BAD INFLUENCE

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FADE IN:

EXT. OPEN ROAD - NIGHT

Blurry headlights from on coming cars paint the background. Out of the chaos of lights, emerge the colors of red and blue. The lights come into focus, as a police squad car comes to a stop.

Two uniformed cops are astonished, as they gaze upon a bizarre looking traffic accident.

A car is wedged between two poles. It’s front nose dug into the ground, while the rear is jacked ten feet high.

The back tires are spinning, as the driver hopelessly struggles to break loose.

    POLICEMAN #1
    Will you look at this shit.

    POLICEMAN #2
    How in the hell did he manage that?

    POLICEMAN #1
    Let's go ask him.

They step out their vehicle and approach the man’s car.

    POLICEMAN #2
    You alright?

ARTHUR, late 30’s, is hunched up in the seat, gripping the steering wheel. He ignores the officers and continues to gun his engine.

    POLICEMAN #1
    Sir, turn off the engine! Turn it off!

Arthur hears them and complies.

    POLICEMAN #1
    Get down from there.

    ARTHUR
    Uh, no.

    POLICEMAN #1
    No? What do you mean no?

(Continued)
Continued:

ARTHUR
Because If I do come down, you’ll arrest me.

POLICEMAN #2
Have you been drinking tonight?

ARTHUR
Maybe.

POLICEMAN #2
Well then yea, you’ll probably be arrested.

ARTHUR
See.

POLICEMAN #2
We can always just drag you out.

ARTHUR
Yea I guess you can do that.
(beat)
Alright I’m coming down. Make some room.

Arthur hops out awkwardly -- snags his foot on the seat belt, as he stumbles out and he hits the ground.

ARTHUR
Aww, that was a bad landing.

POLICEMAN #1
You alright? What the hell happen here?

ARTHUR
I’ll tell you what happen. Them god dam brakes on that Japanese piece of shit almost killed me.

POLICEMAN #1
Isn’t this a Lexus?

Arthur looks back.

ARTHUR
You know I think your right.

POLICEMAN #1
So about how much would you say had to drink tonight buddy?

(Continued)
ARTHUR
Not much, maybe a half of...half a beer.

A bottle of whiskey falls out the car and explodes behind an intoxicated Arthur.

ARTHUR
Maybe a tad more.

The two officers whisper in private.

ARTHUR
Hey, what's with the whispering?

They break from their whisper huddle.

POLICEMAN #1
Sir we're gonna need you to submit to a field sobriety test of our choosing.

ARTHUR
Test? What kind of test?

POLICEMAN #1
Let's see... How about, reciting the alphabet for us.

ARTHUR
That seems easy enough.

POLICEMAN #1
Backwards.

ARTHUR
What?

POLICEMAN #1
Skipping every other letter.

ARTHUR

POLICEMAN #1
How about a straight line than.

ARTHUR
Now that's more reasonable.
Just as Arthur takes his first step, a quick rush of drunken dizziness hits him like a sledgehammer.

ARTHUR
(to himself)
Ok, that didn’t feel like that a second ago.

Arthur laughs to himself.

POLICEMAN #1
TODAY!

ARTHUR
Alright, I’m going.

Arthur takes a shaky first step.

ARTHUR
That one didn’t count. I slid on a pebble.

He points at the ground.

POLICEMAN #1
Just go!

Arthur takes a second step, and then a third. By the forth step his balance starts to lean. As he goes for the fifth step he loses all balance and falls flat on his face. Knocking himself out cold.

POLICEMAN #1
Oh I could have called that one.

POLICEMAN #2
Best part is, look. Dashboard cam caught the whole thing.

POLICEMAN #1
Sweet.

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

The room is littered with of dozens of empty beer and soda cans, consuming every inch of counter space. Not to mention the abundance of marijuana paraphernalia scattered about.

Passed out -- slumped over his shitty living room sofa is BEN, late 20’s.

(CONTINUED)
Tyson, his red nose pit bull, pulls down on his sleeve. Tyson pulls Ben off the couch. His face hits the end table before he crashes to the floor.

Ben awakens in an instant -- shoots up from the floor, and knocks his head on the underneath part of his coffee table.

BEN
Shit! Tyson!

He looks around.

BEN(CONT)
What the fuck am I doing sleeping out here?

Ben rises from the couch, he gives a long stretch followed by an even longer yawn.

He grabs a joint clip from the ashtray, lights it up, takes a few pulls.

He notices his cell phone displaying two new voice mails. He puts his cellphone on speaker, hits play.

First message.

MAN’S VOICE
Ben, I know your home. Pick up. This is Dick, You remember, your old boss. I’m not sure if you know, But we're missing a giant vending machine.

Ben can’t help but to smirk as he passes the vending machine on his way to the bathroom.

MAN’S VOICE
We’re not pointing fingers, but how an eight hundred pound vending machine can just up and disappear is just...unfathomable. So, just call us back.

Ben brushes his teeth. He turns the faucet knob, no water comes out.

BEN
C’mon.

Last message.

(CONTINUED)
WOMAN’S VOICE
Benjamin, this is Margret, your Probation officer. I’m calling in regards to the drug test that we have scheduled for you today. Remember it’s at five O clock. Don’t forget. Call me when you get this.

He gargles a mouthful of beer that rests beside the sink.

He spits it out.

BEN
Fuck!

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN CLASS- MORNING
Twenty little kindergartners are passed out on an area rug. Arthur is asleep, passed out at his desk along with the rest of his kindergarten class.

A KNOCK at the door.
Startled, Arthur pops his head up.
He gets up to answer it.

PRINCIPAL
You got a moment?

ARTHUR
Sure.

The Principal, DONALD ERGANG, late 40’s, shuts the door behind Arthur. The sound of the door wakes up the class.

DONALD
Jesus, your face.

ARTHUR
I have something on my face?

Arthur Pretends to wipe something off his face, as if he didn’t know he had multiple scraps across it.

DONALD
Have you looked in the mirror? Looks like someone threw you off a train.

(CONTINUED)
ARThUR
(Worried)
Is it bad?

DONALD
It’s....yea its bad. What happen to you?

ARThUR
I fell over.

DONALD
You fell over? What are you a toddler?

ARThUR
(child-like)
No.

DONALD
Well explain...that.

He points to Arthur’s face.

ARThUR
I was involved in a car accident.

DONALD
Were you drinking?

ARThUR
Is that really important?

DONALD
Yes, it is.

ARThUR
Well in that case I wasn’t.

DONALD
Look I get it. I use to be a bit of an animal myself back in my hay day. Parties left and right.

ARThUR
I wasn’t partying.

DONALD
Well, whatever. I know the scene. I know what goes down. You ever do cocaine through your asshole?

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
Uhm, no. Can't say I have.

DONALD
It burns like hell. But let me tell ya', what a rush.

ARTHUR
Maybe we should keep our voices down.

DONALD
Your right, we wouldn't want people getting the wrong idea. But what I'm sayin' is, that's all in my past. I'm done with those days. At a certain point we all gotta' move on and take responsibility. We are dealing with kids here, ya' know.

ARTHUR
I know.

DONALD
So, what's this about you needing a month off. I could barely make you out on my voice mail.

ARTHUR
Yea about that, I was...very tired when I made that call. What I said was, I needed take a month off because I'll be going away.

DONALD
Going away? Where?

Arthur panic's at Donald's follow up question.

ARTHUR
Uh, Bali.

DONALD
Bali?

ARTHUR
Yea Bali. I got relatives out there.

DONALD
In Bali?
CONTINUED:

ARTHUR
Yepe.

DONALD
So how long will you be staying in Bali for?

ARTHUR
Twenty eight days - A month.

DONALD
A month? You do know were gonna have to bring somebody else in to cover for you.

ARTHUR
I know. I just need a month. And I’ll be back and ready to teach.

DONALD
Bali?

ARTHUR
Bali.

Donald walks away, feeling confused about that conversation. Arthur peers through the window on the door, A kindergarten anarchy has engulf the room. Kids run a muck, up and down the aisles. Some are dancing on top of their desks.

He see’s a little boy trying to pull a fire extinguisher off the wall.

ARTHUR
Shit.

Arthur opens the door.

ARTHUR
Hey! Put that down. What I say about playing fireman.

INT. BEN’S HOUSE – DAY

Light streams through the window shades, as smoke clouds billow in the room.

Ben is having a smoke session with his friend, DONUTS(late 20’s).

Donuts is a bit heavy -- Nicknamed donuts because of his affinity for glaze. That and the fact that he’s fat as shit.

(CONTINUED)
Donuts takes a long toke. Holds it in, then speaks.

DONUTS
You stink. You don’t take showers?

BEN
There’s no water.

DONUTS
What do you mean no water? No hot water?

BEN
No, I mean no water.

DONUTS
No water? Where you living at, Guatemala? Who doesn’t have running water anymore?

BEN
Apparently I don’t.

DONUTS
That’s cause you live in a shit box. This place is freezing in the winter, you got no water. And look at this shit. You got enough pizza boxes stacked up you could build a little fort. This shit looks like who did it and ran. And what is that? Is that a...is that a lizard?

An iguana climbs over a pile of clothes in the corner of the room.

DONUTS(CONT)
You have a fucking lizard just running loose around here? How many pets are you up to?.

BEN
Not many, maybe about the same amount of kids you got running around.

DONUTS
Not many? It stinks like a pet land in here.

BEN
So does your house. I seen a shit covered diaper stuck to the wall at
BEN (cont’d)
your house last week. Don’t talk about my house now.

DONUTS
That’s emilio, that little bastard. He takes em’ out of...I hate him. But seriously, how many pets you up to?

BEN
Lets see, just got the lizard, I got Tyson, the cockatoo, the two hamsters. Uh...got some fish in the bedroom. Salt water. uh...I think that’s about it.

DONUTS
You sure? You sure there’s not an emu hiding in the closet or something?

BEN
How am I suppose to fit an emu in the closet? You don’t even know what an emu looks like do you?

DONUTS
I know what an emu looks like.

BEN
Yea, what is it?

DONUTS
It’s an animal that...that...that you can fit in your closet. That much I know.

BEN
Your full of shit.

Ben has a feeling like he’s forgetting something.

DONUTS
What’s up?

BEN
Have you ever gotten the feeling like your forgetting something important?
DONUTS
It’s usually my keys.

BEN
No, like its something you suppose
to do.

DONUTS
I don’t know, but I do gotta’ take
a piss.

Ben remembers.

BEN
SHIT!

DONUTS
What?

BEN
I gotta take the drug test today.
What time is?

DONUTS
Like four twenty.

BEN
No seriously.

DONUTS
Seriously man its 4:20.

BEN
Fuck. I gotta be there at 5.

DONUTS
How do you forget you have a drug
test?

BEN
Because I do drugs, that’s how.

DONUTS
I would say drink a gallon of
water, but...

Ben begins to looks for something in the room.

BEN
You seen a fake dick lying around
here?
DONUTS
A what?

BEN
The dick, the fake one. The one that holds the piss. How do you think I been passing these tests every month?

DONUTS
How do you lose a dick?

BEN
I don’t know.

DONUTS
Why don’t you smoke that fake shit instead. So you don’t have to worry about these tests every month. It’s gets you high, no?

BEN
Have you smoked that fake shit before. That shit aint’ right. It felt like my heart was racing and I was numb at the same time. You know how many chemicals they have in that shit?

DONUTS
No idea.

DONUTS
I dont know either. No one knows. I’m not smoking shit that gives you this impending feeling of death, like your gonna’ die any fuckin’ minute. Or get stuck like that, and fry your fuckin’ brain out. Besides, I hate the smell and love the smell of good weed.

BEN
Yea yea you and your fucking scents.

Ben can see Tyson chewing on the prosthetic penis.

BEN
Tyson NO! No No you fuck! Shit, shit.

Ben picks up the mangled remains of his get out of jail free cock.

(CONTINUED)
BEN (CONT)
It’s destroyed. What am I gonna do? I’m screwed. Fuck it, I’m not even going.

DONUTS
Don’t do that. That’s worse. Just go there and piss. Your allowed one fuck up. I think they even have it in print somewhere. Maybe not in those words, but its there. They give you like three strikes. Depending on your P.O.

BEN
You sure?

DONUTS
You kidding, they had me on a five year probation. I must have failed a dozen piss tests. They never locked me up. You’ll be fine. Trust me.

INT. PROBATION OFFICE - 5:30

Ben sits across from his probation officer, who seems to be disappointed by the results of Ben’s test.

P.O
You failed! I’m requesting the judge to send you to a rehab facility.

BEN
What? You serious? What happened to a warning? We’re not doing warnings? We got rid of warnings now? I been coming to you -- going on two years now. I been clean every time. Didn’t I at least earn one warning?

P.O
I don’t do warnings. The law’s the law.

BEN
(under his breathe)
 Fucking Donuts.
P.O
Excuse me?

BEN
I said, when am I going.

P.O
Soon as possible. It’s either this, or some jail Time. It’s only thirty days, you’ll be out before you know it. And for god sakes, don’t screw this up.

BEN
How could I screw this up?

P.O
I know you, there are plenty of ways you could manage that.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD/DRIVING/AFTERNOON

Arthur and his fiance JILL(35)— a striking brunette, almost too good for Arthur, drive down a county looking road.

ARTHUR
I cant believe I agreed to this.

JILL
You said it yourself, this place could be for the best.

ARTHUR
Sure, If I don’t have to miss work. You know where I told them I was going?

JILL
Where?

