

Kill Your Darlings
by
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Based on a True Story

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EXT. HUDSON RIVER - NIGHT

SUPER: **NEW YORK, NEW YORK. AUGUST 14th, 1944.**

Underwater. Shafts of light cut through the river.

Slowly, DAVID KAMMERER, 33, bearded, handsome, rises into view. He is clothed -- open white shirt, khakis.

Face down. Dead.

ALLEN (V.O.)
Some things, once you've loved
them, become yours forever.

The body breaks to the surface. Then FLIPS, David's face turning to the sky. The scene is playing in REVERSE MOTION.

ALLEN (V.O.)
And if you try to let them go...

The body floats back to LUCIEN CARR, 20, unclothed, waist deep in the water. Drops of sweat, blood, down his back.

ALLEN (V.O.)
...they only circle back and return
to you.

As David's body LIFTS into the young man's arms, we see David's feet and hands are TIED together with shoelaces.

The shoelaces suddenly untie.

ALLEN (V.O.)
They become part of who you are...

A STAIN of red blood on David's chest shrinks, vanishes.

ALLEN (V.O.)
Or they destroy you.

David's eyes OPEN.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TOMBS (JAIL) - DAY

A dank prison. Lit only through the bars. Like a film noir.

Behind the bars, Lucien Carr, the young man from the opening, looks up from a MANUSCRIPT. He throws it to the ground.

LUCIEN

You show this to anyone and I'll be
in here for the rest of my life!

On our side of the bars, a young ALLEN GINSBERG, 19, worn,
and intense, looks back at Lucien defiantly.

ALLEN

Then tell the truth, Lu.

LUCIEN

The truth?! You wanted him gone
too.

ALLEN

Not like that.

Allen grabs the pages from the ground and starts for the
exit.

LUCIEN

Please.

Lucien reaches through the bars, grabs Allen by the lapels.

LUCIEN

(desperate)
You'll kill me with that.

ALLEN

I'm sorry.

LUCIEN

For what?

Allen calls out towards the exit.

ALLEN

Guard! He's getting violent!

Allen breaks Lucien's hold. Leaves. Two PRISON GUARDS rush
in. Lucien starts to shake. Starts screaming.

LUCIEN

(pleading, screaming)
Allen! No! DON'T...

CUT TO BLACK.

A 1940's swing tune crackles on the sound-track.

INSERT OPENING TITLES: **"KILL YOUR DARLINGS"**.

As the credits end, we FADE TO...

EXT. PATERSON, NEW JERSEY - EVENING

SUPER: SUMMER 1943. ONE YEAR EARLIER.

Dusk sets in on this drab, working-class town. Lights in row-houses turn on.

Suddenly, a FEMALE SCREAM echoes through the night.

INT. GINSBERG HOME - EVENING

Dutiful Allen Ginsberg (17, fresh-faced, horn-rimmed glasses) looks up startled from his broom, a TO-DO list of chores in his hand.

LOUIS (O.S.)

Allen?!

Allen turns to his father, LOUIS, (40's, working-class poet) who is sorting anxiously through the mail.

ALLEN

I got it, Pa.

Allen starts to the stove, then stops. Looks back to the mail.

ALLEN

Did anything come for me?

Louis shakes his head.

LOUIS

No.

Allen nods, masks his disappointment.

INT. GINSBERG HALLWAY - NIGHT

A long, dark hallway. Allen walks slowly, balancing a tray of soup. Crash. The sound of glass breaking.

ALLEN

Mom?!

INT. MASTER BEDROOM, GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

Allen nudges open the door.

His mother NAOMI (40's, Jewish, intelligent beauty, deep personality disorder) hides in the corner, in a bathrobe.

Allen sees: her hand bloody, a window pane smashed.

ALLEN

Oh God.

Allen sets his tray down, goes to her. He wraps her hand with the dish towel.

NAOMI

You've got to get me out of here.
They nailed the windows shut.

ALLEN

Who, Ma? Tell me.

She points up to the ceiling.

NAOMI

(whispers)
You know who! They're listening.

Naomi begins hunting the walls with her fingers. She is deeply, shatteringly paranoid.

ALLEN

I locked the windows. Because
you're not right. You can't just
go out and wander. People get
scared.

She faces him, her bathrobe open. Scars cross her belly.

NAOMI

I'm not scary!

Allen winces.

ALLEN

Ma. The neighbors can see. Do you
want to go another home?

NAOMI

(fervent whisper)
Would you quiet down?! I told you!
They can hear you.

Allen thinks, turns around and heads to her bureau. He removes a RECORD and sets it on the PHONOGRAPH. The stylus comes down. A BRAHMS WALTZ plays.

ALLEN

Can they *still* hear me?

NAOMI

What did I just tell you? They...

He **TURNS** it up all the way. Allen mimes deafness. Finally, she understands: their sounds are drowned out by the music.

ALLEN

Come here.

Allen pulls her to her feet. They waltz with the music.

NAOMI

(whispers)

Allen. Don't ever leave me.

She holds on tighter. Allen looks trapped over her shoulder.

EXT. GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

On the fire-escape, Allen leans through the bars of the railing. Far off, the lights of New York City glimmer.

We hear the faint sound of jazz playing in the distance. Allen closes his eyes.

ALLEN (V.O.)

God, if you exist, then you know my parents are Communists and if they find out I'm talking to you, there's really gonna be a hell.

Unbeknownst to Allen, Louis watches his son in prayer from the threshold.

ALLEN (V.O.)

I know I can't stay here forever. So I make this solemn vow. If I get into school, I promise to do something to help the world, something extraordinary...

LOUIS (O.S.)

(interrupting)

If you go, she'll never make it.

Embarrassed, Allen turns around to see his father behind him. Louis joins his son, smoking. Allen waves the smoke away.

ALLEN

Don't worry. Everyone else has heard about school by now. I'm not going anywhere.

LOUIS

(reciting his poem)

"Love that is hoarded, molds at last."

He puts his arm around his son.

LOUIS
 "Until we know some day, the only
 thing we have..."

ALLEN
 "...is what we give away."

Silence. Louis shakes his head.

LOUIS
 "What we hand away." Consonance.
Have, hand.

ALLEN
Give, is. Assonance.

LOUIS
 I wrote the damn poem, Allen.
 Write your own.

Louis hands Allen a LETTER. The hardest thing he's done.
 Allen spies the "Columbia University" SEAL on the front.

ALLEN
 (eyeing the postmark)
 This came last week.

Allen RIPS open the letter. Scans down...he's been accepted.

ALLEN
 Oh my God.

LOUIS
 It'll take all the money we have.

Silence. Allen looks at his father.

ALLEN
 I won't do it.

LOUIS
 Go.

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE WALK - DAY

Allen stops in the quad, heavy DUFFEL BAG on his shoulder.
 In awe of the classical facades.

A line of V-12 Navy officers march past. WORLD WAR II is on.

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen DRAGS his bag through the door.

It's a spare room with two beds. He's got a roommate. On one wall are exercise posters, a giant MAP of New York City.

Allen studies the map, his finger tracing the IRT south to Greenwich Village.

CADET (O.S.)
You don't wanna go down there.

A CADET, in a buzz-cut and sweaty shirt, leans over him.

CADET
Land of the fairies. Head there
and you never come back.
(extending a firm hand)
Luke Detweiler, Roxbury Mass.

ALLEN
Allen Ginsberg. Nice to...

The Cadet peels off his clothing. Totally naked. Allen is instantly aroused.

CADET
The angel cakes at Barnard are
within spittin' distance.

ALLEN's P.O.V.: Quick, flustered shots of the cadet's BODY.

CADET
Social this Friday. You and I are
gonna be slicing up that cake
and...

The cadet looks up, thinks he catches Allen looking at him. Allen quickly looks down at a pamphlet on campus tours.

ALLEN
Licking the...frosting.

The cadet wraps himself with a towel.

CADET
I love college.

CUT TO:

INT. BUTLER LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

The Gothic beauty of a university library. A pompous TOUR GUIDE shows off glass VITRINES containing old documents.

A SECURITY GUARD stands nearby.

TOUR GUIDE

Butler Library is a church, and
these are the sacraments. Original
folios of some of the most
important books in history.

Allen looks down in wonderment at the *Gutenberg Bible*,
Beowulf...the classic tomes of literature. A flash of RED
catches Allen's eye in the reflection of the glass.

LUCIEN (O.S.)

Let's hear a bit, shall we?

Allen turns to see Lucien Carr (from opening), now 19, a red
kerchief round his neck, a vision of male beauty.

Lucien claps the guide on the shoulder, turns to the crowd.

LUCIEN

(theatrical throat clear)

"On a Sunday afternoon, when the
shudders are down and the
proletariat possesses the street in
a kind of dumb torpor..."

The crowd is captivated -- Allen is entranced.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)

"...there are certain thoroughfares
which remind one of nothing less
than a big cancerous cock laid open
longitudinally."

Parents looks around in shock. A female student is instantly
aroused. The PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN comes rushing over.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN

What is this nonsense?

LUCIEN

Henry Miller.

ALLEN

(under his breath)

Tropic of Cancer.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN

Mr. Miller's works are not
permitted in this library.

LUCIEN

I know. That's why I committed it to memory before I came.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN

(confused)

I'm sure *that's* not allowed either.

LUCIEN

What? Speaking the words of his text? Or only speaking them in the order in which he wrote them?

Would it make a difference if I said them in reverse order?

(reciting aloud)

"Longitudinally open laid cock..."

Allen laughs. Lucien sees him in the crowd. He winks.
Meanwhile...

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN

Security!

The "Security Guard" rushes over. He is really WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS aka "Bill", (29, tall, gaunt, a Dashiell Hammett wannabe), in a rented suit. He holds up a BADGE.

BILL

Already here, Ma'am. Another pervert on the premises?

He handcuffs Lucien and starts to drag him out of the room.

LUCIEN

Let me go! I'm innocent!

BILL

Cork it!

Bill takes out a roll of masking tape. He tapes Lucien's mouth shut.

BILL

To the clinker. Let's go.

Bill tugs on Lucien's cuffs, but they suddenly break. Cheap plastic.

Then the TOUR GUIDE appears with a genuine SECURITY GUARD. Lucien peels the tape off his mouth.

LUCIEN

Gigs up, Bill.

BILL
So it would appear.

LUCIEN
Plan B?

BILL
Commences now.

Lucien and Bill RUN out the library as quickly as possible. The security guard chases after them. The guide tries to calm the agitated group.

TOUR GUIDE
Excuse the interruption. That was highly unusual. Campus is actually quite...

But Allen doesn't hear, he gazes fondly out the window at Lucien running across campus.

INT. COLUMBIA HALLWAY - DAY

First Day of class. Everyone looking for their classrooms.

As Allen looks for his room, again, a flash of RED in the crowd.

Allen moves closer. It's Lucien.

Allen impulsively follows him through the crowd. But as the bell rings, students disappear into open doorways.

Allen loses him.

PROFESSOR STEEVES (V.O.)
The Victorian sonnet has the
balance of the three tenets.

INT. LECTURE HALL - AFTERNOON

As dusty PROFESSOR STEEVES begins his lecture, Allen peeks around. Rows of prep-school, expensive clothing. Allen in tattered hand-me-downs.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
(on the board)
Rhyme, meter, conceit. Without
this balance, a poem becomes slack,
sloppy. An untucked shirt.

Allen raises his hand.

ALLEN

Then how do you explain Whitman?

Silence. Steeves is not used to interruptions.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

Excuse me?

ALLEN

He abandoned rhyme and meter for a free style to represent America as a spiritual liberator.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

What's your name?

ALLEN

Allen Ginsberg.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

"Ginsberg." Sounds familiar. Your father, perhaps, is Louis Ginsberg?

Allen nods.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

I've come across his bagatelle in the *Times*. He writes rhyming, metered verse. Why do you think he chose that form?

ALLEN

Because it's easier.

The class titters.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

Easier? Architecture is not "easy". Would you rather this building be built by engineers or by Whitman and his boys at play?

Allen realizes he's not going to win. Holds it in.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

The popularity of these dandies and their free verse will be quite temporary. This university, this world work because of tradition. And form.

Professor Steeves writes on the blackboard.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
 There can be no creation until
imitation.

All the students WRITE THIS DOWN. Allen reluctantly opens his notebook.

From a higher row, Lucien watches...and grins.

INT. BARNARD SOCIAL - NIGHT

SUPER: DECEMBER 1943.

Couples waltz, the Cadet making out with a thunderous COED.

Standing awkwardly against a wall, Allen scans the crowd. Couples pawing each other in the dark. A BARNARD GIRL walks up to Allen.

BARNARD GIRL
 Hi...

ALLEN
 (flustered)
 Hi, I don't usually...I mean...
 what's your...

Allen looks up. She's already talking to the next guy. Pained, Allen eyes the exit.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Alone, copying from a tome of sonnets on his desk, Allen stares out the window at the first snowfall.

A record starts up down the hall. Clarinet, strings. Allen's ears prick up.

It's the same BRAHMS from his mother's bedroom.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Allen walks down the darkened hallway, following the music. He reaches a door with a lit transom. He KNOCKS.

The door creaks open.

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A mattress lies on the floor, with a phonograph. Candles light the room. A crammed bookshelf. The rest of the dorm furniture sits in a teetering pile.

In the open window sits Lucien, smoking, reading the *Times*. Allen walks inside.

ALLEN
Brahms Waltz, Opus 39, Number 15?

Lucien looks down, surprised he knows. He flicks his cigarette out the window, JUMPS down.

LUCIEN
Finally. An oasis in this wasteland.

Nervous, Allen tries to make conversation.

ALLEN
So...how come you're not at the social?

LUCIEN
Only the most anti-social have to go to an event actually called one. Libation?

Lucien searches through a cabinet, grabbing a wine bottle corked with a sock. Allen looks on, nervously.

ALLEN
You can't have that in here.

LUCIEN
And I was afraid I'd have to define "libation." How does a horrible bottle of Chianti sound?

Lucien inverts two small glasses and pours, hands Allen his glass. Allen, the model of sobriety, stares at it, nervous.

ALLEN
(nervous, lies)
I've never drunk...red wine before.

LUCIEN
Excellent. I love first times. I want my whole life to be composed of them. Life is only interesting if life is *wide*.
(holding up his glass)
Cheers. To Walt, you dirty bastard.

Allen pretends to sip, watches Lucien toss his wine back in one gulp.

ALLEN
You were there in class?

Lucien suddenly spits his wine out the window.

LUCIEN
Yep, that's vinegar.
(to Allen)
And I have no idea how I'll wade
through Steeves' Trail of Tears.
How's your Yeats?

He tosses Allen a BOOK. Dog-eared, underlined, and
crumbling: W.B. Yeats, *A Vision*.

ALLEN
Never heard of it.

LUCIEN
It's completely brilliant and
impossible. He says life is round:
we're stuck on this wheel, living,
dying...

Allen opens the book, looks through the old pages.

LUCIEN
An endless circle. Until. Someone
breaks it. You came in here, you
rupture the pattern. Bang: the
world...

ALLEN
Gets wider.

LUCIEN
Gets wider.

Lucien looks at Allen, amazed.

LUCIEN
How did you...?

ALLEN
Consonance. Reiteration of themes.

Allen winks. Lucien smiles, circles in close to Allen.

LUCIEN
Are you a writer?
(even closer)
I've got a job for a writer.

