

FOOLS

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FADE IN:

EXT. DOCK-NIGHT

A huge freighter sits by the dock next to a large warehouse. Men scramble here and there as they load the ship with drugs, guns and stolen cars.

INT. WAREHOUSE

PRINCETON TATE, 40s and menacing, watches the activity from his office above.

EXT. DOCK

A sedan pulls up and stops on an incline that overlooks the warehouse.

INT. SEDAN

Inside are AARON WHEY and JEFF AUFE, late 20s. Although not wimpy, are very regular guys. But they have five-o'-clock shadows and stern looks that look silly on these two. Dead pan all the way.

JEFF

Well, the snitch was right.

AARON

Doesn't mean he's here.

JEFF

Oh. He's here. I can feel him in my bones.

AARON

This could get messy.

JEFF

This will get messy. In a bloody way.

AARON

Real bloody.

JEFF

All bets are off.

AARON

It's time to pay the piper.

Pause. They slowly look at each other.

AARON

Maybe we should just go.

JEFF

Yeah.

EXT. SEDAN

The trunk open.

An overt amount of quick flashes of guns being loaded.

They are done and weighed down with weapons.

Jeff steps over to the hill and looks down at the harbor. He confidently pulls out a cigar and places it in his mouth, Schwarzenegger style. He pats a pocket. Then another. Then another.

Taken off guard, he looks at Aaron.

JEFF

Got a light?

Aaron rolls his eyes and walks off as Jeff throws the cigar away and hastily follows.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Princeton walks with YOSHI TAKAGUSHI, 40s and shady, too. MUSCLEMEN flank both.

YOSHI

Ingenious, Mr. Tate. Cars going to the Far East, drugs to Europe and guns to Central America.

PRINCETON

What can I say? I'm a clearing house of crime.

Both men laugh boisterously.

JEFF

And we're here to put you out of business.

"Huh?" plasters on the bad guys' faces.

PRINCETON

Detective Whey. Detective Aufe. I thought I killed you when I lured you to that abandoned building and blew it up in a spectacular fireball.

JEFF

You thought wrong, Princeton! There's more than one way to...uh?...

AARON

(whispers)
...skin a cat?

JEFF

...skin a cat!

Jeff realizes what he has just said and gives a dirty look to his partner. Aaron just shrugs.

Princeton smiles.

PRINCETON

How 'bout good old fashioned bullets.

JEFF

Yes. That's another way.

Just then, dozens of men appear with dozens of guns.

AARON

Oh oh.

And all hell breaks loose as bullets fly everywhere.

Princeton and Yoshi take cover as Aaron and Jeff duck behind some crates and exchange bullets with the bad guys. Gunfire conveniently blazes through every inch of the warehouse EXCEPT through the two heroes.

Two bad guys start to sneak up behind the cops.

The clips run out on Aaron and Jeff's giant machine guns. They throw them over their shoulders, promptly hit the bad guys in the head and knock them out cold.

Guns in our heroes hands again and they blast away. Jeff sees Princeton and Yoshi disappear through another doorway.

JEFF

They're getting away.

AARON

Then it's time to rock.

They exchange smirks and high fives.

The next thing you know the heroes stand and pump hot lead across the area. Bad guys mowed down in their wake.

A couple of gunmen get close and the two "cops" unleash some quick martial arts moves.

Then they run out of bullets!

Wide eyed, Jeff and Aaron take cover again. Both check their pockets. Jeff comes up with one shell. The bullet quickly finds its way into in the chamber of Jeff's revolver.

AARON

Why do you get the bullet?

JEFF

It's mine.

AARON

But I'm the better shot.

JEFF

Oh. You wish.

AARON

Give me the gun.

They start to wrestle for the revolver like a couple of kids.

The throng of killers sense their victory and begin to inch forward.

In the midst of their wrestling match, the revolver goes off. The bullet hits a metal post and then proceeds to ricochet back and forth as it strikes every single bad guy.

