ONE MAN'S TRASH

written by

Vic Burns
EXT. STREET - DAY

Sunshine bathes a leafy avenue in an affluent part of New York. Sports cars and Bentleys rest in the shade of mature oaks.

A guy passes on a bicycle and waves at BEN, fresh faced, 20's, enjoying a stroll with his French Bulldog, LIZA.

A garbage truck cuts across the shot and comes to a halt.

From out of the truck climbs DYLAN, 30's, an everyman guy sporting a bright green work coat.

His infectious, caring demeanor is mirrored in his happy face.

DYLAN
Morning Ben, lovely day for it.

He tips an imaginary cap.

BEN
Morning Dylan. Liza, where are your manners? Say hello.

Dylan crouches, arms outstretched.

Ben lets go of the leash -- Liza immediately jumps into Dylan's arms.

He giggles as Liza feverishly licks his face.

BEN (CONT'D)
You must be hot in that big puffy jacket Dylan?

DYLAN
Standard company issue. Boss men are convinced we'll get knocked down if we don't wear them.

HONK!

The driver of the garbage truck, PETE, thick set, 40's, yells at Dylan out of the window.

PETE
Get a move on!

Dylan mockingly bows to Pete.
Ben laughs affectionately as Dylan picks up an adjacent can and empties it into the truck.

DYLAN
Yes master, coming right away.

Short montage during which we follow Dylan on three more stops, during which he:

- Is ambushed by a four year old KID with a lightsabre.
- Helps an old lady laden with bags to her door.
- Stops to chat to a guy as he pulls out of his drive in a Tesla.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

Pete and Dylan idle along toward their next stop.

PETE
We could do this run in half the time if you quit the visiting pastor routine.

DYLAN
They'd only send us somewhere else in the afternoon. Anyway, you've got Don for company tomorrow.

PETE
News to me?

DYLAN
Short notice. Gotta take my aunt to the bank -- she's had her life savings robbed by an internet fraudster.

PETE
Scumbags.

The truck comes to a halt.

MRS. OPPENHEIM, 60's, shuffles hurriedly down her lawn as she wags an angry finger at Dylan.

MRS. OPPENHEIM (hollering)
What time do you call this?!
Dylan climbs down from the truck.

DYLAN
Mrs. Oppenheim, lovely to see you, as always. An eternal ray of sunshine.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Don't think I don't see you goofing off down the avenue with all and sundry. You'd be here much earlier if you did your job properly.

DYLAN
Do you have somewhere to be Mrs. Oppenheim? I'm more than capable of emptying your trash without supervision. I've done a training course.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Wise ass. I need to keep an eye on you -- make sure you do it properly and don't spill it all over my lawn.

DYLAN
Oh I wouldn't, it's such a nice lawn. Do you mow it yourself? Must get a sweat going?

From a first floor window yells, WENDY, 30's.

WENDY
How dare you make fun of my mother like that?

Dylan waves to Wendy.

DYLAN
Hi Wendy. Your line is, O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo?

Wendy SLAMS the window shut HARD.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
And now you've gone and upset my daughter. I'll be talking to your supervisor.

She quickly turns away. Her wig displaces a little. Embarrassed, she adjusts it and walks back to the house with frustrated purpose.

Wendy storms towards Dylan.
**WENDY**
You think it's funny, making fun of a defenseless old lady?

**DYLAN**
Defenseless? I wouldn't want to meet her in a dark alley all alone.

**WENDY**
I need you to come to the back yard with me.

She turns and walks back to the house, finger wagging to Dylan to follow.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. MRS. OPPENHEIM'S HOUSE - DAY**

The large house is very well appointed, though a little out of date.

Wendy walks along the entrance hall, closely followed by Dylan, who carries his work boots.

**WENDY**
There's a couple of bags in the yard that I need you to take.

**DYLAN**
Oh, I'm not really supposed to...

**WENDY**
- It won't kill you.

**DYLAN**
No, but your mom might.

Dylan stops to admire a framed photograph.

**DYLAN (CONT’D)**
Oh, what a beautiful little girl. Who is she? A niece, cousin?

**WENDY**
No, it's me. Seventh grade.

**DYLAN**
I knew that. Those eyes are a giveaway.
WENDY
Must you carry on with this ridiculous charade every week?

DYLAN
Just trying to be nice. You should maybe do the same sometime -- we might get along.

WENDY
Mister?

DYLAN
Peters, but please, do call me Dylan.

WENDY
Mr. Peters, if you harbor some ridiculous notion that you and I could ever become an item then I would urge you to think again.

DYLAN
Oh Wendy, lighten up, I'm only trying to...

WENDY
- I have a place in this neighborhood which is to be respected and upheld. To think that I would ever fraternize with the likes of a garbage collector?

DYLAN
Well, it's a dirty job, but someone's gotta do it.

From upstairs, Mrs. Oppenheim yells:

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Make sure he doesn't spill any!

FADE TO:

EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

A squadron of flies circle over two garbage sacks slouched against a garden wall.

Dylan peeks inside one of them and instantly dry wretches.

DYLAN
My gosh! What a funk!
WENDY
Contents of our old refrigerator.

DYLAN
When did it break down, 1985?

Dylan picks up the bags, they're much heavier than they look.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
You put some bricks in here too?

He motions awkwardly toward the house. Some kinda brown, putrid gack leaks from one of the sacks onto his boots.

WENDY
Oh that's disgusting, you'd better go through the back gate.

DYLAN
But that'll take ages to walk round to the truck?

WENDY
Well you can't really go through the house with that, whatever it is oozing out.

Dylan takes off, one of the bags nicks a gate post and tears. Out spills a gaudy pink purse. Dylan picks it up.

DYLAN
Hello?

Wendy snatches it.

WENDY
My mother's. She lost it a while ago. Must've thrown it away accidentally. She can be a little forgetful in her, advancing years.

Dylan soldiers on with the sacks.

DYLAN
She never forgets when I'm coming...

WENDY
Who could?

DYLAN
Ah see, you're warming to me.
WENDY
Come on, hurry up.

DYLAN
So, I'll pick you up at seven sharp?

Wendy slams the gate behind him.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
(under his breath)
Thanks Dylan, very nice of you
Dylan...

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

As Dylan throws the sacks into the compactor - more of the gack leaks onto his boots.

DYLAN
The things you do for love.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

Pete munches on a sandwich.

PETE
Man, what is that stench?

DYLAN
Lunch from the eighties.

FADE TO:

EXT. DYLAN’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Small, very tidy. One wall is entirely covered in DVD's, another in books. At the end of the kitchen breakfast bar sits a tank holding two fan tailed goldfish.

Dressed in a bath robe, wet hair, Dylan enters from the bathroom.

He takes a pinch of fish food and drops it into the tank.

DYLAN
Miss me today guys? Yeah? Glad to hear it. I missed you too.

(MORE)
DYLAN (CONT’D)
(then)
You wouldn't just be humoring me so you get fed every day would you now?

He dries his hair a little with the arms of his bathrobe.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Sorry to say, but I'm off out again guys. I'm meeting Ernie for a drink.
You know Ernie? The guy who has made it his life's mission to improve mine, even though his own could be possibly best described as vacuous and unfulfilled? So don't wait up.

He crosses back over to the bathroom.

FADE TO:

INT. UPSCALE BAR - NIGHT

This place is busy. Small groups of affluent looking friends enjoy cocktails and wine.

A pair of bearded hipsters sup overpriced craft beer as they select 'cool' tracks on an internet Jukebox to impress the girls.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAME BAR - NIGHT

ERNIE, 30's, disheveled in an almost cool kinda way, puffs on a nicotine vapor machine as he taps buttons on his cell phone. He finds Dylan's number and calls him. No answer -- leaves a message:

ERNIE
Dildo Baggins -- you're late.

Unbeknownst to Ernie, Dylan sneakily arrives behind him.

ERNIE (CONT’D)
I'm standing here like a little boy lost waiting for you.

Dylan grabs Ernie's side, making him jump in the process.

ERNIE (CONT’D)
Jesus! Don't do that!
DYLAN
Dildo Baggins? How long did that take you to come up with?

ERNIE
Come on, we're wasting time. Place is full of fitties, including that hot brunette I told you about from last week.

DYLAN
Fitties? You charmer.

CUT TO:

INT. UPSCALE BAR - NIGHT
Dylan and Ernie each sup from a bottle of Bud.

DYLAN
Do you think we could stand somewhere else. Possibly away from the bathrooms?

ERNIE
Have I taught you nothing?

DYLAN
No! Nothing at all!

ERNIE
This is the best place to stand. All the women in here have to pass us in order to get to the bathroom.

DYLAN
Man alive, you're truly awful Ernie.

ERNIE
Drink up dad, your round.

DYLAN
Slow down hotshot, it's a school night.

As Dylan crosses to the bar, he notices Ben, the dog walker and waves a hello.

Few quick shots of people enjoying the evening.

At the bar, Dylan hands the bartender a note and gestures to keep the change. He crosses back to Ernie with two fresh Buds.
ERNIE
(feverishly excited)
Dylan, that hot chick I told you about from last week just came out of the bathroom, and as she passed, I'm pretty sure she smiled at me.

DYLAN
She probably feels sorry for you.

ERNIE
I'll take it. That's an in. She went around the corner. Come on, let's go say hello.

DYLAN
Oh, I dunno, you'll only make a fool out of yourself. Out of both of us.

ERNIE
Well I'm going in, full speed. Strike while the iron is hot. I'll send for reinforcements if required.

Ernie disappears around the corner. Ben comes over to say hello to Dylan.

BEN
Hi Dylan, how are ya? Not seen you in here before?

DYLAN
No, my Pal Ernie insisted.

BEN
Oh it's not so bad, not usually this busy during the week. So what happened to Ernie?

Laughter spills from around the corner -- the loudest voice is Ernie's.

DYLAN
(confused)
He's supposed to be wasting his time with a table full of women?

Ernie sticks his head around the corner.

ERNIE
Dylan, get over here! There's some people I'd like you to meet.
BEN
(making a face)
Be lucky Dylan, see you soon.

Ben exits.

Dylan shakes his head, takes a long breath, then heads off around the corner.

Three girls are seated at a table. There is an empty seat.

ERNIE
Everybody, this is Dylan. Dylan, Everybody.

DYLAN
Hi there.

Little response from the ladies, but one manages a half wave.