ALLEN
(looks down)
No. I'm not.

Lucien puts his arm around Allen.

LUCIEN
Well, you're not anything yet.

This boy so close, the rush of contact makes Allen awkward.
Suddenly, from outside.

HALL MONITOR (O.S.)
Ginsberg? Where are you?!

Lucien stops, looks at the door.

LUCIEN
(to Allen)
Isn't that you?

HALL MONITOR (O.S.)
GINSBERG?!

Allen WHIPS around.

ALLEN
WHAT?!

The door swings open. The Hall Monitor peeks through.

HALL MONITOR
Phone call.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Allen on the hallway phone receiver.

NAOMI (O.S)
(with spooky urgency)
He's trying to kill me again.

ALLEN
Mom. Dad's not trying to kill you.
Put him on.

NAOMI (O.S.)
No, Allen. I need you here.

The Hall Monitor passes Allen.

HALL MONITOR
Lights OUT! Everybody in!

LUCIEN slips out of his door behind them. Allen spots him.

NAOMI (O.S.)

Allen. If you don't come home,
there's no telling what he might
do.

Holding a jacket, Lucien smiles at Allen, motions down the stairs.

ALLEN

(whispers, to Lucien)
Curfew. I can't. You can't!

Lucien shrugs, zips up his jacket.

LUCIEN

Ordinary men follow rules.
Extraordinary men break them.

NAOMI (O.S.)

Allen?! Who are you talking to?!

Lucien waves goodbye, heads down the staircase.

ALLEN

(hurried, to Naomi)
No one, Ma. Listen, I'll come as
soon as I can.

NAOMI (O.S.)

You need to promise.

Lucien leaps down the rail and disappears.

ALLEN

Yes. I promiseloveyoubye.

Allen hangs up and RACES after Lucien.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Without a coat, Allen runs into the seminary's courtyard. A
GUARD sits in a gate booth.

Allen sees: Lucien duck under the booth and out onto the
sidewalk.

Allen SNEAKS up to the guardhouse, ready to DUCK...

The Hall Monitor SLAMS open the dormitory door.

HALL MONITOR

Hey you! Get over here NOW!

ALLEN

Shit.

Allen turns around, about to speak up when...a DRUNK CADET saunters into the courtyard from the city.

HALL MONITOR

You need to be in your room five minutes ago if you don't want to be expelled!

As the Monitor pulls the cadet inside, the guard laughs.

Safe, Allen quickly DUCKS beneath the guard's view...and is OFF.

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

Allen sees: Lucien at the first step to the IRT, heading to the train. He races after him.

INT. IRT ELEVATED LINE STATION - NIGHT

Lucien jumps the turnstile as the train approaches.

Allen gets to the turnstile. But he's too straight to jump it. He frantically searches his pockets for a token.

ALLEN

Come on, come on...

The subway doors DING, OPEN. Lucien gets on.

Allen finds a token. SLIDES it in. Pushes through. He gets to the IRT door...as it closes.

Except, the doors JAM. Lucien's foot is lodged between them.

The doors re-open. Allen steps on. Breathless. Freezing.

Lucien REMOVES his jacket, hands it to Allen. Allen takes his hand.

LUCIEN

Welcome...

EXT. MORTON STREET, GREENWICH VILLAGE - NIGHT

LUCIEN (O.S.)

...to the edge of the world.

Allen takes in the scene as the boys walk:

Downtown Bohemia. The world Allen imagined from his balcony in Paterson. JAZZ and smoke blasts from an open door. A BLACK MAN and WHITE WOMAN make out inside.

TWO FEMALE BUMS posing like models for a PHOTOGRAPHER.

ALLEN

"Land of the fairies".

LUCIEN

They got to you, didn't they?

Lucien CLAPS the air at an invisible insect, examines palm.

LUCIEN

They're *everywhere*. Greenwich Village is the land of the fairies and the drunks and...

An older, elegant WOMAN, sex incarnate, walks past, sharing a cigarette with a boy half her age.

LUCIEN

...hussies with the most *theatrical* breasts you will ever see.

Allen and Lucien reach an apartment door at 48 Morton.

LUCIEN

Ready to meet them?

Lucien gives the door a KICK right in the center. It swings open.

INT. 48 MORTON STREET LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A crowded SALON rages. BOHEMIANS sit on upturned tree trunks, flirting and arguing. Empty wine bottles everywhere.

Allen takes in his first hip apartment: books as furniture, candles pooling, smoking everywhere. Lucien laughs.

LUCIEN

"Allen in Wonderland."

Lucien suddenly grabs a DRUNK YOUNG WOMAN from the crowd and KISSES her passionately. Then lets go of her, turns back to Allen and keeps walking.

ALLEN

Do you know her?!

LUCIEN

No, and I don't plan on it. She
tasted like imported sophistication
and domestic cigarettes.

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

A makeshift bar on the counter. Party-goers rummaging
through empty bottles noisily looking for any remaining
liquor.

LUCIEN

Make some friends. Be right back.

Allen nods. As Lucien walks off, Allen tries to make himself
inconspicuous. Sits down. On something metal...

BILL (O.S.)

(muffled)

Hrffrff hrffrfffrfrfrff.

Allen looks down to see Bill, Lucien's library sidekick, on
the floor: a tube in his mouth. He takes out the tube.

BILL

You're...pinching...

Allen stands up. His foot is on a snaking black tube which
runs to a canister that reads: "ETHER".

ALLEN

Sorry. Are you all right?

BILL

(long exhale)

Artifacts in the visual field, some
light-headedness.

(hand out)

Motor hyperactivity.

ALLEN

What is that?

BILL

Nitrous oxide, for narcoanalysis.
Know thyself. And beshit thyself.

Bill turns off the gas. Offers a joint to Allen.

ALLEN

Oh no, I don't do...the cannabis.

Lucien approaches, a paper in hand.

LUCIEN
 Bill Allen, Allen Bill, reefer
 Lucien, Lucien reefer.

Lucien takes the joint. Bill eyes Allen with disdain.

BILL
 Allen here doesn't do...the
 cannabis.

LUCIEN
 Of course not. He's wanted by the
 law. Injured four men in a brawl
 last night.

ALLEN
 (shakes his head)
 Five.

Lucien smiles. Throws back.

LUCIEN
 Armed.

ALLEN
 Hairy.

LUCIEN
 One-legged.

ALLEN
 Priests. It was brutal.

Lucien smiles. Allen's quick on his feet. He grabs Allen's hand, slaps a bottle in it, and leads him onward. Allen notices the TERM PAPER in Lucien's hand.

ALLEN
 What's that for?

LUCIEN
 (hiding it behind him)
 Bunk for school. Now, come on! I
 want you to meet our host...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

DAVID KAMMERER, the man we saw dead at the film's opening, stands in the middle of the room.

The smoky voice of a female JAZZ SINGER, at a club across the street, wafts in through an open window. Lucien and Allen sitting on its sill.

Allen watches David. He's sharp, the center of the circle. David runs his fingers on the rim of his glass. An eerie hum.

DAVID

What there is, darlings and demoiselles, is a circle. Life is round. Patterns, routines, a wheel of self-abuse -- Margaret, don't even deny it. Until. The littlest goddamn wrench, the finger of God really, the very disruption we live for, comes along and...

David taps the edge of his glass. It cracks. The impressed crowd claps. Allen turns to Lucien. Whispers.

ALLEN

Sounds just like you.

LUCIEN

Because it was me. First.

David sees the boys talking. Stares at Allen. Notices he's with Lucien. David's not happy. He approaches Allen.

DAVID

Take this young stalwart.

LUCIEN

David. Play nice.

Ignoring Lucien, David drags Allen to the center of the room.

DAVID

You are...

ALLEN

Allen.

DAVID

...who comes uninvited to my apartment. None of us even notice him. Look at him. Why would we bother?

In his tucked shirt and creased pants, Allen realizes the entire party is examining him.

DAVID

So the pattern of our evening, our lives, holds.

(MORE)

DAVID (cont'd)
 But under the right circumstances,
 with the right encouragement...even
 he might change the world.

The crowd quiets. Allen, in the spotlight, sees Lucien on the sill, expectant.

Behind him, the heart-broken voice of the jazz singer sweeps into the silence. The drunk young girl from earlier stumbles into the room.

DRUNK YOUNG GIRL
 David. You're out of booze.

ALLEN
 Then how about we start with a
 change of venue?

Lucien, catching on.

LUCIEN
 Excellent idea.

He opens the window wide, hops up, and climbs through towards the jazz club. Other party-goers watch amused, start to follow Lucien through the window.

David's party hijacked by Allen.

David and Allen are the last to leave. As Allen approaches the window, David takes a step aside.

DAVID
 After you.

As Allen climbs through the window, David's smile quickly fades.

The jazz singer's voice leads us to....

INT. TAVERN - LATE NIGHT

An underground bar where the party has relocated.

Allen comes out of the rest-room, sees a BUSINESSMAN with a watch. Taps him on his coat.

ALLEN
 Excuse me. Do you have the time?
 I need to catch a ferry.

BUSINESSMAN
 Funny. I've been looking to do the
 same thing.

The man smiles lasciviously. He has a watch. He gets up and walks into the bathroom. He's cruising Allen.

Allen nervously walks back to Lucien, Bill, and David at a table.

ALLEN
Guys, I should go soon...

DAVID
Green Lantern Sidekick Club? Oh
that's rich.

Allen quickly turns around to see Bill and David examining a dorky ID from Allen's WALLET.

ALLEN
How did you get that?!

David points to Bill.

DAVID
You're lucky. When I met Bill in
'34, he was trying to steal my car.

Bill holds up Allen's wallet. Allen snatches it back from him. Motions to David and Lucien.

ALLEN
How about you two?

LUCIEN
David? He's my best pupil.

David looks at Lucien, tenderly. Lucien finishes his whiskey.

DAVID
I used to be his Scoutmaster.

Lucien tries to sneak David's drink.

DAVID
Now, I'm his guardian angel.

David takes his whiskey back from Lucien. Lucien groans and heads drunkenly to the bar. David moves closer to Allen.

DAVID
And you just met Lucien in the
lunch line and now he's all that
you can see.

ALLEN
 (slightly intimidated)
 Why don't you like me?

DAVID
 You're just a slim volume in a
 series I've read one too many
 times.
 (beat)
 He'll be done with you in a week.

Lucien returns and slams a new glass down.

LUCIEN
 Some ear job at the bar just called
 me "boy."

DAVID
 Who?

LUCIEN
 The chimp in the vest.
 (big swallow)
 So I stole his drink.

Allen scans the crowd: the famous poet OGDEN NASH looking
 around for a glass.

ALLEN
 (excited)
 That's Ogden Nash!

BILL
*"A girl who is bespectacled. She
 may not get her nectacled. But
 safety pins and bassinets--"*

DAVID
"Await the girl who fassinets."

Lucien slams his glass down. With historic intensity.

LUCIEN
 That's what he's selling?!

ALLEN
 He's the best selling poet in
 America.

LUCIEN
 I'll kill him.

BILL
 (taking out a switchblade)
 Aim for the throat.

LUCIEN
 No. We're not going to kill him.
 Even better. We're going make sure
 nobody remembers him.

Lucien turns to Allen. Ignites his charm.

LUCIEN
 How many men did it take to start
 the Renaissance? Two. The
 Romantics?

ALLEN
 Shelley, Byron...

LUCIEN
 Three. The Dadaists in the Cabaret
 Voltaire: a single coffee shop
 kicks in the 20th century.
 (beat)
 Just like here.

Lucien stands up, drunk, the passion building.

LUCIEN
 We're sending millions of men to
 fight the Fascists, but the
 Fascists are already here!
 (beat, whispers)
 They've locked the world up. Meter
 and rhyme and your father Allen and
 Columbia, they're guards in the
 giant prison. But this world, all
 around us - the girls at the party,
 the bop on that stage - the world
 is tired of war. It wants to come
 out and play. I want new words and
 rhythms and I want the American
 Now. And we've got to do it first.

Lucien looks directly at Ogden Nash.

LUCIEN
 And we premiere it at his next
 reading.
 (beat)
 First, we need a name. Where did
 "Dada" come from?

BILL

Tristan Tsara jabbed a knife into a dictionary.

LUCIEN

Shit. So that's been done...

ALLEN

What about your Yeats? What about the "New Vision."

Lucien looks at Allen as if he is the most brilliant person in the world.

LUCIEN

Ginsy, you're a genius! You're hired!

DAVID

A literary revolution without writing a word. Neat trick, Lu. And just what is this New Vision?

LUCIEN

I don't know yet. But I know where to find it.

Lucien slings his arm over Allen's shoulders -- excluding David. Allen uncurtains a smile of victory.

Suddenly, the jazz singer stops singing. Silence.

POLICEMEN escort the BUSINESSMAN and another GENTLEMAN out of the bathroom. They are wearing real HANDCUFFS.

A QUEER STING.

Allen sees, looks down terrified. David notes this, knows now who Allen is for sure. Stands up.

DAVID

While you schoolboys plot the destruction of civilization, I have my shift tomorrow morning...make that this morning.

David stands up, grabs his coat. Lucien nudges Allen.

LUCIEN

Hey janitor! Don't forget your broom.

DAVID
 (a blistered pause, to
 both)
 Evening.

As David leaves, Bill sets down a bottle of a demonically green liquor: ABSINTHE. Pours three glasses.

BILL
 A toast to the revolution.

Allen eyes his glass curiously. His first drink. He picks it up, about to knock it back just as...Lucien snatches it away from him.

LUCIEN
 No, Ginsy. His drink.

Lucien points to Ogden Nash. Daring Allen.

LUCIEN
 Break the wheel.

ALLEN
 Fine.

Allen gets up. Walks nervously to Ogden Nash's table...and grabs his drink.

OGDEN NASH
 What are you doing, boy?

Allen looks back at Lucien -- the bar is magically EMPTY. Except for Lucien at the table. Lucien cheers him on.

Lucien is all he can see.

Allen closes his eyes.

He THROWS the drink back.

EXT. LANE TAVERN - DAWN

Trashed, Lucien and Allen CRASH through the doors of the bar. Collapse beside each other in a snow bank. Lucien grabs Allen's hand and holds it up high.

LUCIEN
 "In the dawn, armed with a burning
 patience, we shall enter the
 splendid Cities!"

ALLEN
(drunk, props himself up)
Dawn?

Allen looks into the morning sky. The sun is rising. His eyes SHOOT OPEN.

ALLEN
Shit. My mother.

EXT. MANHATTAN FERRY LAUNCH - DAWN

Allen RUSHES to a Jersey-bound ferry. Lucien follows.

LUCIEN
First rule: it's never my fault.

ALLEN
They are going to be so angry.

LUCIEN
Don't go then.

ALLEN
You don't understand. I have to.

Allen stands on the edge of the ferry, Lucien on the loading platform. Lucien tries to board the ferry.

ALLEN
No. I don't want you to come.

Allen pushes Lucien back.

LUCIEN
Fine. Go home and look dutiful.
Go back to that monstrous "To-Do
List" your parents have for you.
Because you and I both know you can
do a thousand things with your life
and not really do anything at all.

Allen is tongue-tied. The FERRY begins to separate them, by inches. Allen backs away.

ALLEN
It's more complicated than that.

Lucien steps onto the ferry.

LUCIEN
Great. I love complicated.

EXT. GINSBERG HOME - MORNING

Naomi, curbside with two clumsy suitcases. In a fur coat raised over her face, she looks like the madwoman she is.