Jeff and Aaron cautiously peer over the crate and see the sea of bodies. Surprised, they shrug and look at each other.

AARON

We should, uh, go after Princeton.

JEFF

Yeah.

EXT. DOCKS

The two heroes break out of the warehouse, look around and spot the bad guy at the end of the dock. They give chase.

They round the corner with guns up and get the drop on the villains.

JEFF

Hold it right there, boys!

Princeton and Yoshi stop in their tracks.

AARON

Now turn around.

Hands up, they slowly face their nemesis.

Suddenly, Princeton pulls a beautiful WOMAN from behind a crate and gets a gun to her head in the blink of an eye.

PRINCETON

No, gentlemen. You drop your guns.

AARON

Who's that?

JEFF

That's the required damsel in distress.
My love interest.

AARON

Yours? Why can't she be mine?

JEFF

You're the sidekick. Besides, you have
a girlfriend.

AARON

Excuse me? Sidekick?

The bad guys glance, perplexed, at each other.

JEFF

Yes. Sidekick. It's obvious that I'm the
real hero here.

AARON

Oh really?

Out of nowhere, an OLD MAN, complete with a fishing hat and sweater, appears in their line of sight.

OLD MAN

Excuse me, boys.

INT. VIDEO STORE-DAY

A vast sea of DVDs, posters and cardboard stand-ups.

Jeff, in street clothes and an ugly blue vest, the classic good-looks frat boy, plus a couple of years. Aaron, in a shirt, slacks, and loosened tie, a regular Joe, a little cautious and unspectacular. Basically exact opposites.

A look at the old man.

Behind the man a monitor plays the same movie/scenario that the two were just in. But their parts have been taken over by TWO HEROES (Chinese). They speak Chinese.

OLD MAN

(to Aaron)

You have that new Jason Statham?

AARON

Oh. I don't work here.

OLD MAN

(to Jeff)

How 'bout you, son? You on duty?

JEFF

We're out of the Jason Statham movie
but we have this one.

Jeff gestures to the movie on the monitor.

JEFF

Prime Hong Kong action/adventure.
"Blazing Gunfire".

Sure enough, a couple of "Blazing Gunfire" boxes display behind them.

JEFF

Much better than American action.
We should know. We're screenwriters.

The old man glances back at the screen.

OLD MAN

They're talkin' commie talk. How am I
suppose to catch the plot and the
subplot. Follow the arc of the
protagonist.

Jeff and Aaron glance quizzically at each other.

JEFF

Well, I'm sorry, sir. We're all out.

OLD MAN

Oh well. I guess I'll get a porno. Got
any lezbo flicks?

JEFF

Right through the curtain.

The old man ambles off.

AARON

Ready to go?

JEFF

Just let me punch my time card.

Jeff steps off as a PREGNANT WOMAN with TWO SHRILL KIDS walk
by. Aaron winces at the sight before he return his thoughts
to the movie.

Jeff walks toward the back. A curvy woman catches Jeff's
attention and he promptly runs into a woman, COLLEEN, mid-
20s, short, tomboy-esque but with a smart mouth and charming
wit.

Jeff absently glances at her as he keeps his attention on
the sex machine woman.

JEFF

Oh. Sorry.

He continues into the back as Colleen gives him the evil
eye.

She shakes her head and walks off. The back of her T-shirt reads LIGHTNING MESSENGER.

COLLEEN
(to herself)
Jerk.

COLLEEN

steps up to the "Blazing Gunfire" display and picks up the box.

DAVE, 20s and a bit dopey, steps up to Colleen. He wears a jacket with ONE SPEEDY MESSENGER on the back.

Behind, Aaron steps away as Jeff appears. They exit.

DAVE
How about this one?

Dave shows her a tape box in his hands: TORRENT OF LOVE. On the box a couple in a tender embrace. Colleen shoots him a raised eyebrow.