ERNIE
So, as I was saying. If your computers running slow, give me a call. I'd love to tweak your bits and stick my huge RAM in your slots.

Dylan hangs his head.

The girls burst into mocking laughter. Ernie is mistakenly pleased with the fruit of his efforts. Dylan leans into his ear:

DYLAN
They're laughing at you mate, not with you.

Ernie is having none of it.

As the laughter continues, a brunette passes with an ice bucket that holds a bottle of champagne. She places it on the table and occupies the empty seat. Head down, she tops up the empty glasses.

ERNIE
And... if I can't satisfy all of you, my qualified friend Dylan here will happily service the leftovers with his special tool.

The laughter increases. Dylan is painfully embarrassed.

DYLAN
No, no I won't, don't listen to him. He's an idi...
The brunette lifts her head to reveal that she is:

WENDY
- Dylan?

Oh boy.

DYLAN
It was Mr. Peter's this morning.

WENDY
What are you doing in here? Doesn't strike me as your kind of place. Bit upmarket for you don't you think? Not your kind of people.

DYLAN
I was just thinking that myself.

ERNIE
What, you two know each other?

WENDY
(to the girls)
Dylan collects the garbage from our house every week.

GIRL 1
I thought I could smell something.

GIRL 2
Me too. Did you change after work?

GIRL 3
Maybe it's his aftershave?

WENDY
Oh yes, he has changed, not that you would notice.

The girls voice a chorus of cruel laughter.

DYLAN
Come on Ernie, we're leaving.

ERNIE
No way, we're just getting started, they're only kidding around.

WENDY
Dylan, we could use some more champagne, would you be a darling?
ERNIE
I'll get it.

DYLAN
Don't be an idiot Ernie, they'll humor you until your broke, drop you like a hot brick, then move on to the next sucker.

ERNIE
Oh, you're just being over sensitive. What'll it be ladies?

WENDY
Dom Perignon all round s'il vous plait.

ERNIE
You got it!

DYLAN
You bozo Ernie. I'm out of here.

Dylan exits.

FADE TO:

INT. BANK - DAY

An old, spacious bank with a high ceiling and imposing stone pillars.

Dylan consoles his teary aunt, MRS. STEADMAN, 70's, across an oak table from a stuffy looking BANK MANAGER, 50's.

BANK MANAGER
Please, believe me Mrs. Steadman, if there was something more I could do, I would. But you've ignored all written correspondence from us and not returned any of our calls.

MRS. STEADMAN
I'm sorry, I've just been so stressed over this whole mess.

DYLAN
There must be something you can do to keep the wolf from the door? We just need a few more days to come up with something.
BANK MANAGER
Do you have any assets we could secure against the debt sir?

DYLAN
Well no, but I could get an evening job maybe?

BANK MANAGER
I'm afraid the time frame would not allow for that.

DYLAN
So, how long have we got?

BANK MANAGER
Foreclosure proceedings will begin at the end of the month. I make that ten days. I really am sorry.

The bank manager closes his NOTEBOOK with a THUD.

Dylan hugs his aunt. Her sobbing intensifies.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Dylan drags his heels toward Mrs. Oppenheim's house.

He notices Wendy in the garage as she struggles to reach a storage box on a top shelf. He pauses, then continues.

As he reaches the garbage can, he hears a cry from inside the house.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Wendy, the box!

WENDY
Yes mother, I'm getting it now. Hold your horses!

Dylan picks up a garbage can and walks back toward the truck.

As he passes the garage door, Wendy notices Dylan.

WENDY (CONT’D)
Dylan, would you mind?

Dylan drops the can on the floor.
DYLAN
I prefer Mr. Peters if you don't mind.

WENDY
Ooh, what's the matter with you?

DYLAN
Nothing. Not that you're actually asking the question -- or would care to know the answer if there were indeed something wrong.

WENDY
Oh get over yourself. Is this about you and your idiot friend in the bar the other night?

DYLAN
Ernie is not an idiot -- most of the time. At least, not when his better nature is being exploited by a table full of fizzy wine fueled parasites. Present company excluded, obviously.

Wendy knows she actually is included in that number.

WENDY
If your friend Bernie...

DYLAN
- Ernie.

WENDY
If your wannabe Casanova friend Ernie is too stupid to realize when he is being played as the fool by a table full of attractive women then he should maybe take a long, hard look at himself.

DYLAN
I saw a table full of conventionally pretty women. Attractive? No.

WENDY
Mr. Dylan Peter's - what a thoroughly modern man you are.

DYLAN
Ms. Wendy Oppenheim - what a terribly disappointing woman you are.
WENDY
Excuse me! You are not my father.

DYLAN
I'm not sure I could handle the overwhelming sense of failure if I were.

Wendy drops her guard, just a little.

WENDY
Well, he's not alive to disagree with you...

Sensing a chink in Wendy's armour, Dylan backs off.

DYLAN
Work to do.

He picks up the can again and heads back to the truck.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Wendy! The box!

WENDY
On its way!

Wendy calls after Dylan:

WENDY (CONT’D)
By the way, I noticed you're on the list of trustees at the community hall?

Dylan stops in his tracks.

DYLAN
Yes, what of it?

WENDY
There's a box up here that contains some items my mother wishes to donate to the raffle for the fundraiser at the weekend.

Dylan puts down the can again and motions back to the garage.

DYLAN
What a saint.

FADE TO:
EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Dylan and Ernie enjoy coffee together on the front terrace.

    ERNIE
    They took me for four hundred and fifty bucks man.

    DYLAN
    Fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Good job they weren't hungry too.

    ERNIE
    Guys like us should know they ain't got a chance in hell with chicks like that.

    DYLAN
    Us? I guess it's pointless for me to mention that I told you so?

Doesn't register with Ernie... he's checking out two girls walking by.

    DYLAN (CONT'D)
    This fundraiser at the community hall at the weekend...

Ernie's attention remains elsewhere.

    DYLAN (CONT'D)
    Ernie!

    ERNIE
    Sorry, what?

Dylan shuffles his chair closer to Ernie.

    DYLAN
    The fundraiser.

    ERNIE
    I'm doing the barbecue?

    DYLAN
    You're doing the barbecue, yes. And I said I would help -- only Wendy's gonna be there. So I was thinking I might help out in the kitchen instead.
ERNIE
No worries, but why you trying to avoid her? She's super hot.

DYLAN
It's complicated. Actually, no it's not complicated at all. I really like her, but she totally hates me. Thinks I'm a jerk, understandably.

ERNIE
Hey now, wait a minute -- I'm the jerk around here. You're a great guy. She's just too far up herself to realize.

DYLAN
Maybe. I just don't want to end up in another situation in which she gets to totally embarrass me in front of everybody.

ERNIE
Want me to talk to her?

DYLAN
No! Absolutely not.

ERNIE
I get it, you saw her first. Worried she might take a shine to me right?

Dylan takes a sip of coffee as he tries to disguise his grimace.

DYLAN
Uh, yeah, that's it.

A young man arrives, JOSH, 20's.

JOSH
Ernie, how's it going? Long time.

Ernie is very pleased to see him.

ERNIE
Hey, Josh, where you been hiding?
JOSH
Y'know, on the hustle. Been working hard on the algorithm for that parking app I told you about.

ERNIE
Cool. Hey, this is my friend Dylan.

DYLAN
Nice to meet you Josh.

JOSH
Likewise.

They shake hands.

DYLAN
So you're in the computer business like Ernie?

JOSH
Well...

ERNIE
- not really. I'm a hardware guy. Josh is more of a software developer.

JOSH
Aspiring software developer. I'm off to a trade fair in Vegas next week to try to sell the app... or at least garner some interest.

ERNIE
Cut throat business -- and a very crowded space.

DYLAN
Yeah, but you only need that one sale. Right Josh?

JOSH
Here's hoping. Hey, I don't suppose you two guys fancy a trip to Vegas? I could sure use the company.

DYLAN
I'd love to Josh, but I could barely afford a weekend in a trailer park right now.
ERNIE
Yeah, and I got the computer repair shop to run here.

JOSH
OK, but if you change your minds? Ernie, you have my number. Gotta run. Later.

Josh leaves, Dylan and Ernie wave.

ERNIE
Later man.

Ernie takes some more coffee.

DYLAN
Nice guy, how do you know him?

ERNIE
(bitter)
He did some work for me at the repair shop when I started up, cleaning porn viruses out of computers. Now the kid thinks he's Steve Jobs.

DYLAN
Ernie, don't be so hard on him, Kids got an entrepreneurial spirit. Should be encouraged.

ERNIE
Yeah well, I've got entrepreneurial spirit in bags, never got me anywhere.

DYLAN
That's because you've never wanted to go anywhere.

ERNIE
True. I like familiar surroundings, but I sure as hell like the sound of a trip to Vegas. Sin City. All that cheap booze and loose women.

DYLAN
Forget about it, right now! You're already maxed out on your credit.

ERNIE
I could maybe shuffle it around a little?
DYLAN
Stop.

CUT TO:

INT. DYLAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

SUPER: One week later.

Dylan's landline telephone rings, he answers.

DYLAN
Dylan Peters.

ERNIE
Dylan, it's me Ernie. I need a small favor.

DYLAN
Sure.

ERNIE
You still got that spare key for the computer shop I asked you to keep?

DYLAN
Looking at it right now.

ERNIE
Great, could you go to the shop and put a 'closed temporarily due to illness' sign in the window for me?

DYLAN
Ernie, are you OK?

ERNIE
Never better my friend, never better.

DYLAN
The lines not too great, where are you?

ERNIE
Vegas baby!

DYLAN
Oh for fu...

CUT TO:
EXT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

Another sunny day. A large banner reads 'One For All - Save Our Hall'. There is a lemonade stand, a coconut shy, face painting and a BBQ grill manned by Dylan and Rod, 40's.

Dylan is preparing Ben a burger.

   BEN
       Where do you find the time Dylan?

   DYLAN
       I often wonder that myself Ben.

Dylan hands Ben the burger in a paper napkin.

   DYLAN (CONT’D)
       There you go, sauce and onions on the table. I'll come and find you for a chinwag if I ever get done here.

   BEN
       I would offer to help, but I'm a lousy cook. I'd poison half the customers with uncooked burgers and burn the rest.

The kid with the light saber is next in line. He sports a Storm Trooper costume with a Darth Vader mask.

