

My Name is Connor Morris

Written by

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EXT - FRONT PORCH - DAY

CONNOR MORRIS, 73, chiseled, well worn, older man, sporting a day's beard growth and a heavily, lined face. His hair is that real shiny, manly grey, the kind that reminds you of how you want to look when you get old. He is wearing the "old school" overalls - one piece material, not jeans, the other kind of material, like those Dickie uniform pants. He is rocking in a chair versus in a rocking chair. His sinewy frame tells a story; his life is good but not without tragedy.

We specifically and carefully see only one side of him...the great side. He is lost in thought, looking towards the horizon, thinking of how he is, where he is, and how his life could have been different...in some ways, in others...not.

The door burst open to reveal his grandson, Connor Morris the the III, better known as JR, 4, a black haired, mini overall wearing little boy.

JR runs into his grandfather's arms and they both look off into the distance. JR hops off his grandfather's lap and stands in front of him staring at him. We get our first glimpse of the left side of Connor and it is not pleasant or comfortable to see. The right side of his face is...perfect. What you would expect to see from a good looking older man. The left side is disfigured. It is as if only one side of candle melted down, and only creases are left.

JR stares at him then traces the lines of his scars from his face down his left arm. Connor smiles to his inquisitive staring.

JR

Grannpa?

CONNOR 73

Yes, Junior?

JR

You are different.

He smiles a knowing smile.

CONNOR 73

Yes, I am.

JR

You are different than other people.

Pausing to catch his words.

JR
(continuing; touching
his face and arm)
I mean you have lines on your face
and arm that other people don't
have...why?

CONNOR 73
Well, when I was little boy, like
you, I had an accident and it
created some extra lines on my
face and arm and I even have some
lines on my leg but...

Grandpa takes him by the shoulders.

CONNOR 73
(continuing)
I have another side and that side
doesn't have any lines. It's my
good side. What do you think?

JR
(pleased with the
answer)
Even if you have some extra lines
on you, I love you.

Connor takes him up in his arms for a big hug.

FLASHBACK

INT - HOME - DAY

There is hustling and bustling in this busy typical family home; it is Christmas time and kids are home. Two toddlers are playing about, and mom is busy readying something for lunch. CONNOR, at age 6, is running around in Superman pajamas, the ones with the big "S" on the chest. MELODY, 4, is running and following closely behind. Mom puts two pots on the stove and pours in some Crisco for chicken fingers on the front burner and water for mac and cheese on the back. Cell phone rings, it is just out of reach on the other side of the bar. As quickly as she moves to get the phone, the kids are running around her feet. Melody enters the kitchen.

The handle to the pot with Crisco is just protruding out enough over the edge to make it tempting. Melody spies it carefully. She opens the bottom drawer to get a spatula out. Connor enters the kitchen and gives her an inquisitive stare realizing what she is about to do. He considers whether to run and tell mom or take action. Time and motion - stop. He runs towards her just fast enough to reach her but not fast enough to avoid the heated, searing, pot of grease.

5.
Mother shaking, crying hysterically, Fire, Police, EMS running through the house. There is no fire but the grease has cooked half of little Connor's body. He is screaming in pain and the left half of the "S" on the shirt is melted away.

INT - HOSPITAL ROOM - EVENING

A birds eyes view shows a mass of tubes and wires all over every inch of the bed and a small burned body in between.

From right eventually then to left. The right side of Connor's body is perfect. Smooth skin, small, little boy hands, little boy feet. A good looking boy, the right side of his face is unbandaged and untouched.

Then, the left side. The skin is peeling, blackened. His eyelashes are gone and his lip is swollen. Beeping, flashing lights, in an instant he slips away. Doctors and nurses run in, mom and dad are off to the side crying and holding each other.

Amidst the chaos there stands a lone nurse. NURSE, 65, heavenly face, hefty, heavily lined, high cheek bones, very pretty. *Striking blue eyes.* Connor comes back briefly, opening his eyes barely to focus on her face. She has a single tear slowly rolling down her face. She looks him in the eye and ever so slightly smiles a soft, knowing and peaceful smile (First appearance).

NURSE
(mouthing, not
audible)
It's ok. I won't leave you.

He is gone.

Violently, he is shocked back and begins to cry from his good eye and so begins his life of pain and of being "different."

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

INT - BATHROOM - EVENING

CONNOR MORRIS now 15, is filming using a Flip Video hand held video recorder. He is recording himself, documenting his plans for his Facebook - his plan of his suicide. He speaks with a lisp because the left side of his face is badly scarred.

CONNOR 15
(focusing lens on the
right side of his
face only; speaking
with a slight lisp)
Look at me. Look at this half of
my face. If I only see it, it is
perfect, if I do say so myself. I
would have been a very
handsome...No, striking, I like
that word, striking, young
man...BUT...

He repositions the camera for a view of the left side. A
heavily scarred complete contrast of the right side is
revealed.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
If I move the camera over here,
whoaaa, "What the hell happened to
you son?"

CONNOR 15
(continuing; having
a conversation with
himself, mockingly)
"What do you mean Mr. Absolute
Stranger?"

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
"Your face, it is scarred."

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
"No shit Sherlock Holmes, I never
noticed this huge life altering
scar across half my body? Here,
sit down, let me tell you my whole
life story, total random stranger
at the mall."

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Well, let's start with why I am
planning to die tomorrow night!?
Aside from dealing with assholes
like you asking me everywhere I
go, "What happened?"

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Hey, here's one. Do I ask you why
you are fat or how about this,
"Excuse me ma'am, I noticed you
are fat as a horse. Can you tell
me how that happened? Did you eat
a McDonald's?"

CONNOR 15
(continuing; yelling
at the top of his
lungs, spitting as
he speaks with anger
and pain)
Mind your own god damn business!

CONNOR 15
(continuing; taking
a breath)
Oh and you Bill. Billy Big Mouth.
Billy Bad Ass. I wish I could see
your face when you see this. You
think it's funny making fun of
people? Of me? I look like a pig,
huh? How about this, a pig is a
hog, hog rhymes with log, a log is
from nature and nature is
beautiful, so go to hell! Or this
one, hell is your home, Satan's
your father last time I saw him he
was kissing your mother!

He starts laughing and yelling, punching the mirror until his
hands are bloodied, allowing the teenage angst and years of
emotional abuse out. A tear flows from his good eye.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; waxing
sarcastic and
sentimental)
It's not your fault though. I mean
look at me. I am damaged. How can
anyone survive the physical abuse
of this? The emotional abuse is
nothing compared to the surgeries,
the pain. It is like life played
a real cruel joke on me. I guess
I would make fun of me too. But,
I'm going to win.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; speaking
fast)

I keep thinking that I'm going to
wake up and this is all a dream
and that my face is not burnt but
every time I look in the mirror,
my face is burnt, my face is
burnt, my face is burnt, my face
is burnt, my face is burnt x a
million.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; slowly)
There is one thing I can control
and that is my life. I,
(pounding on his
chest)
I, can control whether I live or
die.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; quietly
now, introspectively)
I do wish one thing. I've never
kissed anyone or I guess I should
say a girl, so there's no
questions, and I want to know what
that feels like...just because I'm
scarred doesn't mean I don't have
a heart, you idiots!

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
First things first though, I'm
going to have some fun at school
and tell people what I really
think.

INT SCHOOL - DAY

As Connor is walking to class there is a boy with Down's
Syndrome riding his bike, JEFFREY. He is 14, riding one of
those bikes that is like a motorcycle. He is quiet and rides
past the usual group making fun. Connor sees him and pauses
for a moment knowing how he feels about being different.
Connor sees this going on and wants to do something but
resists as his group of friends casts a comment. WILL, 13,
baggy hooded sweatshirt, incredibly small for his age.

WILL
Connor, stop staring at the
retard...

Connor stops and looks right at him as if to burn a hole through him.

WILL
(continuing)

What?

Connor moves close to get right in his face.

CONNOR 15
Is that what you say behind my
back!?

WILL
Jeezzz, Mr. Sensitive, chillax.

Connor walks into class dressed in Goth-like black clothing. He is wearing a black HOODED sweatshirt that he wears even though it is hot outside. It is an effort to conceal the scars. There is snickering from the jocks and he goes to sit at the back of the room with the other outcasts. BILLIE, 15, good looking jock, leader of the pack, makes a comment as Connor walks by.

BILLIE
(under his breath but
loud enough for his
group to hear)
Is it Halloween? Hey Jimmy, I
didn't get a mask?

Connor pauses for a minute, walks by and then walks back to him.

CONNOR 15
A mask, really? Wow, I've never
heard that one before asshole.

Connor's best friend, a Goth because of him, AL, 14, really fat, with a heavy black coat.

AL
(approaches and grabs
Connor)
It's not worth it, c'mon, Connor.
Let it go.

Connor begins to walk away.

BILLIE
That's right lard ass freak, take
your girlfriend before he gets
hurt, and watch your mouth ass
wipe!

The teacher walks in and Billie and Connor give him the finger behind their backs as they retreat to the back of the room.

AL

What's wrong with you, you have a death wish? You know those guys are idiots, just forget it.

CONNOR 15

(looking down at the desk, dejected)

I've been forgetting about it my whole life.

INT SCHOOL LUNCHROOM - DAY

Connor enters with his group of friends and they take a seat in the corner. The jocks, the nerds, the comedians, the minorities, they all have their place but Connor and one other group seem to stick out. The Goth and the special needs kids have their own section. Jeffrey walks by the Jocks hesitantly to go sit with his group. They make him nervous and he drops his tray near Connor's group. At first, the group laughs. Jeffrey stands in silence.

Connor surprisingly moves to help, not sure why.

CONNOR 15

Here, let me help you with that.