ARTHUR
Bali.

JILL
Bali?

ARTHUR
Yea, Bali.

JILL
Why bali?

(CONTINUED)
Arthur thinks a second, realizing it’s not a word.

ARTHUR (CONT)
It hangs over you.

JILL
He can be temperamental at times, I’ll admit. But he’s got a good heart. He just wants us to be happy.

ARTHUR
He wants you to be happy. That you, does not include me.

JILL
Your wrong.

ARTHUR
Really? Like the time I ate shaving cream, because your father thought
ARTHUR (cont’d)

it would be been funny to put in on my birthday cake. Or how about the time he shot me.

JILL

That was an accident. You boys went hunting. He got startled, you know he didn’t mean it.

ARTHUR

The hell I do.

JILL

He said you popped out of nowhere.

ARTHUR

I was right behind him.

JILL

Well maybe you shouldn’t be standing right behind a man with a rifle while he’s hunting.

ARTHUR

We were still following him. We didn’t even set up yet.

JILL

I’m sure it was an accident.

ARTHUR

Yea, another accident. You know how many accidents I’ve been in since we met. Our hospital is on a first name basis with me.

JILL

Well maybe you can stop drinking and driving. That might help cut down on all your accidents.

ARTHUR

I told you the brakes went out. I could have died.

JILL

I guess that also explains why you fell on your face during a sobriety test.
ARTHUR
Alright, I might have had a few drinks. But I’m not lying about those brakes.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE - DAY

Beautiful country grounds surround a two story complex. A colorful rose garden decorates the front entrance. A warm welcoming sign, "Welcome to Sunnyside" is posted outside.

Jill drives up to the front entrance of the facility.

JILL
Oh wow this is beautiful. You see this?

ARTHUR
It looks like a retirement home.

JILL
Look they got a volleyball net out there and everything. This place looks great.

ARTHUR
What’s with all the roses?

JILL
I think there beautiful.

ARTHUR
You don’t think that’s too many? They’re all over the place.

JILL
Must you harp on the negative? Now what day am I picking you up on?

ARTHUR
The twenty eighth.

Jill stares at Arthur intently.

JILL
I’m so proud of you for going through with this.

Jill leans over and gives Arthur a kiss.

(CONTINUED)
Wish me luck.

JILL
You won't need it.

Arthur grabs his bags and gets out the car. He looks back and see's Jill leaned over the seat, as she smiles and watches Arthur walk away.

INT. SUNNYSIDE - DAY

Arthur walks into the head councilor's office. The head councilor DEXTER(mid 40's) a short hyperactive man with a tendency to smile, all the time -- slams his desk draw shut, rises from his chair and walks over to greet Arthur.

DEXTER
You must be Arthur.

ARTHUR
And your?

DEXTER
The names Dexter. I'm the head councilor here at Sunny Side. Head honcho if you will. I was told you will be staying with us for a thirty day duration?

ARTHUR
Yep.

DEXTER
Well were happy to have you for as long as we can..

(awkward beat)

So as for your room, Since were booked heavy this month. We've been organizing our patients in pairs.

Two beds a room. So it looks like you'll be bunking with...

Dexter looks through some papers.

DEXTER(CONT)
Uhm...Benjamin Kushman.
INT. SUNNYSIDE HALLWAY - DAY

Ben casually walks through the main hallway with his duffel bag slung over his shoulder.

Music blasting in his ears -- Lit cigarette in his mouth, as he carelessly ashes on the hallway floor.

INT. SUNNYSIDE/DORM ROOM

Arthur puts a stack of neatly folded shirts away into his draw.

The door opens, Ben walks in.

    BEN
    Shit, what happen to your face?

    ARTHUR
    I adopted a baby tiger.

    BEN
    I tried to get an African monkey once, but someone told me that they have a tendency to smother you and dig out your eyes with their little monkey hands while your sleeping. So, I told the guy forget about it.

    ARTHUR
    Right. I was just joking.

    BEN
    Yea, I figured that. I wasn’t. So why you really here?

    ARTHUR
    Drinking.

Arthur points to his face.

    BEN
    Gotcha’.

    ARTHUR
    And you?

Ben opens his duffel bag and throws a zip lock bag of kush at Arthur.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
What are you crazy? You cant bring this in here?

BEN
Why not?

ARTHUR
Why not? We’re in rehab. You know that right?

BEN
Oh I know.

ARTHUR
You actually plan on smoking all this?

BEN
Not all of it. I figure I smoke about half, get rid of the rest.

ARTHUR
And you think this is good idea?

Arthur throws it back.

BEN
I think its a great idea. Who better to sell pot to, than a bunch of addicts and bingers.

ARTHUR
Well, the odds are favorably higher.

BEN
See.

ARTHUR
Your gonna’ get caught.

BEN
If I was constantly worrying about getting caught I wouldn’t be selling weed in the first place.

Arthur’s stumped as both of Ben’s answers stop him in his tracks.

Ben drops his bag by his bed.
BEN
Now, I’m gonna take a little nap.
If they call me for anything, I’m not here.

Ben lays back easy on his bed, tilts his fitted cap down and falls asleep.

INT. SUNNYSIDE GROUP SESSION ROOM - DAY

Around twenty people are in a circle of chairs. Each sharing their own personal accounts of addiction, as Dexter orchestrates the session.

CRACK HEAD MAN
(emotional)
It was dark, but I could still see the lights from the cars down the Street. I knew it had to be quick, And before I knew what I was doing...

(beat)
He ejaculated all over me. Then he just started laughing.

DEXTER
OK, Thank you Thomas.

CRACKHEAD MAN
(crying)
I didn’t even get the money.

DEXTER
OK, is there anyone else that would like to share.

Half the group raises their hand.

DEXTER(CONT)
A story without it ending with Men ejaculating on them.

Half of the people who raised their hands, lower them.

Dexter can see Ben nodding off in his chair.

DEXTER(CONT)
Excuse me, are we boring you? Can someone wake him.

Arthur slaps Ben on the arm to wake up.
Continued:

Arthur

Hey.

Ben abruptly wakes up. Still dreaming.

Ben
Tyson stop it!

Dexter
Glad you can join us. Are our story’s boring you today Mr. -

Ben
Kushman.

Dexter
Oh yes. Benjamin Kushman. I have it right here.

Ben
You can just call me Ben.

Room
Hellooo Ben.

Ben gets startled as the room greets him in unison.

Ben
Whoa. Didn’t expect the whole room to jump in. But OK.

Dexter
So were you listening to the group?

Ben
Sure.

Dexter
So what did Thomas say?

Ben
Uhm, I don’t know...he was ejaculated on?

Arthur holds in a laugh, while the room remains quiet.

Dexter
Perhaps you would like to share something with the group.

Ben
Like what?
DEXTER
How about on, why you’re here.

BEN
Well that’s easy. I blew a drug test. You guys know what that’s about huh? Or at least blowing something. Am I right guys. those two in the back, you know what am talking about. Dont act like you dont. Bunch of homo’s.

Ben looks around the room and laughs. He looks for recognition. The room agrees with simultaneous head nods.

DEXTER
Is that it?

BEN
Pretty much. Well, I never got cummed on if that counts for anything?

DEXTER
No, it doesn’t.

BEN
It really should.

DEXTER
OK, that’s enough. I think were done for today. Does anyone have any questions?

RANDOM VOICE
Yea, this place sucks.

DEXTER
That’s not a question.

SAME VOICE
(a bit lower)
Why does this place suck?

DEXTER
Now your just being be smart.
INT. SUNNYSIDE HALLWAY - DAY

Dexter approaches Ben, who is apparently in the midst of one of his transactions with another patient.

The man spots Dexter and walks away from Ben.

    BEN
    Where you going? What the fuck.

    DEXTER
    Hey Ben.

    BEN
    Yea, and you are?

    DEXTER
    Dexter. We just had a meeting this morning. You don’t remember?

    BEN
    Wait, were you one of those guys who got cummed on?

    DEXTER
    (concerned)
    No. We met twice already. Once at registration. A second time at group. Is none of this familiar?

    BEN
    I’m told I have a selective memory. I usually forget things I’ don’t care about.

    DEXTER
    Oh, well, OK. Just wanted to touch base. Let you know my door is always open. If you ever need a friend...It’s like my mother always said, a person can never have too many friends.

    BEN
    Well your mothers stupid. You can always have too many friends. Now if you don’t mind, I got to take a shit and a shower, so.

Ben walks right through Dexter as if he was selling insurance.

Dexter try's to get a hold on the moment.
INT. ARTHUR’S ROOM/SUNNYSIDE - NIGHT

laughs can be heard from the next room over. Arthur wakes up groggy to investigate.

He opens the door to the next room to see Ben and the room’s occupant, CLARENCE (mid 40’s). Their smoking a joint and telling stories.

    CLARENCE
    so that’s why my pants were down.
    but I couldn’t understand why I was fist deep in –

Arthur pokes his head in.

    CLARENCE (CONT)
    Can I help you?

    BEN
    Oh shit. It’s my roommate Arnold.

    ARTHUR
    Actually it’s Arthur.

    BEN
    You sure?

    ARTHUR
    Yea I’m sure, it’s my name. Can you guys keep it down. People are trying to sleep. It’s like two in the morning.

    BEN
    That’s it? Man come back at 6 if we’re still up.
        (to clarence)
        I thought it was late the way he came in.

    CLARENCE
    Shut the door!

Arthur shuts the door, as he walks away.

He hears them laughing even louder.
INT. MAIN ROOM/ GROUP SESSION - DAY

Arthur stands among a circle of eager listeners.

Ben’s eyes are practically shut with his head drooped forward.

ARTHUR
Where should I begin?

DEXTER
Just say what's on your mind.

ARTHUR
Ok...Where do I start. I hate his guts. And I never hated anyone. Never had a reason to. But when someone hates you with so much passion in their blood, the only thing you can do is hate em’ back. It feels like I’m being choked, and onetime literally. I woke up one night with his hands around my neck. It freaked me out. You know how it feels, to live your life with someone constantly telling you, that your worthless, a loser.

Ben raises his head and now acutely listens to Arthur.

ARTHUR(CONT
But what can I do? That’s her father. The man she’s been looking up to her entire life. How can I compete with that? I don’t know, I guess I drink to deal with the pressure. The expectations. The weight. But that’s no excuse. A man should own up to his decisions. So I guess that’s what brought me here.

DEXTER
Wow. Thank you Arthur. You see how Arthur here has opened up and not only took responsibility for his addiction, but is trying to understand and correct it for the better. I want everybody here to take this as an example of how we all perceive the world around us, and how it affects us, our lives and our decisions we make on a day (MORE)

(CONTINUED)
DEXTER (cont’d)
to day basis. OK, that’s it for
today. Well pick this up
tomorrow.

The session ends as everybody gets up chatting as they head for the door.

Ben walks along side Arthur.

BEN
Why don’t you just kill him.

ARTHUR
Two reasons. I love Jill. And
I’m not fond of group showers.

BEN
You don’t got the balls. That’s what your really saying.

ARTHUR
I got balls. Big balls. But I’m not gonna murder somebody because they don’t like me.

BEN
Yea, you don’t fit the killer type anyway.

ARTHUR
What’s that suppose to mean?

BEN
It means, you don’t fit the killer type.

ARTHUR
And what pray tell is the killer type?

BEN
Whatever you are, the complete opposite.

They enter the hallway, and walk toward their room.

ARTHUR
You don’t think I’m capable of murder? You think I’m some kind of square?
BEN
Well you are a square for using the word square.

ARTHUR
I think I could do it if I had to. If pushed came to shove.

BEN
Really?. OK, how many fights have you been in?

ARTHUR
What’s that gotta’ do with it?

BEN
It speaks volumes. It shows how willing a person is in engaging confrontations.

ARTHUR
I don’t know, one, maybe two.

BEN
One? And possibly a second? That’s pathetic. What are you like forty?

ARTHUR
Thirty eight.

BEN
And you been in one fight in thirty eight years? Did you at least win your only fight?

ARTHUR
I think it might have been a tie.

BEN
Of course it was.

ARTHUR
It was the fifth grade. I was getting bullied by a blind girl.

BEN
A blind girl?

ARTHUR
She may have been blind, but let me tell ya, she heard everything.

Ben laughs.
INT. THERAPIST OFFICE – DAY/ TWO WEEKS LATER

The therapist is older gentlemen in his late 50’s.

    THERAPIST
    Are you dealing with any stress?
    Any prolong periods of depression?
    Are you finding it difficult for you to experience joy.

    ARTHUR
    You sound like a AD for an antidepressant. I’m happy, I experience joy, for the most part.

    THERAPIST
    Tell me more about this father in law of yours.

Arthur’s face gets emotional.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE – DAY

Ben comfortably sits in his chair. With an expression of contempt aimed directly in front of him.

    THERAPIST
    So Benjamin. Can I call you Benjamin.

    BEN
    I’d rather you didn’t.

    THERAPIST
    Ben OK?

    BEN
    Yea that’s fine.

    THERAPIST
    You seem to be having some difficulty adjusting here at Sunny side. Is their something you wanted to talk about?

    BEN
    Not really. Just looking to do my thirty.

    THERAPIST
    Try not to think of it as doing your thirty. Sunnyside is meant To heal, but first you gotta-
CONTINUED:

BEN
-Hold on, you guys are gonna heal me? That’s rich. Whadda’ ya’ want to know? About my childhood? You want to know if my daddy beat on every night, while mom was pasted out on pills. How I never had a relationship that lasted a year. How I use drugs to mask the pain.

