

HIGHSTON

Written and Created
by
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Directed by
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FADE IN:

1

INT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER - DR. CONWAY'S OFFICE - DAY

1

A folder marked "HIGHSTON LIGGETTS CASE" drops to reveal the concerned face of DR. LELAND CONWAY. He looks up at the eager family across the desk: Parents WILBUR and JEAN LIGGETTS, both 48, brother BUD, 17, UNCLE BILLY, 55.

DR. CONWAY

So... your son imagines that celebrities are his friends.

JEAN

That's right.

DR. CONWAY

And do you feel this delusion has been harmful to him?

JEAN

We're not sure. It just doesn't seem normal.

WILBUR

Some of them have actually helped him, I think.

JEAN

That's true. You wouldn't think it since she's kinda slutty-like but Madonna had some very good advice.

DR. CONWAY

Madonna? The pop singer?

WILBUR

I believe she also acts.

JEAN

She told Highston to stay in school and always wear a condom.

WILBUR

Well, not always, Jean, just when he's having sex.

JEAN

I assumed that was implied.

WILBUR

You know who gave him appalling advice was that Daniel Day-Lewis.

JEAN

That's true, I can't watch a film of his anymore after what he told our boy. What a wacko.

WILBUR

Although I did catch "There Will Be Blood" recently and liked it.

JEAN

The title spoiled it for me. I like to be surprised as to whether there will be blood or not.

BUD

Mom, if there's no blood, there's no movie.

DR. CONWAY

(genuinely confused)

Now, you're talking about an imaginary Daniel Day-Lewis and not the real one, correct?

JEAN

Oh yes, he's never met the real Daniel Day-Lewis, just the one that's not real.

Dr. Conway glances over at Uncle Billy, who winks. He turns to Bud, who stares back stupidly. He checks the folder.

DR. CONWAY

Highston -- that's an unusual name.

WILBUR

He's named after my grandpa Highston who was a hero in World War II. He even earned a medal.

DR. CONWAY

What was he awarded for?

WILBUR

Uh, he was tortured.

DR. CONWAY

Well, those Nazis could be cruel.

JEAN

Actually it was "Friendly Torture."

DR. CONWAY

I'm sorry?

WILBUR

It was his own troops who tortured him.

DR. CONWAY

My god, how awful. They mistook him for the enemy?

JEAN

Oh no, they knew who he was alright.

WILBUR

In fact while they tortured him they yelled "Take this Highston you god damn son of a bitch."

JEAN

He was not well liked.

Dr. Conway gives them all a look, stopping on Uncle Billy.

DR. CONWAY

And you're Highston's Uncle Billy?

UNCLE BILLY

I wasn't present at the conception so I just have to take their word for it.

DR. CONWAY

Okay. I understand you live with the family. Do you feel Highston should be in a psychiatric facility?

UNCLE BILLY

I believe that if Highston should be in a psychiatric facility then we should all be in a psychiatric facility, so I would have to say yes.

DR. CONWAY

I see. And what do you think causes Highston's delusions?

Uncle Billy points at Mom and Dad.

UNCLE BILLY

I blame it on those two and of course, the Mormons.

DR. CONWAY
Uh huh. Okay.

Dr. Conway looks back at the parents.

DR. CONWAY (CONT'D)
Do you think Highston will agree to treatment?

JEAN
It depends on who his friend is today. If it's someone nice like Meryl Streep then she'll probably be able to talk him into it.

WILBUR
But if it's an asshole like Donald Trump it might be tough.

Dr. Conway gets up and walks to the door. He peers through the small window, and we see through it --

2 INT. DR. CONWAY'S WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS 2

HIGHSTON LIGGETTS, 19, a face as friendly and down to earth as Jimmy Stewart's, stares straight ahead, looking like the last sane person on Earth. Highston turns as the camera pulls out to reveal FLEA next to him. Highston smiles.

HIGHSTON
Hi Flea.

FLEA
Hello Highston Liggetts.

HIGHSTON
I'm a big fan. I love the Red Hot Chili Peppers. "Scar Tissue" is one of my favorite songs. And your bass on "Charlie" is incredible.

Flea smiles, touched.

FLEA
Well thank you, Highston.

HIGHSTON
I always think of you as the consummate musician.