JEFFREY

(hesitantly; looking downcast)

Thank you Connor.

CONNOR 15

(surprisingly)

How do you know me?

JEFFREY

Everybody knows us. You are different like me.

CONNOR 15

Different?

JEFFREY

Yes, my mom says that makes us special.

CONNOR 15

Yeah, I guess it does.

9.
The group of jocks sees this going on.

BILLIE
Look, a freak helping a retard.

A very pretty blonde hair blue-eyed
basketball/volleyball/softball star, KIMBERELY, 14, gets up
to help but not before making a comment.

KIMBERELY
You are the retarded one.

BILLIE
(nonchalantly)
What!? I didn't mean it.

She walks over to help pick up the tray.

JEFFREY
(to Connor)
My name is Jeffrey.

KIMBERELY
Well hello Jeffrey, I'm Kimberely.

They both look to Connor, who is somewhat taken aback.

KIMBERELY
(continuing; to
Connor)
Well???

CONNOR 15
Well what?

KIMBERELY
Are you going to tell us your name?

CONNOR 15
My name is Connor Morris.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; with a
little confidence
and a wry smile)
The Connor Morris.

KIMBERELY
(extending her hand)
Well, The Connor Morris, this is
Jeffrey and I am Kimberely. Nice
to meet you.

She finishes picking up the tray and the three take their separate paths back to the group.

AL

What the hell was that about?

CONNOR 15

What do you mean?

AL

Uh, we don't mix groups here and you just mixed three.

CONNOR 15

Huh?

AL

Well you got your jocks, Asians,
Abduls, nerds, goth,
(pointing to their
group)
special needs, cheerleaders, fat
so's, bikers, freaks
(pointing to their
group again)
Geeks, twilights aka vampire wanna
be's...should someone tell them
vampires aren't real?

CONNOR 15

And where do I fit in that group.

SARAH, 15, blonde, dumb, goth, chewing gum...the only girl of the group.

We get a close up view of her, she has outlined the word "Freak" on one eye lid and "AZOID" under the other.

SARAH

(smiling)

Ummm, you fit in two groups but
you could be anywhere you want.
You choose.

Kimberely makes it back to her group.

BILLIE

Well, you did your good deed for
the day.

One cross look for her sums it all up.

Connor watches Jeffrey go back to his group.

CONNOR 15

Oh, I get to choose? You know it's funny because we make fun like everyone else and pretend like we don't care but we do.

CONNOR 15

(continuing; pointing to special needs group)

Do you think we would ever invite them to sit at our table?

Looking at each of them.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

No, we wouldn't. Why? Because we discriminate just like everyone else.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Look over there...

They see Jeffrey sitting by himself somewhat near the group of other special needs kids.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

We are afraid, afraid to be embarrassed. Afraid to take that first step. We are no better than anyone else.

FLASHBACK

EXT PLAYGROUND/ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

There is a group of children playing all around the playground ages 8-9 and it is time now for kickball, time to choose teams.

The good looking boy is captain of one team and the good looking girl is captain of the other. At least, the teacher is smart enough to separate them but choices are based on popularity. Connor, this time age 8, scarred, scared, and waiting. The choice group is chosen and getting to the last couple of kids, each child hoping they won't be the last.

There are 3 kids left, one of which is Connor. It isn't looking good.

12.
An absolutely beautiful little girl, perfect in all aspects, in a pink dress with bows in her hair, she was chosen first by the good looking boy team and is intuitive enough to know what is going on. She is HAILEY, 8, blond hair, *striking blue* eyes. Before the next choice is made, she leaves her group and approaches Connor.

He is surprised to see her because he is looking down dreading what is going to happen, what always happens.

She approaches him and extends her hand (Second Appearance). Connor smiles as best as he can.

HAILEY
C'mon, stay with me and I'll stay
with you.

The kids pause for a moment but they are ok with her decision and she leads him back to her group. Then there are only 2 left and the choices are easier, one automatically goes to each team so feelings are saved.

As he is walking off the playground in the background the scene repeats itself with a child with Down's Syndrome, a girl with *striking blue* eyes. Connor views it from the eyes of a child not knowing what is happening or why but the protector of children is always watching over them.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

Connor and his friends are walking home after school. Al is skateboarding and Sarah is following, Connor is lost in thought, a loose third.

AL
Hey Guys, let's go to the mall, I
want free samples from the food
court.

SARAH
Lame, lame, lame.

CONNOR 15
Well, I am hungry, let's try it.

They go to the food court and Al is skateboarding in the mall going from Chinese to Subs to Chicken to Pizza getting samples along the way. The group decides on Chinese. There are two Chinese ladies taking orders side by side helping each other. The order line for Chinese or the queue is Sarah, Al and an obscured Connor, waiting third in line.

AL
(making fun of
Chinese lady)
Me have orgggg chicknnnnnnn, moo
goo, won tonnnn

CHINESE LADY
(repeating in broken
English)
One orgggg chicknnnnnnn, moo goo,
won tonnn

SARAH
I'll have water.

CHINESE LADY
What you want with that.

SARAH
Water.

Chinese lady talking to her friend in Chinese, she isn't
happy.

CHINESE LADY
No, must order one ting...

SARAH
Ummm, I'm with him, so I'll have
water.

CHINESE LADY
(cursing in Chinese)
Onnne wattttter.

Connor approaches. The camera provides a close up view of
their faces as Connor pulls back his hood. It is looks of
amazement, pity and astonishment.

There is whispering between the two ladies and a long silent
pause.

CONNOR 15
Are you done?

CHINESE LADY
(caught off guard)
So sorry...

CONNOR 15
(he moves in closer)
Do you want a closer look? Do you
want a picture?

They are taken aback and somewhat stunned.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Ok, now that we got that out of
the way, can I get some Flies
Lice. Two. One for here, one to go.

CHINESE LADY
(embarrassed)
Flies Lice, yes boy...one flies
lice for you, one to go.

The trio finds a seat together. Al and Sarah are somewhat
used to going through this with Connor.

SARAH
I'm sorry.

CONNOR 15
For what?

SARAH
You know. Every time we go
somewhere you have to explain, you
know, what happened.

AL
(enjoying his food)
That sucks!

CONNOR 15
(sighing)
Yeah. Just once I'd like to go
somewhere, anywhere, without
people staring at me or asking me
what happened.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; pulling
the hood over his
head)
I guess that's why I wear this...

AL
(pointing)
Hey, there is that kid you helped
today.

CONNOR 15
(embarrassed for Al)
Easy with the finger pointing Mr.
Obvious.

Jeffrey enters with his mom. Connor watches as everywhere they go, people stop and stare.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

You see that? Watch him, no matter where he goes people whisper, people stop, and people stare...they don't even realize what they are doing.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

That's what it's like to be me. Everywhere I go. Every single time.

SARAH

Mean people suck.

AL

People suck.

CONNOR 15

Life sucks.

AL

You guys want to come to my house and play some Call of Duty?

SARAH

Sure.

CONNOR 15

Na, you guys go I got something to do.

AL

C'mon man!? I need you to help me kill some noob tubers! You know the people with the grenade launchers, all they do is launch grenades all day, hiding! All these kids do is noob tube all day, every time you turn a corner, noob tube, hider, if there is a corner, they are hiding in it, noob tuber idiots...Nuke the Noobs!

Connor and Sarah stare at him until he stops.

CONNOR 15

You done?

Connor gets up and starts heading out with a small box of leftover rice.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Catch up with you later.

Connor heads for the door and waits and watches them leave. He then doubles back heading towards Haagen-Dazs. There he catches up to Jeffrey and his mom and he sits aloof to watch them, not wanting to be noticed.

Jeffrey and his mom take a seat.

JEFFREY
(laughing and
enjoying himself)
Thanks mom, you are the best mom
in the world!

Jeffrey is scanning the room and sees Connor. Connor tries to look away.

JEFFREY
(continuing; running
toward Connor)
Connor!

Connor is somewhat embarrassed but has no where else to go. Jeffrey runs up to him and gives him a high five.

JEFFREY
(continuing)
What are you doing here? I'm here
having ice cream with my mom. Mom,
come over here please.

JEFFREY'S MOM
Ok, honey.

She has the learned the patience and mother's love of a child with Down's Syndrome not a Down's syndrome child.

JEFFREY
Mom, this is my friend Connor. He
goes to my school. Everyone knows
Connor.

Connor hesitantly looks up waiting for the inevitable.

JEFFREY'S MOM
(smiling)
Hello Connor. I am Jeffrey's mom.
It is a pleasure to meet you.

There is pause but she asks no questions only a pleasant smile. He extends his hand.

CONNOR 15
Hello, it is nice to meet you.

JEFFREY
Mom, Connor is different like me.

Connor put his head down slightly.

JEFFREY'S MOM
Oh, you mean he likes rainbow
sprinkles on cookies and cream ice
cream too?

Connor is uplifted by this, raises his head and smiles. She looks him in the eyes.

JEFFREY'S MOM
(continuing)
Well, Connor? Would you like to
join us?

CONNOR 15
No thank you I've got to go meet
someone.

JEFFREY
(looking downtrodden)
Oh mannnn.

There is a moment of hesitation.

CONNOR 15
You know what, on second thought,
yes, I will join you.

JEFFREY
Yeahhhhh...

They order an extra for Connor and sit at a table together.

JEFFREY'S MOM
So Connor...

CONNOR 15
(whispers to himself)
Here it comes...

JEFFREY'S MOM
Chinese food and ice cream, huh?
Sounds like a good mix.

JEFFREY

Connor saw me on my cool bike and helped me at lunch.

JEFFREY'S MOM

Really?

CONNOR 15

It was nothing, cafeteria floors are kind of gross and slippery.