THERAPIST
Is all this true?

BEN
Fuck no.

THERAPIST
Language.

BEN
Sorry. Look, I know those are the things you want to hear. If your looking for me to break down and cry while you hug me saying, It’s not your fault, over and over again, you can forget it. I’m not gonna be singing along like some puppet dancing to show tunes.

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

Arthur cry’s, an emotional wreck. His arms wrapped around the therapist. The therapist is doing his best to console him.

THERAPIST
It’s not your fault. It’s not your fault.

ARTHUR
Why does he hate me?

THERAPIST
He doesn’t hate you. He just thinks your not good enough for his daughter.

ARTHUR
What?

(CONTINUED)
THERAPIST
It’s not your fault. It’s not your fault.

EXT. SUNNYSIDE COMPLEX - DAY

A group of patients play a friendly game of volleyball. Clarence spikes the ball, the ball strikes a cracked out woman in her face.

CRACKED OUT WOMEN
Ahh.

VOLLEYBALL PLAYER #1
Dude.

CLARENCE
What?

VOLLEYBALL PLAYER #1
We’re not even keeping score. Take it easy.

CLARENCE
Go fuck yourself.

Ben and Arthur sit on a wooden bench, just shooting the shit.

Dexter approaches the men.

DEXTER
Hey, how you guys doing?

BEN
We were having a conversation amongst ourselves, until you came.

DEXTER
You don’t like me very much, do you?

BEN
Do I have to answer that?

DEXTER
I’m just trying to be your friend.

BEN
Well there you go. Your trying. It’s obvious, weird and unnatural.

(CONTINUED)
DEXTER
Well my mother always said -

BEN
Again with your mother. Look, I don’t mean to be rude but...go away.

DEXTER
I’m sorry.

BEN
You should be.

Dexter looks like a hurt puppy as he walks away silently.

ARTHUR
That seemed a bit harsh.

BEN
Fucking guy comes on too strong. He comes off like he’s dying to make a friend. Always smiling. Look at Him.

Dexter loses his frown an adopts his usual joyful smile. He happily strolls along as he seeks to engage a conversation with someone else.

BEN(CONT)
That stupid fucking smile.
(beat)
So, like I was saying. Moderation. You gotta learn to do everything in moderation. When you drink, don’t over drink. Their gonna want to tell you to stay away from alcohol all together. Fuck that. Moderation. That’s the key. You don’t want to be the designated driver every night ya’ know.

ARTHUR
Easier said then done.

BEN
That’s why I prefer to smoke than drink. And the shit I got, practically cures cancer. Cloud nine mellow vibe. This shits medicine, I’m telling you.

Ben holds up a rolled joint.
CONTINUED:

BEN (CONT)
First one’s on me. C’mon, Arty. Don’t let me smoke alone in the woods.

ARTHUR
I don’t smoke.

BEN
Well at least take a walk. What else are you doing?

ARTHUR
I’ll take a walk, but I’m not smoking.

BEN
Fine, you don’t have to smoke.

ARTHUR
I mean it, I’m not smoking.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Both Ben and Arthur sit with their backs by a tree, smoking a joint. Their eyes are blood shot to the point of ridiculous.

ARTHUR
I love this air. You smell how fresh this air is? It’s intoxicating.

BEN
It is intoxicating. It’s good air.

ARTHUR
Good? It’s great.

Arthur takes another long breath in.

BEN
You ever had a problem trying to breathe without thinking about it, after you just thought about it?

ARTHUR
What?

BEN
Maybe I shouldn’t even fuck your head up with this.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
With what?

BEN
You sure you want to know?

ARTHUR
Yea, tell me.

BEN
Alright. Just don’t say I didn’t warn you.

ARTHUR
I won’t. Will you tell me.

BEN
You know how we breathe everyday without thinking about it, right? Involuntarily.

ARTHUR
Sure.

BEN
Well, what if I tell you to breathe manually?

ARTHUR
Manually?

BEN
The average person takes about thirty thousand breathes in a single day, give or take. That’s thirty thousand times we breathe in and out and not even think about it. Say if I tell you, to think about it. Think about each and every breathe that you take. Knowing you have to take the next one, and the one after that. Where your mind just gets so fixated on life’s most simplistic action—sometimes you can forget for days, months, and then one day your sitting around and that fucking thought pops up like a an evil thorn pricking you subconscious. "Think about breathing, think about breathing". "Think about breathing". Until you feel like you can just completely lose your shit. And then (MORE)
BEN (cont’d)
you calm down and realize, It’s just a stupid word.

ARTHUR
This is what you think about?

BEN
Why, you think it’s bullshit?

ARTHUR
Pretty much.

BEN
OK. So think about breathing. Let your mind think about it for one second. And tell me you wont be thinking about the next one. Are you breathing manually?

ARTHUR
Am I breathing manually, Are you?

Arthur takes in a breathe.

BEN
Oh, what was that?

ARTHUR
What was what?

BEN
You thought about that last breathe.

ARTHUR
I did not.

Arthur takes another calculated breathe.

BEN
Ha, you did it again.

ARTHUR
I did? Wait, Your right, I’m breathing manually.

Arthur takes another calculated breathe.

BEN
See.

(Continued)
ARTHUR
This is insane. I gotta stop thinking about it. Ok, I can beat this, Uhm, Pretzels.

BEN
Pretzels? That’s the first thing that comes to you. How About uhm, breathing.

ARTHUR
Fuck, stop it. You completely ruined this fresh air for me. I hope your happy.

BEN
I did warn you.

ARTHUR
I cant stop breathing.

BEN
Well you don’t want to completely stop breathing. You just don’t want to think about it.

ARTHUR
Your not helping. I’m having a panic attack In the middle of nowhere and - wait. Were not in the middle of nowhere right?

Ben looks around.

BEN
Sure, we came from uhm...

ARTHUR
Tell me were not lost in the middle of the woods.

BEN
Uhm, wow I have no clue in what direction we came from. You don’t know?

ARTHUR
No I don’t know. I was following you.

BEN
You don’t recognize any distinguishing trees?
ARTHUR
Distinguishing trees? Their fucking trees. They all look exactly the same!

BEN
Ok, let's pick a direction and just go.

ARTHUR
That's your big plan?

BEN
It's that or we just stand here and wait for the sun to go down. I don't know about you, but I'm not looking forward to these wild animals coming out at night.

ARTHUR
What kind of animals?

BEN
Coyotes, badgers, wild chipmunks...bears.

ARTHUR
Bears? You went from chipmunk's to bears?

BEN
We don't have any food, so we should be good. But then again, we are in the woods. So who knows.

ARTHUR
Which direction did you say?

BEN
Follow me.

Ben and Arthur journey into the woods. Blindly, they venture deeper in the wrong direction.

Ben is out front, as Arthur trails him. The branches that Ben passes through, whack Arthur in the face.

ARTHUR
Ahh shit, Watch where your walking.

BEN
You should watch, their hitting you in the face.
The sun has fallen, and full moon has got the animals in a frenzy.

Ben and Arthur have posted up in moon lit spot, where there is a break in the heavily dense trees.

A small fire they made, keeps them warm.

ARTHUR
Do you hear them?

BEN
Of course I hear them. They’re all around us.

ARTHUR
I don’t have a weapon.

BEN
Get a stick. In fact, go out and get two sticks.

ARTHUR
Two? Why don’t you go get em?

BEN
Will you just go get it.

ARTHUR
I’m only bringing back one, big one.

Arthur makes his way a few feet, bends down and reaches for a stick. instead he picks up the back of a skunks tale.

The skunk sprays Arthur.

ARTHUR
Fuck, I’m hit. I’m hit. Something got me.

Ben rushes over to Arthur. He comes to an abrupt halt after he catches a wiff of the skunk.

ARTHUR
(Hysterical)
Something spit at me.

BEN
Were you just sprayed by a skunk?
ARTHUR
It’s unbearable.

Arthur takes in a breath.

BEN
Now think about breathing.

Ben starts to laugh.

ARTHUR
You son of a bitch this isn’t funny.

(beat)
Fuck, and now I am thinking about breathing.

BEN
You hear that?

The sound of a helicopter approaches.

ARTHUR
Sounds like a helicopter.

The helicopter passes over and shines a spot light right on them. Just as it does, a group of men with flashlights reach Ben and Arthur.

BEN
Hey, over here.

Dexter and a group of park rangers reach the men.

DEXTER
Just what the hell do you guys think your doing out here?

ARTHUR
We got lost.

DEXTER
Do you know how far you are from Sunnyside?

BEN
A mile maybe. Two.

DEXTER
Try eleven.
ARTHUR
Eleven? We walked eleven miles?

BEN
You tracked us eleven miles?

DEXTER
The only way we found you is because we seen the smoke from the fire. Which by the way is illegal in a National preserve.

ARTHUR
Were in national preserve?

DEXTER
Yea, you crossed that line about –

Dexter’s nose flares up as he is smells the foul stench in front of him.

DEXTER
What is that smell?

ARTHUR
Skunk.

DEXTER
Well that’s the least of your problems, you guys are in big trouble when we get back.

INT. DEXTER’S OFFICE – NIGHT

Ben and Arthur sit nervously in Dexter’s office.

BEN
I feel like I’m in the principals office.

ARTHUR
No, its too dark in here. And these walls are all wrong.

BEN
You don’t stink by the way, what did they use?

ARTHUR
You don’t want to know.

Ben begins to sniff the air.

(CONTINUED)
BEN
You smell that? I smell weed.

ARTHUR
It’s probably coming off you.

Dexter comes out of the bathroom. He walks over to his desk, sits down and stares at Ben and Arthur.

That cheerful smile is gone. All that is left is man who has reached his limit.

BEN
How about we have that talk you wanted to have?

DEXTER
Save it. I heard everything you said about me. Dying to make a friend, pathetic, limp dick.

BEN
I never said limp dick.

DEXTER
Well whatever, I heard it all. Despite the rumors, I have excellent hearing. The only reason I was so nice to you, was that I believed in you. I thought maybe with a little guidance you can be giving a second chance. Instead you mock and ridicule and think you can just skate through this program. Well let tell you something, when all is said and done, the buck stops here. I say whether you stay, and whether you go. And seeing is how you broke rule nine.

BEN
- Money stays in the car till I say so?

DEXTER
What?

BEN
Scarface.

ARTHUR
That’s not rule nine. Rule nine is, "If I’m not back in fifteen minutes, somethings wrong".
BEN
You sure?

ARTHUR
Positive. Remember the part when Tony had the -

DEXTER
Hey, hey! Fuck is this, film class? I don’t think you guys are taking this serious. So, the only course of action I see is keeping you guys here for another month, at least.

ARTHUR
Another month? I can’t stay here another month. I got a job to get back to. I’m getting married next month.

BEN
Yea I gotta – He’s getting married next month.

DEXTER
You should have thought of that before you decided on that little field trip in the woods.

ARTHUR
That’s bullshit.

DEXTER
What?

ARTHUR
I said that’s bullshit. We really got lost, it was an honest mistake. It seems your coming down harsh because of your feelings toward Ben. I personally think that’s unprofessional.

DEXTER
Do not lecture me on professionalism. You two weren’t suppose to be in the woods in the first place. What are you guys ten, you got to go around exploring. I wish I can – If there was some –

Dexter feels his stomach turn. He leaps up and rushes back to the bathroom.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
Were fucked!

Ben rises from his chair, he leans over to investigate the smell from earlier. It’s stronger by Dexter’s desk.

ARTHUR
I don’t smell anything.

BEN
It's faint. But I got a nose for this. Comes from years of smoking. I’m like a bloodhound, I’ll find it.

ARTHUR
You better hurry up.

Ben rummages through Dexter’s draws. He moves papers and folders about. He stumbles on a secret compartment. Lifts it open, and finds a secret stash of drugs. Pot, Pills, powders, you name it.

ARTHUR
What is it?

BEN
Are ticket out.

The toilet flushes. Dexter exit’s the bathroom.

DEXTER
What are you doing?

BEN
What have you been doing?

Ben grabs a handful of mixed drugs and slaps it on the desk.

DEXTER
Where did you get that?

BEN
In your desk. Along with some pills. Coke, Is this heroin? You got yourself a nice little stock pile over here. I knew something was up with you. Always smiling and shit. It just not natural.

DEXTER
Those were confiscated off the patients.

(CONTINUED)
BEN
Is that right? Is that the procedure around here? You collect all the drugs brought in, and they all go in... your desk?

DEXTER
You know what, go head. I’ll just say that’s not mine. I’ll say you snuck into my office and planted this stuff in my desk. Who are they going to believe. a drunk and drug dealer, or me.

ARTHUR
I guess you can also explain the hidden compartment in the desk along with a test of your blood. Which you know will be asked, after we make this thing public. So, you sure you don’t want to reconsider your position.

BEN
Got em’.

INT. BEN AND ARTHUR’S ROOM - DAY

Ben throws his bag over his shoulders, takes a quick scan of the room to see if he forgot something.

BEN
I guess this is it. Time to go home.

Arthur stops packing and walks over to Ben. He extends out his hand for a handshake.

ARTHUR
You take care of yourself man.

Ben gives Arthur a pound, a handshake more accustomed to Ben’s close friends.

BEN
You too.

ARTHUR
Hey uhm.. You wouldn’t happen to have any of that pot left, would ya?

(CONTINUED)
BEN
Look at you, you’re a smoker now?

