

Kill Your Darlings

Story by
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Screenplay
by
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Based on a True Story

FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT

Sony Pictures Classics

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

Underwater.

Shafts of eroded light slice into the depths of the Hudson River. The ghostly melody of "Lili Marlene," the ache of the war-time lover, plays as a strange SHADOW drifts into view.

We realize it is a BODY.

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

The body BREAKS the surface and we see the face of its owner — DAVID KAMMERER, 33, bearded, handsome. He is clothed, open white shirt, khakis. Dead.

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

Suddenly, a breath: he comes back to life.

David floats back to LUCIEN CARR, 20, (blonde, beautiful, shirtless and terrified), waist deep in the water.

The scene is playing in REVERSE MOTION.

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

David's body LIFTS into the young man's arms. We see David's feet and hands are TIED together with shoelaces. Stones rise back into his pockets.

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

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

David's eyes OPEN.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TOMBS - DAY

LUCIEN
...or they destroy you.

From behind the bars of a jail cell, Lucien Carr (the young man from the opening) finishes reading from a paper MANUSCRIPT in his hand.

Lucien, furious, crumples it up.

LUCIEN

You can't show this to anyone.

We PULL BACK to reveal the author of the manuscript: a eighteen-year-old ALLEN GINSBERG. Unslept and exhausted. But determined.

Allen stares defiantly at Lucien from the other side of the bars.

ALLEN

Then tell the truth, Lu.

LUCIEN

You weren't even there. It's your truth. It's fiction.

Allen grabs for his manuscript back, but Lucien pulls it out of reach.

LUCIEN

You wanted him gone too. You sent him to me.

Allen reaches through the bars and SNATCHES the paper.

Lucien won't let go -- it's a tug of war between the two boys, two wills. Allen yanks the paper from Lucien's grip and wins. Lucien, panicking.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)

Please. You'll kill me with that.

Allen turns and races towards the exit of the prison. Desperate, Lucien calls out after him.

LUCIEN

Allen! No!

Allen doesn't turn. An alarm Hammers through the prison.

LUCIEN

Allen! No! DON'T...!

CUT TO BLACK.

INSERT TITLE: KILL YOUR DARLINGS

CUT TO:

EXT. GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

SUPER: PATERSON, NEW JERSEY. 1943. ONE YEAR EARLIER.

Over a strip of working-class row homes, we hear the sounds of a radio announcer giving a dispatch from the war front.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 American daylight bombers were busy again, as our liberators with fighter escort continue the air offensive with another sock at German coastal installations in France.

INT. GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

The radio continues playing to a modest home. We see a young man cleaning house, sweeping in the background.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 But the Germans report a big new red army push toward Romania. This is World War news.

As the war report ends, a stuffy musical piece begins. We hear a groan from the young man.

From out of the background emerges Allen Ginsberg (now 17, fresh-faced, horn-rimmed glasses, dutiful son). The kind of kid who takes care of everything.

He storms up to the radio, switches the station to a fast-paced boogie-woogie number. He smiles and dances joyfully to the up-beat number with his broom.

The door slams. Allen looks up, caught in the act, to see his father LOUIS (40's, school teacher, Jewish working-class poet) home from work. Allen accidentally drops the broom.

LOUIS
 How was she today?

Louis turns off the music. The playful mood dies. Allen spots the mail in his father's hand.

ALLEN
 Fine. Anything for me?

LOUIS
 Why? You expecting something?

Allen looks down, a bad liar.

ALLEN

No.

Suddenly, from upstairs, the sound of glass shattering. Then a woman whimpering in pain. Allen, worried, looks off, dread in his face. His father just sighs.

LOUIS

I told you it wouldn't work.

Allen rushes upstairs.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM, GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

Allen runs into a dark room, flips on the light.

ALLEN

Mom?

His mother NAOMI (early 40's, Jewish, deep personality disorder) squats in the corner of the room, in a dirty bathrobe. Her knuckles are bleeding.

NAOMI

You've got to get me out of here.
He nailed the windows shut while I
was in the bath.

She motions to the shattered window pane across the room. Allen sees her blood on the sill, where she tried to escape. He moves towards her, to console her. What he's good at.

ALLEN

Dad didn't do that. I nailed the
windows. Because you're not right.

Naomi, in the midst of a paranoid attack, puts her finger to her mouth.

NAOMI

Shhh...Allen. He can hear you!

Allen wraps his mother's hand with a dish towel.

ALLEN

You have to rest. Clear your head.
Do you want to go back to
Greystone?

NAOMI

He wouldn't dare put me back there.

ALLEN

Then listen to me.

NAOMI

SHHHH. He can hear you!

She's losing it. Allen quickly thinks, turns to her bureau. He pulls out a RECORD, starts the phonograph and turns up the volume.

ALLEN

Can he still hear me?

A BRAHMS WALTZ plays.

NAOMI

What did you say?

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

Allen reaches for her. She finally softens, takes his hand.

As mother and son waltz together with the music, Naomi clutches Allen to her, like he's the only thing keeping her sane. Because he is.

NAOMI

Don't ever leave me.

Allen, trapped, over her shoulder.

From the doorway, we see that Louis has been watching the whole time.

EXT. GINSBERG FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Overwhelmed, Allen shakes on the front stairs. She's not well. The faint sound of jazz, fun from someone else's home from down the block. Louis comes out onto the porch, with an open LETTER in hand from the mail pile. He's upset.

LOUIS

Were you even going to tell me you applied?!

Allen spies the "Columbia University" seal on the front. He's been caught. He looks down, ashamed.

ALLEN

I didn't want her to know.
 (beat)
 It was a dream anyway.

Louis lights his own cigarette. Offers his son one. He declines.

LOUIS

(talking to himself,
 dreaming)
 Trilling's there. Van Doren.
 English Professors. Important
 fellows. And New York City, right
 in your goddamn lap.

Louis sits beside his son.

LOUIS

Love that is hoarded,
 molds at last.

Allen, surprised to hear his Dad reciting one of his poems.

LOUIS

Until we know,
 the only thing we have--

ALLEN

is what we give away.

LOUIS

Is what we hand away. Have, hand.
 Consonance.

ALLEN

Give, is. Assonance.

LOUIS

I wrote the goddamn poem. Go write
 your own.

Louis hands over the letter. The hardest thing he's ever done.

Allen takes the envelope, rips it open. He's looking at the response in shock. Louis tries to read his son's face.

ALLEN

I got in.

LOUIS

You got in?!

ALLEN
I got into Columbia University!

LOUIS
You got into Columbia University?!

Allen and his father embrace.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLUMBIA QUAD - DAY

First day of college. Allen crosses the grand Ivy League campus in awe. Before him, the staggering facade of the library like the Parthenon. A troop of Navy midshipmen pass by. Wartime is on.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen sets his bag on his bed. He notices on one wall are patriotic posters, exercise posters. He's already got a roommate.

He eyes a map of the New York City subway system. He can't believe he's really here in the big city. He walks over to it.

Allen studies the map, his finger gliding down to Greenwich Village.

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

His roommate LUKE, 18, buzz cut, in a sweaty Columbia sweatshirt, leans over him.

LUKE
Land of the fairies. Head there and
you never come back.
(extending a firm hand)
Luke Detweiler, Danville, Virginia.

ALLEN
Allen Ginsberg.

LUKE
(bright smile)
You're Jewish, right?

Allen nods. Luke smacks him on the shoulder.

LUKE

I'm getting good at telling.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

The beautiful main hall of Columbia University's Butler Library. It's Ivy League tradition meets thousands of years of scholarship.

A pompous TOUR GUIDE shows off museum-like glass vitrines to new and prospective students with their families.

TOUR GUIDE

The South Hall library is a church,
and these are the sacraments.

Allen stumbles along on the tour. The tour guide points to the contents of the vitrines: the wonders of literary history.

TOUR GUIDE

Original folios of the most
important texts in history.
Beowulf. First folio Hamlet. The
Gutenberg Bible.

Allen looks down, amazed. That's Shakespeare's *handwriting*.

TOUR

These are among the University's
most prized possessions.

Suddenly, in a reflection in the glass, a flash of RED catches Allen's eye.

LUCIEN (O.S.)

Let's hear a bit, shall we?

Allen turns to see Lucien Carr (now 19, devilish, stunningly handsome) LEAP onto a library desk with a book in hand. He wears a distinctive red CRAVAT that only the truly beautiful can pull off. The entire room hushes.

LUCIEN

(reciting)

On a Sunday afternoon, when the
shutters are down and the
proletariat possesses the street...

The tour guide looks around confused.

LUCIEN
 ...there are certain thoroughfares
 which remind one of nothing less...

Lucien gets on his knees and THRUSTS a lamp between his legs.

LUCIEN
 ...than a big cancerous cock.

Parents look around in shock. A female student is instantly aroused. The prim PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN clomps over.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN
 What is this nonsense?

LUCIEN
 Henry Miller.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN
 Get down immediately. That book is
 restricted.

LUCIEN
 Which is why I committed it to
 memory.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN
 Security!

As two Campus Security Guards rush in, Lucien leaps down in front of Allen.

LUCIEN
 Alert the press! Tell them Lucien
 Carr is innocent!

Lucien flees, rushes out of the library.

TOUR GUIDE
 That was highly unusual. Campus is
 actually quite quiet. Moving on.

But Allen doesn't hear, he grins to himself. Who the hell was that?

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

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Patrician, old-guard PROFESSOR STEEVES lectures on the first day of class, Allen dutifully taking notes in his journal.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
 Rhyme, meter, conceit. Without this
 balance, a poem becomes slack,
 sloppy. An untucked shirt.

Allen disagrees and raises his hand.

ALLEN
 Professor Steeves, then how do you
 explain Whitman?

No one interrupts Professor Steeves. Murmurs from around the
 class. Steeves locks down his gaze on Allen.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
 Say more. Two more sentences.

ALLEN
 He hated rhyme and meter. The whole
 point was untucking your shirt.

Professor Steeves smiles to himself. There's one of them
 every year.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
 What's your name?

ALLEN
 Allen Ginsberg.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
 Ginsberg? Your father perhaps is
 the poet Louis Ginsberg?

Allen nods.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
 He writes rhyming, metered verse.
 Why do you think he chose that
 form?

All eyes on Allen.

ALLEN
 Because it's easier.

The class titters. Professor Steeves hushes them.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
 This university exists because of
 tradition and form. Would you
 rather this building be built by
 engineers or Whitman and his boys
 at play?

Allen, realizing he is trapped, unable to answer. Professor Steeves smiles victoriously and writes on the blackboard.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

There can be no creation before
imitation.

The other students take note. Allen sighs, follows suit. From the back row, Lucien watches Allen and unsheathes a grin.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Luke, dressed in a suit, puts on cologne. He looks back at Allen who is copying from a tome of sonnets.

LUKE

Shut the books. We're taking my
brother with us to the social. He
ships out tomorrow.

ALLEN

I can't. You see how much I've got
to do.

LUKE

He's Navy. It's catnip for the
skirts.

Luke pulls out his own waistband and sprays some cologne down the front. Allen shakes his head. Luke shrugs.

LUKE

You hymies are really all about
work, huh?

Luke slams the door behind. Allen, alone stares out the window.

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

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

INT. DORM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen walks down a darkened hallway, the music leading him forward. He reaches a door with a lit transom. He knocks.

The unlocked door creaks open.

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

A mattress lies on the floor, a phonograph on top. Candles light the room. Books for furniture. And Lucien on the floor, reading the *Times* and smoking.

ALLEN

Brahms?

Allen walks inside. Lucien looks up, surprised.

LUCIEN

Finally. An oasis in this wasteland.

Nervous, Allen tries to make conversation.

ALLEN

How come you're not at the social?

LUCIEN

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

Lucien rises and grabs a wine bottle corked with a sock. Allen looks nervously towards the door.