COLLEEN
Are you sure you're a guy?

Dave shrugs.

DAVE
What can I say? I'm a romantic.

COLLEEN
Sometimes I wonder why we're even friends.

With a smile, he hits her on the arm with the box.

DAVE
That reminds me. Gator wants to go out with you.

COLLEEN
Gator would be...?

DAVE
Double Time Messenger?

COLLEEN
Big guy? Bald? With the goatee?

DAVE

That's him.

COLLEEN

No thanks.

DAVE

But you're so butch.

Her eyes flame wide.

DAVE

He likes butch...

Her fore-finger thrusts forward and he hushes. She spins on her heels and walks away. He follows.

DAVE

It's not like that's bad.

A big grumbling ox named LARRY scans the aisles. He comes across a movie called THIEF STORY and smiles.

EXT. ATM MACHINE-DAY

Money pops out of the slit. Jeff grabs the cash and as he checks the receipt, a flash of uncertainty crosses his face.

He steps over to a mailbox as Aaron follows. An envelope addressed to TITAN FILMS in one hand and a braid-bound manuscript with a purple cover under his arm.

Just before he drops the letter in.

AARON

Are you sure?

Jeff hesitates.

JEFF

You sound like you have doubts.

Aaron shrugs.

AARON

No. Not at all.

JEFF

It sounds like you do. We're partners. You have a say in this, you know.

Jeff cranes his neck forward and studies his friend.
Silence. One. Two.

And he drops the letter.

JEFF

Step two.

Jeff leads his friend into a store, COPY, OVER AND OUT as
Colleen and Dave round the corner.

DAVE

What are you so mad about?

COLLEEN

Nothing.

DAVE

I was only trying to help.

COLLEEN

Thank you but no thank you.

DAVE

He's a bud of mine. I just thought...

COLLEEN

That's the thing. I don't really want to
date a guy who's anyone's "bud". No
offense.

DAVE

Okay.

COLLEEN

If I date him, chances are I become
his "babe" or "chick" or "honey". Some
shit like that. Then I get pregnant,
probably triplets, and we live in a
trailer park while I drink away my days
and he works at the muffler shop.

She shrugs.

COLLEEN

I know I'm not much to look at...

DAVE

No! You're, uh, pre..., uh... cute!
Cute. A lotta guys say it.

Colleen grits her teeth.

COLLEEN

How nice of you to say. But I can't be
getting involved with just any guy right
now. I've gotta focus on my career.

Dave absently smirks.

DAVE

You mean you still wanna...

Again, the finger of death thrusts into his face. This gets
his attention.

DAVE

Yes. I see. Sounds like the prudential
choice.

COLLEEN

Prudent.

DAVE

Prudent choice.

She smiles.

COLLEEN

I'm glad you see it my way.

INT. COPY, OVER AND OUT

Copy machines all around.

Jeff sets down a manuscript in front of a CLERK (#1). The
front label reads: EXECUTIVE TERROR. AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
BY AARON WHEY AND JEFF AUFE. On a label placed on the garish
purple cover.

AARON

I don't know about this. It's only the
first draft.

JEFF

But it's good.

AARON

Yeah. But is it good enough?

JEFF

You're looking at the details again.
Movies are about the big picture. Pun
was intended.

CLERK

Ten copies?

JEFF

Yeah. I have a coupon.

He hands the clerk a jagged slip of paper.

CLERK

Of course you do.

JEFF

(to Aaron)

You have to look at the big picture.
This is high concept.

The clerk to returns Jeff a receipt.

CLERK

Tomorrow morning.

Jeff and Aaron exit.

EXT. STREET

JEFF

If we left it to you, we'd be examining
every cell of the page.

AARON

Paper doesn't have cells. It's atoms.

JEFF

See. Everything's a chore with you.

AARON

It's good and exciting. But, uh. Don't
you think people'll think it's--silly?

