

ACT I

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON a SUITCASE, large and empty. Suddenly, wildly different types of clothes start to go in:

Suits, overalls, cowboy boots, beach shorts - it's like we're seeing a schizophrenic pack for vacation.

INT. MIDLAND HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

REVEAL the man packing - ROBERT ALLEN (33), lean and handsome, aged right to the border between southern boy charm and hard earned wisdom. Far from schizophrenic, he carefully considers each outfit before adding it to the rest.

His girlfriend, LINDSAY (23), the kind of approachable beauty who probably won't meet you for coffee, but will give you the nicest no you've ever heard, is fresh from the shower and still in a towel. She passes in and out adding toiletries.

LINDSAY  
Shower's still leaking.

ROBERT  
Call Tim.

Lindsay puts her arms around him, looks at the suitcase.

LINDSAY  
You really need all this for four days?

Robert flashes a smile so natural and magnetic it could make George Clooney jealous. He often does this in lieu of answering questions.

She starts to kiss him. He stops her.

ROBERT  
Honey, I have to get to the airport.

LINDSAY  
Okay.

She lets her towel fall.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)  
(tiny wave)  
Bye.

A beat. Then they're all over each other.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDLAND HOME - MORNING

An aged, paint peeling three bedroom on a street of the same. This is classic suburbia, Leave It To Beaver's neighborhood on life support, but still kicking.

Robert hoists the giant case into the trunk of a ten year old Honda in the driveway.

He sees his neighbor MATT (24), linebacker build gone soft, working on his car across the street. Robert waves.

ROBERT

I thought you set your alarm for noon.

MATT

Steph heard about that. She's been threatening to do drive-bys, make sure I'm being productive.

ROBERT

You still in for the party this weekend?

MATT

It's on my calendar as Free Beer At Robert's.

ROBERT

Actually, the beer's being paid for with what you lost to me at Poker Night.

MATT

I'll be sure to tell people that when they complain about me drinking straight from the tap.

Robert smiles, lowers the trunk. Lindsay is there when he does. He indicates the yard.

ROBERT

Hey, don't let that kid mow the lawn again.

LINDSAY

It's just five bucks and he looks so pathetic.

ROBERT

Then give him five bucks and leave the lawn. It relaxes me.

He notices her hand is behind her back.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You know, you don't have to give me something every time I go.

LINDSAY

Mom did it for my dad and they're  
still together.

ROBERT

Your dad left twice a year, not  
twice a week.

She shows the hand, reveals she's holding a box of cereal.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Cereal. You're right, this will  
bring us closer together.

LINDSAY

That's the wrapping. Present's  
inside.

(caught)

I was in a hurry.

She holds the box open. He reaches in, pulls out something  
along with a handful of Cheerios.

He looks. It's a plastic monkey keychain.

ROBERT

I'll cherish it always.

LINDSAY

See that you do.

He gives her a quick kiss, then-

ROBERT

Now, you're sure you can handle all  
this party stuff? I left a list of  
all the meat I want and I was  
thinking we could maybe get like a  
softball game together, so I don't  
know, get some bats and gloves and  
stuff.

She grins.

LINDSAY

Look how excited you are. You're  
like a kid. Should I get a  
moonbounce?

ROBERT

You should absolutely get a  
moonbounce. In fact, don't rent it.  
Buy it. I think you and I could get  
some mileage out of that.

She LAUGHS. He pulls her close. Kisses her goodbye. Takes his  
time. After-

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I love you.

LINDSAY  
(recovering)  
I'm convinced.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - MORNING

In a series of shots that will become familiar, we follow the suitcase as Robert drags it behind him.

He hands it to the GATE AGENT.

GATE AGENT  
Morning.

Robert flashes his smile.

INT. AIRPLANE - MORNING

Robert is in a middle seat, but it might as well be Letterman's couch the way the passengers near him lean in, engrossed.

ROBERT  
I'm still wiping my tears when he looks at the breathalyzer, kind of disappointed, and says, 'You're free to go, but pull yourself together. Whatever The Notebook is, it's no excuse for driving like that.'

General LAUGHTER.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

As people exit, the ones around Robert shake his hand, give him their business cards.

ROBERT  
Lunch, absolutely, next time I'm in Chicago.

INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM - MORNING

Robert stands among a group from the plane. They're watching him like a magician about to perform. And so he does.

As luggage comes down the conveyer, he eyes the group, eyes the bags, then points.

ROBERT  
Blue one has to be Ann.

The WOMAN (ANN) nods. General MURMURS of amazement. He spots another.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
John, that abused-looking brown thing is calling your name.

An OLDER GUY (JOHN) sheepishly steps forward, reaches for the bag.

JOHN  
It's an heirloom.

ROBERT  
I've seen steamer trunks in better shape.

LAUGHTER. An attractive YOUNG WOMAN steps up.

YOUNG WOMAN  
Do me.

Robert looks her over.

ROBERT  
Did we meet?

YOUNG WOMAN  
No.

Robert takes this in. A challenge.

ROBERT  
Okay.

He looks at the bags, spots a sleek, hardback rollerbag.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
I'm going to guess this one.

She's genuinely stunned. A beat, then she reaches for the bag. The small crowd CLAPS.

YOUNG WOMAN  
How did you know?

Again, the smile-

ROBERT  
It's what I do.

EXT. RENTAL CAR LOT - MORNING

Robert goes straight to the VIP area with the waiting cars.

CLOSE ON the trunk as he hoists his own big suitcase in.

CUT TO:

INT. RENTAL CAR - MORNING

Robert drives into a suburban neighborhood, pulls up outside a house, stops. He pulls out a notebook, looks it over.

EXT. RENTAL CAR - CONTINUOUS

We see the trunk open. Then Robert reaches in and we see the giant suitcase open. Hold on all the clothes, then...

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Robert, now in completely different clothes and looking like he might have just stepped off a golf course, rings the bell.

A MAN (ERIC) opens the door. He looks like he might have just finished eighteen himself. Robert extends his hand.

ROBERT  
Morning. Robert Allen.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Robert and the Eric are seated across from each other, a glass of lemon water before each of them.

Robert's in his element, a born talker in mid-story. It's like having Michael Jordan bring his game to your driveway. Eric is rapt.

ROBERT  
So I'm in the fairway at Augusta  
and this guy rolls up in his cart,  
asks if he can play through. I look  
up... it's Tiger Woods.

ERIC  
No way.

ROBERT  
Looks amazing. Looks like he's going to play a round and then go chop firewood or something. So I say, of course. Sure. And then I say, maybe, Mr. Woods, sir, in exchange, you wouldn't mind giving me a bit of advice. He says, sure. So I stand over my ball, he watches me slice it off into a sand trap, and I say, 'what do you think?' And he says, 'I'll let you in on a little secret. There's only one guaranteed way to take strokes off your game.' And I say, I'm all ears. And he smiles, and as he rolls away he says, 'get an eraser'.

Both men LAUGH. Robert takes a sip of his water.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Well, look, Eric, I could talk golf all day, but you're a busy guy, so let me get right to it. As I said, I'm here because we've got shares remaining in that mineral rights play we discussed.

ERIC  
Are we talking about oil?

ROBERT  
That's a great question. Sadly, the days of black geysers painting the Texas sky are more or less over. Oil these days is giant multinationals sucking every last drop out with newer and smaller straws. What we're talking about is rock. A very particular type of rock that most people think isn't worth anything, and never will be. But we've been working on a sort of underground blender that would swirl water and chemicals with the rock until what came out would be gas. Now, not many people know about the blender, and even less of them actually think it works.

ERIC  
That doesn't sound like the best start to a sales pitch.

ROBERT  
That's because it's not a sales pitch. It's the truth. Their doubt is our greatest asset, because it's what's allowing us to buy these parcels of land for next to nothing. But when we bring this thing on line these worthless rocks are going to be as valuable as gold, and these dirt cheap acres in the Hansen tract that we're buying now are going to be the engine that lets both of us tee up at Pebble Beach in the morning and count our money in the afternoon. It may not be as sexy as the idea of black gold, but I assure you, the money is just as green.

Robert flashes him that smile. A beat, then...

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eric leans across the table, signing a check. He finishes. The two men stand, smile, shake hands.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Robert stands in the doorway miming a swing as they exchange golf tips. They wave goodbye.

INT. RENTAL CAR

Robert gets in, puts the check away. He takes out his notebook, crosses one name off the list, looks at the next.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

ROBERT'S CAR PULLS UP outside a SMALL HOUSE.

HE PULLS UP outside a MANSION.

A TRAILER.

A TRACT HOME.

ROBERT WALKS to a front door in a SUIT.

HE WALKS to different door, now in JEANS AND A T SHIRT.

HE'S WALKING through a CORNFIELD with one guy.

HE'S ADMIRING a different guy's MUSCLE CAR ENGINE.

HE'S FLIPPING through another guy's YALE YEARBOOK.

ROBERT SITS across a simple table with a glass of water.

HE SITS across an antique table with a glass of scotch.

A TINY TABLE with a cup of coffee.

HE SIPS the various drinks, and we see him talking.

THE VARIOUS HOMEOWNERS nod, smile, LAUGH.

CHECKS ARE SIGNED on all the different tables.

ROBERT SHAKES hands with each of the homeowners.

ROBERT CROSSES names off his list.

END MONTAGE

INT. RENTAL CAR

As Robert drives a phone RINGS. We see that he actually has two different phones and two different wallets that he keeps separated with an organizer strapped across the passenger seat.

It's the IPHONE on the right hand side that's ringing. He answers.

ROBERT  
What? Clint, that's really not  
necessary.  
(beat)  
No.  
(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
I didn't say I wouldn't take it, I  
just said it wasn't necessary.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Again we're following his big suitcase until he hands it to the agent with a smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. TARMAC - AFTERNOON

This time, Robert steps out directly onto the tarmac where a sleek Gulfstream G5 waits with its stairs down.

CUT TO:

INT. G5

Robert sits in luxury, sipping a cocktail and looking out the window as little people and places float by beneath.

CUT TO:

INT. BMW - EVENING

Robert drives out of the airport, past a sign that reads: WELCOME TO HOUSTON.

INT. BMW - LATER

A phone RINGS. We see that the organizer is back on the seat beside him, the phones and wallets in their place.

This time it's an old NOKIA phone on the left that rings.

ROBERT  
Hey, Linds. Absolutely. Couldn't  
have gone better. Yeah. I'm  
actually just checking into my  
hotel.

But as he says this we see he's pulling into the driveway of a MODEST MANSION. In Houston, 5000 sq ft of eaves, gables, and brick is still considered modest. He pulls to a stop.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Of course. Hey. I'll see you this  
weekend.  
(beat)  
I love you.

He hangs up, then puts the Nokia and the wallet from the left side of the organizer in the glovebox. He locks it.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON the giant suitcase as we follow it up the manicured sidewalk.

EXT. HOUSTON HOME - EVENING

Robert stops as his NEIGHBOR grabs his mail across the street. Robert waves.

ROBERT  
Evening.

The neighbor completely ignores him, steps into his garage and immediately lowers the door, ending the conversation before it begins.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
(to himself)  
Good talk.

Robert pulls out his keys, monkey keychain and all, and unlocks the front door.

INT. HOUSTON HOME - CONTINUOUS

Robert steps into the well appointed space. A beat, then...

In walks CAT (30), classy, gorgeous, former Miss Texas runner up whose ambitions and abilities now go well beyond trophies.

CAT  
Welcome home.

Robert lights up at the sight of her. Without a word he pulls her in, lets a deep kiss do the talking. When he lets her go-

ROBERT  
Seven more leases.

Now her face lights up.

CAT  
The Hansen tract?

Robert nods. Cat beams, not just excited, but proud.

CAT (CONT'D)  
That's incredible.

She leans in, WHISPERS-

CAT (CONT'D)  
I think this might call for a private celebration.

INT. HOUSTON HOME - BEDROOM - LATER

Robert unpacks. He sets the Iphone and wallet we saw on the right side of the organizer on his dresser.

CAT  
And the alarm is still doing that  
thing where it beeps for no  
apparent reason.

ROBERT  
Did you ever call Tim?

As Robert sets his keys on the dresser, Cat stops.

CAT  
Who's Tim?

Robert stares at his keys for a moment, catches sight of the little plastic monkey keychain. He corrects himself.

ROBERT  
I'm sorry, I meant, Mike. Did you  
ever call Mike?

He turns to Cat.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
Nevermind. I'll call him tomorrow.

He looks at her admiringly. She smiles.

CAT  
So. Seven.

He nods slowly as he moves in. They kiss. He leads her toward the bed. As she GIGGLES under his touch-

PAN and HOLD on his keys.

It's subtle, but beyond the plastic monkey we notice that about half of them have little blue marks on them, the other half have green.

We PUSH IN on the keys, until all we can see is the single ring that they all share. Off that image...

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES

ACT II

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - MORNING

NOTE: ROBERT GOES BY BOB WHEN HE'S IN HOUSTON. FROM HERE ON THE SCRIPT WILL SIMPLY REFER TO HIM AS BOB.

Bob is having brunch with Cat and his in-laws. DREW (26), former UT frat guy who's been lost since graduating to a world where keg stands count for so little, turns to the waiter.

DREW  
Whiskey. Straight up.

TRAMMELL (32), Brooks Brothers suit, might as well have Wharton MBA stamped on his forehead, gawks at his younger brother.

TRAMMELL  
It's ten o'clock. In the morning.

Drew ignores him, looks toward the end of the table where their father, CLINT (60), the kind of classic, handsome, boots and jeans Texan you see in the movies or the White House, eyes him skeptically.

DREW  
(nervous)  
It's not a hangover cure. I mean, it is, but it's like real. Like medicine, from a doctor. Only...

He pulls an unlabeled plastic bottle of clear sparkling liquid from his bag and sets it on the table.

DREW (CONT'D)  
... in soda form.

Blank stares. He presses on.

DREW (CONT'D)  
It's amazing stuff, Dad. I've been testing it all week.

TRAMMELL  
Testing?

DREW  
I've never felt better. I mean, never felt better after drinking all night. I haven't missed a single day of work.

TRAMMELL  
Work?

The waiter returns with the whiskey. Drew opens the bottle with a SWISH, adds some of the soda.

DREW

See, the brilliant thing is, you can actually mix it with the alcohol so you're taking the medicine while you're drinking.

He passes the glass towards his father. Clint stops him.

CLINT

It's... a little early for me, son.

Drew holds the drink out a moment, embarrassed. Bob reaches for it.

BOB

Send it over here. I'll give it a shot, Drew.

Drew, thankful for the bail out, hands the drink to Bob. Bob takes a sip.

His face immediately registers disaster. He tries to hide it but can't help COUGHING and SPUTTERING as he chokes it down.

Clint LAUGHS. Bob does his best to put on a smile.

BOB (CONT'D)

Well... if you put that in my drinks I definitely would not get drunk.

DREW

See.

TRAMMELL

He's saying it tastes too terrible to ingest, Drew.

DREW

What? No he's not. Are you, Bob?

BOB

I'm sure they're working on the flavor.

CLINT

What are you looking for, son?

Drew nods. He was working up to this.

DREW

They just need another half million to get things up and-

TRAMMELL

Uh- no.

DREW

This is an effective, uh - I mean, they've got a business plan and -

TRAMMELL  
No.

DREW  
It's like - venture capital.

TRAMMELL  
We're not venture capitalists,  
Drew. We're an oil company. One  
that's spent the last three  
quarters in the red.

CLINT  
I'm afraid he's right, Drew. In  
fact, that's why I've asked you all  
to be here this morning. As you  
know, times have been tough of late  
and some of the bets we've made  
haven't panned out. Frankly, I  
think it's time to try a fresh  
approach.

Trammell is suddenly beaming.

TRAMMELL  
Dad, I think that's incredibly  
wise. I've got a number of ways I  
think we can boost revenue and-

CLINT  
Hold on son. It's not that I don't  
believe in those degrees of yours,  
Lord knows I paid enough for them.  
But Bob over here, without a high  
priced degree to speak of, with no  
sales staff or office tower, or  
even a father in law who thought he  
had a prayer, has spent the last  
five years doing what no one else  
seems to be able to do: making  
money. That's called building  
something out of nothing, and it's  
how we used to do it in this  
country and this company. And if  
we're going to right our ship, I  
think we're going to have to learn  
to do it again. Which is why, Bob,  
I'd like you to consider joining  
Thatcher Oil.

Everyone is stunned. Cat looks jubilant. Trammell is beside  
himself.

TRAMMELL  
Dad, we need to discuss this.

Clint isn't even looking at Trammell, just Bob.

BOB  
Sir, that's very generous. I-

CLINT  
Don't act surprised, Bob. When someone starts sending the jet to fetch you, you know you're being wooed.

Bob smiles.

BOB  
Fair enough.

CLINT  
Whatever you're looking for, salary and all that nonsense, it can be worked out. I don't mean for this to be about money. It's about you finally, fully, becoming a part of this family.

Bob appears genuinely humbled.

BOB  
Can I sleep on it?

CLINT  
Just don't sleep long. As Cat's pointed out a million times, I should have done this a long time ago. Having finally figured that out, the last thing I want to do is wait.

EXT. VALET STAND - MORNING

Cat is bursting out of her skin as they wait.

CAT  
I'm so proud of you! To finally have you working with Daddy, this is everything I've been hoping for.

BOB  
Let's not jump the gun. We've got our own thing, you know. I need to really think about this.

Cat looks at him, realizing for the first time that he's seriously on the fence.

CAT  
But, honey, you'd be perfect, and they really need someone who-

Clint HONKS from behind the wheel of a large pickup.

BOB  
Go on. We'll talk about it later.

She kisses him.

CAT  
 You know I trust your judgement,  
 but this would really mean  
 everything to me.

She heads for Clint's truck. Once she's gone, Bob pulls the Nokia phone from his left pocket: 2 Messages.

EXT. THATCHER RANCH - DAY

A deep sky and towering clouds swirl over a vast undulating landscape. Clint and Cat CLIP CLOP through on horseback like figures wandering in a postcard.

CLINT  
 Forget just putting you in the ground. They'll blast you into space for a price. Press you into a diamond. Read the other day, I'm not making this up, they can turn you into lead for a pencil. How would you like that? Get to write up shopping lists with your dead relatives.

Cat eyes him. They ride in silence for a moment.

CAT  
 You're not... sick or something are you?

Clint LAUGHS.

CLINT  
 Jesus. Turn sixty and you so much as mention death everybody thinks you're about to kick. I'm just making conversation. I've got at least another sixty before you turn me into anything.

CAT  
 Good.

They ride to the top of a small rise, stop. From here, the views stretch on for days. They drink it in without a word.

After a moment Cat senses Clint's eyes on her. She turns to find him staring. She seems to understand, lets him look.

CLINT  
 You dodged a bullet, you know.

CAT  
 How's that?

CLINT  
 Don't think my features would have looked good on a woman. Lucky for you, you look just like her.

Cat turns back to the view. Clint lingers on her, then looks around.

CLINT (CONT'D)  
This was her favorite spot.

CAT  
I know.

A long silence. Only the clouds move.

CLINT  
I don't think your brothers even remember.

CAT  
They may have forgotten the exact day, but they remember, trust me.

CLINT  
364 days a year I'm pretty much past it. Just this one I wish... hell, I'd settle for a pencil.

Cat smiles. A long beat. They change the subject with their eyes.

CAT  
Thank you.

CLINT  
Nothing to thank me for. You've been campaigning for him since the day you met. Just took me longer to listen than I care to admit. Got all wrapped up in wanting my little girl to go to a guy from money with obvious prospects for making more of it.

CAT  
We tried that the first time, remember?

CLINT  
Yes. And I was wrong about that one too. Apparently a good family name does not prevent you from being an ass.

CAT  
Having Trammell should have taught you that.

Clint LAUGHS.

CAT (CONT'D)  
You know, if I hadn't quit school to marry that moron you could be working with me instead of Tram.

CLINT  
As far as I'm concerned only two good things came out of your first marriage: Grace, and the fact that it kept you away from the business. It's an ugly world where people do ugly things, me included. I've never wanted that for you.

CAT  
But now you want it for my husband?

CLINT  
Nope. I want Bob to keep doing just what he's doing. If there's heads to be cracked, I'll handle it. Lord knows I've spent a lifetime practicing.

CAT  
I just hope...

CLINT  
You think he might not take it?

CAT  
He's got pride. You guys didn't want him before. He remembers that.

CLINT  
Can't blame him. If it were me, I'd say you can stick that job right up your ass, old man. But I think Bob's going to say yes.

CAT  
Why's that?

CLINT  
Cause I think he might just be a better man than I am.

INT. THATCHER OIL - DREW'S OFFICE

Drew, feet on his desk, watches Sportscenter on his office TV. Trammell sticks his head in.

Drew jerks upright, makes an effort to change the channel.

DREW  
Oh hey, I was uh - which channel is CNBC?

TRAMMELL  
We need to talk about this Bob thing.

DREW  
Um. Sure. I'm free.

TRAMMELL  
(already leaving)  
I'm not. Meet me at Tate's thing.

INT. HOUSTON HOME - FOYER

Bob is heading out with his big bag and finds GRACE, 14, cute but plain on purpose, waiting by the door with her own bags. She smiles.

GRACE  
Bob is back.

He drops his things, gives her a hug.

BOB  
Just barely.  
(re: her bags)  
You headed to your dad's?

GRACE  
Yeah. Just for the night.

BOB  
Oh-

Bob grabs for his stuff, pulls out a copy of *The Corrections*, hands it to her.

BOB (CONT'D)  
Took a while, but you weren't  
kidding. Awesome.

GRACE  
I know, right?

BOB  
What else you got?

She reaches into her bag. Hesitates.

GRACE  
Now, don't judge.

She pulls out one of the *Twilight* books.

BOB  
Vampires? Isn't that a little  
mainstream pop culture for you?

GRACE  
What can I say. Sometimes the sheep  
know the way to a teenage girl's  
heart.

She holds the book out.

BOB  
My days as a teenage girl are long  
gone. Pass.

She just keeps holding it out. A long beat. Finally, he takes it.

BOB (CONT'D)  
I'll cover it with a Newsweek or something.

Suddenly, Cat walks in from the garage. Grace's face immediately sours at the sight of her mother.

Cat however, is still beaming.

CAT  
Did he tell you the good news?

GRACE  
What? Are they opening a new country club?

CAT  
Bob's joining the company.

Grace looks at Bob as if he's suddenly betrayed something sacred.

BOB  
We're... discussing it.

A HONK from outside. Grace starts to gather her stuff.

GRACE  
Congratulations, mom. I guess you've finally turned him into a Thatcher.

Grace steps out and heads for the waiting car. Bob holds at the door for a moment, watching a Hispanic lawn care team attack the lawn. He SIGHS.

Cat joins him, looks over his shoulder.

CAT  
Why does she hate me and love you?

BOB  
Because she knows it drives you crazy, and being a teenager, that's her sole objective.

He grabs his own large bag, gives her a kiss.

BOB (CONT'D)  
I've got an appointment. I'll call you later.

INT. BMW - AFTERNOON

Bob drives through a part of town where luxury cars do not tread. He pulls into a giant strip mall anchored by a failed Wal-Mart, and rolls to a stop outside a completely anonymous storefront.

INT. PETRO PARTNERS

Bob unlocks the door, steps in. On the ground are stacks of mail addressed to PETRO PARTNERS. He picks some up.

The space around him is almost completely empty, save a desk with an up to date computer, several cell phones, and tons of papers.

A VOICE -

VOICE (O.C.)  
About time. Where have you been?

Bob looks up to find JOHN (62), white haired, a hard edged handsome, coming out of the bathroom.

JOHN  
Wondered if the law hadn't finally  
caught up to you.

John flashes a smile so smooth and familiar he can only be Bob's -

BOB  
Sorry, Dad. Been a crazy morning.

JOHN  
You're telling me. It's starting to  
hit the fan, boy. Got one who's  
demanding to see the well.

Bob nods, distant.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Did you hear me? I got one who  
wants to -

BOB  
Thatcher offered me a position.  
Wants me to help turn things  
around.

John's jaw hits the floor. He wraps Bob in a hug.

JOHN  
You're in! Sweet Mary, you're in!

He lets Bob go, still grinning. Bob seems less enthused.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
What's wrong? This is what we've  
been working for.

Bob nods.

BOB  
I know. It's just... I mean, it's  
actually a good job, you know.

JOHN  
What the hell does that matter?

BOB  
I just think... I mean, what if I just, you know, took the job? For real.

JOHN  
For real? Real? What do you know about real? You think they hired you because of all your expertise in oil and gas? Because you've been out making a fortune selling wells in the 'Hansen Tract'? Because of your magic blender?

John drags Bob to the door, opens it so they're staring at the vast blacktop parking lot. He points to it.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
That's the Hansen Tract right there, son. Those are your wells. You understand? That's what you do. That's who you are. And you're better at it than anyone I've ever met in my life. But don't start fooling yourself. You're no more a real oil and gas man than that Ford over there is a real drilling rig. This is what we've been waiting for, son. What do we always say? When you're asking for money, it's small time. When they're offering it, they're yours. Boy, they're handing you the keys to the safe.

BOB  
What about Cat?

JOHN  
What about her? She's not your real wife. She's not your family. She's the mark. This was never about a marriage, it was about worming your way into a multimillion dollar company so we could clean it out. Look, we've run out a lot of rope on this one, and I know it gets confusing when you're inside for so long, but don't kid yourself. I'm your family. I'm the one who loves you for what you are, not what you pretend to be.