ALLEN

You drink in your room?!

LUCIEN

How does a horrible bottle of Chianti sound?

Lucien inverts two small glasses and pours. Allen stares. He doesn't break the rules.

ALLEN

I don't drink.

LUCIEN

Freshman?

ALLEN

Yes.

Lucien hands him his glass.

LUCIEN

Excellent. I love first times. I want my whole life to be composed of them. Life is only interesting if life is *wide*.

Lucien toasts Allen's glass.

LUCIEN
To Walt Whitman, you dirty bastard.

Allen, mortified, not sure how to take that reference as Lucien knocks his wine back in one gulp.

LUCIEN
How's your Yeats? Have you read *A Vision*?

He tosses Allen a BOOK. Dog-eared, underlined and crumbling.

ALLEN
Never heard of it.

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

Allen opens the book, looks through the old pages, sees a strange symbol: a diagram of a celestial WHEEL.

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

ALLEN
Gets wider.

LUCIEN
Gets wider.

Lucien looks at Allen, amazed.

LUCIEN
How did you...?

ALLEN
Consonance. Reiteration of themes.

Lucien, intrigued, circles in close.

LUCIEN
Are you a writer? Because I've got a job for a writer.

Allen, mesmerized.

ALLEN
No. I'm not.

LUCIEN

Well, you're not anything yet.

This boy so close, the rush of contact. From down the hall...

HALL MONITOR (O.S.)

Ginsberg?!

Allen doesn't even register his name. Lucien smirks.

LUCIEN

Isn't that you?

HALL MONITOR (O.S.)

Ginsberg?!

Allen groans, snaps out of it.

ALLEN

What?!

HALL MONITOR (O.S.)

Phone call!

Allen reluctantly hands Lucien back the BOOK.

ALLEN

I'll be back.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Hall Monitor hands Allen the phone.

ALLEN

Hello?

NAOMI (O.S.)

I found the wires.

INT. HALLWAY, GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

Naomi grips the phone desperately. We see she has stripped the wallpaper from the wall and pulled the telephone wire out from underneath.

NAOMI

He's trying to get inside my head.

ALLEN (O.S.)

Dad is not trying to get inside your head, okay? Put him on.

NAOMI
He's not home. He left.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Allen, confused. Up the hallway, a door locks.

ALLEN
Where'd he go?

INT. GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

Naomi looks out the window, does not want to answer.

NAOMI
Honey, I need you come home now.

ALLEN (O.S.)
Mom I can't come home. Listen, you
have to look after yourself.

NAOMI
I don't feel good.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lucien passes Allen, putting on his coat, heading out to the city.

ALLEN
(whispered, to Lucien)
You're going to the dance?

LUCIEN
No. Downtown.

NAOMI (O.S.)
Who are you talking to? Is he there
with you?!

ALLEN
No, he's not here with me.

Lucien quickly waves goodbye to Allen, heads down the staircase. Allen, torn between his mother and this boy.

ALLEN
(into the phone)
Listen, I'll come as soon as I can.

INT. GINSBERG HOME - NIGHT

Naomi, clutches the phone, deadly serious.

NAOMI
You need to promise.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lucien slides down the stairway rail. Allen watching him disappear.

ALLEN
Yes. I promise love you bye.

Allen hangs up on his mother and races after Lucien.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Allen, breathless, storms down a flight of stairs, catches up to Lucien. Lucien turns, loving this. The puppy following his new master.

LUCIEN
Coming?

EXT. COLUMBIA ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Lucien throws his jacket over Allen's shoulder and leads him into the wild city around the corner.

LUCIEN
Welcome to the edge of the world.

The sound of the IRT screeching takes us to the SUBWAY MAP from Allen's dorm room which comes to life.

A RED LINE glides down the map from Columbia University all the way...to Greenwich Village.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRS/APARTMENT, 48 MORTON STREET - NIGHT

Allen, anxious, follows Lucien up a crowded staircase to a West Village apartment.

The sounds of a party spill out onto the landing and beyond. It's pure bohemia here.

Smoke, artists flirting, arguing. Allen sees...

A black man making out with a white woman. An older, elegant woman sharing a cigarette with a boy half her age.

She stares seductively at Allen. Lucien enjoying himself immensely. This is what a first time looks like.

LUCIEN

Allen in Wonderland.

Lucien grabs a DRUNK YOUNG GIRL from the crowd, kisses her passionately. Then lets her go, keeps walking.

ALLEN

Do you know her?!

LUCIEN

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

INT. BATHROOM, 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

A makeshift bar in a sink full of ice. Lucien scavenges through empty bottles in the sink, looking for any remaining alcohol.

LUCIEN

(calling out)

Dave! Where's the liquor?! I'll be right back.

As Lucien walks off, Allen tries to make himself inconspicuous and sits down on the tub.

BILL (O.S.)

Hrffrff hrffrfffrfrfrff.

Allen looks down to see WILLIAM BURROUGHS (aka BILL, 29, tall, gaunt, wry), in a suit, sprawled out in the bathtub: a gas mask over his mouth. Bill motions to the side of the tub.

BILL

(through the mask)

You're...pinching...

Allen stands up, realizing his foot is on a snaking black tube leading to a metal canister of gas.

ALLEN

Sorry. Are you all right?

BILL
(long exhale)
Artifacts in the visual field, some
light-headedness. Motor
hyperactivity.

ALLEN
What is that?

BILL
Nitrous oxide, for narcoanalysis.
Know thyself. And beshit thyself.
Ever done that?

Allen shakes his head no. Bill turns off the gas. Offers a
joint to Allen.

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

Bill eyes Allen, skeptically.

BILL
Show me the man both sober and
happy, and I'll show you the
crinkled anus of a lying asshole.

Allen raises an eyebrow. Lucien returns with a paper in hand.

LUCIEN
Allen, Willy. Willy, Allen, Lucien
reefer.

Lucien takes the joint.

Bill puts the tube of gas back in his mouth, back to
business. Lucien grabs Allen's hand, pulls him to the party.

ALLEN
(whispered)
Is he a criminal?

LUCIEN
He wishes he were a criminal. The
Burroughs family is richer than
God.

ALLEN
He looks like a criminal.

LUCIEN

He's a Harvard man, and he's going to be an amazing artist. His current medium is himself.

Allen spots the TERM PAPER in Lucien's hand.

ALLEN

What's that?

LUCIEN

Bunk for school. Now, come on, I want you to meet our host.

INT. LIVING ROOM, 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

DAVID KAMMERER, the man we saw dead at the film's opening, runs his fingers on the rim of a wine glass. He's sharp, the mayor of this scene. An eerie hum from the glass.

DAVID

What there is, darlings and demoiselles, is a circle. Life is round. Patterns, routines, a wheel of self-abuse. Margaret, don't even deny it.

Allen turns to Lucien.

ALLEN

(whispered)
Sounds like you.

LUCIEN

Because it was me. First.

David sees the boys talking. He eyes Allen, curiously.

DAVID

Until. The the disruption we long for, comes along and the circle is broken.

LUCIEN

(whispered, to Allen)
He said he was my guardian angel, but that I was too much work.

David crosses through crowd towards Allen.

DAVID

Take this unbloomed stalwart.

Uh-oh. Allen's singled out. David pulls him to the center of the room.

DAVID
And you are?

ALLEN
Allen.

Bill walks in, knows what game his friend is playing.

BILL
Play nice, David.

DAVID
Allen, who comes uninvited to my apartment.

LUCIEN
Actually I invited him.

DAVID
None of us notice him. Look at him.
Why would we bother?

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

DAVID
So the pattern of our evening, our lives, holds. But under the right circumstances, even *he* might change the world.

Jazz music sparks, PRE-LAP from where this party's going next. Lucien eyes Allen -- an idea forming.

CUT TO:

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

The party continuing at this underground speakeasy. Straight, gay, young, old, a subterranean zoo. A jazz signer owns the room.

Bill, David, and Allen at a table. David's moment alone with Allen.

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

ALLEN
Why don't you like me?

BILL
Because David was in the same
godforsaken line.

David and Bill share a knowing look. Lucien returns to the table and slams a glass down.

LUCIEN
Some earjob at the bar just called
me "boy." So I stole his drink.

Allen scans, sees the famous poet OGDEN NASH looking around for his glass.

ALLEN
That's Ogden Nash!

LUCIEN
Who's Ogden Nash?

ALLEN
The best selling poet in the
country.

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

DAVID
"Await the girl who fassinets."

LUCIEN
And that's what he's selling?! I'll
kill him.

Bill takes out a switchblade.

BILL
Aim for the throat.

A realization. Lucien leans in, focuses his charm.

LUCIEN
No. We're not going to kill him.
Even better. We're going make sure
nobody remembers him.
(turns to Allen)
How many men started the
Renaissance?

ALLEN

Two.

LUCIEN

And the Romantics.

DAVID

More than I suspect this theory accommodates.

ALLEN

(Five?)

Lucien's passion building.

LUCIEN

We're sending millions to fight the Fascists in Europe, but they're here! Meter and rhyme--

ALLEN

And Professor Steeves--

LUCIEN

Yes! They're all guards in some prison. Let's make the prisoners come out and play. Let's come up with new words, new rhythms.

Allen, swept up in the energy. He couldn't be more captivated.

LUCIEN

We need a name.

ALLEN

How did they come up "Dada"?

BILL

Tristan Tzara jabbed a knife into a dictionary.

LUCIEN

Shit. So that's been done.

DAVID

A literary revolution without writing a word. Neat trick, Lu.

BILL

Well, I'm listening.

ALLEN

What about Yeats? How about the
"New Vision?"

LUCIEN

Ginsy, you're hired!

Allen smiles a mile wide. He's in.

Suddenly, the jazz singer stops. The band puts down their instruments. POLICEMEN escort a businessman and another gentleman out of the bathroom, in HANDCUFFS. The mood in the bar chills.

BAR-GOER (O.S.)

Fucking perverts.

Allen, terrified, looks at David, who looks back, knowing exactly now who Allen is.

A DOOR CRASH leads us to...

EXT. BAR - DAWN

Drunk, Allen and Lucien stumble to the ground.

LUCIEN

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

Allen sits up.

ALLEN

Shit.

LUCIEN

It's Rimbaud. It's overwritten, I
know. He's allowed.

ALLEN

No, my mother. This is bad. This is
very bad.

LUCIEN

What is?

Allen stands, gathers himself urgently. He needs to be somewhere about twelve hours ago.

ALLEN

She's going to be furious.

LUCIEN
Don't go then.

ALLEN
You don't understand. I have to.

LUCIEN
What?

ALLEN
It's complicated.

Lucien sees his friend scared. Moved, he links his arm with Allen's.

LUCIEN
Perfect. I love complicated.

INT. GINSBERG HOME - DAY

Allen and Lucien enter the house to find Louis standing nervously with a suitcase beside a DOCTOR.

DOCTOR
Greystone will alert you if there's
a change in her condition.

A DOCTOR holds out a clipboard. Louis sheepishly signs the document on top.

ALLEN
Dad, what's going on?

LOUIS
Your mother needs her rest.

A male nurse leads Naomi from the bedroom. She is still in her robe, shattered and fogged by sedatives. Allen realizes what's happening.

ALLEN
(to his father)
You can't do this to her.

Naomi recognizes her son.

NAOMI
Where were you?

ALLEN
I was out. With a friend.

NAOMI
I called you!

MALE NURSE
It's time to go, Mrs. Ginsberg.

The nurse takes Naomi to the door. Allen pulls her back, into the house.

ALLEN
No, you're not leaving.

Naomi points an accusing finger at Louis.

NAOMI
He already signed the papers.

ALLEN
Dad?!

LOUIS
It's for the best.

ALLEN
Your best.

LOUIS
It's for her best. It's not for my best. Look at her! Listen to her!