JEFF

Silly? "A giant snake makes its way into the White House during an important summit." Wow! White House Burning meets Godzilla. But Godzilla snake. We'll be swimming in the money. I think that's another pun.

From around the corner appears a presidential convoy: police escort, two limos with American flags, and a Chevy Suburban. As quickly as it appeared, the procession drops down another street and out of sight.

The two friends look at each other and, like nothing ever happened:

JEFF

We have to jump on this now. Before someone thinks of it.

Jeff matter-of-factly touches his nose and walks off as Aaron rolls his eyes.

INT. COPY, OVER AND OUT

A basket marked TO DO and filled with various screenplays from other people (LOVING EMBRACE, HELL BENT FOR DEATH, DIE HARD WITH A HEAVY HEART).

The clerk puts EXECUTIVE TERROR on top. He walks off as the purple script teeters for a moment and then drops into a box with several other similar purple-covered manuscripts.

INT. APARTMENT-DAY

Jeff and Aaron enter the basic and neatly kept area. Signs of a woman's touch are all around.

JEFF

You fire it up and I'll get the beers.

They split off and Aaron enters a side room as Jeff disappears into the kitchen.

INT. ROOM

A cramped, messy office area.

On a bookcase sits a framed photo of Aaron and a woman, AMY, same age. They embrace and smile.

Movie posters (Iron Man, Fast & Furious, Die Hard, Star Wars, etc.) in frames and hung on the wall.

Aaron tries to turn on an old computer but nothing happens. He crouches under to a tangle of way-too-many cords that lead into an outlet in the wall. He tweaks a plug and the computer starts to grind to life.

INT. KITCHEN

Jeff grabs two beers.

INT. ROOM

He enters and sets a beer down in front of Aaron.

AARON

We should go over Executive Terror.
Just one time.

JEFF

Are you on this again? We just
finished it.

AARON

When do you think we should?

JEFF

When they buy it. We should get paid
for a re-write.

AARON

And when will this happen?

JEFF

Soon.

AARON

But if we're going to sell it soon,
won't that still be soon after we've
finished it?

JEFF

What's your point?

Aaron shrugs.

AARON

Never mind.

JEFF

Great. Let's start us another masterpiece.

LATER

Both sit silently. Obviously that they are deep in thought (or an incredible simulation).

Something occurs to Aaron and he begins to speak--but then hesitates. Both glance at each other before Aaron shrugs. Both fall back into thought. Another pause.

JEFF

(180 degrees)

How was work?

AARON

Oh. All right, I guess. Temp jobs are temp jobs.

INT. LIVING ROOM

They watch a badly dubbed Hong Kong action movie on TV. In the flick, a GOOD GUY charges in and shoots several goons. Then the BAD GUY gets the drop on him.

BAD GUY

You little shit. How'd you find us?

GOOD GUY

Don't you know?

BAD GUY

What the hell you talkin' about?

GOOD GUY

Seems a guy as smart as you would have figured it out by now.

The good guy overpowers the bad guy, does a back flip and shoots two other goons.

JEFF

It can't be that hard.

AARON

You can do a back flip?

JEFF
No. Writing this.

He gestures to the TV.

JEFF
We're good writers, right?

AARON
Uh. Yes?

JEFF
Then why is it so hard?

Doubt paints Aaron's face.

AARON
We just have to keep at it.

JEFF
Yeah. I guess.

They exchange confident nods.

JEFF
Another beer?

AARON
Sure.

Jeff disappears into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Jeff fishes out two beers from the 'fridge. As he closes the door, Amy enters from a side door. Looks very practical.

Both hesitate, both very uncomfortable with the others' presence.

JEFF
Amy.

AMY
Jeff.

A nervous pause.

AMY
Well...

And she just walks out. Jeff follows.

INT. LIVING ROOM

He watches as she and Aaron kiss.