He looks Bob in the eyes.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Your mom and I, we had a shot like this before she got sick. When I lost her, I didn't think I'd ever get another one, and frankly I didn't care.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)  
But somehow we're here, and if it  
can't be her, there's no one in the  
world I'd rather cross the finish  
line with than you.

Bob absorbs this. John pats Bob on the shoulders.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Now let's figure out what to do  
about this idiot who wants to see  
the well and then we'll start  
talking about how to play the  
Thatcher angle.

A beat, then Bob nods.

BOB  
Sure. Just let me make a call.

His dad flashes the family grin, then steps inside as Bob  
pulls out his Iphone. Bob dials.

When he speaks, he sounds defeated.

BOB (CONT'D)  
Cat? I wanted you to be the first  
to know. I'm taking it.

As we hear her joy on the other end of the phone, Bob stares  
out at the largely empty parking lot, wishing he and it were  
something else.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

INT. AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Again we're following Bob's big suitcase until he hands it to the agent with a smile.

INT. AIRPLANE

Bob is reading by the window seat when an attractive young businesswoman (SARAH) eyes the seat beside him.

SARAH  
Looks like I'm your B.

Bob looks momentarily confused. She indicates the seat. He realizes he's left his jacket in it, quickly pulls it back.

BOB  
Sorry. Please.

As she sits -

SARAH  
Sarah.

He extends his hand.

BOB  
Robert.

Noticing his copy of Twilight-

SARAH  
Teenage vampires?

BOB  
Bookstore was out of Harry Potter.

SARAH  
(grinning)  
What do you sell, Robert?  
(off his look)  
Sit on planes half the week, you  
get an eye.

BOB  
I'm in oil and gas. You?

SARAH  
Pharmaceuticals.

BOB  
You headed home or away?

SARAH  
Away. You?

BOB  
Kind of in between.

She smiles.

SARAH  
Aren't we all.

CUT TO:

INT. MIDLAND SUPERMARKET

ANGLE ON Party Hats as a hand tosses them into a cart.

REVEAL Lindsay and STEPHANIE (STEPH)(23), shopping for supplies. Steph's cute with sharp edges. If she'd grown up in New York she'd have a job as a critic. Since she grew up in Midland she has a husband.

The husband in question is Matt, the slightly doughy neighbor we met in the open, who appears and tosses large slabs of meat in their cart with a smile.

MATT  
(proud of himself)  
But wait, there's more.

Steph shakes her head as he takes off-

LINDSAY  
At least he's available to help.

STEPH  
Oh yes, having him help with the shopping is way better than him having a job. So what's the point of this whole party anyway?

LINDSAY  
No idea. Robert just woke up one day and got all excited about a big neighborhood BBQ. He loves this kind of stuff.

STEPH  
Nope. You guys have been together almost two years. He's got something up his sleeve. Something round.

She holds up her own wedding ring.

STEPH (CONT'D)  
Although you'll probably be able to see the actual diamonds on yours.

LINDSAY  
What? No. We're not into all the like, labels and formality and whatever. We love each other and we're happy. That's all we need.

STEPH

Please, you guys are so perfect  
you're like one of those tabloid  
couples with one name. You should  
be Linbert or Robsay. If you just  
keep being in love without getting  
married you're going to make the  
rest of us look like idiots.

As Lindsay starts to answer, Matt suddenly rolls up with an entire cart packed with different beers.

MATT

Ta-da. See this way we get a  
variety.

They've achieved a shorthand that allows Steph to ask if he's an idiot simply by raising an eyebrow.

MATT (CONT'D)

Or we could just get a keg.  
(figuring it out)  
We'll get a keg.

He wheels his beer cart away. Steph turns to Lindsay.

STEPH

If you don't get married how will  
you ever understand my pain?

EXT. DRILLING RIG - DAY

Bob rolls up to a busy rig in his rental and steps out. He eyes the workers, looking for the man to talk to.

NEW ANGLE as Bob walks up to the FOREMAN with his hand out.

BOB

Hi there. Ted Lanford. I'm a  
location scout. Got a director and  
a producer looking to shoot a movie  
out here, I wanted them to get a  
look at this place. We won't get in  
your hair, just need to be able to  
show them around. And the  
director's a little skittish, so  
probably better if no one talks to  
him. That won't be a problem, will  
it?

The Foreman pulls back his hand to see two hundred dollar bills in it. He looks up. A beat, then-

FOREMAN

You need hard hats?

BOB

Got our own, thanks.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - LATER

Bob, now wearing a hard hat that reads Petro Partners is loading a briefcase on the hood of his rental. On top of thick stacks of blank paper he places real money.

When he's done, it looks like the briefcase is full of money. Satisfied, he closes it.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - LATER

Bob carries the briefcase as he walks around the rig with LARRY, the nervous investor. He points to various things.

BOB  
My understanding is that they're driving through 8000 feet today and they'll start their first tests with the blender in the next couple weeks or so.

Suddenly a pickup truck pulls up right behind them. Bob stops, turns.

Out of the driver's side comes his dad, John, also wearing a Petro Partners hardhat.

BOB (CONT'D)  
Oh, perfect, here's our foreman, Bill.

John shakes the investors hand.

JOHN  
Nice to meet you, sir. You like a little tour?

LARRY  
Yes. Very much.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - MOMENTS LATER

John walks Bob and Larry through the site, pointing to this and that, speaking with authority.

True to his word, the real Foreman keeps his head down and completely ignores the visitors.

EXT. DRILLING RIG - LATER

The little group is back at John's truck, maps and geological reports spread out across the hood. John's finishing his spiel.

JOHN  
Certainly no sure things, but from the samples we've seen so far? This thing's a home run.

Larry seems reassured, but iffy.

BOB

None of which matters, Larry, if you're not comfortable. And frankly, you're right to ask questions. No shortage of scam artists looking to seize on some little nugget in the news and make a quick buck out here. This is a relationship business, one that's built on faith and trust. And frankly, those things are a lot more important to me than money. I can sell your share a thousand different times, but I only get to be your friend once. So I'd like to buy you out. Give you back your entire initial investment, just part ways. No harm, no foul, we're still on each other's Christmas card lists.

Bob takes the briefcase and slaps it on the hood of the truck. He opens it to reveal what appear to be stacks of money.

BOB (CONT'D)

Didn't even want you wondering if the check was any good. Wanted you to have something you could take straight to the bank.

He closes the briefcase, hands it to Larry. This is a huge gamble, but Bob is as cool as they come. A long beat.

Instead of reaching for the case, Larry puts up his hands.

LARRY

That's really not necessary. I just wanted to do some checking, you know? But you've more than satisfied my concerns. I'd really like to stay invested.

Bob keeps the case out.

BOB

You sure, Larry? I don't want to risk our friendship over this.

LARRY

I'm very sure, Robert. In fact, based on what I've seen, I'd really like to buy two more shares. If they're still available, and you'll have me.

Larry looks at Bob beseechingly. Suddenly this is further than Bob meant to go. He stammers for a beat, seems like he might balk. Then John steps in.

JOHN  
Frankly, that's probably about the best investment you'll ever make. I just wish I had the funds to put in myself.

NEW ANGLE as Larry finishes writing a check for 100,000 dollars on the hood of the pickup. He tears it off, hands it to Bob.

LARRY  
Thank you, Robert.

Bob shakes his hand.

BOB  
Sure, Larry. Be well.

Larry waves, then gets in his car and goes.

John looks at Bob.

JOHN  
I'd say I taught you everything you know, but you've got moves I've never seen. That was a pleasure to watch. They start begging you to take their money it's hard to even feel sorry for them.

He pats Bob on the shoulders.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
All right. I gotta return the truck. Where you headed?

Bob's a little bit dazed.

BOB  
Midland.

JOHN  
Midland? What the hell for? Haven't you milked that place dry?

BOB  
I just like the place.

JOHN  
Well, you better watch yourself.  
Clock's ticking out there.

His dad heads for the truck. Bob stares down at the check.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT

Bob still staring at the check as he sits nursing a drink. It's clear he's conflicted about it.

Suddenly, Sarah, from the airplane earlier, is standing next to his table.

SARAH  
Look at this. Same flight. Same hotel. Our travel agents have very similar taste.  
(re: the open seat)  
You meeting someone?

Bob smoothly pockets the check.

BOB  
No. Something wrong with my room. Hotel's buying me drinks while they fix it.

SARAH  
Sounds like a serious inconvenience. You might need help if you're going to get your money's worth.

Happy for a distraction, Bob gestures to the chair.

BOB  
By all means, let's teach them a lesson.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - LATER

There are several empty glasses before them and big smiles plastered across their faces.

BOB  
No, no, no, you actually mix it with the drink. So you don't get drunk.