Naomi babbling. Allen realizing how far she's gone. Allen shoves the nurse off Naomi.

ALLEN
Get off!

From deep within, Allen can see she is still there, and we can see she knows that it's too late.

NAOMI
This is your fault.

The nurse escorts a docile Naomi out of the room. Allen breaks down. Lucien, mute witness to it all.

MUSIC PLAYS over...

INT. GINSBERG HALLWAY - NIGHT

Louis lectures Allen.

We close in on Allen's despondent face. The dutiful son's first failure.

EXT. GINSBERG FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Allen escapes outside where Lucien is sitting, smoking. Allen sits beside him, notices: Lucien has been crying.

ALLEN
Complicated enough?

LUCIEN
At least you have her. My father
left me when I was four.

A beat of understanding between them. Lucien lays down. Allen takes his cigarette, lays next to him.

ALLEN
I've been thinking about what Yeats
said. To be reborn, we have to die
first.

Allen hands him back the smoke. Lucien perks up.

LUCIEN
So what do you suggest?

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Candlelight flickers on Allen's face.

ALLEN
I've spent my life making other
people happy.

We PULL BACK to see a noose around Allen's neck. A suicide is underway.

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

LUCIEN (O.S.)
Oh please. Die already.

We PULL BACK again to see Lucien beside, also with a noose around his neck. Both of them on chairs. Their nooses are attached to the same pipe.

LUCIEN
Where's the verve? The brio?!

From atop the chair, Lucien kicks his record player with his foot. Grand classical music screeches to a start.

LUCIEN

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

ALLEN

That's a run-on.

LUCIEN

Don't edit me!

Lucien shoves Allen. Allen trips off the chair, the noose
snaps tight...and suddenly he's hanging in mid-air. He
struggles. Lucien tries to help, but falls off his own chair.

The pipe starts to bend.

Allen and Lucien panic as they swing through the room,
suspended in air.

The pipe BREAKS. They crash to the ground.

A beat of relief -- are we alive? -- and the two break out
into hysterics.

DIRTY BE-BOP JAZZ PLAYS OVER...

A RED LINE TRAVELS UP THE SUBWAY MAP FROM COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
TO HARLEM BRINGING US TO...

INT. HARLEM NIGHTCLUB (MINTON'S PLAYHOUSE) - NIGHT

The black crowd claps for the same jazz singer and band we
saw earlier, now on their home turf. Allen, Lucien and Bill
watch from a table.

ALLEN (O.S.)

The New Vision declares--

LUCIEN (O.S.)

"Proclaims" is better--

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT (48 MORTON) - DAY

Lucien and Allen pace while Bill reclines on the sofa. They
riff on the *The New Vision* manifesto.

ALLEN

Proclaims the death of morality.
And...

LUCIEN
The expression of self.

ALLEN
The true, uninhibited, uncensored
expression of the self.

BILL
Words, boys. Empty words.

LUCIEN
Then what do you suggest?

BILL
The derangement of the senses.

CUT TO:

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

Allen bopping his head to the new rhythms in this club - the
place where be-bop jazz is being born.

CUT TO:

INT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - DAY

Bill cracking open a Benzedrine canister and removing the
soaking strip from inside.

He drops it into three coffee cups. The boys knock it back,
Lucien pushing Allen to finish the whole drink.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM - DAY

Allen furiously typing up the manifesto at his school desk.

BILL (O.S.)
What do you hate from the pit of
your gut?

INT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - DAY

Allen, Lucien pacing with increasing excitement.

LUCIEN
Institutions.

ALLEN
Paterson, New Jersey.

LUCIEN
My father.

Bill smiles. They're playing his game.

BILL
Bingo.

The music suddenly stops as we ...

CUT TO:

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Professor Steeves lecturing before the class.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
And so while Shakespeare...

He notices Allen's empty seat. Unhappy.

PROFESSOR STEEVES
All right.

The MUSIC builds again as...

CUT TO:

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

...a drummer takes a wild solo. Enraptured, Allen taps his fingers to these new rhythms.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen's fingers typing in these same rhythms. Beside, *The New Yorker* advertising Ogden Nash's upcoming reading.

LUCIEN (O.S.)
Extraordinary men propel society forward. It is our duty to break the law.

INT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - DAY

Allen stopping Lucien in his tracks.

ALLEN

Really?

LUCIEN

It's how we make the world wider.

Allen considers, agrees.

ALLEN

You are an extraordinary man.

Lucien beams.

LUCIEN

Well, thank you.

INT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - AN HOUR LATER

Bill at David's bookcase, removing classic art and literature books and throwing them to Allen.

BILL (O.S.)

"Return of the Native."

"Leviathan." Tear 'em up boys.

Destroy the old and build the new!

Allen, with scissors, cuts up pages of the books. Hands them to Lucien who nails them to the wall.

It's a frantic assembly-line: Bill whips books to Allen, Allen tears out sections, and Lucien hammers them up.

We PULL BACK to see the entire wall is covered in words.

INT. HARLEM NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Time suddenly slows. The music tapers, the hands of the drummer taper down to a still. Allen looks around, scared and confused. What is happening?

A spotlight cuts through the room, capturing the singer's sweaty ecstasy, the bassist's fingers mid-plucking. The room freezes.

Unlit cigarette dangling from his lip, Allen turns to Bill.

Bill holds up his finger - it is on fire. He lights Allen's cigarette with the flame. We have entered into another universe.

Lucien stands -- the only thing moving -- and Allen follows. He steps into the frozen moment. And it's beautiful.

LUCIEN

Watch this.

Lucien leans over a young woman, a statue at a table with a young man in military attire.

LUCIEN

(whispered in her ear)

Go.

The girl comes to life and clambers over the young man to a second, more attractive soldier. And kisses him. The pair erupt into life, into desire.

Lucien and Allen sit on the stage beneath the frozen musicians. Lucien pulls out a BOY SCOUT KNIFE.

Wraps Allen's hand in a fist around the blade.

He pulls the knife free. Allen winces in pain.

Lucien does the same to his own palm, then presses their two bloody hands together. A ceremony. Allen's eyes roll back.

David appears in a janitor uniform. The Technicolor fades.

DAVID

What the hell is this?

CUT TO:

INT. 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Allen, the nitrous oxide mask over his face inhaling from a tank of gas. He has been adrift in a hallucination.

Lucien presses Allen's hand back and forth, both unharmed.

BILL

Time slows down as you drift deeper
and deeper into your cave...

Bill notices David, turns off the gas.

BILL

We are exploring the avenues of
Allen's mind.

David looks around the mess of his living room, his pillaged
library of books, papers all over the floor.

DAVID

Dimly-lit, I am sure. What have you
done to my apartment?

Allen struggles to his feet, moaning. Lucien steps between
David and their wall of clippings.

LUCIEN

David, don't touch anything. We
have to write it all down.

Bill stands up, woozy. Calls out to David.

BILL

Get this man a pair of scissors!

DAVID

This is not your revolution, this
is my life.

BILL

What kind of life is it?

DAVID

It's mine. Not everyone gets an
allowance.

(beat)

Leave. Get out!

Allen stumbles out of the room, scared. David approaches
Lucien.

DAVID

I need to speak to you. Alone.

INT. BATHROOM, 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Allen splashes water on his face. In the mirror, he sees
David and Lucien in the bedroom.

David hands Lucien a TERM PAPER.

LUCIEN (O.S.)

It only has to be five pages.

He tilts the mirror to see them clearly. A glimpse into their private dynamic.

INT. BEDROOM, 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucien flips through the term paper.

LUCIEN

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

David throws Lucien's coat over his shoulder.

DAVID

And get you sent back to your mother again? That would just be the end of you.

LUCIEN

Fuck you.

David spots Allen watching from the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - 48 MORTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Allen, caught, looks down, pretends he heard nothing. But it's too late. David walks over and SLAMS the door in Allen's face.

PROFESSOR STEEVES (O.S.)

Kill your darlings.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Professor Steeves, intent, in front of the class.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

Your crushes, your juvenile metaphysics. None of them belong on the page. It is the first principle of good creative work. A work of fiction you will deliver as your final exam.

He sees Allen, badly hungover and brooding, writing in a journal. Ignoring class.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

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

Steeves walks to Allen's desk, grabs his journal.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

"The New Vision. *Extraordinary men propel us forward. It is our duty to break the law.*"

(to Allen)

Fantastic.

ALLEN

There's more life in those five pages than in the dozens of bad sonnets we've read in class.

Steeves cocks his eye, stares down Allen. The first time Allen has defied anyone. Ever.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

You want life? You want the world on fire?

Steeves motions to the door. Then to Allen.

PROFESSOR STEEVES

The war awaits. What will it be?

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

Allen looks down at the "New Vision", ashamed.

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

A rainstorm beating against the windows. Allen paces as a drunk Lucien knocks off a bottle of wine and reads from Allen's journal.

LUCIEN

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

ALLEN

Keep going. That's my sonnet for Steeves.

Lucien flips through the journal, closes it, disappointed.

LUCIEN

We have the map. We have the manifesto. We need the work.

(suddenly cold)

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

Allen stares at Lucien in disbelief. Shocked, Allen rushes to Lucien's desk.

ALLEN
Show me your fucking map.

LUCIEN
Stop!

Allen grabs the pages Lucien has been working on: they are covered in doodles - there's nothing there.

ALLEN
Oh right, you don't have anything because David's not here to write it for you!

Lucien stands up, drunk. Furious.

LUCIEN
It's complicated.

ALLEN
I love complicated.

Lucien steadies himself. Furious.

LUCIEN
He's a professor working as a janitor so he can be near his precious Lu-Lu. He is a goddamn fruit who won't let me go.

ALLEN
A fruit?

LUCIEN
A queer.

This detonates inside Allen. Lucien crashes to his bed. Allen sits beside.

ALLEN
Then let's get rid of him.

Lucien softens, leans against Allen. Passing out from the liquor.

LUCIEN
Right now, I just need you to write us something beautiful.
(beat)
First thought, best thought.

Lucien drifts off. Allen shakes, holding Lucien's body for the first time.

We follow Allen's P.O.V. as he runs his finger through Lucien's hair. He can barely breathe, this close to what he finds beautiful.

Allen's fingers slide to Lucien's cheek. Toward his lips.

Lucien's eyes open. Allen tenses, afraid. But Lucien suddenly takes Allen's finger in his mouth. Sucks it, eyeing Allen the whole time.

CUT TO:

A thunder-clap. Lucien passed out in Allen's lap. We were just in Allen's imagination.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen at his typewriter. A blank page. Inspired to write something beautiful.

We see flashes of the past, snippets of Lucien: their contact, Lucien's smile. Allen searching through their past. All playing in reverse.

LUCIEN

Allen in Wonderland.

Is it something? He writes the words down. Flash of their past build in a crescendo as he keeps searching, digging through moments, leading to...

NOTHING.

Allen's blocked.

He'll need more help if he's going to get to beautiful.

BILL (O.S.)

Pervitin.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bill with NORMAN (30s, shady, real criminal) and Allen in his dim, bookshelf-lined lair. Bill gives the secret nod to Norman.

BILL

The Germans call it the "wonder drug." Prescribed for super-human feats.

Norman pops open a briefcase full of drugs. Bill selects a green pill bottle and gives it to Allen.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen pops two. Waits for it.

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - LATER

The pace of everything has DOUBLED.

Allen, sweating at his typewriter, jubilant, tapping his foot with the music, typing furiously at the keys. Whatever this drug is, it's working.

BILL (O.S.)

But beware of the side-effects.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bill rattles off the list.

BILL

Sudden blindness, bouts of diarrhea, heart palpitations, and a severe decline in moral standards.

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen jerking-off at his desk.

Allen racing around his room, burning off energy. The memories are now flooding in.

David at his party...

DAVID (O.S.)

Take this unbloomed stalwart.

Lucien at the bar...

