

Benedict Canyon

By

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MEMO FROM THE WRITER:

Hi guys. Just wanted to put in some 'instructions' and info before you read the script. This is a fan fiction script using a found footage method of telling the story.

I invented a main character for it but all the events involving the Beatles did happen and some of the dialogue is authentic. For added atmosphere and 'feel', I have created a playlist of songs that you can play as you read (only if you choose though lol). At a certain point on page 5, you will be prompted to START PLAYLIST. Doing it on Spotify would be the best bet. The 8 songs are:

Baby You're A Rich Man

Ticket To Ride

Rain

She Said She Said

Nowhere Man

Got To Get You Into My Life

In My Life

Tomorrow Never Knows

So just hit play at the prompt and the songs will play out to the end. I tried to sync certain songs with certain scenes and did pretty well. It depends on the speed of your read lol. Anyway thanks again for putting up with this prologue and with further ado...here we go

FADE IN:

INT. CAR - DAY

STEVE LINDSEY(43) sits in a Ford SUV in a medium sized car park, flanked by businesses. He idly surfs the Net on his phone. A figure appears - his brother BILL (46). He opens the passenger door, gets in. The air outside is warm.

SUPER - LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA

SUPER - AUGUST 2017

STEVE

Well? Is that all that was in Dad's security box? A tiny package and an envelope? Why the big secret I wonder?

Bill holds up the said item. It's a small mailbag secured by tape. At his feet is a cardboard box. He shrugs as Steve starts the engine.

BILL

The bank guy looked through the records for me. Dad stored something in a box in there for over thirty years. Then two years ago, he came in, took the box out for a few days and brought this back to be locked up again. Roughly about the time Dad started getting sick. Like, he was preparing for it...

STEVE

Hmm, intriguing. Obviously it has to be Beatle related, right? Dad would've simply added this to his will if it wasn't special to him. Not make us travel across the country to retrieve it.

They both stare at the items. The envelope has marker pen writing on it: DO NOT OPEN UNTIL YOU HAVE FOLLOWED ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS IN THE PACKAGE! Bill places it and the package on the floor next to the box.

BILL

That's Dad alright. Making sure we do exactly what he says, Will we open it now or at the hotel?

STEVE

The hotel. Been a long day. Flying from Chicago...collecting

STEVE
Dad's ashes. I'm ready for a
shower and a drink. And food.

The vehicle moves off towards the car park entrance. The street alongside is busy in a typical L.A way. Steve waits for a gap then eases into the flow.

BILL
You know it's funny. Dad was this
huge Beatles freak. Yet he didn't
name either of us after them?
Isn't that odd?

STEVE
Odd? It's damn well lucky for us.
I hated the Beatles! Dad rammed
them down our throat from birth.

BILL
Yeah true. Maybe Mom stopped him.
She was probably scared he would
call us George or Ringo or Keith.

Steve laughs. Flicks on the radio. A lively ad plays.

STEVE
Keith is in the Rolling Stones,
not the Beatles.

BILL
Oh yeah. I get them mixed up
sometimes. You know I was a Floyd
man. And you were Zep.

Suddenly, 'Hey Jude' comes on the radio as Steve halts at a red light. They look at each other, memories rising up.

STEVE
Of all the...freaking Beatles!

He reaches out to change stations but Bill stops him.

BILL
No...leave it. It was one of
Dad's favorites. We owe him that.

Steve opens his mouth to sneer but just shrugs as he sees his brother's expression. The lights turn green and they roll off as the Beatles' majestic tune builds...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

The door opens and the two brothers enter. It's a nice mid-range room. Steve goes to the mini bar, grabs two beers. Bill sits on the sofa, accepts one.

BILL

Shall we open it now or back in Chicago? I never thought of that.

STEVE

The suspense is killing me. Open it now in case it's some sort of trick thing where it leads us to 'another clue' or some shit.

Sits next to Bill. Drinks deep. Bill laughs.

BILL

That would be just like Dad. But I bet it's something lame like a signed photo of John or Paul.

STEVE

Yes! And we get it authenticated only to find it's a fake.

They both laugh. Bill sips his beer. Puts it down and takes the package. Slowly begins to open it.

BILL

In case it is valuable and maybe fragile, I'll be gentle.

STEVE

'That's what she said.'

More laughter. Bill carefully tears off the tape, unwrapping the mailbag. Peers into the opening. Frowns as he takes out a tiny object swathed in bubble wrap.

STEVE

Jesus, what is this? Jewelry? I'm telling you, Dad is up there now laughing his ass off at us.

Bill pulls the bubble wrap apart. Something small and black within. He holds it up.

BILL

What the hell? It's a USB stick.

STEVE

Oh, great. Dad has mistakenly left us some porn he downloaded. Or deliberately, knowing him.

BILL

I dunno. This feels...important.

He stands, goes to one of the beds, reaches underneath, pulls out a suitcase. Takes out a laptop, brings it back.

BILL

Only one way to find out.

While he boots up the laptop, Steve examines the wrapping.

STEVE

There's a note or something in here. Rolled up tight.

He unfolds what is a single sheet of paper with neat writing on it. Bill looks up from the laptop.

BILL

Let me guess... 'if you're reading this, it means I'm dead.'

STEVE

Ha! It's only a few lines.

(beat)

'Hello sons. I gather you're mystified by the secrecy behind all this but I think you'll enjoy what's on the USB. I put it together with the help of my friend Monty. You would remember him - he's a wiz with all the tech stuff. And please watch the whole thing without a break - its very important for the experience. Love, Dad'.

BILL

That's it? No explanation of what's on the damn thing?

STEVE

Nope. Seems like some sort of film or video. Anyway, I'll turn the tv on for a better view.

Bill inserts the USB into the laptop. Works the keyboard as Steve switches the tv on and finds a blank channel.

BILL

Isn't Monty some sort of hacker? I thought he was in prison.

STEVE

That was his son. Hacked into the tax office to get a better return. Monty showed him

STEVE
everything except how to avoid
being caught.

They both laugh. Bill clicks on a file that appears. It's marked 'Benedict Canyon 1965.'

BILL
Benedict Canyon?

STEVE
Dad lived there for a time with
his parents. They were loaded,
remember? Big mansion, cars.

BILL
Ah yes. 'Were' is the key word.
Lost it all apparently.

A video screen appears. Bill makes it full screen.

BILL
Well...here we go.

OVER BLACK

OLD EARL(V.O)
In August nineteen sixty five, I
was seventeen years old and
living in the hills of Los
Angeles. My parents were
successful business people in the
entertainment world. My dad had
connections in all industries and
one day he brought home a high
tech movie camera. It hadn't
reached the stores yet. A few
days later he casually said to me
that the Beatles were 'staying
nearby'. Well, that was it. I
made my plans. I would find them
and try and meet them while they
were in...
(beat)
Benedict Canyon

START MUSIC PLAYLIST:

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- A jet lands at JFK Airport in New York City; it taxis to
a secluded area. The Beatles are whisked away in a limo.

SUPER - THE BEATLES ARRIVE IN THE U.S FOR THEIR THIRD
MAJOR NORTH AMERICAN TOUR - AUGUST 14 1965

- A collage of images: the Beatles playing on The Ed Sullivan Show; they play their epic gig at Shea Stadium in front of fifty five thousand frenzied fans.

- A map of the U.S.A and Canada shows their travels and concerts over the next few days with a dotted line crisscrossing, bending and weaving.

TORONTO...ATLANTA...HOUSTON...CHICAGO...MINNEAPOLIS...PORTLAND

- The next destination on the map is L.A...a jet lands at midnight and the Beatles are once more into a limo.

OLD EARL(V.O)

The Beatles arrived in Los Angeles on the twenty second of August for a rare five day break before their final gigs of the tour in San Diego, the Hollywood Bowl and San Francisco. They were staying at the home of actress Zsa Zsa Gabor on Benedict Canyon Drive. The address would be given out on air twelve hours later, sparking an odyssey of fans there. But I already knew...so I had a decent break on them.

END MONTAGE

EXT. STREET - DAY - CAMERA POV UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

Moving up a winding road past deluxe houses, walls, driveways and trees, in a convertible. A quick glimpse of the camera man as he points it at himself for a video 'selfie'. A young lean face, a mop of curly blonde hair...

SUPER - HUTTON DRIVE BENEDICT CANYON LOS ANGELES

SUPER - TUESDAY AUGUST 25 1965

This is EARL LINDSEY(17). A smile as wide as the valley. He flips the camera back around to the driver - his mother BETH(42). She sneaks a grin before concentrating on the road. Overhead the summer sun is solid.

EARL(O.S)

This movie camera is so cool.

BETH(O.S)

You've earned it. Your grades are good. Enjoy your break while we're in Europe. And behave.

Their voices are loud over the wind and car engine. Earl gives a whoop of laughter. The camera turns to look out over the valley towards the L.A central business district.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I didn't like the Beatles at first. When they debuted on Ed Sullivan eighteen months earlier, well, I thought they were average. The music was shit and they looked like clowns with their hair and accents.