Allen motions for Lucien to stay back, approaches her softly. She looks at him with heart-breaking disappointment.

NAOMI

You never came.

ALLEN

I know. I'm sorry. Look Ma, it's freezing. Let's go inside.

NAOMI

I'm not well. I'm going to Lakewood.

A LIVERY CAR pulls up to the curb.

ALLEN

The rest home?! You can't leave!

NAOMI

You did.

The DRIVER opens the back door for her. Naomi climbs inside. Allen picks up the suitcases.

ALLEN

Ma! Come back. Now.

Naomi looks at her son through the door. He holds out his hand. She sniffs the air. Then gets out.

NAOMI

That's bad air in there. Poison air.

Allen walks his mother back inside. Lucien tries to help, Allen shrugs him off.

ALLEN

I told you not to come.

Allen storms past Lucien, leaving him outside.

INT. GINSBERG KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

The kitchen in complete disarray. A despondent Louis glares at a hung-over Allen.

LOUIS
She waited all night for you.

Allen's silent. He's failed his family for the first time.

LOUIS
Columbia called. You missed your curfew. You're a scholarship student, you've got one shot at this. One. If you can't do school, then you're going to follow your brother and do the service.

Naomi ENTERS, at the door frame, naked.

NAOMI
Don't poison him.

LOUIS
Christ Naomi, dress yourself.

Allen: staring at the fridge. The middle distance.

NAOMI
(enraged)
You, you did nothing for me,
scribbling away while I screamed!
You WANT him to fail!

LOUIS
No! I want YOU back! Do you hear me?! I want the woman I married to come back to me!

He reaches towards her. She pulls away.

NAOMI
Don't touch me! Allen, stop him!

LOUIS
Talk to her, Allen! Do something!

In the noise, we CLOSE IN on Allen's face.

We see what he sees: the TO-DO LIST on the fridge.

EXT. GINSBERG HOME - CONTINUOUS

Allen escapes to the back staircase, where Lucien sits and smokes. He sits beside him. The city in the distance.

LUCIEN (O.S.)
I'm sorry. I didn't know...

Allen notices: Lucien looks like he's been crying.

LUCIEN

At least you have her. My father
left when I was three.

Allen takes Lucien's cigarette. Smokes his first one.

ALLEN

What does Yeats say? You have to
die first to be reborn?

Allen hands him back the smoke. Lucien looks him in the eye.

LUCIEN

What do you suggest?

CUT TO:

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Candlelight flickers on Allen's face.

ALLEN

I have dedicated myself to making
other people happy.

We PULL BACK to see a NOOSE around Allen's neck.

ALLEN

It's time I find happiness the only
way I see possible.

LUCIEN (O.S.)

Oh please. Die already.

We PULL BACK to see Lucien beside, also with a noose around
his neck. Both of them on chairs.

LUCIEN

Where's the verve? The brio?

From atop the chair, Lucien kicks his record player with his
foot. Classical music screeches to a start over his words.

LUCIEN

If it be that I am merely indulging
my self-consciousness in justifying
myself, or if...

ALLEN

That's a run-on.

LUCIEN
Don't edit me.

Lucien punches Allen. Allen TRIPS off the chair, the noose TIGHTENS as he struggles to climb back up on it.

Allen pulls at the noose. His feet kicking.

LUCIEN
Oh fuck! Allen!

Lucien jumps off the chair. Pulls at Allen's rope. Unties it. Allen falls to the ground, silent.

LUCIEN
Allen? Allen! TALK! Goddamnit!

Allen suddenly opens his eyes. Smiles.

ALLEN
Are we reborn yet?

He was faking it. Allen laughs as his noose releases. Lucien jumps him. MUSIC starts as these two in nooses wrestle on the floor, takes us to...

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: SPRING, 1944.

SOCIETY COUPLES dance to a swing band.

In tattered tuxes, Allen, Lucien and Bill swing from one rich woman to the next. Bill holds up a WATCH he just stole from his dance partner. A lesson in gift.

ALLEN (V.O.)
*Our New Vision proclaims the death
of morality.*

As they pass each other, Lucien and Allen hold up WATCHES that they just GRIFTED. Bill nods, proud.

INT. HARLEM NIGHTCLUB (FUN MAKERS SOCIAL CLUB) - NIGHT

Dirty be-bop JAZZ in this basement. The black crowd whistles and claps.

ALLEN (V.O.)
And the birth of creativity...

Our three white boys walk in. The BLACK DOORMAN stops them. No way.

Allen hands the doorman the WATCHES. He looks them over, pockets them, lets them in.

ALLEN (V.O.)
*The uninhibited and uncensored
 expression of the self.*

A trumpet player (MILES DAVIS) unleashes a melody. A drummer takes a wild solo. Enraptured, Allen taps his fingers to these new rhythms.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

MATCH CUT: Allen's fingers TYPING on his typewriter in these same rhythms.

Beside him, a copy of *The New Yorker* advertising Ogden Nash's new book arriving in the Fall.

ALLEN (V.O.)
*We believe in the derangement of
 the senses.*

INT. BURROUGHS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill dumps opens a briefcase. Marijuana, guns, pills, vials of liquids, and prescription bottles all fall out.

Lucien examines a bottle, eyebrows raised.

ALLEN (V.O.)
*Normality is the doom of the
 ordinary.*

Allen nabs a pill from Lucien's palm. Swallows.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Professor Steeves drones in front of the class. STUDENTS copying his words on the page like machines.

PAN BACK TO: Allen nodding off in the back of class. He watches as the words from the board slowly FLY into the air, rearranging themselves in new orders. He copies them down.

ALLEN (V.O.)
*Only extraordinary men propel
 society forward.*

EXT. ELEVATOR, OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Elevator doors open in an after-hours office. Bill, Allen and Lucien sneak into the elevator.

ALLEN (V.O.)
*They have a duty to break laws, to
 widen reality.*

EXT. OBSERVATORY DECK, EMPIRE STATE BUILDING - NIGHT

The elevator door opens...to Manhattan, spread out like a table set with stars. The deck is empty, sublime.

ALLEN
 Wow.

Bill, Allen and Lucien STEP UP on the guardrail. The wind is ferocious. The lights below SURGE into waves of Technicolor.

BILL
 Now Allen, don't hold your breath.
 It's essential that you...

Allen LEAPS OVER the guardrail.

EXT. FREEFALL - CONTINUOUS

The hiss of the wind is strong, steady.

Allen looks around, beatific. Bill and Lucien reach him, reclining into the winds.

ALLEN
 (exuberant)
 Is it like this every time?

BILL
 Don't know. I've never done this before.

ALLEN
 (now suddenly terrified)
 Are you kidding? We're gonna die!

BILL
 Just relax and breathe...

The sidewalk CLOSES in...Allen covers his face and...

EXT. 42ND STREET - CONTINUOUS

SLAM! Allen's in the middle of a new insanity: 42nd Street.

Times Square - marquees, sailors and prostitutes - takes on a strange grace. Spotlights create HALOS of light off the faces in the crowd.

A young GIRL kisses a young SAILOR with a duffel bag. A second SAILOR lingers behind the first. Allen sees the girl's hesitation.

LUCIEN

Watch this.

(he whispers in her ear)

Go.

The girl's HALO radiates. Fiercely, She CLIMBS over the first sailor to the second SAILOR and embraces him mightily.

LUCIEN

This is how we change people.

Beneath a marquee, Bill hands letters up the ladder to an older, smoking marquee guy. The marquee reads: "I'M DYING."

LUCIEN

With words. We give them permission to feel.

Allen watches the pedestrians' hardened faces transform into exaggerated expressions of sadness, of joy, ecstasy, pain.

ALLEN

To go to places they've never been.

Allen walks up to a NIGHTCLUB DANCER, just off her shift. Her face overcome with loneliness, sadness.

Allen suddenly takes her arm and leads her into a dance. She beams, and then pirouettes into the air.

LUCIEN

This is why we found each other.

Moved, Allen turns to Lucien. A nimbus radiates from his head. Allen's sight begins to flicker.

ALLEN

We're going to make it all new.

Lucien pulls out his Boy Scout knife. Grabs Allen's hand.

Lucien PRICKS Allen's palm with the knife. Allen winces.

Lucien slices his own palm open, then presses their two bloody hands together, a ceremony.

Allen's eyes roll back.

DAVID

What the hell is all this?

David appears in his janitor uniform. The Technicolor quickly FADES.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Allen inhaling from the gas tank. He has been adrift in a nitrous-oxide hallucination. Bill turns it off.

BILL
Exploring the avenues of Allen's
mind.

David sees Allen and Lucien's hands pressed up against each other.

DAVID
Dimly-lit, I am sure.

LUCIEN
Take it easy.

Allen struggles to his feet, moaning.

DAVID
I've been working all night. I'm
exhausted.

LUCIEN
Christ, we'll leave.

David looks at Lucien, then at Allen jealously.

DAVID
(to Lucien)
I need to speak to you for a
moment. Alone.

INT. BATHROOM, 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Allen splashes water on his face in the sink.

In the bathroom mirror, he can see David and Lucien talking and can just make out their whispering.

LUCIEN (O.S.)
It only has to be five pages.

Allen can see Lucien and David through the door. Lucien peruses a TERM PAPER on the table.

LUCIEN

You make me too smart, they're gonna suspect something's up.

DAVID

And get you sent back to *Ile Saint Louis*? That would just be the end of you.

LUCIEN

Fuck you.

The door creaks open. Allen quickly darts behind it. Eyes Lucien putting the paper in his pocket.

DAVID

You know just how much you owe me.

Lucien folds, lets David sweep him up in an embrace.

David sees Allen behind the door.

David slowly shuts it.

Turns to Lucien.

DAVID

End it with Allen.

A pale over Lucien's face.

PROFESSOR STEEVES (V.O.)

Kill your darlings, children.

CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Professor Steeves paces through the class.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

Your adolescent crushes and juvenile metaphysics. None of them belong on the page. It is the first principle of good creative work. A work of fiction that will be delivered to me at the end of the semester as your final.

He sees Allen brooding, writing in his journal.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

Oh look. Whitman Jr. graced us with his presence today.

Steeves walks to Allen's desk. Looks at Allen's journal.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
"The New Vision."

ALLEN
It's not for public...

Steeves grabs Allen's journal. Reads it aloud.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
"Extraordinary men propel society forward. They have a duty to break laws...to widen reality."
(to Allen)
Instead of spending your time plotting the destruction of the establishment, why don't you create a body of competent literature first?

Steeves throws the journal back down on Allen's desk.

ALLEN
There's more life in those five pages than in the dozens of bad sonnets we've had to endure.

Steeves cocks his eye, stares down Allen.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
You want life? You want the world on fire? Come on. Get up.

Allen stands, reluctantly.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
(to the rest of the class)
Boys? Where's the recruitment office?

MALE STUDENT
McCloud Hall.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
Well. The war awaits. What will it be?

Allen sits. A deep shaming.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
(barely concealed smile)
Don't get lost on the way to your life.

INT. LUCIEN'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Allen paces impatiently as Lucien knocks off a second bottle of wine, reading from Allen's journal.

LUCIEN

"The rose that scents the summer
air/ grows from my beloved's
hair...?"

(beat)

This is terrible.

ALLEN

Keep going. That's my sonnet for
Steeves.

Lucien flips through the journal, closes it, disappointed.

LUCIEN

We have the map, we need the
country. We have the manifesto.
We need the work.

(suddenly cold)

I was wrong. Maybe you're not up
for this after all.

Shocked, Allen grabs his journal.

ALLEN

If you don't like what I'm doing, I
don't have to be here right now.

LUCIEN

OK. Bye. Great. Have fun.

ALLEN

What is wrong with you?

No response.

ALLEN

Fine. Show me *your* fucking map.

Allen reaches for the pages that Lucien's been working on, but Lucien tries to cover them up.

LUCIEN

Stop!

ALLEN

No. Come on. I can't wait to see
it.

Allen wrestles the pages away from Lucien's grasp. They're covered in doodles. There's nothing there.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Oh wait, you don't have anything cause you're a fraud. Cause David's not here to write it for you!

Silence. Lucien stands up, drunk. Furious.

LUCIEN

It's complicated.

ALLEN

I love complicated!

Lucien tries to leave the room. Allen blocks him. Lucien stumbles over to his bed. Allen probes.

ALLEN

What does he want from you?

LUCIEN

David only likes me when I'm helpless. You don't know him.

(beat)

Wherever I go, there he is.

ALLEN

So tell him to leave you alone.

LUCIEN

I've tried. He's a professor working as a janitor so he can be near his precious Lu-Lu!

(beat)

A goddamn fruit who won't let me go.

ALLEN

A fruit?

LUCIEN

A queer.

Lucien looks up at Allen. Confronted with the word, Allen looks down nervous.

LUCIEN

And he won't get over me.

ALLEN

Well then let's get rid of him.

Allen sits down beside Lucien. Lucien softens, lies down, head in Allen's lap. Passing out from the liquor.

LUCIEN

Right now, I just need you to write something.

(beat)

Something beautiful.

Lucien closes his eyes and passes out against Allen. Allen shakes nervously, finding himself suddenly holding Lucien's body for the first time.

We follow Allen's P.O.V. as he plays with Lucien's hair. Slowly slides his finger down Lucien's face to his lips.

Lucien's eyes open. Allen tenses. But Lucien suddenly takes Allen's finger in his mouth. Sucks on it.

CUT BACK TO:

Lucien's head passed out in Allen's lap. Allen still petrified. We were just in Allen's imagination.

Brahms Waltz in A-Flat begins to play.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen dumping out his bag. Two PILLS he got from Bill. One red, one white.

ALLEN

"The poet becomes a seer through the complete derangement of the senses."

He takes one of the pills. Sits down to write.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - AFTERNOON

Allen at his typewriter, jubilant, tapping his foot with the music, typing furiously at the keys.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

PROFESSOR STEEVES teaching, looking down. Allen's seat is empty. Steeves sighs and marks it in his book.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - SUNSET

Allen's head bobbing up and down, starting to crash.

He forces himself awake and looks over at his bag. Takes the second pill.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Allen climbing on his bed and jumping for the words that have left the page and are now flying to the ceiling.

The cadet walks in to Allen leaping in the air.

CADET

What the hell are you doing?!

ALLEN

Writing!

The cadet climbs into bed, pulls the cover over his head.

CADET

Freak.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLUMBIA QUAD - DAWN

The sun rising over the campus.

CUT TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY

Students walk past Allen's door. We hear typing roaring like a thunderstorm inside. Suddenly, the door SWINGS open.

Allen, hair on end, storms out of the room.

ALLEN

I GOT IT! LUCIEN!

Other students stare at Allen strangely. Sweating, he races down the hall to Lucien's room.

Turns the corner. Pages in his hand. Arrives at Lucien's door. Hears typing inside.

ALLEN

OK, I got something. It's a little rough. No, it's very rough, but there are...

He swings open the door...

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - DAY

... to see David typing at Lucien's desk. The music stops. David sees the pages in Allen's hand.

DAVID

Poetry? How cute. For Lu, I imagine.

Allen hides them behind his back.

ALLEN

Where is he?

DAVID

He's out. With someone...

Allen stops, stammers.

ALLEN

With...whom?

DAVID

Some new writer. Big guy, movie-star looks. Joe? James. No. Jack. There it is. Jack.

