

SAMPLE:

12TH PREMISE (screenplay)

by

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INT. KEATON AND CHRISTIAN'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER
Christian looks at the Polaroid of himself.

CHRISTIAN
Utopia.

PUSH INTO THE POLAROID.

EXT. THIRD WORLD NOWHERE, A BEACH - AFTERNOON

Christian stands wearing some board shorts and the same expression from the Polaroid.

AIDAN (V.O.)
Premise five.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Christian smokes a joint and looks at the world map on his wall.

CHRISTIAN
(to us)
The world. A big place.

INT. KEATON AND CHRISTIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Keaton helps Christian carry his luggage down the stairs.

INT. KEATON'S VW MINIBUS - LATER

Keaton drives toward LAX.

CHRISTIAN
I decided not to be stuck. Somewhere.
One place.

KEATON
One place?
(answering his own question)
One place.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

- 1) Christian checking in at LAX.
- 2) Christian in the plane, looks out at the pink clouds.

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- 3) Christian going through customs in Spain.
- 4) Christian boarding a small tourist bus.
- 5) Christian walks through shipyards of a Mediterranean town. He makes a deal with some fishermen and boards their ship.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
I travelled four days to get here.
Essentially by getting lost. Third world
nowhere. I think this is Turkey.

EXT. THE SHIP - DAY

Christian stands on the prow of the ship. FISHERMAN speak in a language like Turkish, but not.

CHRISTIAN
(to us)
But I don't know the flag and no one
speaks anything remotely resembling
English on the boat.

EXT. A WAR TORN TOWN, SOMEWHERE LIKE ALBANIA - NIGHT

Christian walks down the streets of the bullet riddled city, taking pictures.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
There's the kind of quiet here you find
in buildings, at home, after they close.

EXT. A HILLTOP OVERLOOKING A VILLAGE - EVENING

Christian looks over the vast green sprawl below.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
Something electrical about nature.

He throws his head to the sky and screams:

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)
THIS IS UTOPIA!
(to us)
I think...this may be Albania, hadn't
considered that.

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EXT. THIRD WORLD NOWHERE, A BEACH - DAY

Christian wades in the water to his waist. He scans the beach there is no one for miles.

CHRISTIAN (V.O.)
I, here alone, feel very much like
building a boat from beech trees and
trying to rediscover a world.

INT. THIRD WORLD NOWHERE, A HOTEL - NIGHT

The room is filthy, riddled with bugs. Around the room are Christian's drawings, camera stuff, and clothes.

CHRISTIAN
(to us)
Things for me are...well you know, don't
you? I want my dad back.

INT. THIRD WORLD NOWHERE, A RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Christian sits at a table trying to communicate with a NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING GENTLEMAN.

CHRISTIAN
I don't want to be an orphan.

The Gentleman shakes his head, the universal sign for "I only speak some Slavic Language."

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)
So I did the only logical thing. Got
lost in the Balkans.

NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING
GENTLEMAN
(pointing at the ground)
Balkans! Balkans yes!

EXT. THIRD WORLD NOWHERE, A BEACH - NIGHT

Christian wades in the black water, holding a hash pipe. The sky is open and stars are all around. He speaks to the sky.

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CHRISTIAN

Out here in the middle of nothing, I thought maybe I'd find him. Maybe it's the hash, maybe I'm delusional.

Christian looks down at the water. He drags his finger in the ocean, drawing a circle. The face of CHRISTIAN'S FATHER appears in the water before him.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

Dad?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. A CLASSROOM - DAY

Con stands in front of the class. MacDuff leans against the side wall. The classroom is full, except for Christian.

MACDUFF

Go ahead, Con. Utopia...

CON

I used to be a minister. Youth minister. And now...I watch football on Sundays.

INT. AIDAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Con and Aidan carry boxes of Con's stuff into the apartment.

INT. AIDAN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Con stands looking in the mirror, talking to himself. In the mirror he can see Aidan in bed.

CON

He's sleeping in there and he's happy and I made that. That's good. It's all from me.

EXT. WESTWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH - MORNING

Con sits on a bench outside the church.

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CON
Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed
be thy name.

INT. AIDAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Aidan lays on Con's chest. Con prays.

CON
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be...

Aidan begins to go south. Con loses his train of thought.

CON (CONT'D)
Blah, blah, blah.

INT. A CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Con recites from memory.

CON
And the power, and the glory, for ever
and ever. Amen.

The class CLAPS perfunctorily.

MACDUFF
Good, Con. Class, using someone else's
words is called plagiarism.

CON
I didn't mean to...

MACDUFF
I'm just, how would you say, giving you
shit, Con. Con--

CON
Yeah.

MACDUFF
Where's Christian?

CON
Um, he's on a--

AIDAN
Pilgrimage.

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MACDUFF

I see.

CON

It was sudden.

MACDUFF

He's alright.

CON

Dunno. Probably.

MACDUFF

All right. Aidan, what's the *premise* of the day?

AIDAN

Utopia.

MACDUFF

Original. Hit it.

Aidan walks to the lectern, reading from his journal.

AIDAN

I've spent the semester in bed.

INT. AIDAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Aidan and Con sit in bed watching TV.

AIDAN (V.O.)

Almost entirely. Either with him--

INT. AIDAN'S MOTHER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Aidan lies next to Ellen, writing in his journal. The wall mounted TV, plays the news.

AIDAN (V.O.)

Or at the hospital with the remains of my mother. I don't remember events, per se.

Aidan looks at the TV. PUSH INTO THE TV. ON THE TV: a series of news clips flash by, different current events from the turn of the millennium flash by.

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AIDAN (CONT'D)

(to us)

I mean, obviously, a few things stick out, but it's just a feeling. Now. An era; a safety and a kind of happy - a brand of it I'd never had. This was, to that point, the best time of my life--

INT. AIDAN'S CAR - DAY

Aidan drives on the highway, away from the hospital.

AIDAN

(to us)

Bouncing between playing house with my undeclared Lutheran boyfriend and the hollowed out sickness and malignancy of a parent.

INT. A CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Con looks uncomfortable. He and Aidan meet eyes.

AIDAN

There's guilt in that. I promise.