

Cover Band

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## SCENE 1

### INT. BAND PRACTICE SPACE - NIGHT

The room smells of stale beer, sweat, and cheap amps. Posters for forgotten local bands peel from the walls. JAKE, the lead guitarist, stands with his arms crossed, jaw tight. LOUIE, the drummer, fidgets behind his kit, avoiding eye contact.

CHESTER sits on a wobbly stool, his bass guitar resting unplayed against his knee. His eyes are wide, manic, twitching. He's been rambling for the last ten minutes about the "cosmic vibrations of dissonance" and how their last gig was "a sell-out to the corporate machine of auditory oppression."

MADDIE stands by the door, her coat clutched tight, looking utterly exhausted.

JAKE

Chester. We need to talk.

Chester stops mid-rant, a wild grin faltering on his face.

CHESTER

Oh, now you want to talk? After I've just delivered a treatise on the inherent fascism of a four-four beat?

JAKE

It's not about the beat, man. It's... it's not working out. You're barely showing up. When you do, you're either completely checked out or so wound up we can't get anything done.

CHESTER

"Not working out"? This is punk rock! It's supposed to be chaotic! Are you telling me "Unemployed in Greenland" is suddenly going corporate? Getting a 401k?

Jake rubs his temples, sighing.

JAKE

We just need to... be able to play. You're our friend, Chester, but we can't keep doing this. We're kicking you out.

Chester stares, his face draining of color. The manic energy deflates, leaving him looking hollow. Louie shifts uncomfortably, tapping a drumstick against his thigh.

CHESTER

Kicking me out? My band? My  
lifeblood? You can't be serious.

MADDIE

Chester, please. Jake's right. You  
need help.

Chester spins to face Maddie, his eyes narrowing.

CHESTER

You too, Maddie? So this is a tag-  
team effort? Great. Just great.

MADDIE (VOICE TREMBLING)

I can't do this anymore, Chester. I  
can't watch you destroy yourself.  
I'm... I'm leaving.

Chester opens his mouth, but no words come out. He looks from Maddie to Jake, then to the floor. His shoulders slump. The last vestiges of his bravado crumble away.

CHESTER

Fine. Fine. Get out. All of you.  
Get out.

Maddie hesitates for a moment, then shakes her head, tears welling in her eyes, and exits the practice space. Jake gives Chester a regretful look, then follows her, with Louie trailing behind.

Chester is left alone in the silent, empty room, the faint echo of their footsteps fading. He slowly sets his bass against the amplifier, then sinks onto the stool, staring blankly ahead. His face is a mask of despair.

## SCENE 2

### INT. CHESTER'S APARTMENT - LATER NIGHT

The air is thick with stale cigarette smoke and the faint smell of desperation. Posters of old punk bands plaster the walls, peeling at the corners. Empty takeout containers and beer cans litter every surface.

CHESTER sits on the edge of his unmade bed, a rusty, chipped RAZOR BLADE clutched in his trembling hand.

His eyes, usually wild with manic energy, are dull, vacant. He's been here before. Many times.

He lifts his sleeve, revealing a roadmap of faded scars on his forearm. He presses the blade against a new, unmarred patch of skin. His breath hitches. He closes his eyes, a silent prayer or curse on his lips.

He SLASHES downwards with all his force.

CRACK!

Chester's eyes snap open. The blade isn't digging into his flesh. It's shattered into three pieces on his forearm, the shards glinting against his skin, utterly harmless.

He stares, uncomprehending. He pokes at the broken blade, then at his skin. Not even a scratch. No redness. Nothing.

CHESTER

What the hell?

He picks up a shard, presses the sharp edge against his thumb. He expects a sting, a bead of blood. Nothing. He presses harder. The shard bends, then crumbles.

A flicker of something—confusion, then a spark of manic energy—ignites in his eyes. He scrambles off the bed, knocking over an empty bottle.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

No. No way. This isn't happening.

He stumbles to a dusty dresser, yanking open a drawer. He rummages, tossing aside old concert flyers and a half-eaten bag of chips, until his hand closes around something cold and metallic.

A small, tarnished REVOLVER. Old. Probably not even loaded.

He checks the chamber. One bullet.

Chester stares at the gun, then back at his unblemished arm. A wild, almost manic grin stretches across his face. Is this some kind of sick joke? A hallucination brought on by exhaustion and despair?

CHESTER (CONT'D)

Okay. Alright. Let's see about this.

He raises the gun, presses the cold barrel against his temple. His hand is surprisingly steady now.

The despair is still there, but it's now mixed with a bizarre, morbid curiosity.

He closes his eyes.

BANG!

The sound is deafening in the small room. A jolt, but no pain.

Chester opens his eyes slowly. He lowers the gun. On the grimy floor, near his feet, is a small, deformed LEAD BULLET. It's flattened, as if it hit something incredibly hard.

He touches his temple. Not even a bruise. No powder burn. Nothing.

CHESTER (CONT'D)  
You've gotta be kidding me.

He looks at the bullet, then at his reflection in a cracked mirror on the wall. His face is pale, his eyes wide, pupils dilated.

CHESTER (CONT'D)  
What am I? Some kind of... cartoon character?

He tries to punch the wall, hard. His fist connects with the plaster with a dull thud. No pain. He tries again, harder. Nothing. It's like an invisible cushion surrounds him.

CHESTER (CONT'D)  
No way. No freaking way.

He stumbles backward, collapsing onto the bed. His manic energy returns with a vengeance, but it's not despair now. It's a terrifying, exhilarating, utterly incomprehensible realization.

He can't die. He can't be harmed.

A choked, disbelieving LAUGH bubbles up from his chest, quickly turning into a hysterical, almost manic SOB. He covers his face with his hands, shaking.

CHESTER (CONT'D)  
This is... this is impossible. This isn't how it works. I can't... I can't even end it. What am I supposed to do now? What the hell am I supposed to do?

The ultimate escape is denied. The one thing he desperately sought, taken away not by intervention, but by an inexplicable, impossible force.

FADE OUT .