Beat on Allen as his face falls.

DAVID

Jealous?

Allen stares him down.

ALLEN

I could call security. You shouldn't be here.

DAVID

Oh really? Odd since I'm the only thing keeping him here.

ALLEN

Not anymore.

David laughs, collects his jacket, goes to leave.

DAVID
 Piece of advice. You don't know
 Lu. Nobody does. As soon you
 think you do, he'll find someone
 else.

(beat)
 Or maybe he already has.

HOLD on Allen's reaction.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY QUAD - DAY

As Lucien comes out of class, Allen is waiting for him.
 Smoking nervously. A cloud of anxious gloom.

Lucien spots him, puts on his game face.

LUCIEN
 Allen! Where have you been?

ALLEN
 Where have *I* been? You haven't
 been home in two days.

LUCIEN
 You sound like David.
 (beat)
 Don't sound like David.

Lucien walks across the quad. Allen following behind.

LUCIEN
 I've been crazed, working for us.
 I found us a *real* writer. Already
 written a million words before
 Columbia, they say.

Allen calls out.

ALLEN
 You mean...Jack?

Lucien stops.

ALLEN
 Why didn't you tell me?

LUCIEN
 I'm supposed to do newsreels?

Lucien sees the worn piece of paper in Allen's hand.

LUCIEN
What's that?

Upset, Allen pockets the poem he wrote for Lucien.

ALLEN
Nothing.

LUCIEN
Look, you'll see exactly what I see
once you meet him.

EXT. BAKER'S FIELD, 215TH STREET - DAY

On the football field, handsome JACK KEROUAC, in a Columbia uniform, INTERCEPTS a long bomb and tears up the sideline.

In the stands with Lucien, Allen sits, sullen.

Below, COACH LITTLE drinks from a thermos. A truck of a man.

COACH LITTLE
This is a practice for the
starters, Kerouac! We don't need
benchers turning into heroes! OK?

Jack slows, frustrated.

JACK
OK.

Whistle. Back to formation. The ball snaps back...Jack intercepts it, PUNTS it.

At Little's THERMOS. It EXPLODES all over him. Lucien stands up and applauds from the stands. He nudges Allen.

LUCIEN
What do you think?

ALLEN
(sullen)
Let me read his book first.

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - DAY

Amidst the mess of Jack's apartment, Allen sits, stuck with a massive handwritten manuscript in his lap: *The Sea Is My Brother*. Lucien creeps up behind Allen.

LUCIEN
Brilliant, no?

ALLEN

It's missing some periods and
commas.

Jack walks up with two beers in hand, offers one to Allen.

JACK

Want one, Al?

Jack burps. Allen shakes his head.

ALLEN

Discretion is the better part of
valor.

JACK

What the hell does that mean?!

Lucien grabs the second beer.

LUCIEN

It means I'll take it.
(whispers, to Allen)
Don't be mean, Al.

ALLEN

Anything you say, Lou.

Jack sets up an old phonograph. His CAT curls up beside him.

JACK

All a you! Quiet!

Allen flinches. Jack drops the stylus. The scratchy record starts, the VOICE OF SAMMY begins, as Jack sidles up close to the speaker and pets his cat.

VOICE OF SAMMY

Jack, how are you chum?

JACK

(wistfully)
Sammy...you made it.

VOICE OF SAMMY

*We've just been through 20 days of
German attack, shelled every three
hours, night and day. Like your
own personal thunder...*

Lucien looks up at Jack.

LUCIEN

Who's that?

Jack pulls the stylus off.

JACK
 My best friend. Off in the Navy.
 (to Edie, yelling)
 Where the hell's our food?

Jack sits at the table. Lucien and Allen not sure what to do, come over and join. EDIE, Jack's wealthy, vivacious girlfriend (early 20's), walks in wearing a pair of blue-collar overalls.

EDIE
 I didn't know we were having
 guests.

She smacks down a plate: it's GLOP.

JACK
 What's this?

EDIE
 I was aiming for stew.

JACK
 You missed.

Jack DROPS his fork, grabs his jacket.

JACK
 Come on, guys.

Lucien stands and follows Jack. Motions for Allen to come.

EDIE
 Where are you going?

JACK
 Out.

EDIE
 Out? I cooked all day for you.

JACK
 What do you want me to do? Eat
 shoe leather? I'm hungry and what
 you do in the kitchen is unholy.

EDIE
 Unholy. That's funny Jack. You
talk like a Catholic. But you fuck
 me and won't marry me. How does
 that work?

Allen and Lucien watch entranced.

JACK
Shut your mouth, Edie.

EDIE
I thought you liked it WIDE OPEN...

Jack exits and SLAMS the door shut. Edie races into the bedroom and SLAMS her own door.

Lucien and Allen, now alone, stare at each other. Edie THROWS open her door.

EDIE
Scram!

And SLAMS her door again. Allen and Lucien run out the exit.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, 115TH STREET - EVENING

Sunset along the Hudson. Jack and Lucien laugh, sharing a joint. Allen trails alone, behind, the third wheel.

JACK
(over his shoulder)
So you thought my novel was shit?

ALLEN
(pretending not to care)
Not exactly. It's...

Lucien throws his arm around Jack. Turns to Allen.

LUCIEN
It's all true. Jack served in the Merchant Marines.

ALLEN
(sarcastic, mumbled)
Shipping out again soon?

JACK
\$470 ducks for a year with the icebergs.
(beat)
The sea's my escape. Every time I fight with Edie, I just want to skip out and sail.

Lucien stops, looks out to the waterfront. Gets an idea.

LUCIEN
Well, you two did just fight...

We follow Lucien's gaze to...the NY BOAT YARD.

JACK
Carr, you're crazy.

Lucien RUNS for it. Jack racing beside. Allen, left by himself. He begrudgingly follows behind.

As he leaves, we realize...there is someone else watching them from the shadows.

EXT. NY BOAT YARD - NIGHT

Lucien SNEAKS onto the dock. Jack and Allen follow.

ALLEN
Lu? Why are you doing this?!

LUCIEN
You scared?

ALLEN
(defensive)
No.

Lucien UNROPES a dory as a DOCK GUARD spies them.

DOCK GUARD
Who's there?!

JACK
Shit. Quick! Get in!

They either GO or GET caught. Jack and Lucien jump in the boat. Allen sees the guard coming.

ALLEN
Oh my God.

Allen jumps in the boat.

LUCIEN
Someone row!

Jack and Allen both reach for the two wooden oars in the boat at the same time. Allen glares at him.

ALLEN
Don't worry. I got it.

JACK
Fine. It's all yours.

Allen GRABS the two wooden oars in the boat. But starts to paddle like a gondolier. Jack shakes his head.

JACK
Give me those!

Allen KNOCKS Jack in the jaw with the handle.

JACK
Jesus!

Allen swings the oar around, TRIPPING Lucien. Lucien's BOY SCOUT KNIFE skitters onto the floor.

LUCIEN
Fuck! Allen!

The guard REACHES the edge of the dock.

DOCK GUARD
Stop right now!

Jack rows...but the painter line catches. They're still tied to the dock.

ALLEN
What do we do?!

The dock guard BEGINS to pull them back in.

LUCIEN
(pissed)
Allen! Cut the line!

Embarrassed, Allen picks up Lucien's KNIFE. REACHES and cuts the line.

Jack rows powerfully....and they are free.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - NIGHT

The boat coasts down Manhattan. A fog around them. The boys LIE on their backs, Allen drapes his hand in the water.

JACK
(disbelief)
A movement? Sounds phony. Old-fashioned. Like you're trying to be Rimbaud. Why try to be someone else when you can be yourself?

ALLEN
Lu, I don't think he gets what we're trying to do.

JACK

(continuing)

This whole town's full of finks on the 30th floor, writing pure chintz, pretending they know about life. Writers gotta be in the beds. In the trenches. And all the broken places. Where are your trenches, Al?

ALLEN

Allen.

JACK

Right.

Allen looks around, water on all sides, trapped. He looks to Lucien for help.

LUCIEN

First thought best thought.

ALLEN

Fuck you. What the hell does that even mean?

JACK

That's good. That's one. What else?

ALLEN

Fuck your one million words.

JACK

Even better.

ALLEN

And fuck you for coming to our party without *my* invitation.

Jack glares at Allen, daring him to continue.

ALLEN

And for looking at me like that!
You don't know me.

JACK

You're right. Who *is* you?

Lucien loves this, raises an eyebrow to Allen. Furious, Allen pulls out the paper from his pocket. The poem he wrote for Lucien.

ALLEN

(reading)

"Thou who are afraid to have
me...lest thou lose me."

He stands, catches his balance in the boat.

ALLEN

"Great anodyne, thyself compound of
pain. Thou comforter
discomfited..."

Allen folds the paper up, pockets it. Recites it.

ALLEN

"Give. Share. Lose. Know
everything co-mingledness."

Allen looks up, directly at Lucien.

ALLEN

"Lest we both die isolate and
unbloomed."

Silence.

LUCIEN

You wrote that?

Allen looks up, slightly hurt at Lucien.

ALLEN

You asked me to. Remember?

Jack applauds. Cries. Shakes his head.

JACK

Beautiful, kid.

Something lights up in Lucien. He looks at gawky, emotional Allen. Brave, swaggering Jack. It's all coming together. Puts one arm around them both.

LUCIEN

Forget Columbia. Forget Ogden
Nash. Here's the plan. We join
the Merchant Marines. Jump ship
and get to Paris just in time for
the liberation.

ALLEN

If we win.

LUCIEN

When we win.

Lucien stands. On the surface of the fog behind him, newsreel style FOOTAGE plays. We see **Jack, Allen, and Lucien in Paris** in the middle of a massive celebration.

LUCIEN

The biggest party this world has ever seen. Imagine the Marquis de Sade plus ticker tape plus thousands of beautiful French war widows looking for consolation. The whole world will be watching the parade, and we'll be there first.

(beat)

It'll be the perfect day.

Suddenly, the footage turns into a field of WHITE LIGHT. The intensity creates HALOS of light off the three boys' faces.

COAST GUARD OFFICER (O.S.)

Don't MOVE!

The boys look up. A FLOOD-LAMP casts across the dory: the COAST GUARD. A megaphone squawks to life.

COAST GUARD OFFICER (O.S.)

Put your hands in the air.

All three of them stand up, hands in the air. Shit. Jack looks over the edge of the boat.

JACK

Go.

He DIVES into the water. Lucien and Allen look at each other then both dive in the water too.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER (UNDERWATER) - NIGHT

We see in SLOW MOTION...Allen, Jack and Lucien fully-dressed in the water. A crazy, joyful moment.

The BEAM of a spotlight cuts across them. Shit. Allen DIVES further.

As Allen swims, the camera SINKS: the keel of a boat, their kicking feet, the light slicing deeper...something ominous rising from beneath them.

It's a COAST GUARD OFFICER IN THE WATER.

Allen turns around. Another officer.

The three look around them. They are SURROUNDED.

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE COLUMBIA DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Allen sits nervously on a bench. The door to the Dean's Office creaks OPEN with the breeze.

DEAN (O.S.)

You've managed to matriculate and
drop out of Tulane, Bowdoin,
University of Chicago...

This is too good for Allen not to eavesdrop. He peeks inside.

INT. COLUMBIA DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lucien in a leather-backed chair. The DEAN (50's, balding) overlooks Lucien's record. Lucien's mother, MARION CARR, a fallen transplanted matriarch, smokes with dispassion.

DEAN

And now, Columbia. Your attendance record here is abominable. The hall monitor has found your room empty on numerous occasions after curfew. Your papers, when you bother to turn them in, exceed the assigned page limit. Can you explain to me why you're at Columbia University, Mr. Carr?

LUCIEN

Same reason you're here.

DEAN

What's that?

LUCIEN

Loose Barnard girls.

MARION CARR

(to the Dean)

I'm sorry we've wasted your time.

DEAN

Mr. Carr. We are not monsters here. I am aware of your difficulties. About what happened in Chicago.

A pale flashes over Lucien's face.

LUCIEN

What? Who told you?!

From the door, Allen looks on curiously. What are they talking about? Marion stands up, hand on Lu's shoulder.

MARION CARR

We should get you back to St. Louis. Where you can be taken care of. Without distraction.

Lucien looks furiously at both of them.

LUCIEN

Who said anybody could know anything?!

Shaking, he throws his mother's hand off of him. An instability in Lucien we have not seen before.

The Dean looks at Marion, moves to close the door.

LOUIS (O.S.)

Allen?

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE COLUMBIA DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Allen jerks away from eavesdropping as the door shuts. His father, Louis, is at the top of the hallway stairs with an unfamiliar WOMAN.

ALLEN

Who's this?

The woman, ELAINE, waves nervously.

LOUIS

This is Elaine.

ELAINE

Nice to meet...

Allen gives her a FRIGID LOOK.

ALLEN

Where's Mom?

LOUIS

Your mother moved out a month ago.

ALLEN

(shocked)
What?!

LOUIS
 She's staying with her sister in
 New York.

ALLEN
 Why didn't any one tell me?

LOUIS
You didn't want to get involved
 anymore.

Allen, stung.

LOUIS
 What's this about the Coast Guard
 and some stolen boat?
 (beat, no response)
 Who put you up to this?!

Lucien STORMS out of the Dean's office. He LEAPS the
 balustrade and disappears. Allen stares his father down.

ALLEN
 No one. *I* stole the boat. And it
 was tremendous.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Allen at his desk, lost. A stack of books, untouched. He
 looks down at a letter from Columbia.

"ACADEMIC PROBATION" stamped on top. The cadet looks over
 Allen's shoulder.

CADET
 Jesus! What'd you do?!

ALLEN
 Long story.

CADET
 Something bad enough to get the
 fruitcake up the hall kicked to the
 corner.

ALLEN
 What?

INT. LUCIEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Allen at Lucien's door. It's open. And empty. Cleared of
 all Lucien's stuff.

He goes to the window, where he met Lucien so many weeks ago.

Through the window: he sees Lucien in the courtyard, staring up at the trees, a SUITCASE in his hand.

EXT. SEMINARY COURTYARD - NIGHT

Allen runs out of the dorm. Lucien looks strangely ravaged, drunk, his chaotic suitcase beside him.

LUCIEN

That belfry, I never noticed it before. And all these terrible benches, I never sat in a single one while I was here.

ALLEN

Where are you going?

LUCIEN

Mother's coming in a taxi. To drown me.

ALLEN

You were just going to leave?

Swept with sadness, Lucien's eyes well with tears. Lucien EXTENDS his hand to shake Allen's.

LUCIEN

You know me now. I'm only good at beginnings.

(beat)

Best of luck.

Allen refuses to shake his hand.

LUCIEN

Fine then.

Allen storms away, then back. This explodes out of him.

ALLEN

My father shows up yesterday with some new woman. And I have to sit listening to the Dean with her in the room, nodding her head, acting like she knows who I am.

(beat)

And in the middle of all the Allen's-a screw-up monologue, all of a sudden, I don't care. I've never not cared. So, I convince them it all was my idea. To steal the boat.

LUCIEN

Why?

ALLEN

Because I don't want to be the person they think I am.

Allen GRABS Lucien's suitcase. Sits beside him.

ALLEN

You can't leave. You started something. And I have no idea what I'm supposed to do next.

(beat)

I need you, Lu.

Lucien leans his head against Allen. Allen comforts him. Not unlike he did with his mother.