FLEA
Really?

HIGHSTON

Absolutely. You're a true artist who follows his muse no matter what the consequences. You've honored your unique talents by not cutting your cloth to fit the fashions or whoring yourself for commercial gain, and that's truly admirable. It's a rare and beautiful thing these days to not be a whore.

Flea is gobsmacked.

FLEA

That's so kind, thank you. It's really insightful as well, because that's what I'm all about.

They exchange smiles.

FLEA (CONT'D)

So what's on your mind, Highston?

HIGHSTON

Well there was something that I've been wrestling with today.

FLEA

Your parents wanting to institutionalize you?

HIGHSTON

Oh no, I figure they must have their reasons.

FLEA

Then what is it?

HIGHSTON

I was wondering where all matter comes from.

FLEA

All matter.

HIGHSTON

Yeah.

FLEA

Hmm. Well there's definitely a lot of math and science involved and if you got to the bottom of all that I wouldn't rule out divine magic... But... I don't know.

HIGHSTON

Sometimes when I have a really tough question I call the Library Quick Information desk. I even have them on speed dial.

FLEA

Well give 'em a whirl.

HIGHSTON

I'd feel silly asking them that.

FLEA

Highston we're all silly, only some of us are brave enough to admit it.

Highston nods, pulls out his phone and hits a button.

HIGHSTON

You're right, Flea.

(into phone)

Yes, I was wondering if you could tell me where all matter comes from... Matter... Yes, all of it. Uh huh... Yes, I can hold.

He looks at Flea, they nod at each other and wait.

FLEA

Sure is taking them awhile.

HIGHSTON

Yes? Uh huh. I see. Thank you.

He hangs up.

FLEA

What did they say?

HIGHSTON

They don't know either.

Flea gives an understanding nod.

FLEA

You really want to know what it's all about, don't you?

HIGHSTON

That would be so great.

3 INT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER - DR. CONWAY'S OFFICE - DAY 3

Dr. Conway peers through the door window.

DR. CONWAY

I think it's time to bring him in.

He opens the door.

DR. CONWAY (CONT'D)

Highston would you join us, please?

Highston enters, sits by his folks, Dr. Conway opposite them.

DR. CONWAY (CONT'D)

So, Highston, how are you feeling?

HIGHSTON

I feel great, thank you for asking.

DR. CONWAY

Is there anyone with you today?

Highston watches as Flea sits down behind him.

HIGHSTON

Yes, Flea.

BUD

Oh for fucks sake!

JEAN

Bud, don't say "fucks."

DR. CONWAY

What's a Flea?

BUD

The Red Hot Chili Peppers. Don't you remember him playing in just a sock?

JEAN

Well that's dangerous, you should always wear two socks because of splinters.

BUD

No Mom, not on his feet.

JEAN

Oh.

(realizes)

Oh.

FLEA

I started a non-profit music school
for kids and all he remembers is
the sock? Jesus.

DR. CONWAY

Oh, yeah, them. I never cared for
their music.

Highston looks back to see Flea flip Dr. Conway off.

HIGHSTON

Flea can hear you.

DR. CONWAY

Tell Flea I'm sorry.

FLEA

Fuck you you pompous brain diddling
asshole.

Highston smiles.

DR. CONWAY

Did Flea say something?

HIGHSTON

He said "Apology accepted."

UNCLE BILLY

Flea is a musical genius and anyone
who doesn't recognize that can kiss
my ass. "Californication" always
makes me cry.

Flea smiles at Uncle Billy. Dr. Conway waits a beat.

DR. CONWAY

Uh, thank you, Billy. Okay, so --

UNCLE BILLY

"First born, unicorn, hard core
soft porn, dream of
Californication."

Dr. Conway stares at Uncle Billy, who is misty eyed.

UNCLE BILLY (CONT'D)

Listen to Flea play and you will
know what it means to be a human.

Flea goes over and kisses Uncle Billy on the head.

FLEA

Anthony wrote the lyrics, but thank you Billy.

Dr. Conway waits a beat for Billy.

DR. CONWAY

Uh huh. Great. Anyway Highston, I'd like to invite you to stay with us for a while.

Highston turns to Flea.

FLEA

It's your call, dude. I'm here for you either way.