ARTHUR
I don’t know. But maybe I can substitute pot for liquor. See how that goes.

BEN
At least if your baked you don’t have to worry about getting into any more accidents.

ARTHUR
Why’s that?

BEN
You probably won’t be able to find your keys.

Arthur gets a chuckle out of it.

BEN(CONT)
But yea unfortunately, I’m all tapped out. Sorry.

ARTHUR
Don’t worry about it. It was just a thought.

BEN
I imagine you don’t have many weed connects.

ARTHUR
None I can think of.

Ben writes his number down on napkin by the table. He hands Arthur his number.

BEN
Now you got one

ARTHUR
Thanks.

BEN
Be good man. Call me up.

Ben leaves the room.

Arthur watches Ben leave as he realizes he probably just made a good friend.
EXT. SUNNYSIDE - MORNING

Arthur exits the front entrance. He spots Jill with huge smile plastered on her face, as she leans up against her car.

She runs up and throws herself into Arthur’s arms.

JILL
Baby, you did it.

Arthur looks worn down.

JILL
You OK?

ARTHUR
Yea I’m fine, just tired.

JILL
Anything interesting happen?

ARTHUR
Uh, nothing I can think of.

JILL
C’mon, lets get you home.

They get in the car and drive off.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

A car pulls up to a long circular driveway, in front of a castle like mansion.

Arthur and Jill sit in the car.

JILL
You look nervous.

ARTHUR
I dread coming to these dinners. Every time I’m here it feels like an inquisition.

JILL
He’s not that bad.
ARTHUR
Not that bad? Your father’s Darth Vader, just without the helmet.

JILL
So that means I’m Leia?

ARTHUR
No, cause than that means I’m Luke. And then it just gets weird.

JILL
Why would you be Luke?

ARTHUR
Can we stop talking about star wars.

JILL
OK, you brought it up.

ARTHUR
I am nervous though. I feel like a boxer who just finished training, thrown into title bout. I got to slip the jab, slip the jab.

JILL
Do you hear yourself? Everything’s going to be fine. Look at me. Everything-will-be-fine.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

The mansion is lavished with marble tiles and roman pillars connecting each of the rooms. The ceiling is tall, just shy of the height of a church.

Dinner nears the end with the main course nearly finished.

Mr. HARDWELL(60) Jill’s father, a big man physically as well as in stature, is busy praising PHILLIP MASON(38) a microbiologist, a bachelor more importantly in regards to Mr. Harrows daughter Jill.

MR. HARDWELL
And under three years?

PHILLIP
Yep.

(CONTINUED)
MR. HARDWELL
Outstanding.

PHILLIP
Oh it’s not that impressive. I’m sure you did very well at Yale yourself sir.

MR. HARDWELL
Well I did graduate at the top five percent of my class.

MR. Hardwell and Phillip LAUGH

Arthur sticks his tongue out. Sick of watching these two blow each other.

Mr. Hardwell spots the look from Arthur, and gives him back a grizzly look of disdain.

MRS HARDWELL(57) enters the dining area with a bottle of Merlot.

PHILLIP
So Arthur, what is you do again?

ARTHUR
I’m a teacher.

MR. HARDWELL
He’s a substitute.

JILL
Dad.

MR. HARDWELL
Well he is.

PHILLIP
Teenagers can be a handful. What grade do you teach?

MR. HARDWELL
Kindergarten.

PHILLIP
Oh.

Phillip snickers.

MR. HARDWELL
Can you believe it. A male substitute kindergarten teacher.

(MORE)
MR. HARDWELL (cont’d)
Have you ever heard of such a thing?

JILL
Dad will you stop attacking him.

MR. HARDWELL
I’m just saying, it’s kind of weird.
(toward Arthur)
Right Pal?

ARTHUR
You want me to tell you what I thinks weird?

MR. HARDWELL
By all means.

ARTHUR
OK, I think this whole damn dinner right now is weird.

MR. HARDWELL
Excuse me?

JILL
Arthur.

ARTHUR
I mean, who is this guy and why is he here? Yea I get it, you two know each other from Yale. Even though your like thirty years older than him. That’s kinda weird right there. And could it be any more obvious on how your basically dangling this guy in front of Jill. You think I cant see what’s going on here? Lining up a replacement are we?

Jill is shocked to see Arthur stand up to her father.

MR. HARDWELL
Phillip is more than your replacement. You couldn’t accomplish in a year what he does in a week.

ARTHUR
Yea, what do you do?
PHILLIP
I’m a micro biologist.

ARTHUR
And that’s...what is that?

PHILLIP
I study microbes and bacteria. Primarily with chimp feces.

ARTHUR
So you study shit?

JILL
Arthur.

PHILLIP
Among other things.

JILL’S MOTHER
I don’t think this is proper dinner conversation.

JILL
Moms right. Lets change the subject.

PHILLIP
So I heard you just came out of rehab Arthur. What was that like?

ARTHUR
It sucked. Kind of like when someone brings up something you don’t want to talk about and then that person gets punched in the face for it. Sort of like that.

JILL
Arthur! Whats gotten into you.

ARTHUR
He asked a question.

JILL
Can you pass the wine mom?

JILL’S MOTHER
Sure.

ARTHUR
I’ll take a glass.
JILL
You sure?

ARTHUR
I don’t think one glass of wine will kill me.

MR. HARDWELL
It will if you get behind the wheel again.

ARTHUR
Not letting that go are you?

MR. HARDWELL
Should I? It’s only been a month. You really think you changed in a month.

ARTHUR
I think I’m the same man your daughter fell in love with.

MR. HARDWELL
This wouldn’t happen to be the same man who crashed my Lexus up a pole.

JILL’S MOTHER
Jeffery please.

MR. HARDWELL
I just want my daughter to know who she’s marrying. Now that we all know he’s an alcoholic-

ARTHUR
- I’m not an alcoholic!

JILL
Arthur!

MR. HARDWELL
So the rabbit shows its teeth.

JILL’S MOTHER
Can everybody please just, calm down.

JILL
Dad I don’t know why your so hard on Arthur. Yea OK, maybe a few years ago when he didn’t have a job, and he wasn’t shaving, and he (MORE)

(CONTINUED)
JILL (cont’d)
going through that whole Una bomber Stage.

ARTHUR
Una bomber?

JILL
You had a lot of hoodies. A lot of hoodies. But now he’s changed. He’s a good man. He works with children.

MR HARDWELL
Please. Drawing inside the lines and sleeping in a circle is not exactly a professional curriculum.

ARTHUR
I don’t need to take this again.

Arthur stands up at the table, and heads for the door.

JILL
Arthur please.

ARTHUR
I’m going for a drive.

MR. HARDWELL
Be careful.

JILL
Dad will you stop it.

Arthur stops to turn around.

ARTHUR
He’ll never stop. It’s in his nature.

Arthur is now talking directly to Mr. Hardwell.

ARTHUR(CONT)
You’re impossible to please. And at this point, I don’t think I even give a shit anymore. No matter what I do, it’s never good enough. And it will never be good enough.

Mr. Hardwell rises from his chair.

(CONTINUED)
MR HARDWELL
That’s right, you’ll never be good enough for my daughter. As much as you try, you will always be an underachieving, weaseling drunk! An embarrassment to this family.

ARTHUR
And on the note, have fun with Phillip the fucking the shit doctor.

Arthur heads for the door again.

Jill runs over to Arthur by the front door. She catches up to him before he leaves.

JILL
Where are you going?

ARTHUR
I gotta see somebody for something?

JILL
You gotta see somebody for something? What the hell does that mean?

ARTHUR
I’ll be back in a little bit.

JILL
Don’t leave me stranded here.

ARTHUR
Stranded? Your father has like fifty cars. I’m sure you’ll be fine.

JILL
Your coming home tonight right?

ARTHUR
Of course.

JILL
Please be careful.

MR HARDWELL+(O.S)
Let him go. Hopefully he crashes and does us all a favor.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
You see...

Arthur walks out the door.

EXT. ARTHUR’S CAR/DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Arthur sits in his car and looks down at his phone.

ARTHUR
"Hopefully he crashes and does us all a favor". Fucking dick.

He calls a number off his phone, then pulls off hard, racing down the street.

INT. MANHATTAN/ BAR - NIGHT

Arthur walks into the bar with a sense of trepidation. He scans the room, looking for Ben.

Ben is about fifteen feet to the right of Arthur.

Ben gets up and walks over, he stands behind Arthur.

BEN
Don’t make a move.

Arthur spins around expecting the worst. He see’s Ben’s big smile grinning back at him. A sigh of relief rolls over Arthur’s Face.

BEN
You made it.

ARTHUR
Wasn’t hard to find.

BEN
What happen, your father in-law driving you up the walls again?

ARTHUR
I swear to god, I think this guy, if given the opportunity, would pay to have me killed.

BEN
That bad?

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
The worst.

BEN
So what are you drinking?

ARTHUR
Oh I didn’t come here to drink.

BEN
You came to a bar. Your having at least a shot.

ARTHUR
I’m not sure that’s a good idea.

BEN
You wouldn’t have come here if you thought otherwise.

ARTHUR
Actually, I came here for pot.

BEN
Pot I got. Right now, it’s shots.

ARTHUR
I don’t know.

BEN
Just look at it this way, it’s our welcome home party.

ARTHUR
It been two weeks. You cant say that every time we hang out.

BEN
Sure I can.

ARTHUR
I’ve been good so far, I don’t know.

BEN
Are you a man, or what?

ARTHUR
I’m definitely a man.

BEN
So its time to act like one. The only way to face your fears is to tackle them head on.

(CONTINUED)
(convincing himself))
Well its not like I cant drink at all.

BEN
Right.

ARTHUR
Particularly if its a special occasion. I’m gonna have a drink or two.

BEN
Exactly.

ARTHUR
I’ll drink a bottle right now. Just to prove A point.

BEN
Whoa, slow down. Lets start with a shot.

ARTHUR
Yea its just mind over matter.

BEN
Yea. If you don’t mind getting fucked up, then it don’t matter.

ARTHUR
Not exactly what I was going for, but yea.

ARTHUR
Cheers.

Lining up three shots, THE BARTENDER takes the bottle of whiskey and starts pouring.

Quick still shots of Arthur and Ben, as they pound back shot after shot.

Ben introduces Arthur to his friend Donuts.

All three of them down more shots.

A man turns away from his drink to talk to a friend. Arthur see’s this and swaps his empty bottle of beer with the mans.

The scene gets rowdy as Arthur has let himself go. He’s completely inebriated, as him and his new found friends stumble out the bar.

(CONTINUED)
Arthur drags a bar stool with him.

BARTENDER
Hey, what are you doing?

ARTHUR
(LAUGHING)
Oh shit, sorry.

EXT: BAR - NIGHT

All three men play leap frog in the street, like a bunch of kids. Donuts crouches down as Ben decides to kick him in the ass.

Donuts falls on his face.

Ben finds it hysterical.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Arthur and the guys walk down a residential street. Along the side of them are a line of thick bushes.

Donuts pushes Ben as hard as he can right into them.

DONUTS
Bush whack bitch.

Ben stumbles head first into a bush.

BEN
Ahh, you dick. This bush got no leaves. I just got stabbed by a thousand sharp branches. I think I’m bleeding.

EXT. THE BIG FAT PUSSY CATS/PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Donuts pisses on a car. Particularly on the driver door handle. A feeling of drunken bliss is released like a pressure valve.

DONUTS
Oh my god, few pleasures in life. This moment, I will remember...ahhh.
INT. BIG FAT PUSSY CATS - NIGHT

The three men walk in the club and notice a dwindling crowd and four very large women dancing, in four very tight bikini’s.

BEN
What the fuck?

ARTHUR
Am I this drunk? Or am I really seeing double?

BEN
It’s like watching the animal planet.

DONUTS
You guys fags or what? That’s pussy down there.

BEN
Where? Under the second, or third roll?

ARTHUR
Why am I here? Whose responsible for this?

DONUTS
My cousin says he goes here all the time. Maybe the regular girls are off tonight, so what.

BEN
I think these bitches ate the regular girls.

DONUTS
They got 3 dollar taps.

ARTHUR
Well I guess we can stay for a beer or two.

The men reluctantly sit down at a table.

An overweight stripper, wearing nothing but fishnets and a G-STRING, comes to the table.

STRIPPER
Which one of you boys want to ride the Panda express tonight?

(CONTINUED)
Both men point toward Arthur.

BEN
I know my friend here is dying for a lap dance. He just loves plus size women.

ARTHUR
He’s actually wildly misrepresenting me.

DONUTS
It’s on me. Show him a good time will ya’.

STRIPPER
It’ll be my pleasure.

The stripper grabs Arthur by his shoulder -- thrusts him up off his chair, and leads him away from the table.

Arthur has a frightened look as he’s escorted into the back room.

INT. PRIVATE ROOM/PUSSY CAT CLUB

The overweight stripper straddles Arthur, riding him like baby on a quarter ride.

Arthur, noticeably in pain, trying to get through it.

STRIPPER
What’s a matter sugar? Your not enjoying yourself?

ARTHUR
How long is this song?

STRIPPER
Oh you don’t have to worry about the time. This ones on the house.

ARTHUR
(in pain)
Funny, feels like the house is on me.

STRIPPER
What’s that?
ARTHUR
I think I lost feeling in my legs.

STRIPPER
You sure?

ARTHUR
Yea I think something’s wrong.

The stripper stops, and hops off.

STRIPPER
You OK?