Connor notices a group of teenagers snickering about Jeffrey. Jeffrey's mom notices and looks directly at Connor.

JEFFREY'S MOM

(taking a long breath)

I realize this is a grown up conversation with someone you just met and it may be a little forward, but, I think you will understand. There is this test that someone can take when they are pregnant. This test tells people whether or not they will have a special needs child. Can you imagine having the choice over life and death?

JEFFREY

You chose me didn't you mom?

JEFFREY'S MOM

Yes, Jeffrey, yes I did.

JEFFREY

My mom always tells this story.

JEFFREY'S MOM

(to Connor)

Sometimes, we are given a choice over matters, others times we are not. IF I had chosen differently, I would have missed out on a love that knows no bounds. So, the staring and the comments, while callous and hurtful, can never replace the one thing in the world that heals all wounds...

JEFFREY'S MOM
(continuing; placing
her hand on his -
Jeffrey's- and
looking him eye to
eye)

Love.

He gets up to leave and Jeffrey gives him a hug.

JEFFREY
Bye Connor, Mom give Connor a hug.

She approaches him and gives him a big hug. Connor is taken
by their kindness.

JEFFREY'S MOM
Jeffrey and I go to a program
called Best Buddies every month.
We'd like for you to go some time.

JEFFREY'S MOM
(continuing)
It was great to meet you Connor.

Connor exits out the back door but not before pausing and
watching Jeffrey and his mom laughing and having fun as they
eat their ice cream oblivious to the people staring.

He is just about out of the mall when he runs into the jocks
coming in. Jock 1, Jock 2 and Billie. Just the guys, no girls.

BILLIE
Well, well, well , what do we
have here?

JOCK1
Looks like Freddy Krueger, where
are your knives?

Forming a group around him.

CONNOR 15
(sheepishly but
purposely)
Up your ass?

JOCK2
Hey, watch your mouth and remove
that mask, it's not Halloween.

BILLIE
I don't like you embarrassing me
in front of the ladies.

They start to push him around. Connor is holding two boxes of fried rice. He is in a no win situation. He tries to push back but is getting roughed up. He takes a hit to the gut from Jock1.

JOCK1

Hey, what you got there? I'm hungry.

Connor slowly extends his hand, then he flips the top and throws the rice all over them. The distraction is enough for him to make his escape.

CONNOR 15

Here...eat it, pigs.

He walks along the edge of the mall towards and alleyway near the expressway. As he is approaching, he removes his hoodie and we get a better view of why he hides his face.

He finds a a broken mirror leaning against a building. He moves in close to get a good look. He looks around on the ground to find a piece of a broom stick.

CONNOR 15

(continuing; to himself)

So this is it huh? This is me.
What if I hate it, what if I hate me.

He begins smashing the mirror with the broom stick. Shards of glass are flying all over the place and little droplets of blood form along his face and arms.

He beats the mirror and the broom stick until he is exhausted and falls on the ground laying face down and cries to himself.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

No one cares. No one understands the pain.

He composes himself and gets himself together. He turns the corner and near a dumpster is BUMSTER, 51, weathered, tattered clothes, bottle of Jack nearby, smoking a used cigarette butt. He has been living on the streets a long time.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

There he is. Hey, what did you do today? Let me guess, you sat here and chilled the whole day?

Connor takes a usual place beside him and hands him the Chinese food.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

I had a run in with those school assholes today. Don't worry, they only got one shot on me.

He gets up to walk as he talks.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Well, I kind of made a new friend today. He is someone completely different, I guess like me you could say. Everyone makes fun of him but the hell with them. I'm tired of their games and being part of that group. It's hard enough fitting in, much less God forbid anything, anything at all be at least the slightest bit different about you. You're short, you're tall, you're skinny, you're fat, you're smart, you're dumb, you're ugly, you're horribly scarred. Well, then you know what happens, they expose it, make fun of it, no matter what it is and persecute you for it. I don't understand it. Why does God choose some of us to be made fun of? Why couldn't I be the good-looking one? The popular one? The sports star?

Connor pauses to watch him eating the rice with his hands.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

You know, in all the time I've known you, you never asked me about my scars...in case you didn't notice I have some pretty serious scars...

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Helllooo, I was burned as a child?

Bumster pauses to look at him, *striking blue eyes*, (Third Appearance) as if he is going to say something but then continues eating his rice.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

But then again, in all the time
I've known you, you've never said
anything. Pretty much anything at
all.

CONNOR 15

(continuing;

introspectively)

Well, I may not see you for a
while or ever again for that
matter. I'm sure you of all people
understand that life is hard and
sometimes you have to make hard
decisions, this is one of those.
Well, I wish you the best and
thank you for being a good friend
or a good listener I should say.

He pauses and takes a deep breath to let it out as he sighs.
He begins to walk away.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Ok, good not talking to you and
have a good life, whatever that
means.

He begins to walk away and pauses, for no reason, other than
to look back. Bumster still looking down extends his hand and
looks him in the eyes. There is a pause for both, neither
says a word.

Connor walks away.

EXT BY THE POOL - DAY

Connor approaches his dad who is sitting on a lounge chair
next to the pool reading the Bible.

DAD

Praise the Lord.

CONNOR 15

What for?

DAD

Just a great day son.

CONNOR 15

Not for me.

DAD

What do you mean?

Connor begins to walk away then turns to face his dad.

CONNOR 15

Have you seen my face?

DAD

Yes. We are supposed to give praise to the Lord for that. He could have taken your life but spared you.

CONNOR 15

What!?

He moves closer to him.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

I guess it's time we had this "God" conversation. Look at me. Have you seen the scars on my face? Don't be ridiculous. Kids at school call me Scarface and you my dad, want me to thank God? Thank Him

(pointing to the sky)

For saving me!? Saving me for what? So I could have a lifetime of pain?

Walking away.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Never, never, n-e-v-e-r!

DAD

C'mon son, what I mean is that we are told that God has a plan for all of us...

CONNOR 15

Did His plan involve me suffering everyday for the rest of my life?

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

I don't think so...Do me a favor and save it.

DAD

Connor, do you think I wanted any of this? One of my children to be scarred for life. If I could have stopped it I would have thrown myself into that grease fire a thousand times. I'd give my life for that fire to never have touched you, son.

DAD

(continuing)

But it didn't happen that way and I do thank God. I thank him that he didn't take your life that day and that I'm able to be your dad and I know he has plans for you.

CONNOR 15

Look at me! This is not about you dad. I am scarred. I am disfigured. I can't even talk. God played a joke on me and everyone gets a good laugh out of it.

DAD

You tell me who they are and I'll take care of it.

CONNOR 15

Dad, dad, you don't understand. Are you going to take care of everyone in 10th grade class? Everyone at the mall? Everyone at the store? Everyone every place I've ever gone since the accident happened?

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

I just want you and everyone else to leave me alone. Leave me alone and let me die.

INT LIVING ROOM - EVENING

It is a typical all American living room. There is an L shaped leather sofa, a flat screen and two bookshelves on either side, there are pictures of the family, DAD, 40, aka Connor Sr., good looking middle age man, MOM, 38, pretty, suburban house wife, SISTER "SIS", 13, cute, preteen, and Connor.

Dad is watching game on tv, mom sitting nearby reading a book. Sister listening to I-Pod, wearing sunglasses.

Connor enters room from outside.

DAD

Hey, Connor Mo what's up kid?

MOM

Hello, Honey.

CONNOR 15

(mumbling; barely
audible)

Nothing.

MOM

How was your day?

He walks by headed to his room to avoid the "family" time.
Mom looks toward dad.

DAD

(to mom, shrugging
shoulders)

Teenage angst.

Connor catches this as he is halfway to his room. Stops,
drops his backpack on the ground, ready for a fight.

Marching back into the room...

CONNOR 15

Teenage angst, really, Dad!? You
don't even know what you are
talking about. Didn't we talk
about this earlier? You just don't
get it, do you?

DAD

(jokingly)

Well, I was a teenager once.

CONNOR 15

(yelling)

Really, and did you have a huge
freaking scar across your face?
Did you talk with a lisp? Did you
wake up every morning hoping that
your miserable life was a dream
and then look in the mirror to
realize it wasn't and your whole
life sucked!

Mom sets her book down and sister removes her earphones.
Everyone takes note of the anguish and pain in his voice.

DAD

(softly)

Connor, I know how you feeeeeel...

CONNOR 15

(even louder;

pointing at him)

No you don't! Look at you

(then pointing to mom)

And you...

(then pointing to

sister)

And you...

CONNOR 15

(continuing; softly)

You are all perfect, I'm damaged.

Don't you get it. I am damaged!

(pausing, softly)

I can't even tell you how I feel
because I speak like a moron and
no one can understand me.

MOM

Connor, your life has meaning and
purpose, you're not damaged...

Connor sits back into the leather sofa shaking his head.

CONNOR 15

Meaning and purpose. Is that the
same as you have a nice
personality? Why can't anyone ever
tell me the truth?

DAD

What is it you want us to say?

CONNOR 15

(rising to his feet)

The truth, that everything is not
going to be ok. That life,
especially mine, sucks! That you
don't end up with the girl, that
people die. That bad things happen
to good people.

DAD
(catching himself
getting ready for
platitudes)
Son, I think...

He pauses to look at his wife and they exchange knowing glances. Connor pauses to look at both of them.

CONNOR 15
(walking out of the
room; pausing
briefly)
That's what I thought. What is my
life worth, what difference does
my life make to anyone?

CONNOR 15
(continuing; to Mom)
Why did you let it happen, you
should have let me die. Why didn't
you just abort me when you had the
chance.

Mom rises to her feet and slaps him across the face.

MOM
Never speak that way again to me
young man. Never!