INSERT - flickering black and white footage of the Beatles performing on The Ed Sullivan show. Screams from the audience as these four Englishmen capture American hearts.

OLD EARL(V.O)

But over time I realised these guys were the real deal. They were talented. They were good. And they were here to stay...

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

A long driveway leads up to an imposing double storey perched on the side of a hill. A neatly manicured front garden, with a fountain in the middle. The garage door rises. A car door opens. Beth smiles at the camera.

EARL(O.S)

I'm heading out to film stuff, Mum. So I won't see you before you and Dad head to the airport. Have a great time in Europe!

BETH

We will, honey. You stay safe here. If you have any issues in the house, call your sister.

EARL(O.S)

I will. I'll be fine. And I promise there'll be no parties.

BETH

Your father and I trust you. Bye.

The car door shuts. The camera shows the convertible rolling into the garage. Beth waves as the roller door lowers. The camera hovers then arcs around.

EARL(O.S)

I am so lucky to have great parents. They are the best.

He pans to the street. Houses are scattered in each direction, but a lot of the landscape is virgin scrub and trees. The view shakes as Earl jogs across the road.

Next to an impressive bungalow type residence, a rough path leads into the forest.

OLD EARL(V.O)

Through my father's connections
in the entertainment business -
courtesy of an overhead plane
conversation - I knew the Beatles
were staying in this area during
their current tour.

Moving quicker through the foliage now, whipping past bushes, ducking under low branches. The sound of lawnmowers from adjoining properties. Past high brick walls and steel fences.

OLD EARL(V.O)

My destination was two eight
fifty Benedict Canyon Drive...

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The camera stops, examining the surrounds. A wall looms.

EARL(O.S)

This is the one. Zsa Zsa Gabor
owns it. They've rented it.

(beat)

Gonna be tough to get in. But I'm
prepared. Brought a few things.

A canvas bag hits the ground. The camera is placed on the ground nearby, pointing at the action. Earl comes into view, sweating. He kneels, opens the bag.

Pulls out a coil of rope attached to a crude grappling hook. Stands, hefts it in his hand. Addresses the camera.

EARL

Ladies and gentlemen...I'm
recording all of this for
posterity. I may fail but I know
I will have done my best.

He glances up at the wall. It seems to look even higher in the gloom of the trees. There is complete silence.

EARL

There is a chance I will get
horribly injured or even die. But
destiny...and the Beatles...are
calling. Here we go.

He walks to the foot of the wall, pays out the rope.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I gotta hand it to myself. I was stubborn. Not to the point of being crazy. Just...stubborn.

(beat)

Well, maybe a little crazy too...

LATER

A scraping sound. Vision of grey concrete slowly passing inches at a time. The sound of heavy breathing.

OLD EARL(V.O)

It seemed to take hours. I strapped the camera to the top of the backpack to continue to film. and then...I was at the top.

The camera wobbles a little as the top of the wall comes into view. It's flat, about a foot wide. A brief shot of bleeding hands next to the grappling hook.

The view is boosted higher as Earl perches on the wall. The drop on the other side is minimal due to the slope of the hill. The sound of water gurgling from a bottle.

EARL(O.S)

Jesus, that was a damn slog.

The camera pans around. Through more trees in the long backyard, the house is visible.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I had a basic plan. At first I thought about hiding out and secretly filming the Beatles...

The grappling hook is removed and turned, the rope cast down the wall into the yard. We see the grey concrete passing again before the ground is reached. The camera goes wonky as its removed from the backpack.

Another vid selfie as Earl rests at the base of the wall. his face is flushed with exertion but he smiles.

EARL(O.S)

But then I decided to take the initiative and simply walk in and introduce myself. I knew they were extremely nice to fans who didn't annoy them. And I was gambling on their curiosity about my movie camera.

The view flips back to the trees as Earl stands.

OLD EARL(V.O)
And off I went...

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Moving closer to the residence visible through the trees.

OLD EARL(V.O)
But I suddenly panicked. What if
I never get near the Beatles?
They would have security guys,
maybe even cops there. I might be
beaten up or arrested. Or both.

(beat)
So I hunkered down behind a clump
of bushes to think it through. I
wasn't far from the pool. I could
even hear voices from a window.

The camera stops. The view is all over the place.

OLD EARL(V.O)
But just as suddenly, my resolve
came back. I was horrified at the
very thought of turning back.

EARL(O.S)
You stay with it, goddamn it.
Don't you dare chicken out n---

MAL(O.S)
Hey, you there. How did you get
in? This is private property.

The camera veers sharply to the left. A large man dressed
in casual shirt and shorts looms from the scrub. He wears
glasses and has longish hair. A giant with a friendly
grin, this is: MAL EVANS(30). Beatle roadie and mate.

OLD EARL(V.O)
By sheer luck, I was first
spotted by the one member of the
Beatles entourage who wouldn't
simply throw me back over the
fence - Mal Evans.

(beat)
A lovely man who met a tragic
end. May he rest in peace.

EARL(O.S)
Uh, well, I...you're Mal, right?
Met the early Beatles on your
lunch breaks at the Cavern? Man,
you're experiencing history.

Mal peers at the camera, deciding...finally a wide smile
appears on his face.

MAL

I'm impressed you know me. I don't get a lot of personal greetings. Not here in the U.S anyway. I'm just the 'roadie'.

EARL(O.S)

Not just any roadie though. You got the best job in the world.

MAL

I...you may be right. The boys are the best. But I still have to keep them safe. I have no idea who you are. Nice camera though.

EARL(O.S)

Well, sir, Mister Evans...I'll tell you the truth. I live in the neighborhood. And I came here to meet the Beatles and document their stay in Benedict Canyon.

Mal muses on this. Steps closer to study the camera which offers a tilted view of his gentle face.

MAL

Never seen this model before. Looks expensive.

EARL(O.S)

Its the latest technology. I wanted only the finest to film the Beatles. I'm not a crazy fan. I'm serious.

Mal nods at this despite his duty of care.

MAL

I'm sure you're a nice young man. But the boys value their privacy on their time off. We're expecting lots of fans to try and get into this place.

(beat)

By the way, how did you get in?

EARL(O.S)

Over the wall. Grappling hook.

MAL

Ah, a would be James Bond. Look, I'm sorry but I'm going to ask you to go back over the wall. I just can't let anyone in, I'm afraid. You understand.

The camera dips to the ground as Earl's disappointment kicks in. A sigh.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I began to try and convince Mal to at least let me meet them but I knew he was right. I had no business intruding on their leisure time. I turned to go...

(beat)

Then, another stroke of luck...

RINGO(O.S)

Mal...there you are...have you seen the bag of weed?

(beat)

Oh. Whose yer friend then? I love his camera.

The said camera hurriedly moves onto the newcomer - RINGO STARR(25). Beatle drummer of course. He's dressed in a thick robe and fluffy slippers. Eyes sleepy but intrigued.

OLD EARL(V.O)

All four Beatles had a penchant for photography. But Ringo was the keenest of them. He made it a lifelong hobby. Here was my chance to make myself wanted.

MAL

Well, Ringo, young chap here climbed the wall. Says he wants to meet you and the boys.

EARL(O.S)

Man, I can't believe I'm standing next to Ringo Starr himself, actually filming him. Please, Mister Starr, don't make me leave. I'll behave. I won't---

RINGO

Hey, its alright, son. I want to learn all about that movie camera. Can I have a look at it?

A pause then skewed vision of the trees, Mal and finally Earl himself as he hands it to Ringo.

RINGO(O.S)

Its filming now?

EARL

Yes. It has an automatic button. The latest in technology. Not even in the shops yet.

RINGO(O.S)

I can see that. Oh, wow, its so clear. So how come you have it? Its not stolen, is it?

EARL

No! My dad is high up in the business world. He got it for me.

MAL

Ringo, we really should get back to the house. The cops will come searching for you.

The camera pans around, Ringo oblivious.

MAL

What's your name, lad?

EARL

Earl. Earl Lindsey.

MAL

Well, Earl, its been great to meet you. But you'll have to leave. Come on, back to the wall.

OLD EARL(V.O)

My heart sank. But I didn't want to make a scene. And then...

RINGO(O.S)

Wait, Mal. I think we can let Earl stay for a bit. I'm sure the lads won't mind. He can be our guest. And show us the wonderful things this camera can do.

MAL

I...yeah, whatever you say. He seems like a good one anyway. He says he's going to film you all.

EARL

Oh, what? Oh, thank you, Mister Starr...thank you Mal. I promise to be quiet. I won't---

The camera view whirls as Ringo hands him back the camera. Then the drummer is in shot. Smiling.

RINGO

We need to buy one when they're for sale. It will take five years before they get to England.

MAL
More like ten.

Laughter all round.

RINGO
Its settled then.

MAL
Sometimes its like I have no
authority anymore. Always
overruled. I dunno...

Ringo laughs again, claps him on the back.

RINGO
We still love you, Mal.
(beat)
Now...about that weed?