   DYLAN
       Hey look at you Darth, get dressed in the dark today?

   KID
       We would be honored if you would join us.

   DYLAN
       No dice I'm afraid, already pledged my allegiance to the Klingon. You heard of them?

The kid waves his light saber at Dylan.

   KID
       Star Trek is for geeks.

   DYLAN
       I'll pass that on to them. You might have a fight on your hands though. Now, what can I get you my Lord?
KID
These are not the burgers I am looking for.

The kid runs off. Dylan turns to Rod.

DYLAN
I'm gonna have to use the bathroom before the levy breaks.

ROD
Sure, I got this.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

The hall is decked with balloons and bunting. There is a cake sale on one table. A tombola offers soft toys as prizes on another whilst a guy draws caricatures of people on a third.

Dylan enters, searches for the bathroom and encounters Wendy and Mrs. Oppenheim.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
You again. A little early to be collecting the trash?

DYLAN
Good afternoon Mrs. Oppenheim.

WENDY
I thought I saw you flipping burgers earlier?

DYLAN
I was, but nature calls.

WENDY
It's a step up on the employment ladder from garbage collector I suppose.

WENDY (CONT’D)
Well at least I've got a foot on the first rung. What is it you do for a living again?

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Wendy looks after me full time, not that it's any of your business.
DYLAN
Well, that's a tough job, one would hope your paying her a small fortune...

WENDY
For your information, my mother is not paying me a penny.

DYLAN
No, you just live rent free, drive a Range Rover and dine out five nights a week on your good looks.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
How dare you?

WENDY
It's OK mother, he's just bitter. He looked after his mother for 5 years on state handouts.

DYLAN
I sacrificed a college education whilst I nursed my mother at home as she was torn apart by cancer -- if that's what you mean?

WENDY
Oh, spare us the violins.

DYLAN
Meanwhile, you were probably sleeping with half of Harvard to 'earn' your degree.

Wendy slaps Dylan across the face.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Who the hell do you think you are!

DYLAN
(deflated)
Nobody, just nobody.

Mrs. Oppenheim turns to Wendy.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
I'm going to the ladies room to compose myself.

DYLAN
I'm sorry Wendy, that was ungentlemanly of me.
WENDY
Save it for someone who cares.

There is a large mirror over a table near the bathroom doors. Mrs. Oppenheim, stops to touch up her lipstick. She goes to the bathroom having left her pink handbag behind.

Dylan passes her on his way to the men's bathroom.

DYLAN
Sorry again Mrs. Oppenheim.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Out of my way loser.

Ben crosses over to talk to Wendy.

BEN
Why are you so hard on him Wendy? He's a lovely fella. No one else has a bad word to say against him.

WENDY
That's because they don't have to put up with what I do week on week.

BEN
It's not a crime to be sweet on someone.

WENDY
Maybe not, but annoying all the same.

BEN
You know, I've never seen you with a guy?

WENDY
I've seen you with plenty.

BEN
Charming. I just hope you defrost a little before your heart gets freezer burn and is no good to anybody, not least yourself.

Ben exits as an anxious Mrs. Oppenheim returns.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Wendy, we gotta go home. I forgot my speech.
WENDY
Are you sure mother?

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Of course I'm sure, I left my notepad on the table next to the telephone.

WENDY
OK, but we'll have to hurry.

As they exit:

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Oh they'll wait, I'm a very large donor to the hall.

Dylan comes out of the bathroom and spots Mrs. Oppenheim's bag and picks it up. He notices Ben and motions over to him.

DYLAN
Ben, where did Mrs. Oppenheim go?
She's left her bag behind.

BEN
Not sure, she left in a hurry with Wendy. I'm sure she's around somewhere. She's doing her annual speech later.

DYLAN
(sarcastic)
Oh yeah, can't wait. I'll put it somewhere safe.

BEN
Gotta go Dylan, it's my brother's birthday today too. I said I'd go visit for a few days.

DYLAN
See you Ben, have fun.

Dylan heads back to the BBQ stand.

We see a short montage of the dog show.

Dylan arrives back at the BBQ stand.

Dylan places the handbag in his open sports holdall below a trestle table and zips it up.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Did I miss much?
ROD
No, died off a bit now. Maybe we should call it a day?

DYLAN
Suits me. I'll take the burgers and buns back to the kitchen.

ROD
Hey, you heard from Ernie in Vegas again?

DYLAN
Not yet.

ROD
No news is good news huh?

CUT TO:

INT. HARD ROCK CLUB, VEGAS - NIGHT

LOUD UPBEAT DANCE MUSIC. Very busy.

Ernie is slouched on a leather couch with an attractive woman either side. The woman on his right passes an ice cube from her lips to his, then Ernie passes it to the woman on his left.

ERNIE
Man, you gotta love Vegas!

Josh arrives with two bottles of champagne in ice buckets.

JOSH
Seriously Ernie, that's the last two.

ERNIE
Oh, liven up a little, we're in Vegas buddy.

JOSH
No, that's it! I'm on a strict daily budget and I'm already into tomorrow's cash. No more. Finito.

One of the women rises.

WOMAN 1
Well that's a real shame cos my friend and I were looking to party hard all night long.
Her friend rises, they take a bottle each and wave goodbye as they leave.

ERNIE
Way to go Josh, way to go.

JOSH
Calm the hell down Ernie. I've got a lot riding on this trip. I don't need to be bailing you outta jail or collecting you from a hospital.

ERNIE
I can look after myself, always have done.

JOSH
This place may be all glitz and glamour on top, but scratch below the surface and there's a lot of nasty people out here looking to take advantage of boozed up tourists.

ERNIE
I wish Dylan was here -- my wing man.

JOSH
I met Dylan for what, two minutes? And I'm pretty sure he would agree with me.

ERNIE
Yeah, thinking about it, you two bores would get on just fine.

JOSH
Come on, let's bail, go get some sleep. You'll thank me in the morning.

Ernie rises, releasing a huge BURP and almost falls forward over the table, knocking over a couple of glasses.

ERNIE
You may be right.

FADE TO:

INT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

Dylan enters the hall with his holdall over his shoulder.
One of the trustees, MR. DOUGLAS, 60's, approaches him.

MR. DOUGLAS
Dylan, good work on the burger stand. Just short of two hundred bucks.

DYLAN
Nothing to it Mr. Douglas, they sell themselves.

MR. DOUGLAS
Tell me, have you seen Mrs. Oppenheim?

DYLAN
According to Ben she left in a hurry.

MR. DOUGLAS
Rats. The day is winding down and she's yet to bore us with her annual speech.

DYLAN
I'm sure it wouldn't hurt to skip it for a year.

MR. DOUGLAS
I wish that were so, but as you may not be aware she makes a considerable contribution to the fund every year on the proviso she gets to perform her annual address to the community.

DYLAN
I did not know that, but I can't say it surprises me.

MR. DOUGLAS
Hopefully she'll be here soon and get it over with so we can all go home, should we survive the inane tedium.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. RANGE ROVER - DAY

Wendy drives AT SPEED.
MRS. OPPENHEIM
Put your foot on it, we're going to miss my spot.

WENDY
I'm already going too fast mother. It's not my fault you left your precious speech at home.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
I forget things, you know that.

WENDY
Don't I ever just.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMUNITY HALL CAR PARK - DAY

Wendy's Range Rover SCREECHEES to a halt. On a mission, she and her mom both spill out of the car and make hastily for the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

Mr. Douglas is on stage holding a microphone. There is a projector screen behind him displaying a group photo of the organizers and volunteers.

Thirty or so people remain.

MR. DOUGLAS
Is this on?

A little feedback.

MR. DOUGLAS (CONT’D)
Yeah, it's on.

He drinks some water.

MR. DOUGLAS (CONT’D)
Well, yet another successful annual fundraiser. If we keep up at this rate, we should be able to replace the hall roof this time next year.

A ripple of applause.
MR. DOUGLAS (CONT’D)
Firstly, I'd like to thank all those of you who turned up today to part with your hard earned cash and also show my appreciation to our hard working volunteers.

More applause.

MR. DOUGLAS (CONT’D)
Now as you know, in order to close the fundraiser every year, Mrs. Oppenheim normally delivers this speech. Well, unfortunately she seems to have gone AWOL.

A few sarcastic cheers.

MR. DOUGLAS (CONT’D)
So, I'd like to take advantage of this opportunity to wrap this up quick for once and ask you to join me in finishing off what's left of the rum punch and that lovely looking Italian wine.

More applause -- louder this time.

MR. DOUGLAS (CONT’D)
Saluti!

The hall doors BURST OPEN.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Not so fast!

The hall falls silent. A sweaty, out of breath Mrs. Oppenheim clambers onto the stage as she swats people out of her way with a notepad.

MR. DOUGLAS
(deflated)
Mrs. Oppenheim, so glad you could make it, we were beginning to worry.

He hands the microphone to Mrs. Oppenheim.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Where's the lectern? There's normally a lectern to rest my pad on.
Squinting, she clears her throat and holds the notebook at arm's length as she tries to focus on the text.

MRS. OPPENHEIM (CONT’D)
This is no use, I need my glasses.
Wendy! Where are my glasses?

Wendy shuffles in to the crowd and stands next to Dylan.

WENDY
I've no idea. Did you leave them in the car?

MRS. OPPENHEIM
No, they must be in my handbag.
Where's my handbag?

WENDY
Maybe that's in the car? I'll go take a look...

MRS. OPPENHEIM
It is not in the car. I had it here when I went to the ladies room.

Uh oh. The color drains from Dylan's face. He's just remembered her handbag is in his sports holdall.

DYLAN
(nervous)
Excuse me Wendy, little boys room.

FADE TO:

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Dylan has locked himself in a cubicle.

DYLAN
Come on Dylan, you're an innocent man, think of something.

Dylan pulls out his cellphone from his jeans pocket.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Call Ben, he was there just after you found the bag and you were asking for Mrs. Oppenheim. He'll set things straight.

He thumbs through his contacts.
DYLAN (CONT’D)
You don't have Ben's number, you hardly know Ben, why would you have Ben's number?

Dylan's cell phone RINGS -- it displays Ernie's number. He answers immediately.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Ernie, I never thought I'd say this, but boy, am I glad you called.

ERNIE
Sounds ominous brother -- do tell.

DYLAN
Well...