It is later in the evening when Connor comes out of his room. He begins to walk by the living room where his parents are quietly talking. His mom is crying.

MOM
(continuing; crying
softly)
He's right. We don't understand
what it's like to have to live
like he does. It causes me pain
every time I see him, it hurts me
so bad.

DAD
(with his arms around
her)
Oh honey, I know. So many nights,
I lay awake wishing it was me but
we can't change it.

DAD (cont'd)

I can remember in school, I played football and at halftime we had the homecoming and I was in it, I wasn't the king of the homecoming court but I guess I was part of the "court" and right then I told myself, "My son will be homecoming king and I will be cheering on the sidelines" but when the accident happened I guess my dreams went away.

DAD

(continuing; pulling
back from the hug)

Connor is right though, life isn't easy. Especially his life. Life is hard, everyone thinks that they are going to have a big house and be on MTV Cribs and have all these new cars and big screen tv's and their life will be without problems and they will be rich and...guess what? It isn't and they aren't rich and bad things do happen to good people and good people die and good people are maimed and get hurt and we live in an imperfect world...but to place all that blame on one person is not fair and it's not your fault or mine.

He moves close to grab her hands.

DAD

(continuing)

But the world has beauty in it too, there are babies and love, like the love we share. I don't know why God allowed this happened to us or Connor and we may never know the reason why but I hope and pray that in some way, some how, good can come from all this pain...

Connor turns and walks away slipping out the back door, closing it softly and placing his hand against the door as if it is the last time he will ever be there.

CONNOR 15

(softly)

Good bye.

EXT HIGHWAY OVERPASS - MIDNIGHT

Connor enters with his Flip video in hand, filming. This is the Flip video perspective. He is walking along a highway overpass, the ones with the fence all along so no one can jump. He approaches an area where there is a break in the fence.

CONNOR 15
(he is filming
himself, talking
into camera)
Well, the time has come, I'm not
sure how I'm going to post this up
but I told my friend if anything
ever happened to me where to find
it
(points camera
towards rusted out
barrel along
fenceline)
...look at those cars speeding by,
who knew that one lucky person is
going to help me put myself out of
my misery.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
It's gonna be awesome.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; softly)
But not really. I am sad though,
I'm not without feeling you know,
this message is for my family.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Dad, Mom, Sis, I love you. I'm
sorry that things had to end this
way. You did everything you could.

He steps out over the edge and losing his footing almost
falling.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; laughing)
Whoa, that was close. I don't want
to kill myself trying to kill
myself.

Positions camera to see oncoming traffic.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Ok, I'm waiting for something
here, not sure what. Divine
intervention? An angel, God, a
miracle?

He pauses for a minute to look skyward.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
No I guess not, how about a really
big truck.

He spies a semi tractor trailer lumbering toward him.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Ok, here it goes...

He leaps from overhang trying to time it perfectly.

He doesn't land it perfectly, one never does. He lands askew
and atop the semi, bouncing and rolling along until he is
forcibly thrown along the roadside. Rolling like a rag doll
thrown from a speeding car. Severely scraped, a couple of
broken ribs, mangled leg, fading in and out of consciousness,
but alive.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; moaning
loudly; then
laughing)
Not good, not good. Hurting badly!

Raising his outstretched hand towards heaven.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Are you kidding me? I mean first
the fire, then this? How much
suffering does one person have to
endure? How much pain!? Now what?
Look at me? If you got something
to say come say it yourself.
Otherwise, leave me here to die a
painful death like my painful life.

He tries to get up but his leg is like a puzzle piece. He
sees his leg and tries to sit up to move it and violently
grabs for his ribs, which are broken on the same side as his
mangled leg. There is blood slipping out along the side of
his mouth.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; moaning)
Ok, ok, ok. You got my attention
or did I get yours?

He is trying to slide himself off the road. Cars are honking swerving to miss him but no one stops. He forcibly rolls himself over yelling in pain. Now he is facing the dirt.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; talking
to the dirt, God,
himself; coughing up
blood)
I'm not sure what to say, I don't
care either way, you choose but
I'm in a lot of pain so please
choose one...

Bumster approaches from the side and rolls him over slowly.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
What are you doing here?

Bumster just stares at him and does nothing. Cars are whizzing by. It seems as if it is a long period of time.

Bumster stands to his feet and walks carelessly into traffic. There are massive skids, screeches and swerves to miss him but he accomplishes his goal.

There are crazy amounts of cops and firefighters, reminiscent of when he was burned. He is placed into the ambulance with Bumster watching. AS they pull away, Bumster places his bloody hand print on the window of the ambulance and walks away.

INT HOSPITAL ROOM - MIDNIGHT

Lights, tubes, wires flashing like a Christmas tree, Connor laying on a stainless steel table with 5 people working on him...again. Though he is semiconscious, he can still hear what they are saying.

NURSE 1
What happened to him?

NURSE 2
Poor kid, tried to kill himself.

NURSE 1
With what...gasoline?

NURSE 2

No, that was from before, all that scarring was from previous surgeries.

NURSE 1

Good God, if that happened to me, I would want to die as well...

DOCTOR (O.S.)

Prep him for surgery...

INT HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Connor is slumped in his wheelchair in a physical therapy room. There are ramps and those horizontal bars to help people to learn how to walk. There is a half court basketball court there as well. The room is made up of people in various stages of rehabilitation. There is a cute, jet black haired Hispanic girl off in the distance playing basketball with some other people as part of their therapy.

Connor is near a window looking out forlornly. There is a lady sitting next to him, a hospital psychologist asking him questions to which he is not too amenable to answer.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Now Connor, trying to commit suicide is often a request for help..."Were you asking for help for something?"

He looks up from his wheelchair and gives her a look that sums his thoughts of her incredibly obvious stupidity.

CONNOR 15

Yes, well, you see when I was little I had this little puppy and I loved him so much and he got hit by a car and then you know...I just couldn't take it, that's all I ever thought of, his name was "Ruffy, "then one day...

Slumps a little in his chair to hold his neck.

CONNOR 15

(continuing;
whispering; pointing
to his neck)

I kept feeling like there was something wrong, like in this area...Almost like a dog bite or teeth marks...

She moves in closer to look and right as she begins to touch his neck...

CONNOR 15
(continuing; yelling)
Ruff!!!!!!

He starts laughing hysterically.

He gives her the same look and stares her down.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
You people are so stupid.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Look at my face. Why the hell do you think I did it? It doesn't take Erik Erikson to figure out that I suffer from psychosocial behavioral development issues. Since the accident, my ego identity has been marred through lack of social interaction. Yeah that's right, look it up...

She adjust her glasses and decides it's best to go.

PSYCHOLOGIST
Well, I guess we will just continue this another time.

He is again looking ragged and into the space of the light shining through the window along the wall.

A basketball comes rolling along and slowly rest against the wall near his wheelchair.

MARIA
It's called *physical* therapy.

Maria, 16, pretty, Latin, athletic, jet black hair, with blue eyes, leans against the window frame to pass some time to talk.

Connor lifts his head slowly,

CONNOR 15
Leave me alone and mind your own business.

MARIA
Wow! Angry.

CONNOR 15
Who the hell do you think...

He looks up to defend himself and looks up from her shoes along her long legs to her face, then the left side, then the right side, she is absolutely perfect, except she is missing her right arm from the shoulder down.

The look on his face changes quickly from scowl to embarrassment.

MARIA
You should see the look on your face right now.

MARIA
(continuing; laughing
and pointing at him
jokingly; in a high
pitched voice)
You look so stupid...

CONNOR 15
(stuttering)
I'm sorry, I didn't realizzzze
that you....

She moves in close to him.

MARIA
That I what?

CONNOR 15
That you, you know...

She leans in real close to his face.

MARIA
(mouth open mocking
him; shaking her
head in amazement)
Duh, duh duhhhh. That I...? That
I'm missing an arm?

MARIA
(continuing; looking
around inquisitively)
Where is it? Where is my arm, I
must have misplaced it.

Connor is both mortified and amused and embarrassed.

MARIA
(continuing; loudly
for everyone)
Hey, "has anyone seen my arm?"
This kid tells me I'm missing one.

PHYSICAL THERPASIT
(from across the room)
Maria, come back and quit
bothering that boy.

She flicks the ball up with one foot and catches it with her left hand.

MARIA
Hey "Estupido," when you stop
feeling sorry for yourself come
over and play some bb with me..."I
could use a hand!"

He is taken back by her brazenness but mostly that she didn't say anything about his injuries. He watches her in amazement.

Al and Sarah both in trademark black come into the room to visit. All activities stop briefly, they bring Connor his black jacket and hoody.

AL
Hey Connor, what's up look what we brought you.

SARAH
When can you leave cuz these people are weird!

We get a close up view of her, she has outlined the work "GET" on one eye lid and "Well" under the other.

This causes a slight smile to Connor's face.

CONNOR 15
(smiling)
Soon guys, thanks for visiting.

AL
We need you back man, you are our leader, you know that.

SARAH

Yeah, you see, we are like followers, like the McDonalds family or something but in a quasi-good goth, semi-evil kind of way, we are not what you call the "leaders of tomorrow."

AL

It's Manson family.

SARAH

On you mean like those Munster people?

AL

Anyway! What happened to you? Why were you there and why were you there without us?

AL

(continuing;
whispering)

You know if you had some kind of suicide pack or something if you let us know we could all gone together or something.

This thought causes Connor great concern.

CONNOR 15

(looking down in
shame)

Who am I that you should be my friends and what kind of person am I that would have someone else suffer because of me?

They both look at him inquisitively.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Guys, I've spent my whole life feeling sorry for myself and living a life of misery, maybe, this is the beginning instead of the end, maybe I should be doing something different. I don't want to be responsible for you two following a loser.