ARTHUR
No, no I don’t think I am.

Arthur try’s to straighten out his legs. A task that seems impossible.

STRIPPER
What’s wrong?

ARTHUR
What’s wrong? Well the blood that usually goes through my legs has stopped. I’d say for a full five minutes now. And I think you broke my femur.

EXT. THE BIG FAT PUSSY CATS - NIGHT

The men stumble out the club. Arthur grips his leg.

BEN
You alright?

DONUTS
What happen, she was too rough on you?

ARTHUR
She weighed close to Volkswagen.

They laugh.

Arthur pisses on a door handle on one of the cars in the parking lot.

BEN
What are you doing?

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
I believe its called, relieving yourself. You try having a 300 pound hippo use you as a chair.

DONUTS
Well hold it in now, cause there’s someone in that car.

Arthur is shocked to see a man in the front seat, just livid after watching a stranger carelessly piss on his driver door.

The man swells in anger as he wants to open the door, but is forced to wait in fear of any piss hitting him once the door is open.

MAN IN CAR
You mother fucker!

Donuts pulls the car around. They all jump inside. Arthur being rushed, pissed down his leg.

They all laugh as they make the escape.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET FROM ARTHUR’S HOUSE - MORNING
Arthur’s passed out on a sidewalk across the street from his house. He starts to wake up as he hears his name being called from a distance.

JILL
ARTHUR!

Arthur opens his eyes to see his Jill in the middle of the street. She walks toward him, pissed as hell.

JILL
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

ARTHUR
Huh?

JILL
What are you doing out here?

ARTHUR
Out where?

JILL
Were you drinking last night?

Arthur holds his head from the pounding headache.
ARTHUR
Last night? What- what happen?

JILL
You tell me? Where’s your shirt?

ARTHUR
My shirt? Where is my shirt?

Arthur is surprised to notice that he’s bear chested.

JILL
And the car?

ARTHUR
I don’t know. It’s kind of a blur.

JILL
You reek of alcohol. Did you crash again? Is that what you did? You crashed and...lost your shirt?

ARTHUR
I cant remember.

JILL
Just...get in the house!

ARTHUR
Alright, stop yelling, I’m not a dog.

JILL
Inside! Now!

Arthur scampers into his house.

INT. ARTHUR’S HOME/BATHROOM - MORNING

Arthur is clearly hungover trying to adjust his eyes as he’s splashes water on his face in the bathroom sink.

Jill stands by the doorway, holding up her cellphone.

JILL
Yea daddy he’s here. No every things fine. Everything’s fine, I’ll call you later...Yea he’s going into work today. Ok....Ok....I love you too. Bye.

Jill hangs up.
JILL
What the fuck happen to you!

ARTHUR
I’d tell you if I could remember.

JILL
Don’t pull that memory shit with me. What happen last night?

ARTHUR
I don’t know, a bad night I guess.

JILL
You guess?

ARTHUR
Well I cant remember much, so I’m going on assumptions.

JILL
I’m not joking!

Jill SLAPS Arthur across his shoulder then pushes him.

ARTHUR
I’m sorry. I fucked up, OK.

JILL
Ya’ think!

ARTHUR
I think the most important thing is that I came home at all. You find me across the street sprawled out on a stoop missing a shirt. And the first thing you come up with is that I must have been drinking. Whose to say I didn’t get beat up and robbed, left for dead on the street. What kind of person are you for leaping to such bold conclusions?

JILL
That would be plausible. However, you reek of alcohol, you have vomit on your pants. And you just got out of REHAB!

ARTHUR
That sounds so bad when you say it like that.
JILL
Because it's not good!

ARTHUR
Will you relax.

Arthur leaves the bathroom as Jill follows behind him.

JILL
So who were you with last night that let you come home like this? Those new friends of yours? The ones you been sneaking around and hanging out with. Like your seventeen goddamn years old.

ARTHUR
Their not seventeen.

JILL
Really? There's a penis drawn on your back by the way.

ARTHUR
What?

Arthur turns his body, looks into a wall mirror and sees a cartoon penis shooting a load on his back from a black magic marker.

ARTHUR
Son of a bitch.

JILL
These are your friends?

INT: BEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ben and a female companion are smoking a bong, as the house is consumed with smoke.

Ben takes a hard rip from the long bong. He blows out a cloud.

BEN
Whoa, that got my dizzy.

GIRL
Your a pussy. Let me see that.

BEN
Be easy. That's like taking a 12 gauge to ya face.
The girl takes an even stronger rip off the bong than Ben. She holds it in -- then blows it out.

The bong hit causes her to cough uncontrollably. A very deep harsh cough. A man cough. Not very lady like.

Ben is taken back by her violently loud cough.

BEN
Take it easy. You alright.

She continues to cough.

BEN
Breathe.

She finally catches her breath, then hocks up a nasty loogie on the floor.

BEN
Oh, what the fuck!

GIRL
What happen?

BEN
What happen? You just hock up some shit on my floor.

GIRL
Did I?

BEN
Watjue’ think, were outside?

GIRL
Sorry, but lets face it, your apartment isn’t exactly the Ritz.

BEN
That still doesn’t mean I’m gonna start spitting and pissing on the floors. You know what, it’s time for you to go.

GIRL
Why?

BEN
I don’t gotta give a reason. I got shit to do today. You gotta go.
CONTINUED:

GIRL
You know you could have asked me nicer.

BEN
I’m not asking you. Get the fuck out.

GIRL
Fuck you Ben.

She heads for the door

BEN
No, I’ll be fucking you this weekend.

GIRL
You wish.

BEN
Yea, well see.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MORNING

Arthur sits alone in the principals office, looking nervous and a bit hung over.

Donald walks in.

DONALD
So Art, How do you feel?

ARTHUR
I feel great.

DONALD
Really? Cause’ you don’t look great. In fact, you look like shit. How come every time I see you, you got a new marks on your face? What do you sleep on asphalt?

ARTHUR
No...that’d be crazy.

DONALD
Listen Arthur...

The Principal gets up and opens the window. He then proceeds to light up a cigarette.

(CONTINUED)
DONALD (CONT)
I know you just came out of a rehab for drinking. In fact, the whole faculty knows it. I get it, your fucked up in the head. You like the bottle like the baby likes the Bibby?

ARTHUR
What?

DONALD
I wish we can keep you here. You seem like a fun guy. But we don’t need fun guys here. We need teachers. We work at a school. We got rules, certain dress codes.

ARTHUR
Something wrong with my shirt?

DONUTS
Your shirt’s fine. Your face isn’t.

ARTHUR
Wait, are you firing me?

DONALD
We like to say "let go". Firing is just too (MAKES GUN GESTURE) violent. These days we got to watch what we say, you know.

ARTHUR
Like how the principal of an elementary school use to do coke through his asshole.

DONALD
Exactly. Oh, I see. You gonna use that against me now?

ARTHUR
Why shouldn’t I?

DONALD
Look Art, this one is out my hands. This goes way above my pay grade. The district superintendent gave me a call this morning. She said you gotta go. I wish things could have been different. I really do.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
DONALD (cont’d)
This isn’t gonna affect our friendship is it?

ARTHUR
What friendship? We’re not friends or buds or pals. Your my boss, and I’ve, just been fired.

DONALD
(softly)
Let go.

ARTHUR
Yea, got it!

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/HALLWAY – MORNING

Arthur walks down the first floor hallway. He hears the sound of commotion coming from the boys bathroom.

He walks in and see’s a 4th grader being roughed up by a bunch of boys.

He scares the boys away, then bends down to console the 4th grader.

ARTHUR
You OK?

BOY
Yea I’m OK.

ARTHUR
You’ll be alright.

BOY
Are you OK?

ARTHUR
Yea, why?

BOY
Its just...You got marks on your face, were you dealing with bullies too.

ARTHUR
Oh this?

He points to his face.

(CONTINUED)
This is from sleeping on a side walk. Don’t ever do that by the way.

Why don’t you like sleeping on your bed?

I do...I...C’mon lets get out of here.

Arthur exists the bathroom with the boy.

MS. GRADY, a forth grade teacher, spots Arthur leaving the bathroom with the boy and keeps her eyes suspiciously locked on him.

Oh don’t give me that look. Your sick Ms Grady. It’s not what it looks like.

Arthur pushes the kid in the back.

Alright get out of here kid.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MORNING

A car sits idling across the street from the school.

Inside are two undercover narcs. Their badges dangle from their necks.

So your saying Babe Ruth wouldn’t have did steroids?

They had too much class back then.

Class? Half of them were drunks. And by the seventy’s half were on coke. They just never had the opportunity to cheat. That shit wasn’t around back then. And at this point, I say let them all take roids. Make it even. Whoever cracks the most home runs is the better.
CONTINUED:

NARC TWO (cont’d)
player. Problem solved. You eliminate the cheating if everybody participates. It’s two birds with one stone. You eliminate the cheating aspect and at the same time, you make the game a lot more exciting.

NARC ONE
So you wouldn’t mind seeing gorilla after gorilla stepping up to the plate, crushing balls.

NARC TWO
Whose to say they crush anything. Remember, everybody would be on them. Even the pitchers. You try hitting hundred and five mile per hour pitch.

NARC ONE
That’s not baseball.

NARC TWO
It should be. Baseball sucks. It needs a face lift. Football, basketball, shit tennis is even exciting. But baseball...its turning into golf. Just long periods of me staring, waiting for something to happen. Its like this stake out.

NARC ONE
Speaking of which. Were on.

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MORNING

Arthur walks out the school to see Ben right out front. He sits in the drivers seat of Arthur car, hip hop music blasting as he bops his head to the beat.

BEN
ARTYYYY!

ARTHUR
Ben?

BEN
That’s right. Looks what I brought you.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
Lower that, we're in a school zone.

Ben shuts off the music, and steps out of the car.

ARTHUR (CONT)
What happens here?

Arthur notices two long scratches on the side of his car.

BEN
I noticed that too. I'm guessing you didn't always have that.

ARTHUR
No, I didn't. And why do you have my car?

BEN
You left it by my house. You don't remember?

ARTHUR
No I don't. What happened last night. Why was I without my shirt across the street from my house?

BEN
We got fucked up is what happened. You especially. You told me your cross streets but fell asleep before I could get the house number.

ARTHUR
So you just left me on a sidewalk?

BEN
We figured you'd get up eventually and walk inside.

ARTHUR
And who drew a dick on my back?

BEN
My guess would be Donuts.

ARTHUR
Nice friend of yours.

BEN
Yea, he can be a dick.

Ben seems hesitant to ask Arthur a question.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BEN
I hate to ask this but...I need a favor.

ARTHUR
(dreading)
What is it?

BEN
Well seeing how I got your car back. I was hoping...

ARTHUR
Do you need a ride?

BEN
Yea.

ARTHUR
Fine.

Ben opens the driver the door.

ARTHUR
I’ll drive.

BEN
Sorry, force of habit.

EXT. LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY/DRIVING - MORNING

Arthur and Ben cruise down the highway. No traffic in ahead of them.

The car is filled with smoke.

ARTHUR
Do you have to smoke all the time?

BEN
No, I don’t have to. I just do.

ARTHUR
Don’t you ever feel like, maybe you should give it a break every now and then.

BEN
No, not really. What crawled up your ass?

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
Well, I was just fired. Because I look like some fucking wino who got in a fight with a prostitute. But other than that, I’m fine.

BEN
You got fired just now?

ARTHUR
Not fired, "let go". As they like to put it. Apparently my face didn’t go over to well with members of the faculty, and for some reason the superintendent. So they canned me.

BEN
Don’t you got tenders or something?

ARTHUR
Tenders? What, like chicken tenders? what are you talking about?

BEN
You know what I mean.

ARTHUR
Oh tenure. Yea, I should. But with my luck, something will come up and I’ll lose that too.

(beat)
It really does stink in here though.

BEN
You don’t like this smell?

ARTHUR
No, not particularly

BEN
What a shame, I love it. I mean like, I really love it. I even got the perfect investment for it.

ARTHUR
An investment? Like what?

BEN
I want to put out a line of different exotic weed scents and have them as car fresheners.
Arthur starts laughing.

BEN
What’s so funny?

ARTHUR
Are your serious? Or was that a joke?

BEN
I’m serious.

ARTHUR
You can’t possible have peoples cars stinking like weed.

BEN
Why not?

ARTHUR
Because it won’t work. The last thing people want when they get pulled over is the car to stink like pot.

BEN
Yea, but if you got one of my fresheners, and you already are smoking weed. They can just say it’s the car freshener when they get pulled over.

Arthur thinks a moment.

ARTHUR
That’s actually not a bad idea.

BEN
Told you.

ARTHUR
Fine, you sold me. Gimme a pull.

Arthur takes a toke.

POLICE lights flash behind them. The undercover narcs pull them over.

ARTHUR
Shit, Cops!
BEN
Put that out.

ARTHUR
Where? Where would you like me to put this? I’m throwing it out the window.

BEN
Not out the window. Your gonna have to swallow it.

ARTHUR
You want me to swallow a lit joint.

BEN
I’d advise you to put it out before swallowing it. But yea, swallow it.

ARTHUR
Why cant you swallow it?

BEN
Because you were the last one holding it. Besides, I dont swallow.

ARTHUR
Yea, very funny. I cant believe I’m doing this.

Arthur clips the joint, and begins to chew it down where he can swallow it.

ARTHUR
Aw, its awful.

BEN
Its not that bad.