HIGHSTON

I would prefer to stay home.

DR. CONWAY

How about stopping by to take some tests and meet with a counselor?

FLEA

Follow your heart. The brain is a little overrated. But don't follow your spleen. It's basically just a blood filtering device.

Highston nods.

HIGHSTON

Can I talk it over with Flea first? And Stephen Hawking?

He turns back to Flea, apologetic.

HIGHSTON (CONT'D)

He's really insightful on personal matters, too.

Flea nods in agreement.

4

INT. LIGGETTS FAMILY ROOM - DAY

4

Highston, Uncle Billy, and Bud sit watching an off-screen TV. Highston is smiling, Billy riveted, Bud bored.

DOCTOR (O.C.)

I'm afraid that President Lincoln has passed away.

A beat.

MAN (O.C.)
Other than that, Mrs. Lincoln, how
did you enjoy the play?

CLOSE-UP ON TV: MRS. LINCOLN holds a stove-pipe hat and
glares at the off-screen man.

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What, too soon?

The title "THE STUNTED SHOW" fills the screen.

BACK TO THE ROOM:

UNCLE BILLY
I love "The Stunted Show." I used
to write for television, you know.

HIGHSTON
I didn't know that, Uncle Billy.
What shows?

UNCLE BILLY
Not for that television.
(pointing to his head)
The one up here.

Bud makes a face as he changes the channel to HORSE RACING.

UNCLE BILLY (CONT'D)
I always wanted to write a novel,
but I never had enough paper.

HIGHSTON
I can get you some.

UNCLE BILLY
Nah, it's too late.

Uncle Billy points at the TV.

UNCLE BILLY (CONT'D)
I don't care for horse racing.
Cruelty to animals.

BUD
Hey, you don't think they'd ride us
if they could?

UNCLE BILLY
That's the dumbest thing I ever
heard.

(MORE)

UNCLE BILLY (CONT'D)

Where's a horse going to get a human saddle? Come on, think!

BUD

I'm just saying animals are assholes. If you think horses wouldn't have us breeding in unheated sheds and racing in the mud if they could then you're kidding yourself.

UNCLE BILLY

I've never cared for mud but I wouldn't mind breeding in a shed.

Highston turns to Uncle Billy.

HIGHSTON

So, Uncle Billy, what do you think I should do?

UNCLE BILLY

I think you're fine.

BUD

Billy, he sees ghosts.

HIGHSTON

They're not ghosts, they're my friends.

BUD

Oprah is your friend. Neil Young is your friend. Bill Gates is your friend.

HIGHSTON

We hang out. Talk about girls.

BUD

For crying out loud.

UNCLE BILLY

What is Bill Gates like?

HIGHSTON

He's very intelligent.

UNCLE BILLY

I knew it!

HIGHSTON

He eats more than I would have thought.

UNCLE BILLY

Sure, thinking makes you hungry.
That's what I've always found.

Highston checks out the clock.

HIGHSTON

It's time for my dance lesson.

Bud shakes his head.

BUD

Who's your teacher, Fred Astaire?

HIGHSTON

Don't be silly, Fred Astaire is
dead.

5 INT. HIGHSTON'S BEDROOM - DAY

5

Highston's room has a bunk bed, lots of books, no computer.
Highston and SHAQUILLE O'NEAL stand facing each other.

SHAQ

Okay, this is my robot dance. You
move like this, then like that,
then a little of this.

Highston awkwardly tries to copy Shaq's moves.

HIGHSTON

I'm not a good dancer.

SHAQ

You're a natural. It just takes
time. Remember what the great
choreographer Martha Graham said:
"We learn by practice. Whether we
learn to dance by practicing
dancing or to learn to live by
practicing living, the principles
are the same."

Highston nods, in awe, soaking it all in.

SHAQ (CONT'D)

I'll bet Martha would like this.

Shaq starts free-styling, even break-dancing. Highston tries
to follow along. Shaq calls out instructions.

SHAQ (CONT'D)

More definition with the step --
each movement makes a statement --
as Martha said, "The body says what
words cannot."

Highston smiles as tries to keep up.

HIGHSTON

You should be on "Dancing With the
Stars."

SHAQ

Nah, too many people have done
that. I like to be original.