(more)

CONNOR 15 (cont'd)
We are a self-fulfilling prophecy;
we do nothing to change our lives
except sit around in misery, we
dress differently so that we can
hide in the open. So we can
further isolate ourselves. There
are some things we can't change
and some we can.

Sarah and Al look at each other not sure how to react.

SARAH
Ummm, I have no idea what you just
said. Is this like some kind of
psycho o logy talk?

SARAH
(continuing; yelling)
What have they done to you in here?

CONNOR 15
(begins to wheel away)
I'm sorry guys.

SARAH
(to Al)
What just happened?

AL
I don't know, let's go.

Connor exits the therapy room and into a courtyard where some
patients are sunning. He sees Maria sitting off to the side
having a drink.

MARIA
Well, look who woke up; is nap
time over?

She is trying to open a bottled water and having a little
trouble.

CONNOR 15
What's the matter you only got one
arm?

MARIA
Estupido made a joke...

Extending his hand.

CONNOR 15
Truce?

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
At the risk of sounding like
everybody else, what happened?

MARIA
(sarcastically)
Well, you ever see shark week on
discovery channel? I was out on
the coast of Africa surfing and
this great white...

Connor shakes his head knowingly and begins to wheel away mid
sentence without a word.

MARIA
(continuing)
Hey, wait up. I was only kidding.

He continues to wheel out of the room.

MARIA
(continuing)
Hey did you hear me?

CONNOR 15
(sarcastically)
Oh, I guess I didn't hear you, I
only have one good ear, the other
has been burnt to a crisp in a
fire while I ran into a burning
building to save a baby...

MARIA
Ok, ok, truce, I'm sorry..

He keeps wheeling away.

MARIA
(continuing)
I went to visit my grandmother's
farm when I was 12...

He pauses to listen with his back facing her.

MARIA
(continuing)
They had a barn with a glass
window at ground level, the window
lever was broken, I reached
through to try to get my
softball...and here I am.

She walks up behind him and extends her arm.

MARIA
(continuing)
I'm Maria.

CONNOR 15
Connor. The Connor Morris.

She sits next to him to see him eye to eye.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
I was 6, my mom was cooking us
some chicken fingers, I saw my
sister reach for the handle of the
pot. I got to it first; here I am.

She looks at his leg.

MARIA
And now?

CONNOR 15
I got hit by a truck.

MARIA
I think I'm going to change your
name from "Estupido" to "Lucky."

They share a laugh.

A dark-haired gentleman enters the room. It is MARIA'S DAD.
He is 40, dressed in a dark suit with a white priest collar.
He speaks with a slight Spanish accent.

MARIA'S DAD
Hey, there is my girl. How are you?

MARIA
Papi! Como estas?

He kisses her on the cheek.

MARIA
(continuing)
This is my friend, "The Connor
Morris."

MARIA'S DAD
Connor, very nice to meet you. I
have not seen you in my class?

CONNOR 15
Sir?

MARIA
My dad teaches the religion class,
it is a requirement before they
release you from prison.

MARIA'S DAD
Maria, please? You are not helping.

CONNOR 15
I haven't attended yet, I'm just
finishing up with the psychologist.

MARIA'S DAD
(knowingly; shaking
his head)
Yes, I heard, well let's hope my
class is a little different.

MARIA
You just got so told son. Well, I
gotta go, see you tomorrow, ok?

As she walks away, Connor's parents and sister come walking
in.

DAD
Hey son, how are you?

They each give him a hug. Sister is wearing sunglasses.

CONNOR 15
Hi.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Sis, can you help with me with
something?

Sister shakes her head. She never speaks.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Mom, Dad, can you do me a favor?
No questions please.

INT CLASSROOM - DAY

Typical hospital type classroom setting.

Connor shows up to religion class dressed nicely and current,
not Goth, current as in Hollister bright clothes, with his
hair combed.

It is a class full of those touched by tragedy in some way. He is late. The class is in session as he rolls in. His wheelchair clips a small table with cans of soft drinks and a plastic jar of pretzels sending them tumbling all over the place.

MARIA'S DAD
Well everyone, please welcome our
latest member...

Forgetting the name, he leans over to his daughter.

MARIA'S DAD
(continuing)
Este, "The Connor Morris."

Dead silence.

Maria stands to help.

MARIA
Let's give him a hand.

Motioning with her one hand, everyone starts to laugh and it is a necessary ice breaker.

MARIA'S DAD
Thank you Maria for always
bringing us back to why we are
here.

Creative pause...

MARIA'S DAD
(continuing)
Laughter and being thankful.

Connor looks around questioning if he heard what was just said.

MARIA'S DAD
(continuing; sensing
everyone's
hesitation)
Did you hear me? Yes, let me
repeat, laughter and being
thankful. Also, known as
thanksgiving...and I'm not talking
about the meal. I did not say
frowning, misery and pain.

Removing his glasses, he sits on the edge of the table near his daughter.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing; holding
up 3 fingers)

Many years ago, I was a successful businessman, I had 3 companies and I was so successful in my business, I did not have time to attend softball games. She was very beautiful, but her mother and I were getting separated and I was angry, bitter and a very hard worker, I had to provide for her. She would call me and say, "Daddy please go to my game, why don't you ever go?"

He walks the room to make the point.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing)

You have to understand how business works, it takes a lot of hard work. Now, what you don't know is that this little girl was a star pitcher, girls softball is very big now. Colleges give scholarships, ESPN...

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing; softly)

I was working when her mother called me. I was annoyed and angry that I was being bothered at work until..."Meet me at the hospital, your daughter is hurt very bad and needs a blood transfusion!"

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing)

Well, that changes everything doesn't it? I dropped the phone and ran to my car, I drove on streets, sidewalks, through red lights and a short cut through a park to get there...

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing)

The doctor told me she was stable, I went in to see her and I looked down at my baby, she seemed too little to be in a hospital with all these tubes and wires.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing)

So, what would you do? I'm her dad, I reached down to hold her hand and kiss her cheek. It felt very strange but something was wrong.

He stands to his feet and looks Maria in the eye.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing; making
a swishing motion
with his hand)

I kept reaching for her hand. I thought, "Where is my daughter's hand?" and then I thought, "Where is my daughter's arm?" and then I thought, "She pitches with her right hand." And...I've never seen her play.

Long, silent, pause. You could hear a pin drop.

He extends his hand and Maria walks to the front of the room.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing)

The prophet Jeremiah tells us that God has plans for us, not to harm us, plans that give us hope and a future.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing;
motioning to his
daughter's armless
side)

How can *this* give us hope and what kind of future does my daughter have, because it certainly isn't playing softball?

Maria quietly sits down.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing)

Here it is. Our future is together; I have my daughter and she has her father. Her mother and I are more in love than ever and now, Maria is going to have a baby brother.

(more)

MARIA'S DAD (cont'd)

My life that was without meaning
now has more purpose than
ever...it is this that we are
thankful for. Not, the injury, the
tragedy that has touched you all.
That will not change, but what you
do with it will.

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing)

Will you let the tragedy control
you and decide your future or will
you use it for good...

MARIA'S DAD

(continuing; pointing
to Maria)

We did.

Connor exits and is in his wheelchair. He wheels down the
hall by himself shaking his head as if to disapprove of the
message.

As he is wheeling by, he sees a sign on a door down the side
hall that states, "Chapel."

He barely enters the extremely small chapel where he sees a
sign, "He has plans for us. Jeremiah 29:11."

He approaches the small kneeling pew and gets himself out of
the wheelchair to pray.

CONNOR 15

(in prayer)

I don't know what all this is
about. I don't even know if you
are real. I don't think there will
ever be a time I'm glad this
happened to me. IF, If, you care,
give me a chance, a chance for
life and love, a chance to be
better, not bitter..If you don't
give up on me, I won't give up on
myself.

EXT BASKETBALL COURT PARK - DAY

Connor is now out of his wheelchair and is playing h-o-r-s-e
with Maria. She is beating him clearly sinking all shots.

MARIA

You suck...

CONNOR 15
Ok, this is my special play, now
remember, you must copy all my
moves.

He is holding the ball and she playfully slaps it out of his
hands.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
You are scared aren't you? Ok,
here it is, behind the back, lay
up, using the backboard must have
tongue out like Michael Jordan.

He carefully sinks the shot with his tongue out.

Maria tries carefully, goes up makes the shot, forgetting to
have the tongue out. She realizes it towards the end...

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Oh, yes! Got her, it is a victory!

MARIA
Hello, I got H, you got H-O-R-S,
that makes you done after this,

She carefully goes to half court and with a softball type
throw rebounds one hand off the backboard and into the net.

CONNOR 15
No way, no way! I guess I forgot
about the softball playing
experience.

He lines up to take a shot.

MARIA
(interrupting)
No pressure...

She coughs loudly causing him to hesitate.

CONNOR 15
You don't like to lose, do you?

MARIA
(winks)
Never give up.

He carefully winds up and throws the ball hard, the ball
sails pass the basket and into a field.

They both pause and then laugh out loud.

MARIA
(continuing; coughing
slightly as if to
muddle her words)
You suck.

CONNOR 15
Thanks.

They walk into the field to get the ball. Connor is retrieving the ball when he sees Maria pause to look at some wildflowers and a beautiful Monarch butterfly pauses to watch her.

MARIA
Everyone calls them butterflies
but you know what I call them?

CONNOR 15
No, what?

MARIA
Flutterbys. They just kind of
flutter by.

MARIA
(continuing)
They have a service here for some
of the kids who don't make it and
they release butterflies.

MARIA
(continuing)
Not everything has a happy ending
you know.