In an attempt to camouflage the smoke, both Arthur and Ben light up long Newport 100’s.

The two undercover narcs step out of their car and approach Ben and Arthur.

BEN
Just be cool, be cool.

The officer taps on the window at the drivers side.

Arthur lowers a window and a cloud of mixed smoke hits the officer in the face.

(CONTINUED)
NARC ONE
How’s it going guys?

ARTHUR
Pretty good. And you?

NARC TWO
Lot of smoke in there huh?

Arthur raises his cigarette up.

NARC ONE
Smells like something else too. What’s up wit your friend?

BEN
Who me?

NARC ONE
No, the one sitting behind you.

Ben looks back.

NARC ONE
Of course you.

BEN
I’m fine. Just - fine.

NARC TWO
Yea? You look a little stoned to me.

ARTHUR
He always looks like that. It’s kind of a slow look.

NARC ONE
OK, Do me a favor. Step out of the vehicle please.

ARTHUR
Why, is there something I did wrong.

NARC TWO
When did this become democracy?

ARTHUR
Seventeen seventy six?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

NARC ONE
Smart ass huh. Pop the trunk and step out!

Arthur pops the trunk and then him and BEN step out of the car.

Narc two makes his way to the back of the car to look inside the trunk.

ARTHUR
What’s going on here? I wasn’t speeding. I didn’t do anything wrong.

NARC ONE
Then you have nothing to worry about.

NARC TWO
We got something!

NARC ONE
I thought you had nothing to hide.

ARTHUR
I don’t.

Narc two slaps a kilo of coke on the hood between Ben and Arthur.

NARC TWO
Yea, what do you call that than? Found this in the trunk. You boys better start calling your lawyers.

INT. PERCENT HOLDING CELLS - AFTERNOON
Arthur and Ben are in separate cells beside each other.

Arthur is nervously pacing back and forth as Ben sits patiently still.

ARTHUR
I actually trusted you.

BEN
I’m telling you that shit wasn’t mine. They must have planted it there or something.
ARTHUR
How can I possibly believe anything you have to say?

BEN
Because I thought we were friends.

ARTHUR
Are we? I barely know you. Who are you? I trusted in you to make sure I got home. You had my car, you were riding around with coke in the trunk. I mean what the fuck, what kind of friend is that?

BEN
And you blame me?

ARTHUR
There’s nobody else here.

BEN
You feel like you need to vent? Go right ahead. Just don’t go blaming me for your fuck ups.

ARTHUR
Excuse me, my fuck ups? What fuck ups?

BEN
We live in two different worlds Arty. You see things one way, and I another. You think that someone taking your car for a night was their fault. Meanwhile you’re the one who was passed out cold on a sidewalk like some college chick. Whose fault is it really?

ARTHUR
I thought you said it was parked?

BEN
Is that really important? And then I go and get you your car back for you, and this is the thanks I get. Yea you are right. We’re not friends. I couldn’t imagine being friends with a winy little bitch like you.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
FINE!

BEN
FINE!

The door opens, an officer escorts Mr. Hardwell in the room. Then leaves.

ARTHUR
Oh great.

Mr. Hardwell wears a huge smile on his face.

BEN
Whose this joker?

MR. HARDWELL
Your worst nightmare.

BEN
Yea I’m real scared.

MR. HARDWELL
You should be.

ARTHUR
What are you doing here?

MR. HARDWELL
Just here to watch you burn.
(beat)
For years now I had to hold my true feelings aside. Had to bite my tongue and pretend to at least tolerate you, for the sake of my daughter.

ARTHUR
Well you did a shitty job at that.

MR. HARDWELL
But not no more. When you’ve reach the heights of success that I have, you get to the point where you realize, anything is possible. With enough money, you can buy your own future. And that future, did not include you. So, I set some things in motion.

Mr. Hardwell pulls out an asthma pump and takes a quick inhale.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
You set me up?

MR HARDWELL
And its not the first time neither. How you walked away from that crash is beyond me.

ARTHUR
I knew you messed with the brakes.

MR. HARDWELL
To be fare, you were drunk. But the accident, rehab, your job and now this. Are all pieces to help illustrate a portrait of a man who is reckless and out of control. Chess pieces if you will, set into play. Dictating your next move. Which all make this charge, that much more believable.

ARTHUR
Your a psycho, you know that right?

MR. HARDWELL
You have no idea.

ARTHUR
Your not gonna get away with this.

MR HARDWELL
Look around, I already did. And oh, don’t even think about stepping a foot in that house. Lets not forget its still under my name. If I’m there, and I see you in there, you will be shot on the spot. And this time I wont graze your shoulder.

Mr. Hardwell whistles and strolls out of the holding cell room.

BEN
Wow. What a douche bag.

ARTHUR
Look, I’m -

BEN
I know. Don’t worry about it.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
I cant believe he would do that. I mean, I knew he was a cocksucker, but this is just...diabolical.

BEN
Its fucked up alright. You OK?

ARTHUR
No. No I’m not OK. My life just exploded in my face. I’m being charged with possession of cocaine. A goddamn kilo! I just found out that for the past few years my father in law has meticulously drew out a plan to literally end my life. I lost my Job, my fiancee, I cant even go home. This is like...definitely the worse day of my life.

BEN
I would say this shit happens, but... I haven’t seen no shit like this before. This shits crazy. So what’s that about you not being able to go back home

ARTHUR
The deed on the house is in his name?

BEN
Why the fuck would you do that.

ARTHUR
Technically he still owns it. But it’s my house. We did it because we were getting a deal on the mortgage.

BEN
Looks like he was playing you for awhile.

ARTHUR
She’ll never believe me.

BEN
Who, Jill?

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
With everything that happened. How could she?

BEN
If you want. You can spend a night at my house, once we get out.

ARTHUR
I appreciate it man. So now what happens?

BEN
Well expect at least thirty hours of your life to be sucked from your soul. And that’s just getting processed. Just to see the judge. Lets just hope we can make bail.

ARTHUR
I should have some money in the bank.

BEN
Yea I got a little savings too.

Arthur gives him a skeptical look.

BEN
Don’t look at me like that. I got money saved up

ARTHUR
What, the weed fresheners?

BEN
That’s right, whose laughing now.

INT. ARTHUR AND JILL’S HOUSE – NIGHT

Mr. Hardwell pulls into the driveway.

He walks up the driveway headed for the front door.

Jill opens the door before her father can reach it.

JILL
What happen, where is he?

MR. HARDWELL
Honey, now I told you what kind of man he was.
JILL
What happen?

MR. HARDWELL
He was pulled over and arrested for possession of cocaine.

JILL
What? Cocaine? He doesn’t do coke. He doesn’t even like taking aspirins three at a time.

MR HARDWELL
And it’s just a report, but...he might be brought up on child molestation charges.

JILL
What? They’re saying he touched a little girl?

MR HARDWELL
They’re saying it’s a boy.

JILL
Oh dear god.

Jill is emotional and confused. Her father warmly embraces His daughter

JILL
How couldn’t I’ve see this?

MR. HARDWELL
I told you he was hiding something. These men, these sicko’s. They prey on the goodness of others. And Arthur’s no different. He’s just another sicko with a fetish for cocaine and little boys and god knows what else. He probably masturbates in the dark.

JILL
Dad, eww.

MR. HARDWELL
The truth is ugly honey.
EXT. ARTHUR AND JILL’S BACKYARD – NIGHT

Mr. Hardwell stands by a drum barrel that he set a blaze. He throws suits and clothing, and anything of importance of Arthur’s, into the inferno.

The light from the flames reveal a devilish expression.

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Ben and Arthur walk in. Tyson runs up on Arthur and puts his head in Arthur crouch.

Arthur trembles.

ARTHUR
Hey, this your dog?

BEN
Yea, Tyson go inside.

ARTHUR
Please grab your dog. He’s...very close.

BEN
HEY, GET INSIDE!

Tyson runs into the bedroom.

BEN
He’s really a big teddy bear. Usually a heavy sleeper.

ARTHUR
He’s big alright. Tyson? Like Mike Tyson.

BEN
Yea, he’s a biter.

ARTHUR
Makes sense.

Ben starts straightening up the living room for Arthur.

BEN
I cant believe he cleaned out your bank account. How’s that even possible.

(Continued)
That’s cause he’s the devil. The devil does what he pleases. I do appreciate the bail money and you letting me crash here and everything.

Yea, don’t worry about it.

So this is home?

It’s not much, but yea. I got beers in the fridge, cable, you can sleep on the couch for now. Just don’t be spanking off out here. And well figure out your shit out tomorrow.

Sounds good.

Ben starts to walk away, he turns to Arthur.

Oh yea. Whatever you do, don’t pick up any of Tyson’s toys. He gets very possessive. And don’t let Oscar out of his cage.

Oscar?

The cockatoo.

The what?

The bird.

Ben goes in his bedroom.

Arthur plops on the couch and makes himself comfortable. He looks up at the ceiling, staring straight up at a water stain. As he stares and inspects the mark, a water droplet falls, and lands in his eye.

Ah shit.
CONTINUED: 87.

Arthur leans up takes a quick look around the room. He Scopes out the pig sty, that is Ben’s home.

ARTHUR
Fuck it.

He closes his eyes and falls asleep.

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The room is completely dark, Arthur is in a deep sleep on the couch. Out of the silence, a shrieking sound of horror breaks Arthur’s REM sleep.

He jolts up, scared but curious to see where the sound is coming from.

The sound is very similar to the grudge.

Arthur walks around the living room trying to locate the origin. He looks behind him and all around him as he suspects, it might be supernatural. He than notices Oscar’s cage.

He lifts up the blanket that’s covering the cage to see Oscar, up against the bars screaming his head off.

ARTHUR
Jesus Christ. You sacred the shit out of me. Your like a little demon bird, aren’t you? Oscar is it? Look Oscar, if you promise to be quiet and let me get some sleep. I’ll promise not to take your cage and throw it out the fucking window. Deal?

The bird remains quiet.

ARTHUR
Good.

Arthur lays back down on the couch.

SILENCE, Peaceful silence. Until...

Oscar begins another wave of haunting sounds. Arthur doesn’t even budge. He just takes the blanket and pillow slowly covering himself up. Doing the best he can to block out the world.
INT. BEN’S APARTMENT – MORNING

Arthur is sleeping on the couch in a fetal position. Tyson is face to face with Arthur, licking him on the mouth.

Arthur wakes up.

ARTHUR
Aruuh.

Ben laughs as he’s eating a bowl of cereal on the recliner next to him.

BEN
Morning sunshine.

ARTHUR
I got a bad taste in my mouth.

Both Ben and Arthur look over at the dog. The dog is crouched on the floor licking his balls and cleaning himself.

ARTHUR(CONT)
Aruuh. Bad dog.

Tyson tilts his head, pondering what he meant.

Ben can’t help but to laugh.

ARTHUR
That’s not funny.

BEN
They say dogs have the cleanest mouths.

ARTHUR
Not after they lick their ass.

Ben laughs.

ARTHUR(CONT)
Let me ask you something. What is it up with that bird?

BEN
Who? Oscar?

ARTHUR
You have another bird that’s sounds like The grudge? All night with those demonic sounds. You didn’t hear none of that?

(Continued)
BEN
I sleep like baby.

ARTHUR
Aren’t babies restless?

BEN
You know what I mean.

Arthur starts looking for his shoes.

BEN (CONT)
Where you going?

ARTHUR
I got to see Jill.

BEN
You think that’s a good idea?

ARTHUR
Probably not. But she needs to know who her father is. And what I’m not. I can’t just sit idly by.

BEN
You want me to take the ride?

ARTHUR
No. I need to do this myself.

EXT. ARTHUR HOUSE - MORNING

Arthur pulls up to his house. An officer’s squad car is parked just outside.

THE OFFICER steps to out to meet Arthur.

OFFICER
Can I help you?

ARTHUR
I live here.

OFFICER
You must be Arthur.

ARTHUR
You must be confused. You can call me Mr. Kemp.
OFFICER  
OK Mr. Kemp, I’m afraid your not allowed on the property.

ARTHUR  
This is my house, I live here, If I want to go inside I’m going inside.

OFFICER  
Actually the property is under Mr. Hardwell’s name. And he’s given us strict instructions to not allow you inside.

ARTHUR  
I’m not allowed inside?

OFFICER  
Actually your not even allowed on the lawn. If you could just take a few steps back, off the lawn. That be great.

ARTHUR  
How am I suppose to get my stuff out?

OFFICER  
Well as for your possessions, Mr. Hardwell, beyond better judgment took it upon himself to eradicate all of your possessions last night.

ARTHUR  
Excuse me, eradicate?

OFFICER  
He burned em.

ARTHUR  
He burned em? All my stuff?

OFFICER  
I’m afraid so.

ARTHUR  
Is that even legal?

OFFICER  
Technically yes. Your belongings are located on someone else’s property. I’m sure you could go to court or something, but... yea good luck with that.
ARTHUR
This is bullshit. JILL! JILL! HONEY COME TO THE DOOR!

OFFICER
He also mentioned that there is restraining order on you towards Jill Hardwell.

ARTHUR
What? That’s insane. It’s been one day.

(shouts at door)
Jill please come to the door!

The door opens slightly. Jill reveals herself.

JILL
What do you want?

ARTHUR
What’s going on here?

JILL
You tell me? We’re supposed to be getting married in two weeks. And you pull this shit? Child molestation? Cocaine?

ARTHUR
Jill, let me explain. Wait, child molestation? I’m getting charged with child molestation?