Flea sits up in the top bunk.

FLEA

Yeah, shake it Shaq!

Flea gets down and joins Shaq and Highston for a few moments
of frantic dancing. Shaq finishes his moves, shrugs.

SHAQ

Just a little something I do.

Highston's parents KNOCK and step in, followed by quiet
sister PAM, 8. Wilbur carries a 10-YEAR-OLD PC COMPUTER and
Jean has an OLDER COMPUTER BOOK.

WILBUR

Highston, we think it's time for
you to find yourself and figure out
what you want to do with your life.

JEAN

We know it's not easy to study
having to share the family
computer, so we went to Value
Village and got you a Challenger
3000.

They put the computer stuff on his table.

FLEA

The main challenge will be
disposing of it properly.

HIGHSTON

Thank you.

JEAN

And this book says you can learn something called Crunge 3.0 in just one week.

SHAQ

Are you sure your parents are for real, Highston? Maybe you're imagining them.

WILBUR

And there was a man there who was missing a finger who said you'd need these disks.

He hands Highston some old disks.

FLEA

Where's the god damn keyboard?

HIGHSTON

Where's the god damn keyboard?

JEAN

Highston!

HIGHSTON

I'm sorry. Isn't there supposed to be a keyboard?

WILBUR

We're still looking for one.

SHAQ

Have you tried looking in 2005?

WILBUR

Anyway son, the thing is, your mom and I have been talking and we think that you need to start setting goals.

SHAQ

Like getting dial-up internet and AOL, apparently.

Shaq starts dancing again.

WILBUR

Now, you can still live here, but we would like for you to either get a job, go to school, or commit yourself for psychological testing.

FLEA

Fucking fascists. Wait, that actually sounds fair, doesn't it?

HIGHSTON

That sounds fair. But it will take a while to get into school.

JEAN

Then perhaps in the meantime you should work. It might help you be more normal. Not that you're not normal now, but really, you're not.

WILBUR

That's not just our opinion, son, it's society's. Heck, I almost wish you were gay instead. Are you gay?

FLEA

Tell them yes. Keep the mystery alive.

JEAN

Honey, you can be honest. Are you gay?

HIGHSTON

Not yet.

WILBUR

That's good. I was worried when Alex Rodriguez was sleeping over.

HIGHSTON

He's not gay.

JEAN

Did Alex Rodriguez touch you, Highston? You can tell us.

HIGHSTON

Nobody has ever touched me. And he's not gay.

WILBUR

Sure he's not, sure he's not. Here's the thing, son. If you don't have a job within a week, we want you to enter the treatment center for your sickness.

JEAN

You're ill, Highston. It's not your fault, and it's nothing to be ashamed of, but you should hide it and if anyone asks about it you should lie and run away.

HIGHSTON

I feel fine. I'm very happy.

WILBUR

See right there, that's crazy talk.

JEAN

Nobody's really happy, Highston.

FLEA

I'm happy.

HIGHSTON

Flea says he's happy.

SHAQ

I'm very happy.

HIGHSTON

Shaquille O'Neal says he's very happy.

JEAN

Shaq's here? I love Shaq!

WILBUR

But that's just them, Highston. Flea and Shaq are the only happy people. Everyone knows that.

JEAN

You think about it. We'll leave you and your little friends.

Pam emerges between her parents and hugs Highston.

PAM

I don't want you to leave Highston.

HIGHSTON

Don't worry, Pam. It'll be okay.

Wilbur pats Highston on the shoulder and they all leave.

6

INT. LIGGETTS HALLWAY - DAY

6

Wilbur and Jean hug, distressed from dispensing tough love.

WILBUR

You know what my problem is?

JEAN

A complete inability to experience
real joy?

WILBUR

No, not that. I just can't bear to
be tough on that boy.

JEAN

Me neither, but it's for his own
good, Wilbur.

WILBUR

I know.

They look sadly at Highston's door.

WILBUR (CONT'D)

You think he liked the computer?

JEAN

I do. You did really well to talk
them down to \$200 on it.

Wilbur smiles proudly.

7

INT. HIGHSTON'S BEDROOM - DAY

7

Highston looks at Shaq and Flea.