SARAH  
(confused)  
Then... why drink at all?

He looks at her, totally stumped.

BOB  
I have no idea.

The both LAUGH.

A quiet beat as things settle. Then-

SARAH  
Why didn't you just ask for a different room?

BOB  
I did. Booked solid.

Long beat.

SARAH  
I've got more room than I can use.  
You should come up.

Bob smiles. He subtly TAPS his wedding ring on the table.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
(re: the ring)  
Platinum?

BOB  
I don't know. I'll ask my wife.

Sarah smiles, undeterred.

SARAH  
Don't worry. I'm not looking to  
steal you. I've been married. Not  
for me.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - INTERCUT

Bob is standing in the corner of the room on his Nokia. We hear Lindsay on the phone.

LINDSAY  
(filter)  
And I'm pretty sure we got all the  
meat in Midland. And Matt says he's  
got a bunch of softball stuff.

Lindsay's voice fades out as Bob nods along.

SARAH (V.O.)  
All marriage really means is that  
you take a person you used to want  
to tear the clothes off of and  
agree to exchange daily reports on  
minutia. Who did and said what to  
who, how it went, what has to be  
done and said tomorrow.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE

Sarah looks across the table.

SARAH  
I still make a call like that  
everyday, but it's to my office.  
The only difference between work  
and marriage is that one of them  
pays.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Bob is on his Iphone now. It's Cat's voice we hear.

CAT  
(filter)  
And I just have to sit there and  
smile because God forbid I bring up  
whether or not it's a good idea to  
keep a fourteen year old up until  
2am on a school night.

Bob begins to take off his tie.

BOB (V.O.)  
What about being a part of  
something that's real? That lasts?

SARAH (V.O.)  
Overrated, believe me. Besides,  
studies show couples are never  
nicer to one another than when one  
of them has something to hide.

Bob looks at the bathroom door. It's closed, a little crack  
of light at the bottom letting us know someone's inside.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE

Bob looks at Sarah.

BOB  
Sounds like you've got this all  
worked out.

SARAH  
What do you expect? I sell for a  
living. And so do you, so let's  
just look at the cost benefit of it  
all.

She reaches for his leg under the table.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
Do you find me attractive?

Bob nods slowly.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
You think we'll ever see each other  
again?

Bob shakes his head.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
Any reason anyone besides us would  
ever have to know?

BOB  
No.

SARAH  
Then give me one good reason why we  
shouldn't continue this  
conversation upstairs with more  
drinks and fewer clothes.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Bob is talking on the Nokia to Lindsay.

BOB  
I love you.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Bob is on the Iphone to Cat.

BOB  
I love you.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Bob starts to unbutton his shirt. He eyes the bathroom door.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE

Sarah leans in, puts her hand on Bob's, covering his ring.

SARAH  
One good reason.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Bob walks toward the bathroom door as he finishes unbuttoning  
his shirt.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE

Bob flashes that magnetic smile. He takes her hand, kisses  
it, and stands.

BOB  
I can think of two.

He walks away, alone.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Bob opens the bathroom door revealing A MAINTENANCE MAN just finishing up. As the man gathers his things and moves out-

MAINTENANCE MAN  
My apologies. Should be working now, but the hot water might take a few minutes.

BOB  
Cold will be just fine.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

EXT. TIFFANY'S - MORNING

Bob waits as a CLERK unlocks the door.

CLERK  
Good morning.

INT. TIFFANY'S - MOMENTS LATER

Bob looks over a case of diamond necklaces, points to a monster.

EXT. TIFFANY'S - MOMENTS LATER

Bob walks out armed with a little blue bag and a giant smile.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT

We're following Bob's giant suitcase again as he hands it off to the agent.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPLANE

Bob is again holding court among the other passengers. They LAUGH.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT

Bob drives past a sign that says WELCOME TO MIDLAND in his aged little Honda.

EXT. MIDLAND HOME

Bob pulls up, opens the door, drinks in the scene. His house, his neighborhood, his lawn. Without even going inside, he starts to unbutton his shirt.

EXT. MIDLAND HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Now topless, Bob pushes his lawnmower across the yard, making perfect little lines. Lindsay steps onto the front porch and shakes her head like he's crazy.

He shrugs and smiles in a way that says, 'It's just the way I am.' It's as content as we've seen him look.

EXT. STADIUM - DAY

Practice. Trammell and Drew are focused on Trammell's son, the quarterback, TATE THATCHER, as he zings a ball downfield.

Drew WHISTLES with admiration.

TRAMMELL

Fox Sports has him as the top prospect in the state. That's as a junior. Talked to Pete Carroll yesterday.

Drew watches in reverie.

DREW

I remember those days. God, wouldn't you give like, anything, to go back? Just for a while?

TRAMMELL

(eyes on the field)  
You never had days like that.  
(redirecting)  
About this Bob thing. We need to get on the same page.

Drew is only half listening, his eyes now on the practicing cheerleaders.

DREW

I thought it sounded like a good thing. Bob's been doing well.

TRAMMELL

Maybe so, maybe not, but that's no reason to jump the line. We've put in our time. What do we get?

Drew shrugs, unsure.

TRAMMELL (CONT'D)

So what if he is making money? Dad used to crush guys like Bob, not hire them. The mere fact that he wants to bring him in makes me think he's losing his edge.

DREW

Dad? He punched out a roughneck for stealing pipe three weeks ago. Ask that dude if he's going soft.

Trammell's face says that for all his talk, Clint's still not someone he wants to tangle with.

DREW (CONT'D)

Besides, what's Dad supposed to do? Bob's family.

TRAMMELL

Yeah? Ask Uncle Roy if that matters.

DREW

Uncle Roy's dead.  
(walked into that one)  
Oh.

TRAMMELL  
Look, I'll figure all this out. All  
I need from you is to know that  
you'll support me.

Drew looks at Trammell, surprised by the request.

DREW  
(genuine)  
We're brothers, Tram. Of course.

A WHISTLE from the field as practice breaks. As Tate steps off he gets a hug from a KNOCKOUT CHEERLEADER.

Drew sees this and smiles.

DREW (CONT'D)  
Damn! Is that his girlfriend?

Trammell stands, collects his stuff.

TRAMMELL  
Yeah.

Drew shakes his head in appreciation.

DREW  
Just like his Uncle Drew.

As Trammell heads out.

TRAMMELL  
Trust me, we're not going to let  
that happen.

Drew, blindsided, waits a few beats then flips the bird to his brother's back as he walks away.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Grace slides over to Tate, both of them eying the stands.

GRACE  
Is that Uncle Drew flipping off  
your dad?

TATE  
Looks that way.

GRACE  
Why are they here?

TATE  
Dad shows up to watch a couple days  
a week. I guess Drew came out to  
flip him off.

Tate's girlfriend KAYLA (the cheerleader) looks at Grace.

KAYLA  
Hey Grace.

Grace just nods, intimidated by the older, prettier girl.

GRACE  
(to Tate)  
You ready?

TATE  
Yeah.  
(to Kayla)  
Call you later.

He kisses her on the cheek. Grace watches with a tinge of jealousy. Tate may be her cousin, but that doesn't mean she doesn't eye him just like all the other girls do.

CUT TO:

INT. TATE'S BMW - AFTERNOON

Tate's behind the wheel of a brand new BMW. Grace stares out the window.

TATE  
I guess you heard about Bob?

GRACE  
Yeah. Sucks.

TATE  
Why? Now everyone will be working together.

GRACE  
Exactly. The only good thing this a-hole family ever did was shut Bob out. All their stupid country clubs, and dinner parties, and spoiled brats demanding new cars the day they turn sixteen, he wasn't even allowed near that crap. That's why he stayed cool, normal.

An awkward silence.

TATE  
I didn't ask for the car, you know. Dad just gave it to me.

He looks at her for reassurance.

GRACE  
I know.

Off her attempt to absolve him with a smile-

EXT. SOFTBALL FIELD - DAY

CRACK! Bob rips a liner into left field. As people CHEER he drops his bat and runs for first.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

BOB RUNS past second base. The players converge on him and point him back. He returns to second where's he's forced to down a beer from a keg just behind the base before stumbling on to third.

LINDSAY THROWS the ball to Steph who chases Matt down between bases. When she gets close, he starts to run in circles, makes her chase him into the outfield.

BOB CHUCKS the ball from the outfield to home plate where a LITTLE GIRL playing catcher scoops it up just in time to see Matt barreling down on her from third.

The girl closes her eyes. At the last second, instead of sliding into her, Matt hoists her up with both arms, holding her at a distance where she can't reach him with the ball, and leaps on home plate with her in his arms.