OLD EARL(V.O)
I'd made it. We walked back to
the house. I was in.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Mal and Ringo lead the way. The trees and foliage end abruptly at the rear walls of the house. A side path leads to an outdoor area - a small pool, gazebo, shady trees.

RINGO
I love this place. Its so lived
in. And so quiet.

The camera pans around slowly. You can imagine a wide-eyed Earl drinking it all in, truly amazed. Mal heads through the sliding glass doors into the house. Its silent.

EARL(O.S)
Thank you again, Mister Starr.

RINGO
Call me Ringo. Everybody else in
the world does.

EARL(O.S)
Ah sure...Ringo.

RINGO
Well, almost everyone. Me mum
still calls me Richie. Like I'm
forever ten years old.

Movement at the door. The camera turns . A figure comes out. Its PAUL MCCARTNEY(23). Beatle bassist of course.

OLD EARL(V.O)

Oh boy. I felt like none of this was happening to me. Paul. There.

PAUL

Hey, Ring? Have you seen the... oh, excuse me...

(beat)

Whose yer friend then?

RINGO

I don't know. We found him out in the garden. But he's cool.

PAUL

Crazy, man. Just wild, you know?

The camera moves between the two like a tennis match.

EARL(O.S)

Ah, my name is Earl Lindsey, Mister McCart---um, Paul. I'm a huge Beatles fan.

Paul smiles, walks towards the camera. Ringo sits on the edge of the pool with his legs in the water.

PAUL

Well, you wouldn't be here if you weren't. And you aren't that huge. Maybe five eight.

Ringo breaks into laughter, lets himself slip into the water. Robe and slippers and all. Paul grins inanely. Claps his hands. Ringo makes faces underwater.

EARL(O.S)

Man, you guys are so funny.

PAUL

Its the weed. Apparently.

He turns to look at the house, musing on something. Then he seems to notice the camera for the first time.

PAUL

Oh wow. That is one nice camera. What brand is it?

EARL(O.S)

Bell and Howell three eleven Super eight. Best in the world. Waterproof housing, two zoom modes. Best in the world.

Ringo surfaces, swims to the side. Splutters water playfully at Paul and Earl.

RINGO
Never met anyone named Earl.

PAUL
You need to get out more, son.
(beat)
Shall we adjourn inside? Say
hello to the other lunatics?

RINGO
I'm staying in the pool. For the
rest of my life. See ya.

OLD EARL(V.O)
The Beatles were exactly how I
imagined them to be. Certainly
Paul and Ringo were.

The camera heads to the glass doors.

OLD EARL(V.O)
I knew George could be friendly
most of the time. But I was
nervous about meeting John. There
was no way to tell how he would
react to a stranger in their
inner circle. Fair chance he
would override Ringo and have me
kicked out on the street....

PAUL
Would you like a drink, Earl? How
old are you anyway? Tell the
truth now.

EARL(O.S)
Seventeen...ah, you know what I
mean, right?

Paul laughs as they step into the house proper.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Its dim despite the bright sunlight outside. Blinds and
shutters are drawn so there's a cave like feel. A huge
living area, with two sofas and antique decor. Glimpses of
a kitchen to one side.

PAUL
We keep the windows blocked.
There's cops and security guys at
the front gate. We, ah, don't
want them seeing everything we
do. Not that we do bad things.

The camera 'nods' in affirmation.

EARL(O.S)

The furniture is amazing.

GEORGE(O.S)

Neil? Mal? What time are our guests arriving? Oh, hello...

GEORGE HARRISON(22) comes from a hallway. Beatles lead guitarist of course. He's wearing t-shirt and jeans. Walks up to the camera, examines it. Smiles widely.

OLD EARL(V.O)

George...the youngest Beatle. He was always my favorite. He just had that charisma...

PAUL

This is Earl. We found him in the garden. Well, Ringo did.

GEORGE

Ah, so he's a gardener. With a movie camera. That's cool.

PAUL

I dunno. He might be.

George nods at this. Walks to another hallway.

GEORGE

(yells)

Mal? Neil?

PAUL

Maybe they're out the front already? Stop worrying.

GEORGE

I know, but...

EARL(O.S)

I really loved your solo on 'I Feel Fine', Mister Harr---George.

George looks back. Straight through the eye of the camera, all mop top and smile. Mal emerges from the kitchen.

MAL

What is it, George?

PAUL

He's worried no one will be at the front to greet our friends.

MAL

Neil is there now.

EARL(O.S)

Ah, who is coming? If its not
being too nosy?

GEORGE

Not at all. Couple of birds,
thats all.

Paul laughs, as does Mal.

EARL(O.S)

Ok, some girls. Nice.

PAUL

George needed to spell it out
better. A couple of b-y-r-d-s.

(beat)

Like, David Crosby and Roger
McGuinn. You know...THE Byrds.

The camera trembles as Earl hears this.

OLD EARL(V.O)

It just kept getting better. I
loved the Byrds as well. Their
folky rock was like the perfect
counterpoint to the Beatles
music. I learned later that
George was inspired to write 'If
I Needed Someone' after hearing
that classic jangly Byrds guitar.

A POLICE OFFICER appears suddenly in the main hallway. The
front door can be seen wide open, showing the driveway
leading to the gate. Figures squeeze past the fans
gathered, more police keeping them out.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I was surprised to see fans at
the gate but was told later that
a radio DJ let the address out. I
guess the fans would've found out
eventually. They were persistent!

POLICE OFFICER

Ah, Mister McCartney?

PAUL

I'm Mister Harrison, actually.
You can call me George though.

Titters from George, Mal and Earl.

POLICE OFFICER

Oh, sorry. Its hard to tell, you
know. You guys all look the same.

GEORGE

That's what she said...

PAUL

Enough, Paul! What's the problem, Officer? Have the fans got in?

POLICE OFFICER

Some of your friends are here.

He consults a notebook.

POLICE OFFICER

'Mister David Crosby and Mister Roger McGuinn.'

(beat)

From the Rolling Stones, right?

MAL

Close but no cigar.

He walks off down the hallway towards the front door. The cop notices the camera on him. Frowns.

POLICE OFFICER

Who is this? I didn't see him come in since we've been here.

Ringo walks in, drying his hair with a towel. He sizes up the situation perfectly. Goes to the camera and points.

RINGO

He lives here.

POLICE OFFICER

I...what?

Paul and George struggle to keep a straight face.

RINGO

Aye. This is his aunt's house. Aunty Zsa Zsa. They left him here when they went on holiday. We found him in his room.

POLICE OFFICER

Is this true, son? Can't have any strangers here. No telling what might happen.

GEORGE

John has been a stranger to me since nineteen sixty three. Can you evict him for me?

Paul giggles. The cop shakes his head, mutters.

EARL(O.S)

I...yes, sir, I'm Earl Gabor. I do live here. I didn't want to go on holiday. The Beatles were kind enough to let me stay.

PAUL

Yep. We let him stay in his own house! Aren't we nice?

POLICE OFFICER

Well, I'll be damned.

A commotion in the hallway, where stairs lead to the upper rooms. A figure in sunglasses appears - JOHN LENNON(24)...Beatles guitarist of course.

JOHN

Are they here yet? Oh, did I miss the meeting? Anything important?

He looks quizzically at Earl and the camera.

RINGO

Yeah. You've been booted out.

JOHN

Of the band? Or the country?

GEORGE

Both. Officer, escort this man from the premises and take him to the airport immediately.

Laughter. The cop throws his hands up, leaves. He slips past Mal who is back with two men: DAVID CROSBY(24) and ROGER MCGUINN(23). They smile at the four Beatles.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I was stunned. Here I was in the very same house ...the very same room as the Beatles and two members of the Byrds. Amazing.

The camera pans across the room as the newcomers shake hands and hug the Beatles. Smiles all around.

JOHN

Have you got it? The stuff?

Crosby leans forward to whisper in John's ear. Nods. Then he glances at the camera. Frowns like the cop did.

CROSBY

Who is this? Some punk journalist? We don't need the like of him here, filming us.

JOHN

No no, he's fine! Actually, I haven't met him yet.

He approaches the camera, peers into it. Makes a grotesque face. His nose looks enormous.

RINGO

This is Earl. Mal found him in the garden. He's alright though.

JOHN

He looks harmless. And he has one very nice camera. Hi Earl.

Crosby still stares at the camera with distrust.

CROSBY

Can we trust him? To keep quiet?

PAUL

About what? No secrets here.

GEORGE

I can vouch for him. Absolutely.

Crosby nods. Goes to the hallway door and locks it. John's eyes light up. George and Ringo look keen. Paul is nervous. McGuinn's dopey grin gets wider.

CROSBY

Ok. Its time to seek the truth...

He takes a plastic bag from his pocket. Doles out tiny squares of coloured paper. John, George, Ringo and McGuinn take one. Paul shakes his head, quietly leaves the room.

CROSBY

Camera dude? You want?

MAL

He may be too young perhaps?

EARL(O.S)

If that's acid, I've had it before. Last year. Took a trip with my brother and his friends.