AMY

Don't drink too much. We have to meet
my parents at 6:30.

Aaron's eyes widen and briefly shoot to Jeff. She disappears
into the bedroom. Jeff approaches and hands his
uncomfortable friend a beer.

JEFF

What's that about?

AARON

We have to have dinner with her folks.

JEFF

What's the occasion?

AARON

Uh. Anniversary.

JEFF

I thought that was, what, six weeks ago?

AARON

A different anniversary.

JEFF

Of what?

AARON

(snaps)

I don't remember.

Jeff seems to drop the subject as Amy returns.

AMY

Oh. Daddy'll probably tell you this
tonight but he wants you to come in
for a couple hours tomorrow before
you start on Monday. Around ten
o' clock will be fine.

Jeff almost chokes on his beer but Amy doesn't notice. If
Aaron was any more surprised, his eyes would bounce out of

his head. She disappears again as Jeff glares at his friend.
Both speak in hushed tones.

JEFF

You're going to work for him?

AARON

It's a good job. seventy a year, benefits.

JEFF

And a mouth full of bullshit.

Aaron cringes at the visual.

JEFF

What about us? What about the writing?

AARON

We'll find the time.

JEFF

He's a twelve-hour-a-day guy, right?

AARON

Weekends?

JEFF

It's hard enough finding the time to write with her around.

AARON

That's not fair.

JEFF

This is our dream. Our meal ticket.

AARON

We've been doing it for six years and have only written three scripts.

JEFF

Damn good scripts.

AARON

Then why haven't we sold any? Huh?

Aaron shrugs.

AARON

I've gotta think about the future. I don't come from a rich family like yours. I don't have a trust fund to dip into.

JEFF

That's not the point.

AARON

Amy's pregnant.

This puts a halt to the festivities. The two study each other as the topic of conversation crosses to the kitchen.

AMY

Honey, you should wear the blue suit. You look really good in it.

JEFF

Well, congratulations, dad. I've gotta go.

Jeff stands and slowly exits. Aaron clearly frustrated.

EXT. APT.

Jeff exits. He looks back at the apartment and walks to the corner.

INT. JEFF'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

He enters his sparse, very bachelor, digs. All the furniture is thrift store specials except for the huge home theater in the center.

He drops the keys and wallet on the counter and punches the answering machine. "Beep". A young woman's vacuous voice comes on.

Scattered around movie-type magazines of all kinds: stars, big-budget films, big-chested starlets.

WOMAN #1

Jeffie?

Jeff's eyes roll as he pulls out bread and sandwich meat from the 'fridge.

WOMAN #1

Where've you been? I got that part on the soap? Well, only one line? Okay, one word. But it's a start, right? I just have to get that breast job and I'll shoot to the top. Right? Call me.

"Beep!" Another woman's sexy voice. This catches Jeff's attention.

WOMAN #2

Jeff? It's Caroline. I hate to do this on the phone but I think we should stop seeing each other.

JEFF

Of course.

WOMAN #2

I met another guy, from William Morris. But I'm not breaking it off because of he's an agent.

JEFF

Oh rea-lly.

WOMAN #2

We've grown apart, Jeff, and Yuri...

JEFF

"Yuri?"

WOMAN #2

...and I have more "in common".

JEFF

I'm sure.

WOMAN #2

Sorry if I hurt you. Bye.

JEFF

I'll get over it.

With that, Jeff pulls out another beer. His eyes settle on a poster that hangs on the kitchen wall: BY THE GUN.

In it a picture of a hero, gun in one hand and a beautiful woman in the other. The banner on the top reads: "A breathtaking adventure..."

JEFF

That's the life.

Closer look reveals the bank slip in the wallet: BALANCE
\$87.23.

INT. RESTAURANT-NIGHT

Very posh.

GEORGE, 40s, sits at the end of the bar. Black rimmed
glasses circle his skull. Very drunk and takes too much of
the BARTENDER's attention.