ALLEN

We can't let Columbia push us around like this.

At the thought of payback, Lucien awakens.

LUCIEN

No, we can't.

Lucien stands up, grabs his suitcase. Heads back to the dorm. Allen looks to the entrance.

ALLEN

But what about your mother?

LUCIEN

Yes. Right.

Lucien leaves Allen, walks up to the guard.

LUCIEN

(quietly)

When someone arrives for me, just tell them I've made other plans. Got it?

The guard nods. Lucien grabs Allen and the two head back upstairs.

Behind, we see a taxi arriving at the seminary's entrance.

From out of it steps **David**.

Holding a suitcase, he enters the courtyard, checks his watch, then stops. Looks up. Sees a light on in Lucien's room: Allen and Lucien inside. The guard walks up to David.

GUARD
Can I help you?

Upstairs, Allen suddenly turns, sees David in the courtyard.

DAVID
(to the guard)
Any help I need is beyond your
ability tonight.

As Allen stares out of the window confused, David rushes back to the waiting taxi.

Disappearing just as quickly as he came.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

A GUN. It points DIRECTLY at the camera.

We PULL BACK to see BARBARA STANWYCK holding it. We are watching an old film noir.

INT. CINEMA - NIGHT

Lucien, Allen, and Bill watch "Double Indemnity", entranced.

LUCIEN (V.O.)
Can you see it?

On screen, Barbara SHOTS the gun. An EXPLOSION.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - DUSK

SUPER: SUMMER, 1944.

Allen, Jack and Bill on top of Jack's apartment building.

The three future great writers together for the first time.

Lucien steps along behind them. Directs his attention over the roof to the cupola of Butler Library.

LUCIEN
Butler Library. Our Bastille.
(beat)
(MORE)

LUCIEN (cont'd)
 Columbia has over two hundred books
 holed up there, under lock and key.

CUT TO:

INT. PERMISSIONS ROOM, BUTLER LIBRARY - DUSK

A Permissions Librarian lowers a heavy grate over a shelf of
 "illicit" books.

LUCIEN (O.S.)
Lady Chatterly's Lover. Ulysses.
The Kama Sutra.

The library locks the shelf with a heavy RING of keys.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - DUSK

Lucien stops behind Jack.

LUCIEN
 Voices of the outcasts.

Walks down the line to Bill.

LUCIEN
 Seers.

Ending on Allen.

LUCIEN
 Visionaries. Caged up.

CUT TO:

INT. CINEMA - NIGHT

Projected on screen is a film noir: "Criss Cross". Burt
 Lancaster with a group of criminals, planning a heist.

Bill taking notes.

LUCIEN (V.O.)
 In what history will remember...

CUT TO:

INT. BUTLER LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

From a remote stack, all four spy on the "Permissions" desk.

LUCIEN (V.O.)
 ...as the first act of the New
 Vision...

A LIBRARIAN tucks her RING OF KEYS into a drawer.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - DUSK

LUCIEN
 We're going to release them.

Jack looks up at Lucien, incredulous.

JACK
 Ah hell, Carr. Why you dragging me
 into this? This isn't a rebellion,
 this is your payback.

LUCIEN
 To announce their arrival, the
 Cubists stole the Mona Lisa from
 the walls of the Louvre...

ALLEN
 Actually, it wasn't them.

LUCIEN
 (curt)
 But it should have been.

Jack shakes his head. Looks down.

JACK
 If we get caught...
 (beat)
 ...Memère would never forgive me.

ALLEN
 The football star is scared of his
 mother?

Jack gets enraged, reaches for Allen. Allen backs up.

ALLEN
 Hey. I'm already on probation. If
 we get caught, I'm the one who'll
 be expelled.

Bill walks in between them.

BILL
Did you two come here to write
about history or make it?

Jack groans, nods. Allen joining in beside him. Lucien beams.

LUCIEN
Excellent. Any questions?

INT. BUTLER LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

From their position in the stacks, the four look at a female librarian seated at the Permissions Desk.

BILL
You ready?

Jack tucks in his shirt, SLICKS his hair down.

JACK
No telling Edie, got it?

Jack BOUNDS up to the desk, chats with the librarian. She FLIRTS back radiantly. Bill looks at his watch.

BILL
25 seconds. Masterful.

But then, GWENDOLYN, an eager Barnard freshman, suddenly joins the other librarian. The first librarian hands the KEYS to Gwendolyn.

BILL
Oh no. Shift's over.

Jack looks back, shrugs as he walks off with the first librarian. Lucien puts his head in his hands. Allen sits up.

ALLEN
I'll go.

Lucien and Bill look at Allen, surprised.

CUT TO:

INT. PERMISSIONS DESK - DAY

ALLEN (O.S.)
Uh...hi.

Gwendolyn looks up. Allen smiles nervously. Sweating.

ALLEN

I wondered if you could...help me.

GWENDOLYN

Sure. What are you looking for?

ALLEN

Right. I'm looking for...

GWENDOLYN

A book?

ALLEN

Yes. Right.

GWENDOLYN

What's the title?

He hadn't thought this far. He turns back to Lucien who nods to him, pushing him to continue.

ALLEN

How To...Fit. Pipes.

She smiles flirtatiously.

GWENDOLYN

That's the name of the book? Come with me.

She places a sign on the desk: "HELPING A READER. BACK IN 5 MINUTES." They head down to the STACKS together.

Lucien sneaks up to the DOOR of the Permissions Office. But it's locked. Shit.

He turns and opens the desk DRAWER. No keys. He ruffles through the papers.

LUCIEN

Where the hell are the keys?!

CUT TO:

INT. BUTLER STACKS - DAY

CLOSE UP: THE KEYS...on Gwendolyn's key ring as she searches the stacks.

GWENDOLYN

What was the call number?

ALLEN

70...7...b...dot...45...5.

GWENDOLYN

In the psychology section?

She scales the shelves. THROUGH A GAP IN THE STACKS: Allen sees Lucien, pointing to the KEYS on her ring. Allen nods.

ALLEN

So...working here must be a drag.

Gwendolyn gives Allen a great view of her ass. He is mortified. She jumps down, BOOK in hand.

GWENDOLYN

Are you joking? It's the only way I get to talk to boys. They're so strict at Barnard.

ALLEN

Like how strict?

GWENDOLYN

Like they'd never let me do this.

Gwendolyn plants a KISS on Allen's lips. His first kiss. He purses his lips as she ravages him, his eyes darting open, looking desperately for Lucien.

Gwendolyn pushes Allen against the bookshelves. She rests her hand on one of the shelves, and lays the KEYS down on it.

Lucien emerges from behind the stacks. Allen motions for him to step in. But Lucien just smirks, GRABS the keys from the shelf, and waves goodbye.

INT. READING DESK, BUTLER LIBRARY - DAY

Lucien RACES the keys over to Bill.

Bill PLACES the keys into a clay molding and PRESSES hard, making an impression of each.

INT. BUTLER STACKS - DAY

Gwendolyn looks around, LIFTS her sweater for Allen. No bra. But amazing breasts.

GWENDOLYN

You can touch them. It's not like I'm a virgin. I've done it with three guys already.

Allen looks around nervously.

ALLEN

I think we should get back.

GWENDOLYN

You're a virgin, huh?

She runs her hand down the front of his PANTS.

ALLEN

No.

GWENDOLYN

Liar. If you've done it before,
you'll last over thirty seconds.
That's what my roommate told me.
Start counting.

She opens up his fly, then lowers herself down.

ALLEN

Gwendolyn. Stop.

Too late. There is no stopping her. Allen sighs.

ALLEN

1...2...

As Allen reluctantly gets his first blow-job, he sees Lucien put the keys back down on the shelf. Allen glares, furious.

ALLEN

3...4...

But Lucien just flashes his beautiful grin, continues to watch.

ALLEN

5...6...

Over Gwendolyn's head, Allen watches Lucien staring at him, refusing to look down. Allen starts to get aroused, moan softly. He grabs Gwendolyn's head.

ALLEN

7...8...9...

Allen and Lucien holding eye contact, Allen thrusts into her mouth, shudders, suddenly comes. Gwendolyn drops her sweater, fixes her hair.

GWENDOLYN

I knew it. But I'm getting pretty good, aren't I?

She grabs the KEYS that are suddenly back on the shelf.

Allen looks up to share the post-coital moment with Lucien. But he is gone.

EXT. BUTLER LIBRARY - THAT NIGHT

Two POLICEMEN walk by on the beat. After they pass, a manhole cover pops up.

Bill sticks his head out, dressed in a maintenance worker uniform. Jack climbs up behind him.

JACK
Where the hell are they?

Bill WHISTLES into the dark. Allen EMERGES from the shadows.

BILL
Where's Blondie?

ALLEN
I don't know. I thought he'd be coming with you.

Suddenly, the sound of footsteps, someone arriving.

BILL
That him?

JACK
Let's not bet on it.

Jack and Bill quickly hide down the manhole as the sound of footsteps get closer. Allen's about to disappear down the hole when he spots Lucien approaching.

ALLEN
(under his breath)
Where'd you go?!

LUCIEN
I'm here now.

Lucien fingers his neck: his signature red-kerchief is MISSING.

LUCIEN
Come on. Let's do this.

As they head down the manhole, there is movement in the SHADOWS down the street.

Walking into the warm light of the street lamp is David.

David walks deliberately, slowly over to the policemen that passed by moments before.

DAVID
Officer. There's someone in the
library. Isn't it after hours?

The policemen FLASH their lights at the library.

INT. STEAM TUNNELS, BELOW BUTLER LIBRARY - NIGHT

Billows of steam BLAST through the narrow passage. The boys walk through the steam, come to a HEAVY DOOR.

Bill turns the locks and the door OPENS into...

INT. MAIN HALL, BUTLER LIBRARY - NIGHT

The ghostly library. Gothic. Silent. Flashlights slice through the dark as the boys enter.

BILL
This door is our only way out.

Bill grabs an empty umbrella STAND to hold the door open. He sets it down in the jam. Closes the door.

BILL
If this door locks, we...

BAM! The stand SLIDES out. The door LOCKS behind them. Everyone looks at each other in terror. Jack slams up against the door, but it's no use.

JACK
This is stupid. We should go.

Lucien grabs Jack by the shoulder. Intense. As if possessed.

LUCIEN
No. We'll figure it out.

Lucien leads them into the dark. Allen looking at Lucien, concerned, following cautiously behind.

INT. PERMISSIONS DESK, BUTLER LIBRARY - NIGHT

Bill procures his MOLDED KEY and slips it into the lock. He slowly turns it. The sealed Permissions room OPENS.

INT. PERMISSIONS OFFICE, BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Shelves of caged books -- like prisoners in their cells.

Lucien releases a bar and the cage doors OPEN. Arthur Rimbaud. James Joyce. D. H. Lawrence. Voltaire. Years of shame and scandal, whisked aside.

They shine their lights on the books which glow, emanating a golden halo. Lucien pulls out a copy of Tropic of Cancer.

LUCIEN
I knew they had it.
(to Jack, Allen)
Carry as much as you can.

INT. MAIN HALL, BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Allen rushes up to Bill who is unscrewing the glass from the majestic VITRINES. They replace the books in the glass cases. Suddenly, Allen hears voices, approaching feet.

ALLEN
Someone's coming.

Flashlights SHINE on them. The two policemen enter the hall.

BILL
Go!

Allen, Jack, Bill, and Lucien SCATTER amongst the stacks.

POLICEMAN 1
OK guys, come out NOW!

INT. LIBRARY HALL - CONTINUOUS

ALLEN AND JACK'S P.O.V.: A HIGH WINDOW in the wall.

Their only potential escape route, Allen and Jack rush underneath it. Bill following behind. They hear the police walking towards them.

JACK
Don't move.

Jack grabs Bill's SCREWDRIVER. As the cops get closer, Jack FLICKS the tool to the other side of the room. It clatters noisily, a distraction.

Jack runs to the window. Cups his hands. Turns to Bill.

JACK
(whispered)
Go.

Bill JUMPS off of Jack's hands, launches through the window. The window BANGS as he exits.

POLICEMAN 2 (O.S.)
What was that?!

JACK
(whispered)
Quick. You got more to lose.

Allen desperately searching the library. Lucien is nowhere to be seen.

ALLEN
No. You go.

A flashlight FINDS Jack and Allen. Allen cups his hands, motioning for Jack to jump.

Jack nods graciously and races up the aisle. LAUNCHES himself off of Allen's hands OUT the window. Alone, Allen RUNS.

EXT. BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Jack CRASHES to the ground next to Bill. They both look up to see another POLICEMAN standing in front of them.

POLICEMAN 3
Don't move.

They're caught.

INT. MAIN HALL, BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Lucien hides underneath the librarian's desk. A FLASHLIGHT searches right past him.

POLICEMAN 1 (O.S.)
(into walkie-talkie)
Yes, a break-in at Butler.

The cop pulls out his billy club. Allen, in the stacks, spots Lucien crouching. Races over and backs against the desk, beside him.

ALLEN
What do we do now?

LUCIEN
(truly scared)
I don't know!

Allen sees: a console of switches in the desk.

EXT. BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Bill STANDS, dusts himself off and pretends to ARREST Jack.

POLICEMAN 3
What are you doing?

Bill shows a fake "Investigator" badge in his wallet.

BILL
I'll take care of this from here.

POLICEMAN 3
(not buying it)
"Investigator"?

BILL
It's Federal.

INT. MAIN HALL, BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

The lights in a side room turn on.

The police officers rush into the room.

POLICEMAN 1
In there -- we gotcha!

As soon as they make it to the threshold, the lights inside go off.

POLICEMAN 2
What the hell?

INT. BEHIND MAIN DESK, BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Allen works the light switches.

ALLEN
(whispered to Lucien)
Close your eyes!

INT. MAIN HALL, BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, ALL the hall lights come up -- a blinding amount of light. The cops squint and cover their eyes.

POLICEMAN 1
It's Coney Island in here...

Then, just as quickly, all the lights go OFF. The room plummets into darkness. The police stumble.

In the dark, the sound of Lucien and Allen racing through the space.

They valiantly RAM against the main library doors.

The doors BURST from the force. But they are locked with a padlock from the outside.

The police hear the noise, turn.

EXT. BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Outside, the banging of the doors DISTRACTS the cop from Jack and Bill.

Bill grabs the cop's night stick. The policeman and Jack both turn to Bill, shocked at what he just did.

Bill takes the stick and SMACKS the back of the cop's head, sending him to the ground.

JACK

Where'd that come from?!

BILL

"The Maltese Falcon". Now let's go.

INT. BUTLER LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

The cops, eyes adjusting, approach Allen and Lucien. They are cornered.

POLICEMAN 1

Enough now. It's all over.

A rage building inside Lucien.

LUCIEN

(to Allen)

They can't do this to us!

Lucien races violently towards the cops.

ALLEN

Stop, Lu!

Allen pulls him back. The cops hold out their guns and move forward. Allen steps in front of Lucien as they approach.

A SOUND: the padlock unlocking. Suddenly: the door OPENS. It's Bill and Jack.

JACK

Come on!

Shocked, Allen grabs Lucien, pushes him outside. Slams the door behind them.

EXT. BUTLER LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Jack runs the chain back through the door. Bill LOCKS it. The door BULGES as the two cops bang into it.

A huge sigh of relief as they realize they are safe. Allen turns to Lucien.

ALLEN

You OK?