CROSBY

Oh, its acid, alright. The finest in all of California. Here...

He passes a tab to the camera. The paper is held up and examined before being consumed.

JOHN

Mal here is staying straight.
He'll look after us.

MAL

Aye. Can't have any accidents.

OLD EARL(V.O)

It was interesting that no one bagged Paul for leaving. Even on LSD they did the team thing. It was John, George and Ringo's second trip. Eventually Paul would cave in a year later and try it to 'keep up with the others'. Peer pressure indeed...

A hush amongst the musicians as the acid kicks in. Ringo goes to the sofa, stretches out.

OLD EARL(V.O)

And there I was. Dropping LSD with these rock stars.

CROSBY

Let's head to the bathroom, guys.
Just in case those cops come knocking. We'll take guitars.
Write a new song or two.

JOHN

Good idea. Great echo in there.

RINGO

I might just lie here, you know?

GEORGE

I'm going for a swim. Earl?

EARL(O.S)

I...sure. Sounds great.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

In slow motion, George walks to the pool. He turns around on the edge, smiles and spreads his arms wide. Lets himself fall backwards into the water. The splash sends sparkling blue water rising back up into the air.

Like rain. It's raining...UP

OLD EARL(V.O)

Oh boy. I was tripping the light fantastic in a big way.

The camera pans up to follow the lines of water that radiate up from the pool surface. Higher and higher, reaching orbit. George lies on the bottom of the pool, eyes open. He beckons with one hand. His mouth moves...

OLD EARL(V.O)
The crazy thing though? I could
hear George. And he said later
that he could hear me as well...

Now the camera is falling forward into the pool, floating slowly down towards George. The Beatle pats the concrete next to him. His face is serene and beautiful and wise...

GEORGE(O.S)
We can stay down here for a
thousand years, Earl.

The camera rotates as Earl's body turns to glide to the bottom next to George, before facing up to the surface. The water up there looks red, green and yellow as the sunlight flashes on it.

And now the rain has reversed and is coming from the surface down to the bottom. Impossible but true...

OLD EARL(V.O)
I've never experienced anything
so real in my life that obviously
wasn't. Yet it felt so damn real.
(beat)
And the whole time, George's
voice was in my head as we lay
there under seven feet of water:

GEORGE(O.S)
This is the reality of all
things. This is the universe.

OLD EARL(V.O)
The realisation that I was
underwater and not breathing for
ages lurked at the periphery of
my mind. But as I lay there with
George and listened to him, I
felt a calmness that maybe harked
back to being in the womb.

Now the inverted rain has stopped. The water between the camera and the surface gradually turns a purple color. George lifts a pale arm to indicate the phenomenon.

GEORGE(O.S)
See, Earl? See the void? The
great abyss we must cross to
fully gain enlightenment?

OLD EARL(V.O)

I could see it. I projected my positive thoughts to him. He smiled and raised his other arm.

GEORGE(O.S)

Then let us travel together to that special place. And find ---

Suddenly, a big dark shape looms, cutting off the light. The rain and colours dim as hands grip Earl and George.

OLD EARL(V.O)

The true nature of things interfered. Luckily, Mal got us out before we drowned.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The camera enters. John, McGuinn and Crosby are sitting on the edge of the huge bathtub/shower. They play and sing old rock and roll tunes on acoustic guitars.

OLD EARL(V.O)

Next minute, George and I were back inside. Carried in by Mal? Or did we just float in? And somehow we were dry. Strange...

MCGUINN

Well, now. Look at these two.

CROSBY

How do you like my acid, Earl?

EARL(O.S)

It's wild, man. So wild.

George picks up a spare guitar. He tries to play but can't focus. The guitar neck seems all bendy like rubber.

MCGUINN

George, I've been listening to this Indian music. It's so cool. Guy named Ravi Shankar.

JOHN

George has been learning to play the sitar. There were these Indian musicians when we were filming 'Help'. Sounded great.

CROSBY

I like their food. Hopefully their music is as good.

He slides down into the tub, still strumming his guitar. The others laugh. To Earl, the laughter sounds like a roaring tidal wave of noise. Mal pops his head in.

MAL

Everything alright?

GEORGE

Yeah, Mal.

MAL

We have another visitor on his way here.

(beat)

Peter Fonda.

JOHN

Is he cool? I've heard some stories. Not all good.

EARL(O.S)

Oh, can I meet him? He's great.

GEORGE

Never heard of him...

He and McGuinn are sitting eyeball to eyeball, trading chords, bringing up new melodies. Crosby tries to sit up straight but its impossible so he continues to strum wedged in the tub. John stops, peers into the camera.

JOHN

So, Earl...you're a normal American teenager, right?

EARL(O.S)

Yeah, I guess so.

JOHN

So what do you really think of us? Our records and films? Do your friends like us?

OLD EARL(V.O)

Even though I was totally bent, it was still unnerving to be asked serious questions by the great John Lennon. More so when he was as out of it as me.

George stops playing, watching me. McGuinn and Crosby continue on, playing a ragged version of 'Yesterday'.

EARL(O.S)

Well, sure they do. Most think you guys are cool.

GEORGE

Most?

EARL(O.S)

Yeah, for real.

JOHN

What about the Rolling Stones?
Any of your mates like them?

McGuinn stops playing, keen to hear this interaction between idols and fan. Crosby too listens but keeps strumming. Comes up with a pretty good acoustic rendition of 'A Hard Day's Night'.

OLD EARL

It was surreal. I felt like a witness being cross-examined in court. I knew John was just curious and not being threatening if I gave 'wrong' answers. But it was an interesting moment...

EARL(O.S)

Well, yeah some do. They like that bluesy stuff. But they still prefer, ah, you guys. Definitely.

CROSBY

He's lying! Eight out of ten American kids now favour the Byrds over the Beatles!

Laughter all round. John in particular loses it. Mal once more pokes his head in. McGuinn points at him and laughs even louder. Mal smiles good naturedly. After a moment, the musicians are silent as the trip takes another turn.

MAL

Anyone hungry?

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The camera pans a bit shakily around the room. John and George sit on the sofa. Crosby and McGuinn sit on the floor. Mal brings in plates of bacon and eggs.

OLD EARL(V.O)

Once again, I'm sure we simply teleported out of the bathroom. But we were all totally ripped...

MAL

I have a feeling this isn't going to turn out good. So I'll adjourn back to the kitchen.

GEORGE

We'll be fine, Mal. It's not like we've never eaten food before.

JOHN

Yeah, Mal. Go on and pick on someone else! Like, ah, Paul.

Crosby and McGuinn explode into laughter as they try to balance plates of food on their laps. It's crazy.

OLD EARL(V.O)

As usual, dear dependable Mal was right. Chaos beckoned...

Comical scenes as the four musicians try to use their utensils. The camera zooms in on bright yellow eggs transformed into wall-size spheres by the acid. John tosses his cutlery, uses his hands. Food spills...

EARL(O.S)

Far out. This is so far out...

George looks up, a slice of bacon hanging from his mouth. Crosby sees him, immediately stick bacon in his mouth too. McGuinn follows suit, then John. A real sight to behold...

JOHN

Earl, you're letting the team down. Where's your bacon?

His slice falls from his mouth as he speaks. He tries to put it back in but it falls to the floor. In slow motion. The camera zooms in on it as it floats down.

OLD EARL(V.O)

It was insane how the acid made you focus on the mundane until it became the most important thing in your life to that point.

Crosby and McGuinn let their bacon fall. Soon, there is a trio of rashers neatly in a row on the floor. George tosses his but it falls across the others.

CROSBY

Damn, that's wrecked our art, George. Our careers are over.

GEORGE

Sorry. I'm not feeling the best.

Suddenly, Ringo walks in from the hallway with a lean, hip looking dude - the actor PETER FONDA(25) Sunglasses, tanned, wearing all denim gear. Damn cool.

RINGO

Look who I found out the front.

FONDA

The fabulous Beatles. At last I meet you. And some of the Byrds?

He scans the room, frowns.

FONDA

Paul? Not tripping with you?

CROSBY

No, he's not partaking today?

JOHN

Nor any day.

RINGO

Maybe forever. Never.

FONDA

Ah, I see. Fuck, man, you cats are deep. So very deep.

He notices the camera. Looks wary.

FONDA

Who is this? A new star who you have taken under thy wings?

JOHN

He's our personal film director. Earl Hitchcock. No relation to that other guy, you know the famous one? Earl Smith...

Crosby and McGuinn break into insane laughter, rolling on the floor in the food droppings.

GEORGE

I need another swim. I'm burning up. Think I'm dying.

He stands up, a little unsteady. Walks to the door and out to the patio. Stands blinking up at the sun. Mal comes out of the kitchen to clean the food mess. Frowns as he sees George outside, clearly struggling. Follows him.

EARL(O.S)

I need some air too.

FONDA

Dying? I know all about that.

John looks up, annoyed at this guy already.

JOHN

Cut that talk about dying. We don't want to hear it, ok. Who put all that shit in your head?