FADE TO:

INT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

Wendy fans herself with a leaflet as Mrs. Oppenheim fumbles her way through an improvised speech.

She weaves her way to the back of the hall in search of cooler air.

She takes out her cell phone and calls a friend, who answers quickly.

WENDY
Donna, we still on for drinks at eight?

She listens to her friends reply.

WENDY (CONT’D)
Change of plan, can we make it six? I'm gonna need a drink after the day I'm having.

CUT TO:

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

DYLAN
Makes complete sense. Put the bag back where I found it and forget I ever saw it there, simple. Ernie, you're a lifesaver. I'll call you later.
INT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

WENDY
OK Donna, I'll grab an Uber and pick you up on the way.

She hangs up.

A sheepish looking Dylan clutches the holdall close to his chest as he exits on tip toes from the men's room.

Suspicious, Wendy spots Dylan and takes cover behind a tall potted palm.

She begins filming Dylan through the large leaves on her cellphone.

Dylan takes the pink handbag from his holdall and places it back on the table where Mrs. Oppenheim left it.

WENDY (CONT’D)
(to herself)
Well, well, well. Not such the whiter than white saint after all are we, Mr. Peter's?

Dylan crosses back through the hall and retakes his place.

DYLAN
Did I miss much?

ROD
(sarcastic))
Oh yeah, she just explained what came before the big bang and announced a credible solution for the age old conflict in Israel.

Wendy is now at the rear of the hall next to the projector.

She plugs a data lead from the projector into her cell phone, picks up the projector remote then heads back to the front of the hall.

Exasperated, head in his hands, Mr. Douglas is seated on a chair at the rear of the stage.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
And so, it gives me great pleasure to declare this annual fundraiser...
WENDY
- Stop!

Wendy takes to the stage.

WENDY (CONT’D)
Here are your glasses mother.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Thank you my dear, though a little too late don't you think?

WENDY
Would you like to know where I found them?

MRS. OPPENHEIM
In the car?

WENDY
No, in your handbag. And, would you like to know where I found your handbag?

DYLAN
(under his breath)
Oh crap.

MRS. OPPENHEIM
Well I...

WENDY
...Here, let me show you.

Wendy presses play on the projector remote. The video of Dylan replacing the pink handbag begins to play.

Gasps from the crowd as they watch.

DYLAN
Hang on, hang on. I can explain.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

Double doors FLY OPEN. An angry, fist waving mob chases Dylan out of the hall. Plastic glasses of alcohol and uneaten cake fly through the air toward him.

FADE TO:
EXT. STREET - DAY

A forlorn Dylan is seated on a park bench talking to Ernie on his cellphone.

INTERCUT: Dylan on bench / Ernie, poolside, smokes a fat cigar.

DYLAN
I've never been so embarrassed in my life Ernie.

ERNIE
Don't worry about it, get Ben to call her, he'll straighten it all out.

DYLAN
I wish it was that simple. He's visiting his brother for a while and I don't have a number for him.

ERNIE
Well, I guess you'll just have to sit tight until the dust settles.

DYLAN
Yeah, only option. I can't believe I've got to face her again tomorrow. I feel sick just thinking about it. Anyway, how's it going out there?

ERNIE
Totally nuts. Josh is at the tech fair today. He's running out of cash so let's hope he gets a sale.

DYLAN
I'm sure you're helping him spend it Ernie.

ERNIE
Dylan, give me some credit -- it's all on a tab.

CUT TO:

INT. TRADE STAND - DAY

Josh talks to a smart dressed woman, Beth, 20's.
BETH
I gotta say Josh, I talked to my head coder back in San Fran and he's very impressed with what you've built here.

JOSH
Great, really good to hear. There's still a few minor tweaks to be made here and there but it's pretty much good to go.

BETH
Let's not get ahead of ourselves. I'll run it by the boss man. He gets here on Friday, you'll still be here right?

JOSH
Uh yeah, sure. I'm here for the whole show.

BETH
Great, well here's my card. Hopefully we'll run into each other over the next few days and catch up before he gets here.

They shake hands.

FADE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Ernie is in his underwear. One hand clutches a bottle of whiskey, the other a hairbrush as he sings along to a loud playing rock song.

An anxious Josh enters the room and turns off the music.

ERNIE
Hey, I was listening to that!

JOSH
Yeah, so was half the hotel.

ERNIE
What's got into you? Not go so well with your pitch today?

JOSH
Hard to tell, she seemed interested but...
ERNIE
- She? Is she hot?

JOSH
Yeah, Beth, kinda... very actually, but that's not why we were here.

ERNIE
Speak for yourself. This is the first vacation I've had in a while.

JOSH
We have a, I mean I have a bigger problem. I'm close to broke. The big guy from the tech company doesn't get here for three days and Beth wants me to stick around to meet him.

ERNIE
I thought we had a daily budget?

JOSH
I did, but I wasn't planning on being here for that long and supporting you. Gotta enough for tomorrow and that's it. Can't ask my folks for anymore -- they've already helped me enough.

FADE TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Dylan listlessly trudges up the garden path to Mrs. Oppenheim's house.

Wendy waits for him, arms folded.

Dylan walks straight passed her to the garbage can.

WENDY
(spiteful)
Something up? Not your usual jolly self today?

Dylan ignores her.

WENDY (CONT’D)
I would have thought you would have at least prepared an apology for my mother.
Dylan turns to Wendy.

DYLAN
Are you enjoying this?

WENDY
You can count yourself lucky we didn't call the police.

DYLAN
Why would you need to do that? Your already judge, jury and executioner.

WENDY
You were caught red handed -- bang to rights.

DYLAN
Did you ever stop to ask yourself why I might need a pink handbag?

WENDY
One would assume you were more interested in its contents?

DYLAN
I didn't take a look inside but I would imagine there's a witches guide to survival in the modern age and a couple of voodoo dolls in there.

WENDY
I heard about the financial difficulties your aunt is experiencing.

DYLAN
She's in ten grand deep, through no fault of her own but I wouldn't imagine that not even your mom walks around with that much in her bag.

Wendy begins to thumb through her cellphone.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Before I go, if it's of any interest to you, I've asked my supervisor to put me on a different route from next week.

Wendy hands Dylan her cell phone, upon which plays the video she has uploaded to Youtube of Dylan replacing the bag.
Dylan watches for a moment, aghast.

He hands it back to her.

**DYLAN** (CONT’D)

You utter cow. You heartless, selfish cow.

Wendy begins to laugh as she watches the end of the video.

**WENDY**

Two thousand likes already!

Her laughter intensifies as she walks back to the house.

**DYLAN**

Have a nice life Wendy.

He watches on as she disappears into the house.

**DYLAN** (CONT’D)

What did I ever see in you?

Dylan picks up the garbage can and makes back for the truck.

*CUT TO:*

**INT. MRS. OPPENHEIM'S HOUSE - DAY**

In the entrance hall, Mrs. Oppenheim places some cut flowers in a vase.

**MRS. OPPENHEIM**

I don't know why you give that low life the time of day. I warned you about him.

**WENDY**

He's toothless mother. Just making sure he knows his place.

Wendy turns and stares out of a window down the lawn at Dylan.

**WENDY** (CONT’D)

We won't be seeing much of him again.

*FADE TO:*
EXT. STREET - DAY

Dylan is about to empty the trash can into the truck.
Something shiny catches his eye.
Hanging out of the can is a pearl necklace.
He sheepishly lifts the lid. On top of the trash is a purple colored vanity case.
He opens it cautiously -- then closes it in a flash.

DYLAN
Now there's a dilemma.

He opens the case again whilst checking for observers at the house... coast is clear.

Inside the case is a bunch of bejeweled gold necklaces, bracelets, brooches and rings.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
You know what Mrs. Oppenheim? One man's trash...

He stuffs the case into his jacket and empties the can into the truck.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
...is another man's treasure.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. UPTOWN JEWELERS - DAY

Dylan stands outside the shop holding a cashier's check.
He kisses it then places it in his shirt pocket.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

A large commercial jet takes off.

DISSOLVE TO:
INT. HARD ROCK HOTEL LOBBY, VEGAS - DAY

Josh talks to the hotel CONCIERGE at the reception counter. Ernie is wasting his time with a pretty receptionist.

CONCIERGE
I can only repeat what I've told you already sir, the hotel does not have a credit facility.

ERNIE
Unless you're a high roller...

JOSH
Ignore him.

Ernie returns his attention to the receptionist.

JOSH (CONT'D)
Sir, if you could please talk to the manager I would be eternally grateful.

CONCIERGE
He's not in today sorry, I am deputizing in his absence.

JOSH
Then I guess we're screwed.

From out of nowhere:

DYLAN
Surprise!

Josh and Ernie spin on their heels to discover a beaming Dylan in a cream linen suit and Panama hat.

ERNIE
What the...

JOSH
Dylan?

DYLAN
Nice to meet you again Josh.

They shake hands.

ERNIE
Dylan, what the hell are you doing here?
DYLАН
I'll explain shortly. But first, let's get a drink.

ERNIE
I heard that.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BAR - DAY

ERNIE
So let me get this straight. That old watch your grandfather gave you was worth sixty grand?

DYLАН
Maybe a little more, but the guy in the shop was nice, so I didn't haggle.

JOSH
And you just quit your job and hot assed over here?

DYLАН
Tada!

ERNIE
Then I guess it's your round.

JOSH
Hold up Ernie, you've already gone a long way to help me blow what little I had.

DYLАН
About that...

Dylan gestures to a waiter.

DYLАН (CONT’D)
Same again please.

Dylan shuffles his seat closer to Josh.

DYLАН (CONT’D)
Josh, I only met you briefly, but I instantly liked you.

JOSH
Thank you Dylan, likewise.
DYLAN
So how about, given my windfall, I lend you some cash to see out your trip here?

JOSH
That's very kind of you Dylan, really, but I'm not sure I'd be comfortable with that. I hardly know you.

ERNIE
Whoa, rain check. We need to be here til Friday -- or no deal.

JOSH
I need to be here til Friday. Dylan, I'm grateful, truly, but it would kinda feel like I'm taking advantage of your good fortune.

DYLAN
OK, I get that. Well how about this? Sell me part of the company.

Josh leans back in his chair.

JOSH
That could work.

A revitalized Ernie leans forward.

ERNIE
That could definitely work.

DYLAN
There you go. So sell me ten percent for say, forty grand?