As if nothing just happened, Lucien wipes his hands ostentatiously and breaks out in a grin.

LUCIEN

Drink anyone?

INT. BUTLER LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - THE NEXT DAY

The TOUR GUIDE shows off the vitrines to a crowd.

TOUR GUIDE

Butler Library is a church, and these are the sacraments.

He pauses. The CROWD mumbles in shock. The guide looks through to see the *Kama Sutra* opened up to a salacious page.

TOUR GUIDE

Oh. My. God.

Students, librarians all crowd around, gaping. Flashbulbs go off: journalists already there.

Students GRAB the classic texts before any one can stop them. Open them. Race out of the library. The books are free.

And signed in the dust of the glass: "**The New Vision.**"

INT. WEST END BAR - CONTINUOUS

Four shot glasses. Four hands.

LUCIEN

(slurring)
To...literacy.

Allen, Bill, Jack and Lucien throw back their drinks in the wood-paneled college hang-out.

The Mills Brothers "*You Always Hurt The One You Love*" plays on the jukebox.

Allen's eyes fall on the wall above them, Columbia's "Hall of Fame": newspaper headlines, yearbook photos...

ALLEN

Jack, that's you, isn't it?

It's a framed photo of Jack in a football play, mid-catch.

JACK

Game against Princeton, last year.

Lucien STEPS up onto the table. All bluster.

LUCIEN

Look at all of them.

And we do: FLASHES of the portraits, ribbon-cuttings, team-photos...life in a thousand fake smiles and stagings.

LUCIEN

The same poses and uniforms. Just "souvenir history." Remind 'em that they actually were, because otherwise they'd never know.

(beat)

I don't ever want to end up on this wall.

Lucien tries to step down, nearly falls. Allen STEADIES him. Suddenly, David enters the bar.

ALLEN

What's he doing here?

They quiet down. David sees them, walks briskly over to their table. Turns to Lucien.

DAVID

Since you didn't show up today...

David holds up a term paper. "On the Decline of the West."

DAVID

...I took it upon myself to find you.

ALLEN

Maybe he didn't want to see you.

DAVID
I think Lucien can speak for
himself.

David slips in the booth. Lucien raises his arm.

LUCIEN
Then...let's all have another
round.

Lucien stands up to get a drink. David grabs his arm.

DAVID
You've had enough. There's been
plenty of time to celebrate.

Pause. Allen, Jack and Bill glance at each other. Then back
to David.

ALLEN
Celebrating what?

DAVID
Your library hijink made the paper.
I'm sure you're all very proud.

ALLEN
How do you know it was us?

DAVID
(beat, to Lucien)
Now who did tell me?

Lucien looks up from his drink. Allen, Jack and Bill look at
Lucien, shocked.

LUCIEN
(to David)
I haven't seen you for days.

DAVID
That's ridiculous.
(to the group)
Did he use that "Bastille" line
cause I gave it to him.

LUCIEN
Liar!

ALLEN
(to David)
No one else but us knew we where
there. You told the cops, didn't
you?!

David does not respond.

JACK
You little fink!

LUCIEN
(confused, to David)
You ratted me out?

ALLEN
Not you. He was aiming for me.
Get me kicked out of school and
then run me out of your life.
Right, David?

Jack suddenly jolts up.

JACK
Bastard!

Bill pushes Jack back down.

BILL
Not here.

Lucien gives David a fatal look.

LUCIEN
You betrayed me.

DAVID
Stop this, Lu. You're losing
control again. You know what's
next. I know what's next.

David reaches into pat Lucien on the hand. Lucien recoils.

LUCIEN
Don't touch me!

David jolts back. Allen glares at David.

ALLEN
(to Lucien)
Cut him off.

Beat. Lucien waves goodbye to David.

LUCIEN
Best of luck, Janitor.

DAVID
Excuse me?

LUCIEN
We are over.

David doesn't believe him. In shock. Points to Allen.

DAVID
So he wins.

LUCIEN
Leave.

David looks at all of their angry faces. He deploys his last salvo.

DAVID
You left this at my place.

David throws down Lucien's red kerchief.

DAVID
The tears have dried, it seems.

BILL
Enough, Dave.

LUCIEN
Fuck OFF!

Lucien LUNGES at David. Bill intervenes, pushing them apart. Allen grabs Lucien.

BILL
Dave, let's go. Come on.

DAVID
(to Lucien)
You'd be DEAD if it weren't for me!

Bill walks David out of the bar. Lucien throws himself down to his seat.

Lucien ribs Allen in the side. RIPS David's paper into pieces.

He laughs. Together, they throw them up into the air like confetti, fading into...

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - LATER NIGHT

Summer rain. Jack inside a barrel. Trashed, Lucien pushes the barrel down a grassy slope.

The barrel CRASHES into bushes. At the top of the slope, Lucien and Allen cheer.

LUCIEN

Jack? Jack?

(no response)

He broke his fucking neck. The warrior poet has passed on.

Jack staggers from the shrub. Throws his hands in the air.

ALLEN

No, he lives!

Then he falls on his face, pukes.

LUCIEN

Excellent! Judges award a...

Turns to Allen. Allen holds up nine fingers.

LUCIEN

Come on Ginsy, your turn.

Drunk, Allen tries to stand up. But then falls back down. Lucien laughs, sits next to him. Puts his arm around Allen.

LUCIEN

You were extraordinary in the library. This is just the start, you know.

Lucien's thigh brushes up against Allen's. It's all Allen can feel.

ALLEN

You were the brave one tonight. He's gone now.

LUCIEN

Your fault, Ginsy. All your fault.

Lucien's thigh presses up against his again.

Allen stares at Lucien, at war with his impulses. He's in the full glare of Lucien's warmth.

Lucien rests his head on Allen's shoulder. Allen looks around. The park is empty.

ALLEN

First thought, best thought.

He grazes his hand against Lucien's inner thigh. Lucien looks down at Allen's hand curiously, then back at Allen.

The decisive moment. Allen grabs hold of Lucien's thigh, leans over.

He kisses him.

Their lips touch. Kiss. Then again. Building in passion. Allen slides his hand up Lucien's thigh, pulling him closer...

Jack RETURNS up the slope and collapses.

JACK

I think I puked on the inside too.

Lucien opens his eyes. Tenses, pulls back.

ALLEN

Lu...

Shoves Allen away, stands, and turns his back to Allen.

Lucien takes a breath, and as if nothing just happened, turns to Jack with his usual devilish smile.

LUCIEN

Come on. Let's go, Jack.

JACK

Where?

LUCIEN

Mephisto awaits.

JACK

Is Allen coming?

LUCIEN

No.

(beat)

Allen's got work to do.

Lucien turns back around to Allen.

LUCIEN

Ten pages on Spengler's *Decline of the West*.

(beat)

Due tomorrow.

ALLEN

Excuse me?

LUCIEN
 I'd be lost without you, Ginsy.
 (to Jack)
 Come on, Lion.

The two of them start walking away.

ALLEN
 Lucien! Wait!

Lucien does not stop, turn around. Allen is left alone and confused.

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

Bill, smoking a joint, tends to a devastated David.

BILL
 Carr doesn't care about people. He
 burns them up.

DAVID
 He's making me crazy.

Bill holds up his hand. David notices his short, scarred PINKY finger on his left hand.

BILL
 Look at this.
 (beat)
 The love of my life let me go. I
 didn't think I'd survive. So I
 bought a pair of gardening shears.
 And I imagined that the tip of my
 littlest finger was the part of him
 that was inside me. The part I
 couldn't live without. And I
 removed it.
 (beat)
 Say goodbye to him. You need to
 remove Carr from your life. He is
 the damage.

Across the street, a bustle. Lucien and Jack stumble out of the park and head uptown.

Bill tries to hold David back. But David turns around.

DAVID
 I just need to finish with him. I
 need to say goodbye.

EXT. BUTLER LIBRARY - NIGHT

Pained, Allen walks back to the same library he just robbed. This time with books in his hand. Just a student once again.

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Lucien and Jack stumble into the apartment. The lights flick on and Edie meets them. She's pissed. Jack knows it.

EDIE
You're smashed.

Lucien realizing the tension, stumbles off to Jack's room.

JACK
We were out being stupid,
adventuring.

Jack reaches for her.

JACK
Come on, forgive me.

She kicks his Merchant Marine DUFFEL BAG.

EDIE
All your stuff is in your bag.
I'll be at Joan's.

JACK
Stay. I'm sorry.

Jack BLOCKS her exit.

EDIE
You just say that, but it's one of
your million words. For a whole
year, you've been promising to
marry me.
(beat)
You won't change. You don't
change. So I have to.

Jack lets Edie by. She's gone. Jack is crushed.

INT. BUTLER LIBRARY - NIGHT

Allen sits at a study booth in front of a typewriter.

He PUTS IN a blank page. He hates himself. But he types:

"On The Decline of the West. By Lucien Carr."

He starts to cry.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE, 118TH STREET - LATER

David jumps from the sidewalk and climbs the fire-escape outside Edie's apartment building.

He makes his way upwards.

INT. EDIE AND JACK'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Lucien and Jack crashed out together on the bed.

Then: A SHADOW crosses over Lucien from outside.

Lucien opens his eyes and sees: David, on the fire-escape. The two make eye contact.

 DAVID
 (whispered)
 Lu, I'm sorry.

Lucien climbs out the bed. Walks to the window.

 DAVID
 (whispered)
 I just want to say...

 LUCIEN
 (whispers)
 Another word and I call the police.

Lucien CLOSES the window. Locks it.

Goes back to bed. David does not leave.

Lucien TURNS away from David, toward a snoring Jack. Puts his arm around Jack, caresses him so David can see. Torturing David.

David recoils. A purring noise from below.

Jack's CAT curls around his leg on the fire-escape. The cat jumps back in through the open LIVING ROOM window.

David's eyes follow it.

INT. LIVING ROOM, 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

A SLAMMING noise as a window shuts.

The sound of noise down the fire-escape.

JACK (O.S.)
 What the hell?!

The bedroom door OPENS. Jack rushes in, carrying a bat. Lucien follows. The LIGHTS COME ON.

The CAT twists in a noose from the overhead light.

Jack races to the cat, untangles the noose.

JACK
 Oh my Christ.

He frees the cat. Cradles it in his arms. It's alive.

JACK
 Who the fuck would do this?!

LUCIEN
 David.

JACK
 He was here? I'll kill the sonofabitch.

LUCIEN
 We'll never find him. Let him go.

LUCIEN'S P.O.V.: Jack's Merchant Marine duffel bag.

LUCIEN
 I have another idea.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - THE NEXT DAY

Allen turning the corner to Lucien's room, paper in hand. Knocks timidly.

ALLEN
 Lu?
 (no response)
 You there?

LUCIEN (O.S.)
 It's open.

INT. LUCIEN CARR DORM ROOM - DAWN

Allen walks in with a folder. Hands Lucien the folder and the line he's practiced all night.

ALLEN
 Your paper. And my apology.

He sees Lucien PACKING his stuff into a duffel bag.

ALLEN
Where are you going?

LUCIEN
Sailing out. To Paris.

ALLEN
Now?
(no answer)
Lu, stop.

Lucien considers his BOY-SCOUT KNIFE. He slips it into his back-pocket.

LUCIEN
(ignoring)
We've got to make a ship, probably
as merchant seamen. Jack knows the
tricks.

Allen's face falls.

ALLEN
You weren't going to tell me.

LUCIEN
We both know why you can't come.

Silence. Lucien continues his packing. Allen breaks.

ALLEN
Fuck you.
(vicious)
You got what you wanted, didn't
you? You used me. You got me, a
whole team of people working to
make your vision come true. All
because you couldn't do it
yourself.

Lucien turns around. Cold. Deadened.

LUCIEN
No, Allen. You got what you
wanted. You were ordinary, just
like every other Freshman. I made
your life extraordinary. You'll
just have to be yourself now, all
by yourself. Now leave me alone.

ALLEN
You don't really mean that.

Beat.

LUCIEN
Leave, Allen.

Allen WHIPS the folder at Lucien. Tries to hold himself together, walks out the door.

Alone, Lucien lets down his guard, starts to shake as he zips up his bag.

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE WALK - LATER

Allen, despondent, walks across campus.

DAVID (O.S.)
Allen, have you seen him?

Allen stops, turns. It's David. Pale. Desperate.

ALLEN
Get away from me. He doesn't want to see you.

DAVID
I have to tell him something. You have no reason to help me.
(beat)
Except.

ALLEN
Except?

DAVID
I know who you are, Allen. We've both known it all along.

Silence. David moves closer.

DAVID
We can't choose who we love.
(beat)
You saw me that night. When he called me to rescue him. We're his listeners, the one he needs, but never wants. It hurts knowing that, doesn't it, Allen?
(beat, pointed)
I bet sometimes you want to hurt him too.

Allen burns, does not respond.

DAVID

But really, you just want him to know how you feel. And that is all I am asking from you. Tell me where he is. Please. I just want to tell him goodbye.

Allen, on the blade of a choice.

ALLEN

He's shipping out tonight.

INT. MERCHANT MARINE, BILLETING OFFICE - EVENING

Jack and Lucien at the front of a giant line. The place is teeming with men. Lucien nips at a flask.

LUCIEN

Christ. We'll never get on.

Jack barrels his way to a billeting DESK and OFFICER.

JACK

Two seamen, reporting for duty.

OFFICER

Lemme see your discharges.

Jack hands over paperwork.

OFFICER

(pointing to Lucien)
And his?

LUCIEN

Lost them. In the drink.

OFFICER

What's your name?

LUCIEN

Arthur Rimbaud.

Jack rolls his eyes. The officer looks at the paperwork. Hands them back.

BILLETING OFFICER

All right, have a wait over there.

He points to another enormous, snaking LINE.

LUCIEN

Oh Christ.

David is there in the next line. He is cleaned-up and positive. As if last night never took place. Jack is about to pounce, but Lucien stops him.

LUCIEN
Let me handle this.

Lucien rushes up to David.

LUCIEN
What are you doing here?!

DAVID
Listen, I spoke to a guy upstairs.
I got two passes for the sail.
(beat)
We can leave.

LUCIEN
The reason I'm leaving is you.

It doesn't register. David holds out the passes.

DAVID
(desperate, almost mad)
You take them. You and Jack. I'll
catch up.

Lucien considers this. Then: a fateful decision.

LUCIEN
Come with me. We're taking a walk.

They pass Jack. Stone-faced.

LUCIEN
I'll be back.

EXT. 42ND STREET - EVENING

Allen, alone. Wrecked. Smoking. Wandering drunk, lingering outside an automat.

Sailors, businessmen, prostitutes all pass in a mad rush.

In the crowd, Allen sees a young man, blonde, the streetlight casting a golden halo around his head.

ALLEN
Lu!

Allen pushes through the crowd, reaches him, turns him around...the young man is a SAILOR, a thread-bare version of Lucien. The halo fades quickly.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, AT 116TH - NIGHT

The real Lucien. Walking. David following, to the water's edge.

David's arms gesticulating wildly. They are arguing.

Lucien slips his hand into his back pocket.

DRINKS heavily from his flask. Fingers his pocket knife.

CUT TO:

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - SAME

Jack unlocking his door. Edie sits on the floor of the living room. Her eyes are blotchy, red from crying.

Jack drops his duffel bag. Sits with her.

JACK

I'm sorry.

Edie embraces him.

EDIE

This came today.