MARIA
(continuing)
There is an Indian legend that if
you want a secret to come true,
you capture a butterfly and tell
them, because they can't speak,
they can never tell anyone, you
release them and they are thankful
so they tell God your secret and
He makes it come true.

CONNOR 15
Do you wish you never had the
accident?

MARIA

I think about it a lot. The answer is, I wish it didn't happen but it did Connor and now I'm ok it did. Losing my arm gave me my family and made us closer and stronger and I'm becoming a better person...I don't know if I will ever get to the place where I'm glad it happened. I'm just being honest. I mean, I only have one arm...How am I going to open a can of soup?

She makes a motion with the one hand turning in circles like a can spinning on an automatic can opener.

MARIA

(continuing)

You?

CONNOR 15

This one is easy for me, "I wish this never happened."

He comes closer to her.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Look at me Maria. I can't lie. I'm scarred for life. My whole life, my whole existence on this earth has revolved around this...

(he places both hands
around his face)

She slowly and carefully extends out her arm and hand to touch his face.

MARIA

I forgot to mention one thing...if this hadn't happened, I would not have met you.

He puts his head down and she carefully lifts it up, she leans in and kisses him, on the scarred side of the face.

EXT HOSPITAL ROOM EXIT - DAY

Dad, Mom and Sis are there as Connor is wheeled out in wheelchair by Maria. They approach him cautiously.

CONNOR 15

Before you all say anything. I'd like to say something to you.

They kind of brace themselves.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

I don't want to drag this out but I want to say, "I'm sorry."

Awkward moment as Maria is standing there.

Sister walks up wearing sunglasses to his kiss him on the cheek without saying a word.

MARIA

Hello, my name is Maria.

CONNOR 15

Oh, I'm sorry, dad, mom, sis, this is Maria...Maria, dad, mom, sis.

MOM

Hello Maria, it is very nice to meet you.

Standing in silence for a minute.

DAD

Well, I guess I'll get the car and we will go, so I'm on the way, well, nice to meet you Maria.

The trio walks away with Connor and Maria left alone briefly.

MARIA

(softy)

Don't forget about me.

MARIA

(continuing)

Remember what my dad said...

She walks away and pauses, gesturing.

CONNOR 15

(unfolding piece of paper; nervously)

I wrote you something.

He clears his throat.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
When you.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
When you take time to pause for a moment of quiet reflection, hear me whisper to your soul. Step out and feel the crisp cool air brush softly against your face, feel the taste of my lips pressed against yours. See the sun break through the clouds, shining in its glory, feel my arms in a loving embrace. Look up at the star filled sky in the night, think of my eyes as pools of light reflecting the beauty of you. Think with a smile of romance, poems, words and fools in love. In a field see a rose among a field of thorns. Ever feel down or discouraged, know there is one who cares for you no matter where no matter when one who cares for you above all just , just because of who you are. When you think of love, think of me.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
What are you doing?

She takes the paper from his hands.

MARIA
I'm waving bye and I'm scared I
wont see you again.

INT SCHOOL LUNCHROOM - DAY

Connor is dressed in his new garb, sporting some bright clothing and a nice trim haircut. People are starting to notice something has changed. He is sitting in the middle of the group of Goth kids who are dressed totally in black and there is silence as they eat.

SARAH
So, anything new with anyone?

They all stare at her.

SARAH
(continuing)

What!?

Connor is looking off into space and focuses on Jeffrey and his group and then looks toward the jocks and spies Billie poking fun of Jeffrey. He shakes his head in disgust and after a moment, picks up his tray and heads to the table where Jeffrey is and joins them for lunch. After, Connor proudly heads toward the trash can. Billie is walking by and walks up behind him.

BILLIE
Hey Faggot, what is this new
clothes crap. You look gay.

Connor lowers his head and everyone pauses. Kimberly senses what is about to happen and makes a bee line for the two of them in a preventative measure.

The usually loud cafeteria quiets quickly.

BILLIE
(continuing; lowering
his voice)
You can't even kill yourself right
you dumb ass...

Connor clenches his hands along the edge of the tray and stands motionless.

BILLIE
(continuing)
And I know you are friends with
that retard!

Billie smirks.

Years of holding it in have taken their toll. Connor turns slightly and slowly left to gain momentum and turning his tray flat, swings away, hitting a very surprised Billie across the face sending him reeling into group of seats.

The lunchroom is frozen in time in stunned silence.

Billie's jock friends come to his rescue and Connor backs them up with the tray, motioning like he's going to hit them and smiling as he does it.

He calmly walks over to Billie.

CONNOR 15
That's what's up bitch!

He tosses the tray on top of him and walks out. The cafeteria cheers.

SARAH

That kid has some mental issues.

The camera focuses on her eyelids and the words ASK ME and then TO PROM are written.

INT MEETING ROOM - NIGHT

This is a typical meeting hall like they have at the local community center. There is a plate of cookies and drinks and people walking about. These people are a little different, they are kids with Down's Syndrome with their parents, and this is a Best Buddies Meeting and Social.

The children are dancing already outside before the meeting starts, even though the music hasn't started yet.

Connor enters quietly from a side door trying to slip in unnoticed.

JEFFREY'S MOM

(approaches from the
side and puts her
arm around him)

I'm glad you are here.

They stand for a moment watching the dance as music begins.

JEFFREY'S MOM

(continuing)

Jeffrey told me you had an
incident today with Billie.

He looks at her surprised.

JEFFREY'S MOM

(continuing)

Yes, I know about Billie. I've met
a 100 Billie's dealing with
Jeffrey.

Connor puts his head down.

She looks him in the eye.

JEFFREY'S MOM

(continuing;
motioning with her
hand, then winks)

This isn't an adult thing to say
but, just once, I'd like to punch
him in the mouth. So, good job. We
will keep that to ourselves.

She walks away and Jeffrey sees him across the room and
approaches with a girlfriend in tow.

JEFFREY

Connor, I knew you'd make it.

Jeffrey introduces MADISON, 15, strawberry blonde girl with
Down's Syndrome.

JEFFREY

(continuing)

This is Madison, my girlfriend.
Madison this is Connor. He's the
one I was telling you about, he
beat up the biggest kid in the
school, he's like a UFC fighter or
something. Connor come dance with
us.

CONNOR 15

No, no, I'm not really a dancer.

MADISON

(she grabs his hand
and Jeffrey's hand)

Come on it will be fun.

The trio moves onto the dance floor, without hesitation
Jeffrey and Madison are dancing uninhibited and Connor is
amazed at their zeal and slowly but surely joins the party.

He is occasionally looking towards the door. He begins to let
go and have some fun and scans the room.

Standing across the room from him is Maria. Dressed in a
yellow strapless sun dress, she is tan and beautiful.

He walks to her.

MARIA

I didn't know you were such a good
dancer?

CONNOR 15

Well, I guess I needed some help
from my friends.

MARIA

Stop talking and start dancing.

She extends her hand to his.

They dance across the room as they work towards a dancing
Jeffrey and Madison.

JEFFREY

I see you met a friend.

CONNOR 15

Yes, this is Maria...

MARIA

(extending arm)

His girlfriend.

MADISON

Hi Maria. I'm Madison, I'm
Jeffrey's girlfriend.

MARIA

It is nice to meet both of you.
Now, isn't this a party? Let's
dance.

Connor leans close to her as a slow dance begins to play.

CONNOR 15

Girlfriend?

MARIA

Well, what else?

CONNOR 15

It's just that, I didn't think I
would see you again...I wasn't
sure?

MARIA

Well, be sure.

He leans in for a soft kiss.

CONNOR 15

I'm sure.

Time passes and it is towards the end of the party most
people have left.

JEFFREY

Connor, thank you for being here with me. You are a good friend.

CONNOR 15

You are a good friend.

JEFFREY

Will you do me favor?

CONNOR 15

Sure.

JEFFREY

Tomorrow after school, I want to watch basketball because it is my favorite sport and I like to watch the practice.

CONNOR 15

Yeah?

JEFFREY

Will you watch practice with me? I really want to play but I'm not good at sports and people make fun of me. I'm scared.

CONNOR 15

What are you saying?

JEFFREY

Actually, tomorrow is try outs and I didn't tell my mom but I want to try and play. Will you go with me, please?

CONNOR 15

Why are you scared?

JEFFREY

Billie is going to be there.

Moments of silence.

CONNOR 15

Jeffrey, I know you saw what happened today but that was unusual, these guys are sports stars, I caught them off guard, I can't fight the whole team...I mean I've never been in a fight in my life...I'm not a UFC fighter, I'm just a regular guy.

JEFFREY
You're right Connor.

Connor lowers his head to think about it.

CONNOR 15
(to himself)
I guess that's how it always is
with me, right?

CONNOR 15
(continuing; taking
a deep breath)
On second thought, let's do it.

JEFFREY
Yes, yes, yes...

INT BASKETBALL COURT GYM - DAY

There are people practicing about, the jocks are out in full force doing lay ups and making top of the key shots. There are some high school students hanging out there and a coach or two.

Connor and Jeffrey slowly enter the gym. Jeffrey first, then Connor. After Jeffrey passes into the gym, Connor enters cautiously behind. The wind catches the door and the heavy, rusted gym door slams shut behind them.

Everyone stops to look.

CONNOR 15
Why does this always happen to me?

BILLIE
(to his friend)
What the hell is this?

JEFFREY
What do we do now?

CONNOR 15
Ummm, well, I guess we start
warming up.

JEFFREY
Ok, let's go.

Jeffrey walks right through the practice into the middle of the court. The commotion causes a player to lose the ball. Jeffrey calmly picks it up and motions to Connor.

JEFFREY
(continuing)
C'mon Connor, let's practice.

Connor sighs loudly.