Ernie chokes on his drink.

JOSH
Dylan, right now, my company isn't worth anywhere near that figure, but I have a meeting with the CEO of a big tech company on Friday that might change all that.

(then)
If you were really prepared to put forty in, I would more than happily give you forty percent. It would be a gamble on your part, but all investments are.
Ernie rises.

ERNIE
Oh that's just great, you two get to play businessmen together and I'm out of the picture.

JOSH
Ernie, you were never in the picture.

ERNIE
You two would never have met if it weren't for me!

DYLАН
Sit down Ernie.

ERNIE
Don't tell me to sit down.

Ernie sits down.

ERNIE (CONT’D)
I'm only sitting down because my back hurts.

DYLАН
Josh, I'll give you thirty grand for thirty percent.

JOSH
Thirty, forty, either deal is cool with me.

DYLАН
And, I'll lend ten grand to Ernie so he can buy in ten percent -- that is, if you're comfortable with a third partner.

ERNIE
(pensive)
That's what I was about to suggest.

Josh looks at Ernie for a second, then turns to Dylan...

JOSH
You gotta deal -- but you're responsible for the E-Monster here...

Dylan slams down his drink and jumps on to Ernie.
DYLAN
You here that Ernie, you're my bitch now!

They engage in a little playful rough and tumble. Ernie starts to giggle as Dylan tickles him.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Josh, I need some back up...

Josh jumps in.

FADE TO:

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - DAY

At a table, Josh sports an ill fitting, cheap suit opposite the casually dressed CEO of the tech company, TODD, 50's.

JOSH
Wow, I don't know what to say. I'm guessing I should say I'll consult my lawyer?

TODD
Sure, who do you use?

JOSH
Busted. I don't have one.

TODD
I don't want to sound like a douche, but I guessed that.

JOSH
Oh?

TODD
The suit. Thrift store?

JOSH
Thrift store. Fifty bucks.

TODD
I would have haggled to thirty.

JOSH
You wouldn't need to.

TODD
Relax, I'm busting your balls.
Todd pulls out a pen and BUSINESS CARD from his jacket and begins to write on the rear.

    TODD (CONT'D)
    Take this to any good tech lawyer you please and show them this acquisition figure.

He pushes the card to Josh.

    TODD (CONT'D)
    Have him call me if he agrees it's a good deal.

Josh picks up the card. The color drains from his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. HARD ROCK HOTEL, VEGAS, POOLSIDE - DAY

Ernie dive bombs into a pool clutching a bottle of champagne. Moments later he resurfaces and addresses Dylan and Josh who are both on loungers, puffing on Cubans.

    ERNIE
    We're rich beyond our wildest dreams!

    DYLAN
    Ernie.

    ERNIE
    Yeah?

    DYLAN
    Don't worry about the ten grand!

    ERNIE
    Cheers!

Ernie drinks from the champagne bottle and immediately spits it out and begins to cough.

    DYLAN
    (to Josh)
    I'd have never got it back anyhow.

Josh and Dylan chink champagne flutes.
INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - NEXT MORNING

Clearly hungover, the guys are struggling to get through breakfast.

DYLAN
I'm not sure this agrees with me.

Dylan pushes his plate away.

Ernie and Josh concur and do the same.

ERNIE
Hey Dylan, how did it go with your Aunt and her financial worries?

DYLAN
Took care of it before I left.

JOSH
You're a good guy Dylan.

DYLAN
(to Josh)
Well, lucky for me I met a clever guy.

ERNIE
Thank you.

Dylan and Josh smirk at each other.

JOSH
Ooh, guys, while I remember, it's a while off but my mom and pop are in town for the weekend of June eighteenth. Is it cool if you make yourselves scarce for a couple of days?

DYLAN
No worries Josh.

ERNIE
Sure thang.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEACH HOUSE - MORNING

SUPER: TWO MONTHS LATER, 18th JUNE.

A large open plan kitchen/living space with beach views.
Empty alcohol bottles litter the tables and floor. Two girls are cuddled up asleep on a large leather couch. A third, dressed only in her underwear, is cooking eggs.

A rough looking Dylan enters the living space in his bathrobe. As he sits on the end of the couch, his arrival stirs the two girls. One of them reaches out to Dylan and strokes his cheek -- he pushes her hand away.

Josh enters from the front door and immediately freaks.

    JOSH
    No, no, no! Dylan, I told you my parents were coming over this afternoon.

Ernie surfaces from an adjoining bedroom.

    ERNIE
    J-Dawg, I thought you were away for the weekend?

    JOSH
    No, I was away on business last night. I wanted you two away for the weekend cos my folks are in town, remember?

    DYLAN
    Oh rats! My bad Josh, I got the weekends confused.

Josh frantically gathers the empty bottles and tries to place them in a recycling bin, but the girl cooking is blocking the way.

    JOSH
    Excuse me, miss.

    GIRL
    You want some eggs?

    JOSH
    No, I do not -- I had breakfast three hours ago!

    ERNIE
    You can't have eggs for lunch?
JOSH

Enough! I'm tired of this crap. You two degenerates get this place cleaned up and get these tramps out of here. I'll be back at four O'clock -- you will not be here.

He storms out, SLAMMING the door behind him.

FADE TO:

INT. BEACH TIKI BAR - LATER

Ernie and Dylan are sat at the bar, groggy looking, hiding behind sunglasses.

BARTENDER
There you go guys, two margaritas.

ERNIE
Thanks, put them on my tab.

DYLAN
I'm not sure this is such a good idea Ernie.

Dylan picks up his drink, smells it, then takes a small sip -- doesn't go down at all well.

ERNIE
Nonsense, it's the hair of the dog that bit you.

Ernie knocks half of his drink back -- no problem.

ERNIE (CONT'D)
Besides, we need to be match fit for the party later.

DYLAN
Maybe not tonight Ernie, I'm feeling pretty ropey right now. We've been at it like troopers for months.

Ernie knocks back the rest of his drink.

ERNIE
Enzo, two more por favor.

DYLAN
Ernie, Enzo is French.
FADE TO:

EXT. LARGE HOUSE - NIGHT

This place wasn't cheap.

A chauffeur driven car arrives at the front of the house from which a smart dressed Dylan and Ernie emerge.

Ernie hands the driver a bunch of notes.

ERNIE
Thanks man. There's a little extra for you there.

Pleased, the driver nods and pulls away.

The guys motion towards the front entrance.

DYLAN
Tell me, how do you know this guy again?

ERNIE
I wouldn't say I know him, more of a, casual acquaintance. He's the CEO of the company that bought Josh's company.

Dylan stops in his tracks.

DYLAN
We do actually have an invitation right?

ERNIE
Sure we do.

DYLAN
Thank the heavens.

ERNIE
Well, kinda.

CUT TO:

INT. LARGE HOUSE - NIGHT

The guys are in and are immediately handed a glass of champagne by a bow-tied waiter.
You'll be glad of those margaritas earlier. Come on, let's mingle.

They walk through pockets of well dressed guests until Ernie spots the host.

(Cont’d)
Todd, great party man.

Todd reaches out for a handshake.

Thank you uh...

Ernie, and this is Dylan.

Nice to meet you Todd. Lovely house you have here.

Thanks.

Todd reaches behind and picks up a drink from a waiter carrying a service tray.

I don't want to sound rude guys. I meet a lot of people and I've had a little to drink, but how do I know you guys?

(arms outstretched)
Business partners with Josh.

Oh right. Interesting. I seem to remember Josh being alone when I invited him at lunch last week?

Sure. But when I saw the invite on top of his wallet I assumed the invitation extended to all partners?

I'm sorry Todd, I had no idea. Come on Ernie, I'll call a cab.
TODD
No guys, it's fine really. I'm just a little surprised as we never met during the acquisition. Enjoy the party, there's plenty of food and fizz for everybody.

DYLAN
You definitely haven't met Ernie before.

With a warm smile, Todd places a hand on Dylan's shoulder.

TODD
I can tell you're the sensible one so I trust you'll keep him in check.

Todd leaves.

DYLAN
Oh boy. Got my work cut out.

CUT TO:

INT. LARGE HOUSE - LATER

A five piece seventies covers band plays on a small stage. As they finish a song, Todd takes the stage and is handed the mic by the vocalist.

TODD
(somber)
Thank you everybody, thank you. It's not every day you get an excuse to throw a party like this.

Warm applause and a few cheers from the guests.

TODD (CONT'D)
As most of you know, I've had some health problems recently.

A few light-hearted boos.

Todd drops his head, bad news is on its way.

TODD (CONT'D)
Well, I just wanted you to know that I went to the hospital today for a final consultation and...

Takes a large drink.
They originally told me I had two years max.

(then)
Well, that's no longer the case...

The crowd falls silent.

It turns out that, contrary to my original prognosis things have moved along quite quickly...

We love you Todd!

Moved along quite quickly to the point where -- I'm all clear!

The guests burst into rapturous applause and cheers.

I'm gonna live forever! I love you all!

The band start playing an uptempo song. Everyone starts to dance.

Man... Ernie can move!

A circle forms around Ernie, he performs a clearly rehearsed Northern Soul/Disco routine.

In fits of laughter and admiration, Dylan looks on.

FADE TO:

INT. LARGE HOUSE - SUNRISE

Large glass conservatory. A few potted citrus trees. The guest count has thinned considerably.

Dylan and Ernie are each seated on a cushion covered wicker couch, enjoying the company of two LADIES, 20's.

Smoking cigars.

The girl with Dylan, pours champagne then hands a glass to her friend.
DYLAN
Ernie, don't forget you're driving me to the airport Wednesday morning.

ERNIE
You sure about this trip? Long way to go for a couple of days.

LADY 1
(joking)
Oh, so soon Dylan, we've only just met.

DYLAN
Duty calls I'm afraid. I take my aunt to visit my uncle's grave every year on his would be birthday.

LADY 2
That's very sweet of you Dylan. Don't worry Ernie, we'll take care of you in his absence.

ERNIE
Hallelujah.

Todd appears:

TODD
Guys, I'm done. Nice to meet you both, especially John Travolta here.

ERNIE
Ern baby Ern.

TODD
The cleaning maid may be here soon, so pick your feet up if she passes by with the vacuum cleaner.

A collective chuckle. Todd exits.

Dylan rises, there isn't much strength left in his legs.