LUCIEN (O.S.)
*Let the prisoners come out and
play.*

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - EVENING

Luke enters, turns on the light.

His jaw-drops: Allen is on his bed, running in place like a mad-man.

LUKE
What the hell are you doing?

Allen, furious at the interruption.

ALLEN
Writing!

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bill, a thoughtful eye on young Allen.

BILL
But the words, oh the words...

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Allen's got it. He rips the pages from the typewriter.

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Lucien's door slams open. A sleepless Allen, hair on end, storms into the room, fresh pages in hand.

ALLEN
Lu! It's very rough but...

David sits at Lucien's desk, writing. Allen stops short. David spies the pages in Allen's hand.

DAVID
Ah. The "Vision" at last. Can I see?

Allen hides them behind his back.

ALLEN
Where's Lu?

DAVID

He's out. With a senior, some
football player. A writer and
handsome too.

(beat)

James? Jack. There it is. Jack.

ALLEN

You're not allowed to be here.

DAVID

That's odd since I'm the only thing
keeping him here.

ALLEN

Not anymore.

A stand-off. David collects his jacket, approaches.

DAVID

Piece of advice. You don't know Lu.
As soon you think you do, he'll
find someone else.

David smirks, walks off leaving Allen alone with his pages.

DAVID

Or maybe he already has.

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

3:00 AM. Allen snoring. Then the sound of the door creaking
open. Allen wakes up to see Lucien entering.

LUCIEN

What are you, moving in?

ALLEN

Where have you been?!

Lucien starts getting undressed.

LUCIEN

I found a *real* writer. Already a
million words under his belt before
Columbia.

ALLEN

You mean Jack?

Lucien fumbles.

ALLEN
Why didn't you tell me?

LUCIEN
What am I supposed to do?
Newsreels?

He spots the piece of paper in Allen's hand.

LUCIEN
What's that?

Defensive, Allen pockets his poem for Lucien.

ALLEN
Nothing.

Lucien gets into bed.

LUCIEN
If you're going to stay, don't hog
the blanket.

Lucien closes his eyes. Allen sits up, jealous, his mind spinning. He stares at Lucien.

ALLEN
Why is Jack a *real* writer?

LUCIEN
Once you meet him, you'll see what
I mean.

JACK (O.S.)
Hey Al!

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Handsome JACK KEROUAC (mid-20's, athletic, infamous jaw) palms a football, fakes a pass to Allen. Allen, on the couch with a stack of pages, shakes his head.

ALLEN
No.

Lucien drinks wine beside. Jack ignores Allen, wings the pigskin right at him. Allen ducks. The ball SLAMS into a painting on the wall. It crashes onto Allen's head.

EDIE (O.S.)
Jack? What was that?

JACK
 (with a wink)
 The damn cat!

The bell around the neck of Jack's cat KIT KAT jingles as it scurries away. Jack darts over, hangs the painting upside down.

JACK
 (whispered to Allen)
 She painted it. Say nothing.

Jack notices a piece of mail addressed to him next to Allen. It's an old vinyl RECORD sent by his friend Sammy. He shouts down the hall.

JACK
 Hey when'd this come?

EDIE (O.S.)
 Today. Where is Sammy now?

JACK
 I dunno. Some battleship.

Lucien nods to the huge manuscript on Allen's lap. We realize it is Jack's novel *The Sea Is My Brother*.

LUCIEN
 What do you think? Brilliant, no?

ALLEN
 It's missing some periods and commas.

LUCIEN
 It's better than anything you've ever written.

ALLEN
 I use periods and commas.

JACK
 Both of you! Quiet!

Jack sets up an old phonograph. The scratchy record starts as Jack sidles up close to the speaker.

VOICE OF SAMMY (O.S.)
Jack, how are you chum?

JACK
 Sammy, you bastard.

LUCIEN

Who's Sammy?

JACK

My best friend since I was twelve.
Off in the Navy.

VOICE OF SAMMY (O.S.)

*We've just been through 20 days of
German shelling, every three hours,
night and day. This will be my last
one for a while. We're headed out
to the front. Some beach near Rome.
Anzio?*

EDIE (O.S.)

Come to the table!

VOICE OF SAMMY (O.S.)

It's supposed to be beautiful...

Jack pulls the stylus off.

EDIE PARKER, Jack's wealthy, vivacious art student girlfriend (early 20's) walks in. Messy, comfortable, adorable. She holds a pot, eyes Lucien and Allen.

EDIE

I didn't know we were having
guests.

Jack comes to the table. She smacks something down on a plate: it's brown GLOP.

JACK

What's this?

EDIE

I was aiming for stew.

JACK

You missed.

Jack grabs his jacket.

EDIE

Where are you going?

JACK

Out.

EDIE

Out? I cooked all day for you.

JACK

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

EDIE

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

Allen and Lucien watch entranced.

JACK

Shut your mouth, Edie.

EDIE

I thought you liked it WIDE OPEN...

Jack exits, slams the door shut. Edie stares at Allen and Lucien on the couch.

EDIE

Scram.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

Lucien drinks from a wine bottle as the three boys stroll. Allen trails behind.

JACK

So Al. You thought my novel was shit?

ALLEN

Not exactly. It's...

LUCIEN

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

JACK

I've left school twice already. Columbia's full of squares. I'm not even sure why I bothered to come back.

ALLEN

(sarcastic)

Then why don't you just ship out again?

JACK
Trust me. Sometimes when I fight
with Edie, I want to.

Lucien stops. He spots a DINGY, floating off a dock. He gets
an idea.

LUCIEN
You two did just fight.

JACK
Carr, you're goddamn crazy.

Lucien RUNS for it, then Jack. Allen, now the third wheel,
reluctantly chases after.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - NIGHT

The dingy drifts into view in the middle of the busiest river
in the world - quiet at this late in the night. Jack rowing.

JACK
A "new vision?"

ALLEN
Yeah.

JACK
Sounds phony. Movements are cooked
up by people who can't write about
the people who can.

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

JACK
Listen to me, this whole town's
full of finks on the 30th floor,
writing pure chintz. Writers, real
writers, gotta be in the beds. In
the trenches. In all the broken
places. What're your trenches, Al?

ALLEN
Allen.

JACK
Right.

Allen looks to Lucien for help.

LUCIEN
First thought, best thought.

ALLEN
Fuck you. What does that even mean?!

JACK
Good. That's one. What else?

ALLEN
Fuck your one million words.

JACK
Even better.

ALLEN
You don't know me.

JACK
You're right. Who *is* you?

Lucien loves this, raises an eyebrow. Allen pulls out his poem from his pocket.

ALLEN
Be careful.
You are not in wonderland
I have heard the strange madness
long growing in your soul.
But you are fortunate.

Lucien listens anew, realizing this poem is about him.

ALLEN
In your ignorance
In your isolation,
you who have suffered
Find where love hides.
Give. Share. Lose.
Lest we die unbloomed.

Just the sound of the water. Completely vulnerable, Allen sits back down.

JACK
Allen. Beautiful, kid.

Allen looks up, moved.

LUCIEN
You wrote that?

ALLEN

You asked me to. Remember?

Lucien lights up. He comes forward, gathers his friends close: gawky, emotional Allen. Blustery, sensitive Jack.

LUCIEN

Forget Columbia. Forget Ogden Nash. Here's the plan, boys. We join the Merchant Marines. Sail the world until the war ends. Then jump ship and make it to Paris. For the liberation.

ALLEN

You don't speak French.

LUCIEN

Jack does. It'll be us, together. At the beginning. It'll be the perfect day.

A FLOOD-LAMP and HORN shatter the reverie.

A COAST GUARD patrol boat has caught them. A megaphone squawks to life.

POLICE OFFICER

Don't MOVE!

JACK

Jesus Christ!

POLICE OFFICER

Put your hands in the air!

The boys, trapped, look at each other terrified. The BLAST of the horn sends up to...

CUT TO:

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

Allen, nervous waits outside. Lucien already inside getting reprimanded by the Dean. Allen can hear the conversation through the door.

He leans in closer.

DEAN (O.S.)

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

INT. COLUMBIA DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Lucien in a leather-backed chair. The DEAN (40's, sardonic) overlooks Lucien's record. Lucien's mother, MARION CARR, a fallen matriarch, smokes with dispassion.

DEAN

Your attendance record here is abominable. You've ignored curfew. Your papers, when you bother to turn them in, exceed the assigned page limit. Can you explain why you're at Columbia?

LUCIEN

Same reason you're here.

DEAN

What's that?

LUCIEN

Loose Barnard girls.

Marion Carr looks at the Dean with a weary smile.

DEAN

I know about your difficulties. About what happened in Chicago.

A pale comes over Lucien's face. Which becomes absolute fury.

LUCIEN

(to Marion)
You told him?!

MARION CARR

He's not the enemy.

DEAN

See, the University acts in loco parentis. You are our responsibility. We're trying to find some way to make this all work.

Lucien EXPLODES.

LUCIEN

Who said anybody could know anything about anything?!

MARION CARR

Lucien, your temper!

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

Allen sits back as he hears someone approaching.

Louis Ginsberg rounds the corner with an unfamiliar woman.

 LOUIS (O.S.)
Allen? What the hell is going on?

 ALLEN
Who's she?

The woman, EDITH (early 30s, Jewish, shy), waves nervously.

 EDITH
Hi. I'm Edith Cohen.

 ALLEN
What's she doing here?

 EDITH
I'll go wait outside.

Edith exits down the stairs.

 ALLEN
 (smirks)
So that's why you locked mom up.

Louis SLAPS his son.

Lucien storms out of the Dean's office, followed by Marion, putting on her fur coat. Marion inspects her son's new accomplice then races after her son. Louis motions to Lucien.

 LOUIS
Did he put you up to this?

Allen stares down his father. Gathering courage to defy him.

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

EXT. SEMINARY GARDENS - NIGHT

In the quiet, Lucien smokes and stares up -- he looks ravaged. A suitcase beside him.

Allen approaches, surprised.

 ALLEN
Where are you going?

LUCIEN

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

ALLEN

You're dropping out?

LUCIEN

Best of luck.

Allen GRABS Lucien's suitcase and sits beside Lucien. This explodes out of him.

ALLEN

My father shows up yesterday with some new woman. And in the middle of the Allen's-a-screw-up monologue, all of a sudden, I realize: I don't care. I've never not cared. So, I told them it was my idea. To steal the boat.

LUCIEN

Why?

ALLEN

Because I don't want to be the person they think I am. I'm on academic probation. I could be kicked out. You can't leave. You started something and I have no idea what I'm supposed to do next.

Lucien, moved.

ALLEN

It's our turn. Let's show them what we can do.

At the thought of payback, Lucien awakens. Allen grins.

ALLEN

You in?

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

A hard STAMP on a library request: RESTRICTED.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN

You must not drink while you're handling it. And no writing in it.

Allen, Lucien, Jack and Bill spy on the PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN and a female PAGE at the main desk. The librarian places a KEY RING in a drawer.

PERMISSIONS LIBRARIAN

It must come back exactly as you found it.

The Permissions Librarian heads off. Seeing the young page alone, Jack tucks in his shirt, SLICKS his hair down. Jabs a piece of gum from his mouth into Lucien's palm.

JACK

No telling Edie, got it?

Jack strolls up to the desk. Winks at the page.

JACK

I see you checking out all these books. And I'm asking myself: do you ever get checked out?

She radiates. Bill looks at his watch.

BILL

25 seconds. Masterful.

But then, another page, GWENDOLYN (20, sweet and saucy), joins the first.

LUCIEN

Damn! Shift's over.

Jack looks back, shrugs as he walks off with the first page. Lucien groans, plan's 86'd. But Allen sits up.

ALLEN

I'll go.

INT. PERMISSIONS DESK, LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

Allen walks up to the desk.

ALLEN

Hi.

Gwendolyn looks up. Allen is smiling nervously.