EXT. PATIO- DAY

The camera points up at the sky, unmoving on the blueness. Mal appears, concerned. Fonda has followed him out, a wry smile on his face.

MAL

George, you and Earl stay out of the pool. That's an order, ok? Just lie in the sun, maybe sleep.

Camera 'nods', pans to George next to him. His eyes are closed but he nods. Mal directs him to a recliner. The camera settles next to George,

MAL

I'll be inside if you need me.

FONDA

Ah, thanks. Ron, isn't it?

MAL

Mal. Mal Evans.

FONDA

Oh yeah. Any chance of a drink?

He plonks down on a recliner on the other side of George.

MAL

No.

He walks back in to the house, clearly not a fan. Fonda shrugs, puts his hands behind his back, stretches out.

FONDA

George, how you feeling?

GEORGE

Like I'm dead.

FONDA

Crosby's gear can do that to you. I take only half a tab of his stuff. Did so on the way here.

The camera turns to him. George has gone very pale.

EARL(O.S)

You're tripping too?

FONDA

Oh sure. Its the in thing.

(beat)

Did I tell you I died years ago?

George's eyes flicker. Fonda turns onto his side, takes off his sunglasses. His eyes are a piercing blue.

EARL(O.S)

Go on.

FONDA

Well, I was eleven. My sister and I were living in Nebraska with our aunt and uncle. After our mom killed herself...

He sighs, a long, dreadful sound when you're high.

FONDA

One day I was out hunting deer or squirrels or gophers...whatever moved basically. It was a shit hole place for a New York city boy to be stick in.

He closes his eyes as he remembers.

FONDA

Anyway, I was running to get to a kill and I tripped. Rifle hit the ground and went off. Bullet hit me in the stomach. I passed out from the pain.

(beat)

And I was dead until I woke up in the hospital...

GEORGE

What did you see?

FONDA

I saw nothing.

EARL(O.S)

Well, you were unconscious or in a coma, so of course you saw n---

FONDA

No. I was dead. The nothingness was black. No white light...no shiny loved ones come to welcome me. I could feel my body but I was crawling around in this empty nothing. I was aware but...gone.

A silence as the trippers contemplate this.

GEORGE
Maybe you were in Hell?

FONDA
Possibly. It was only a few hours
apparently but felt like years.
I've always had a theory that
Earth is Hell. That we are reborn
here after being evil in past
lives. And we try to redeem
ourselves and get to a better
existence when we die here.

GEORGE
That's profound. Sounds a lot
like the Indian philosophy I've
been looking into.

EARL(O.S)
What if you were good in a past
life? Where does that take you?

George and Fonda look at the camera, musing.

FONDA
Well, maybe the Bahamas or
somewhere awesome, right?

Laughter. Then the camera suddenly slides to a weird
angle. George and Fonda are upside down. There's a
thumping sound. Faint yells from the house, running feet.

OVER BLACK

OLD EARL(V.O)
I fell asleep or passed out or
went into a coma. Maybe I died?
(beat)
Anyway, whatever it was, I didn't
wake up for eighteen hours.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

The camera whirs on but everything is black.

RINGO(O.S)
I can't see anything. Are you
sure the new battery is in right?

GEORGE(O.S)
Yes. Earl showed me how to charge
it. Surely you haven't broken it?

PAUL(O.S)
Let me have a look.

SUPER - WEDNESDAY AUGUST 26 1965

The sound of buttons clicking. Then a view of Paul staring into the lens. He tut tuts.

PAUL

You idiots. The lens cap was still on. Bloody hell...

The camera spins around. A sheepish Ringo and George lie on the recliners next to the pool.

GEORGE

Well, what do you expect? We're lousy musicians from Liverpool. Not gadget experts.

(beat)

Where's John?

RINGO

Still in bed, I guess. He and ah, Miss Baez are good pals.

A sound at the sliding door: Earl himself sways as he squints into the daylight. The Beatles cheer him.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I woke at noon the next day. Felt weary but also incredibly alert. As if the world had changed for me. I felt so alive...

RINGO

You're in trouble now, Paul. Taking Earl's camera while he was asleep. He might press charges.

PAUL(O.S)

Hey, come on. That's not fair. He said it was ok. Right, Earl?

EARL

Yeah sure. Excuse me.

He shuffles across the patio, dives into the pool. Paul zooms the camera in on him as he surfaces. He dog paddles to the edge. Leans on the warm concrete, kicking his legs.

EARL

So what's happening today?

RINGO

Rest day. We're all knackered.

EARL

Knackered? What does that mean?

GEORGE

It means we're all tired.

Earl nods. Sits on the edge, legs still kicking.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I wasn't nauseous or wasted. I
felt great. Then I witnessed
something really special.

A noise from the wall. Scratching, heavy breathing. Mal
comes out with a tray of juice and sandwiches. Frowns.

MAL

What is that sound?

EARL

Beverley Hills lion. Escaped from
a private zoo last month.

The camera zooms to him quickly then back to the wall. The
Beatles look at each in shock, sit up as if to run.

RINGO

What the hell? Are you serious?

GEORGE

Jesus, Earl. Is that a---

Relieved laughter as Earl grins.

EARL

Gotcha.

A hand appears at the top of the wall, then another. Both
dirty. A head of hair peeks over. A YOUNG GIRL(17)perches
on the top before sliding down into a flower bed.

PAUL(O.S)

Ooh, look, lads, its a fan.

The girl stands up slowly, brushing dirt from her clothes.
she focuses on her idols watching her. Looks down at her
dirty hands. Bursts into tears.

MAL

That was silly, love. You
might've been hurt.

He moves to her. Earl watches the Beatles intently,
curious to see what they do. Paul films it all.

YOUNG GIRL

I'm sorry. I just wanted
to...meet them.

MAL

No harm done. I'll take you to the gate, alright?

She looks at each of the musicians again, still sobbing. Mal takes her arm gently. Suddenly, John is at the door.

JOHN

Wait, Mal.

He glances at his band mates, nods his head towards the girl. The other three smile, they all go to her.

OLD EARL(V.O)

It was then I witnessed the special bond between the Beatles and their fans. It was awesome.

PAUL(O.S)

Earl, have your camera back.

A tilted view of the sky then Paul is framed, along with his mates, ushering the girl to a seat at the table. They sit around, chatting, smiling, laughing. A gesture to Mal who goes in the house, returns with notebook and pen.

OLD EARL(V.O)

They all signed their autographs. Gently wiped dirt and tears from her face. Made her laugh.

George notices a small camera in the girl's pocket. Takes it out, hands it to Mal. The four Beatles pose with the girl as Mal takes a few snaps. She's trembling, ecstatic.

INSERT: A freeze frame of one of the photos...

OLD EARL(V.O)

Then they said good bye to her, hugged her, before Mal took her into the house and out to the gate. The boys nodded to each other, happy with this simple act of kindness that cost nothing.

The Beatles return to their recliners as if nothing had happened. Pretty soon they are all asleep.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I thought I had seen it all. But later I learned what was happening the next day...

(beat)

The Beatles were meeting Elvis.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

The Beatles sleep. No movement. Suddenly, the screen goes BLACK as the camera is turned off.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I had to save my battery life for the following night. I filmed nothing that day or the next. Not much happened anyway. resting up, watching tv. And waiting...

(beat)

Waiting to visit the King...

SUPER - THURSDAY AUGUST 27 1965

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

It's blurry. The camera just shows fleeting glimpses of the Beatles in the car. But the audio is clear. A haze of smoke as John lights a joint.

PAUL

You're a lucky boy, Earl. You're gonna meet Elvis.

EARL(O.S)

Thank again for letting me come.

GEORGE

Brian wasn't happy. He said that Elvis's crew might be annoyed too. But you're one of us now.

He takes the offered joint. Has a deep toke.

EARL(O.S)

I am?

JOHN

Sure you are. We like you. You---

RINGO

You remind of ourselves before we got famous. That youthful thing.

George passes the joint to him. Closes his eyes.

GEORGE

I think he means before we became famous arseholes.

Laughter by all, Earl the loudest. The limo rolls on.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I felt a little guilty. I had decided to sneak my camera along to Elvis's house. It took awhile to set up but I had it strapped to my left wrist, hidden under my jacket sleeve. I could turn it on and off to conserve power easily. The picture would be a little off but should capture ok.

RINGO

Um, where are we going again?

The weed has kicked in. The four look at each other, ripped. John shrugs. Paul frowns.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I stayed silent, bemused and trying not to giggle. I'd had a quick toke earlier but declined further offers. I wanted a clear head. Plus I was already paranoid about getting caught with the camera. But it was so funny seeing them like this...

GEORGE

Oh, I remember now...we're going to see Elvis!

PAUL

That's right! How could we forget that? Elvis...we'll meet him.

The four of them dissolve into helpless giggles. The camera pans out the window as the road steepens. Below, the lights of L.A glitter like a jeweled crown.

JOHN

'Ere, what city is that?

He lights up another joint. The other three peer out the window, trying to focus.

EARL(O.S)

It's...ah, Los---

GEORGE

Wait, don't tell us...