JILL
Like you don’t know what you did.

ARTHUR
You don’t understand. It’s your father-

JILL
- What? Your putting this on my father? Really?

ARTHUR
It’s true. I’m not lying, he set me up.

JILL
I can’t believe you. I can’t believe you would sink this low. My father did nothing but give you chances. And this is how you repay him.

(Continued)
ARTHUR
You may think I’m an alcoholic, or some drug addict or even...a child predator. But the one thing you know that I am not, is a liar. I’ve never lied to you.

JILL
So your saying you are all those things?

ARTHUR
No, I’m saying, I never lied to you. Hence, I’m none of those things.

JILL
You never had a stronger enough reason to. But now I see why you would. You were wrong, your not the same man I fell in love with.

ARTHUR
Babe, please don’t.

JILL
Goodbye Arthur.

ARTHUR
Please don’t. Please.

Jill closes the door...

ARTHUR
I can’t believe this! So that’s it! Your just going to close the door on me forever? WE’RE SUPPOSE TO BE GETTING MARRIED!

The officer whistles.

OFFICER
Off the lawn!

Arthur clenches his teeth, as he reluctantly walks away. Leaving his home and the life he once knew.
INT. BEN’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tears roll down his cheeks as Arthur is sunk low into the living room couch. He holds a bottle of scotch in one hand and a calzone in the other. He takes a bite of the calzone and washes it down with the scotch.

An unsatisfying grimace strikes his face, yet he continues to repeat this action.

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Arthur lays on BEN’S couch in the fetal position with the lights off, drinking a bottle of scotch.

He has a picture of Jill propped up, standing up on the coffee table. He’s using a flashlight off his key chain to illuminate the picture on and off, like Tom Hanks in "cast away".

INT. MR. HARDWELL’S MANSION

Jill is curled up sobbing on the living room sofa.

Mr. Hardwell approaches his daughter.

MR. HARDWELL
Hey, you OK.

She doesn’t respond.

MR. HARDWELL
You need to let him go. He wasn’t good to to you.

JILL
He was. What’s crazy about all this is, none of this makes any sense. Why would he just...

MR. HARDWELL
Their are better men out there for you.

JILL
I DON’T WANT BETTER MEN. I WANT HIM.

MR. HARDWELL
It will get better. I promise.

(CONTINUED)
Mr. Hardwell leaves the room. He’s now by himself in the adjacent room.

He takes a quick scan of his surroundings. After noticing the coast is clear. Mr. Hardwell performs an awkward celebratory dance.

Mrs. Hardwell turns the corner, to see her husband making a fool of himself.

MRS HARDWELL
What were you doing?

MR HARDWELL
Just stretching out my quads. The doctor said I should do more stretching, you know, for the blood.

Mrs. Hardwell stares suspiciously at her husband.

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The living room is clouded with smoke. As Ben, Donuts, and Arthur play a friendly game of poker.

They’ve set up a fold able table in the middle of the apartment.

DONUTS
So let me get this straight. They dropped a brick in your trunk, And you just came out of rehab?

Arthur nods.

DONUTS
So now you lost your house, your car, your job, your girl...uh, Am I missing something?

BEN
He burned up all his shit too.

DONUTS
And he set ya’ shit on fire? You got royally fucked my friend.

ARTHUR
I’m quite aware of that.

(CONTINUED)
DONUTS
So what are you gonna do?

ARTHUR
(defeated)
What can I do? He won.

DONUTS
That’s it, you give up?

ARTHUR
What can I do?

DONUTS
You crack his head open. That’s what you do.

ARTHUR
I’m not gonna’...crack his head open.

DONUTS
You should consider it. You grab yourself a nice lead pipe. Something heavy, Ya’ know. Come up from behind, and BAM!

Arthur JUMPS.

DONUTS(CONT)
It’s that simple.

BEN
And then BAM! He’s dead. You cant just go around clubbing people in the head. Besides, he’s got cops on his payroll.

Donuts thinks.

DONUTS
I’d still crack his head open.

BEN
You need to find something he loves. Something he cant live with out. Then you take it from him. Just as he did with you. Now what does he love most in this world?

ARTHUR
Besides his daughter...
Arthur thinks a second, then a huge sinister smile develops.

INT. MR HARROWS GARAGE - NIGHT

A long multicar garage, more like the size of a gymnasium with an expensive collection of the worlds most desired automobiles.

The door opens, in comes three men wearing brunet barbie masks.

    BEN
    Holy shit. Its like an expo.

A beautiful site. Lined up in rows, the cars sit in pristine condition.

    DONUTS
    How rich is this guy?

    ARTHUR
    His estimated worth is close to a billion.

    DONUTS
    A billion? Damnnn. I bet he got a helicopter. I’d love to steal me one of those.

    BEN
    Do you know how to fly a helicopter?

    DONUTS
    No.

    BEN
    So we aint stealing one. Besides, that’s not the plan.

    DONUTS
    What is the plan? I can breathe in these fuckin’ things.

    ARTHUR
    He’s got cameras, thats why we got em. And the plan, we burn it all.

    DONUTS
    All of em? I cant take one?

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
No, you can’t take one. Stop bitching and help us with this shit.

All three spread out. Each of them carrying two bottles of lighter fluid each. They walk up and down squeezing lighter fluid on top of every car they see.

Arthur sprays some of it on the walls as well.

They finish up and slide the empty containers under some cars.

BEN
You do the honors.

Ben hands Arthur a zippo lighter.

Arthur flicks the zippo and throws the lighter onto a line of gas.

Before the men leave, Arthur gives the finger to a security camera pointed down on him.

INT. MR. HARDWELL GARAGE - MORNING

Mr. Hardwell stands in what used to be his garage. The side walls are charcoal, and all that remains are burnt car frames in their original position. Mr. Hardwell stands in a state of shock, as the fireman go through the debris.

FIREMAN
Looks like we got the cause.

THE FIREMAN raises up a burnt piece of the lighter fluid bottle.

MR. HARDWELL
Arson? Someone did this to me?

FIREMAN
Pretty boldly if you ask me.

MR. HARDWELL
Yea thanks.

Mr Hardwell’s attention swings upward toward his security cameras.
INT. MR. HARDWELL’S MANSION - MORNING

Mr. Hardwell stares at security footage of last night’s fire. He can see a masked man give the camera the finger before leaving the garage.

MR. HARDWELL
Son of a bitch.

The screen is on pause as he looks deeper into the still image of the suspect.

Mr. Hardwell uses his high tech camera system to zoom in and clear up the pixels on the footage.

He notices something key. An engagement ring on one of the perps.

MR. HARROWS
Arthur? You fucking idiot.

Mr. Hardwell calls a number.

MR. HARROWS
Did Arthur post bail?...How? I emptied his accounts....That friend he was locked up with? OK, listen closely. You find them OK, You find them and you end this. I’ll double the price. Whatever it takes. I don’t want to have to say his name ever again. You guys understand what I’m saying. End it. It seems this little prick doesn’t get the point. It’s time to show him how sharp the point can get.

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Arthur makes his way up the stairs, holding two coffees from Dunkin Donuts. He reaches Ben’s floor, gets to door and notices that it’s slightly jarred open.

He walks inside to find the two Narcs holding Ben down on a chair at gun point.

ARTHUR
What is this?

BEN
Hey Arty, looks like our favorite two pals paid us a visit.

(CONTINUED)
Narc two snatches the two coffees from Arthur’s hand.

NARC TWO
Coffee? You shouldn’t have.

NARC ONE
What kind of coffee is that?

NARC TWO
This one looks like vanilla bean. And this one smells like...hazelnut.

NARC ONE
Ugh. What happen to men drinking black coffee. What’s with all these fucking flavors now a days.

ARTHUR
Why are you here?

NARC ONE
Take a guess.

ARTHUR
My psychotic father in-law paid you to rub me out.

NARC TWO
He actually paid for both of you.

BEN
Me? What did I do?

NARC ONE
Well you burned down his fucking garage for starters. And your friends with this one. Guilt by association. You guys really did fuck with the wrong guy.

He points the gun to Arthur’s chest.

Ben’s cockatoo starts a wave of his ominous sounds.

NARC TWO
What the fuck is that?

BEN
It’s just my bird.

Narc one swings his silenced 9mm Beretta and fires a shot at the bird. Feathers explode inside the cage.

(CONTINUED)
BEN
You mother fucker.

NARC ONE
I take offense to that.

Tyson SLOWLY walks out of the bedroom and into the living room.

NARC TWO
I’ll shoot him, I swear to god.

BEN
Tyson stay.

Tyson obeys the command and remains in place.

As the attention has switched to Tyson. Arthur seizes an opportunity, he picks up the two hot coffees and SPLASHES both cops in the face.

NARC TWO
Ahh shit, Hot hot!

Ben leaps up from out of the chair and tackles one of the cops.

Arthur jumps on his partner.

BEN
Tyson! INTRUDER!

Tyson runs over to Ben’s aid. He chomps down on the wrist that’s holding the gun. He shakes the gun loose from the narc’s grip as he continues to maul the him further.

BEN
Grab the gun.

Arthur picks up the gun.

ARTHUR
Don’t move! Or I start shooting.

Tyson is still mauling the first cop.

NARC ONE
Ok, get him off of me. Get him off of me.

BEN
Not just yet......alright Tyson now that’s enough.
Tyson lets go of his grip, but remains on guard. Snarling at the cop who is coward on the floor.

BEN
Let’s tie em up.

Latar on--

Both Narcs are zip tied to chairs, with dirty socks taped to their mouths.

Ben looks through one of the cops cellphones.

BEN
Check this out. It seems these two were cordially invited to celebrate the 60th birthday party, hosted by no other than Mr. Hardwell himself.

ARTHUR
That’s right, it is his birthday today. The 17th. Well it looks like their not gonna make it.

BEN
But I know two people that can take their place.

ARTHUR
That’s out of the question. We won’t make it past the door. Once they see my face it’s over.

BEN
They won’t. He’s throwing some sought of costume party. It says bring your own mask.

ARTHUR
And why would I want to go to his party?

BEN
Because I just got an idea.

Ben removes the tape and sock from crooked cop 2

NARC TWO
Aruh, really, those socks stink. One of you got some serious foot odor.
BEN
Now listen up. Cause this is how its going down. My friend over here is gonna hit record on his phone. And then your gonna admit everything. How you were hired by his father in law to kill us. How that kilo landed in our trunk. Everything.

NARC TWO
And if I don’t?

BEN
Then my dog is gonna find himself four new balls to play with.

CROOKED COP 1
You wouldn’t.

BEN
I wouldn’t? Tyson!

Tyson shows his teeth as he moves in closer.

NARC TWO
Oh Jesus Christ. OK OK. Just please. Just get him away from me.

BEN
(toward Arthur)
See. Now we got ourselves a little thing called leverage.
(toward narc two)
Now, start talking.

Arthur holds up his cell phone to NARC TWO’S mouth.

INT. DONUTS HOUSE/BATHROOM - DAY

Donuts is struggling on the bowl. A life and death battle of his bowels.

The door bell rings.

DONUTS
The dooooor.

The door bell rings again.

(CONTINUED)
DONUTS
Hey! What is everybody deaf in this house?

The bell rings again.

DONUTS
God dammit. I gotta’ do everything around here.

The bathroom door creaks open. Standing at the doorway is one of five of Donuts kids. A ten year old Spanish boy named Emilio.

DONUTS
You don’t hear that door Emilio?

Emilio doesn’t respond.

DONUTS
So your just gonna stand there and stare at me. Where the fuck is your mom? Nothing right, your not gonna’ say a word? This is why no one loves you. Alright get out of the bathroom.

Emilio doesn’t budge

DONUTS
Your just gonna continue to stand there, like some fucking mute. OK.

Donuts reaches for the toilet paper. He grabs it and flings it at Emilio. Emilio ducks as the roll sails into the next room.

Emilio gives Donuts the finger as he leaves the bathroom, but not before he opens the door wider.

DONUTS
I really fucking hate that kid.

Donuts suddenly notices that he had just thrown the last roll out of the bathroom.

DONUTS
Shit.

INT: DONUTS HOUSE – DAY

The door opens. Ben and Donuts walk in.

(CONTINUED)
BEN
What took you so long? I rang the shit out of your bell.

DONUTS
Fucking little dick inside. Four of them are mine. But that little jerk off is gotta’ be someone else’s seed.

Donuts snaps his head around and see’s Emilio giving him the finger again.

BEN
Who, little Emilio? That little dude is definitely your seed.

DONUTS
So what’s up?

BEN
You wont believe it if I told you.

DONUTS
What?

INT. BEN’S APARTMENT – DAY

The two narcs are zipped tied and bound to chairs.

Arthur keeps watch as he sits on the couch petting Tyson along his back.

The door opens. Ben and Donuts walk in.

DONUTS
Fuck, you weren’t kidding. You really did kidnap two cops.

BEN
I told you.

Narc one try’s to speak and all that is heard is a muffled voice through a layer of duck tape.

ARTHUR
Shut up!

Arthur slaps the cop.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: 105.

DONUTS
Damn Arty, you are definitely a
born again bad ass.

Donuts walks over to the narcs. He grabs one by the chin.

DONUTS
So you were gonna kill my friends?
Huh? What’s that? I cant hear you..

Donuts back hands one of the narcs.

DONUTS
Oh that felt good. Can I do that
again?

BEN
Be my guest.

Donuts slaps him again.