ALLEN

I wondered if you could help me.

GWENDOLYN

Sure.

ALLEN
I'm looking for a book.

GWENDOLYN
Okay. Does this book have a title?

ALLEN
It's called The Day Amanda Came.

GWENDOLYN
(knowing look)
Well, you'll have to wait. I can't
leave the desk.

Allen turns back to Lucien who nods, eggs him on.

ALLEN
But...I really need it.

Gwendolyn looks around.

GWENDOLYN
(flirting)
Okay. Only for you.

She places a sign on the desk: "HELPING A READER. BACK IN 5
MINUTES."

They head off the stacks, Lucien bounds up to the desk,
glides over the top, and digs through the drawer.

Old cards. Broken pencils. NO KEYS.

LUCIEN
Shit!

60 INT. STACKS - DAY

60

CLOSE UP: THE KEYS in Gwendolyn's hand as Allen and Gwendolyn
walk through the stacks.

ALLEN
Working here must be a drag.

GWENDOLYN
I like it. It's the only way I meet
boys. They're very strict at
Barnard.

ALLEN
How strict?

GWENDOLYN

For example, they'd never let me do this.

Gwendolyn LIFTS her sweater. Bares her brassiere.

ALLEN

Right. No.

INT. PERMISSIONS DESK - CONTINUOUS

Lucien peeks up from behind the desk. Sees Bill staring at him.

BILL

Go!

Lucien races into the stacks after Allen.

INT. STACKS - CONTINUOUS

GWENDOLYN

Did you know I've never done it with someone who was Jewish before? I really want to know what it looks like.

Gwendolyn paws the front of Allen's pants, undoes his belt. Uncomfortable, Allen stops her.

She pulls away, pulls down her sweater. The keys jangling in her hand.

GWENDOLYN

I'm sorry, I thought you were saying something but not saying it. Should we find your book?

THROUGH A GAP IN THE STACKS: Allen sees Lucien, pointing to the KEYS in her grip. Realizing what he has to do.

ALLEN

There is no book. Take it off.

GWENDOLYN

Really?

Gwendolyn sets down the keys. Undoes her cardigan. Lucien nabs the keys and races up the stacks.

INT. ROW, LIBRARY STACKS - CONTINUOUS

Lucien hands the keys to Bill. Bill PLACES it into a clay molding and makes an impression.

GWENDOLYN (O.S.)

No. Why don't you take it off?

INT. STACKS, LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Allen takes off her sweater. Gwendolyn, just in a bra. This is as close as Allen has ever come to sex. He's breathless.

GWENDOLYN

It's not like I'm a virgin. I've done it with three guys already. You're a virgin, huh?

She KISSES him. Cold lips. He's terrified.

GWENDOLYN

You're kind of a virgin, though, huh?

ALLEN

No.

GWENDOLYN

Liar. If you have done it before, you'll last for thirty seconds. Start counting.

She opens his fly, then lowers herself down. Allen tries to stop her, but it's too late. He sighs.

ALLEN

1...2...

Lucien returns and see Allen reluctantly getting his first blowjob. Lucien leans against the books and watches.

ALLEN

3...4...

Lucien flashes Allen a wicked grin.

ALLEN

5...6...

Over Gwendolyn's head, Allen watches Lucien staring at him. He starts to get aroused.

ALLEN

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

Allen and Lucien holding eye contact, Allen thrusts into her mouth, comes. Gwendolyn rises back up, unimpressed, drops her sweater.

GWENDOLYN

I knew it.

She grabs the KEYS that are now back on the shelf. Allen looks to find Lucien. But he is gone.

GWENDOLYN

I bet you don't even read.

Gwendolyn walks off. Allen lifts his pants, ties his belt.

ALLEN

I do.

EXT. COLUMBIA LIBRARY - NIGHT

Shots of the darkened church-like building. Deserted. Timeless.

LUCIEN (O.S.)

This is it guys. Our Bastille. No chickening out.

INT. CARD CATALOGUE AREA, LIBRARY - NIGHT

The light from the boys' flashlights SLICES through the dark as they enter into the library through a heavy door.

Bill reaches into Jack's mouth and takes the chewing gum from inside it. Jack shoots a glare at him - what the hell?

Bill presses the sticky gum into the strike plate of the door -- blocking the door from being able to close shut.

The boys look at each other, give each other the silent nod, then split -- Lucien and Jack sneak off to the main hall, Bill and Allen up to the stacks.

Behind them, the chewing gum slips, falls from the strike plate. The door shuts.

And LOCKS.

INT. STACKS - NIGHT

Outside a gated "RESTRICTED ACCESS" room, Bill grabs the padded LOCK and fits in his molded KEY. Allen watches as he turns it...

The lock CLICKS open.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Jack and Lucien unscrew the glass from the VITRINES encasing the historic books and manuscripts we saw earlier.

EXT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Walking into the light of the street lamp outside the library is David. He approaches two campus security GUARDS on the night patrol.

DAVID

Excuse me. I think I saw some light
or movement in the library.

The security guards FLASH their lights at the facade.

INT. RESTRICTED ACCESS ROOM - NIGHT

Bill throws open the metal gate between them and the restricted books inside.

An ALARM explodes into the quiet.

Bill and Allen look at each other: this was unexpected.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Jack and Lucien jolt as the alarm goes off, look up from the vitrines to each other. What is going on up there?

EXT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

The guards hear the alarm coming from inside the library. They race to unlock the CHAIN holding the doors locked together.

INT. RESTRICTED ACCESS ROOM - NIGHT

Bill rushes past the gate, shines his flashlight searching the books until he finds a box marked RESTRICTED CONTENT.

He empties it, tossing the books to Allen. We've seen this move before.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Allen, carrying the restricted books, runs up to Jack and Lucien at the vitrines which are now wide open and empty.

JACK
(whispered)
What just happened?

Jack and Lucien grab the books from Allen and start to set them in the cases. The alarm suddenly STOPS.

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
We know you're here!

The footsteps of the guards approach. Game over. Their work not done, the boys RACE back to the door they came through.

All EXCEPT LUCIEN. He ducks behind the vitrine, hiding. He clicks off his flashlight.

The guards ENTER the main hall, searching for the culprits.

INT. CARD CATALOGUE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Allen, Jack and Bill reach the closed door. They can't open it.

JACK
What the hell, Bill? It's locked!

No way out. Allen turns, notices Lucien is missing.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

The guards step right past Lucien and STOP. Lucien ducks, rounds to the side of the case.

GUARD
Did you hear that?

INT. CARD CATALOGUE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Bill, Jack and Allen slide along the wall of card catalogs, back to the main hall looking for another exit.

Through the arch leading inside, they can see the guards canvassing the room with flashlights.

SECURITY GUARD

We know you're here!

SECURITY GUARD #2

Come on out!

Across the room, Bill spots TWO GLASS DOORS leading out to a balcony. He points at the doors.

Jack WHIPS his flashlight in a tremendous arc to another room. It clatters noisily, a distraction.

It works. The guards CHASE after the noise.

Jack, Bill, Allen BOLT to the glass doors. They throw them wide open. Allen is about to leave, but stops Jack.

ALLEN

Wait. Lucien.

Allen turns and sees Lucien, still furiously working, books under his arm.

Jack shakes his head, follows Bill and races out the door. Alone, Allen RUNS back to Lucien who is madly placing the books in the vitrines. He is a man possessed.

ALLEN

Lu that's enough. Come on! What's wrong with you?

LUCIEN

(deadly serious)

No. Not yet, we have to finish.

A FLASHLIGHT finds them. Allen and Lucien, caught. The guards pull out BILLY CLUBS.

SECURITY GUARD

Don't move. It's over.

The guards GRAB Lucien. Drag him by the collar. But Allen flees, breaks free. Lucien struggles, enraged.

LUCIEN

Get off of me! Allen! Help!

INT. CARD CATALOGUE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Allen stops, terrified. He sees: a console of switches on the wall. Desperate, he reaches for them. Flips them all on.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

All the lights in the whole library come on at once. A BLINDING flash.

The guards squint and look for Allen.

INT. CARD CATALOGUE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Allen THROWS down all the switches.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

The room PLUNGES into complete darkness.

Lucien realizes: this is his moment.

He wriggles out of his coat and RUNS. Allen JOINS him and the two, reunited, run around the corner.

The guards give chase.

INT. ENTRANCE FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Allen and Lucien race into the vestibule between the doors leading out to the city -- and the doors back into the library.

Lucien presses against the exit doors: they're locked.

The GUARDS turn the corner, see the boys stuck between the two sets of doors.

Allen blocks the library doors with his shoulder. The guards POUND on the door.

A SOUND from outside: the padlock unlocking. Suddenly: the exit door opens. It's Jack and Bill, with lock-picking gear in hand.

They YANK Allen and Lucien out.

EXT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Jack slams the door, Bill runs the chain back through the handle and LOCKS it.

The door BULGES as the guards bang into it.

SECURITY GUARD

Open the goddamn door! Open this up!

The boys turn and RUN down the grand steps leading back to the campus. Glee on their faces.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIBRARY - DAY

The same grand steps the next morning. Students walking up and down it to class, socializing, as if nothing happened there the night before.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

Inside, the pompous TOUR GUIDE from earlier showing off the vitrines to a new crowd of parents and incoming students.

TOUR GUIDE

The South Hall library is a church, and these are the sacraments.

The crowd mumbles, then laughs. The guide, confused, looks inside them to see the *Kama Sutra* opened up to a particularly salacious page.

The explicit images from a Grecian urn.

Lady Chatterly's Lover, Ulysses, all the books banned, restricted, kept from public eye.

And lastly: Tropic of Cancer. By Henry Miller.

The prisoners have come out to play.

TOUR GUIDE

Oh. My. God.

And a note, left on the glass: "**The New Vision.**"

INT. WEST END BAR - DAY

Four shot glasses. Four hands.

LUCIEN
To literacy.

Allen, Bill, Jack and Lucien throw back their drinks in celebration.

The Mills Brothers "*You Always Hurt The One You Love*" on the jukebox plays over this lazy, drunken afternoon.

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

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

He sees a framed photo of Jack in a football play, mid-catch.

JACK
Yep. Last year. They still won.

LUCIEN
Look at them!

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

LUCIEN
Souvenir history. To make people think they left some mark on the world. Because otherwise nobody would ever know.
(beat)
I don't ever want to end up on this wall.

JACK
Have no fear. You never will.

Suddenly, David appears in the bar. The group looks at each other, mystified.

ALLEN
What's he doing here?

David walks briskly over to Lucien.

DAVID
Since you didn't show up earlier, I just hoped to give you this.

David drops a TERM PAPER on the table: "On the Decline of the West." Allen leans over the table, inserting himself into the conversation.

ALLEN

Maybe he didn't want to see you.

DAVID

I think he can speak for himself.

LUCIEN

Yup. And he says we should all have another round...

Lucien stands up to get a drink. David grabs his arm. Lucien tries to push him off.

DAVID

You've had plenty of time to celebrate. Your library hijink made the morning paper. I'm sure you're all very proud.

Allen, Jack and Bill glance at each other suspiciously, then at David.

ALLEN

How did you know it was us?

DAVID

Did he use that "Bastille" line? Cause I gave it to him.

Allen, Jack and Bill look at Lucien, shocked.

LUCIEN

I haven't seen you for days.

David throws down Lucien's cravat to the table. The one we remember him wearing when we first met him in the library. A private power move.

DAVID

You left this at my place.

ALLEN

(to David, a guess)

You told the guards we were there. No one else knew.

David does not respond. Jack suddenly jolts up. Shoves David back.

JACK
You little fink!

Lucien explodes at David.

LUCIEN
You wanted me to get kicked out?!
You ratted on me!

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

ALLEN
Yeah.
(to Lucien)
Cut him off.

Lucien gives David a fatal look.