(beat)

Las Vegas?

RINGO

Close. It's Las Francisco. Earl?

JOHN

What would he know? He's only a local. It's Los Angeles, I think.

PAUL

Good job.

The limo suddenly turns into a driveway, stops. A tap on a window. The driver winds it down to reveal Mal looking in. A cloud of smoke exits around his head.

MAL

We're here.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I hadn't told the Beatles about the hidden camera. But I think they knew. They probably expected me to do it. But I had a feeling they were delighted as they would've done the same in my shoes. And I reckon they would want to have a record of this special event...

EXT. ELVIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The limo door opens. A view of the moon and stars. And the Elvis Presley house. The camera moves around to the other side of the limo as Mal opens that door. Abruptly, four stoned Beatles tumble out on the concrete.

OLD EARL(V.O)

George later described this scene in Anthology. He said they all fell out of the car like in the Beatles cartoons.

(beat)

It was hilarious and surreal.

Laughter from Earl. Mal giggles too. In the limo ahead, Brian and Neil get out. The Beatles hurriedly get up.

Outside the front door, men appear - Elvis's friends and 'gang'. They watch as the Beatles entourage approaches. Nod in greeting, identifying each member. The camera view is a little blurry but the audio is clear.

ELVIS MAN ONE

Good evening, gentlemen. Welcome to Mr. Presley's house.

BRIAN

Thank you. We are grateful for his hospitality.

ELVIS MAN TWO

He's happy to see you all.

He frowns as he notices Earl amongst the Beatles. Steps closer. The camera trembles. The man consults a list.

ELVIS MAN TWO

Who is this? He isn't named on here. Is he a journalist?

JOHN

No, he's family. He's been staying with us.

ELVIS MAN ONE

This might be a problem. Mister Presley doesn't want any strangers here. Just you guys.

PAUL

Well, we're strangers, aren't we? We've never met your boss.

George and Ringo try to keep a straight face. Brian closes his eyes, sighs. Mal and Neil glance at each other.

ELVIS MAN ONE

Hey, we don't need---

ELVIS MAN TWO

It's ok, Randy. Cool it. Alright, you can go in. Mister Presley will be informed. it's his decision after that. Keep a low profile, ok?

OLD EARL(V.O)

I nodded. Paul clapped me on the back. The King was only moments away. It was unbelievable.

INT. ELVIS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door opens. A long hallway. Doors on either side down to the faint glimpse of a kitchen at the far end. The level of the view changes as Earl moves his arm quietly.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I had to concentrate on getting a clear field of film but not making it obvious. It helped being in a bunch as we walked down the hallway.

The sound of a bass guitar from a room on the left. Paul tilts his head to listen. The noise pauses before resuming louder. The notes are clunky but tuneful.

RINGO
 (whispers)
 Who is playing that? Elvis?

Elvis's men get to the door. Its open. They usher the Beatles crew in. The camera follows, light streaming from within the room. It makes the Beatles have halos...

OLD EARL(V.O)
 And then we were in a huge room.
 (beat)
 And there was Elvis...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's like a young man's playroom, packed with cool stuff. Two big television sets at each end of the room. A small bar in the corner. A stereo. A jukebox, pool table. Plush carpets. A massive sofa set in a semi circle.

ELVIS PRESLEY(30) sits in the middle of the sofa, plucking a Fender bass. It's plugged into a huge amp. The King is dressed in a long sleeved red shirt with black trousers. His hair is perfect. His smile divine.

EARL(O.S)
 (low voice)
 Oh man, its him. Its Elvis.

Around him, the Fab Four gape at the man on the sofa. He waves them over to sit next to him. A door in the back wall opens and Elvis's manager, COLONEL TOM PARKER (56)emerges. He's a big man wearing a plain suit.

Parker shakes hands with all the Beatles, ushers them towards Elvis. He shakes hands with Brian, whispers to him and they head to the other room.

OLD EARL(V.O)
 I learned later that Parker and Brian were gambling in that room and discussing all sorts of things about the music business.

Now the Beatles are sitting on the sofa, staring at Elvis. He puts the bass down, smiles, nods. Waits...

OLD EARL(V.O)
 I could see Elvis was looking at me, wondering who the hell I was. Obviously his help hadn't told him. I looked at the wall...

Elvis suddenly gestures to the camera, pointing to a smaller sofa. The camera settles along with Neil and Mal.

ELVIS

Well now. Here we all are.

OLD EARL(V.O)

His voice so rich and textured.
But soft. The Beatles still
hadn't spoken. I frowned, willing
them to speak!

Elvis leans forward, looking back at the boys. They glance at each other, waiting for someone else to start the talk.

ELVIS

Well, if none of you are gonna
talk, then I'm heading to bed.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I saw my chance and jumped in
before anyone could speak.

EARL(O.S)

Mister Presley, ah, it's a huge
honor to meet you.

ELVIS

Why thank you? Good to see one of
your group has a tongue.

(beat)

And who might you be?

That breaks the ice. John and Paul laugh. George and Ringo tear their gaze from Elvis to stare at the camera.

EARL(O.S)

I'm Earl Lindsey, sir. I ---

RINGO

He lives in the house we're
staying at.

ELVIS

I see. Ah, wait, isn't that Miss
Gabor's house?

PAUL

Yes it is. Earl is her nephew.

Elvis's face lights up. The camera zooms in.

OLD EARL(V.O)

Once again, Lady Luck was in my
corner. I even had time to adjust
the camera for a closeup.

ELVIS

Well, that's just great. Miss
Gabor is a good friend of mine.

ELVIS
She took me under her wing when I first came to Hollywood. Lovely lady. Incredibly generous.

EARL(O.S)
That she is, sir. I'll give her your regards when she returns from vacation.

ELVIS
Excellent. Now, you must've been having some fun with these boys?

EARL(O.S)
Yes, sir. It's been interesting.

GEORGE
Sorry to interrupt, Elvis. But perhaps we could, you know, have a jam? While you play the bass?

Elvis looks at the four Beatles. Realises that, even though his career has stagnated because of the English invasion, these young men still worship him. HIM...

ELVIS
Of course. Randy, fetch some guitars and a couple more amps for my friends.

John and Paul look at each other, almost shivering with delight. George has his eyes closed, smiling. Only Ringo looks a bit lost. Elvis notices. Touches his arm.

ELVIS
Sorry, Ringo. No drums here.

RINGO
No problem. I'm happy to tap on the table. I'm used to it.

LAUGHTER

OLD EARL(V.O)
The ice was well and truly broken now. The common bond of music saw these five talents blend as they played all sorts of songs: Beatles and Elvis standards, hits from the forties, whatever.
(beat)
I had a great chance for some really good clear footage and the result is what you see.
(beat)
The night seemed to pass in a blur. Like a dream.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- Ringo and Elvis play pool. George chats to the King's crew. John and Paul sip a drink and take it all in...
- Elvis's girlfriend PRISCILLA is brought in to say hello. She's dressed up to the hilt, almost doll-like...
- Trays of food set up. The jukebox pumps out rock and roll. Elvis tosses a gridiron to Ringo...
- They get on the guitars again. Ringo taps an empty tray with a knife and fork...
- Brian and The Colonel emerge from the gambling room, smiling at the historic interaction...

END MONTAGE

OLD EARL(V.O)

Until, finally, it was time to go. It was about two a.m by then. I felt sad, not even tired. But I knew I had captured gold on my camera. And gotten away with it.

Hands are shaken all round. Elvis comes over to the camera, nods. His crew give gifts to Mal and Neil to carry - gold records, stage uniforms. A gun holster for Ringo.

ELVIS

It's been a pleasure, Earl. Please give my regards to your Aunt. Tell her I'll call her.

OLD EARL(V.O)

He had a wry smile on his face and kept looking at my arm. I think he knew I had some sort of camera hidden, but for some reason he just didn't care.

EARL(O.S)

I will, Mister Presley. Thank you, sir. I'll never forget this night. For the rest of my life.

OLD EARL(V.O)

For some reason, I don't recall leaving the house. Next minute we were back in the limos. I was curious to see what the Beatles thought of the meeting.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

The camera is back out from Earl's sleeve, silently filming the boys. They all seem lost in their own musings, before John pulls a fresh joint. Lights it, tokes and passes it around. Instantly, the four perk up...

PAUL

Elvis. We met him.

RINGO

Dream of a lifetime.

JOHN

Ay, Elvis. He was pretty stoned.

EARL(O.S)

Oh, I don't think he was. He was just...like the King he is.

The Beatles all look at the camera. Smiling. Little glances at each other but careful not to mock.

JOHN

Come on, Earl. He was as stoned as we were. Maybe even stonier. He was pretty, I'll give you that. But he was stoned pretty.

George hasn't spoken, accepts another toke.

PAUL

He didn't seem happy when you asked him why doesn't he do some rock and roll records again.

RINGO

Aye. I guess the sappy stuff goes with the B grade films.

GEORGE

He was stoned alright. But very cool. Like us.