CONNOR 15
Well, today is as good as any day
to get my ass kicked and
embarrassed.

He reaches the middle of the floor about the same time the coach does.

COACH
Can I help you two?

CONNOR 15
Yes, Coach, well you see, I, or,
we would like to try to see if
there was any way, maybe we can...

JEFFREY
Connor and I want to play
basketball.

COACH
Yeah, well practice is over in ten
minutes so go to the stands and
wait.

The coach begins to walk away.

CONNOR 15
He means, we want to try out for
the team.

The coach walks back to Connor distressed.

COACH
(to himself)
I told my wife I wanted to retire
this year but she said, "No,
Honey, you like to work and you
love kids..."

COACH
(continuing; to
Connor and Jeffrey)
Both lies. This isn't a joke I
have a job to do and it doesn't
involve jokes, I don't know who
put you up to this but I don't
have time to...

CONNOR 15

This isn't a joke Coach, give us
a chance.

The Coach realizes they are both serious.

COACH

Ok then, line up over there for
lay ups and let's see what you got.

They move over to the sidelines cautiously.

COACH

(continuing; he
throws him the ball)

COACH

(continuing)
You, lay up, right side.

Billie sees what is going on.

BILLIE

(to friend)
Watch this.

As Connor goes for a lay up, Billie tosses a random ball
causing Connor to fall and this causes a laugh from the boys.

Connor gets back up and begins again and does a behind the
back lay up.

COACH

Now, other side.

He repeats.

COACH

(continuing; to
Jeffrey)

You, lay up.

Jeffrey mimics Connor and does a behind the back lay up.

BILLIE

(muttered)
Retard.

COACH

Who said that!

COACH
(continuing)
Anyone who makes fun of any of my
lambs pays the price!

COACH
(continuing)
Ohhh, the silent treatment.

COACH
(continuing)

Everyone sprints on my whistle.

Collective moan.

Connor and Jeffrey are standing on the sideline. The coach
approaches them.

COACH
(continuing; to
Connor and Jeffrey)
Are you two enjoying the show?

They are not sure how to react.

COACH
(continuing)
Well, get out there and run.

INT RANDOM HOUSE - NIGHT

A typical two-story house on a full-moon lit night, yard
decked out in Halloween gear.

Connor approaches with Maria, Jeffrey and Madison (hand in
hand).

CONNOR 15 (O.S.)
I don't think this is a good idea.

MARIA
It's a great idea!

We see Connor, Maria, Jeffrey, Madison, Al and Sarah walking
down the sidewalk heading to a Halloween party. Jeffrey leads
the way dressed as Superman, Madison is dressed as Wonder
Woman, Al and Sarah are dressed as usual, Goth, Maria is
dressed as a softball player and Connor is dressed as Freddy
Krueger.

Connor pauses for a moment.

CONNOR 15

Wait guys, I'm serious, I don't
think this is a good idea.

SARAH

(over each eyelid is
written the word,
"Boo.")

We put all this work into getting
dressed and you want to change
your mind now?

Jeffrey and Madison are already at the door.

MARIA

C'mon, live a little...Freddy.

They enter the house and the party seems to stop for a minute
as everyone checks everyone else out.

MARIA

(continuing)

Well...hello? Where's the music?

The party resumes.

In the kitchen, dressed like skeletons, are Billie and his
crew. They are drinking.

Billie spies Maria from across the room.

BILLIE

Check this out, gotta get me some
fine young lady...

As he is walking towards her, he sees Connor approach her and
the two start dancing and having fun next to Jeffrey and
Madison. Even Al and Sarah seem to be enjoying the party.

CONNOR 15

(to Maria)

Is this real or am I dreaming?

BILLIE

Seems more like a nightmare to me
dumb ass.

Billie steps between the two with his boys at his side and
the party stops again.

BILLIE
(continuing; to Maria)
Hey, little lady, would you rather
be with a sports star or Freddy
Krueger?

People start to laugh.

Maria approaches him close as if to go with him.

MARIA
I'd rather be with Freddy than 3
jackasses.

She takes her drink and splashes into his face.

BILLIE
Why you little!

Jeffrey approaches with Madison.

JEFFREY
Leave her alone Billie.

BILLIE
Mind you own business, retard.

MADISON
Do what he says or else.

BILLIE
Or else what.

Sarah and Al approach.

AL
Or else you will deal with us.

SARAH
All of us.

A group starts to form around them as if a protective circle.

CONNOR 15
Now, go away, like the scared
little boy you are.

BILLIE
This isn't over, Scarface. Just
wait.

BILLIE
(continuing)
Let's go boys.

INT LUNCHROOM - DAY

Connor is eating lunch dressed in his new outfit, sitting at the table thinking about things. Sarah and Al show up without their Goth makeup and with new clothes that sport the same outfit as Connor, the Hollister type.

Connor looks in amazement.

AL

If you say anything, I will kill you! Just shut up and go with it.

SARAH

Yeah, we told you, you were like our leader or something...

She bats her eyes to reveal the words, "Bee Difrent."

CONNOR 15

This is change number 1 for the better and here comes change 2, go with it.

Connor picks up his tray and heads towards Jeffrey and his group.

Sarah and Al look at each other, hesitant at first but then purposely walk over and sit with them.

The lunch crowd quiets.

BILLIE

Look at these idiots, what are they, stupid and gay? Now they want to be part of the retards?

Kimberely promptly gets up from the group and walks over to sit with Jeffrey and Connor and soon so does one of the jocks.

INT BASKETBALL COURT GYM - NIGHT

Crowded gym, this is playoffs and the home team is in it. Crowds on both sides are cheering and raucous as the game gets ready to start. Both sides are dancing to the music playing by the D.J. Cheerleaders cheer. Opposing team enters the gym and a sea of boos start. It is a home team crowd. They hold up newspapers and pretend to read in order to ignore the announcing of the other team members names.

The team is introduced one by one. Everyone cheers for all the jocks, especially Billie.

ANNOUNCER
Annnddd nowwww, ladies and
gentlemen, your home team Tigers!
Tiggerrrrrrssss!!!

The crowd cheers wildly. The team runs through the banner held up by the cheerleaders. The team is gathered in a group waiting for the announcer to call them individually.

ANNOUNCER
(continuing)
He's the center and and an all
pro, being recruited by all the
major colleges, Billie Bigowski.
Big Billie B!

Pretentious background music of Queen's, "Another one bites the dust." It is common and trite but crowd goes wild.

ANNOUNCER
(continuing)
And now...Jeffrey Taylor.

The spotlight is trying to capture Jeffrey but can't find him. He is in the stands dancing to the background music which soon comes to the forefront.

It is a mix of "Gonna Fly Now" where Rocky Balboa, introduces himself...

SYLVESTER STALLONE (O.S.)
"Hi, my name is Rocky Balboa..."

Cue music.

Jeffrey runs into the center of the rink singing and dancing, and the crowd starts going nuts, cheering him on. The crowd is incited and cheers wildly drown out any measure of clapping for Billie.

There is a slight lull in the crowd, some whispering and murmuring because some of the crowd can see Connor prior to his entry.

ANNOUNCER
And now...Connor Morris, ummm,
"The" Connor Morris...

Connor is extremely reluctant but enters in his magenta basketball uniform, why did they pick magenta? Do purple and yellow always go together? For whatever reason this color provides the crowd with the full picture and view of his devastating injuries which up to this point have been somewhat obscured.

04.
This is further made evident by the big screen above the gym capturing the moment.

The crowd is stunned silent.

People are not sure if this is joke or real.

Connor's parents are in the stands and his mother covers her mouth and lowers her head to her heart. His sister is there in sunglasses.

Al and Sarah are there. Maria is there.

No one knows what to do...

Jeffrey runs from the sideline to him and gives him a big hug.

He then takes his arm and places it into the air to the first stunned now breaking into thunderous applause audience. They are cheering as if they have won the game.

Billie is on the sideline shaking his head.

The game starts and Billie quickly becomes the star. As Billie is waiting to make a foul shot, the other team starts taunting him.

TEAM PLAYER 1

Hey, ass wipe, who you got playing on your team, a cripple and a retard.

TEAM PLAYER 2

Yeah, must be like a horror movie or something.

The score ties with Billie's second free throw. It is the 4th period with 1 minute to go.

Billie's friend fouls out of the game.

COACH

What! Why did you do that, I don't have anyone else to send in!? This is the championships son!

Connor and Jeffrey are sitting on the bench.

COACH

(continuing)

Connor, go in and for God's sake, don't do anything!

TEAM PLAYER 1

Oh look who is coming in, The
Cripple, we are gonna cripple him
some more.

Connor comes trotting into the game, unsure of himself.

The game starts again feverishly and the two other jocks from
the opposing team are man handling Connor badly.

Billie takes notice.

Connor gets passed the ball unintentionally, with 30 seconds
left on the clock and a tie game. He begins to dribble the
ball down the court and is crunched horribly by Team Player 1.

Team Player 1 stands over him and laughs. The ball that fell
out of Connor's hands roll slowly towards Billie. He picks up
the ball and beans Team Player 1 right in the smiling face,
knocking him to the ground.

The refs run over and throw him out of the game.

Connor looks over to him and Billie nods his head as if to
say, "We taught him a lesson."

COACH

Billie, are you crazy!? You just
cost us the championship and maybe
your basketball scholarship; we
have no one else. Now, we have to
play short-handed.

Billie looks towards the bench and sees Jeffrey.

BILLIE

You've got one more.

The coach looks at Jeffrey who is beaming.

COACH

Fine. Fine.

COACH

(continuing)

Taylor! Get over here.

JEFFREY

Yes, Coach?

COACH

I'm counting on you not to screw
this up.