People crowd around, LAUGHING, debating, as Matt accepts a victory beer from Lindsay. Off him hoisting it high-

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDLAND HOME - EVENING

It's a party in full swing. Family, friends, the odd party hat.

Matt mans the keg, refilling his own glass between pours for others.

Yes, there's actually a moonbounce, with kids of various ages jumping and flopping with glee.

Steph and Lindsay chat up a group of their girlfriends. Lindsay looks over and winks at-

Bob, at the center of it all, lording over a grill and perfectly tamed lawn, a man in the midst of suburban ecstacy.

He distributes meat fresh from the fire to people as they step near.

Lindsay's PARENTS (CAROL and ED), salt of the Earth types with warm grins, each hold out a bun for Bob to fill.

ED  
(re: the burgers)  
Lookin' good, Robert.

BOB  
I can't do 'em half as good as you  
Ed. Just trying not to set myself  
on fire back here.

Ed LAUGHS as Bob serves him up.

CAROL  
Looks like you're still taking good care of our little girl.

BOB  
I try, but somehow Lindsay always ends up taking care of me.

CAROL  
Now I know that's not true.  
Frankly, you're taking care of all of us.

ED  
Yes, indeed. We got our latest statements. Looks like things are going great with the wells.

And like that we see the first dent in Bob's perfect mood.

BOB  
Uh, yeah. Just plugging away.

ED  
We just feel so fortunate to have been able to get in on the ground floor of such an opportunity. Our friends too. We all call each other every time we get our new balances.

CAROL  
You've made Ed the most popular guy at the Lodge.

Now it just plain stings. Bob's looking for an exit.

BOB  
You know what, I'm just going to grab a beer.

ED  
All right, son. Enjoy.

Bob steps away and quickly heads for the beer line. He stares blankly into space.

MATT  
Beer, Chief?

Startled, Bob looks up. Matt holds out a beer.

MATT (CONT'D)  
For the man of the hour. Where would we be without him?

Bob takes the beer.

EXT. MIDLAND HOME - BACKYARD - NIGHT

It's late, things have started to wind down. Matt and Bob sit at a table watching Lindsay and Steph still dancing.

As the song ends the girls head for the keg. Steph pours, hands one to Lindsay.

STEPH  
One more song and then we hit the moonbounce.

Lindsay LAUGHS, then casually hands the beer back.

LINDSAY  
Actually, I'm just going to stick with water.

STEPH  
Come on. What kind of person throws a bash in their own backyard and then spends the whole time drinking-

And then Steph gets it.

STEPH (CONT'D)  
No WAY!

Lindsay tries to keep a lid on it, but can't help but smile.

LINDSAY  
Shhh. It's very, very, very early.  
You can't say anything. I haven't even told Robert.

Steph gives her a giant hug.

STEPH  
Congratulations! Oh my God, this makes me want to go sleep with my husband.

Lindsay LAUGHS.

STEPH (CONT'D)  
When are you going to tell him?

LINDSAY  
I don't know. I want to wait a little, make sure it's for real.

Steph can't contain herself. She starts jumping up and down.

ANGLE ON Matt and Bob as they watch the girls jumping and SCREECHING before running to the moonbounce.

MATT  
I swear, those girls bring out the crazy in each other.

He finishes his beer. Both he and Bob seem distant, contemplative.

MATT (CONT'D)  
Good party, man. Almost makes this place bearable.

Bob doesn't say anything. He's just watching Lindsay and Steph jumping and LAUGHING.

MATT (CONT'D)  
Gonna start looking for work in Ft. Worth, maybe Dallas, see if we can't finally move on, move up for once.

Bob sips his beer.

BOB  
Moving up's not all it's made out to be. There's something to be said for being right here.

MATT  
Shoot man, this place is like being on an island. You get stuck here, you never get out.

BOB  
Yeah, but the bad stuff doesn't get in. Keeps this place the way it used to be. The way it should be. Just simple. Real. I wish I'd grown up in a place like this.

MATT  
Where did you grow up?

Bob looks up at the stars. He takes a long beat.

BOB  
Doesn't matter now. The point is, you're lucky to live here, Matt. You shouldn't forget that.

Matt takes that in. He grabs a random beer glass from the table.

MATT  
Well, if I'm lucky, then you are too, right?

Matt raises his glass.

MATT (CONT'D)  
To being lucky.

Bob hesitates, then-

BOB  
To being lucky.

Bob taps his glass. They both drink.

EXT. MIDLAND HOME - BACKYARD - LATER

Everyone is gone. Bob cleans in the backyard. Through the window he can see Lindsay doing dishes. He stops, watches.

EXT. MIDLAND HOME - DRIVEWAY

Bob walks to his car, opens the passenger side. Inside, on top of his briefcase full of 'money', is the Tiffany's bag.

As he reaches for it, his Iphone rings.

BOB

Hello.

JOHN

(filter)

Where are you?

BOB

Midland, I told you.

JOHN

Get out.

BOB

What?

JOHN

Get out. Now.

BOB

Dad, I'm right in the middle of-

JOHN

My contact at the commissioner's office just tipped me off. Lawyer in Midland is requesting the deed on the well for one of your investors. Soon as he finds out you don't own a damn thing that whole town is going to be looking to set you on fire. You need to be long gone.

BOB

But-

JOHN

Bob! Do you want to go to jail?  
CLEAR OUT! NOW!

Click. Bob looks down at his phone. Looks at the Tiffany's bag in his hand. A long beat. He puts the bag back in the car, closes the door.

INT. MIDLAND HOME - KITCHEN

Bob steps in just Lindsay is heading out.

LINDSAY  
Perfect timing. I'm beat. Let's do  
the rest tomorrow.

He nods.

INT. MIDLAND HOME - BEDROOM

Bob lays in bed wide awake, Lindsay draped over him, sound asleep. He looks destroyed.

A long beat as he wrestles with something. Then-

He slowly lifts her arm, slips out from under her. He stands, walks to the doorway, then pauses to watch her sleep. Then-

SERIES OF SHOTS:

CLOSE ON THE MONKEY KEYCHAIN as one of the keys starts the Honda.

BOB BACKS out, stares at the house, the yard, the world. He puts the car in gear.

BOB DRIVES across the vast, empty, midnight Texas landscape.

BOB PASSES creaking pumpjacks as they pull oil from beneath.

A SMALL TOWN. Bob sits at the single stoplight longer than required, truly lost in his thoughts.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATE NIGHT

Bob leaves his car pumping, heads in.

INT. GAS STATION

A KID in uniform works the counter. Bob wanders the aisles. He stops, eyes a postcard: SOMEONE IN TEXAS LOVES ME.

The door BEEPS as a scruffy man (DAD) steps in. His voice, gait, and the fact that his truck is parked sideways outside indicate he's been drinking.

To the kid behind the counter-

DAD  
Well, well, well.

The kid seems embarrassed. The dad steps over, paws at the uniform.

DAD (CONT'D)  
Your mom said you got a job.

The dad starts to move down the aisles. Bob makes eye contact with the kid, then looks back at the postcards.

As the dad moves along the aisles to the coolers in the back, opens the one full of beer-

DAD (CONT'D)  
 They give you any time off? Maybe  
 you want to come by, hang out.

The kid stays quiet. The dad starts back toward the counter,  
 puts down a pack of gum.

DAD (CONT'D)  
 Just this for tonight.

From Bob's angle, he can see the dad's pockets are stuffed  
 with beer cans, jerky, etc.

The kid hesitates.

KID  
 (quiet)  
 Dad, I can't.

The dad looks around, briefly makes eye contact with Bob,  
 then looks back at the kid.

DAD  
 He don't care.

KID  
 No... there's cameras. I'll get  
 fired-

The dad SLAPS the counter.

DAD  
 Just this.

A beat. The kid rings it up. The dad gives him a dollar. As  
 he goes-

DAD (CONT'D)  
 That's my boy.

The kid looks frustrated. When he turns, Bob's at the  
 counter, a single postcard in front of him.

A glance between them. The kid rings it up.

KID  
 Forty cents.

Bob puts down a twenty.

BOB  
 For me and the last guy.

The kid looks at him. Really?

As Bob goes -

BOB (CONT'D)  
 I know what it's like.

## INT. BOB'S CAR

Bob gets in. He sees the Tiffany's bag on top of the briefcase in the passenger seat, waiting for him. He takes it, looks inside.

Something deep inside him breaks, and for the first time his armor fails. All the things he's been able to hide under layers of flash and fiction come spilling out in tears.

He looks at the organizer on the seat beside him - the two cell phones on either side.

CUT TO:

## EXT. GAS STATION

Bob, eyes still moist, walks toward a trash bin. He raises the Tiffany's bag, ready to toss it in. At the last second he hesitates.