Laughter as the limo rolls on. The camera starts to tilt.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I was exhausted. When we got back, I crashed on the sofa.

BLACK

MAL(O.S)

Wake up, Earl.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Earl's face - young, serene. Mumbles as Mal gently shakes his shoulder. The camera swings around the room. In the hallway door, a pile of suitcases and other gear. John and Ringo sip cups of tea.

SUPER - FRIDAY AUGUST 28 1965

RINGO
Give him back the camera, Paul.

PAUL(O.S)
I can't till he wakes.

The camera pans back to Earl who opens his eyes.

EARL
I...wait, did we meet Elvis last night? Or did I dream it all?

JOHN
It's all a dream, Earl Lindsey.
We're living in one crazy dream.

Brian and George enter. Brian checks his watch.

BRIAN
The bus will be here in half an hour. Please help Mal and Neil load the luggage, ok?

GEORGE
'Ere, steady on. We're stars not hired help. We'll need a pay rise first before we touch a bag.

Brian shakes his head as the others laugh. He heads down the hallway, giving instructions to the cops.

EARL
You're leaving for San Diego now?
I thought your flight was after lunch? What's happened?

PAUL(O.S)
Apparently there's a strike at the airport. No planes in or out.

JOHN
How dare they! They should be flogged publicly. And privately.

RINGO
So we're taking the bus down. Leaving now as the traffic will be bad. You're welcome to come with us. Plenty of room.

Earl stands up. John hands him his empty cup of tea.

EARL

I...no, I better go home. I've overstayed my welcome.

He looks around, sees his backpack. Paul hands him back the camera. The four Beatles huddle in as one.

JOHN

No. You haven't. We've enjoyed your company. Right, fellas?

The others nod emphatically.

OLD EARL(V.O)

I have to say I was tempted to go with them. But I knew it wouldn't be the same, once we left the house. Their privacy would be gone again as they went back to their fans and the world. I would just be a hanger-on, not a guest or friend. I had to go home.

EARL(O.S)

I've had the best experience. But it's time to head home.

The camera wavers with emotion. One by one, the Fab Four shake Earl's hand. Ringo hugs him.

RINGO

Peace, brother.

GEORGE

Take care, Earl.

PAUL

Been a pleasure.

JOHN

We won't forget you, lad.

They turn, pick up pieces of luggage and walk down the hallway. The camera follows. Lingerin.

EXT. FRONT DRIVEWAY - DAY

Emerging from the front door, we see a large bus parked in the driveway. A few fans peer through the front gates. The scream as the Beatles come into view, hand the gear to the bus driver who is helping Mal and Neil load it underneath.

Brian ushers the Beatles onto the bus where they take seats on the near side. They wave to Earl. Brian turns to the camera, holds out two stubs of cardboard.

BRIAN

Thank you, Earl. The boys seemed to relax more with you here. These are tickets to both Hollywood Bowl shows, tomorrow and Saturday night. Hope to see you there.

EARL(O.S)

Oh wow, thank you, Mister Epstein. Thank you so much.

Brian smiles, steps up. Mal and Neil shakes hands with the camera as they get on. The driver shuts the compartment, follows the others. The door closes. The engine rumbles. A cop opens one side of the gate, waves the bus forward.

A window slides open and the four Beatles are there, laughing, pulling faces, blowing kisses. Earl's friends. The bus moves slowly out. The four mop tops wave again.

PAUL

Don't lose that camera footage!

And then they are gone...

EXT. EARL'S HOUSE - DAY

The camera slowly trudges up the driveway to the front door. The jangle of keys then Earl's hand inserts one. The door unlocks and is pushed open.

OLD EARL(V.O)

It was just as surreal leaving the Beatles house as it was being there. Going back to normality.

(beat)

Which then hit me like a ton of bricks. Severely.

The faint sound of a phone ringing inside. The camera hurries inside. Heading down a hallway to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

It's a fancy kitchen with all the mod cons. The telephone on the bench stops ringing just as we get to it. A click then the answering machine comes on - 'leave a message'. Then his mother's voice:

BETH(ON PHONE)

Hi Earl, just letting you know our holiday is cut short and we'll be home Monday. Your father has to be back in the office as

BETH(ON PHONE)
 some internal issues came up. So
 we'll see you then. Bye, honey.

EARL(O.S)
 Monday?

There's a note next to the phone. The camera moves slowly
 towards it. Earl's hand picks it up. Neat writing.

INSERT:

'Hey Earl, have a great time while we're away. But not too
 great a time, ya know? I left you a few chores to do.
 please get them done, ok? It would be a big help.

Love Mum and Dad xxx'

EARL(O.S)
 Chores? Oh man. Look at this
 list! Clean the house and
 pool...mow the lawn...tidy up the
 spare room...do the
 laundry...clean out the attic?

He sighs, a sound bereft of all hope..

EARL(O.S)
 Welcome back to the real world,
 right. I guess I better get to
 it. Like...now. But I'm so tired.

OVER BLACK

OLD EARL(V.O)
 It was time to turn off the
 camera and start the damn chores.
 To cut a long story short, I
 never got to go to either of the
 Hollywood Bowl gigs. I left the
 tickets in my jeans and they went
 through the wash. Totally ruined,
 not even readable. And to tell
 you the truth, I was too tired
 over the next tow days as I
 worked like a demon cleaning.

(beat)

But I got it all done before my
 folks arrived home. And I
 thought, well, that's the last
 time I'll meet the Beatles.

(beat)

Well...maybe not...

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Screaming fans line fences outside a fancy hotel. Limousines crawl along the street, ready to turn into an arched driveway next to the hotel. The camera flips to see Earl, hair longer, a wispy moustache.

SUPER - SAN FRANCISCO AUGUST 29 1966

OLD EARL(V.O)

A year later I was living in San Francisco, attending college. The events of Benedict Canyon hadn't faded from my mind - just been put aside as I grappled with adult life and new responsibilities. Anyway, the Beatles were in the US for what would be their final ever tour, although that wasn't official yet. And the last gig was at Candlestick Park in 'Frisco.

(beat)

They'd had enough of touring. I was going to the gig but I was drawn to their hotel, with my camera. Maybe I could see them one last time...

A limo slows as it nears the entrance. The second car eases behind it. The camera pushes to the edge of the fence, showing the fans yelling, some crying. Inside the second car are the Beatles - tired, bored, the odd wave.

Suddenly, George at the near window, looks out. Straight into the camera. His eyes widen. Leans forward to tell the driver to wait. The fans go wild. The window rolls down...

GEORGE

Earl?

The other Beatles barely move their heads to see why George is doing this. Then John does a double take, slides over. Paul and Ringo frown, turn to look. Their mouths open with surprise and then the window frames their faces.

JOHN

Earl! It's our mate, Earl!

PAUL

Look at him. Just...look at him.

RINGO

Earl, you have to come up to the hotel with us. Please.

The camera zooms in on the Fab Four. Their delight is uplifting. All around, the fans shriek at this bonus.

EARL(O.S)

Hello to you guys! This is fantastic. But I can't stay...I'm meeting up with family.

GEORGE

We're your family, Earl.

PAUL

Are you coming to the concert?

EARL(O.S)

Yes! I wouldn't miss it.

JOHN

We'll dedicate a song to you.

A couple of cops head down the street, wondering why the limos aren't moving. The Beatles realise time is up.

RINGO

We have to go. Goodbye, Earl.

EARL(O.S)

So long, fellas. You are the best. The best ever in history.

GEORGE

'Bye, Earl. Have a great life!

PAUL

The concert...it may be our last.

Then the driver moves the limo off. The Beatles peer out the rear window, waving. This time tinged with a real sadness. The camera zooms in even as they disappear down a ramp under the hotel. The fans continue to scream.

OLD EARL(V.O)

And that was it.

STOP PLAYLIST

The music ends. The screen goes black for a moment before we see OLD EARL(75) sitting in a wheelchair in an office or study. He's old and frail, but his eyes remain lively.

OLD EARL

Hello sons. If you're watching this - and I hope to god you are - it means I'm dead. Funny, I've always wanted to say that.

He laughs, before it changes into a deep cough. He wipes his mouth with a handkerchief, trying to hide a grimace.

OLD EARL

Excuse me. I'm feeling poor.
 Doctor says I don't have much
 time left. Been a struggle the
 last few weeks organising things.
 This video, my cremation. All the
 necessary stuff. And of course,
 my final instructions to you.

He pauses to sip from a glass of water. His eyes flit to one side of the camera where a nurse possibly sits.

OLD EARL

No doubt you will have lots of
 questions running through your
 head. But I'll be as thorough as
 I can with my wishes. They are
 quite simple really. After this
 video ends, you may open the
 envelope and take it from there.

He looks at his watch, takes a pill from a tray and washes it down with more water. Takes a deep breath.

OLD EARL

Anyway, I'll let you get on with
 my plans. Hopefully they
 don't...annoy you. But I think
 you'll be pleasantly surprised.
 Now, the video footage you just
 watched...I know it will be worth
 a lot of money. A small fortune,
 maybe a big fortune. Beatles
 memorabilia is huge business.