(more)

COACH (cont'd)

Go in, don't do anything, just follow the team around and don't touch the ball. You understand me, don't touch the ball. Ok? Keep your hands up!

JEFFREY

You got it Coach.

He trots in the game with his hands up.

The clock is frozen at 24 seconds.

Connor throws the ball in from the sideline which is promptly stolen by the other team who starts to march it down court.

Jeffrey runs into the player and the ball goes out of bounds. It is the other team's ball but not a foul.

The other team passes the ball into play. Jeffrey is kind of frozen at the other side of the court. The other team shoots the ball with 9 seconds left, the ball bounces off the backboard and deflects off the rim almost going in, Connor is jostled to and fro like a rag doll and is knocked to the ground when the ball drops next to him, he picks up the ball and hurls it towards a waiting Jeffrey, time slows...

The ball bounces twice. Jeffrey catches the ball easily and begins to dribble towards the goal; he reaches the goals with 2 seconds left and passes the ball behind his back for a lay up with the tongue hanging out. The ball circles the rim and drops in!

Jeffrey motions with his hand with two fingers down same as the referee indicating the shot is good!

The clock changes to 0 and the score is 89 to 87!

The crowd goes crazy and an announcer runs onto the court.

ANNOUNCER

Jeffrey, you made the game-winning shot, how did you do it?

JEFFREY

(repeating what the coach said)

"This is the championships son!"

The crowd goes absolutely crazy and plays his theme song over again and again mixing it.

Connor, Maria, Jeffrey and Madison are all celebrating when Billie walks up and grabs Connor by the shoulder.

He extends his hand to which Connor accepts.

BILLIE
I still hate the preppy clothes
but you are ok.

Jeffrey goes up to him and gives him a hug.

Billie is taken aback but gives him a hug back.

BILLIE
(continuing; pushing
Jeffrey off him a
little)
Ok, that's enough.

INT AUDITORIUM - DAY

This is the later part of the school year high school graduation where the group is a little more mature and "older."

We see each person in cap and gown. Al seated next to Sarah. Sarah blinks and the words, "We DdIt" are written on her eyelids. Spelled as a text would be.

Jeffrey is seated next to Connor.

HEADMASTER
Good evening ladies and gentlemen.
I'd like to introduce our
graduates.

Cheers from the crowd.

HEADMASTER
(continuing)
I'd like to recognize everyone who
participated in a sport, please
rise.

Connor and Jeffrey rise as do Al and Sarah.

HEADMASTER
(continuing)
I'd like everyone that
participated in a club to rise.

Connor and Jeffrey rise as do Al and Sarah.

HEADMASTER
(continuing)
I'd like everyone that completed
the volunteer and mentoring blocks
to rise.

Connor and Jeffrey rise as do Al and Sarah.

HEADMASTER
(continuing)
Having done this for many years,
I have found that that when we
have these events, no one wants to
hear me speak.

There is a clap from the audience and hushed laughter.

HEADMASTER
(continuing)
As I thought, therefore, I will
introduce to you...your class
president...Mr. Connor Morris.

A very confident and refined Connor Morris walks to the
podium in a tailored suit.

CONNOR 17
Thank you Headmaster. He walks
around the podium so he can see
the crowd.

CONNOR 17
(continuing)
Hi, my name is Connor Morris, The
Connor Morris. You may not notice,
but I have a speech impediment...
and if you didn't notice that, you
may notice that I had an accident
when I was young that left me
severely scarred and disfigured...

CONNOR 17
(continuing)
People are usually surprised by
that one...

Some laughter.

CONNOR 17
(continuing)
Thank God, I had people that cared
and loved me.

He looks to the crowd to see his father, mother, and sister (finally without glasses but from a distance).

CONNOR 17
(continuing;
motioning towards
himself)
I also had people teach me that my
life can make a difference. Even
someone who had something like
this happen to them. Let me tell
you my story.

He looks directly at Maria in the audience. She motions with one hand as if she is clapping.

CONNOR 15
(getting serious)
I died when I was young.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
I was at home, I was five. Do you
remember who your superhero was at
5? Mine was Superman, here I am in
my Superman outfit.

Shows picture to audience on the big screen.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Wasn't I cute?

Audience smiling.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
My mom was busy trying to cook for
a five-year-old and a two-year-
old. Do you remember those chicken
fingers shaped like dinosaurs? I
was standing there looking into
the kitchen not understanding what
I was seeing. My baby sister
standing there in a diaper...I
guess she spilled something on her
shirt and my mom went to get her
another one, then the phone
rang...she was standing there,
mesmerized by the stove.

He walks across the room as if to see a stove and stares at it and pauses.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Stoves with sizzling hot grease
look really appealing to a baby
for some reason.

He faces the audience again.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; reaching
with one hand)
No baby, don't touch that, where
is mom, what is happening?

CONNOR 15
(continuing; yelling)
Nooooo!

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
I ran, I ran as fast as I could
and just before she could reach
the handle, I grabbed it.

Making a motion of being covered in water.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Splash.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; louder)
Splash!

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Splash!!!

Makes a motion of peeling skin.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Do you know what it feels like to
have burning hot grease poured all
over you?

Silence, then comic relief for a moment.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Needless to say, I don't eat
chicken fingers anymore.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
In the hospital, I died on that
table, the table of pain I called
it.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
"Wow," you say, "that's horrible."

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
You know what's worse than dying?

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Living. Living with something like
this. Do you know how people look
at you if something is even a
little bit different.

Motioning to his face.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
How do you think it is when you
have something like this? God
knows life is hard enough but when
you are different, let that one
little thing about you be
different...well then, it is
capitalized on, used, abused and
used again. You are made to feel
like an outcast. I've been called
Freddy Krueger so many times I
think my name is Fred sometimes.
For those of you who don't know,
it's from a movie where people
burn the town crazy person and he
lives and comes after them in
their sleep for revenge, he is
horribly scarred. Let's just say
being associated with that name
and movie can be a little
negative. My favorite is Scarface,
wow, I didn't think of that one...

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Many times, I wished I were
asleep, I kept thinking when am I
going to wake up but each time I
did...I looked in the mirror and
I was still scarred, I still spoke
with a lisp. It's hard to speak
when half of your lips are gone.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
I guess the best question is,
"Why?"

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Growing up like this, I've had 34,
no, 35 surgeries now, I'm
partially blind, I speak with a
lisp and walk with a gimp, "Why?"
I mean what kind of a cruel God
would allow this to happen...

He walks towards the front of the platform.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Look at me.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Here's a picture of me in my
basketball uniform.

He flashes a picture of himself in a tank top purple and
yellow basketball team uniform.

The audience gasps.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
That's the typical response I get.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
I'm here for a reason.

Long Pause.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; pointing
fingers and hands
inward.)
I'm here for a reason.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
What a lot of people miss is,
that's me in a basketball uniform.
The Gimp with a Limp, plays
basketball. Freddy Krueger plays
basketball. Scarface plays
basketball. People didn't think I
would live much less walk, much
less play any sport.

He walks back to the podium.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Oh, by the way, our basketball
team won the championship!

Crowd cheers.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Thanks to that kid right there,
Jeffrey Taylor!

Connor claps for him.

Jeffrey stands to take a bow.

Crowd cheers again. Jeffrey waves.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Oh and by the way, that kid is my
best friend. Me. The guy who
should die, the guy with a lisp,
the guy with scars has a best
friend.

CONNOR 15
(continuing; clapping
for himself)
Wow, pretty impressive right?

74.
CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Yes except *this* kid wanted to kill himself. Oh yeah, it's on YouTube, check it out. Why? A lifetime of suffering, a lifetime of misery, a lifetime of pain, a lifetime of loneliness...or so I thought. You see, I was so focused on my situation, I failed to see that I was part of the problem. I let misery or my circumstances take over my life instead of my life taking over my circumstances.

CONNOR 15

(continuing; placing
hands inward)

I accepted that my life would never change, I sought the easy way out not realizing the impact it would have for my family...Not realizing the impact my life *could* have. Someone pretty famous once said, "If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, move forward." Dr. Martin Luther King. I was stuck and moving backwards.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Well I stand here before you to say my life did make a difference and I made a difference in spite of what everyone thought and what I thought about myself. Class president, Connor Morris? Yes, that's me. Basketball player? Yes. Best friend to someone? Yes.

Grabs clicker to show picture.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Oh, there is one more thing, these scarred lips that I thought would never be in love, kissed the most beautiful girl in the world, yes, I got the girl too, here she is...

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

She taught me that having a disability doesn't mean having to make excuses or feeling sorry for yourself...there is one more thing.

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

Someone once said, there is no greater love one can give than to sacrifice themselves for their friend...

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

What about for his sister? If I were not there, the doctors told me, she would have died. Her little body could not have taken that kind of pain or injury. I would gladly give my life a thousand times for her.

Calls Sis up to podium. She hugs him and stands by his side. She is crying and this is the first time we see her *striking blue eyes*.

FLASHBACK

We see a quick view of every instance of striking blue eyes and how Connor was never alone.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

CONNOR 15

(continuing)

I close with this - be someone who makes such an impact on someone else that you just might save a life. Let your life make a difference; mine did.

Crowd cheers and he holds his hand for Maria to come join him on the stage.

A man in a haphazard Salvation Army suit walks up to the group to shake hands with Connor, clean-shaven, but hair still askew. Weathered face.

CONNOR 15

(continuing;
extending hand)

Hello, I'm Connor Morris.

There is a moment of silence. Connor is handed a newspaper article, it states, "Boy overcomes great obstacles to become class president."

He turns to walk away and Connor realizes it is Bumster. He catches up to him.

CONNOR 15
(continuing)
Thank you.

Bumster smiles with slight tears and walks away without saying a word.

ROLL CREDITS.