CUT TO:

## INT. GAS STATION

Bob steps back inside, once again the cool, collected man we've come to know. He goes straight to the kid, puts the Tiffany's bag on the counter.

The kid looks at him.

BOB  
I'd open it away from the cameras.

Bob walks out.

CUT TO:

## INT. RENTAL CAR

Close on Bob as he drives across the darkened landscape, his decision made, his eyes steely and fixed on the road ahead.

CUT TO:

## INT. GAS STATION

The kid slips behind a wall with the Tiffany's bag. He double checks he's out of camera sight, then reaches in.

He pulls out a wad of hundreds. He looks around, unsure, then pockets them.

CUT TO:

## EXT. GAS STATION

CLOSE ON the trash bin where Bob was about to throw away the Tiffany's bag. We peer inside and among the garbage and things left for dead, see -

The briefcase, spewing stacks of paper, the real money gone.  
And-

His NOKIA CELL PHONE.

CUT TO:

INT. RENTAL CAR

As Bob drives we pan over to the passenger seat. There's only one phone in the organizer now. His IPHONE.

On top of it is the diamond necklace.

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

INT. THATCHER OIL - CONFERENCE ROOM

Clint walks Bob in to reveal a table covered with stacks upon stacks of folders, binders, maps, papers. He offers a seat.

CLINT  
Prepared a little welcome buffet  
for you.

Bob, a little lost, takes a seat. Clint pulls a binder at random, opens it in front of Bob.

CLINT (CONT'D)  
These are all the deals we've made, not made, and been offered in the last five years. I want you to have a sense of the kind of things we've been pursuing as well as the ones we've been avoiding.

Bob looks down at the pages. He seems uncertain.

CLINT (CONT'D)  
Don't worry. Once you're up to speed, I plan to turn you loose. You'll be a like a company within the company, and hopefully you'll be as profitable with us as you have been on your own. Just want you to know what we're doing as a whole before you run off and start printing us money.

He pats Bob on the shoulder. Bob looks up, smiles.

As Clint goes -

CLINT (CONT'D)  
You need anything?

Bob eyes the mountain of paper before him.

BOB  
Yeah. Have someone bring me all the coffee in the building.

Clint LAUGHS as he walks out.

Alone, Bob looks at the binder before him. At first it seems like another language. But as he flips pages, looks at charts, statements, etc, recognition dawns on his face.

INT. THATCHER OIL - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Bob's now deep into the work, a huge stack of items moved off the table into a done pile.

He sips coffee and cracks a new folder.

Bob looks up to see Trammell at the window, watching him. Bob gives a wave. Trammell just moves on.

INT. TRAMMELL'S OFFICE

Trammell comes in, takes a seat at his desk. He thinks for beat, then calls something up on his computer.

He dials his phone.

TRAMMELL

Hey. Trammell Thatcher. Yeah. Good.  
Listen I'm calling to see what you  
know about Bob Taylor.

(beat)

Bob Taylor. Stays with you guys  
maybe once a week. I just want to  
know what you make of the guy, you  
know, personally.

(beat)

He's been coming there for almost a  
year. Christ, I've seen the shampoo  
bottles at his house.

(beat)

You're sure?

(beat)

Well double check and get back to  
me.

Trammell hangs up, confused.

INT. DREW'S OFFICE

Drew is at his desk reading the sports section. The bottle of hangover soda is off to one side.

Bob walks in with one of the binders

BOB

Hey, Drew.

Startled, Drew drops the paper, sits up.

DREW

Bob. Hey. I was just... what's up?

Bob puts the binder on Drew's desk, takes a seat.

BOB

Going through all the deal  
proposals. Found this thing you  
brought in a few years back. The  
wind farm deal?

DREW

Oh, yeah. Tram shot that down.

BOB

Why?

Drew shrugs.

DREW

I don't know. He said we're in the oil business, not the wind business.

Bob gets up, comes around the desk to Drew's side and opens the binder. He points to some of the charts.

BOB

Well, maybe we ought to get into the wind business. If I'm reading this right, that looks like a pretty good return. Are these numbers right?

Drew looks at the chart.

DREW

Um, yeah. I think so. Or, you know, they were.

BOB

And we'd need what, a couple hundred acres for this test farm?

It's coming back to him now.

DREW

Right. Right. And I'm pretty sure it's still available. There was a guy looking to go after it but he got hammered in the crash. I could do some checking, make sure it's still for sale.

Bob gives it some thought.

BOB

Why don't you do that. I think this is a good play.

DREW

Are you serious?

Bob seems to be asking himself that same question.

BOB

Yes. I think it's time try a new direction.

Drew suddenly seems unsure.

DREW

That's great. I just... you're sure you want me on this?

BOB

It's your deal. Don't you want in?

DREW

Sure. This is just where I usually get asked to sit out.

BOB

Drew, underestimating you has been one of this company's biggest mistakes. If you're willing to work, to listen, and to help me, I can assure you, it's one I will never make. In or out, that's your call. All I'm saying is there's no one I'd rather have.

Drew looks like he's just heard a great half time speech and can't wait to hit the field. He stands, extends his hand.

DREW

Well, okay.

They shake. Bob's genuinely excited too. They're both turning over a new leaf. As he leaves-

BOB

I've got to get to a meeting. We'll talk later.

Drew sits, pauses for a second basking in newfound utility. He picks up his phone, starts dialing.

He spots the hangover soda on his desk, pitches it, and turns on his TV, starts changing the channels.

DREW

(into phone)

Hey. Drew Thatcher calling for Bill Adelman. Sure.

As he waits he finally finds CNBC. He puzzles at it for a moment, knowing he should be interested. But he's not.

He switches to ESPN. A man can only change so much in one day.

INT. DINER - AFTERNOON

John sits in a booth eating. Suddenly, Bob slides into the seat across from him.

JOHN

Hey. Sorry, couldn't wait. Get the pancakes.

John raises his hand towards the waitress.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Some more pancakes over here?

BOB

I don't want any pancakes.

John shrugs.

JOHN  
Too late.

A long beat. Bob's gearing up for something. John ends up going first.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
So there's ten different ways to play this, but there's probably only one way to get it right. I've been thinking-

BOB  
I'm not working an angle.

John takes a bite of pancake.

JOHN  
What do you mean?

BOB  
I'm not doing this anymore. I don't ever want a situation like Midland again.

JOHN  
What was the situation in Midland exactly, Bob? Was there a girl there too?

Bob doesn't respond.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Well, whose fault is that, son? What have I taught you? You play any character you want, but you never play yourself. That's what lets you walk when the time comes. That's the discipline. To look someone in the eye, to sound completely sincere, and mean the exact opposite of what you're saying. Now, if you forgot all that for a moment, and it ended up hurting, then I'm sorry. But that's why we follow the rules. And I'm guessing that's why you won't make that mistake again.

The waitress drops a plate of pancakes in front of Bob. He ignores them.

BOB  
You don't understand. I can do this. I've spent so long faking these things I actually know how to read them, how to figure out what's a good deal and what's bad.

JOHN

The only good deal is one where you  
see the exit as you're walking in.

BOB

We can build something real here,  
Dad. We don't have to make it up  
anymore. There's plenty of money to  
go around. You could come live with  
me. I could put you on staff, pay  
you really well to consult.

John SLAPS the table.

JOHN

I didn't spend my whole life  
hunting an elephant so I could get  
a job! This is about moving to an  
island full of topless women, not  
dragging my ass to some stupid  
office everyday. Now get your mind  
right, and let's focus on how to do  
this.

A long beat.

BOB

What do you need? What do you want?  
A million? Two? Ten? I'll get you  
the money. I'll write you a check.  
Just don't make me do this again.

And now the son is offering the father money. John's whole demeanor changes as he takes this in. He's pained, but for all the wrong reasons.

A long beat. He looks Bob right in the eye, sounds completely sincere.

JOHN

This is really that important to  
you?

BOB

I don't want to live like this  
anymore. I want something real.

John takes this in, nods.

JOHN

All right, son, we'll try it your  
way.

Bob is flooded with relief. He leaps up, crosses the table and hugs John.

BOB

Thank you, Dad. Thank you. You're  
gonna' see. It's going to work.  
It's going to be great.

Pushing him off-

JOHN  
All right, all right. Calm down.

Bob stands, composes himself.

BOB  
I'll call you later, okay.

JOHN  
Sure.

BOB  
Dad?

JOHN  
Yeah.

BOB  
I love you.

John nods. Bob goes. John watches him leave, a saddened look on his face. As he turns back to the table-

JOHN  
How many times have I told him?  
They start offering you money,  
they're yours.