HIGHSTON

Is there something wrong with me?
Am I a freak?

FLEA

Sit down, my friend.

They sit down on the bed.

FLEA (CONT'D)

Listen Highston, I'm no doctor, I'm
just a traveling troubadour, but
I've seen some troubled human
wreckage in my time, and you're not
one of them.

(MORE)

FLEA (CONT'D)

In fact, you're the sanest person
I've ever met, except for maybe
Iggy Pop.

Highston nods. Flea puts his hand on Highston's shoulder.

FLEA (CONT'D)

Let me tell you a story. I was
about your age, just starting out,
got asked to play at some roadside
bar. So I start jamming and this
woman comes up on stage and starts
taking her clothes off. And it
just didn't feel right. I yelled
at her to get down and then a
couple of guys came up and just
kicked the fucking shit out of me.
Then I realized I was playing in a
stripper bar.

Highston and Shaq wait expectantly as Flea stares at them.

FLEA (CONT'D)

Do you see what I'm getting at?

HIGHSTON

Not really.

FLEA

Not at all?

HIGHSTON

Not even close, but thank you.

FLEA

Hmm. Maybe I told it wrong.

SHAQ

I don't think it was the way you
told it.

HIGHSTON

So what should I do?

FLEA

Maybe we should find you a job,
man. What would you like to do?

HIGHSTON

I wouldn't mind being Zoey
Deschanel's driver.

FLEA

And what if that's already taken?

HIGHSTON

Anything, as long as there's no blood.

SHAQ

Hey, don't limit yourself, buddy.

8 EXT. KENT CITY SIDEWALK - DAY

8

Highston and Flea walk along the downtown business district in this old town called KENT CITY, looking around.

FLEA

Let's see, you could sell antiques... Or antiques... Oh here's something -- no, that's antiques.

They stop in front of CONNIE'S COLLECTION AGENCY and look at a "Help Wanted" sign in the window.

HIGHSTON

"Help Wanted." That sounds good.

Flea looks skeptically at the building.

9 INT. CONNIE'S COLLECTION AGENCY - DAY

9

Flea looks around suspiciously at the threadbare offices. A MISERABLE LOOKING WOMAN is on the phone in the corner. The very serious MS. PARKER, 35, is sizing Highston up from across a metal desk.

MS. PARKER

Mr. Liggetts, tell me, why do you want to be a debt collector?

Highston thinks.

HIGHSTON

Uh, well, ever since I was a kid I always dreamed of working in collections.

FLEA

Great answer, man. You nailed it.

HIGHSTON

My friends and I would play telephone collection agents on the playground. It was a lot of fun.

SHAQ

Sounds like a wonderful childhood.

Highston smiles as he turns to see Shaq come in. As Ms. Parker goes to a file cabinet Shaq wanders around, horrified, especially by the miserable woman in back on the phone. He goes to her and does a few dance steps, gives it a "ta da" ending. He shakes his head as she drones into the phone.

SHAQ (CONT'D)

Nothing.

Ms. Parker returns to her desk.

MS. PARKER

Tell you what.

She hands Highston a folder and turns the phone towards him.

MS. PARKER (CONT'D)

I want to see how you work. This man owes \$5000 on a truck. Call him and demand the money.

Highston cautiously opens the file and stares at the paperwork.

FLEA

Highston, maybe we should keep looking. This doesn't feel right.

Highston picks up the phone and pauses.

FLEA (CONT'D)

I thought we were here to give you advice.

Highston turns from Ms. Parker, tries to whisper.

HIGHSTON

And I appreciate that. But my parents are right. It's time for me to grow up and do something.

MS. PARKER

Are you okay?

Highston nods, dials the number. Shaq sticks his head in the copy machine and makes a copy. Flea leans toward Ms. Parker.

FLEA

She smells like camels. Not the cigarettes.

HIGHSTON

(into phone)

Yes, Mr. Sanders? This is Highston
Liggetts --

FLEA

Don't tell them your real
name --

MS. PARKER

No! Use an alias!

HIGHSTON (CONT'D)

This is Shaquille O'Neal --

SHAQ

Don't use my name!

MS. PARKER

Shaquille O'Neal?!

HIGHSTON (CONT'D)

This is... just a guy from Kent
Collections and I'm calling to ask
that you pay the \$5000 you owe for
the truck please.

