I want to dance!

As she starts to dance through the store:

78 INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - DAY (2018) 78

As Sam tunes his guitar, Annette gently KNOCKS.

ANNETTE

Sam? The caseworker's here for a
random check. She wants to observe.

SAM

No problem.

ANNETTE

You're so calm. Is everything okay?

SAM

No one is taking my son away. Not
my mother-in-law, not your son's
"friends," and not the city. My
luck is about to change. Again.
Even if I have to change it myself.

79 INT. SILVER LAKE GENERAL STORE - DAY (2010) 79

Gigi and Nellie dance through the store, totally free. Nellie
sits to catch her breath. Looks in her bag. Pulls out a
Moleskine book. It's her graphic novel, and it's beautiful.
She turns to the last page, and starts to sketch: Sam.

80 INT. HIGHLAND PARK BEDROOM - MORNING (2018) 80

De'Andra lays awake in bed, her boyfriend asleep next to her.
Her CELL RINGS -- **Dante** calling. We realize that's not who's
next to her. This is what Sam was referencing; she didn't
wait for Dante, but he doesn't know that. She doesn't answer.

81 EXT. SECTION 8 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - MORNING (2018) 81

Dante sits on the balcony, on his cell. De'Andra's not
answering. He hangs up. Sees one of his gang cronies motion
him to come down. Dante goes with him. This is not good.

82-83 OMITTED

82-83

84 INT. SAM & BARRY'S APARTMENT - DAY (2018)

84

Annette opens the door to let Joanna in.

BARRY

What are you gonna write?

SAM

I don't know. But I'm pretty sure
it'll be a love song.

BARRY

A love song? Why?

As Joanna enters to quietly observe, she suddenly stops. Something happens that she didn't expect: Sam actually looking at her, and not only that, but seeing her, for the first time. Unlike all the other times. We PULL AROUND Sam to see: the hairs on the back of his neck standing up. That thing he's felt only once before. The thing we don't have to feel only once, if we're lucky.

Worlds colliding again, this next mixtape begins. Joanna sits next to Barry, open, kind -- doing her job.

JOANNA

I don't mean to interrupt. What
were you talking about, Mr. Campos?

SAM

Sam. And I was just telling my son
something important.

JOANNA

Oh yeah? And what's that?

He smiles at his son. Smiles at this stranger. And he begins.

SAM

Every song is a love song.

We CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW