

Joe Nobody

Written by

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white draft

FADE IN:

(**NOTE TO READER:** Proceeding animations: despite their novice aptitude, there remains a certain curious, innovated quality.)

EXT. PLANET EARTH FROM SPACE - DAY? NIGHT? (ANIMATED)

-- EARTH spins idly amongst the heavens, surrounded by a mob of twinkling little STARS.

-- METEORITE streaks across the distant horizon, chased by a luminous, serpent-like tail.

We

Spiral

Downward....

EXT. OCEAN-BLUE SKY - DAY (ANIMATED)

-- Sun smiles blissfully down from its perch high in the sky.

-- Happy blue birds flutter by, CHIRPING gleefully in song.

NARRATOR

(dulcet)

In a time, not so long ago....

Far below: the backdrop of a metropolis.

Continue

Descent....

EXT. CITY OF LOS ANGELES - DAY (ANIMATED)

The city surges with the hustle and bustle accustomed to the dawns of a bright, new day.

NARRATOR

In a land, not so far away....

Vehicles fight through the morning's rush-hour traffic....

As we soar over to....

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY (ANIMATED)

A typical middle-income, suburban neighborhood.

-- A newspaper skips across and onto a doorstep.
Headline reads: FRANK'S COFFEE BLEND: THE LATEST
SENSATION?

-- NEIGHBORS wave to NEIGHBORS, as they stroll about
their business.

-- CHILDREN wait for the approaching school bus.

-- A DOG chases a CAT with a MOUSE in its mouth up a
tree.

INT. EFFICIENCY APARTMENT - DAY (ANIMATED)

JOE, a fresh-faced twenty-two-year-old, with a Gumby-
esque stature, frantically searches his meager,
efficiency-size apartment.

NARRATOR

There lived a certain fella, named Joe.

Cartoon Joe bends off screen, then bolts upright holding
a COMIC BOOK in the air like a coveted trophy.

FREEZE -- MORPH TO REAL LIFE

RESUME: as Joe darts off toward the bathroom, squashing
his butt cheeks together like he's seconds from shitting
his pants.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY (LATER)

This is our first solid look at Joe's Casa and it
epitomizes TOP-RAMEN living.

Joe walks back in, dressed in a black Frank's Coffee
Emporium T-shirt and khaki slacks.

A subtle warmth resides within his aura, a good-
heartedness.

He listens intently into some earphones, then with
inflated conviction....

JOE

I will! I can! I am!

(again)

I will! I can!

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

I am -- Today WILL be my day! Today I CAN succeed! Today I AM a success!

He heads over to the fish tank.

JOE (CONT'D)

How's lil Miss Jolie this mornin'?

MISS JOLIE, Joe's ANIMATED, vibrant goldfish, leaps high in the air in a spectacular exhibition of aerobatics.

JOE (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. Calm down -- Here you go.

Joe tosses a fish pellet in the air over the tank.

Miss Jolie jumps high, snatching the pellet out of the air like a voracious dog before splashing back down.

She quickly bolts over and up to the glass partition and watches adoringly as her master walks out of the room and into the....

JOE'S KITCHEN

A coffee pot PERCOLATES on the kitchen's counter top.

Scribbled over a dry-erase board are: PA positions, studio internships, etc. Each with its own dispiriting line streaked through it, punctuated by a (ANIMATED)WEEPING FROWNY FACE.

Joe enters.

He flings open the cupboard door and grabs a to-go coffee mug.

He grabs the coffee pot, about to pour when off screen a RINGTONE, something on par with "HOLD ON" by Wilson Phillips (*"Hold on for one more day...."*), erupts -- breaking the dégagé.

He sits the #2 SON handcrafted coffee mug down and scrambles out of the kitchen.

Joe walks back in, cell phone nuzzled between shoulder and ear....

JOE

Hi, Uncle Frank. -- How -- How 'm I late?
-- Wait, but I'm not scheduled 'til
eight.

Trepidation blushes his face.

He checks his cell phone's time:

SUPER: 7:35 A.M.

JOE (CONT'D)

But it's --

He taps the cell phone's screen, the clock flickers, reappears as:

SUPER: 8:34 A.M.

JOE (CONT'D)

-- Shoot. No, it changed time-zones again. -- Okay. Well. Umm. Okay. --

JOE'S BATHROOM

Joe rushes in, pops open the medicine cabinet and pulls out a stick of deodorant.

JOE

-- No, I'll be there in like fifteen minutes.

(listening)

No fifteen, I swear.

He pops the cap-- it's empty.

JOE'S KITCHEN

Joe races back in, in total 'Oh shit' mode.

He rifles open a cabinet drawer, pulls out a can of Lysol and coats his armpits.

JOE

I know I said that but -- I said -- I know-- I'm sorry. But --

Joe grabs his #2 SON coffee mug and quickly pours a cup of piping-hot coffee.

JOE (CONT'D)

-- I know Uncle Fra --

CRAAAAASH

The handle from his COFFEE POT has broke free from the glass dispenser, sending the glass portion plummeting to the linoleum tile in a magnificent explosion of glass and beverage.

JOE (CONT'D)

Terds!

Joe quickly maneuvers for distance, but this spastic reaction causes him to drop his phone into the puddle of coffee.

He bends in a mad-dash to rescue the device from its certain liquidity demise, only to....

THWACK

....smack his head against the counter top. He drops like a water-logged brick.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

(via phone, accented)

Hello...?

REVEAL: Joe splayed across the kitchen floor, out cold.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

(screaming)

You better....

....the phone fizzles out with a BEEP.

Joe twitches.

EXT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - DAY

SAMANTHA, 20, attractive in that unique "there's something about her" kind of way, emerges from the eatery.

She's dressed vintage-chic and, at the moment, dons a pair of librarian-style glasses which have an overly-obnoxious tendency to slip down along her nose.

She stretches out a reinvigorating yawn....

SAMANTHA

AAAUUUOOWWWHHnomnomnom!

Samantha plugs in her earbuds, hops on her pink, vintage Schwinn bicycle and peddles off.

MOMENTS LATER, a determined WAITER and bald, pudgy MANAGER burst out the door holding, presumably her bill.

They scour the parking lot but when they finally locate her, can only watch as she disappears around the distant street corner.

BALD MANAGER

(to waiter)

Looks like you owe me....

(looks at bill)

....Eight-ninety-six.

The Bald Manager SMACKS the waiter in the back of the head in disgust as they walk back into the restaurant.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Samantha peddles along, choosing the busy sidewalk over the designated bike lane just feet away.

SAMANTHA

(singing)

I got bills to pay. I got mouths to feed. Ain't nothin' in this world for free....

She approaches a shabby, HOMELESS MAN, 60's.

Samantha waves to him. He happily reciprocates. Samantha suddenly swoops in, snatching the styrofoam cup out of his hand.

HOMELESS MAN

AAAY, MY CHANGE!

A loud, grating VVVVROOOOM....

She looks back over her shoulder, sees a '91 GEO METRO as it barrels down the street toward her, engine SCREAMING for mercy.

SAMANTHA

Hey! Slow down....

The Metro shoots past her, trailing a thick, mushroom-cloud of exhaust in its wake.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

....Douche sack!

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

The METRO careens around the corner and accelerates.

It breaks hard and skids to a SCREECHING halt in the middle of the road.

INT. JOE'S METRO

Joe sits in the driver seat. He nurses an ice pack against his noggin.

JOE
(apprehensively)
Come on! Come on! I'm screwed. So
screwed.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET

A family of ANIMATED DUCKS cross within inches from the Metro's front bumper.

QUACK QUACK

One of the little ducklets struggles to keep pace with the others.

Joe scrambles out of his car and over to assists the little guy across the street.

He jumps back in his car and ZOooms away.

INT. FRANK'S COFFEE EMPORIUM - DAY

The place is pimped-the-frick-out with gaudy attributes signature to an exclusive Hollywood nightclub. But we aren't in Hollywood, and this ain't no fancy nightclub-- it's FRANKS COFFEE EMPORIUM

Joe barges through the main doors and negotiates his way through the throng of eclectic COFFEE PATRONS.

INT. FRANK'S SERVICE AREA

Joe takes his work-station behind the lavish, glass-fabricated service counter.

BECKY, 24, Joe's brooding co-worker, saunters by.

JOE

Hi, Becky. Like what you did with your hair.

(sotto)

Must not have heard me.

Something catches Joe's periphery....

TELEVISION SCREEN: A small, wiry ASIAN MAN, 53, pimped-out in a blue-lined tracksuit, a collection of gold necklaces and some diamond earrings. This is FRANK.

A gaggle of gorgeous, young WOMEN in dental floss, I mean bikinis, crowd around him.

FRANK

(thick accent)

....so if you big dawg, den git off porch and run to Frank's Coffee Emporium an git yershelf a tweet.

HOTTIE

You so fine, Mr. Phun!

FRANK

Please, call me Frank!

Frank launches into a toothy grin. WINKS at the camera.

BACK TO:

Joe stands frozen, mouth ajar.

BILLY (22), a buoyant Baristan, with Ted Kaczynski's grooming regimen, shimmies up, eyes redder than the devil's scrotum.

BILLY

(British accent)

Well it's a lovely day for you to grace us with your presence dear sir.

JOE

Not now, Billy.

BILLY

(normal voice)

We missedja last night.

(off Joe's look)

I Facebooked you.

FREEZE FRAME:

NARRATOR

Now Joe's not exactly what one would consider: socially pertinent.

INSERT: A social-networking profile page of Joe...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Three months into his social media experience he had an exiguous amount of acquaintances, one of whom, his parents....

INSERT: Profile page of large ASIAN FAMILY. Joe looks severely out of place as he's the only Caucasian amongst them.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Another, Billy....

INSERT: Profile page of Billy smoking from an apple, with a giddy smile on his face.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And a pending request to a girl he fancied...

INSERT: Profile page of TRISH WILLIAMS (20's). A friend-request box from Joe looms in the right-hand corner.

The cursor floats over to the DECLINE BOX and.... CLICKS

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

But he no longer likes her.

BACK TO SCENE:

JOE

Yeah. I'm not into the whole Facebook trend. Highly over-rated.

BILLY

You missed out on those killer brownies I toldja about.

(sneezes)

You know, the ones I was thinkin' about maybe making, but then didn't just 'cause, but then thought: shit I should probably maybe make 'em. You know? Those ones?

JOE

What about 'em?

BILLY

I made 'em.

Billy pulls out some Visine, SQUIRTS a drop in one eye.

JOE

That's great, Billy.

BILLY

Had a wicked-crazy blast, man.

SQUIRTS his other eye, puts it back in his pocket.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Almost had to rush B-little's stupid ass to the hospital. Dude like completely flipped, ain't never seen nothin' like it. But he finally spewed, so....it worked itself out.

JOE

If I had a nickel.

BILLY

You goda pickle?

JOE

Huh?

ANNOUNCED OVER PA:

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

(announcement)

Joe Dagala to the office. Joe Dagala to the office.

Joe deflates, he already knows what waits ahead. He removes his apron and trudges off to the back.

BILLY

(calling after)

Maybe next time.

Billy remains idle, too stoned to do much else.

His eyes linger over to a CUSTOMER, 30, male business-type, waiting in line to order.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Hey.

BUSINESS TYPE

Ah....hey.

BILLY
Hey, you like brownies?

INT. FRANK'S OFFICE

Think Albino tiger-skin rug, ostentatious furnishings and mahogany everywhere.

FRANK, the Asian from the commercial, kicks his head back, a look of ecstasy contorting his face.

His eyes are ANIMATED: unearthly, manic and bulbous.

He slams his palm to his forehead, EXCLAIMS in Asian dialect....

FRANK
Socket to me!

The intercom CRACKLES to life....

FEMALE (V.O.)
Mr. Phun, Joe's here to see you, sir.

Two yoked-out bodyguards, BURLY and LEAN & MEAN. 30's, flank Frank's left and right.

FRANK
C'nd em in.

The towering mahogany doors part like the Red Sea.

Joe shuffles in.

JOE
Sorry I'm late, Uncle Frank. But it's actually kind of a funny stor--

Frank's eyes flicker back to normal.

FRANK
--When my sister aska....

Burly stomps over to Joe, SNARLS and fits a Dunce Cap on Joe's head.

FRANK (CONT'D)
...me if you could work here I say: Naw, he too stupid, and lazy like retarded kitty whose belly full milk.

Joe fidgets with the hat.

FRANK (CONT'D)

But she your mom, I agree, I give try.
But twice, TWICE, you late now. I not
stand for dis insubordination. Last
person who twice late....

(hints with his eyes)

....he very, very sorry.

REVEAL: An ANIMATED severed head hangs mounted to the wall on a hunter's plaque. His mouth agape, eyes bugging, as if he was caught by surprise.

JOE

(startled)

Jesus, Frank!

FRANK

Silence! No more of dis insubordination,
or else....

Frank sweeps his crooked finger across his throat in a slitting motion.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Good. Now someone left category-five in
the mens room, third stall. You go clean
now.

Joe is about to walk out....

FRANK (CONT'D)

(reflecting)

There proverb in my country, I want you
remember, it got me where am today. It
go: Do your job rite, or die!

(then screams)

AHHH!

JOE

(freaked)

AHHH!

FRANK

Now go. Go clean poop.

Joe exits.

Frank retrieves a silver plater that caters to a mound of dark-black powder.

He begins to cut the granules into snortable rails.

INT. FRANK'S BACK AREA - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Joe pulls the Dunce cap off and trudges down the hall.

He passes by a wall stacked with cages concealing restless (ANIMATED) exotic animals.

Billy pops out between the cages, munching on a Danish.

BILLY

Shit! You startled me, bro.

(re: exotic animals)

Just got the cougar in this morning. I named him: Mr. Snuggles, cause he looks snuggly.

JOE

That's great, Billy. Hey, have you seen Frank's new commercial yet?

BILLY

Wasn't he supposed to use yours or something?

JOE

Well, you know how he gets, very particular about his promos. It's my own fault, really. I mean, just because he said: I'm gonna use your promo, doesn't necessarily mean he's actually gonna use it.

BILLY

His loss. Not sure if I told you this, but that horror short you made -- had me sleepin' with a knife for like a week. Shit you not, under my pillow. So don't feel you need to pander to lowlifes like him. Pander to better.

JOE

I'm just -- I guess I just thought working hard -- playing by the rules, I don't know, would yield some sort of tangible fruit. I didn't struggle to put myself through college so I could be --

BILLY

Devalued. Belittled. Degraded.

JOE

I knew you'd get it.

BILLY

I'm sorry, I was just spitin' out words.

JOE

That really isn't necessary.

Joe opens the cleaning-supply room's door.

BILLY

Things'll get better for ya, bro. -- Hey, where you goin'?

JOE

To cleanup the crap in stall three.

The door SLAMS closed, entombing Joe inside.

INT. MEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Joe enters, body wrapped in trash bags, hands sheathed in rubber dishwasher gloves and his mouth hidden behind a painter's mask.

He marches over to the third stall and kicks the door open.

JOE

(re: mess)

There is no God!

He hesitates, then reluctantly steps in.

The stall door swings closed.

A split second later, the stall door's thrust open and expels Joe back out into the main area.

He HEAVES.

He takes a deep breath and charges back in.

JOE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Seriously?! What could you have possibly been doing to get it that high?

BY MAIN DOOR: The bathroom door opens.

A pair of polished, black wingtips CLAP across the bathroom's tile surface and stop in front of a urinal.

A zipper CLICKS downward along the tread of an expensive pair of dress slacks.

A manicured hand, plush with gold rings, reaches into the pant-cave and pulls out --

INSIDE 3RD STALL: Joe scrubs away at the ungodly collage of human excrement.

Off screen: URINATING.

Off screen: a cell phone RINGS.

MAN (O.S.)

Hello?

(then)

What? What happened? She didn't tell me she was going to the zoo. She tell you? What do you mean, dead?!

BACK TO URINALS: The man taking a piss is LARS RYDER (40's), a dashing-dapper looking fella with a serrated poise and pointed tone.

LARS RYDER

Huh?

IN THE BACKGROUND: Joe's head slowly, clandestinely, peeks over the third stall's partition wall....

LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

I know what dead means, stupid. What I don't understand is what happened?

....Lars senses something and glares over at the 3rd stall. Joe quickly ducks, evading Lars' eyes.

INSIDE 3RD STALL: Joe strains to hover above the filth, but continues to eavesdrop.

LARS RYDER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(listening, then)

A freak accident at what zoo? I can't believe this! So you're basically telling me I don't have an assistant? -- No! I want you to say the words: You no longer have an assistant! That's just fucking perfect. Well get Jennifer on the phone. She needs to start scheduling interviews immediately. What do you mean vacation? -
- I know what vacation means, stupid.
For how long?

The urinal FLUSHES.

LARS RYDER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Well then get her a message. I suggest
 if you value your job, you make this a
 priority.

The sink turns on, the FLOW OF WATER drowns-out the
 remainder of Lars' conversation.

The water shuts off.

The Italian loafers CLACK out of the restroom.

Joe stealthfully peeks back over the stall.

Over Joe's head-- **DING** --an animated LIGHTBULB appears.
 It sparks to life, yielding an intense yellow glow.

INT. FRANK'S SERVICE AREA - DAY (LATER)

Joe's back behind the counter, reinvigorated.

He hands over a coffee to a female CUSTOMER (13).

The girl takes a sip, immediately SUPER-CHARGES, her hair
 turns purple, eyes triple in size (think Japanese Anime.)

JOE
 Have a Frank-abulous day!

She bolts off.

Billy strolls by on his way out to leave.

JOE (CONT'D)
 Still coverin' my shift tomorrow?

BILLY
 Ya can count on me, bro.
 (then, O.S.)
 Becky, need a ride?

JOE
 (next customer)
 Welcome to Frank's Coffee Emporium. Care
 to hear today's specials?

Samantha studies the menu board, then Joe.

SAMANTHA
 Hey, you look sorta familiar. We met?

JOE
I get that a lot. Vanilla features I guess.

SAMANTHA
Whatever.
(then)
I'll have the Frank's Mighty Meglo-licious Macchiato. With a dash of cinnamon.

JOE
One Frank's Mighty Meglo-licious Macchiato, comin' up.

Joe begins concocting her beverage.

SAMANTHA
Say, you guy's hiring by chance?

JOE
I can get you an application.

SAMANTHA
Yeah, that's not what I asked.

JOE
I'm not sure.

SAMANTHA
Will you find out?

JOE
(hesitant, but dutifully)
Sure. Umm, one sec.

Joe scurries off.

A licentious, douche bag of a MAN(27) slides up.

He high-beams Samantha lasciviously. Then....

DOUCHE BAG
Hey, pretty mama, you gotta burn permit?

SAMANTHA
Excuse me?

DOUCHE BAG
Cause you done set my crotch on fire.

SAMANTHA
Wow! Think that up all by your lonesome?

DOUCHE BAG
What's your name, pretty?

SAMANTHA
Nun-yah.

DOUCHE BAG
Nun-yah?

SAMANTHA
Nun-yah Business.

DOUCHE BAG
HA! That's a joke, right? You're a
joker. I like jokes.

Samantha pivots her back to him. Using the counter she leverages herself up to get a better view of where Joe has gone.

DOUCHE BAG (CONT'D)
Hey, what do you say you drop back down here and let me give you my number? I'll take you out. We can burn this city down together.

The douche bag reaches his hand out, rests it on hers.

DOUCHE BAG (CONT'D)
I'm not a bad person, but I goda wicked mind.

Samantha whirls about, plants her knee square in his crotch.

He GASPS, buckles to the floor.

SAMANTHA
(yelling)
Don't ever, ever touch me!

Joe returns.

JOE
Bad news. Looks like we're fully staffed.

DOUCHE BAG (O.S.)
My nads.

SAMANTHA
This sucks. What 'm I gonna do? I swear, I've applied to at least a hundred dozen places and still nothing.
(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Unemployment's expired. Can't afford rent. Stealing from bums -- I'm screwed. Ass up, face down, bite the pillow bitch, screwed.

JOE

Come on, don't say that. You know the saying: when one door opens another closes.

SAMANTHA

What?

JOE

Wait. When one door closes--

SAMANTHA

Save it. I canceled my subscription to Golden Book philosophies when I was nine.

Joe sits the coffee down on the counter.

JOE

That'll be six dollars and seventy-two cents.

SAMANTHA

(re: price)

Ouch.

(sarcastically)

You like add a shot of brandy or something?

JOE

I'm sorry but we don't carry a liquor license.

SAMANTHA

Never mind. How much?

JOE

Six dollars, seventy-two cents.

She digs deep in her pocket, retrieves a few crumpled bills and change. Mostly change. And mostly what she stole from the bum.

SAMANTHA

(re: homeless guy)

No wonder you're homeless.

Joe watches as her desperation grows ever more so as she counts through the pennies and nickels.

JOE

Maybe you should go ahead and fill out an application anyway. You know, just in case.

SAMANTHA

Incase of what? Didn't you just say you're fully staffed.

JOE

Goda hunch there's gonna be a vacancy soon.

SAMANTHA

What do you mean?

JOE

I think I'm gonna quit.

SAMANTHA

What? Why're you fuckin' whispering?

JOE

(little louder)

I said, I'm quitting. Well, hopefully.

SAMANTHA

Congratulations. I can't find a job and your about to quit one. Thanks for cheering me up, asshole.

He ponders something, then....

JOE

Do you know who Lars Ryder is?

SAMANTHA

Is that an actual question? Who the fuck doesn't know who Lars Ryder is? You'd literally have to live under a rock, or be some kinda retarded Spider Monkey.

(then)

I fuckin' love Lars; Rip U A New One, I'll Consume Your Soul-- only just the two best B-flicks ever.

JOE

Right? So I overheard 'em say: his assistant....

As Joe speaks, the words spill from his mouth in thick, bold print and float upward where they connect like Tetris blocks.

JOE (CONT'D)
died in some sorta, I don't know,
 freak zoo accident....

The entangled Tetris block of words turn to YouTube
 footage of:

CAPTIONED INSIDE BOX: PANDEMONIUM at a Zoo, as PINKY, the
 infamous polar bear, mauls a WOMEN (38) through the bars
 of its cage while panicked ONLOOKERS attempt to fend it
 off her using twigs. (This is actual real-life footage
 via Google.)

JOE (CONT'D)
or something....

-- **POOF** -- the image of Pinky's attack vanishes.

JOE (CONT'D)
and needs a replacement like asap.

Joe looks at her, smiling expectantly.

SAMANTHA
 I'm short seventy-eight cents. Can we
 just call it even?

JOE
 Don't you get it? No one knows! It just
 happened. Be shameful if I didn't
 utilize this tidbit of knowledge to my
 advantage.

SAMANTHA
 (patronizing)
 But by the time, and I'm saying this as a
 big IF, but by the time you are finally
 called in for an interview this "tidbit
 of info" you so called it will have
 spread like fuckin' herpes at a clambake.

JOE
 And in there lies the kicker, my dubious
 friend. The person heading up his
 interviews, her name's, Jennifer -- she's
 out on vacation so they can't get a hold
 of her. I'll just pretend she told me to
 come in. Perfect right? I feel kinda,
 dare I say, diabolical.

SAMANTHA
 Don't take this wrong way, 'cause you
 look like you might, but why the fuck are
 you telling me?

JOE

I don't know. Guess it's something-- I guess I know what it feels like to be on the down-and-out. But listen, you goda stay optimistic 'cause you never know when an opportunity will present itself. Who knows, one could be waiting around the corner just for you too.

Joe passes her her beverage.

JOE (CONT'D)

(re: drink)

On the house.

(then, re: application)

Oh, and don't wanna forget this.

(then)

Keep your head up. Remember, when there's rain the rainbow isn't far behind.

SAMANTHA

Thanks....

(reading his nametag)

....Joe.

She strolls off.

JOE

(next customer)

Hi. Welcome to Frank's Coffee Emporium. Would you like to hear --

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - DAY

Joe's '91 Geo Metro negotiates the morning traffic, pulls into a multi-level parking structure.

INT. LOBBY - OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Joe, dressed in Men's Warehouse, buy one get one free apparel, walks in carrying a manila folder. He's honestly never looked so confident.

He saunters over to the lobby's RECEPTIONIST(30's).

INT. FIFTH FLOOR - ELEVATOR - DAY

The elevator draws open spilling Joe out into Lars Ryder Production Headquarters.

The walls holster an assortment of off-beat B-Flick type horror movie posters.

Beautiful PEOPLE scramble about, busy in work.

Joe moseys over to the receptionist's desk.

He positions up behind another VISITOR who speaks to a female, prim and trim, RECEPTIONIST (23).

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

(to visitor)

I'll let Mr. Ryder know you dropped it off.

FEMALE VISITOR

Thank you.

She turns and CLICK-CLACKS away.

Joe squares his tie.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

Can I help you?

JOE

Hmm? No I got it, thank you though. Normally I would wear my clip-on but, lost it.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

Huh?

JOE

What?

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

No. Is there a reason why you're standing in front of my desk?

JOE

Oh! Yes. I'm here to see Mr. Ryder.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

And you're?

JOE

Joe. Joe Dagala.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

Do you have an appointment, Mr. Dagala?

JOE

(freezes, then)

I'm not sure -- Umm....I was supposed to--
 - Jennifer made -- I mean, I got this
 message from her yesterday -- Jennifer
 called me yesterday saying I should be
 here or I should come in for an
 interview.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

(incredulous)

Jennifer sent you?

Joe tugs at his collar.

A bead of sweat slithers down his forehead.

JOE

Yes. Yesterday.

He wipes it away.

JOE (CONT'D)

It was yesterday, by phone message --
 Voicemail. Said it was urgent.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

I'll let him know.

(pointing)

You can go ahead and have a seat.

JOE

(jokingly)

You mean like to take home?

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

Sir, I don't have time for games.
 Especially lame ones.

JOE

Sorry. Hey, I like your tattoo. Went
 with Tribal, I see.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

It's a birthmark.

JOE

'Course it is. So over there?

He points to the glassed-in waiting area.

She nods.

WAITING AREA

Joe walks over and sits on a plush sofa. He pulls out his cell phone and clicks it off.

He skims over some magazines, settles on 'PEOPLE.'

He idly thumbs through the first few pages, then sheepishly pivots so to watch Ms. Prim and Trim as she....

RECEPTION AREA

....speaks into her phone piece.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM
(into phone)
We already went through this, you never initiated a code.

Ms. Prim and Trim leers up and over at Joe.

WAITING AREA

Joe evades the inquisitive gaze, reverting his attention back to the magazine.

PRIM AND TRIM
(calling out)
Mr. Dagala?

JOE
(calling back)
Yes.

PRIM AND TRIM
He'll be with you in a moment.

JOE
Thank you.

He beams like the Gods are beginning to smile down on him.

He opens the manila folder revealing: his resume, a DVD and some other paperwork.

He closes it.

He spots a drinking fountain next to the elevator.

WATER FOUNTAIN

Joe strolls over, pushes the lever and takes a sip.

He pulls straight and wipes his mouth.

JOE'S POV: Strolling toward the elevator, is Mr. Ryder and none other than, Samantha, and she's dressed in a stylish pantsuit, sans glasses.

RETURN TO: Joe stands frozen, eyes like saucers, drowning in disbelief.

Mr. Ryder and Samantha shake hands. Samantha continues on her way to the elevator.

Samantha sees Joe, sheds a cut-throat smile.

She passes him. His eyes lock on her's.

The moment FREEZES

BEGIN FANTASY: The office, the world, crumbles away.

It's only Joe and Samantha now.

Samantha LAUGHS manically. A tail sprouts from her backside, gnarly horns from her head.

-- **POOSH** -- Midget DEMONS appear and CHEER her.

Devil-Sam slings a puppy (ANIMATED), with big, droopy puppy-dog eyes, from behind her back and dangles it before Joe.

PUPPY
(tiny voice)
Help me!

Devil-Sam chucks the doggie into a fiery pit.

PUPPY (CONT'D)
NOOOOooooo.....!

Joe, now clothed in only tattered skivvies, sinks to one knee.

JOE
WHY?! WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?!

He CALLS OUT in aguish!

JOE (CONT'D)
Mercy!

The LITTLE DEMONS start Riverdancing.

END FANTASY

Joe watches Samantha step into the elevator.

She sticks her hand out and gives him the middle finger before reeling it back in as the doors draw shut.

MR. LARS RYDER (O.S.)

Mr. Dagala?

Joe looks over at Mr. Ryder.

Mr. Ryder waves for Joe to follow.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

A distraught, sunken Joe enters, minus the manila folder.

He throws his keys on the floor and crosses over to answering machine. He hits the play button and disappears off screen.

ANSWERING MACHINE

You have two new message.

FRANK (V.O.)

(via Answering machine)

Where you?! It eight-thirty you no here!

Joe races up to the answering machine.

FRANK (V.O.)

Three strike now! You gone! You Gone!

The message ends in a flurry of Asian GIBBERISH.

JOE

Shi - oot!

ANSWERING MACHINE

Message two.

JOE'S MOM (V.O.)

(via answering machine)

Joe? I get off phone with Frank. He say you no show again. Why your cell phone off? Joe?

Joe hits the delete button.

He takes out his cell phone and turns it on....

SUPER: seventeen missed calls.

JOE

Great.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

JOE'S FRONT DOOR

Joe opens the door.

BILLY

Hey, man.

JOE

Dude! What flip?

Billy walks in.

Joe closes the door.

BILLY

Yeah, I came by to let you know, I'm not gonna make your a.m. shift.

JOE

You're telling me this now.

BILLY

Well.... I just woke up, dude. Couldn't tell you from my sleep, now could I? Could I? Do you think people can like communicate through their dreams? Like telegraphically?

JOE

Telepathically, and no I don't, Billy. I just got fired!

BILLY

For what man?

JOE

You not covering my shift man.

BILLY

I just said I couldn't.

JOE

Yeah, but Billy you should have told me like four hours ago.

BILLY

So like, what, you're fired?

JOE

Yeah, Billy. I'm fired.

BILLY

Man. That sucks. I'm sorry.

JOE

It's-- It's ok. Just-- just wish you coulda told me sooner.

BILLY

Next time.

JOE

There'll be no next time.

BILLY

Why?

JOE

I got fired!

BILLY

I just apologized, man! What more can I do? Geez.... you seem stressed.

Billy offers up a sack of weed.

JOE

I don't smoke.

BILLY

Mind if I do? Kinda bummed out here. Just got someone fired.

JOE

What 'm I gonna do? I should call Frank. I have to talk to him. I'll explain what happened and beg for my job back. Probably'll have to sacrifice a finger but it has to be done.

BILLY

Don't let 'em take your thumb, man. That's an important digit. It's the only thing that separates us from the animals. Ask if maybe they'll take like a toe instead.

JOE

Dude, you're not helping. I'm screwed.
What 'a I gonna do now? I'm gonna have
to start robbing bums.

Joe's cell phone RINGS: *"Hold on for one more day...."*

JOE (CONT'D)

(re: phone)

Great he's calling from a blocked number.
Alright, I can do this.

(to Billy)

Say something encouraging.

BILLY

Huh?

JOE

Never mind.

BILLY

Blame it on me. Wait don't. I wanna
keep my head.

JOE

Today I WILL....screw it.

(into phone)

Hello? -- This is him. -- Really? --
No, of course. What time? -- That's
great! Thank you so --

(to Billy)

She hung up. I GOT the job!

BILLY

You got your job back! See that was easy.
Told 'ja yous be frettin' over nothin'.

JOE

No. I got the job with Mr. Ryder. Well
technically, it's on a trial basis. But
I basically got it! Right? He liked my
reel. Shoot. See and I was worried
'cause this girl--

BILLY

Hey, that's great. Do you have any
pineapple-orange juice? I'm parched.
Oh! And some eggs? Maybe some waffles?
Oh! With those teeny-weeny chocolate
chips in 'em?

INT. LARS RYDER HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

The elevator door slides open. Joe emerges into the lobby schlepping a box of donuts and coffees.

He walks over to the receptionist, Ms. Prim and Trim, just as she sinks her teeth into a juicy green apple.

JOE

Hi. I'm Joe Dagala. I'm supposed to start with Mr. Ryder today.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

I know who you are, Mr. Dagala. I met you yesterday. He's in his office, the one in the far back.

Joe steps toward Mr. Ryder's office but spins around....

JOE

Almost forgot. Here you go. Brought you a coffee. Enjoy.

He hands her the cup, then continues to the office.

Behind him, Ms. Prim and Trim drops Joe's coffee into a trash receptacle and pick up a 16 ounce can of red bull.

INT. LARS RYDER'S OFFICE

Joe shuffles up to Lars' office and see Lars at his desk going over paperwork.

MR. LARS RYDER

There's no way I'm green-lighting his project.

Joe knocks twice on the office door and enters.

JOE

I brought us coffee and donuts. I wanted sausages-in-a-blanket but they were--

Joe turns and sees a coffee table displaying several cans of red bull and an assortment of scones, fruits and energy bars.

JOE (CONT'D)

Oh. I see--

Next to the table stands Samantha, beaming.

JOE (CONT'D)

(re: Samantha)

You're here.

(feining)

Yay!

MR. LARS RYDER

Samantha brought us red bulls, a fruit medley....

(to Samantha)

And what are those other little things called again?

SAMANTHA

Scones.

MR. LARS RYDER

And scones for everyone.

SAMANTHA

(to Lars)

You want the cinnamon scone or the blueberry energy bar?

MR. LARS RYDER

The cinnamon scone sounds tasty but I'll stick with the energy bar. What the heck.... give me the scone.

(to Joe)

Almost forgot you were here. Go ahead and put what you brought in the break room.

Joe shrugs out of Lars' office.

OUTSIDE LARS' OFFICE

Joe shuffles out of the office and treads on down the hall.

LARS (O.S.)

This scone's....de-licious.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)

Use a napkin silly.

INT. HEADQUARTER'S BREAK ROOM - DAY

Joe paces outside the door.

He finally enters.

MARTY, a disheveled, spastic thirty year-old with a short stocky build, a bushy Jew fro and bottle-thick glasses.

Marty waits for the coffee maker to finish brewing.

MARTY

Come on, can you possibly take any longer?

He checks his watch.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Great, thanks a lot. I'm officially late.

(then)

Why do you hate me?!

JOE

Umm, you're more than welcome to one of these.

Marty pivots.

MARTY

Hey, yeah. Thanks, man.

He snatches a cup.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I'm tellin' ya, off to a rough start today.

He dumps half the coffee into the sink, replaces it with a pint of hazelnut creamer and sweet n low..

MARTY (CONT'D)

And today of all days. Suppose to get some good news. EEK. Fingers crossed. My name's Marty.

Joe sits the donuts and coffee down.

JOE

Hi, Marty, I'm Joe.

They shake hands.

MARTY

First day?

JOE

Yeah. Mr. Ryder's assistant.

MARTY
 Good luck with that.
 (re: coffee)
 Oh....thanks again.

JOE
 Brought donuts too if you want one.

MARTY
 Day's gettin' better already.

He meticulously browses the selection, settles on one but quickly changes his mind.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 Was running late this morning, so I didn't have time for breakfast. Man you're a real life savor. Any jelly ones?

JOE
 Not sure.

MARTY
 Jelly are my favorite.

He does eenie-meenie-miney-moe with his figure and snatches one up, then grabs a second to take with, then wrangles a third.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 Just in case. Well, goda get back to work. See ya around, Matt.

JOE
 Joe.

MARTY
 Joe.

Marty scampers away, balancing his donuts on his beverage.

MARTY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (yelling)
 Free donuts in the break room! Hey everyone, this Gumby-lookin' dude brought donuts!

INT. LARS RYDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe enters.

Lars dictates a message as Samantha types it out on a laptop.

MR. LARS RYDER

Under these circumstance I regret to inform you that we will not be pursuing this project. I appreciate all your efforts and wish you future success with the placement of your project elsewhere.

(to Joe)

Have a seat.

(to Samantha)

Go ahead and send it, but add me to the BCC. OK lets get started. Did you send it?

SAMANTHA

It's sent.

MR. LARS RYDER

Good. So you're probably asking yourselves: why are we both here when there's only one opening?-- Haven't got the BCC yet.

SAMANTHA

Might take a moment, sir.

MR. LARS RYDER

Got'cha.

(then)

Well that's a great question. Due to the bizarre unexpectedness that recently took the life of my beloved assistant -- reiterating the importance one should never ever wander too close to the polar beer cage -- I am regrettably forced to fill the vacancy -- Okay, just got the BCC. Thank you, Samantha -- And I only have fifty-eight hours left before the 'Tyrant' premiere on Friday, so I assume you can see my predicament.

(--BURP--)

Excuse me. I'm looking for someone who can step up to the plate and score a touchdown. Now I have no doubt that each of you are qualified -- Joe with your educational background and Samantha, your loo -- particular skill set, I'd be remise not to give you each at least a shot.

Ms. Prim and Trim pokes her head around the door.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM
Mr. Ryder, sir? I apologize for
interrupting but Stacy's here.

MR. LARS RYDER
Shit.
(to Joe & Sam)
Alright, this'll just take a minute.

Mr. Lars Ryder stands, readjusts his shirt and tie then
heads out.

The two sit in silence, then....

JOE
So.... any luck on the job front?

SAMANTHA
What's your point, Mitch?

JOE
My name's Joe, and I didn't try to make
you feel better so you'd come ninja my
plan.

(then)
What about-- I thought you were gonna
fill out the Frank's application?

SAMANTHA
Now why the fuck would I apply to some
crappy-ass coffeehouse gig when there's a
perfect opportunity right here?

JOE
I can't believe I actually felt sorry for
you.

SAMANTHA
You felt sorry for me?

She SCOFFS.

JOE
Gave you a free coffee. That was six
bucks outta my pocket.

SAMANTHA
How incredibly kind of you. You're like
Jesus.

(then)
Nice outfit by the way. Really brings
out the ugly in your face. The job's
mine, butthead.

JOE
Over my dead body.

SAMANTHA
Funny -- you just read my mind.

JOE
Yeah? We'll just see about that.

SAMANTHA
I just realized something -- you have a
little girl's voice.

MR. LARS RYDER (O.S.)
Tell 'em that's fine, I'll see him on
Thursday.

JOE
You have -- a girl's -- voice.

SAMANTHA
Nice stammer.

Mr. Ryder enters, sits behind his desk.

MR. LARS RYDER
Now. Where was I? Shit, forgot.

JOE
Why we're both here.

MR. LARS RYDER
Right. Simply put, I'm in the mood for an
experiment. A contest so to speak. Which
ever one of you impresses me, can dig in
and kick some shit, will become my new
assistant. Deal?

SAMANTHA
I love challenges.

JOE
I live for them.

MR. LARS RYDER
Great! Excellent! Like the attitudes.
(covered BURP)
Samantha, good call on the scones.
Simply delicious.

A BOX OF TEXT-- **DING** --appears with SAMANTHA and JOE's
names indented inside. The counter ticks to indicate a
current score of: Samantha: 01 - Joe: 00

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

Now....

The counter-- **POOF** --vanishes

INT/EXT. JOE'S CAR - 405 FREEWAY - DAY (LATER)

Joe's hands are at ten and two.

MR. LARS RYDER (V.O.)

....what I need today: Samantha, I need you to pick up the reels from our warehouse and deliver them to the Sunset Theater for threading. I'll also need an update on decorations for the after party. My man, Joe, my mother will be arriving at LAX shortly. I will need you there to pick her up and bring her back here.

BACK TO:

INT. LARS RYDER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Lars stands, his hands pressed against the top of the desk, leans in toward Samantha and Joe.

MR. LARS RYDER

Oh, yeah, you only have two hours.

JOE/SAMANTHA

Two hours? Is that even possible?

MR. LARS RYDER

Wouldn't be much of a challenge if it was!

(he claps once)

Time's money, and money's God, so lets get busy!

BACK TO:

EXT. JOE'S CAR - 405 FREEWAY - DAY

The piece-of-shit Metro exits the freeway, via ramp, toward W. Century Boulevard/ LAX.

EXT. LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

The Metro veers onto the ARRIVALS ramp.

INT. ARRIVAL WAITING LOBBY - LAX - DAY

Joe enters. Checks his watch....

A **COUNTDOWN BOX** appears: **1 hr:26min** remain until deadline.

INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

A HEADSHOT (picture) of Joe hangs pinned to the wall.

A dart (ANIMATED) slices though the air, strikes Joe in the forehead.

Frank grabs two more darts (ANIMATED) and chucks them simultaneously....

The darts smack Joe in both eyes.

Burly enters, ushering Billy alongside.

BILLY

If this concerns the Danish I snuck the other day....I swear, man, I found it by the trash can. So technically it wasn't stealing.

FRANK

Mr. Billy. Please, have seat.
(then)
No. Sit over there, please.

BILLY

(re: chair)
It's like one of 'em massage chairs I've seen at the mall.

FRANK

Massage chair? Right, massage chair.
Please, sit -- sit.

Billy straddles the contraption.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Go ahead an relax, rest your head on the--
there you go. Perfect.

Billy faces the floor, his neck, perfectly exposed.
Frank walks up behind Billy. Burly hands Frank a sword.

BILLY

And here I was -- thinkin' you were mad or something. Okay, so I might have taken it from the kitchen....

Frank gauges his swing from Billy's neck.

BILLY (CONT'D)

....but I knew you wouldn't care....

Frank raises the sword.

BILLY (CONT'D)

....Like I was tellin' Joe yesterday: You're nota bad guy. Just misunderstood.

Frank breaks the MOMENTUM mid-swing. The blade an inch from Billy's neck.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I blame it on your silly accent. You might wanna give that Rosetta Stone a try. I've heard good things 'bout it.

FRANK

You talk to Joe?

BILLY

Yeah. Yesterday. Will lotion be involved? Should I like -- maybe I should take my shirt off. Please tell me this includes a happy ending?

FRANK

What he say?

BILLY

He was talkin' all this smack 'bout you. I was like: Don't be talkin' smack about my best friend! I'z 'bout to punch 'em in the eye but he gets this call about his new gig at Ryder Productions. So I just let it go with a warning.

(then)

I carry the majority of my stress between my shoulders so if the masseur could start there-- that'd be great.

Frank FUMES, nods at Burly. Burly grabs Billy and manhandles him toward the door.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Hey! What about my massage? Man, you....

Burly tosses him out.

Over Frank's head-- **DING** --an animated LIGHTBULB appears. It sparks to life, yielding an intense RED glow, then SHATTERS into flames.

INT. ARRIVAL WAITING LOBBY - LAX - DAY

Countdown reads: ONE HOUR and THIRTEEN minutes remaining.

Joe stands with purpose, holding a sign for MRS. RYDER. He pulls out a photo of a feeble old lady posing with Mr. Ryder.

He looks up-- there she is, MRS. RYDER, older than time, she's assisted by SECURITY (30).

JOE

Mrs. Ryder?

MRS. RYDER

Huh? Speak up.

JOE

Mrs. Ryder, my name is , Joe. Your son asked me to come and pick you up.

The security escort hands Joe her bag, a dog-caddie, and turns to walk off, but not before Mrs. Ryder swats his ass.

SECURITY

(to Joe)

She's all yours.

JOE

Mrs. Ryder if you could please follow me I can take you to your son.

MRS. RYDER

You're not my son.

JOE

I'm not, but I can bring you to him if you like. We just need to go out this way. No. This way Mrs. Ryder. There you go.

Joe lovingly escorts her, but they move at a snails pace.

JOE (CONT'D)

So how was your flight?

MRS. RYDER

Huh?

Joe looks at his watch. The counter continues to tick down.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - LAX - DAY

Joe helps Mrs. Ryder inch along.

Counter is now down to FORTY-FIVE minutes and ticking.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - LAX - DAY

Joe assists Mrs. Ryder into the Metro's front seat.

Counter reads: THIRTY-EIGHT minutes.

Joe scrambles for the driver seat.

EXT. LARS RYDER HEADQUARTERS PARKING - DAY

Counter: THIRTEEN minutes...

Joe's metro swerves into the parking entrance, clips some bushes, sends birds and feathers scattering like confetti, veers into the parking structure.

MOMENTS LATER: Joe and Mrs. Ryder exit from the structure.

JOE

I bet you're excited to see your son.

MRS. RYDER

You're not my son.

JOE

I said, I bet you're.... Oops, we have a car coming.

The car slows as it passes.

MRS. RYDER

What?

Samantha's in the driver's seat.

JOE

(re: Samantha)

Shi - oot!

MRS. RYDER

Where are we?

Samantha mad-dogs Joe.

The car guns it over to a parking spot.

Samantha pops out and darts across the parking lot.

JOE

Okay, Mrs. Ryder, I need you to do something for me....

INT. LOBBY - OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Samantha runs in and over up to the elevator just as the door slides closed.

SAMANTHA

Shit!

She turns, heads for the stairwell.

INT. HEADQUARTER'S LOBBY

The Stairwell door swivels open, Samantha spills out. She smiles confidently, and makes her way down the hall, past the....

Elevator, it's door draws opens.

Reveal: Joe wears Mrs. Ryder like a backpack, piggy-back style.

A stunned Samantha stares at a HEAVING Joe.

SAMANTHA

Seriously?

JOE

I told you I wasn't--

Samantha Three-Stooges slaps him in the face, then bolts.

JOE (CONT'D)

Hey!

Joe recovers and quickly races after.

The two race down the hallway for Lars' office.

MRS. RYDER
YEE-HAWWWW!!!

Mrs. Ryder digs her heels deep into Joe's side.

JOE
My kidney!

The heel on Samantha's stiletto snaps, she stumbles.

Joe's pumps his legs with all he's got. He pulls parallel to the wobbling Samantha, only yards away now from Lars' door.

Joe powers ahead, overtaking the lead spot. Samantha instinctively sweeps her foot out, snagging Joe's shin.

INT. LARS RYDER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Joe flounders past, trying to regain his balance. Mrs. Ryder SHRIEKS with excitement and thrill.

Samantha turns the corner, calm and collect, and enters to find Lars' occupied with paperwork.

SAMANTHA
Mr. Ryder. Here are the updates you requested.

She hands him some invoices.

TIMER blinks down to triple ZERO's as....

Joe enters with a wild-eyed Mrs. Ryder.

MR. LARS RYDER
(to Joe)
You're late....!
(then)
Mom, What- what happened to your....?

Her clothes are disheveled, wig off tilt.

MRS. RYDER
I rode me a stallion!

MR. LARS RYDER
Come. Lets get you straightened out.

Lars gives Joe a suspecting glare as he guides his mother out of the office.

SCORECARD appears: SAMANTHA: 02 - JOE: 00

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)
Have you eaten today?

Mrs. Ryder gives Joe a wink as she shuffles out.

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)
There's this great place....

Joe seethes.

JOE
What's wrong with you? You could've seriously hurt her.

SAMANTHA
Piece'a friendly advice, Matt--

JOE
It's, Joe.

SAMANTHA
Piece'a friendly advice, Jim. Be a good little boy and quit now. I'd hate to see you get hurt.

She rustles his hair, then trots out of the office saddled to her high horse.

INT. CAFATERIA - OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

The cafeteria is full with the bustle of the LUNCH CROWD.

Joe sits, crestfallen. With his fork, he picks at his Cup-O-Noodles.

MARTY (O.S.)
Hey, Donuts!

Joe spins around.

MARTY (CONT'D)
This way....Over here.

Joe spins the other way.

Marty sits a few tables away.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Come keep me company.

Joe gathers his Cup-O-Noodles and trudges over.

MARTY (CONT'D)

You okay? Lookin' a tadbit peaked?

JOE

Just having a rough day.

MARTY

Talk about a rough day-- I just learnt Mr. Dickface passed on my project.

Joe sits.

JOE

Project?

MARTY

I'm a writer, Joe. That's why I even work at this stupid shithole. I was hired to help the bastard write Tyrant, but did I get a writing credit for my efforts?

(off Joe's expression)

No, Donuts. I didn't. So the prick promised to green light my script as his next feature to make up for it, then pulls this on me.-- I need to stop thinkin' about before I go James Holmes in this bitch.

(then)

What about you? What makes you wanna work for a jerkoff like, L--ars?

JOE

Well I haven't exactly got the job yet- But I'm hoping it will develop into more of a producing roll.

MARTY

What do you mean?

JOE

There's this other girl bidding for the spot. He has me and her competing for the position.

MARTY

Not that....

(he cups his boobs)

....that one?

JOE

You meet her yet?

INT. MARTY'S OFFICE - DAY (EARLIER)

Marty finishes the tedious task of collating a script, he beams with accomplishment.

He picks up the stack of pages and marches into....

HALLWAY

Marty steps out into the hallway, script in hand.

Samantha stomps by...

MARTY

Hi there. I'm....

Without missing a beat, Samantha swats the script out of Marty's hands. The pages scatter across the floor, as Samantha continues down the hall, unfazed.

BACK TO:

MARTY (CONT'D)

Briefly.

JOE

Yeah, well, you might be seeing a lot more of her.

MARTY

You seem like a nice guy, donuts and although I'll admit that I'd much rather ogle her voluptuous breast for forty hours a week than your meek, almost, Ratatouille lookin' face-- I'm gonna be straight with you.

Marty take a large bite from his burrito, then....

MARTY (CONT'D)

(still chewing)

You seem like a nice guy and that's great an all, but nice guy's don't work in this industry. If you wanna work here then you have to be cut-throat, a take-no-prisoners type. Like if Rambo and Chuck Norris fucked and by some sordid anomaly in procreation had a child-- you need to be that fuckin' kid.

JOE

Yeah. Maybe.

MARTY

No maybes, Joe. Just, is'es. Sad? Yes-
But very true. Just the nature of the
biz, I guess. Don't miss out on potential
because you're afraid to step on some
toes. Anyway, if you need any help, don't
hesitate to ask.

JOE

Thanks, but I think I'm gonna travel the
high-road on this one.

MARTY

Suit yourself.

JOE

I think she's just had a rough go at it
lately.

MARTY

Yeah, life must really suck when you're
so fucking attractive.-- You're a
producer, a? I have this friend who just
wrapped on a short of mine. We're
watching it over at his place tomorrow--
you should come. You can tell me what ya
think --

Joe's phone rings....*"Hold on for one more...."*

JOE

(into phone)

Hello? -- Okay -- No I can be right
there.

INT. LOBBY - BEVERLY HILLS HOTEL - DAY

Joe moseys in through the front doors of the lavish
Beverly Hills Hotel.

He spots an anxious Mr. Ryder and a consoling Samantha
waiting in the lobby and heads over.

Samantha notices Joe, her eyes narrow, she SNARLS.

INT. ELEVATOR - HOTEL - DAY

The three huddle as the elevator lifts upwards.

MR. LARS RYDER

We got a serious situation on our hands
here.

(MORE)

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

My largest investor is planing to pull his financing on my next project. Samantha, I need you to work your magic for me. We can't leave that room until we've convinced him otherwise.

SAMANTHA

I'll have him tripling his money in no time, sir.

She hikes her breasts.

MR. LARS RYDER

That's my girl. Joe if all else fails I'll need you to take one for the team.

JOE

Huh?

MR. LARS RYDER

Hurt yourself. Trip over something, break a foot, arm, your neck-- I don't give a fuck how you do it but do it so we can threaten lawsuit. You're a clever boy, you'll figure something out.

JOE

Is that really necessary?

MR. LARS RYDER

Don't disappoint me, Dagala.

Samantha eyes Joe with a smirk.

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

Is my tie straight?

Lars squares his tie off and draws it snug against his neck.

INT. MR. PENA'S SUITE - DAY

Lars loosens his tie. Sweat beads down his forehead.

ASIAN MAN (O.S.)

(heavy accent)

--and because your numbers were considerably dismal at best....

We're inside Mr. Pena's lavish hotel suite.

The voice emanates from a diminutive Asian man with precise posture and stoic tone. This is, THE INTERPRATOR (48).

THE INTERPRATOR
on your last feature, Mr. Pena has found it unwise to continue his investments at this time.

MR. PENA (62) Asian, wise and mythical, sits on the plush couch.

A beautiful MODEL (20) lies splayed across the top of the dinning-room table in a culinary-inspired ensemble.

MR. LARS RYDER
 If you could just explain to him--

THE INTERPRATOR
 There need be no more explanations, Mr. Ryder.

Lars looks at Samantha.

SAMANTHA
 (to Mr. Pena)
 You look tense.

She sashay/belly dances over to Mr. Pena, her cleavage clearly on display.

Samantha moves in to give Mr. Pena a shoulder massage.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 Bet I could limber you up.

The interpreter steps in, blocks her off and nudges her away.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 What are you doing!

THE INTERPRATOR
 No touch him.

SAMANTHA
 It's just a massage!

THE INTERPRATOR
 No touch.

Samantha and the Interpreter begin to shove, then scuffle.

THE INTERPRATOR (CONT'D)

No you, no touch!

SAMANTHA

Ow-wah! That hurts!

Mr. Ryder sees his plan's falling apart before his eyes, nods for Joe to commence with option #2.

Joe pretends not to see this.

Lars shoulder-checks Joe.

Joe stumbles, catches his balance and looks at Lars.

Lars hints with his eyes: "NOW".

Joe pans the room for a spot to carry out his devious objective.

Then-- **DING** --the word: **IDEA** appears over Joe's head in bold, blocked font.-- **POOF** --It disappears.

JOE

Let me try to talk to him.

MR. LARS RYDER

You speak China Man?

JOE

No. But that's okay-- he's not Chinese.

MR. LARS RYDER

(incredulous)

Really?

Lars does a double take.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)

Stop pushing me!

THE INTERPRATOR (O.S.)

You bad. No touch.

MR. LARS RYDER

Shit. I just sent him a Handmade Lucky Knot for the Chinese New Year.

JOE

Sir, I know I can get him to reconsider.

THE INTERPRATOR (O.S.)

AAUGH!!

Joe approaches Mr. Pena, timid as a mouse. The interpreter wrestles with Samantha.

JOE
 (sotto)
 I will. I am. I can
 (sincerely, with conviction)
 Mister Pena. Dong luck E song song mut.

SUBTITLED: Mister Pena. It is a great honor that I have very, very tiny penis.

The interpreter breaks free from Samantha and looks over at Joe, mouth drooped, dumbfounded.

JOE (CONT'D)
 (reassuringly)
 To bing bong A kong so tong ef sucky.

SUBTITLED: I like to anal rape small furry woodland creatures.

Joe clears his throat, then...

JOE (CONT'D)
 (final plea)
 Slippy hong, ebauch mool, hekie take E
 tong eh lung.

SUBTITLED: Please, I invite you, if you so choose, to stick your finger up my tight virgin butthole.

Mr. Pena and the Interpreter look at one another, confused, repulsed.

MR. PENA
 Cooshie?

THE INTERPRATOR
 Okie my ya.

The two burst into LAUGHTER.

MR. LARS RYDER
 (harsh whisper)
 What the fuck did you just say to him?
 Why are they laughing like that?

JOE
 I don't know-- Unless--

MR. LARS RYDER
 Joe if you fucked this up--

MR. PENA
Tong E bong knog lee.

THE INTERPRATOR
Mr. Pena say: Okay. He extend his
decision until after premiere.

Mr. Pena points at Joe and wiggles his pinky (mimicking a
tiny penis) then erupts in riotous LAUGHTER.

MR. PENA
Chee to Chee.

THE INTERPRATOR
(to Joe)
He say: You funny. He like.

JOE
Huh?

MR. LARS RYDER
Great. You won't be disappointed, Mr.
Pena.

MR. PENA
Tee bo kee.

THE INTERPRATOR
Mr. Pena say: You go now.

MR. LARS RYDER
Can do.
(to Joe and Samantha)
Lets go.

INT. HALLWAY - HOTEL - DAY

Lars walks Joe down the hall with his arm around Joe's
shoulder.

MR. LARS RYDER
Excellent work, Joe. Where on earth did
you learn to speak like that?

JOE
My Uncle taught me some phrases that I
thought could help.

MR. LARS RYDER
Well I don't know what you said or how
you said it, but you coulda single-
handedly just saved my next feature, not
to mention, career, from nixedville.
(MORE)

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

(then)

I knew I saw that certain something
special in you just waiting to be
utilized. You got pizazz, kid.

SCORECARD appears and ticks: SAMANTHA 02 - JOE 01

Joe soaks in the revelry.

JOE

Thank you, Mr. Ryder.

MR. LARS RYDER

No-- Thank you, Mr. Dagala. I goda
feeling I might have just found my new
main man-- Mr. Joe!-- Samantha....

(hands her a receipt)

....I need you to pick up my dry
cleaning.

SCORECARD ticks: SAMANTHA 02 - JOE 02

Samantha notices the scorecard, seethes, her angry eyes
(ANIMATED) explode into torrid flames of rage.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The front door swings open, and Joe strolls in with a
whistle in his step, singing.

JOE

*Some day somebody's gonna make you want to--
Turn around and say goodbye--*

He closes the door. Darkness retains the room.

JOE (CONT'D)

*Until then baby are you going to let them-- Hold
you down and make you cry....*

Joe FLICKS the light switch.... nada.

JOE (CONT'D)

(shrouded in darkness)

Perfect.

Joe's FOOTSTEPS cross the room.... CLICK.... Desk lamp
flutters to life, casting a shallow glow throughout the
space.

Joe flanks the desk. He turns around, SHRIEKS.

JOE (CONT'D)
Cheez-sauce, Frank.--

Frank sits on the futon, legs crossed, eyes (ANIMATED) bloated and black. He sips a cup of his coffee.

JOE (CONT'D)
--What're you doing -- How'd-- how'd you get in here?

FRANK
Well, well, well, who do we half here?

Miss. Jolie swims with anger in her tank. She'd kick Frank's ass if she only wasn't a fish.

JOE
Listen, Uncle Frank-- I'm sorry I didn't call-- I--

FRANK
Silence! I told you-- I say: no more insubordination. And you insubordinate. I warn you of consequence. You no listen. Now must pay for your dishonor.

Frank yields his sword, licks the blade sinisterly.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Your head fit very nice on my wall of shame....

KNOCK. KNOCK.

Joe inches his way over to answer the door.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Where you go?

JOE
Uncle Frank, you're over-reacting again. I swear, I was going to call you. Just put the sword down and I'll explain everything....

Joe opens the door, reveal Billy, slant-eyed and giddy.

BILLY
Dude, check this out-- I just witnessed the greatest thing ever.

Joe turns back to Frank, but he's gone.

BILLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I thought for sure this dude was dead,
 like he just took a shot to the face
 that'd kill most people, like BAM....

Joe sees the window's open.

BILLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
He was hit so fuckin' hard-- like he
 nearly went through a brick wall. I shit
 you not-- a brick wall! I was like,
 DAMN...!

Joe runs up to the window and looks out.

INT./EXT. JOE'S APARTMENT WINDOW - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Joe looks out and sees Frank, who lies flat on his back
 on the sidewalk, writhing in pain.

BILLY (O.S.)
Dude, you just got jacked the EFF up!
 Honestly thought: that's it, this fool's
 dead.

Lean & Mean (Frank's other bodyguard, remember him?)
 Stands overtop Frank trying to help him onto his feet.

FRANK
 UGH, my back. You suppose to catch me!

LEAN & MEAN
 Sorry, Mr. Frank. I didn't know you were
 gonna jump.

FRANK
 You stupid!

BILLY (O.S.)
 But no-- not him. Not He-man. He-man....

Lean & Mean helps Frank into the waiting car.

BILLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
gets up, does his Power of Greyskull
 thing and tears into Skeletor like no
 one's business. POW-- POW-- BOOM-- BING
 take that Skeletor! You shoulda seen
 Skeletor's face, man....

The car jets off down the street.

BILLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
....priceless.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT

Joe turns back to Billy.

BILLY
It was awesome.
(then)
You ready to go yet?

JOE
Yeah.

The two make for the front door.

BILLY
Before I forget-- I think Frank's like
pissed at you, man. I mean, more so than
usual.

JOE
(sarcastic)
Ya think?

BILLY
I don't know. Could be wrong-- what's
with the third degree?

JOE
No I-- Forget it.

BILLY
So anyway, Skeletor's like....

They exit.

INT. LOBBY - LARS RYDER HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Joe struts along through the lobby.

Samantha emerges and stops him. She is holding a baker's
box in her hands.

SAMANTHA
There you are. Listen, I owe you an
apology for the way I've acted. So I
apologize.
(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

It was uncalled for and if you allow me -- I'd like us to start over, let bygones be bygones -- start fresh. Even though I know I don't deserve your forgiveness, I hope you will.

JOE

That's so considerate of you, Samantha. Of course I forgive you. -- See I knew somewhere, hidden deep down, there was this lovable, huggable little girl just waiting to escape.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, sure. -- Here I brought these this morning....

She opens the box, revealing two delectable MUFFINS.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

....I'd like to offer you one as a peace offering.

(off Joe's look)

Here.

She takes a bite of one.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

See? Didn't poison them, Joe. I'm a different person now. You can trust me-- I want us to play fair.

JOE

Thanks, Samantha. That's so sweet of you.-- They really do look delicious.

SAMANTHA

You should eat it now so it doesn't stale.

Joe eats.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

I think if we work together he might even hire us both-- you know, as a team.

JOE

Mmm-- Fresh.

Samantha smiles.

SAMANTHA

Happy you like.
(then)
Friends?

JOE

Friends.

Joe invites a hug.

Samantha reluctantly hugs him.

SAMANTHA

You're the best.

Joe sniffs her hair, soaks in its fragrance.

INT. LARS RYDER'S OFFICE - LATER

Joe sits alongside Samantha, both face Lars.

MR. LARS RYDER

Did we get a final tally?

SAMANTHA

(checking her notes)

It looks like two hundred and thirty-two.
Joe suggested that we provide gift bags.

MR. LARS RYDER

I like the initiative, Joe. Have Rebecca start on those right away. Any word from Mister Sayner?

JOE

He said: He'd have to check with Tyler but he's pretty sure he can fit in, as long as the aforementioned changes are made to the script. Samantha proposed we try and schedule a meeting when he's at the premiere tomorrow.

MR. LARS RYDER

Great idea, Samantha. And I'll have Billy start on those rewrites. I like the team work, guys. The next issue we need to discuss is-- Is everything okay, Mr. Dagala?

Joe rubs at the arms of his chair, feverishly.

JOE

Huh?

He catches himself, stops.

JOE (CONT'D)

No. I'm fine.

MR. LARS RYDER

Mr. Pena should be arriving a little late--
- so we will need...

JOE'S POV:

Lars' eyes morph into: (ANIMATED) rotating wheels of multi-colors, like the panels in a kaleidoscope. His lips: anamorphic, cartoon'esque.

BACK TO:

Joe rubs his eyes-- everything returns to normal.

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

...to start a few minutes later than previously planned.

SAMANTHA

Joe and I talked about this earlier and thought it might be a...

JOE'S POV:

Samantha's tongue: (ANIMATED) elongates, shoots across and coils around Lars' neck, constricts, pops his head off. -- **POP** --

BACK TO:

Joe rubs his eyes again-- everything returns back to normal.

Joe shifts in the chair, with unease.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

....good idea if we had you say a few words before hand-- That should give us some time to compensate for Mr. Pena's late arrival.

MR. LARS RYDER

That's a great idea, guys. I think if we-- Mr. Dagala, that is extremely distracting.

Joe's rubbing, okay, molesting his own chest in a sexual manner.

JOE
I-- I apologize.

Joe looks over at Samantha. Samantha looks at Joe.

SAMANTHA
(slow, deep, trippy)
Wh--at's wro-----ng, Jo-----e?

JOE'S POV:

Her face: (ANIMATED) begins to melt, bubbles, shifts around like ooze in a Lava Lamp.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Ar-----e y-----ou fee---lin-g o-----kay?

Her arms: (ANIMATED) morph into tree branches, sprouting leaves. Her hair, vipers.

MR. LARS RYDER (O.S.)
(slow, deep, trippy)
I--s th---ere a prob----lem h---ere?

Joe looks at Lars.

Lars: (ANIMATED) sprouts four extra arms, ala. the goddess Shiva.

A vibrant, colorful butterfly emerges from Lars' mouth and flies over, up to Joe.

BUTTERFLY
(in French)
You're not looking so well. Must have been something you ate.

Joe swats at it-- **POOF** --the butterfly vanishes.

JOE
I-- I need--

BACK TO:

Samantha and Lars stare blankly at Joe who's now curled up on his chair like an scared infant.

JOE (CONT'D)
I think I need a moment.

MR. LARS RYDER
Jesus man, we're in the middle of something. Can't it wait?

JOE'S POV:

Tunnel vision, Mr. Ryder appears a thousand miles away, literally across a desolate wasteland.

JOE

I just need some fresh air.

MR. LARS RYDER

Why are you shouting at me?!

BACK TO:

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

For Pete's sake, pull yourself together, son.

JOE

Colors.

MR. LARS RYDER

Huh?

JOE

Yes.

MR. LARS RYDER

If you're not back here after lunch--
I'll consider it your resignation.

Joe bows, scurries out.

Lars looks at Samantha. Samantha shrugs her shoulders.

SAMANTHA

Guess he's caving under the pressures of the position.

(then, humble)

Can't say I'm surprised. Between you and me -- I've done all I can to help this poor guy out, but-- I mean, I wanna do more but it's hard -- it's hard not to feel sorry for someone so pathetic.

Lars' face says it all:

SCORECARD appears, ticks: SAMANTHA 03 - JOE 02

INT. LOBBY - LARS RYDER HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Billy exits the elevator. Marty, concerned, waits by the receptionist's desk.

INT. BATHROOM - LARS RYDER HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Marty enters with Billy.

MARTY

He's been hiding in there since I called....

Marty points at one of the stalls.

MARTY (CONT'D)

....said you'd know what to do.

BILLY

(reassuringly)

You did the right thing, Matt.

MARTY

Marty. Oh, and he keeps rambling on about something to do with butterflies.

BILLY

Shit, not the butterflies. Okay. What ever happens here needs to stay here, got it? And we need to remain calm, no sudden movements.

INT/EXT. BATHROOM STALL

Billy open the stall's door, finds Joe collapsed over the toilet.

BILLY

Hey there, buddy-pal.

Joe flinches like a scared bunny at the sound of Billy's voice.

JOE

So many butterflies.

Billy whips out a syringe and vial.

BILLY

Don't be scared, everything's gonna be okay.

He fills the syringe with the clear liquid from the vial.

JOE

The butterflies.

BILLY

I know-- I know. I'll take care of those pesky little butterflies. I'm here to help you, Joe. So just relax and--

Billy SCREAMS in BATTLE CRY....

BILLY (CONT'D)

AGGGHHHHH!

....charges in at Joe like a wide-eyed Banshee, yielding the syringe like a weapon.

The stall's door swivels closed, entombing the two.

INT. TOMMY'S RESTURANT - DAY

The three sit at a table, empty plates before them. Joe's looking better, more color to him anyway.

MARTY

What 'a bitch.

JOE

I can't believe I was stupid enough to for it.

BILLY

Don't beat yourself up, man. You just have this tendency to look for the best in people and sometimes--

MARTY

--Sometimes it bitch slaps you back in the face in the form of a delicious fuckin' muffin.

BILLY

You didn't happen to save any, did you?

JOE

Sorry, man.

BILLY

Shucks. Not even a crumby morsal?

Joe nods "no."

MARTY

You needa stop pussy-footin around with this chick, Joe.

(MORE)

MARTY (CONT'D)

Cause she sure as hell ain't returning you the favor.-- Do you even want the job? 'Cause you sure as hell ain't actin' like it.

JOE

Of course. Not to mention, how screwed I am if I don't get it.

MARTY

Then start acting like it, donuts, for God's sakes, start actin' like it.

BILLY

Wait, man. You won't be screwed-- I told 'ja you could just move in with me.

JOE

You live with your parents, Bill.

BILLY

Yeah. But the basement's all mine, bro. Like having my own little apartment down there. Microwave even. Come and go as I please-- 'cept Tuesdays, those be my chore days. But those six other days are all mine, baby.

MARTY

I toldja before, Joe, taking the highroad gets you nowhere but smack in a ditch. You needa smash this chick, stomp her out like 'n ant.

JOE

What are you suggestin'?

MARTY

Now you're showing some balls. Okay, check it out, my idea is quite simple really: we....

EXT. PARKING LOT - OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Billy's vehicle pulls up.

Joe hops out.

MARTY (V.O.)

-- You said Lars wanted you to like pick up his mother's dog, or something, right? From the groomers?

Joe runs up to the office building's door.

JOE (V.O.)

Yeah.

A BLACK SEDAN lurks along through the parking lot.

MARTY (V.O.)

Kay, well you're not.

JOE (V.O.)

Why?

MARTY (V.O.)

You need to come up with an excuse to have Samantha go instead. Think you can handle that?

Billy drives off, nearly side-swipes the BLACK SEDAN that is creeping in from the opposite direction.

JOE (V.O.)

I'm sure I can come up with something.

BILLY

(yelling, re: Sedan)

My bad!

It's Burly (Frank's bodyguard), he scouts Joe with purpose then drives off.

INT. LARS RYDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Joe sits next to Samantha as Lars rambles on, flamboyantly waving his arms.

MARTY (V.O.)

So when she leaves send Billy and me a text letting us know --

BILLY (V.O.)

Wait, I'm participating?

MARTY (V.O.)

You have somewhere you need to be? It's not Tuesday is it?

INT/EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - PARKING LOT - BILLY'S VEHICAL - DAY

Billy and Marty wait in Billy's vehicle.

MARTY (V.O.)

Send us a text to let us now she's
leaving and we'll follow her in Billy's
car --

BILLY (V.O.)

Why my car, dude?

Marty receives a text: "Heads up."

MARTY (V.O.)

'Cause she might recognize mine -- Can
you stop interrupting, please? And we'll--

Samantha walk's out of the office building.

BILLY (V.O.)

Sorry, man.

Billy and Marty scope Samantha as she crosses the parking
lot and gets in her car

MARTY (V.O.)

-- And we'll follow her....

INT/EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - BILLY'S VEHICAL - DAY

Samantha rolls along in her Prius.

MARTY (V.O.)

....to the groomers. Where we'll right
the wrong.

Billy and Marty follow in close pursuit.

BACK TO:

INT. TOMMY'S RESTURANT - DAY

The three remain in the same booth, plotting.

MARTY

What do you think?

JOE

Well what is it that you're gonna do to
'er?

MARTY

It's better you don't know.

BILLY

Man, I'm not down to the whole murdering anyone thing -- I'm like a vegan. -- Mostly.

MARTY

Relax, nobody's gonna murder anyone. But we're gonna teach this big-tittied-hottie a lesson she'll never forget.

(to Joe)

So?

JOE

Lets do it. But only if no one gets hurt.

MARTY

Of course.

JOE

Of course.... someone's gonna get hurt, or of course.... no one's gonna get hurt?

MARTY

I've already said too much.

(re: Joe's look)

Reasons of deniability. Come on, let's get.

The three stand, head out.

As they are leaving, they walk past Burly perched in a booth, spying the three with cause.

EXT. TOMMY'S RESTURANT - PARKING LOT - DAY

The three walk over to Billy's vehicle.

MARTY

Now how exactly does one qualify as mostly vegan?

BILLY

Won't eat meat during the weekends.

MARTY

Yeah. I don't think it works that way.

INT/EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - BILLY'S VEHICAL - DAY

Billy drives along with Marty, sans Joe.

BILLY

....No it's actually really good.....

Billy sparks a cigarette, or maybe it's a joint.

BILLY (CONT'D)

....Scared the shit outta me. Had me sleepin' with a knife under my pillow for like a week. Shit you not. I'll let ya borrow it.

EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - DAY

Samantha rolls along in her Prius.

Billy's vehicle is in close pursuit. The driver-side window cracks and a plume of thick smoke floods out.

Billy's vehicle follows Samantha's off onto the exit ramp.

EXT. LIL' PUP'S GROOMERS - DAY

Samantha saunters over and through the door into Lil' Pup's Groomers.

Billy's vehicle pulls up and parks on the opposite side of the street.

INT. BILLY'S VEHICAL - CONTINUOUS

Marty and Billy's eyes are red and glossy.

BILLY

....but no -- not him. You shoulda seen it -- Dude gets up, does his Power of Greyskull thing and tears into Skeletor like no one else's business. POW -- POW -- BOOM --

MARTY

There she goes. Shouldn't be long now. Kay, you remember the plan?

BILLY

The gist.

Billy passes the joint off to Marty.

MARTY

When she comes out, we snag the little
bitch and --

(suddenly)

Oh, I like this song!

BILLY

Yeah, man. Totally my favorite band.
Kinda sucks he's dead though.

INT. FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY

The mahogany doors opens. Burly spills in.

He walks past Lean & Mean, well the head of Lean & Mean
anyway, which happens to be the latest addition to
Frank's wall ornaments.

Burly walks up over to Frank who stands behind his desk,
with his back to Burly.

Frank turns to Burly, his face(ANIMATED) shifting,
distorted.

FRANK

(growls)

Well?

EXT. GROOMERS - DAY

Sam exits the groomers with the poodle in tow.

She begins toward her car.

BILLY (O.S.)

Excuse me.

Samantha spins around.

SAMANTHA

What? I don't carry any spare change,
pal.

BILLY

No I didn't -- Wait, are you basically
calling me a bum?

SAMANTHA

Call as I see 'em.

BILLY

Well that's kind of a hurtful thing to say to someone.

Behind Samantha creeps Marty, stealthfully, eyes locked on his prey.

SAMANTHA

You'll get over it. Now if you'll excuse me....

She goes to turn back around.

Billy rushes in on her like a wild man.

Samantha's eyes widen.

Marty lunges in from behind, arms readied for the clinch.

INT. LARS RYDER HEADQUARTER'S LOBBY - DAY

Joe stand with Ms. Prim & Trim, she is showing off her new tribal tattoo to him.

JOE

I like it. Very -- dare I say, tribally.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

Isn't it?!

Lars approaches.

MR. LARS RYDER

Joe, have you seen Samantha anywhere? She should be back by now.

JOE

I think I overheard her say something about another job --

MR. LARS RYDER

Never mind. There she is.

Samantha storms down the hall, sans dog, away from the elevator.

The stairwell door opens, releasing Marty and Billy into the lobby. They both look beat, scuffed and dishevelled.

They scramble over to Joe.

MARTY

(panicked whisper)

Shit, donuts, the plan backfired. We have a serious -- shit -- yep, she's already here.

BILLY

(re: Ms. Prim & Trim)

Hey.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

(bemused)

Hi.

BILLY

So you come here often.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

Ah? I work her.

SAMANTHA

That motherfucker right there! That motherfucker just tried to steal your mom's dog!

MR. LARS RYDER

Excuse me? Why is your hand bleeding?

SAMANTHA

(points to Billy)

I cut it on that asshole's face.

BACK TO:

EXT. GROOMERS - DAY

RESUME ALTERCATION:

Billy charges in at Samantha SCREAMING like a banshee.

Samantha whips out her keys and sprays him in the face with a small, portable can of mace.

Billy YELPS.

BILLY

My precious eyes!

Samantha makes to escape and catches Marty trying to unleash the poodle.

BILLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It's so painful!

She soccer kicks, her foot lands square in Marty's jaw.
He crumbles.

Samantha re-leashes the dog and is about to make off but
is quickly grabbed from behind by Billy.

BILLY (CONT'D)
You shouldn't mace people....it's not
polite --

She thrusts her head backwards, crushing Billy's nose.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Aggh!

She slips his grasp and throws a hard right at his
kisser. Billy stumbles away in retreat.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Abort -- Abort!!

Samantha spins back around in time to catch Marty in the
face with another jab. He drops, out solid cold.

INT. LARS RYDER HEADQUARTERS LOBBY - DAY (RESUME)

Samantha finishes her story to Lars.

SAMANTHA
....He tried to kidnap your mom's dog,
probably....
(re: Billy)
....so this one could sacrifice it in
some sort of twisted-pagan sex ritual,
but certainly to make it look like I was
incompetent and get me fired.

MR. LARS RYDER
Is this true, Mr. Finkle?

MARTY
In theory. Except for the twisted-pagan
sex thing she stated. But --

MR. LARS RYDER
Vacate building, Mr. Finkle. You're
fired.

JOE
Wait. Mr. Ryder, I swear this is all just
a big misunderstanding.

MR. LARS RYDER

So he didn't just try to steal my mommy's dog to get Samantha here fired?

JOE

Well if you want to approach it like that -- But he was technically doing it for me. You see Samantha laced this muffin she insidiously offered me --

SAMANTHA

How dare you insinuate that I -- Once again, Mr. Ryder, this is what I was talking about before. I was simply trying to be friendly -- to help him -- You're not actually buying this diluted fabrication of the truth are you?

JOE

That's why I was actin' all weird this morning. And so to get back at her we decided --

MR. LARS RYDER

So this is a we now situation? That's fine. You're fired as well...

The SCORECARD BOX -- **BING** -- appears, ticks: SAMANTHA 04 - JOE 02. Samantha's names wipes over Joe's, declaring her the winner. WINNER flashes over and over.

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

....Tessa, call security to have these gentlemen escorted off the premises.

MS. PRIM AND TRIM

Yes, sir.

Lars retreats back to his office.

Ms. Prim & Trim walks over to her desk, Billy sneaks in a seductive wink to her as she does.

She picks up the phone to call security.

JOE

Please stop. There's no need, I can -- will leave on my own accord.

SAMANTHA

Then off you go.

(then)

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Did you really think you could actually
beat me, Joe? You're a loser, a nobody.
You don't even matter.

She CACKLES.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Joe Nobody.
(then)
You needa leave. Get. The exits that way.

MARTY

Come on, Joe. This place is a joke
anyway.

Joe and Marty shrug off toward the elevator.

SAMANTHA

(calling after)

And you're lucky I'm not pressing assault
charges.

BILLY

(re: Ms. Prim & Trim)

So here's my card. I was just thinkin'
after a crazy day like this you could
probably use a stiff drink or maybe
something stiffer, know what I mean.
There's this bar, Casey's --

SAMANTHA

(re: Billy)

Hey, fuck face.

She gestures for him to leave.

BILLY

(to Ms. Prim & Trim)

Call me. Or don't. But do, kay?

SAMANTHA

Leave!

BILLY

Huh? Oh, hey, I meant to ask ya, could I
get that muffin recipe off -- ?

SAMANTHA

Now!

BILLY

Alright! G....od!

Billy mimes "call me" to Prim & Trim then scampers off after Marty and Joe.

Samantha gloats, a (ANIMATED) MISSION ACCOMPLISHED banner waves triumphantly over head.

INT. CASEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

It's Barrelhouse Night and a BAND of aged, VFW TYPES play DIXIELAND CLASSICS to the mixed CROWD of elderly and youth.

Our three rejects sit perched at the tavern's rustic bar top.

Joe is shit-faced, with a half pint of beer before him. Marty and Billy flank either side of him.

BILLY

....Dude gets up, does his Power of Greyskull thing --

JOE

(slurred)

-- Bill, how many times you gonna tell that stupid, frickin' story?!

BILLY

Whoa, man. Resist the violence.

JOE

I can't believe it. What 'm I gonna do now? No job. No money. No....nothing.

MARTY

Relax, donuts.

JOE

Samantha's right, I am a losers.

BILLY

Wait. That's not what she said. I think she said: nobody. Like, you simply don't matter. Then called you, Joe Nobody.

JOE

Thanks for clarifying.

MARTY

You're kidding me. Samantha's right? Do you even hear what you're saying? Samantha puts the bitch in skank-ass-ho.

(MORE)

MARTY (CONT'D)

-- I'm telling you: you didn't wanna work there, trust me. That place is a total shitty-ass wannabe soul-suck, I should know.

JOE

Maybe for you, Marty. Maybe for you. -- But it actually meant something to me. I coulda made somethin' of myself, been one of those people others wanna be around, not run away from.

MARTY

Dude --

JOE

But not now. All 'cause of your stupid, little, idiotic plan.

(then)

Stop calling me, donuts. I have a name. News flash, it's Joe.

MARTY

Wait a second here, Honto. I came up with the idea -- but you're the one who flipped it into a plan.

JOE

Wakka Makka!

MARTY

What?

(to Billy)

That even an expression?

JOE

Wow! Shame on me! Of course, it only makes sense now. Put down your pencils....

MARTY

What're you -- ?

JOE

....Ring the bells, school's officially out now 'cause I get it. -- It's totally my fault, right? My fault that you took the liberty of screwing up my entire life. -- Who kidnaps a dog, anyway?

MARTY

Fuck that. Here's a news flash for you, Joe -- Your life was screwed up ell before I ever entered it.

Joe SCOFFS.

JOE
(sarcastic)
Okay, dude.

MARTY
You harbor this fucked up delusion that simply because you're nice -- "friendly", it negates your overall pathetic-ness. Your weak.

BILLY
Hey now....come on, guys. Can't we all just get along?

MARTY
Listen, okay? I apologize. I'm sorry things went -- well -- took an unexpected turn, but at least you stood up and clanked your clackers for once.

JOE
Screw off, Marty -- Marty McFly.

MARTY
You know what, Joe?

Marty stands, throws some cash down on the bar top.

MARTY (CONT'D)
I'll screw off, just for you, Donuts.

JOE
Where's the Doc? So tell me -- when you got there, did you need roads?

MARTY
Good luck with the whole chump thing. It's a suit you wear well.

Marty walks off.

JOE
You better walk away -- I'll chump thing you in the face. Ninja style. Yeah! That's right, you heard me.

Marty's gone.

Joe swigs the rest of his beer, stewing.

JOE (CONT'D)

Can you believe that guy? Geez Louise.

(then)

Come on, Billy. Lets get outta here. This place reeks of moth balls and looming death.

The two get up, make way to the front door.

Something catches Billy's eye, it's Prim & Trim settled sheepishly at a table nursing her beverage.

BILLY

Hey, man. I'll catch up with you later.

Billy bee-lines over to Prim & Trim.

JOE

(shouting after)

Oh....

(cackles)

....I get it. You're just gonna bail on me too?! Thanks a lot. -- Real good friend -- person. -- That's fine. I don't need you.

(to Crowd, screaming)

I don't need any of you. -- You're all fake! You're all just -- !

BLAM! A fist connects to Joe's jaw.

The fist retracts: it belongs to an elderly, withered old MAN.

Joe, looks on, stunned. He reaches up to cradle his jaw, his eyes roll back.

Joe drops to the ground, out cold.

The elderly man turns back toward the GASPING crowd, caressing his knuckles.

He shrugs.

EVERYONE erupts into CHEERS and CONGRATULATIONS!

Even Billy gives the old popper a hi-five.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DOOR - NIGHT

SOUND: keys jingling.

SOUND: keys landing on the ground.

SOUND: key slides into the lock.

SOUND: keys jingling.

SOUND: another key slides into the lock.

SOUND: deadbolt retracts.

Doorknob turns, the door pops open.

Joe, disheveled, schlumps in, stumbles over to the futon and plops down.

He simmers in distraught solitude for a beat, then....

JOE

Guess it's just you and me now, old pal.

Joe looks over....

JOE (CONT'D)

Little Miss....?

....Little Miss Jolie floats wrong-side up, lifeless, in the aquarium.

INT. BATHROOM - JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

Joe flanks the porcelain grave, forlorn.

He watches as the toilet water eddies around.... finally SLURPING Little Miss Jolie down its drain.

Joe closes the toilet's lid and sits, defeated.

He HOWLS in anguish.

EXT. GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATER - NIGHT (DUSK)

A concert of flashing bulbs, PAPARAZZI hard at work.

Red carpet stretched out, A-LISTERS walk it, stopping only for the occasional ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT INTERVIEW.

MR. LARS RYDER (V.O.)

Mommy! Come check this out....!

INT. LARS RYDER'S HOUSE - DAY

REVEAL: Lars watches a recording of SOMEONE ELSE'S extravagant premiere.

MR. LARS RYDER
That's exactly what I want mine to look like.

MRS. RYDER
That's great, Snoogie Poops.

MR. LARS RYDER
I was thinkin': what if --

Phone RINGS.

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Hello?
(beat)
What do you mean, you can't make it? I have a fucking contract -- that you signed!

INT. UNKNOWN HOUSE - DAY

CATERER (40s) speaks to Lars.

CATERER
(into phone, nervous)
Yes, I understand that, sir. And again I apologize.

A GUN BARREL, smack-dab against the caterer's head.

Reveal: Burly holds the weapon.

CATERER (CONT'D)
Yes, I....

The caterer looks to Frank, apprehensively.

Frank nods, a devilish grin spans his face.

CATERER (CONT'D)
....I all ready have another company in place to --
(listens)
Yes, sir, the after party. Frank's Coffee Emporium. -- No. Yes -- They are more than capable. I assure you. You will not be disappointed.

INT. SPIELDING PRODUCTIONS - OFFICE - DAY

A one-car garage subbing as an office.

Joe sits across from a disaster of a MAN (50s).

SLOUCHY MCFAT-FAT

Now, I know what you're thinkin' -- but no, we do not only cater to funerals. We're also highly sought after for Bar Mitzvahs and what-nots. Mostly what-nots.

(then)

Any question?

JOE

So when can I start?

SLOUCHY MCFAT-FAT

Right away, my friend! Just need to get your initial investment for six hundred dollars, and you're good to go!

JOE

(befuddled)

Wait -- there's a start-up fee?

SLOUCHY MCFAT-FAT

We like to consider it more of an investment. I can take a check if you'd prefer to go that route -- just need a valid ID. Oh, and a quick blood sample.

INT/EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - JOE'S CAR - DAY

Joe drives along. He passes an apartment building nestled along the freeway.

INT. MARTY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Marty works on his script via laptop.

He looks up, he's also watching Joe's short film.

He smiles approvingly.

INT. SOMETHING SOMETHING COFFEE - DAY

Joe sits across from an EX-MARINE TYPE (40s) donned in a Something Something's Coffee uniform.

The ex-marine studies Joe's application.

EX-MARINE

So I see you have some experience in the coffee-brewery field.

JOE

Yes, sir. Frank's Coffee Emporium.

EX-MARINE

Wait -- you're that Joe Dagala?

JOE

Not sure I'm following.

The ex-marine retrieves a headshot of Joe with the word: **BLACKBALLED**, in bold printed over it.

EX-MARINE

Sorry, son. Can't help ya. -- Shit, I shouldn't even be talkin' to you.

INT. BILLY'S BASEMENT PAD - DAY

Billy hits play on his DVD player and HE-MAN starts over the television.

He strolls back over to his bed and climbs in next to Ms. Prim & Trim.

The two snuggle up.

BILLY

Personally, I think this is the best episode, but it's been the debate of many of arguments.

Billy's cell phone RINGS.

EXT. SHITTY JOBS INC. - PARKING LOT - DAY

Joe trudges out the doorway of Shitty Jobs Inc., crestfallen.

INT. CONVENTION ROOM - DAY

Lars does his final walk-through for the after party with Samantha.

The two hustle past Frank, who flails his arms and hands flamboyantly, directing WORKERS, dressed in white uniforms, where to position things.

FRANK

No! Over deer, stupid!

Frank picks up his blinged-out coffee mug, chugs it, then, with ANIMATED eyes....

FRANK (CONT'D)
Very good. Dis be very, very special night.

In the background: Billy, also dressed in all white, totes boxes of catering supplies about.

He shields his face with a box, avoiding Samantha's impervious gaze, as he marches past.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Every-ding muss be perfect for special, special night.

Frank bursts with manic LAUGHTER.

His LAUGHTER escalates into a gaping, full-body COUGH.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (DUSK)

Joe walks in, vapid.

He heads into the

KITCHEN

where he fills a pot with water and fetches his dinner: a package of Ramen Noddles.

PHONE RINGS: *"Hold on for one more day...."*

JOE
Shut up, Wilson Philips!

"....things'll go your way --"

He answers.

JOE (CONT'D)
Hello?

BILLY (V.O.)
Sup, homie? What'cha doin'?

JOE
I'm about to delete this stupid ringtone.

BILLY
Why ain't you at the premiere?

JOE
I was fired, Billy.

BILLY
No shit? When?

JOE
Dude, you were there.

BILLY
Oh yeah -- So hey, turn on channel six.

JOE
I'm in the middle of making dinner.

BILLY
Your Romen Noodles can wait -- Turn on
channel eleven.

LIVING ROOM

Joe slumps over to the small television.

JOE
If I'm about to turn on another one of
your stupid He-man episodes, I'm warning
you now -- I'm gonna be bitter.

Joe flips the tube on and....

ON TELEVISION:

We are outside the Sunset Theater for Tyrant's premiere.

A microcosm of ONLOOKERS gawk as D-LISTERS parade the red
carpet to a modest symphony of flashing bulbs, PAPAZZI
hard at work.

Some ACTOR (someone like Andy Dick) is being interviewed
by a female beauty of an ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER (20s)

ANDY DICK
(to Reporter)
....and when he asked me to be Officer
Logan....

BACK TO....

Joe is watching the interview.

JOE
Great, Andy Dick? Billy, why am I
watching Andy Dick?

BILLY (V.O.)
Hello?

JOE
Billy, why am I watching Andy Dick?

BILLY (V.O.)
Look....seven feet over from his left --
no, from his right.

JOE
I can't pan the camera, for God's sake's.

BILLY (V.O.)
Hello?

ON TELEVISION SCREEN: In the background, Marty shows his
admission badge to SECURITY, walks through the doors into
the theater.

JOE
What?

BILLY (V.O.)
Can you hear me?

JOE
Yes -- what are doing?

BILLY (V.O.)
Look to his right.

JOE
I don't control the camera, Billy.

BILLY (V.O.)
Shit. Right. Hold on.

ANDY DICK
(to Reporter)
....but I knew this would be the perfect
opportunity....

Billy shuffles up, on screen, infringing on Andy Dick's
personal space.

ANDY DICK (CONT'D)
....for me to re-inve --

Andy Dick stops mid-sentence, gives Billy a quizzical stare motivated by annoyance, then continues....

ANDY DICK (CONT'D)

-- Would give me the opportunity to re-ignite my career, so to speak.

GOSSIP REPORTER

And when....?

BILLY

How 'bout now?

EXT. SUNSET THEATER - NIGHT (SAME)

Tyrant's red-carpet event is in full-swing.

BILLY

(to Joe)

Can ya see me now?

Billy waves eagerly into the camera, still flanking an annoyed ANDY DICK.

ANDY DICK

(to Reporter)

....No, not at all. He's a really great guy -- great to work with. We had....

JOE (V.O.)

Geez sauce, Billy. What're you doing there?

ANDY DICK

....a fabulous time -- awesome experience.

BILLY

Just workin' it, dude.

ANDY DICK

I think what I was most attracted to was....

JOE (V.O.)

Working what?

ANDY DICK

....the overall concept that some --

BILLY

-- We're catering the after party! Ain't it cool?

Andy shoves Billy.

ANDY DICK

(to Billy)

Jesus, kid -- do you mind?! I'm in the middle of a BEEPing live interview here.

(then, to Reporter)

Where was I -- The concept really spoke to the inner-recesses of my....

JOE (V.O.)

Why is Frank catering the after party?

BILLY

I know, right? How cool's that?

Billy casually throws his arm around Andy Dick's shoulder.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Got the call this morning -- something about the other company canceling.

Billy smiles at Andy, then winks.

BILLY (CONT'D)

(giddy)

Even think there's gonna be a petting zoo cause --

Andy shoves Billy away from him.

ANDY DICK

(to Billy)

-- One more word motherBEEPer and I swear to Allah I'm gonna power-slam your ass!

BILLY

(to Andy)

Geez, man. Show some sympathy here -- I'm talking to my good friend, Joe Dagala. And he's extremely suicidal at the moment....

JOE (V.O.)

I'm not suicidal!

BILLY

....Like razor to the vein as we speak. He's like, been fired six times in three days.

JOE (V.O.)

That's not true!

ANDY DICK

I couldn't care less. Now take it some
where else, freak.

Andy shoves Billy again.

BILLY

Stop shoving me, Mr. Dick!

ANDY DICK

Oh, you BEEPIn' with my name now!
(to Reporter, re: Billy)
This bitch got balls!

Andy shoves Billy again, this time with force, with more
intention.

BILLY

Stop it. I have rights, man!

ANDY DICK

The only rights you have here are those
of a dog -- or a chair. Now scat! Scat!

Andy pushes Billy off camera.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Joe continues watching as.....

....on the television: the camera quickly swivels over to
and fixes on, the ALTERCATION between Billy and Andy
Dick.

BILLY

Quit man-handling me!

A news RSS feed scrolls along the bottom, reading:
...unknown, JOE DAGALA, severely suicidal.... fired six
times in three days....

ANDY DICK

I'm gonna make you suck my shoe, bitch!

BILLY

Stop! No! I hate the taste of shoe!

Joe lethargically clicks the TV off, walks back into
the....

KITCHEN

Joe sits the pot of water down on the dilapidated stove top and turns it on.

Flame WHOOSHES to life.

BILLY (V.O.)
(cosmic)
Even a petting zoo.

Joe walks to the cupboard, retrieves a bowl.

BILLY (V.O.)
Got the call this morning.

Joe opens the package of Ramon Noodles, dumps them in the pot of water.

FRANK (V.O.)
No more of dis insubordination, or else.

BILLY (V.O.)
The other company canceled.

Joe begins stirring the noodles around idly.

FRANK (V.O.)
Or else!

BILLY (V.O.)
I named the cougar: Mr. Snuggles.

Joe readies to strain his dinner noodles.

BILLY (V.O.)
No. Stop. I hate the taste of shoe!
(then)
Even a petting zoo.

FRANK (V.O.)
Must pay for your dishonor.

Joe stiffens, as if struck by a staggering revelation.

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - JOE'S CAR - NIGHT

Joe, with renewed purpose, travels at a snail's pace, bumper-deep in the stagnate Los Angeles traffic.

JOE
 (re: traffic)
 Come on -- Come on, really?! That's what
 your blinker's for!

INT. THEATER - SUNSET THEATER - NIGHT

The theater is crowded with the whose-nots of Hollywood
 CELEBRITANTS and CONSTITUENTS.

Marty, popcorn in hand, take a seat in the back of the
 theater.

Samantha takes center stage just as Mr. Pena and his
 ENTOURAGE take their seats.

SAMANTHA
 Ladies and Gentlemen. I would like to
 personally thank you all for joining us
 on this auspicious occasion. And so,
 without further adieu, I would like to
 introduce the man behind the screen. The
 King of the Camera -- Mr. Lars Ryder!

Lars takes over the lectern under muffled APPLAUSE.

MR. LARS RYDER
 Thank you. Thank you. Please, you're too
 kind.
 (pompous bow)
 Thank you all for joining us here
 tonight. Now -- let the festivities
 begin!

Lars thrusts his arms out as if King of the Land.

More half-hearted APPLAUSE.

Samantha and Mr. Ryder take their seats in the front row
 next to Mrs. Ryder.

The lectern's rolled away.

Overhead-lights fade out.

The movie screen fades in.

EXT. JOE'S CAR - 101 FREEWAY - NIGHT

Joe is still inching along, still wrestling against the
 traffic.

His head rests in his palm, elbow propped on the door/window-sill ledge.

JOE
(re: another car)
Please, after you.

INT. SUNSET THEATER - NIGHT

The premiere ends to sporadic APPLAUSE.

EXT. SUNSET BLVD. - NIGHT

Joe's Metro SQUEALS around the corner.

EXT. SUNSET THEATER - NIGHT

The Metro pulls up to the curb outside the Sunset Theater.

Joe jumps out, notices the: NO PARKING sign.

He jumps back into his car, speeds off.

MOMENTS LATER

Joe's car SKIDS up to the curb along the opposite side of the street.

Joe jumps out, bolts across the boulevard and into the theater.

MOMENTS LATER

Joe bursts back through the doors, shooting out into the street like a bullet --

HOOOONK! -- barely dodges an oncoming vehicle as it barrels past.

Joe jumps in his car, speeds off again.

HOUSE MUSIC, thick and bold, starts to THUMP....

INT. AFTER PARTY - CONVENTION ROOM - NIGHT

....over the speaker system.

The place is pretty packed with schmoozing PARTY-GUESTS.

Billy is squared-up behind the bar, making cocktails for inebriated partiers while other STAFF MEMBERS scurry about, balls-deep in work.

Ms. Prim and Trim takes a seat at the bar.

Marty speaks with Mr. Pena off to the side of the room.

MARTY

(sipping a drink)

I just helped with the rewrites -- but I am working on my own pieces. You know what -- you might actually be interested.

Mr. Pena's interpreter INTERPRETS this to Mr. Pena.

MR. PENA

Coung cha.

INTERPRATOR

He say: tell him more.

Samantha and Lars walk by, making their rounds.

MR. LARS RYDER

(re: Marty)

Who let him in?

SAMANTHA

I can have security escort 'em out, just say the words.

MR. LARS RYDER

No. I don't wanna look like a jerk-off in front of Mr. Pena.-- Have you heard anything yet?

SAMANTHA

No, sir. But I've given specific instructions to the staff to keep his drink full at all times.

MR. LARS RYDER

That's my girl. -- Mr. Rylee....

Mr. Rylee (30s), pompous sheik.

MR. LARS RYDER (CONT'D)

....great to see you made it.

MR. RYLEE

Mr. Ryder, there you are!

MR. LARS RYDER

So I've been dying to know what you thought.

MR. RYLEE

Well....