FLEA

This isn't you, Highston.

HIGHSTON

I see. How long have you been out
of work? Wow, that's a long time.
Okay then, just pay it when you
can.

FLEA

Well done! Let's go home then!

MS. PARKER

Never say that! Tell him he has to
pay or else!

HIGHSTON

I'm sorry, can you hold please?

He covers the phone and looks at Ms. Parker.

HIGHSTON (CONT'D)

What was that?

FLEA

She said to run away.

MS. PARKER

Tell him to pay! No excuses!

Highston nods and talks into the phone.

HIGHSTON

Yes, I'm sorry, but can you pay us anyway? Uh huh. How long has your wife been sick?

MS. PARKER

Don't fall for that!

HIGHSTON

What does she have? Oh, that's too bad. Is there blood? Oh wow. I don't like blood. That has got to be hard on both of you.

SHAQ

Good job, you've got him right where you want him.

MS. PARKER

What are you doing!?

HIGHSTON

I know, my mom was sick for a long time and all I could think of is how sad I would be if I lost her.

MS. PARKER

Are you kidding me?

FLEA

Pipe down lady, I want to hear this.

HIGHSTON

Uh huh. The other thing is you've got to make time for yourself, too. You can't give all day. Get out and take a walk or meet some friends for coffee or something...

FLEA

Or go record shopping.

SHAQ

Or go to a game.

MS. PARKER

Why don't you just tell him to take a drive in his truck?!

Highston points excitedly at Ms. Parker, who rolls her eyes.

HIGHSTON

Oh yeah, or just take a drive in your truck!

MS. PARKER

Get him to pay something at least!

Highston looks up at her and nods.

HIGHSTON

Yeah... So, do you think that you could pay us \$100 for now? No? No problem.

MS. PARKER

Okay, that's enough! Give me the phone!

She grabs for the phone but Highston turns so she can't reach it.

HIGHSTON

I'm sorry, I have to go. You know what I could do though -- I've saved up a little money. Would it offend you if I sent you \$100?

MS. PARKER

What are you doing?!

FLEA

That's the sweetest thing I ever heard.

HIGHSTON

No, I've got your name and address right here. You're welcome. Take care. Kiss your wife for me.

MS. PARKER

Kiss your wife for me?!

SHAQ

That was kind of weird, man.

Highston hangs up the phone, satisfied. He looks across the desk at the beet red Ms. Parker, staring daggers.

FLEA

Highston, I think it's time to run!

Highston bolts from the chair, stops and runs back, grabs the folder and races through the door.

10 EXT. KENT CITY SIDEWALK - DAY 10

Highston comes to a stop on the sidewalk in front of Flea and Shaq.

SHAQ
Way to go Highston!

FLEA
We're so proud of you.

Highston smiles, but slowly turns concerned.

HIGHSTON
Now what am I going to do?

Flea and Shaq don't have an answer.

11 EXT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER GROUNDS - DAY 11

The LIGGETTS' VAN carries the whole family through the entrance of the "HOPE STATE PSYCHIATRIC CENTER."

JEAN
This is for the best, son.

WILBUR
Damn, that's what I was going to say.

BUD
Can I have your Challenger 3000?

As they drive down a long, TREE-LINED DRIVEWAY, Highston looks up at the trees and at the vast grounds of the institution with some trepidation.

Highston looks out at the SPRAWLING BEIGE BUILDINGS and watches patients being guided by their vigilant attendants.

Highston is intrigued by a FADED MERRY-GO-ROUND with wooden horses that looks more sad than cheerful in its dormant state.

12 INT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER RECEPTION AREA - DAY 12

Highston and all of his family stand in the waiting area. His mother hugs him, looking worried. Pam steps up.

PAM
I love you Highston, just the way you are.

(MORE)

PAM (CONT'D)

I hope they don't make you better
and you stay sick forever.

Highston bends down to her.

HIGHSTON

Thanks, Pam. I love you, too. You
be good, okay?

She nods. Uncle Billy stands in front of Highston, puts a
hand on his shoulder.

UNCLE BILLY

I don't know if this helps, but if
I could give milk I would gladly
let the cows drink it.

Highston nods.