LUCIEN
Best of luck, Janitor.

DAVID
Excuse me?

LUCIEN
We are over. Leave.

Lucien spindles the paper and plunges it into a beer. David
in shock, begins to shatter in front of them.

DAVID
Look at me, Lu.

Tears well in David's eyes. Lucien sits back down, ignores
him. Bill stands up, tries to lead David away.

BILL
Let's go.

DAVID
(from his wound, breaking)
You said I was everything to you.
You are everything to me.
Everything to me. Do you hear me?

David fractures. Utterly vulnerable. This is it: the real
uninhibited, uncensored self.

BILL
Let's go. Time and place, David.

DAVID
Shut up, traitor.

He turns sharply to Lucien saying loud enough so everyone can hear.

DAVID
You'd be dead if it weren't for me!

Lucien totally dead cold. Allen, unsure what David is talking about. David turns and rushes outside and Bill follows him.

Alone with Allen and Jack, Lucien suddenly smiles as if nothing just happened, puts his arm around Allen.

LUCIEN
You'd be boring if it weren't for me!

The two start to crack up together.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

JACK
And...go!

Jack crouched inside an empty barrel. Trashed, Lucien kicks the barrel down a grassy slope.

Allen and Lucien cheer Jack on as the barrel bangs down the slope. But then it swerves, SLAMS into a bench. At the top of the slope, Lucien and Allen look on in shock.

LUCIEN
Jack? Jack?
(no response)
He broke his fucking neck. The warrior poet has passed on.

Jack staggers from out of the barrel. Throws his hands in the air victoriously. Allen and Lucien cheer him on.

ALLEN
No, he lives!

LUCIEN
Excellent! Judges award a...

Allen holds up nine fingers.

ALLEN
Nine!

Jack falls to his knees, pukes. Allen and Lucien crack up.

LUCIEN
All right Ginsy, your turn.

Drunk, Allen tries to stand up. But then falls right back down. Lucien laughs, tucks his body next to Allen's.

LUCIEN
This is just the beginning, you know.

Lucien lays his head against Allen's shoulder.

LUCIEN
Your fault, Ginsy. It's all your fault.

Lucien's thigh brushes against Allen's.

Allen stares at Lucien, in the full glare of Lucien's warmth.

Allen looks around. The park is empty. Building up the courage.

ALLEN
First thought, best thought.

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

The decisive moment. Allen leans over. Kisses him. It builds in passion.

Lucien pulls back, unsure. Then returns the kiss. It builds in passion.

Everything Allen had hoped for, lensed into a moment.

JACK (O.S.)
I think I just puked on the inside.

Lucien opens his eyes to notice Jack stumbling up the slope.

He tenses, pulls away from Allen.

The moment has been shattered.

As if nothing just happened, Lucien stands and looks at Jack with his usual devilish smile.

LUCIEN
Let's go, Jack.

He throws his arm around Jack's shoulder, turning his back to Allen. They start to walk off. Jack stops, turns back to Allen.

JACK
Wait, Al, you coming?

Lucien glares at Allen.

LUCIEN
No. Allen's got work to do. Ten pages on Spengler's *Decline of the West*. Due tomorrow.

ALLEN
Excuse me?

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

The two of them leave. Allen, abandoned and broken, puts his head in his hands.

ALLEN
Fuck. Fuck!

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucien and Jack stumble into Jack's apartment. Edie sits with GRANDMA FRANKIE (90s, stone-faced) around the living room table, listening to the news on the radio. We hear there's been an attack in Anzio.

JACK
Edie! Edie bird!

Lucien looks at Edie's stone-cold face. She's pissed. He turns right back around.

LUCIEN
(exiting)
Lu's going to use the loo.

EDIE
Say hi to Gram.

Grandma Frankie glares at Jack.

EDIE
We invited her over for her birthday. We made her a cake.

Jack sees a lumpy, half-eaten cake on the table. Realizing he just messed up big-time.

JACK

Then we should have a drink! How about a drink, Grandma Frankie? You want some red wine?

Jack heads to the cabinet. Edie follows him.

EDIE

Where the hell have you been?!

JACK

I was out.

Edie's rage boils over.

EDIE

I packed all your stuff. It's in your bag. I'm going to be at Gram's tonight.

Jack reaches for her. She shakes him off.

JACK

Stay. I'm sorry.

EDIE

You just say that, but it's one of your million words and they don't mean anything!

(beat)

Just don't be here when I come back in the morning.

INT. 118TH STREET BEDROOM - LATER

Edie's gone. The apartment is quiet. Lucien and Jack, crashed out on Jack's bed.

The sound of a strange KNOCKING against a window outside. Lucien wakes up. Sees Jack still asleep.

He rises to investigate.

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucien sees David, desperate, alone, on the fire escape. Lucien can't believe this. He opens the window.

DAVID

I know this is crazy. I don't know even know what I'm doing here. But I had to tell you I'm sorry. Let me make it up to you.

From behind...

JACK (O.S.)

Lu, where are you?

Lucien stares down David.

LUCIEN

I'm going back to bed. Another word and I call the police.

Lucien turns around and leaves David alone at the sill. From inside the living room, David hears a MEOW.

He spots Jack's cat KIT KAT looking up at him.

INT. 118TH STREET BEDROOM - LATER

The sound of gas and a violent STRUGGLING from the other room.

Jack quickly wakes up.

JACK

What the hell?!

Jack jumps out of bed and grabs a baseball bat.

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack walks up the hallway. The living room, eerily empty. Then a howling from the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN, 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack rushes in. Turns on the light. The sounds are coming from the OVEN.

He rushes to the oven door and opens it. Kit Kat struggles in the oven, gassed and barely alive. Jack turns off the oven, clutches his cat.

JACK

It's okay. Shhh.
(turns to Lucien)

What kind of sick son of a bitch
would do something like this?

LUCIEN
It was David.

JACK
I'll wring his fucking neck.

LUCIEN'S P.O.V.: Jack's Merchant Marine duffel bag that Edie
has fully packed for him.

LUCIEN
I have another idea.

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - THE NEXT DAY

Allen sits at a table at the library he just broke into and
robbed. But now he's just another student sitting at a study
desk.

He puts in a blank page in the typewriter before him and
types: "On The Decline of the West. By..."

He hesitates, breaking down in tears.

Then finishes typing: "Lucien Carr."

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Lucien, in a Merchant Marine uniform, packs his clothes into
a sailor's duffel bag. Allen enters, type-written pages in
hand.

ALLEN
Your paper and my apology.

Allen hands Lucien the paper he wrote for him. But Lucien
doesn't take it. Allen registers that he's packing.

ALLEN
Where are you going?

LUCIEN
Sailing out. To Paris.

Lucien grabs his BOY-SCOUT KNIFE. Puts it in his pocket.
Allen is speechless.

LUCIEN

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

ALLEN

You weren't going to tell me?

LUCIEN

We both know why you can't come.

Silence. Lucien continues his packing. Allen breaks down.

ALLEN

Fuck you. You're a phony. You got me and Jack and Bill making your vision come true. All because you couldn't do it yourself.

LUCIEN

No, you got what you wanted. You were ordinary, just like every other freshman, and I made your life extraordinary. Go be you now, all by yourself. Leave me alone.

Allen, now in tears, realizing the end is here.

ALLEN

You don't really mean that.

LUCIEN

(cold, deadened)
Allen. Leave.

Allen gathers himself, stumbles out the door. Leaving the friendship behind.

Alone, Lucien cracks, breaking down as he closes his suitcase.

EXT. SEMINARY COURTYARD - DAY

Allen crosses through the courtyard, heading to class. He comes upon David, waiting for Lucien. Pale. Distraught.

DAVID

Allen, have you seen him? He's not in his room.

They look almost the same.

ALLEN

He left.

DAVID

I did something wrong. Really wrong. And you have no reason to help me. But

ALLEN

But?

DAVID

I know who you are. We're the ones he needs, but never wants. It hurts, doesn't it?

Allen burns, does not respond. David is right.

DAVID

All I am asking is tell me where he is. Please.

CLOSE ON: Allen, on the blade of a choice.

INT. MERCHANT MARINE, BILLETING OFFICE - EVENING

Jack and Lucien in a long line of young soldiers waiting to ship out. Lucien nips at a flask. They reach the front of the line. A BILLETING OFFICER calls out to them.

BILLETING OFFICER

Lemme see your papers.

LUCIEN

Two seamen, reporting for duty.

Jack tries not to laugh, hands over his paperwork. The officer points to Lucien.

BILLETING OFFICER

What's your name?

LUCIEN

Arthur Rimbaud.

Jack rolls his eyes. The officer hands the paperwork back.

BILLETING OFFICER

Go upstairs to get on the docket.

LUCIEN

Let's go get on the docket.

As they turn to leave, they see David is there, descending the stairs. Jack is about to pounce.

JACK
Goddamn son of a bitch!

LUCIEN
Let me handle this.

Lucien holds Jack back, rushes up to David.

LUCIEN
How did you know I would be here?!

DAVID
Listen, I spoke to a guy upstairs.
I got two passes. I packed for both
of us. We can leave.

LUCIEN
The reason I'm leaving is you.

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

DAVID
Then you and Jack take them. I'll
catch up.

Lucien considers this, then makes a fateful decision.

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

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Allen, wrecked, walks into the bar where he first drank with Lucien.

He sees an older man eyeing him and sits down, terrified.

ALLEN
Could I have a whiskey, please?

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack unlocks his door. Edie sits on the floor, her eyes red from crying. Jack drops his duffel bag. Sits with her.

JACK
I'm sorry.

Edie embraces him.

INT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Allen sees a young man in a Merchant Marine outfit, blond, the bar lamps casting a golden halo around his head. Could it be?

ALLEN

Lu?

Allen races to him. The man turns and Allen's heart sinks. It is a SAILOR, a distant echo of Lucien.

The Sailor eyes Allen gently, seductively.

Allen walks up to him.

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Edie breaks the embrace.

EDIE

This came for you today.

She hands Jack a package from the mail. A new record.

JACK

Sammy...

Jack places it on the record player and listens, clutching Edie. He knows immediately there won't be another record.

SAMMY (V.O.)

Jack, old chum. I'm on a hospital ship now. My guts all tore up.

INT. CRAPPY HOTEL, 42ND STREET - NIGHT

Allen undresses, terrified, as the sailor does the same.

SAMMY (V.O.)

Anzio's going to be the last place I ever see with my eyes.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill with Norman, his dealer, in his apartment. Norman injects himself with a morphine syrette. Bill watches, fascinated.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*A mortar round came and found me in
my tent.*

Norman offers the box of morphine to Bill. Bill handles it. Considering.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

Lucien walks, guzzles from his flask. David follows. They are visibly arguing.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*I can feel metal under my skin some
places. Some went clean through.*

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack continues to listen to Sammy, his heart sinking. He knows this is headed to a dark place.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*They're not even trying to take it
out no more.*

INT. CRAPPY HOTEL, 42ND STREET - NIGHT

Allen's heart in his throat as he steps out of his pants. He is nearly naked. Vulnerable.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

Lucien throws his flask into the woods, LASHES out at David.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill injects the syrette into his wrist. And presses the oblivion in.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*The nurses gave me the same
morphine I gave to dying boys...*

INT. CRAPPY HOTEL, 42ND STREET - NIGHT

Allen, naked, lays on the bed. He turns off the light.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*...when I didn't know what else to
do.*

The sailor climbs on top of Allen, turns it back on.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

David LUNGES for Lucien and Lucien throws him off, spins away.

He pulls out his Boy Scout knife.

David stares at Lucien, stunned.

INT. CRAPPY HOTEL, 42ND STREET - NIGHT

Allen turns to face the sailor. Looks him in the eye.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*Wake, melancholy mother. Wake and
weep.*

Allen reaches to kiss the sailor.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

Lucien STABS David, plunges the blade into his chest.