SAMANTHA

I'll give the two of you with some privacy. Glad you were able to make it, Mr. Rylee.

Mr. Rylee extends his hand for Samantha to kiss.

Samantha looks at Lars, bemused.

Lars' eye flare, "do it!"

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Umm....okay.

Samantha kisses Mr. Rylee's hand, then

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

If you'll excuse me then.

Samantha hurries off.

MR. RYLEE

I like the accessory. French?

MR. LARS RYDER

My guess -- mutt. Anyway, she's only my assistant 'til I fuck 'er.

(then)

So tell me, what did you think about....?

Samantha crosses the floor to go outside, passes by Frank -- who is lurking suspiciously about the room -- as she exits.

Frank nods "it's time" to Burly, who is donned in a black SECURITY shirt, stationed across the room.

Burly leaves his position and joins Frank, the two scamper off into an adjoining room, with devious intent.

EXT. AFTER PARTY - NIGHT

Samantha, blasé, strolls out the doors, past the DOOR-SECURITY DUDE (30s) and out onto the neighboring sidewalk.

She pulls a silver cigarette case from her mini purse, snaps it open.

DOOR SECURITY

You can't smoke here.

SAMANTHA

(condescending, dismissive)

Relax, Doorman. It's not a cigarette.

She sparks the joint -- pulls a long, voracious drag, then exhales as....

Joe's Metro SURGES in front of the VALET, parks.

Joe pops out.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Nice car. Fits you well.

JOE

Samantha, good. Listen --

SAMANTHA

What are you doing here, Joe?

JOE

I think Frank --

SAMANTHA

You need to get back in your shit-stain of a car and get the eff on your way, before I kick you in the fucking temple.

JOE

No -- Samantha, listen to me....I Think Frank --

Samantha slaps Joe square in the face.

SAMANTHA

You got a dick in your ear? Leave or I'm calling the police!

JOE

I'm not leaving until --

Samantha slaps him again, harder.

JOE (CONT'D)

Stop slap --

Samantha chops him in the throat.

Joe GAGS.

SAMANTHA

You're such a bitch.

Joe straightens, anger swelling his face.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Ohh, what's the little --

Joe unleashes a sharp jab right smack into Samantha's tit.

Samantha cringes in pain.

Joe follows his attack with a stiff kick to her shin.

Samantha crumbles, grasping her shin.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

What's wrong with you!

Joe jukes, scurries past Samantha, eluding her lunging grasp.

He dashes up to the door but is road-blocked by the Door Security dude.

DOOR SECURITY

No go, Cowboy.

Joe looks to him, pleadingly.

Security Dude smiles, steps to the side.

SAMANTHA

(to security)

What are you doing?! Stop him!

Joe runs inside.

DOOR SECURITY

You've got some real issues, lady.

Samantha stands back up, launches after Joe.

SAMANTHA

(as she passes security)

Congratulations, dickweed. You just got yourself fired.

Samantha shoots through the doors.

DOOR SECURITY
 (sotto)
 Shit, I hate this job anyhow.

INT. AFTER PARTY - NIGHT

Joe rushes in, nearly collides into Marty, who is on his way out.

MARTY
 Joe! Why is there a hand print across your face?

JOE
 Nevermind that, we --

MARTY
 -- Check this out -- I think Mr. Pena is interested in my screenplay! He --

JOE
 -- Marty! Listen to me! We need to get everyone back out onto the street before --
 - have you seen Frank?

MARTY
 Who?

Joe frantically skims through the crowd, desperately looking for Frank

JOE
 Frank. Frank -- you know, dude from the Frank's Coffee Emporium commercials?

MARTY
 Oh, that guy! He cracks me up.

BY ENTRY OF ROOM

Samantha enters, revved up, cell phone to ear.

SAMANTHA
 Yes. Hi. I need to report a possible criminal act....

Samantha scans the crowd looking for Joe's whereabouts. She spots Lars, sets off toward him.

BACK TO

JOE

Listen you need to get everyone out on the street immediately!

MARTY

Why? Hey, so I was saying: Mr. Pena is interested in reading my script. Might even back it if--

JOE

Dammit, Marty! Listen to me! Frank is gonna kill everyone if we don't act NOW!

MARTY

Shit!

JOE

Get 'em out of here and call the cops!

Joe scurries off toward the bar, toward billy.

MARTY

Okay, guys! Party's over!

Samantha flanks Lars.

SAMANTHA

Sir, Joe's here and I think he's about to do something crazy, postal. I just got off the phone with the police and they're on their way. But....

BY BAR

Joe scrambles up.

JOE

Billy!

BILLY

Hey, dude -- glad you decided to come. Franks been askin' for ya.

JOE

Where is he?

ADJACENT ROOM

Frank pokes his head out of the room, eyes, manic. He spots Joe. He ducks back inside the room.

BACK TO

BILLY

Think I saw him -- wait, no that was earlier -- wait was it earlier?

JOE

You goda focus for me, Billy. Where'd you last see Frank?

BILLY

Yeah -- No. I saw him go into that room over there, you know, I think that's the one with Mr Snuggles in it.

(epiphany)

Shit, man..... I think the petting zoo's about to start!

JOE

Mr. Snuggles isn't here for a petting zoo -- you need to get out of here, Billy, NOW. RUN!

BILLY

Way ahead of ya!

Joe darts off toward the room where Mr. Snuggles and Frank are held up.

Billy remains stagnate.

INT. ADJACENT ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Frank and Burly uncover the cage.

Mr. Snuggles (ANIMATED), ROARS. Flashes his dagger like teeth with a snarl.

Joe runs in.

JOE

Frank stop!

FRANK

Frank no stop. You pay now!

Frank lifts the cage door open.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You must pay for insubordination!

Mr. Snuggles leaps out, GROWLS.

FRANK (CONT'D)

ATTACK!

Mr Snuggle leaps.....straight on top of Burly, and begins to tear him limb from limb.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (re: Mr. Snuggles)
 NO! Stupid! Kill that one!

Mr, Snuggles drags Burly's corpse back into it's cage.

Joe rushes in, closing and securing the lid.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 No!

Frank pulls out a gun, points it at Joe.

JOE
 Uncle Frank stop!

FRANK
 You pay now!

BILLY
 By the power of --

Billy chucks a beer bottle -- it S A I L S through the air, SMACKS Frank dead center in the head.

Frank drops.

POW -- gun fires.

Joe drops.

POLICE storm in, surround Frank's unconscious body.

Billy runs over to Joe, who is still on the floor writhing in pain.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 Joe! Speak to me buddy!

Joe sits up cradling his neck with his hand.

JOE
 I've been shot! I've been shot! How bad is it?! How bad?!

BILLY
 Here -- Just....

Billy peels Joe's hand from his neck -- blood SQUIRTS out like a fountain.

Billy quickly places Joe's hand back over it.

BILLY (CONT'D)

....just a little mosquito bite. But you might wanna see a doctor, just to make sure. Like, maybe, right away.

Other OFFICERS swarm in, surrounding Joe as he gathers to his feet, hand still cradling his wound.

Lars and Samantha meander in.

MR. LARS RYDER

What in the world is going -- Oh, look a lion. Please Good tell me that's a congratulatory gift for me! You guy's shouldn't have.

Mr. Pena enters with his interpreter , who interprets the dialogue to Mr. Pena.

SAMANTHA

I know what's goin' on -- that's not a present, Mr. Ryder -- that's a fucking murder weapon -- Joe had his uncle bring it here to kill you! This whole scheme is a plan of retribution for firing him.

JOE

That's not true!

MR. LARS RYDER

Joe is this true?

JOE

I just said -- Frank was trying to kill me, not you! He wanted me dead for quitting --

SAMANTHA

See? There it is, from his own mouth! He's totally partly responsible for this entire charade. I told you, he's a total psycho!

MARTY

That's bullshit! He was trying to save us.

MR. LARS RYDER

Police, arrest -- no wait....
(clears his throat,
theatrical)
....I want this man arrested!

JOE

But --

SAMANTHA

Boo him!

EVERYONE starts JEERING Joe, all except Marty and Mr. Pena.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(to Lars)

We need to get you out of here, God knows what else this looney might have planned. He's evil, pure devil. And on your special night.

MR. LARS RYDER

You're a good person, Samantha. What do you say I take you back to my place and....?

The two leave the room.

Joe is handcuffed to another officer.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Packed and bundled moving boxes are scattered everywhere.

NOTICE TO VACATE letter lies in the open.

Joe's cell lies on top of one of the boxes.

It RINGS: (NEW RINGTONE, something on par with: Edie Brickell & New Bohemians' "Circle")

RINGTONE: *"I quit. I give up. Nothin's good enough for anybody else...."*

Joe enters, vapid, and answers.

JOE

Hello?

The wound on Joe's neck is healing nicely.

MARTY (V.O.)

Joe, it's Marty.

JOE

Marty, hey, I've been meaning to call you.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

Look, I should have never've said those mean, nasty things to you the other night at the bar and...

MARTY (V.O.)

Forget about it, Joe. Listen, I need you to do me a huge favor -- I need you to answer your door.

JOE

Why?

MARTY (V

Please, don't ask any questions, just do it, okay?

Joe obliges, opens the door.

Reveal: Marty waiting on the other side, beaming brightly.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Hey, man. I never got a chance to thank you, you know, for saving all our asses.

JOE

Yeah. I'm just happy they came to their senses and dropped the charges.

MARTY

You did good, Joe.
(re: boxes)
What's with the mess?

JOE

Well Marty, this is what happens when you can't afford the rent.

MARTY

Well unpack it, cause....

Marty hands Joe an envelope.

JOE

What's this?

MARTY

Open it.

Joe opens it, finds a check with so-and-so amount scribbled over it.

JOE

I'm sorry Marty, but I can't accept payments for trying to save peoples' lives --

MARTY

-- Mr. Pena pulled his funding after he saw the way Lars treated you. He's decided to finance mine instead.

JOE

Well that's great, Marty. But --

MARTY

-- It's your first check, Joe. First of many.

JOE

Check for what?

Joe stares quizzically at Marty.

MARTY

You showed some real clackers the other night, Joe, and well, you showed, without a doubt, that you've got what it takes to make it in this biz....

(off Joe's confused look)

...basically put, I want you to be my producer.

(then, on knees)

Donuts? Will you do me the honor of being my producer?

EXT. STREET - DAY

The sun shins brightly in the clear blue sky.

Production is under way.

CAST and CREW prep for the next scene.

Mr. Pena and his interpreter stand in the background looking on with Marty.

Billy and Ms. Prim and Trim work as the craft-services engineers, Billy's "special" brownies clearly on display.

Joe is diligently at work, currently speaking with two beautiful female ASSISTANTS (early 20s)....

JOE
 Tell Ms. Griffin, that I said no. It's
 the exact same trailer as --

He overhears some COMMOTION off screen, looks over and
 sees Samantha ARGUING with LOCATION SECURITY.

SAMANTHA
 He's right there -- Joe! Hey, Joe!

Joe waves her in.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 (to Security)
 You see, asshole!

Samantha strides over to Joe.

JOE
 (to assistants)
 Can you guys excuse me for a moment?

They girls leave.

SAMANTHA
 Joe! It's so good to see you again.

JOE
 Hi, Samantha.

SAMANTHA
 You're looking good! How's the neck?

JOE
 It's better, thanks for asking.

SAMANTHA
 Say, what ever happened to Frank, anyway?

JOE
 He was arrested for conspiracy to commit
 murder and drug charges -- guess he's
 been lacing his coffee with some type of
 hallucinogenic. Who'd of thunk it?

SAMANTHA
 Yeah, I heard something about it on the
 news. No wonder it was selling so well.
 (then)
 Anyway I just stopped by because I felt
 like I owe you an apologize for all the
 shit that I put you through and how
 things went down the other week and all.
 (MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

I honestly feel just awful about the way I acted and well, it was totally unfair of me and for what it's worth, I would like to apologize. Forgive me?

Beat.

JOE

Heck, of course I forgive you. I'm not really one of those who harbor grudges.

SAMANTHA

Thanks, Joe. I really mean it, thanks.

JOE

Shoot, don't mention it. So say, how are things coming along with Lars these days?

SAMANTHA

He fired me.

JOE

Really?

SAMANTHA

Later that night in fact.

JOE

What for?

SAMANTHA

I don't really care to bore you with the specifics but lets just say I learned my lesson. So I heard you're working like as a producer now.

JOE

Yeah, believe it or not. Mr. Pena decided to fund Marty's newest project and well, long story short -- here I am.

SAMANTHA

That's wonderful, Joe. If anyone deserves it, it's you. So I....

Samantha digs at the ground with the toe of her shoe.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

.... also heard you were listed in BackStage as needing a PA?

JOE

We do.

SAMANTHA

So.....?

Samantha's look says it all, hint hint.

JOE

Ohmigod, you know what? I just got the best idea!

Her eyes spring hope, her smile glows.

JOE (CONT'D)

Why don't YOU go fuck yourself.

Joe pivots, walks away.

SAMANTHA

(shouting after)

How 'bout you go fuck yourself, loser!

Without turning, Joe flicks her off.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You're still a pathetic douche, Joe. You ain't worth the tissue I wipe my ass with. You're a no--!

SMACK - CRUNCH - Samantha is bulldozed over by the large equipment truck ZOOMING past us.

INT. EQUIPMENT TRUCK'S CAB

The oblivious DRIVER is preoccupied with eating one of Billy's delicious homemade brownies.

He looks out the window to Billy, with excitement, his eyes bulging with intoxication, holds up the brownie and smiles, gleefully.

Billy throws out a double thumbs up.

EVERYONE transform in to ANIMATION as we ascend....

NARRATOR

And that, my friends, is the story of how Joe Nobody became a somebody.

(long beat)

Wait, that's it? That's all you needed me for? A couple of poorly-written lines? I missed my fucking colonic for this!

(then)

Yeah? Well, whatever, I'm out.

Noise of a chair SHUFFLED about, then dense FOOTSTEPS,
followed by CREAKING of a door opening...

VOICE OVER

Oh, and I never got that latte you
promised, Richard! Freak'in amateurs!

Sound of a door SLAMMING closed as we....

FADE OUT