HIGHSTON

Yes, Uncle Billy, that helps a lot.

BUD

Uncle Billy, you want me to see if
they've got room for one more?

Uncle Billy leans in and whispers.

UNCLE BILLY

Live your life without regrets.

HIGHSTON

Do you have any regrets?

UNCLE BILLY

Just one. All those hours I wasted
watching people play poker on TV.

HIGHSTON

I understand.

UNCLE BILLY

I should have gone to watch them
play in person instead.

HIGHSTON

Thank you for that wisdom.

Uncle Billy smiles. An AIDE appears and calls out.

AIDE

Highston Liggetts.

Highston has a look of dread. He turns and Flea is beside him.

FLEA
It's going to be okay. I'll be right here beside you.

HIGHSTON
Not if they fix me.

FLEA
That's true. Damn.

Highston and Flea follow the aide. Highston turns and sadly waves goodbye to his family. Flea puts his arm on Highston's shoulder.

13 INT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER TEST ROOM - DAY 13

Highston and Flea are seated at a table. The aide hands Highston a folder.

AIDE
Mr. Liggetts, this is a psychiatric evaluation test. There are no right or wrong answers.

FLEA
That's a lie.

HIGHSTON
Thank you very much.

AIDE
I'll be back in twenty minutes.

She leaves the room. Highston looks at the first question.

HIGHSTON
"Can you give an example of something you think is immoral?"

FLEA
Recording contracts.

Highston starts writing Flea's answer down.

FLEA (CONT'D)
And don't get me started on concert riders. Everything favors the promoter. Bunch of fucking psychos and sycophants stealing from the people who actually create ...

Highston holds a hand up as he writes furiously.

HIGHSTON
Whoa, slow down...

14 INT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER HALLWAY - DAY 14

The aide opens a door for Highston.

AIDE
Go ahead and take a seat and Dr.
Gabler will be in shortly.

HIGHSTON
Thank you so much.

15 INT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER MEETING ROOM - DAY 15

Nine chairs are in a circle. DANNY ST. CLAIR, 18, is in one, reading "WALDEN." Across from him MOLLY MEEKER, 17, sits sullenly. THREE OTHER PATIENTS stare straight ahead. They glance at Highston as he sits down but nobody speaks for awhile. Highston points at the book.

HIGHSTON
I like Thoreau.

DANNY
Have you read "Walden?" He was
fucking on fire in this one.

HIGHSTON
"All men lead lives of quiet
desperation."

DANNY
Fucking A they do.

Molly finally looks over.

MOLLY
All men? What about women?

DANNY
No, he said they're fine.

Molly gives him a look. Danny smiles at her.

DANNY (CONT'D)
You know, you're pretty enough to
be a singer.

MOLLY

And you're stupid enough to say something like that.

Molly stares at Highston to get a read on him. Highston is wary, but very taken with her. He smiles.

HIGHSTON

Hi.

Molly isn't sure what to make of Highston, but she softens. Flea walks by Danny, looking concerned.

FLEA

This guy is a moron. I'm starting to get a bad vibe here.

Flea sits next to Highston. The door opens and DR. GABLER, 40, enters. She sits and smiles benevolently at the three.

DR. GABLER

Welcome, I'm Dr. Gabler. We have three new members today, so why don't you introduce yourselves and tell us why you think you're here. Molly.

Molly shifts in her chair.

MOLLY

I'm Molly Meeker and I'm here because I don't play well with others.

Dr. Gabler smiles, turns to Danny.

DANNY

I'm Danny St. Clair, and I'm an alcoholic. No, just kidding. I'm here because my search for truth and understanding has led me to total three of my parents' cars.

DR. GABLER

Good. And Highston.

DANNY

Highston?!

Highston nods and smiles as Danny laughs.

HIGHSTON

I'm here because I love my family and want them to feel better even though they're wrong.

FLEA

Excellent answer.

DR. GABLER

Very good, Highston, very good.

FLEA

It's like she's talking to a dog.

DR. GABLER

And tell us Highston, what is your biggest fear?

FLEA

Hold on, you don't even know these people yet.

Shaq behind Highston.

SHAQ

Flea is right. This is bullshit. Don't answer that.