INT. CRAPPY HOTEL, 42ND STREET - NIGHT

The sailor enters Allen.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill drifts backwards, into the high.

SAMMY (V.O.)
*Quench within thy burning bed, thy
fiery tears.*

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT

David looks up from his chest. Blood pumps from the gash.

David, clutching his shirt, his chest...

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - NIGHT

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

The record runs out, the stylus scratches. Jack, trembling.

EDIE
 What is that?

JACK
 It's Shelley's elegy for Keats.

EDIE
 What's that mean?

JACK
 It means he's dead.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. GROUP SHOWERS, SEMINARY - THE MORNING AFTER

FADE UP ON: Allen, alone in the shower. He's completely blank, eyes on the tile.

Realizing what he did the night before and how it felt so natural -- now he knows exactly who he is.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - DAY

Allen steps out in a bathrobe, to see a POLICEMAN and a DETECTIVE whispering outside Lucien's room.

POLICEMAN
 He didn't come back here
 afterwards. Nobody on the floor
 saw.

They stare at Allen, studying him. Other students whisper.

POLICEMAN
 We have two in custody. We're still
 getting names.

Allen makes his way down the hall. Custody? What happened to Lucien?

DETECTIVE
 So what do we know about this Carr
 kid? Did we have any friends? We're
 gonna have to speak to all of them.

Allen looks down and races to the hallway phone.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Allen dials a number. Nervous. Edie picks up.

ALLEN
Edie? Is Jack there?

EDIE (O.S.)
You don't know?

ALLEN
Know what?

INT. 118TH STREET APARTMENT - DAY

Edie searches for the words.

EDIE
The police took him down to the
Tombs. As an accessory. Bill too.

ALLEN (O.S.)
What happened?

Edie shocked, unable to speak.

CUT TO:

INT. THE TOMBS - DAY

The BLARE of a prison horn. A guard opens a heavy gate and Allen walks onto the hall of cells. It's a long, dank walk.

Allen spots Lucien in a small unremarkable cell, behind bars, reading. Allen can't believe he's here.

Lucien sits up from his cot and rushes to the bars.

LUCIEN
Allen, thank God.

Allen's skeptical face makes Lucien change tactics.

ALLEN
How could you?

LUCIEN
He wanted to hurt me, I had no
choice.

ALLEN

You could have run. Called the police.

Lucien looks Allen fiercely in the eye.

LUCIEN

Listen. Somehow he found me at the Marine Hall.

Allen looks away, realizing he is potentially complicit.

LUCIEN

He said no matter where I went, he would follow. When I confronted him, he exploded. I had to defend myself. He wouldn't stop.

ALLEN

But how did Jack and Bill get roped into this?

CUT TO:

EXT. HARLEM SIDEWALK - DAWN

Lucien drops the bloody Boy Scout knife down a grate. Jack stands guard.

LUCIEN (O.S.)

I went to Jack first. He told me to get rid of the knife. To forget the whole thing.

They hear footsteps and turn. A black woman watches them suspiciously.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

LUCIEN (O.S.)

But then I went to Bill. He told me to get a lawyer.

Bill fingering David's pack of Lucky Strikes in his bathroom. David's blood on his hand.

LUCIEN (O.S.)

To say it was an act of self-defense.

Lucien watches Bill light one of the bloody cigarettes and inhale. The last flare of his friend.

Bill flushes the rest of the pack down the toilet.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. TOMBS - DAY

Lucien, desperate, at the bars of his cell.

LUCIEN

The D.A. is asking for my
deposition. In writing.

Allen shakes his head, there's no way he's going to do this.

LUCIEN

(pleading)

We both know I can't do it. I don't
know what I'm going to do. I'm
going to be stuck in here for the
rest of my life!

Allen, still unsure. Lucien slides his hand down the bars
until it touches Allen's. Pleads seductively.

LUCIEN

Please don't leave me here.

The BUZZER goes off. Visiting time is over. The prison guard
heads towards the cell. Allen makes a fateful choice.

ALLEN

I'll do it.

Lucien, smiling. Leans in, whispers.

LUCIEN

We're going to say it was an "honor
slaying".

Off Allen's confused face...

INT. LIBRARY, MAIN HALL - DAY

A finger traces down a legal index to the definition of the
phrase: "Honor Slaying."

ALLEN (V.O.)

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

OTHER students around Allen gossip and steal glances at him as he reads to himself from the index. The murderer's "friend."

ALLEN (V.O.)

"If the accused is *heterosexual*, he shall be pardoned. But if the accused is *homosexual*, the charge of murder in the first degree..."

Allen's attention falls to the final words:

"SHALL STAND."

INT. POLICE OFFICE - DAY

Jack, in handcuffs, on the phone. PHOTOGRAPHERS, JOURNALISTS outside, clamoring for Jack to look their way. A murder with Columbia University students, this is big news.

JACK

Dad. It's five thousand dollars for bail. I know it's a lot--

A flash bulb FIRES. Journalists cat-calling for Jack's attention.

JACK'S FATHER (O.S.)

No Kerouac was ever wrapped up in a murder! Go to hell.

The line goes dead. Jack has run out of options. More flashbulbs EXPLODE. More screaming for his attention. Jack whips around.

JACK

Would you all just SHUT THE HELL UP?!

INT. LUCIEN CARR'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Marion Carr taking down Lucien's dorm room, packing her son's belongings into the same suitcase he tried to run away with before.

MARION CARR

You must understand David has been following him for years.

Allen, smoking nervously from Lucien's bed, watching all traces of Lucien being torn down.

MARION CARR

When Lucien went to Bowdoin, David appeared out of thin air. So I sent Lu to Chicago.

Allen registers the reference from Lucien's conversation with the Dean, a dim clue. Marion goes back to packing.

MARION CARR

Surprise, David turned up there too. Then, when Lucien wanted to go to Mexico, guess who had a car idling in the driveway?

ALLEN

But he didn't have to go with him.

MARION CARR

He spun a web to ensnare my son. That's why I brought him here. A lot of good that did.

Marion finds Lucien's cravat, quickly folds it, hides it in the suitcase. Allen notices.

ALLEN

What happened in Chicago?

Marion stops packing. Thinks. She settles on the bed, charms Allen with a smile.

MARION CARR

Thank God Lu has you in his life. He talks about you all the time.

She leans over and slips the cigarette from Allen's hands into her own. Inhales seductively.

MARION CARR

You know what Allen? He calls you his guardian angel.

ALLEN

That's what he called David.

She exhales, her face falls. Leans in threateningly.

MARION CARR

That man ruined my son. You're going to help me keep what's left of him.

INT. BURROUGHS'S APARTMENT (69 BEDFORD) - NIGHT

The zip of a suitcase. Bill, undoing his den, packing away clothes, books. He's also leaving town. Allen's come for answers -- from the only person who knew the real David.

BILL

Contrary to reports, prison is not
a tonic for the spirit.

We are now realizing it's the end of a chapter for all of them.

BILL

All the district attorney cared
about was if David was queer.

Allen gulps. The heart of the issue, thrust into the light.

ALLEN

And what did you tell them?

Bill sees the box of morphine from his night with Norman. He decides to take it with him, hides it under a pile of shirts.

BILL

I said yes.

ALLEN

Did David do something Lu in
Chicago?

BILL

Christ Allen, please don't get
involved.

ALLEN

I have to be. I'm helping him write
his defense.

Bill paces, then turns to face Allen.

BILL

David was my friend. But he's dead.
And did Lucien tell you how he
died?

Allen shakes his head. He has no idea.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The moment right after Lucien stabbed David. What we have not seen yet. The story continues.

David trembles on the ground, bleeding from the knife wound. Lucien stands above, realizing what just happened.

Car headlamps swipe across Lucien's face. Terrified, Lucien scans the park for witnesses.

BILL (O.S.)

He might not have wanted you to know, Allen. He tied David up.

Lucien DRAGS David's body from the park under a railing to the shoreline.

He unties his shoes, LASHES David's hands together with the shoelaces. Ties them tight.

David groans and gurgles blood. Still very much ALIVE.

Lucien rustles through David's pockets -- pulls out anything side. He tosses David's pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes, now speckled with blood - to the sand.

Lucien collects stones from the riverbank, STUFFS them into David's pockets.

BILL (O.S.)

He put stones in his pockets to weigh him down.

Lucien panics, looks around. He takes off his Merchant Marine clothes. Fully naked, he drags a bound David into the dark waters of the Hudson River.

David moans and struggles but is no match for Lucien.

BILL (O.S.)

And dragged him into the Hudson River.

ALLEN (O.S.)

What?!

BILL (O.S.)

David was alive, Allen, until Lucien made him drown.

The sound of a door slamming open brings us...

BACK TO SCENE

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MR. BURROUGHS (60s, patrician, wealthy), Bill's father enters his son's apartment, causing Bill to stop telling the story. Mr. Burroughs eyes Allen suspiciously.

MR. BURROUGHS
Who are you? Is he part of this
business.

BILL
Leave him alone, Dad.

MR. BURROUGHS
I paid your bail. Don't talk to me
like that.

Bill looks down, obedient. The rebel silenced by his father.

BILL
Yes, sir.

MR. BURROUGHS
The car leaves in five minutes.

As Mr. Burroughs exits, Bill furiously SLAMS his suitcase closed.

BILL
The libertine circle has come to an
end.

Allen looks at Bill, lost at what to do next. Bill leans in close.

BILL
Go back to the beginning.

THE RED LINE LEADS US, ONCE MORE, DOWN THE SUBWAY MAP FROM
COLUMBIA...

TO THE EDGE OF THE WORLD. WHERE IT ALL STARTED.

INT. BATHROOM, DAVID'S APARTMENT (48 MORTON) - DAY

The window bangs open. Allen climbs into David's apartment from the fire-escape.

He opens the door to the living room. Sunlight filtering into a dusty, silent apartment.

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT (48 MORTON) - DAY

It is eerie. The place of someone who just left the world. Allen looks around, unsure what he's looking for.

His eyes fall on the bookshelves. Memories flood back, raveling and unraveling.

FLASHCUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT (48 MORTON) - DAY

Books LEAP into Bill's hands and he places them back on the shelves.

Allen UNSUTURES the pages of books, returning back to their original condition.

Lucien TAP nails out of the wall handing the pages back to Allen.

Allen scouring his memories, just like when he wrote his poem earlier.

Time runs in reverse.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT (48 MORTON) - DAY

Allen searches through the steamer trunk of the apartment. Nothing. He ruffles through the console table. Again nothing.

He notices David's SUITCASE. The one David packed before planning on leaving by boat with Lucien.

Allen opens it. He digs through it, searching for some clue, any clue -- something to shed light on the past.

He pulls out a pile of clothes and underneath them...a book.

It's a copy of Yeats' A VISION, covered in notes. It's David's.

It's the same edition of the copy that Lucien showed Allen in his room.

FLASHCUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT (48 MORTON) - NIGHT

Time shifts into reverse -- we realize this Allen's mind at work: rummaging for details, clues, snatches of life.

We see the first night Allen met David -- David circling his finger around his wineglass, his speech about life as a circle, slipping through time...

FLASHCUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S APARTMENT (48 MORTON) - DAY

Allen opening the book to find the legend that Lucien once showed him, the picture of Yeats's WHEEL.

A stack of PAPERS fall from the book. Allen rifles through them.

And finds a faded pink hospital "ADMIT" form.

Cook County Hospital, Chicago. March 1943.

He scans down the page: **"Carr, Lucien. Suicide Attempt. Gas Inhalation. Admitting Person: D. Kammerer."**

At the bottom, the form reads **"Next of Kin."**

Beside is the name: **David Kammerer.**

Below, Allen sees POSTCARDS, PHOTOS. Photos of the beach, of Lucien and David, reclining together. It's their trip to Mexico.