Slides Jack a package. A new record from SAMMY.

CLOSE-UP: A stylus touches a record groove.

CUT TO:

EXT. 42ND STREET - NIGHT

The sailor's with a pale-faced GIRL. He makes eye contact with Allen. Cruising.

SAMMY (V.O.)

It's Sammy here, Jack. On a hospital ship.

The sailor whispers something to the girl. The GIRL approaches Allen.

GIRL

Coming?

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, AT 116TH - NIGHT

Lucien FINISHES his flask and tosses it into the water.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*Get this, 91st day, I catch
 shrapnel so bad nobody can
 recognize me anymore.*

Something David says causes Lucien to turn, start storming away.

David THROWS his arm around Lucien.

INT. CRAPPY HOTEL, 42ND STREET - NIGHT

Allen's heart in his throat. He sits on the edge of a bed beside the sailor who is getting undressed.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*There's no medicine for what I've
 got.*

The boy undoes his belt. Allen leans in to kiss him. The boy stops him.

Wraps his hand around Allen's head, FORCES it down.

In a chair beside, the girl DROPS her celebrity magazine to watch...

CUT TO:

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, AT 116TH - NIGHT

Lucien PUNCHES David once in the belly, doubling him over.

SAMMY (V.O.)
Can't feel my hands.

Lucien reaches into his pocket. OPENS his Swiss Army Knife.

SAMMY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Or my face.

David looks down at it. Then up at Lucien.

SAMMY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I think I'm going to die here.

CUT TO:

INT. CRAPPY HOTEL, 42ND STREET - SAME

In the shadows from the neon lights, the sailor throws a naked Allen down on the bed. But Allen suddenly grabs his arm. Pulls him down beside him.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*So they gave me this machine. For
 some final words.*

The sailor looks up. Allen pushes his head down to the bed. Climbs on top of him. The sailor gives in, winces.

Allen starts to THRUST, violently.

CUT TO:

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, AT 116TH - SAME

Lucien thrusts, STABS David in the heart. David falls to his knees.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and
 weep! Quench within....*

Blood pumps from the gash as Lucien frees the knife.

David, clutching his shirt, his chest...

CUT TO:

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - SAME

Jack COLLAPSED next to the record player amplifier, crying.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*Their burning bed thy fiery
 tears...*

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, AT 116TH - SAME

Lucien, naked, CARRIES a dying David into the Hudson.

SAMMY (V.O.)
And let thy loud heart keep...

CUT TO:

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - SAME

The record runs out, the stylus scratches.

EDIE
What's he saying?

JACK
It's Shelley. An elegy for Keats.

EDIE
What's that mean?

JACK
It means he's dead.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. GROUP SHOWERS, SEMINARY - THE MORNING AFTER

FADE UP ON: Allen standing alone in the shower.

Other students walk into the showers on either side of him.
He's completely blank, eyes only on the tile.

Commotion outside.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - DAY

Allen steps out to see a POLICEMAN walk out of Lucien's door.
Then DETECTIVES and other COPS.

As the policeman passes, Allen stops him.

ALLEN
What happened?

POLICEMAN
Mind your own business.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER

Allen, now dressed, on the hallway phone. Nervous.

ALLEN
Edie? Is Jack there?

EDIE (O.S.)
(distraught)
You don't know, do you?

ALLEN
Know what?

EDIE (O.S.)
The police took him down to the
Tombs as an accessory. Bill too.

ALLEN
(confused)
What happened?

EDIE (O.S.)
Last night, your pretty boy killed
David.

SMASH CUT TO:

SUPER: AUGUST 17, 1944.

CLOSE-UP: Page One, *New York Times*.

A war photograph of landing craft, on French Coastline.

Below it: Lucien's face and the headline:

"COLUMBIA STUDENT KILLS FRIEND, SINKS BODY IN HUDSON RIVER"

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. JAIL - DAY

Jack, in handcuffs and sleepless, on the phone.

A massive crowd of PHOTOGRAPHERS and JOURNALISTS stand at the
jail entrance, clamoring for Jack to look their way.

JACK
(fingers in ears)
Dad. It's five thousand dollars
for bail. I know it's a lot...

JOURNALIST
Tell us about the Columbia Murder
kid!

A flash bulb FIRES.

JACK
Dad? Can you hear me?! Is that
Memère crying?

JACK'S FATHER (O.S.)
No Kerouac was ever wrapped up in a
murder! You can go to hell.

His father hangs up. Jack looks down, wounded.

JOURNALIST
Was it an attack?

SECOND JOURNALIST
Were they lovers?

Jack WHIPS around.

JACK
Would you all just SHUT UP?!

Jack tries to race towards them, but a GUARD holds him back.
Flash bulbs FIRE.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. THE TOMBS - DAY

The infamous New York City Jail. A massive stone complex with a giant columned portico.

Allen climbs up the stairs in disbelief, engulfed by the magnitude of it all.

INT. LUCIEN'S JAIL CELL - DAY

A Guard escorts Allen to see Lucien. Allen sees Lucien in prison clothing. Behind bars.

ALLEN
Oh my God.

Beside Lucien on his cot, a bouquet of flowers.

LUCIEN
My mother brought them. *Les fleurs du mal*. What did you bring me?

Allen can't believe Lucien's tone, his levity.

ALLEN
How could you?!

Lucien looks Allen fiercely in the eye.

LUCIEN
You weren't there. He wanted to hurt me, I had no choice.

ALLEN
(shaking his head)
You could have run...called the police...

LUCIEN
Listen to me.

We begin to see Lucien's vision of the murder.

FLASHCUT:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

David and Lucien at the water's edge. David walks behind Lucien. Lucien throws his flask in the water.

LUCIEN (V.O.)
He showed up at the Marine Hall.

FLASHCUT:

David GRABS Lucien roughly from behind.

LUCIEN (V.O.)
When I tried to confront him, he
exploded.

His hand over Lucien's mouth as David roughly undoes Lucien's belt, his pants.

In its violence, this should recall Allen's sex with the boy.

INT. THE TOMBS - DAY

Lucien stands up in his cell, moves closer to the bars.

LUCIEN
I had to defend myself.

FLASHCUT:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

Lucien forces David off of him. PUNCHES him in the belly, doubling him over. Reaches into his pocket, pulls out his scout knife.

LUCIEN (V.O.)
I had my knife.

He jabs violently into David's chest.

FLASHCUT:

LUCIEN (V.O.)
I wasn't thinking. He wouldn't
stop. I wanted him to go away. I
wanted him to disappear.

Lucien, naked and carrying David's body, wanders into the river. He releases David's body into the current.

The body floats away. We occupy David's P.O.V. as we sink.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. THE TOMBS - DAY

Allen shakes his head, still in disbelief.

ALLEN

Jack and Bill were there too?

LUCIEN

No. I went to them after. Bill first.

FLASHCUT:

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Bill and Lucien in the tiny bathroom. They flush David's Lucky Strike cigarettes down the toilet.

LUCIEN (V.O.)

He told me to get a lawyer.

BACK TO SCENE:

INT. CELL - CONTINUOUS

LUCIEN

Then Jack helped me get rid of the evidence.

FLASHCUT:

EXT. MORNINGSIDE PARK - DAWN

Jack PISSES against a tree while Lucien DIGS a hole. Lucien drops David's glasses into the hole.

LUCIEN (V.O.)

His glasses. The knife.

FLASHCUT:

EXT. HARLEM STREET - DAWN

Lucien drops the KNIFE down a subway GRATE. Jack looks at the morning crowd.

A black woman watches suspiciously.

BACK TO SCENE:

Allen looks down, uncomfortable.

ALLEN

But you didn't come to me.

Lucien softens his voice.

LUCIEN

We're going to avoid a trial. The D.A. asked me for my deposition. In writing. I need you, Allen. It's the only chance I have to get out. We're going to say it was an "honor slaying".

ALLEN

That he deserved to die because he was a queer.

Silence.

LUCIEN

Homosexuality is a crime, Allen.

ALLEN

And you want me to write it?

LUCIEN

You know I can't.

Allen thinks, shakes his head.

ALLEN

This is your life. This isn't a term paper.

LUCIEN

If I get murder, I could be in here for years.

(beat)

You know what a monster he could be. You more than Jack, Bill...anyone. I just need you to write it all down.

Allen doesn't respond. Lucien's eyes turn cold.

LUCIEN
 You're in this too.
 (beat)
 You sent him to me.

A wave of guilt over Allen's face. Lucien moves in closer.

LUCIEN
 I'm sorry if I hurt you. But no
 matter what, we're...friends.
 Right? Please, Allen. Help me.

Allen looks down. A beat as he considers.

ALLEN
 And if I did, where would I even
 start?

LUCIEN
 Talk to my mother.

CUT TO:

INT. PARK AVENUE APARTMENT - DAY

A photo album. Marion, Lucien's mother hands it to Allen. Together, they sit on an elegant couch. Marion smoking a slim cigarette.

MARION CARR
 David Kammerer followed my son
 everywhere, uninvited I might add.
 When Lucien went to Bowdoin, David
 appeared, out of thin air. I sent
 Lu to the University of Chicago,
 and surprise, David turned up
 again.

Allen opens the photo album: scalloped, childhood PHOTOS of Lucien.

MARION CARR
 Last year, Lucien wanted to go to
 Mexico and suddenly David had
 tickets. I was terrified. Any
 mother would be. I thought I'd
 never see my son again. So I
 brought him to New York and
 followed him myself this time. To
 make sure nothing would happen.
 (beat)
 A lot of good that did.

Allen sees a photo of Lucien from his childhood: the golden boy.

MARION CARR

Look how he used to be.

Allen turns the page. Sees photos of David (21) and Lucien (14) camping.

ALLEN

This is when they met.

MARION CARR

Yes. David was his troop leader. Can't imagine how they let that happen.

(beat)

But you see my ex-husband passed away when Lucien was 12. And this was at a time when Lucien needed...an authority figure.

At the opposite end of the hall, a door to a study creaks open. Marion's eyes dart to the door. Nervous, she puts out her cigarette, stands to shut it.

MARION CARR

The world is a much better place without David, believe me.

Allen watches curiously as she closes the door, walks back towards Allen.

MARION CARR

Thank God Lucien has you in his life. You know what he calls you? His guardian angel.

Allen looks up. Remembering the reference.

MARION CARR

He came by very distraught the day after the...attack. I told him he'd need his friends more than ever...

Allen stops her.

ALLEN

He came here? He didn't mention that.

MARION CARR

He probably didn't want you to know
I pressured him to confess.
Wouldn't seem very heroic if you
discovered his mother told him what
to do.

The phone RINGS elsewhere in the apartment.

MARION CARR

Excuse me. It's probably the
lawyer.

Marion leaves to answer the phone in another room. As Allen
hears her talking, the study door creaks open again.

Allen eyes the open door.

INT. STUDY, THE APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Allen creeps into the study. On a desk, childhood photos of
Lucien. Journals. Early report cards. Papers. All
pointing to the picture of a perfect child.

A shelf of scrapbooks has one opening. Allen slips the
scrapbook into place and notices tiny black flecks.

ASH.

Allen follows the ashes to the waste-paper basket.

In the trash, he pulls out badly burned pieces of PAPER.

Medical paperwork. Amongst them, Allen finds a faded "ADMIT"
form.

Cook County Hospital, Chicago. March 1943.

Allen's eyes SAIL down the page:

Carr, Lucien. Suicide Attempt. Gas Inhalation.

Admitting Person (Next of Kin): D. Kammerer.

ALLEN

(in shock)
He wasn't lying.

MARION CARR (O.S.)

Allen?

Allen looks up to see Marion in the doorway. The paperwork
still in his hands.

ALLEN

David saved his life.

MARION CARR

If you push someone in the river,
you can't exactly then save them
from drowning, now can you?

She takes the paper from him.

MARION CARR

He ruined my son. Please help me
keep what's left of him.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Allen's finger traces down the index of a legal textbook.
He scrolls down the H's, traces his finger down the page to
"Honor Slaying."

ALLEN (V.O.)

(taking notes)

"A lethal attack committed when the
accused is defending himself
against a known homosexual."

(beat)

A known homosexual.

He looks up to see OTHER students stealing glances at him.
He ignores, continues.

ALLEN (V.O.)

"If the accused is *heterosexual*,
the charge of murder is reduced to
first-degree manslaughter."

Allen senses someone passing. He looks up. It's Gwendolyn.
She looks at him ashamed, as if he were the murderer.

ALLEN (V.O.)

"However, if both victim and
perpetrator are *homosexual*, the
charge of murder in the first
degree will stand."

Allen shuts the book. Looks up. Everyone in the library is
staring at him.

Allen defiantly stares them down, picks up the book. Walks
up to Gwendolyn at the library counter and SLAMS the book
down with a thud.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Allen pulls opens his door to see the Cadet and a group of other Navy officers sprawled out over his room, smoking and drinking.

They stop talking as Allen walks inside. The Cadet approaches Allen, ominously.

CADET

We're shipping out tomorrow.

Allen kicks one officer out of his desk chair.

ALLEN

Good luck.

CADET

(teasing)

You're going to miss me?

The other officers laugh. Allen collects his papers silently.

CADET

We're going to head down to 42nd Street to a girlie bar. I think you should join us.

Allen tries to leave but an OFFICER blocks the door out.

ALLEN

Excuse me.

CADET

Or is that not what queers are into?

Silence. Allen realizes he is cornered. Thinks quickly.

ALLEN

You would know.

The cadet looks at him confused.

ALLEN

(to the officers)

Take a look at his bunk then tell me what you think.

The officers look at the wall next to the cadet's bunk. Beside the map of New York, exercise posters, male physique pictorials. They look back at the Cadet, concerned.

The Cadet intercepts Allen heading to the door. GRABS him and holds him against the wall.

CADET
What did you just say?

Allen smiles at the Cadet, like he's about to kiss him.

Then Allen PUNCHES him in the gut.

The Cadet pulls back, shocked. Allen breaks free from his grasp, races out.

CADET
(calling out)
Fly away, fairy. But you can't run
forever.

EXT. BROADWAY - DAY

Allen runs, fast. Through the maze of people.

He stops at a corner. Catches his breath. Confused. Hears the rumble of the IRT behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - DAY

Allen in front of David's old apartment.

He tries the door. It's locked.

He circles round. Considering. Then KICKS the door in its center like Lucien did the first time they came. The door creaks open.

Allen slips inside.

INT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - DAY

Allen finds the BEDSIDE LIGHT and turns it on.

The apartment is dark, eerie. The apartment of someone who just left the world.

Allen looks around. Does not know what he's looking for.

Allen digs through everything, looking for evidence. Something.

Tears up the apartment, finds nothing.

ALLEN
What am I doing?!

Allen slinks down to the floor. Looks at the bookcase.

Scans the books. Finds a copy of Yeats's A Vision. The same book Lucien gave to him the night they first met.

It is well-worn, notated. Underlined.

"Break the wheel." The same phrase Lucien used earlier.

As Allen opens it, POSTCARDS, PHOTOS fall free.

Allen scans through the postcards. One from Maine. On it, one word.

LUCIEN (V.O.)
Come.

Allen holds up the photos.

One, a portrait of David, young, handsome on a beach. The signature red KERCHIEF around David's neck.

At the bottom, it reads "Mexico".

DAVID (V.O.)
I feel lucky.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH, MEXICO - DAY

Lucien's P.O.V. as if through the viewfinder of the camera. David in the sun. He looks peaceful, beautiful.