FLEA

Just because this lady has a note pad doesn't mean she has the right to your most private thoughts.

DR. GABLER

Highston?

Highston looks over at Dr. Gabler.

HIGHSTON

Well, I would have to say...

FLEA

Run for it while you can Highston.

HIGHSTON

My biggest fear...

FLEA

Listen. There was this time I had lost my way a little bit, wasn't really inspired anymore. I was feeling constricted. Everyone was trying to tell me what to do. But they just didn't understand.

Highston leans forward, intense, empathetic. Flea jumps up and acts out his story.

FLEA (CONT'D)

So one night I put on the X album "Los Angeles" really loud, and in that moment I had a total epiphany about why I wanted to play rock music in the first place. I started jumping around and threw my plate against the wall!

SHAQ

Wow! Your plate!

FLEA

Yeah, I was smashing shit. My daughter was like, "Papa, what's the matter with you?" So sweet. I threw myself on the ground. I was on the verge of tears, but they were happy tears.

Highston smiles.

FLEA (CONT'D)

That's where you're at, Highston. Other people will try to control you, but you have to find what inspires you, find your own path. When it's the right path, you'll know it. Does this feel right?

Highston looks around at the others. He shakes his head.

FLEA (CONT'D)

Does that help?

SHAQ

It helped me. Damn that was good, Flea. I have to get that album.

HIGHSTON

Yeah, that was much better than the stripper bar story. This one is actually pertinent.

DANNY

Who's he talking to? This guy's nuts!

DR. GABLER

Highston?...

Highston realizes they're all staring at him.

FLEA

Just remember, ain't nothing wrong
with you...

DR. GABLER

We're all friends here Highston...

SHAQ

These people are not your
friends...

Highston looks at Shaq and Flea.

HIGHSTON

My biggest fear... is...

Highston looks at Danny and Molly, back to Dr. Gabler.

HIGHSTON (CONT'D)

... is...

Molly leans in, captivated.

HIGHSTON (CONT'D)

Is this.

DR. GABLER

I'm sorry?

Highston runs for the door and is gone. Shaq and Flea smile.
Molly claps.

FLEA

Yes, Highston!

16

INT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER HALLWAYS - DAY

16

Highston runs wildly through the labyrinth of corridors,
looking for an exit. He opens up a door and ALARMS SOUND.
He runs back down the main hallway as ATTENDANTS come running
after him.

Highston sprints around the corner, confused, looking every
which way. The attendants are joined by more staff. Flea
and Shaq approach from a side hallway.

FLEA

Highston, you're a voluntary day
patient! You don't have to run! I
was using the term loosely.

Shaq appears in front of Highston.

SHAQ

But if you insist on running, the
front door is that way!

Highston smiles at Shaq and Flea, sprints for the door.

FLEA

Run, Highston, run like
Phidippides!

SHAQ

Didn't he die?

FLEA

Oh shit, he did. Not a good
reference.

(yells)

Slow down, Highston!

17 EXT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER ACUTE HOSPITAL - DAY 17

Highston bursts out the door of the ACUTE HOSPITAL and down the sidewalk. The attendants come out, stop, watch him run off. Flea and Shaq go by them, flip them off.

18 EXT. PSYCHIATRIC CENTER GROUNDS - DAY 18

HIGHSTON RUNS ALONE down the long, tree-covered driveway. His expression slowly changes from happy to worried.

FLEA AND SHAQ NOW RUN BESIDE HIM. Highston notices them and they all keep running in tandem.

HIGHSTON

Now I'm in trouble.

FLEA

Don't worry, we'll figure it out.
You've got a long, full, marvelous
life in front of you.

Highston takes it in, nods.

HIGHSTON

Okay.

FLEA

So, do you like girls?

HIGHSTON
I believe I do, yes.

SHAQ
What did you think of Molly?

HIGHSTON
She seemed kind of scary and
scarred by the vagaries of life. I
liked her.

FLEA
Ah, it's going to be a wonderful
journey for you, brother.

CUT TO:

19 SHOT FROM BEHIND:

19

Highston keeps running, but now we see HE'S ALL ALONE AGAIN.
He reaches the end of the driveway and stops. He looks left,
looks right, looks straight ahead, unsure...

CUT TO BLACK