In photo, the two of them, posing for the camera together. Smiling. Looking very much like a couple in love.

Lucien's signature red CRAVAT hangs around David's neck.

On the backside, written by hand is:

LUCIEN (V.O.)
The perfect day.

Allen, shocked. The puzzle pieces have fallen into place.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY, GREYSTONE - DAY

INSERT: A photo of Lucien in *The New York Times*.

The headline: "STUDENT IS SILENT ON SLAYING FRIEND. HELD WITHOUT BAIL. AWAITING DEPOSITION."

The sound of footsteps.

Allen looks over the article. He's on a bench in the hallway of an old sanitarium.

His mother, Naomi, approaches, tentatively. The first time they have seen each other since she was taken from home.

Both of them scared to make the first move towards re-connection.

Naomi steps towards her son, takes his face in her hands. Allen melts in her arms.

EXT. GARDEN, GREYSTONE - DAY

Allen and Naomi, in the courtyard of the hospital. Patients being led through the sanitarium's gardens by nurses behind.

Naomi, looks remarkably more calm then the last time Allen saw her.

NAOMI

He would leave me alone in the house. I was going to die there.

ALLEN

No, Mom. That's not true.

NAOMI

Yeah, I know it.

Naomi sinks inside herself, dark thoughts returning.

ALLEN

Mom, stop.

NAOMI

Hey, I'm okay now. I'm your mother. And I'm okay.

She notices the bags under his eyes. His weary face.

NAOMI

But you're not.

Allen, a kid out of his league.

ALLEN

I'm in over my head. Someone I know
killed a man. And I don't know what
to do. He wants my help. And I
don't know if I should give it to
him. I don't know if it's right.
It's just a mess.

NAOMI

Let him go. Don't help him.

ALLEN

I can't, mom. He's my best friend.

NAOMI

Listen to me.

Naomi pulls her son closer. With more strength than she has
displayed in years.

NAOMI

The most important thing your
father ever did was fail me.

(beat)

You understand?

Allen, realizing what he has to do.

INT. DORMROOM - NIGHT

Late night. Allen, back at the typewriter where he wrote the
poem for Lucien.

He inserts a blank page. The task before him feels huge.

The events of the night in question -- the night of David's
murder -- ravel and unravels in his mind's eye.

FLASHCUT TO:

David, stabbed, gasping at Lucien with horror. The knife
being pulled back, the wound closing back up.

FLASHCUT TO:

David, reaching for Lucien, in reverse, Lucien walking back
to David, ending in an embrace.

ALLEN (V.O.)

He loved you. And the truth is,
once--

FLASHCUT TO:

Allen turns over the old PHOTOGRAPH of David and Lucien together from David's apartment. The Perfect Day.

ALLEN (V.O.)
You loved him back.

FLASHCUT TO:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Time now runs forward, to the inevitable. We watch Lucien and David walking once more of the night of the murder. But this time we hear their argument. Lucien, drunk, tosses his flask into the bushes. David follows him, desperate.

DAVID
Let's get out of the city. Anywhere you want. I've saved up.

ALLEN (V.O.)
But this secret ate away at you.

LUCIEN
I was just a kid, you dragged me into your perverted mess!

ALLEN (V.O.)
So in Chicago, you tried to kill yourself.

DAVID
How can you say that? You know that's not true.

Lucien stops short. Stares hard at David.

DAVID
I will never give up on us.

ALLEN (V.O.)
He rescued you. He saved your life.

LUCIEN
You're pathetic.

Lucien walks on, but David lunges for him. They struggle.

Lucien throws David off, spins free from his grasp, pulls out his Boy Scout knife from his pocket.

The two men face each other.

ALLEN (V.O.)
You needed him as much as he needed
you.

The bare blade FLASHES between them. David, looking at the knife, shocked that their relationship has come to this. He looks back up at Lucien.

DAVID
Now I know how you felt.

LUCIEN
When?

DAVID
When you wanted to die.

David takes a step, closing the gap between him and the knife. Daring Lucien to strike.

DAVID
Do it.

Lucien moves forward. The gap narrows. Just inches away from each other.

David steps forward onto the blade. Lucien does not back off. David gasps, notices the knife deep in his chest to the hilt.

Blood pumps from the gash.

Lucien frees the knife. Then pulls back and STABS David a second time. With malice.

And again. Plunges the blade into his chest. He grinds the knife into David even further..

DAVID
Oh my god...

David DROPS, clutching his shirt, his life pulsing from his chest.

FLASHCUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Allen writing madly. The words come in a rush.

ALLEN (V.O.)
Some things once you love them
become yours forever.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK

Out in the Hudson River, Lucien cradles David's dying body in his arms. David looks up at Lucien, his last moment of life. The opening shot of the film.

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

David's eyes CLOSE. Lucien releases David out into the current.

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

David sinks into the depths of the Hudson, becoming just a shadow then disappearing altogether.

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

CUT TO:

INT. THE TOMBS - DAY

From his cell, Lucien Carr finishes reading Allen's DEPOSITION.

LUCIEN
Or they destroy you.

We have returned to the opening scene of the movie. Lucien crumples the paper in his hand.

LUCIEN
You can't show this to anyone.

Allen stares at Lucien defiantly through the bars.

ALLEN
Then tell the truth, Lu.

LUCIEN
You weren't even there. It's your
truth. It's fiction.

Allen grabs for the manuscript. Lucien pulls it out of reach.

LUCIEN

You wanted him gone too. You sent
him to me.

Allen SNATCHES the manuscript -- it's a tug of war through
the bars.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)

Please. You'll kill me with that.

Allen yanks the paper from Lucien's grip. He heads towards
the exit of the prison. Desperate, Lucien calls out after
him.

LUCIEN

Allen! No! DON'T!

An alarm HAMMERS through the prison, sending us to...

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

The New York City's District Attorney's SECRETARY at her
reception desk. Allen enters the room, his deposition in
hand. He is visibly nervous as he approaches the desk.

ALLEN

Allen Ginsberg.

SECRETARY

He'll be with you in a minute.
Please, have a seat.

Allen waits, glances at the deposition in his lap. The title
reads, "The Night in Question."

INT. JAIL - DAY

From his prison bed, Lucien stares down the cellblock,
hopeless. His eyes alight on his sheets.

INT. DISTRICT'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

The camera moves in an arc, rotating past Allen, sweating,
toward the door of the DISTRICT ATTORNEY...

INT. JAIL - DAY

...the same circle finds Lucien as he RIPS the bedsheet into strips. Frantic...

INT. DISTRICT'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

The circle discovers Allen, unable to sit still. The weight of his decision crushes him...

INT. JAIL - DAY

...Lucien fashions a noose around his neck. He ties the sheet to one of the cell bars. We glide past him back to...

INT. DISTRICT'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

...Allen spies the shadow of the District Attorney behind frosted glass of his office...

INT. JAIL - DAY

...the circling suddenly STOPS at Lucien as the knot on the noose catches. He is hanging, choking, desperate to die and yet fighting for life.

But the knot on the cell bars releases. Lucien FALLS to the ground.

Alive.

INT. DISTRICT'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

The secretary hangs up the phone.

SECRETARY

Mr. Ginsberg. He's ready for you.

She looks at the chair. No one is there.

SECRETARY

Mr. Ginsberg?

The sound of the door closing. Allen is gone.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

How did you expect us to react to this?

INT. COLUMBIA DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Allen's manuscript HITS the Dean's desk.

The deposition's title page now reads "The Night in Question by Allen Ginsberg." It's been refashioned into a novella.

Allen sits in the same chair where Lucien was reprimanded. Professor Steeves sits silently beside the Dean at his desk.

DEAN

No, please tell me. Professor Steeves says you submitted it as your final.

Allen, nervous in the chair.

DEAN

Well, then, let me tell you. It is smutty and absurd.

ALLEN

But you finished it.

The Dean loses his patience.

DEAN

You've taken incompletes in two classes. And you are already on academic probation. There are rules you agreed to upon admittance into this university. And you have managed to break and keep breaking them. You don't seem to have much respect for this institution. So you may either retract this fiction as your final. Or you may choose to be expelled. What will it be?

Professor Steeves eyes Allen.

ALLEN

Fine.

Allen stands, making his decision.

ALLEN

Consider me expelled.

Allen reaches for his manuscript. The Dean SLIDES it out of reach.

DEAN

This remains with us.

Professor Steeves keeps a close eye on Allen as he leaves the office.

INT. GINSBERG HOME - DAY

Back in the Ginsberg residence, but the house is quiet now, peaceful. No Naomi. The radio playing softly in the living room. Louis jotting down verse on the back of the mail.

Allen, shirt untucked, composing a poem on the back of a bill.

They both reach for their cigarettes at the same time.

Louis looks at Allen writing. A mirror between father and son. A moment of warm appreciation.

Louis hands Allen a package from the mail pile.

LOUIS

This came for you today.

The package is from Columbia University. Allen opens it, mystified as to what it might be.

It's his manuscript.

On it, a note: "Walt Jr.: Keep this, Keep Going. - Professor Steeves."

The music on the radio suddenly stops for a news broadcast.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This is Bill O'Connell reporting
from Paris and these are the sounds
of liberation.

Over the radio comes the sound of a ROARING CELEBRATION.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Crowds have assembled in the
streets.

Allen takes in the historic news. He looks at his father. The world, forever changed.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This is the end of a long darkness.
France and Europe are finally free.

Crowds ERUPT in whistles and cheers. Allen takes it in. The moment Lucien had dreamed of.

The Mills Brothers' "You Always Hurt The One You Love" starts to play.

EXT. RIVERSIDE PARK - DAY

Sun streaming on Allen, standing at the bank of the Hudson River, at the place where David died.

ALLEN (V.O.)
Another lover hits the universe.

But the night here has passed, a new day begun. It's now pastoral, shimmering. Strolling couples, families walk by.

Allen closes his eyes.

ALLEN (V.O.)
The circle is broken.

INT. WEST END BAR - DAY

A raucous crowd now fills the boys' old haunt. Soldiers, New Yorkers of all kinds, pouring champagne, toasting the end of the Second World War.

ALLEN (V.O.)
But with death comes rebirth.

The camera searches through the crowd to find Allen smoking in a banquette towards the rear of the bar, dressed-down, scruffy - a hint of the man he will soon become.

He is joyous, writing in his journal.

ALLEN (V.O.)
And like all lovers and sad people

The camera then pans past Allen, up and across the old college photos on the wall.

We find a framed newspaper article on the Columbia's football team's latest victory.

In the corner of the article, we see a familiar face.

As we move closer, we can read the edge of the headline reads: "HONOR SLAYING."

The face belongs to Lucien Carr, staring down, frozen in time.

Lucien is now on the wall.

ALLEN (V.O.)
I am a poet.

CUT TO BLACK.

The following TEXT CARDS fade up on screen.

FIRST CARD:

Portraying David Kammerer as a homosexual predator, *Lucien Carr* pled guilty to first degree manslaughter. He served 18 months in a reformatory.

He worked as an editor at United Press International, where he remained until his death in 2005.

He married twice and had three children.

SECOND CARD:

Edie Parker's family bailed out *Jack Kerouac*, on the condition they marry and move to Michigan.

Craving friends in New York, he annulled his marriage and began a journey that would inspire his novel On the Road.

THIRD CARD:

William Burroughs left his family to pursue a criminal life in New York that he documented in his novels *Junkie* and *Naked Lunch*. He co-wrote his first novel with Jack, a novel based on David Kammerer's murder.

It was kept from publication for over sixty years.

FOURTH CARD:

After his expulsion from Columbia University in 1945, *Allen Ginsberg* became one of the most awarded poets in American history.

He dedicated his first published collection *Howl and Other Poems* to *Lucien Carr*.

In response, Lucien asked that his name be withdrawn from all further editions.

FADE TO BLACK.