He starts to cough again, blood seeping onto the handkerchief. A NURSE comes into view, efficiently gives him an injection in his arm. Tenderly wipes his mouth clean before disappearing from the frame. He nods to her.

OLD EARL

Apologies. I'll be quick. my
 strength is fading each day. The
 Candlestick Park concert is on
 another file on the USB. I filmed
 the whole gig and restored it. It
 will be worth a tidy sum too.

(beat)

Now, I'm formally leaving the USB
 and its contents to you both.
 While it is special to me, I have
 no issues at all if you decide to
 sell it at some stage. If you
 need money for my grand
 children's future then, I'm happy
 for the video to pay for it. I
 leave the decision to you both.

OLD EARL

You might hold it for years or
sell it next week. Again, I have
no qualms about it - I won't be
here, will I?

(beat)

Just make sure there's no
fighting over it. I've seen it
happen. As I said in the note
earlier, I have been proud to
have been your father. I love you
both dearly. Goodbye.

The picture turns black.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Steve and Bill stare at the blank screen, before Bill
shuts the laptop. They look at each other, then at the urn
and the sealed envelope.

STEVE

Well, how about that, hey? Our
dad...partying with the Beatles.

BILL

I'm impressed by the design of
the video, with the music and
effects. I know Dad didn't
actually do any of the fancy
stuff but he sure as hell had a
lot of input into it.

STEVE

He was always the planner.

He gestures to the urn and envelope.

STEVE

And no doubt he'll have some
final intricate wishes for his
ashes. Go ahead, open it.

Bill reaches out for the envelope. Shakes it. Slowly tears
the seal. Takes out a single sheet of paper. Reads. Grins.

STEVE

Well? Doesn't seem much writing.

BILL

Nope. It's pretty
straightforward. But weird.

He hands it over. Steve takes it.

STEVE

'My beloved sons. Here is my final wish. Ring the number at the bottom. His name is Alex. He knows me and my plans. He will give further instructions. I'm sure you will carry them out as I wish. I am proud of you both. Love, Dad.'

The brothers look at each other, eyes misty. Steve grabs his mobile, dials the number on the note. Listens...

STEVE(ON PHONE)

Ah, hello? Am I speaking to Alex?
 (beat)
 Oh, great. My name is Steve Lindsey. My dad was Earl Lin--
 (beat)
 Thank you. This is all kind of odd for my brother and me, so you can explain what happens next.

He listens for long moments. Nodding... 'yes I see'... 'that would be nice'. Bill fidgets, mouthing 'what's going on'?

STEVE(ON PHONE)

That sounds perfect, Alex. We'll be over soon. Thank you again.

He clicks off. Picks up the urn. Examines it.

STEVE

Lord, Dad, you are making sure you are sent off in style.

BILL

Never mind that! What's happening? Who the hell is this Alex guy? How does he know Dad?

STEVE

Patience, brother. I'll explain in the car.

He gathers up the laptop, locks it in his suitcase. Hands the car keys to Bill. Walks to the door.

BILL

Where are we going? Where does this Alex live?

STEVE

Where do you think?

He opens the door. Glances back at Bill and smiles at the dawning look of comprehension on his face.

INT. CAR - DAY

Bill steers through the city streets, following a map on his phone. The blue line snakes along the virtual L.A.

STEVE

...and then years ago, Dad met Alex at a Beatles convention in Seattle. They became good buddies and kept in touch. Two years a---

BILL

Wait...Dad went to a fan event? Did he like, cosplay? Dress up like a walrus or something?

STEVE

That's funny! Look, concentrate on getting us to our destination. So two years ago, Alex actually bought the Benedict Canyon house.

BILL

Woah! I'm no real estate expert but that must've cost like---

He eases to a stop as traffic lights turn red.

STEVE

Two point five million. It's worth at least four now. But, anyway, when Dad learned he was dying, he contacted Alex and told him his wishes. Alex was happy to oblige. Dad was over the moon.

Bill muses on this. Takes off as the light turns green. The phone map indicates ten minutes to arrival. Suddenly, Steve takes the phone, taps in a new address.

BILL

Hey, what are you doing?

STEVE

Just follow the blue line, ok?

Bill opens his mouth to speak then looks at the destination. Smiles, nods. Picks up speed.

LATER

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The Ford rolls to a stop near the driveway of a house - Earl's old house on Hutton Drive. It has a different paint job and some extensions but its still recognisable.

STEVE

Thought we may as well see it as its near the Beatle house.

BILL

Good idea. Dad would appreciate it. He lived here for what, ten years? Maybe more?

STEVE

Fifteen. The months after his time with the Beatles were his last here. He went off to college - his folks sold it and moved not long after that. Nice house.

Bill nods and they stare at the place for a moment, lost in their thoughts. At last, Bill starts the car.

BILL

Let's go and see what Dad has in store for us, shall we?

Steve laughs as they move off...

EXT. BENEDICT CANYON HOUSE - DAY

A weathered sign reads '2850'. High barred gates. A view back towards the city. The Ford rolls to a stop in the driveway. The brothers stare at the house beyond.

STEVE

Doesn't seem to have changed much since nineteen sixty five.

BILL

Only the value. Most of the houses in this area were built to last a hundred years.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

- The brothers get out of the SUV, Bill carrying the urn. They walk to the gate. There's a buzzer set into the wall. Steve presses it. Overhead, the sun is hot on their skin.

- Presently, a huge bald man with glasses appears. This is ALEX(60). He wears a 'Rubber Soul' T shirt and jeans. His smile is that of family. He opens the gate, beckons them in. Shakes hands. The three disappear down the drive.

- Inside the house now. The interior furniture is of course new along with the carpet. But the rooms still look remarkably like they were fifty two years ago. A wall near the kitchen has been knocked out to create a pantry.

- Alex takes them into the other rooms. A look into the bathroom. The tub that once echoed with a Beatles/Byrds jam is still there with a new paint job. Steve and Bill look at each other, lips trembling with emotion.

- Now they are out on the patio next to the pool. The wall has been upgraded over the years into a mosaic render. The pool is still the same shape but painted green. There are several recliners along one side.

- Bill and Steve stare at the water. Alex gestures: 'have a swim if you like?' The brothers laugh, decline. Alex laughs, leads them down the path along the side of the house. To the back of the house. To the wall.

- Now the three are at the back wall. They walk along it before stopping at a certain spot. Alex points at the top of the wall. Where Earl climbed over on that long ago day.

- Bill kneels in the grass, carefully unscrews the lid of the urn. Holds it out over the base of the wall, tilts it. Steve grasps his shoulder as Bill gently shakes the urn.

- Half of the ashes fall out, scatter softly against the wall. Alex takes his glasses off, wipes them on his T shirt. Rubs his eyes before replacing his glasses. Bill stares at the ash before screwing the lid back on.

- They walk back to the pool, to the garden bed near the wall where the fan climbed over in nineteen sixty five. Alex goes to a small shed, brings out a shovel and a canvas bag. The brothers look for a suitable place in the garden. Bill points to a tree, nods.

- Alex hands the shovel to Steve who starts digging at the base of the tree. He stops a couple of times to check the depth against the height of the urn. Continues on. Sweats.

- At last the hole is done. The brothers kneel, both holding the urn as they lower it in. Tears roll down their faces. The urn sits upright nicely. Alex says a few words.

- Steve lovingly shovels the loose dirt back over the urn. Before long it's completely covered. Alex opens the canvas bag, takes out a hammer and nails, and a varnished piece of square wood. A plaque. It has 'EARL' carved into it as well as the Abbey Road Beatles silhouette burnt into it. The brothers watch, crying openly now as Alex attaches the plaque to the tree above the urn site.

- Alex stands with them, heads bowed for a moment. Finally, they wipe away the tears, hug each other. Smile even amongst the sadness. Alex leads them to an outdoor table, gestures to be seated. He disappears inside as Steve and Bill sit and reflect.

- Alex comes back with a tray. Three bottles of beer on it. Hands one each to the brothers. Takes his own. They clink a toast to Earl Lindsey, drink deeply.

- A movement behind, a flicker over near the recliners. Suddenly, figures occupy each recliners - it's the Beatles and Earl as they were in nineteen sixty five. They wear sunnies, T shirts and shorts. Lying in the sun, relaxing.

- Bill frowns, turns his head to look at the pool. From his POV there's nothing there just the empty recliners. Steve and Alex look over to see what he's looking at. Zero. Bill shrugs, takes another sip. As they turn away, we see the five figures plain as day.

- Time passes. Alex fetches more beers and a bowl of corn chips. Then one of the figures stands up. It's John. He looks at his band mates and Earl. Walks to the pool. Dives in and vanishes.

- A bit later, another figure rises. George. He smiles at his friends. Walks to the pool. Dives in. Disappears.

- And now a third figure stands. Earl. He looks at Paul and Ringo who seem to be asleep, then over at his sons. Walks to the pool. One last look at his sons. He smiles and dives in. And he is...

Gone