

THE LEDGE

SCREENPLAY BY

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**EXT. NEW YORK CITY HOTEL BALCONY - NIGHT**

MATHEW, 29 stands on a hotel balcony overlooking park street. He smokes a cigarette, slowly watching the fumes fly out his mouth and into the night sky.

A bottle of Jack Daniels sits half empty beside him. He picks it up and takes a swig between his cigarette hits.

He stares at the window of the building across from him. He looks at his shadow, the darkness in it. The shadow begins to speak.

SHADOW

Drinking the pain away again? That makes four nights now? Drinking will only help so much.

MATHEW shocked and drunk throws his cigarette towards the shadow.

MATHEW

What the fuck would you know huh?

The SHADOW grins.

SHADOW

Everything we know. Everything we're hiding from ourselves.

MATHEW

(Sloppily)

Hiding? Now what am I hiding, please inform me cause I want to know.

Mathew takes another swig of the Daniels.

The shadow looks at Mathew, then looks to the street below. People rush into the New York nightlife. Cars blare, people laugh. The streets are lively.

MATHEW gives a nervous laugh.

SHADOW

Say it. I know what we are thinking.

MATHEW

Yeah.

(Beat)

Thats one way to get attention.

Made in Highland

SHADOW

Attention? We lost that craving  
long ago.

Mathew nods and drinks again.

SHADOW (CONT'D)

Seeing us like this, hurts me so  
deeply. It pains me that we still  
fear bringing up the one thing we  
are hiding from. That we know is  
the final piece of this puzzle.  
The one to make the picture whole  
again-

Mathew finishes the rest of the bottle and hurls it at the  
shadow. Drops of whisky fall down the window. The shadow looks  
onward stoically.

MATHEW

Shut up! Shut your fucking mouth.  
You don't know me. You don't know  
a single damn thing about me.

Mathew looks to the street below. The breeze touches his face,  
pushing his hair back.

MATHEW

Fixing some philosophical puzzle  
doesn't solve shit. Seeing a  
picture come to life that, if I-  
(beat)  
I did follow through with, I  
wouldn't even be able to see it.  
You don't know what you're saying.  
You never know what you're saying.

Mathew grabs his head.

MATHEW (CONT'D)

I don't know what I'm saying.

SHADOW

You see it now, don't you? That I  
am just as much of you, as you are  
me. We are one and the same.

Mathew looks up, his eyes are watery. He stares directly at the  
shadow.

MATHEW

I hate you.

SHADOW

I know. So solve it.

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Mathew looks out at the city. He looks below again at the streets. A group of friends walk by laughing. Their voices BOOM through the New York Avenue.

MATHEW

I used to be like that. Never a dull moment, taking life in its fullest form. Now look at me. What happened? Where did I go wrong? What did I do to make my days darker than nights?

SHADOW

We were hurt, mangled by emotional torture. It scarred us. Left us broken and beaten. You see it! We were used and discarded. It was never our fault.

Mathew now in full tears.

MATHEW

But it was! I fucked up, I got nervous, I didn't follow through, I felt I could ride the wave with it never crashing.

(laughing)

How wrong was I? I just don't think I have the strength to paddle back out and ride another one.

SHADOW

You see, now you're speaking from the heart. You're showing our true colors.

Mathew pulls out a cigarette and lights it. He blows the smoke out. He looks at the street below.

MATHEW

I...agree.

(beat)

But I can't do it. I just can't.

The shadows face becomes harsh.

SHADOW

This is the only option! We know what will happen out there. Down there is a world of disappointment and dissatisfaction. We will never find what we are looking for. We tried!

Made in Highland

MATHEW  
I... I could try again.

SHADOW  
We are too weak.

MATHEW  
But I can grow!

SHADOW  
We have tried this! Stop lying to yourself! I can't stand to even look at you. You're a miserable sad drunk, talking to himself. Do you see any good coming from this?

Mathew is silent, tears stream from his cheeks.

SHADOW (CONT'D)  
There is only one option. It's the only solution. We both know it.  
(Beat)  
Now can we finish this puzzle?

Mathew looks into the eyes of the shadow. His eyes are too blurry to even recognize the darkness.

He climbs up onto the edge of the balcony. The wind kisses his face, the rush of adrenaline rises through his body and into his eyes.

SHADOW  
Doesn't that feel good? Can you feel the rush? The adrenaline shooting up our body?

Mathew nods.

SHADOW  
Now do it. There's only more pain in waiting.

Mathew closes his eyes. The breeze rushes upward, ruffling his shirt. He breaths gently in and out. He lifts his foot over the edge.

A sudden crash from across the balcony causes Mathew to open his eyes. He looks towards the shadow and sees nothing but shattered glass.

A voice from beside him clears his throat.

GABRIEL  
I always hated that window.

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Mathew in complete disarray looks at GABRIEL. He looks clean, older, and well kept. He wears a white suit.

Gabriel motions towards the pack of cigarettes by the ledge.

GABRIEL

You mind? Its been ages since i've had one. Im not allowed to you see.

Mathew still trying to process the event stands still. He gives a slight nod.

GABRIEL

Thank you.

He picks up the pack.

GABRIEL

Ah Marlboro reds, As a teen these were my favorite. Unfiltered, hand rolled, you know they stopped producing these for a while. I liked them so much I couldn't stand any other brand. I quit out of spite. They started producing the unfiltered ones again about a month later. Those pesky buggers. Must've waited till I stopped.

MATHEW still looks at Gabriel in a complete daze.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Are you going to stand on that ledge all night? I have places to be.

MATHEW slowly climbs down from the ledge.

MATHEW

When did you come out here? I didn't even hear you.

Mathew brushes himself off In an attempt to look presentable.

Gabriel inhales the smoke, shooting it out in one swift motion.

GABRIEL

You know sometimes our minds tell us funny things. Especially when we can see them with our own eyes. Thats why I always keep a baseball with me. It reminds me of the things I enjoy.

Made in Highland

Gabriel puts the rest of the cigarette out and flicks it over the building.

He smiles.

GABRIEL  
Thank you for the cigarette,  
Mathew.

Gabriel shakes Mathews hand.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)  
Have a safe night.

He walks back towards the door and enters the hotel.

Mathew's eyes seem to be lighter, he picks up his pack of cigarettes and pulls out a single stick. He shakily brings it to his mouth as he lights the end. He leans over the railing and stares at the broken window across from him.

On the floor by the shattered glass in the building is a baseball.

Mathew smiles.

Behind him Gabriel flys above the city, his wings spread wide as he ascends towards heaven.

END.