DYLAN
Ernie, I think now's a good time for us to bail.

ERNIE
Where to? Josh has his folks over remember?
DYLAN
Oh yeah, I forgot about that. One last hurrah before Wednesday it is then!

They all chink glasses and start jovially fooling around.

Dissolve to:

INT. CAR - DAY

Ernie drives Dylan to the airport.

ERNIE
You think you'll be back by Saturday?

DYLAN
Yeah, maybe Sunday, early hours.

ERNIE
So, I arranged for a car for you at the airport back home.

DYLAN
Thanks Ernie, you know how I hate forms. Which rental company did you use?

ERNIE
Didn't, bought you a runaround to say thanks for everything. I don't thank you enough.

DYLAN
Oh Ernie, you're a good pal.

ERNIE
Don't start getting mushy on me. You got the check I gave you for the landlord of the shop?

DYLAN
Sure. You should have closed it two months ago. You've wasted five grand on rent in the meantime.

ERNIE
Yeah I know, but I still feel weirdly attached to it.
DYLAN
Y'know Ernie, I might stay for a week or so. Catch up with some old friends. Give my liver a break.

ERNIE
I like to keep mine well oiled to stop it seizing up. Don't stay away for too long. I need my wing-man.

Ernie pulls up at the airport drop off point.
Dylan gets out of the car, carrying a small bag.
They shake hands through the open window.

DYLAN
Be good.

ERNIE
Not a chance!

Ernie wheel-spins away. Dylan smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

Dylan approaches a CAR VALET who holds a card which bears his name.

DYLAN
That's me.

CAR VALET
Here you go sir, have a nice trip.

He hands Dylan a set of keys.
Dylan tries to unlock an adjacent Hyundai, but nothing happens.

CAR VALET (CONT’D)
No sir, this is your car.

Dylan turns around to face a new Mercedes S-Class convertible. Gosh.

FADE TO:
EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

CLOSE UP OF GRAVESTONE THAT READS:

A WARM AND LOVING HUSBAND

OLIVER STEADMAN - 12th APRIL 1938 - 19th MAY 2014.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - CONTINUOUS

Dylan, on his knees, pulls out weeds around the grave. His aunt is seated on a picnic chair with a tartan blanket over her legs.

MRS. STEADMAN
I thought I'd be here alone this year Dylan, it's so nice of you to come all this way.

DYLAN
Don't be silly auntie Sue. I'd walk on hot coals to get here for my favorite girl.

MRS. STEADMAN
I was hoping you might have arrived with a lady?

DYLAN
And pay two air fares?

MRS. STEADMAN
Such a shame, you'd make someone a great husband.

Dylan rises and takes off his weeding gloves.

DYLAN
Yeah well, I couldn't even look after two goldfish. Thanks for having them for me.

MRS. STEADMAN
They're no trouble at all. By the way, I've renamed them...

DYLAN
Oh? What to?

MRS. STEADMAN
I call them 'One' and 'Two'.
DYLAN
I don't follow?

MRS. STEADMAN
Because if One dies, I'll still have Two!

Laughter.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOKMAKERS - DAY

Pete, seated on a stool, shouts at a TV screen.

PETE
Come on you donkey, come on... oh crap!

He screws up his betting slip and tosses it at the TV.

He turns around as a pair of firm hands land on his shoulders.

DYLAN
I thought I might find you in here.

Excited to see Dylan, Pete rises and hugs him.

PETE
Dylan, what a nice surprise. I was beginning to wonder if I'd ever see you again?

DYLAN
In town for a while, thought I'd swing by and say hello.

PETE
Coffee?

CUT TO:

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Dylan reads a newspaper at a table.

Pete arrives with two coffees.

PETE
Ten bucks for two coffees, daylight robbery.
DYLAN
Here, let me get that.

PETE
No, it's OK.

DYLAN
I insist.

He produces a twenty dollar bill from his bulging wallet.

PETE
Whoa. Somebody's doing okay?

DYLAN
Don't be fooled. I'm on the way to the bank to deposit it.

PETE
You were always a saver.

DYLAN
Look after the pennies...

PETE
Been saving myself for a while. Darn gearbox is shot in the car. Been in the shop for a month 'til I can afford to collect it. Eighteen hundred god-damn bucks. Been using the buses in the meantime, pain in the ass let me tell you.

Dylan opens his wallet and peels off hundred dollar bills.

PETE (CONT'D)
No Dylan, no, I wasn't angling...

Dylan stuffs the bills into Pete's shirt pocket.

DYLAN
I know you weren't. Pay me back when you have it. The interest rate at the bank is lousy anyhow.

Pete places a hand on Dylan's.

PETE
Thanks Dylan, that's a lovely gesture.

DYLAN
I hate the buses too. Excuse me, gotta pee.
INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Dylan searches for the bathroom. He spots a waitress. Head down, she struggles with an overloaded tray of dirty crockery.

DYLAN
Here, let me help you with that.

WAITRESS
Oh thank you, I was about to drop it.

She looks up.

WENDY
Dylan...

DYLAN
Wendy....

He places the tray on a trolley.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Uh, I was... looking for... the bathroom?

WENDY
It's... just around the corner.

DYLAN
Thank you.

Deeply embarrassed, Wendy lowers her head and continues with her duties.

FADE TO:

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Dylan sits down.

PETE
You OK buddy? You look like you seen a ghost.

DYLAN
Something like that.
PETE
I don't wanna sound like I'm running off with your cash but I got a call while you were gone. Gotta go meet the wife.

DYLAN
I understand Pete, I'll call you in a couple of days?

Pete rises.

PETE
I'll hold you to that.

He pats his shirt pocket.

PETE (CONT'D)
Thanks again, you're a trooper.

Pete exits.

Dylan stares into the distance for a few beats.

Wendy sits down in Pete's chair.

WENDY
Go on, give it both barrels.

Dylan takes a long sip of coffee.

DYLAN
What am I aiming at?

WENDY
I finish at two. Would you do me the kind favor of sparing me five minutes of your time?

DYLAN
I suppose, yeah, sure. That would be nice -- I think?

FADE TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Dylan is seated on a park bench.

Wendy joins him.

A prolonged, frosty silence. Eventually:
WENDY
I owe you an apology.

A beat.

DYLAN
Are you OK Wendy?

WENDY
I said some very nasty things to you over a prolonged period, and my general behavior towards you was nothing short of... truly awful.

DYLAN
Wendy - are - you - OK?

WENDY
I bumped into Ben shortly after you left. He told me all about the handbag and how you were looking after it for my mother.

Dylan rises quickly.

DYLAN
Wendy, none of that matters! It's all in the past. Why the hell are you working in a God damn coffee shop?

WENDY
I publicly humiliated you and ruined your good name in the community.

Dylan squats in front of Wendy and firmly grips her upper arms.

DYLAN
Wendy!

WENDY
You were only ever nice to me...

Dylan shakes her lightly.

DYLAN
WENDY!

She breaks her gaze and locks eyes with Dylan. She burst into tears.

They hug.
INT. BAR - NIGHT

A quiet bar. Wendy is seated at a table for two.

Dylan arrives with two glasses of champagne and takes his seat.

WENDY
Oh, you shouldn't...

DYLAN
Well I did. I know how you like it. Now tell me what this is all about.

WENDY
(sullen)
My mother, she died.

DYLAN
(shocked)
Oh... I'm sorry to hear that.

WENDY
Heart attack, very sudden. The paramedics said she was probably dead before she hit the floor.

DYLAN
Wendy, that's terrible. That must have been very difficult for you to take. I know you two were very close.

WENDY
Well, not that close as it turns out -- she left her entire estate to the community hall on the proviso they renamed it after her.

DYLAN
Ouch.

WENDY
No, not really. No more than I deserve.

DYLAN
Don't say that. You were always there for her.
WENDY
It's true. I'm a heartless, selfish cow... as you so, correctly put it once. My comeuppance I suppose.

DYLAN
Wow... that's a lot to take in. And the house?

WENDY
I was there for a month. They offered me a cheap enough rental deal but, having no income of my own -- I had to let it go.

She takes a large swig of champagne.

WENDY (CONT’D)
Fast forward to now and I'm working in a coffee shop and living in a pokey little, roach infested apartment.

DYLAN
Sheesh. How you dealing with that?

WENDY
Truthfully? I've never felt more alive. I might not be making much of a difference in the world but it's been a huge wake up call. Just what I needed.

DYLAN
Well, I wish I could say that the circumstances that led you here were different, but I guess some small good has come out of it?

WENDY
Hmm. So, where did you run off too?

DYLAN
Oh, I uh, I spotted an opportunity, which to my surprise, worked out, so I moved out to Santa Monica.

WENDY
Interesting, doing what?

Dylan shifts in his seat, a little uneasy.
DYLAN
Oh, a guy I know moved out there to set up his own business and needed a little help.

WENDY
And your friend Bernie?

DYLAN
Ernie too.

WENDY
Sorry, Ernie. Well I'm glad for you both, really I am.

DYLAN
Thank you Wendy. You know, that's probably the first nice thing you've ever said to me?

Wendy lifts her glass, as does Dylan.

WENDY
I've a lot of catching up to do, Mr. Peter's.

They chink glasses.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Wendy and Dylan idle along the sidewalk.

DYLAN
I had a really nice time tonight, totally unexpected. I'm so glad I ran into you.

WENDY
Me too. So how long are you around for?

DYLAN
Few days yet.

WENDY
Well do promise me you'll drop by the coffee shop before you go to say goodbye.

DYLAN
Course. Absolutely.
WENDY
Those are very nice shoes Dylan, expensive looking.

DYLAN
It's great what you can pick up in the sales.

Wendy stops at a shoddy looking front door.

WENDY
Well, this is me.

DYLAN
Handy for work I guess, plenty of shops nearby.

WENDY
Did you want to come in for a coffee?

Dylan thinks about it for a beat.

DYLAN
Maybe not tonight...

WENDY
I promise there are no rats, I'm pretty sure I got the last of them.

DYLAN
Don't be daft, I'm not a snob -- I was a garbage collector remember?

Wendy smiles.

DYLAN (CONT'D)
It's just that, it was really nice to see you and spend some time with you and I'd like to remember the end of the night with you just standing there, with that lovely smile.

WENDY
Stop it, you're making me blush.

DYLAN
OK, well I guess this is good night then.