Johns stabs the untouched pancakes left on Bob's plate and pulls them across to his own. He starts to eat.

END OF ACT V

ACT VI

INT. THATCHER OIL - ATRIUM - EVENING

An office party. Bob is clearly the guest of honor, Cat by his side, beaming.

Trammell is nowhere to be seen. Drew however, is riding shotgun as Clint introduces Bob to guests.

CLINT  
This guy does it like we used to.  
Finds money with his nose, not a  
degree.

Bob gladhands.

Clint spots a REPORTER (CLIFF) he's been looking for, calls him over.

CLINT (CONT'D)  
Ah, Bob, this is Cliff from the  
Chronicle. Covers oil and gas.

Bob shakes Cliff's hand.

CLIFF  
Actually, this is perfect. You guys  
mind holding for a photo?

Suddenly a PHOTOGRAPHER steps in behind Cliff. Bob never betrays a thing, but it's crystal clear that the last thing he wants is his picture in the paper.

BOB  
You know what, why don't you take  
it without me. I see someone I need  
to talk to. Excuse me.

He slips out. Clint looks briefly confused, then smiles for the camera.

INT. THATCHER OIL - ATRIUM - MOMENTS LATER

Grace sits by herself. Bob swoops in next to her.

BOB  
Hey.

GRACE  
Looks like you fit right in out  
there.

It's obvious she doesn't mean it as a compliment.

BOB  
I'm doing my best.

GRACE  
That's what I'm afraid of.

BOB  
What's the matter? You should be excited.

GRACE  
Are you kidding? I feel like I'm at your funeral.

BOB  
Mine?

GRACE  
These people freeze you out for years, and now you're out there slapping backs and shaking hands with them. It's hard to watch. It's like you're turning into one of them.

BOB  
No, no, no. Trust me, this is going to free me up to be myself so much more you should be worrying about these people turning into me, not the other way around. Six months from now I bet they've ditched the country club scene completely. We'll all just be hanging out in your room playing Xbox.

She looks at him, skeptical.

Clint appears.

CLINT  
Bob. Got something I want to show you.

CUT TO:

INT. THATCHER OIL - CORNER OFFICE

Clint walks Bob into a stunning office, views of downtown and beyond twinkling through the windows.

CLINT  
Welcome home.

Bob looks the place over, genuinely impressed. He can't suppress his smile.

BOB  
I suppose this will do.

Clint LAUGHS.

When Bob looks up, he sees Trammell and Cat have appeared in the doorway behind Clint.

TRAMMELL

It's an older building, so the windows still open. In case you ever feel the need to jump.

Trammell smiles, but his distaste is thinly veiled.

TRAMMELL (CONT'D)

Speaking of rooms, I was actually talking to our pal Ken Winter at the Worthington today, you know, telling him about your promotion. You know, Ken, right?

BOB

Not well, no.

TRAMMELL

That's strange. He didn't seem to know you much either. Or at all. Seems like you've spent at least a couple days a week at his hotel for the last year, but, he didn't seem to have any record of you.

This is odd enough that Clint and Cat's faces suddenly require an answer.

Bob doesn't miss a beat.

BOB

Actually, I've never stayed at the Worthington, Tram.

This doesn't quite fit for Cat.

CAT

But... you've got mountains of their stuff.

Bob SIGHS.

BOB

Buy it bulk, just like they do. This is embarrassing. Truth is, I stay in motels when I travel. Cheap, clean, lets me get my work done. I just know how... appearances tend to matter around here and I didn't want you having to explain why your husband was crashing in Motel 6's.

Clint LAUGHS.

CLINT

See, Tram, not everybody needs a mint on their pillow and a kiss goodnight to get things done. Bob, you keep doing what you're doing, you can stay whereever the hell you want.

He turns for the door.

CLINT (CONT'D)  
We'll leave you guys to admire the view.

He motions for Trammell to leave with him. Trammell's not yet buying all of it. As he goes-

TRAMMELL  
Well, welcome. If you have any problems, finding the bathroom, kitchen, or you know, remembering what hotel you're in, my office is right next door.

Trammell's smile could cut through metal.

Once they go, Cat takes a few steps in. She's radiant.

CAT  
Can you believe it? It's like we always talked about.

She looks out the window, then turns.

CAT (CONT'D)  
We should think about the next move. What kind of deals you want to do. You could even partner up with some-

She notices he's just staring, awestruck.

CAT (CONT'D)  
What?

He steps close to her.

BOB  
You're amazing.

He reaches into his pocket, pulls out the Tiffany's diamond necklace.

BOB (CONT'D)  
You believed there was something better in me before I even believed it myself. I don't know if I can tell you what that means to me.

She looks at it, stunned.

CAT  
Bob, it's incredible.

She turns. He puts it on. She models it.

BOB  
Perfect.

They kiss. And then they fall towards his new couch.

CUT TO:

INT. THATCHER OIL - BOB'S CORNER OFFICE - LATER

Bob and Cat lie wrapped around one another in post coital bliss. She slips on his shirt, begins to move around the office, touching the furniture, taking in the view.

As she stares at the city.

CAT  
I knew you'd get here.

She returns to him, slips into his arms.

BOB  
Well, you were certainly in the minority.

CAT  
Because everyone else saw you for what you were. I've always seen what you could be.

Bob downplays, but he's clearly moved.

BOB  
I took some risks. I got lucky.  
That's all.

CAT  
No. You make your own luck. That's why I married you.

She squeezes in, closes her eyes. Bob wraps himself around her, wide awake, staring at the ceiling.

BOB  
(whispers)  
I love you.

She smiles and he turns his head, finds himself staring at the necklace as it sparkles in the dim light.

Off the necklace-

CUT TO:

EXT. TIFFANY'S - MORNING

Bob is waiting again as the clerk opens the door.

CLERK  
Back so soon?

BOB  
It's been a particularly good week.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPORT

Again, we're following that giant suitcase as Bob hauls it through the airport, hands it to the agent with a smile.

But this time, as Bob walks on, we stay with the case.

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S CORNER OFFICE - DAY

Bob looks over a map of Midland. He draws a circle around something.

CUT TO:

INT. CONVEYER BELT

We see the case weaving it's way through the bowels of the airport.

We hear John's voice-

JOHN (V.O.)  
You did what!

CUT TO:

INT. DREW'S OFFICE

Bob takes just a couple steps in.

BOB  
I'm going to go ahead and purchase another little tract of land to go with that windfarm deal. Place I've just got a feeling about. It's only another million.

Drew shurges.

DREW  
Sure, Bob. Whatever you think.

INT. AIRPLANE

We see the suitcase, one among many as the plane takes off.

BOB (V.O.)  
It's fine. This way, when they pull the deed I'll actually own it.

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S CORNER OFFICE

Bob sits behind his desk.

We see him write a check on Thatcher paper for 1,000,000.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI

We see the suitcase as it's tossed into the trunk of a taxi.

JOHN (V.O.)  
Why in the hell would you want to  
do that? We were out of there. It  
was clean. Owning the land is worse  
than not owning it! Now you're  
going to give them a trail!

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL

The suitcase is loaded onto a luggage trolley.

BOB (V.O.)  
Well, then I won't give them a  
reason to feel like they have to  
come after us.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM

The suitcase is delivered to a room. We hear John's voice  
over the phone-

JOHN  
(filter)  
How? Are you planning to actually  
pay them what you owe?

NEW ANGLE as we see a close up of Bob on his Iphone.

BOB  
Maybe?

JOHN  
That's insane! You're stealing from  
your 'real' job to pay debts from  
your imaginary one?

BOB  
I'll figure out a way to make it  
work.

JOHN  
Why? Why would you do this?

We come around until we can suddenly see out the hotel's window, and beyond the pane are the unmistakable lights of LAS VEGAS.

BOB  
Because I'm in love, Dad.

JOHN  
In love! With who, Bob? Your imaginary wife, or your imaginary girlfriend?

We pull back now, revealing that Bob is standing there in a FULL TUX. He stares at his reflection in a mirror for a moment.

BOB  
Both.

JOHN  
BOB!

Click. Bob hangs up just as we hear the bathroom door OPENING.

Suddenly we spin around just in time to see Lindsay step out looking stunning in a full wedding dress.

When she sees Bob she recoils.

LINDSAY  
What are you doing? It's bad luck to see the bride before the wedding.

Bob goes to her, pulls her close.

BOB  
I make my own luck.

CLOSE ON his giant suitcase as we see him snatch up a small Tiffany's ring box.

He takes her hand, and together, they head out.

As they go, we turn back to the suitcase and push in until it fills the frame.

Suddenly, we're right back where we started:

Staring at Bob's giant suitcase, and the array of different clothes he keeps inside.

FADE OUT.

\*