LUCIEN
For what?

DAVID
For this.

LUCIEN
And what is this?

BACK TO SCENE

Allen examines the final photo. Lucien, holding the camera, as he embraces David. On the bottom, Lucien's writing.

ALLEN
(reading it aloud)
A perfect day.

Suddenly, the sound of the front door opening. The ROOM LIGHTS come on. Allen pockets the photos.

Bill and his wealthy father, MR. BURROUGHS, walk inside the apartment. Bill behaves formally, stiffly, around him.

ALLEN

You're free?

BILL

Father posted bail for me this morning. Father, this is Allen. A friend of mine. And David's.

MR. BURROUGHS

How did you get in?

ALLEN

(beat)

I had a key.

MR. BURROUGHS

Well, I'm sorry to say that Bill will be leaving for St. Louis this evening to be with his family.

(beat)

And I'll have to ask you not to remove anything. The Kammerers have asked me to collect their son's effects.

ALLEN

I was just about to leave.

As Mr. Burroughs walks into the bedroom with an empty suitcase, Allen whispers to Bill.

ALLEN

Lu loved him, didn't he?

Bill pauses, considers how to answer the question.

BILL

A good crime story is less about the answer to the mystery than the detective's reason for solving it.

Bill cocks his ever-knowing eye.

BILL

Can't wait to hear the ending.

MR. BURROUGHS

William! Come on!

Bill's father walks in, drags tough-guy Bill into David's bedroom by his ear.

BILL
Dad. Stop it!

As they leave him, Allen looks back down to the photo of Lucien and David embracing.

The Brahms melody from the beginning of the film begins to play.

INSERT: Newspaper photo of Lucien.

A *New York Times* headline: "**Columbia Student is Silent on Slaying Friend. Held Without Bail. Awaiting Deposition.**" August 18, 1944.

CUT TO:

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

Lucien, alone, curled in a ball on his prison cot as the overhead lights shut off.

CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHOTHERAPY OFFICE - DAY

Allen closes a music box, the song ending. He is sitting in a reception hall of a therapist's office.

NAOMI (O.S.)
I keep it. To remind me.

Allen looks up to see Naomi returning from a back room to the reception DESK. She walks up to Allen. They embrace.

ALLEN
I'm sorry it took me so long...

NAOMI
Shhhh.

ALLEN
No one's listening, Ma.

NAOMI
I'm talking about you. I'm glad you're here.

Allen looks closely at his mother. The fear is still there, but recessed deep in her eyes. She is fighting it, the best she can.

NAOMI
Is everything OK?

Allen shakes his head no. We see Allen, a nineteen-year-old kid, out of his league. Needing his mother.

ALLEN
I'm in...over my head.

Allen looks down to the paper in his lap. Lucien's photo on the front page. Naomi follows his gaze. Understands everything.

NAOMI
He came to the house. I remember..

ALLEN
He asked me for something,
something important. And I don't
know if it's right.

DR. LURIA (O.S.)
(interrupting)
Naomi?

DR. LURIA, a PSYCHOTHERAPIST, enters from the rear office. Allen looks at him curiously.

NAOMI
(suddenly nervous)
Honey. I...want you to meet Dr.
Luria.

Allen and Dr. Luria SHAKE hands awkwardly.

DR. LURIA
Sweetheart? Will you type this
prescription for me?

Leon Luria KISSES Naomi. Allen's face falls. He didn't know. As Dr. Luria RETURNS to his office.

ALLEN
I thought you were staying with
your sister.

Naomi squints. Anger flashing over her face.

NAOMI
There are things you are too young
to understand.

ALLEN
Don't patronize me.

NAOMI
 Listen to your mother!
 (beat)
 Your father couldn't let me go.

ALLEN
 So you left him?

NAOMI
 No. Your father was having an
 affair. He left me.

Allen is confused. The pressure building up in her head,
 Naomi breathes, tries to quiet down the voices.

NAOMI
 (whispered)
 Sometimes, to save yourself, you
 have to...hurt someone you love.
 (beat)
 The most important thing he...you
ever did, was fail me.

Allen looks closer at Lucien's photo.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

The flask HITS the surface of the water.

Lucien sits at the Riverside. David standing beside him.

LUCIEN
 (very drunk)
 Come Dave, sit.

DAVID
 Do you remember wanting to die?
 What did it feel like?

LUCIEN
 I said sit.

Lucien PUNCHES the back of Dave's knee. Dave falls into a
 sit.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM - NIGHT

Allen, at his typewriter. Smoking. Surrounded by Yeats,
 David and Lucien's photographs, all the remnants of Lucien
 encircling him. Allen types.

ALLEN (V.O.)
He loved you.

Allen stops. Starts again.

ALLEN (V.O.)
And the truth is once, you loved
him back.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - CONTINUOUS

David and Lucien sitting, arguing. Lucien looks out to the water.

ALLEN (V.O.)
But this secret ate away at you,
terrified you. So in Chicago, you
tried to kill yourself.

Lucien gets up, starts to leave.

ALLEN (V.O.)
But he rescued you. Because he
needed you as much as you needed
him.

David puts his hand on Lucien's shoulder. Lucien pushes him.

LUCIEN
I swear if you don't get yourself
out of my life, I'll destroy you.

DAVID
You're mad.

LUCIEN
(drunk, growing angrier)
No! You're the mad one. And you
made me mad. I was just a kid,
David, and you dragged me in your
perverted, fucking mess.

DAVID
Because I love you.

Lucien punches David in the stomach, he doubles over.

LUCIEN
Well stop then!

Lucien reaches into his pocket. Opens his pocket knife.
David looks down to the knife, then back up at Lucien.

DAVID
You don't mean that, darling.

LUCIEN
I do. Leave, David.

Silence. David opens up his shirt. Bares himself.

DAVID
Now I know what it's like.

LUCIEN
What is what like?

DAVID
Wanting to die.

David LEAPS onto Lucien. It's violent. Lucien, terrified at David's strength.

Pressed between them: The KNIFE-BLADE against David's chest.

DAVID
(whispered)
Do it.

Lucien slowly WRAPS his hand around the handle.

Lucien HOLDS the knife as David releases himself ONTO the blade.

David, at first, shocked. Then he falls to his knees.

DAVID
Oh God.

Blood pumps from the gash. Lucien frees the knife. David clutching his shirt, his chest.

Then: a deliberation.

Lucien pulls back his arm, STABS David a second time. With malice. Grinds the knife.

DAVID
Oh...

David weeps on the ground, his life pulsing from his chest. Then stops moving.

Methodically: Lucien UNTIES the shoelaces from his shoes. He rolls David on his side, lashes his hands behind his back.

Then Lucien ties David's feet.

He STUFFS David's pockets with rocks.

Car headlights sweep above them as Lucien UNDRESSES. Naked, Lucien drags David's body into the water and wades out into the Hudson.

ALLEN (V.O.)
You killed him to kill part of
yourself.

As Lucien cradles him, David looks up at Lucien, his last moment of life.

Lucien PUSHES David out into the current.

ALLEN
And he couldn't live once it was
gone.

Allen is now in the scene, watches from the shore.

It's the opening of the movie.

DAVID'S P.O.V.: The city bobs and dips in the periphery, as he sinks into the cold water.

Suddenly: it is **Lucien** in the water, sinking.

ALLEN (V.O.)
Some things, once you've loved
them, become yours forever.

And it's **Allen**, bloody, in the water, watching Lucien go.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - LATE NIGHT

Allen pulls out the final paper from the typewriter. He has a stack of them. He reads the first paragraph.

ALLEN (V.O.)
And if you try to let them go, they
only circle back and return to you.
They become part of who you are...

CUT TO:

INT. LUCIEN'S JAIL CELL, THE TOMBS - DAY

The opening scene. Lucien looks up from Allen's manuscript, finishing it.

LUCIEN
Or they destroy you.

Lucien throws it to the ground.

LUCIEN
You show this to anyone and I'll be
in here for the rest of my life!

Allen looks back at Lucien defiantly.

ALLEN
Then tell the truth, Lu.

LUCIEN
The truth?! You wanted him gone
too.

ALLEN
Not like that.

Allen grabs the pages from the ground and starts for the
exit.

LUCIEN
Please.

Lucien reaches through the bars, grabs Allen by the lapels.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)
(desperate)
You'll kill me with that.

ALLEN
I'm sorry.

LUCIEN
For what?

Allen calls out towards the exit.

ALLEN
Guard! He's getting violent!

Allen breaks Lucien's hold. Leaves. Two PRISON GUARDS rush
in. Lucien starts to shake. Starts screaming.

LUCIEN
(pleading, screaming)
Allen! No! DON'T...

CUT TO:

EXT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Allen stands outside, the manuscript in hand. He's frozen.

He is about to ruin Lucien's life.

Allen walks through the door.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Allen at the receptionist's desk, manuscript in hand.

SECRETARY

Have a seat. He'll be with you in
a minute.

Allen sits down in the lobby. Sees the lit shadow of the
DISTRICT ATTORNEY behind the smoked glass.

Allen's sweating. Nervous.

He looks down at the first page of his manuscript.

CLOSE-UP: "IF YOU TRY TO LET THEM GO..."

The phone rings.

CLOSE-UP: "THEY WILL DESTROY YOU."

Allen closes his eyes. Puts himself together. The secretary
picks up the receiver.

SECRETARY

Yes. He's right here.
(beat, hanging up)
Mr. Ginsberg. He's ready for you.

She looks at the chair where Allen just was. No one is
there.

SECRETARY

Mr. Ginsberg?

The sound of the door closing. He's gone.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

Mr. Ginsberg? Do you have any idea
how much disrepute this murder has
brought to the university?

CUT TO:

INT. COLUMBIA DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Allen's manuscript LANDING on the desk of the DEAN (the voice
we just heard).

DEAN

Far more than you can imagine in
your smutty academic endeavor.

Allen sits in the same chair where Lucien was reprimanded.
Professor Steeves sits silently beside the Dean.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

The university cannot accept this
as your final.

Allen raises his hand.

PROFESSOR

Yes?

ALLEN

But what did you think of the
writing?

DEAN

(not amused)

There are certain rules that you
agreed to upon admittance into this
university. And you have managed
to break and keep breaking them.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

(remembering)

Only ordinary men follow rules.
Isn't that right, Mr. Ginsberg?

ALLEN

We're all ordinary.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

What was that?

ALLEN

Imperfect. Beautiful. Isn't that
the most extraordinary thought of
all?

DEAN

Please.

Allen suddenly gets up out his chair, nods, heads out the
door. Steeves holds up the manuscript.

STEEVES

Ginsberg? I think you're
forgetting something

But Allen does not turn around. He's already gone.

DEAN
 (calls out)
 Consider yourself suspended!

The Dean takes Allen's manuscript from Steeves's hand and dumps into the trash.

DEAN
 Good riddance.

INT. KITCHEN, GINSBERG HOME - DAY

Quiet house. No Naomi. Allen and Louis at the table. Allen takes a bill. Louis going through the mail.

Allen begins to COMPOSE a poem on the back. His father looks at Allen, sees the poem. Smiles.

Like father, like son.

Over the bar RADIO comes the sound of a ROARING CELEBRATION.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 This is Bill O'Connor reporting
 from Paris and these are the sounds
 of liberation.

Allen and Louis stare at each other. The world is about to change. Louis hands Allen a package.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 All across the city, survivors have
 assembled in the streets in
 celebration.

Allen opens the package. It is his manuscript. On it, a note: "From the desk of Professor Lewis Steeves."

"Walt Jr.: Keep this. Keep Going. - L.S."

The phone rings. Allen answers.

ALLEN
 Hello?

JACK (O.S.)
 Allen, it's me.

ALLEN
 Jack! Where are you?

JACK (O.S.)
 Bumblefuck, New Jersey! How am I
 supposed to know? Where do you
 live again?

EXT. GINSBERG HOME, NEW JERSEY - DUSK

Jack leans on the exterior of a beautiful, 1940's CRUISER.
 Edie is in the passenger seat. Radio blaring. Allen bolts
 out of the house. Embraces Jack.

ALLEN
 How'd you get out?!

JACK
 Edie came through.

Edie STICKS her hand out. Shakes the rock on her finger.

EDIE
 Damn right. Couldn't let my
husband rot in the clink.

Jack smiles too, though his happiness seems forced.

ALLEN
 Congratulations. Where you headed?

JACK
 Out west.

EDIE
 Detroit. Back to my parents.

JACK
 Gotta get away for awhile. Where's
 Bill?

ALLEN
 St. Louis. With his dad.

JACK
 Looks like you're the only one
 left, kid. Take care of this
 place.

ALLEN
 OK. Take this with you.

Allen hands him his story.

JACK
 What's this?

ALLEN
 It's me. In the trenches.
 (beat)
 Send me something. When you get
 where you're going.

On the radio, we hear the end of the newscast.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 (in complete awe)
 This is the end of a long darkness.
 France and Europe are finally *free*.

Jack embraces Allen.

INT. LUCIEN JAIL CELL - DAY

A scared, humble Lucien looks up. Allen approaches the cell, with a newspaper. Lucien is shocked to see him.

ALLEN
 I thought you might want to see
 this.

Allen shows him the headlines. "**France Liberated.**"

LUCIEN
 What's it like out there?

ALLEN
 There's a parade at Rockefeller
 Center.

LUCIEN
 And Paris?

Allen points to the newspaper through the bars.

ALLEN
 It's the perfect day.

LUCIEN
 Tell me.

As Allen starts to read, the Mills Brothers' "You Always Hurt the One You Love" starts to play, continuing over...

INT. WEST END BAR - DAY

Late summer sun, empty bar. Music on the jukebox.

Patrons celebrating the end of the war, toasting. Allen WALKS past the rows of framed photos and sits in a banquette.

ALLEN (V.O.)
Another lover hits the universe.

As he pulls out his JOURNAL and begins to write what we are hearing, the camera pans up the photos on the WALL.

ALLEN (V.O.)
The circle is broken.

We see a photo of Ogden Nash at his most recent reading.

ALLEN (V.O.)
But with every death, comes re-
birth.

CLOSE-UP: The *New York Daily News* with the headline: "HONOR SLAYING."

ALLEN (V.O.)
And like all lovers, and sad
people...

A photo of Lucien Carr on the front page. He is on the wall.

ALLEN (V.O.)
...I am a poet.

FADE TO BLACK.

END CREDITS. A still photo of Lucien fades up on screen.
The following text underneath.

Portraying David Kammerer as a homosexual predator, Lucien Carr pled guilty to first degree manslaughter for his murder. He served only 18 months in a reformatory.

Upon his release, he took a job as an agent at United Press International, where he remained until his death in 2006.

A still photo of Jack.

Jack Kerouac separated from Edie Parker in Detroit, then began travelling cross-country on a trip he would later recall in his novel On the Road.

A still photo of Bill.

William Burroughs co-wrote his first novel with Jack, a novel based on David Kammerer's murder. The novel remains unpublished and hidden from the public in Columbia University's Butler Library.

A still photo of Allen.

After his expulsion from Columbia University in 1945, Allen Ginsberg became one of America's most awarded poets.

A still photo of Allen and Lucien.

Allen dedicated his first published poem "Howl" to Lucien Carr upon its release in 1956.

In response, Lucien asked that his name be withdrawn from subsequent editions.

FADE OUT.