WENDY
Good night Dylan.
She leans forward and kisses Dylan lightly on his cheek. She turns and seemingly floats up the five steps to her door, turns, and waves.

A beat.

DYLAN
Wendy.

WENDY
Yes?

DYLAN
I've got nothing on tomorrow, so if you're at a loose end?

WENDY
Oh, I can't sorry.

DYLAN
Oh right, I just thought...

WENDY
I'm on a double shift, but the day after is OK?

DYLAN
Great!

Dylan hands Wendy his cell phone.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
I'll need a number to get you on.

WENDY
Problem. I don't have one, waiting for my next paycheck. Just swing by the shop tomorrow and let me know?

DYLAN
Will do, night again.

WENDY
Night again.

Dylan longingly watches on as she lets herself in. She waves through the gap in the door, pauses for a moment, then gently closes the door.

DYLAN
(to himself)
Am I tripping right now?

FADE TO:
INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Pete pushes a trolley, followed by Dylan.

PETE
Are you sure it's the same Wendy, not some lookey-likey impostor?

DYLAN
Honestly, it's like the old Wendy never existed.

PETE
Sounds like a very humbling experience she's been through.

DYLAN
Most definitely.

Dylan places himself in the path of the trolley.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Pete, I think I'm falling in love with her.

PETE
What are you talking about -- you were always in love with her?

DYLAN
Kinda, but back then, I knew it would never go anywhere -- but now...

PETE
Dylan, I'm not the kinda guy people normally turn to for advice when it comes to matters of the heart but if you wanna hear my two cents...

DYLAN
- Gimme ten dollars worth.

PETE
OK. She's hot -- too hot for you. But, you're a nice guy, and that counts for a lot. So, if you think she's genuinely turned a corner and is interested in you -- strike while the iron is hot, carpe diem.

DYLAN
Does that mean "seize the day"?
PETE
I think so. You get my drift though right?

DYLAN
Pete, there's something I need to tell you.

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

PETE
You son of a bitch Dylan, we were partners on the road.

DYLAN
Yeah well, from my recollections Pete, I did all the heavy lifting whilst you got fat behind the wheel.

PETE
I gotta a slow metabolism! That aside, I'm still the fat looser taking charity from his buddy while he lives the high life of a freakin' millionaire!

DYLAN
It's not that simple.

PETE
 Seems pretty straightforward from where I'm sitting -- right opposite Elon Musk.

DYLAN
It all happened so quickly.

PETE
It all happened so quickly? You find the family jewels, take them to a shop, sell them and jet off to make your fortune -- all in the blink of an eye?

DYLAN
I met with your wife earlier...

PETE
Say what?
DYLAN
Paid off your mortgage.

Pete rises, stares at the table for a moment.

PETE
My round I guess.

Pete bursts into tears.

FADE TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Wendy and Dylan are both enjoying a salad. Dylan refills Wendy's glass with sparkling water.

WENDY
Thank you.

DYLAN
So, I got you a present.

WENDY
Oh Dylan, you shouldn't...

DYLAN
- Yes, yes I should.

Dylan reaches into his inside jacket pocket and produces a small rectangular gift, wrapped in pink sparkly paper. He hands it to Wendy.

WENDY
I'm intrigued.

Wendy unwraps the gift.

A brand new iphone X.

WENDY (CONT’D)
Dylan! This must have cost a fortune, Really, I can't...

DYLAN
- Didn't cost me a penny. I was due a free upgrade with my service provider and, well, I like my current phone.

Wendy hugs it to her chest then leans forward to kiss Dylan. Dylan sheepishly withdraws.
WENDY
Oh I'm sorry Dylan, I'm just so grateful, I wanted...

A few awkward moments of silence.

DYLAN
I would like nothing more than to kiss you Wendy. You know how crazy I am, sorry, was about you.

WENDY
Was? OK, we can be friends, I mean, we are friends, I hope. I wasn't trying to...

DYLAN
- Oh to hell with it. Wendy, I think I'm in love with you. No! I know I'm in love with you. Always have been since the first time I laid eyes on you.

WENDY
Oh knock it off Dylan, now you're being cruel.

Dylan leans back in his chair, relieved.

DYLAN
And, like an idiot, I've convinced myself that you might like me too.

WENDY
Of course I like you...

DYLAN
- But the thing is, I just don't know how I would cope if, in some far fetched scenario we got together and then split up. It would crush me. I just don't think I could take that much pain.

Wendy, head bobbed, leans back in her chair.

DYLAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry to lay that on you so bluntly, but I don't wanna be the sad, lonely old guy who looks back from his rocking chair forty years from now wondering 'what if'?
Wendy rises, teary eyed. She walks around the table and sits side-saddle in Dylan's lap. She cups his cheeks with her hands and stares deep into his eyes.

An OLD LADY cleaning the adjacent table leans over to them.

OLD LADY
This is where you kiss her you dummy.

They kiss, tenderly for a couple of seconds, then passionately for a few more. Dylan reaches his arm around to Wendy's back, knocking over the water bottle which smashes on the floor. Startled, they break their embrace and rise.

DYLAN
Sorry, Oh I'm really sorry...

OLD LADY
(chuckling)
Forget about it, now get on out of here and be happy together.

Dylan throws thirty dollars on the table and offers Wendy his hand.

DYLAN
Ms. Oppenheim, would you?

WENDY
I'd love to, Mr. Peters.

Dylan leads her out.

As they approach the exit:

WENDY (CONT’D)
Oh, the phone...

She turns back to grab it.

A guy at a table winks at Dylan.

GUY AT TABLE
She's a keeper.

DYLAN
(contemplative)
I certainly hope so.
SUPER: ONE MONTH LATER

INT. DYLAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Seated on a couch, Wendy looks comfortable in one of Dylan's T-shirts. She scrolls through an iPad. Dylan yawns as he enters in boxers and T-shirt.

WENDY
Morning honey, coffee in the pot.

Dylan kisses Wendy on top of her head.

DYLAN
What are you looking at?

WENDY
Job listings. I need to get a second income. That apartment was only ever a stopgap but my wage at the coffee shop won't cover much else.

Dylan crosses to the kitchen area and pours himself a coffee.

DYLAN
Y'know, I was thinking about that.

WENDY
You were? You know of any openings?

DYLAN
No, I mean I was thinking about your apartment.

WENDY
I try not to.

Dylan sits next to Wendy.

DYLAN
Listen, you've been here pretty much solid for the last few weeks.

WENDY
Oh, sorry, am I crowding you? You need some more space?

DYLAN
No, not that. I love having you here, you know I do.

(MORE)
DYLAN (CONT’D)
I was just thinking maybe I should
give you your own key?

WENDY
Oh?

DYLAN
Too soon? Sorry, silly me rushing
in again. Well, if you change your
mind...

WENDY
Dylan, that would make me so happy.

DYLAN
Oh yeah, how happy?

WENDY
This happy.

Wendy puts down the iPad, straddles Dylan and begins to kiss
him.

DYLAN
So, do we have a deal?

WENDY
We do, but on one proviso.

DYLAN
Which is?

WENDY
You ask me to become Mrs. Peters
someday.

DYLAN
OK, deal -- but you better start
behaving yourself.

WENDY
I can't promise you that, I'm a
very naughty girl.

They lie down on the couch and continue kissing.

DYLAN
Then you must be punished, Mrs.
Peters.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Josh and Ernie are either side of a glass desk.
JOSH
So it looks like our stock is on the up. Our subscriptions are very healthy and the new software update has rated very well with the beta testers.

ERNIE
So have Techsoft made an increase on their initial offer?

JOSH
Au contrair, they pulled out.

ERNIE
Oh great, there goes my apartment in Dubai.

JOSH
Relax. They pulled out because they couldn't raise the extra capital for the deal. We do, however have fresh interest from two new parties.

ERNIE
Sweet.

JOSH
So, we need to get Dylan out here to sign some papers.

ERNIE
Good luck with that.

JOSH
Say?

ERNIE
Been trying to get him over for weeks. He's smitten with that squeeze of his.

JOSH
Oh that's nice. I'm sure he'll be fine, it's business. Little different to partying all night with you.

ERNIE
Josh, please.

JOSH
I'm kidding. Call him later. Maybe he can bring her too.
ERNIE
Good idea, maybe she'll bring some of her hot friends.

EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Dylan and Wendy are outside the coffee house. Dylan has a small case. He kisses Wendy.

WENDY
You promise you'll call me every day?

DYLAN
I'm only going for a week, I'll be back before you know it.

WENDY
OK, just stay away from those party girls with Ernie.

DYLAN
Now there's a first.

WENDY
Huh?

DYLAN
You got his name right.

Dylan kisses her again.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Bye.

He starts to walk off.

WENDY
Love you.

DYLAN
Another first.

Wendy looks a little coy.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
I love you too -- very much so.

Wendy blows Dylan a kiss.
INT. SOHO CLUB, SANTA MONICA - DAY

Dylan and Josh are seated on leather chairs, overlooking the city.

JOSH
All being well, we should get confirmation of received funds from the bank inside 48 hours.

DYLAN
You sure have got the Midas touch Josh, I gotta hand it to you.

JOSH
Never would have come to anything without your original investment Dylan.

Ernie arrives and drops into a spare chair.

ERNIE
You tell him the good news?

DYLAN
He did yes.

A waitress arrives with three coffees.

JOSH
Thank you.

She nods and exits.

DYLAN
Guys listen, I've been thinking.

ERNIE
Is that what that grinding noise was?

Ernie chuckles to himself.

DYLAN
(to Josh)
I think I'm done with this.

JOSH
How so?
DYLАН
Just not me. Sure, I've, we've all done well out of this adventure, but I only need so much money and I've already got way more than I could ever need.

ERNIE
I could always use a little more, send it my way buddy.

JOSH
Ernie, this is serious.

DYLАН
I just feel a little uncomfortable being on the outside of the daily goings on whilst you two, well, you Josh, do all the work.

Ernie turns away.

JOSH
I get that, I get that. Well, If you're sure, what are you proposing?

DYLАН
I'm prepared to sell my shares to you guys at fifty percent of value and keep five percent to feed a pension pot for rainy days. Just to keep things tidy.

JOSH
No deal, we'll give you full market value.

ERNIE
Hey!

JOSH
Shut up Ernie! We're only here at all because of Dylan.

DYLАН
There is one small clause I'd like entertained.