DONUTS
Shit, I’d would pay money to slap
around cops like this. So what are
you gonna do with them?

BEN
That’s why your here.

DONUTS
You need me to chop them up or
something? I dont have any tools
with me.

Both Narcs show extreme fear.

ARTHUR
We don’t need to go that far. We
just need you to watch them for a
night. And we need to borrow your
car.

DONUTS
Why, whats going on tonight?

ARTHUR
Retribution.

EXT: OUTSIDE MR. HARDWELL’S MANSION - NIGHT

A car pulls up to MR. Hardwell’s mansion.

INSIDE CAR --

(CONTINUED)
Both Arthur and Ben are dressed up in black and white tux’s.

    ARTHUR
    I’m not sure I told you this before, but...thank you.

    BEN
    For what?

    ARTHUR
    For being a friend. I don’t have many friends. Especially ones that would help burn down a building and kidnap a couple cops.

    BEN
    Shit, that was fun. Besides. I hate to see people in power walk over those without it. Remember back at Sunnyside, when you were saying how it feels when your always being called worthless, a nobody. You know what who that reminded me of?

    ARTHUR
    Who?

    BEN
    My father. My father always told me, Some people in this world are destined for great things. And some people just aren’t. He always reminded me that the world needs leaders. Men with character. And those were two qualities I was lacking he said. My whole life he broke me down, he never made me feel like I was good enough. He died thinking that. Thinking that his son was a failure in life. Well I don’t accept that. I’ll decide when I give up. And what constitutes as failing. I’m sick and tired of men with power and ego, dictating the rules for the rest of us. Tonight we strike back. Tonight we show them why you don’t fuck with the underdog.

    ARTHUR
    Payback time.

    (CONTINUED)
BEN
And you know, I was thinking, maybe you were right when you said I might be smoking too much. Maybe I do smoke a lot. Maybe I been lacking some ambition. Hanging out with potheads everyday I guess doesn’t help the matter.

ARTHUR
You thinking of quitting?

BEN
Quit? Hell no. Slow down, Moderation. That I could do.

ARTHUR
Some progress is better than no progress I guess.

BEN
So what goes on here? I’m all dressed up in a tux. We got these weird masks. What is this like one of those eyes wide shut orgy type parties?

ARTHUR
Yea I don’t think its quite like that.

BEN
So you ready for this?

ARTHUR
I been waiting five years for a night like this.

BEN
Alright. Lets do it.

Arthur and Ben put on "phantom of the opera" type masks as they step out the car and head toward the front door.

Two men wearing masks greet them at the door.

INT: MR. HARROWS MANSION - NIGHT

The house is packed with rich guests, all dressed in black tuxes and elegant dresses. Each wearing their party masks.

The guests enjoy the party as they mingle around the room drinking champagne and laughing.
Arthur and Ben enter the party.

ARTHUR
Ok. Just try to blend in. Mingle.

BEN
I can do that.

Arthur and Ben do their best not to draw attention. As they head deeper into the party.

Ben grabs a wine glass off a waitress plate as she passes them.

ARTHUR
I said mingle. They don’t do that here.

BEN
Than what the hell is it on a plate for?

ARTHUR
Just act like these people.

Ben straightens his back and walks with an air of confidence.

Arthur and Ben make their way up a spiral staircase.

ARTHUR
There she is.

BEN
How can you tell?

ARTHUR
That’s her hair. That’s the back of her head, I can tell. And that’s got to be Mr. Hardwell next to her.

He spots Jill laughing and affectionately conversing with another man.

His Heart DROPS.

Arthur pulls out a cellphone and sends a message.

Mr. Hardwell excuses himself and heads into his private office.

An opening reveals itself as Arthur and Ben move in.

Jill notices familiar eyes as she’s see’s two men approach.
BEN
Great party huh?

JILL
I don’t believe we’ve been introduced?

BEN
My mistake. My name is Benjamin. And this man to my left I-think-you-do-know.

Arthur picks up Jill’s right hand delivers a sensual kiss to it.

The man to the left of Jill is Phillip Mason.

PHILLIP
Hey, take it easy buddy, she’s with me.

ARTHUR
Is that right?

PHILLIP
Yes it is.

BEN
How can she be with you if she’s engaged?

PHILLIP
Are you talking about that loser, Arthur.

BEN
I believe that’s his name, yea.

PHILLIP
He’s a pathetic drunk. I heard he got fired for molesting little boys at an elementary school.

ARTHUR
Is that what you heard?

Arthur shoots a look over to Ben who recognizes the situation immediately -- Ben throws an elbow to the side of Phillip.

He grabs Phillip by the neck and drags him away.
BEN
Let me talk to you for a second.

JILL
What’s going on?

Arthur removes his mask.

JILL (CONT)
Arthur?

ARTHUR
Hey baby.

JILL
What the hell are you doing here?

ARTHUR
I came to set things right.

JILL
You shouldn’t be here. If my father finds out.

ARTHUR
He’s just the man I’m looking to see. Now I don’t want to know what’s been going on the past few weeks with Dr. shit head. But I promise that everything will be explained to you soon.

JILL
I don’t understand.

ARTHUR
Trust me, just keep your phone on.

Arthur signals Ben to follow him into Mr. Hardwell private office.

INT: MR. HARDWELL’S PRIVATE OFFICE

A large office room, extravagant paintings and art decorate the walls.

Arthur and Ben enter the room.

MR. HARROWS
So is it done?

Arthur shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)
MR. HARDWELL
Good. Now I can really celebrate. So how was it? Did he squeal, was he screaming. Was he begging for his life.

BEN
All the above.

MR. HARDWELL
Beautiful. So what did we discuss? Fifty thousand?

BEN
Fifty thousand for the each of them.

MR. HARDWELL
We never agreed to that.

BEN
Plans change.

MR. HARDWELL
Fine. Whatever, I'm just glad it's done with.

BEN
There's just one more thing.

Arthur and Ben remove their masks.

MR. HARDWELL
Arthur.

BEN
That's right motha' fucka'. Your worst nightmare.

ARTHUR
In the flesh.

MR. HARDWELL
I thought...

ARTHUR
What, I was dead? Nope, alive and kicking.

MR. HARDWELL
So what happen to the other two.

INT: BEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT
Donuts laughs while he pisses on the two tied down cops.

INT: HARDWELL MANSION - NIGHT

BEN
They’re in good hands.

ARTHUR
You might want to listen to this.

Arthur puts the cellphone down on the table and hits play. The recording is of the two cops back at Ben’s apartment, admitting their guilt and the involvement of Mr. Hardwell

MR. HARDWELL
(unimpressed))
What is that?

BEN
That’s the proverbial dick up your ass.

MR. HARDWELL
And you think this is going to change anything? My lawyers would shred this apart.
(beat)
Didn’t I tell you you couldn’t win. Someone like you will never get the best of someone like myself.

ARTHUR
You done? Because there’s one thing your over looking.

MR. HARDWELL
What’s that?

ARTHUR
That was never the recording I was going to use.

Arthur pulls out another cellphone.

ARTHUR(CONT)
It’s funny, these phones now a days can record inside your pocket with such clarity. You can practically hear every word. If you take a look on the screen, you’ll notice it’s a two way call. One is going to a friend who is recording and saving this himself. Thanks Donuts. And

(MORE)
The door swings open. Jill enters.

JILL
I can't believe you. Everything he said was true. You're a monster.

MR. HARDWELL
Honey.

JILL
Save it. I can't even look at you. Arthur, I am so sorry.

ARTHUR
I know. I'll be out there in a second. Well talk, I'm just finishing this conversation with you father. Give me two minutes.

JILL
OK.

Jill closes the door. And scowls at her father.

BEN
You know, if there's one lesson I learned in the past month. From all the misery and pain that you caused is...how to properly set someone up.

MR. HARDWELL
OK. Very well played. How much do you want?

ARTHUR
Who says I want money?

MR. HARDWELL
Everybody wants money.

ARTHUR
That's the one thing you failed to realize. I was never after your money. I just wanted your daughter.
BEN
Ten million..

Ben looks over at Arthur like "why not"

MR. HARDWELL
Ten million?

ARTHUR
Consider it a wedding gift.

MR. HARDWELL
Ten million, fine. How do I know you wont try and extort more from me in a years time.

ARTHUR
I guess your gonna have to just trust me. I mean I could just turn this in as evidence, if that’s what you want. And as for those two narcs. You might want to plant something in their trunk. We wouldn’t want a couple of hot head cops do anything stupid now.

MR. HARDWELL
Done.

BEN
Yea. And you owe me a cockatoo.

Mr. Hardwell seems confused.

ARTHUR
Now if you don’t mind, My wife is waiting for me.

Arthur and Ben exit the room.

Arthur spots Jill outside the door. He walks up to her, wraps his arms around her, lifts her as he plants a romantic kiss on her.

She smiles as the room looks on.

BEN
That’s my friend.
EXT. WEDDING - DAY

The wedding venue is exquisite. Lavish and expensive is what is presented to those invited.

Arthur and Jill are standing at the alter exchanging their vows.

ARTHUR
I Arthur Kemp take thee Jill Hardwell to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part

FATHER
And I Jill Hardwell take thee Arthur Kemp be to my wedded Husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part.

FATHER
Rings please.

Ben leans forward and presents the rings.

FATHER
Repeat after me. With this ring, I be wed.

ARTHUR
With this ring, I be wed.

The Priest turns to Jill.

FATHER
With this ring, I be wed.

JILL
With this ring, I be wed.

FATHER
If anyone here should abject to this holy union, speak now or forever hold your peace.

Both Arthur and Jill look back at Jill’s father.

He keeps his mouth closed.

(CONTINUED)
So by the power invested in me, I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride.

Arthur lays a wedding kiss on Jill as the crowd erupts in cheers.

EXT: WEDDING RECEPTION - DAY

The guests are all having a good time eating, drinking and laughing.

Ben and Donuts battle in a dance off.

Ben talks to a couple of Jill’s girlfriends. He laughs and makes small talk.

Donuts brought two of the dancers from the Big fat pussycats. The two women have large portions of wedding cake, piled up on their plates.

A drunk Ben makes his way toward Arthur.

BEN

Hey, Fucking awesome wedding man. Yo, those two chicks back their are sisters. I think they might even be Siamese. Look, their always standing together. That shit’s crazy.

ARTHUR

Their not sisters. Their cousins. And they love to smoke weed.

Ben gives Arthur a drunken smile.

BEN

Hey, thank you for that loan again. I mean, a 1.5 mill as starting capital. That’s a serious gift man. I’ll pay you back every dime.

ARTHUR

Don’t worry about that. It’s yours, keep it.

BEN

Thank god you said that. I wasn’t trying to pay that shit back. But check it, next month I got my line of CannabLISS fresheners hitting the market.
ARTHUR
That’s the name?

BEN
Yea, CannaBLISS car fresheners. You like it?

ARTHUR
It’s...got a ring to it.

BEN
We already got five different scents out. They said if it does good, its possible we could get upwards to ten out there. They said it could be the next big thing.

ARTHUR
Sounds exciting. I’m happy for you man, I really am. We all deserve a little happiness, right?

BEN
Fuckin’ right.

Even Donald the principal showed up. Mingling with two heavy set strippers from the pussycat’s.

He looks over his shoulder, then walks the strippers away from the crowd to a more private area.

Arthur is slow dancing with his new bride.

JILL
I’m sorry I doubted you. I cant believe the man I called my father was a monster.

ARTHUR
I’m surprised you let him show up to the wedding.

JILL
Well he did pay for all this. I been waiting my whole life for a wedding like this. I’m sorry, but an attempted murder is not going to take that from me. Are relationship will never be the same though, so the very least I could do is invite him to the wedding that he paid for.

(CONTINUED)
ARTHUR
I’m just glad you know the truth now.

JILL
I do, but it still doesn’t change the fact that when you drink, you get...

ARTHUR
I’m working on it.

Arthur hugs Jill as they continue their dance.

Ben walks over to MR. Hardwell, who stands alone.

BEN
I didn’t think I’d see you here.

MR. HARDWELL
I did pay for this wedding.

BEN
But your daughter is way over there. And your way over here. I guess money doesn’t buy everything.

MR. HARDWELL
That’s interesting. Because the way I look at it is, I’ll always be waaaay up here –

Mr. Hardwell lifts his right hand above his head.

MR. HARDWELL
And you’ll always be waaaay down here.

He lowers his hand below his waist.

MR. Hardwell takes a quick inhale of his asthma pump.

Ben smiles as he processes his next move.

BEN
So, have you ever heard of the concept of breathing?

MR. HARDWELL
What?

Arthur looks on from a distance intently.

(Continued)
Suddenly Mr. Hardwell experiences an asthma attack. He hunches over clutching his chest.

People rush toward him as Ben walks away from him.

Arthur catches up with Ben.

ARTHUR
What happen?

BEN
Nothing. We were just talking. And then I brought up the whole breathing thing.

ARTHUR
He’s got asthma

BEN
(playing coy)
Is that what he’s doing? I thought his stomach wasn’t agreeing with the chicken. I guess he’ll really be needing this then.

Ben raises up Mr. Hardwell’s asthma pump.

ARTHUR
You took his pump?

BEN
They killed my bird.

Arthur can’t help but to smile.

Mr. Hardwell is now layed flat on the grass, hardly any movement.

RANDOM VOICE (O.S)
Somebody call a doctor!

Ben walks away from the crowd and lights up a fat blunt. Disregarding all sense of decorum.

FADE OUT:

THE END