JOSH
Yeah?

DYLАН
I get the lease on Ernie's computer repair shop.
ERNIE
I still have that?

DYLAN
You do. I want to give it to Wendy. I was thinking maybe she'd like to turn it into a coffee shop.

ERNIE
Sheesh, she's really got you by the curlies.

DYLAN
One shop for now, then who knows down the line, maybe a nationwide chain?

JOSH
Worldwide! I love the idea Dylan. From small acorns, grow mighty oaks.

ERNIE
You get the shop in exchange for a hell raising night out. Been going stir crazy with Mister Goody Two-Shoes here.

DYLAN
I was planning to anyway.

ERNIE
Waiter! Champagne!

INT. COCKTAIL BAR - LATER
The guys are seated at the bar. Fairly wasted. Josh is clearly the worse off as he rises:

JOSH
I gotta go pee.

He stumbles as he exits.

ERNIE
Call me if you get into trouble.

Ernie knocks back a large slug of whiskey.

ERNIE (CONT’D)
Love the guy, but he's such a lightweight.
DYLAN

Compared to a super heavyweight like you -- yeah. You need to rein it in a little Ernie before it catches up with you.

ERNIE

Sorry mom.

DYLAN

Seriously Ernie, I can't remember the last time I spent time with you in an evening sober. I really wanted to talk to you about something tonight.

Ernie becomes very serious.

ERNIE

I know that look, what is it buddy?

DYLAN

It's about Wendy and I.

Ernie rises quickly and hugs Dylan.

ERNIE

Buddy, Buddy, Buddy -- Of course I'll be your best man!

DYLAN

No, no, no. I'm not getting married. Maybe not for a while anyhow.

Ernie swings back to serious.

ERNIE

Oh. Well maybe you should. She's a great girl. Have to admit I'm a little jealous. Gets a little lonely out here.

DYLAN

Then come home and clean up a little?

ERNIE

We'll see. I love you man.

DYLAN

Too.

ERNIE

So what do you wanna chat about?
EXT. DINER - NEXT MORNING

Ernie and Dylan are enjoying bacon and eggs.

ERNIE
You sneaky so and so. I never thought you had it in you.

DYLAN
Ernie, please. You make me sound like some kinda criminal.

ERNIE
Let me get this straight. You 'find' the family jewels in her trash can, sell them for a healthy sum then invest the proceeds into a business that goes on to make millions? Sounds fairly criminal to me. Not that I wouldn't have done the same.

DYLAN
She was a different Wendy back then.

ERNIE
Superbitch.

DYLAN
Superbitch. But things are different now. She's broke and I'm rolling in cash. Sure, I'm looking after her but I hate myself every time I look into the mirror.

ERNIE
Does she know what you're actually worth?

DYLAN
Hell no. She knows I'm doing OK but has no idea about the truth.

ERNIE
Well, if you ask me, you have two options...

DYLAN
- One. I'm gonna come clean.

ERNIE
Whoa!
DYLAN
I have to Ernie. I love that girl so, so much but I can't go on living the lie. It's not fair to her.

ERNIE
You know she'll probably never talk to you again and sue you for every cent right?

DYLAN
Already spoke to a lawyer -- off the record. He says nothing can be proved. He says to claim I saved the sixty grand over the years under the mattress. There's no paper trail.

Dylan's cellphone rings.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Spooky.

He answers the call.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Hi honey, what a lovely surprise. Ernie and I were just talking about you.

He puts a hand over the receiver and makes a face at Ernie.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Yeah, sorry, I did actually forget. I'll do it when I'm back tomorrow morning. OK -- love you, can't wait to see you. Mwah.

Hangs up.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
I said I'd pay her rent this month as she had an unexpected dental bill.

ERNIE
Got yourself a tough decision to make there cowboy.

DYLAN
Ain't I just partner.
EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

Dylan waits with his case at the airport entrance. Wendy arrives in his Mercedes.

WENDY
Hey you.

DYLAN
Hey.

Dylan opens the rear door, throws his case on the back seat then takes the front passenger seat.

Wendy pulls away.

INT. CAR - DAY

WENDY
Good trip?

DYLAN
Oh, y'know?

Wendy places a hand on Dylan's knee.

WENDY
You OK honey, you seem a little down?

DYLAN
Yeah, yeah. Just the traveling.

WENDY
Well you better find your second wind, I have plans for us later. Got the Chardonnay on ice and I'm gonna try to cook your favorite, chilli con carne -- but please don't be disappointed when I ruin it. We can always order in.

DYLAN
Sounds great. Listen, Wendy, do you think we could stop for coffee on the way back? There's something I need to talk to you about.

WENDY
Uh, sure, yeah. I guess?
EXT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Wendy arrives at a table with two coffees where Dylan nervously waits for her.

WENDY
Two pick-me-ups, as required.

DYLAN
Thanks.

WENDY
I didn't ask how Ernie was?

DYLAN
Oh he's good. He's actually coming home next month. Gonna get his act together.

WENDY
Oh, that'll be so good for you to have him around again.

DYLAN
Wendy, we need to talk.

A beat.

WENDY
Are we not talking now?

DYLAN
Did you ever stop to wonder how an average Joe garbage man like me came to be driving that Mercedes?

WENDY
No, you told me that you invested some money you had from your grandfather's watch into Josh's company and it did OK. What's your point?

DYLAN
That Mercedes is worth one hundred thousand dollars. Ernie bought it for me with loose change.

WENDY
(uneased)
Ernie, I don't follow?
DYLAN
And, If I wanted to return the gesture, I could afford to buy Ernie a Ferrari. Again, with loose change.

WENDY
I'm lost.

DYLAN
Your mother didn't sell the family jewels Wendy.

Wendy places a hand into his.

WENDY
Listen, I know you two didn't get along but she's not here to cause us any problems now, so let it go.

DYLAN
Forgetful wasn't she?

WENDY
She had her moments. Dylan, what's this all about? I don't care how much money you have or haven't got. What's it got to do with my mother?

DYLAN
Everything.

WENDY
OK, now I'm confused.

DYLAN
Come on Wendy, you're an intelligent woman. Those shoes you liked of mine cost eight hundred dollars.

WENDY
(shrugs)
Like I said, I don't care about the money.

DYLAN
Your mother had one of her moments.

WENDY
Dylan, you're scaring me a little now.
DYLAN
Wendy, she threw the family jewelry in the trash.

WENDY
No, you're mistaken. That was her purse, remember?

DYLAN
She threw the jewelry in the trash, and as I was tipping the can it caught my eye.

Dylan leans back in his chair.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
Then, in a moment of madness I stuffed it in my jacket.

WENDY
This is a terrible joke, Dylan.

DYLAN
Then I sold it, took off to Vegas and invested the money in Josh's company.

Wendy nervously claps.

WENDY
Oh that's a good one, Dylan.

DYLAN
Wendy, I did something terrible.

Wendy begins to well up.

WENDY
And for your encore?

DYLAN
I - found - the - jewelry - and - sold - it.

Wendy begins to sob.

WENDY
Dylan, stop now, please. You wouldn't do that, not you.

DYLAN
You were both so horrible to me.
WENDY
You haven't got a bad bone in you.

DYLAN
And when I found it, I thought, screw the pair of you, you won't miss it.

WENDY
I don't believe you, this isn't true.

DYLAN
It's all true. Had I had known this was going to happen to you I wouldn't have...

Wendy rises and throws a napkin at Dylan.

WENDY
Oh save it!

She wipes the tears from her eyes.

WENDY (CONT’D)
OK, I think I should leave. You can call me when you've finished this silly game you're playing.

DYLAN
It's not a game Wendy.

Wendy begins to sob intensely.

WENDY
Oh Dylan. Why did you have to go and ruin everything?

DYLAN
I'm so sorry Wendy. I just wanted to be honest with you.

WENDY
Well you should have just kept it to yourself. Things were just fine the way they were.

DYLAN
I couldn't. It wasn't fair to you.

WENDY
You know, the jewelry thing doesn't matter. I couldn't care less.

(MORE)
WENDY (CONT’D)
I just don't see how I could ever trust you again?

DYLAN
I don’t expect you to.

WENDY
Well, I think I should leave. I need to call my landlord and see if he can hold the cancellation of my lease.

DYLAN
Don't be silly, stay at my place, all your stuff is there. I'll get a hotel -- or you can have a hotel...

WENDY
- No, I want to go home. I need to be alone.

DYLAN
OK, but please don't just disappear. There are things we need to discuss. Maybe in a couple of days?

WENDY
I can't even think about that right now.

DYLAN
I put that rent money into your account by the way.

WENDY
Thank you. I'll get it out from the ATM on my way to see the landlord. That'll keep the wolf from the door.

Wendy puts on her coat and gathers her bag.

WENDY (CONT’D)
Goodbye Dylan.

DYLAN
Promise you'll call me?

WENDY
I can't promise you that. I'll be in touch somehow when I have the five hundred to pay you back.
DYLAN
You don't need...

WENDY
- Please, let me leave with what's left of my dignity.

Wendy exits.

Dylan cups his face with his hands.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A still teary Wendy approaches an ATM, talking on her phone.

WENDY
That's very kind of you. I'll be over with this month's rent in the morning.

She hangs up, takes out an ATM card from her purse and slots it into the machine.

She taps a few buttons as she sniffs a little.

A few moments later her face drops as she sees the balance of her account on the ATM screen.

WENDY (CONT'D)
(to herself)
There must be some mistake?

Confused, she taps at the buttons some more.

WENDY (CONT'D)
Still the same?

Dylan cruises up alongside in his Mercedes -- top down.

DYLAN
Having trouble?

Wendy turns to Dylan, a little surprised to see him.

WENDY
There must be a problem at the bank. It says there's seven and a half million dollars in my account?

DYLAN
It's all yours Wendy, every cent I had.
Wendy bursts into tears of joy as she runs to Dylan and kisses him.

DYLAN (CONT’D)
It’s a good job I did spot the jewelry, or we'd both be screwed huh?

Wendy heads around the front and climbs into the passenger seat and kisses Dylan again.

WENDY
Well maybe I'll let you marry me for my money!

DYLAN
Can I at least keep the car?

WENDY
Of course you can, that was a present from Bernie.

DYLAN
Ernie!

WENDY
Kidding!

They laugh together as they drive off into the sunset.

THE END.