GEORGE

I love her but all she loves is
shopping. Shop shop shop. You know
what she goes and does?

A WAITRESS appears and the bartender hands her three beers
and a bottle of wine.

BARTENDER

No.

GEORGE

She leaves me for a rich guy. That
way she can...

BARTENDER

...shop shop shop?

GEORGE

Yes! She's a selfish bitch--but I still
love her.

BARTENDER

I'm sorry.

GEORGE

Oh! Don't feel sorry for me. She'll
learn what it's like to lose your one
true love.

The waitress steps off and into the dining room. She passes
a particular table.

Amy and Aaron are with Amy's parents, BILL and LUCY
O'FLAHERTY.

BILL

You're entering a demanding time in your life now, Aaron. Wife, child on the way, beginning a career.

Aaron tries to pay respectful attention despite being under a lot of stress.

BILL

It's going to be hard. Long hours. Difficult assignments.

At the front desk appears a well-dressed MAN and a busy REDHEAD. The guy not very good looking.

BILL

But if you give it your all, you'll find yourself with a rewarding career in restaurant supply.

The man and the redhead led to a table.

LUCY

Bill, leave him alone. He's got enough to think about.

BILL

The boy has to know. He's not a kid anymore.

AMY

(to Aaron)

I heard the food here is great. You'll be around a lot of great food when you work with daddy.

LUCY

(to Bill)

He's not one of your clients. He's your son-in-law.

Aaron, wide-eyed, looks at Lucy.

LUCY

Well, not yet.

Lucy giggles as he forces a pleasant smile in return. Aaron looks back at the couple.

DAY DREAM

For a moment Aaron imagines himself with the redhead.

AMY

(to Aaron)

But you can't get yourself fat on me.

He snaps out of his daydream as she playfully grabs his side. He forces another smile.

AARON

What?

AMY

Don't get fat around all that temptation.

AARON

I think I can control myself.

EXT. AARON'S APARTMENT-DAY

The city awakens.

INT. AARON'S APARTMENT

The local news plays on the TV in the living room.

NEWSCASTER

...and police are still baffled by the recent string of three bank robberies by the same suspects...

INT. BEDROOM

In bed, Aaron opens one eye and looks at the clock.

8:10.

Suddenly, Amy appears before him.

AMY

Morning, honey.

They kiss.

AMY
10:30 today. Okay?
(presses)
Okay?

AARON
Yes, yes.

She smiles.

AMY
I know this isn't what you had in mind.
If you don't want to, I suppose we could
survive by...

Aaron hushes her and smiles warmly.

AARON
It'll be fine. I'm looking forward to it.

But he isn't. They kiss again. She stands.

AMY
I gotta go or I'll be late.

He half-heartedly holds her arm but she easily pulls free.

AARON
You can't spare fifteen minutes?

AMY
Whatta you want? Twins?

AARON
I don't think that's how it works.

AMY
Joke, dummy, joke.

She exits.

Aaron sits up in bed and swings his feet around to the floor. He quickly loses his smile and sighs.

EXT. TITAN STUDIOS-DAY

Mercedes, Jaguars and BMWs come in and out of the front gate.

INT. STUDIO BLDG.-DAY

9:12 a.m.

The mail room.

Piles and piles of envelopes.

Jeff's query letter gets thrown onto the top of a basket of mail. A MAIL BOY pulls the basket down the hall.

INT. OFFICE

The area tense and busy. The mail boy swings around the hustle and bustle and drops envelopes as he goes.

He passes a desk and drops Jeff's letter on top of a pile.

At the desk sits a GIRL (#1), an early 20s intern. She stands on a chair and tries to tape a piece of paper over a vigorous air conditioner that blows her hair around.

She sighs, steps down, sits, and grabs Jeff's envelope.

To her side sits a trash can that overflows with letters. Next to that an empty RECYCLING container.

She opens Jeff's envelope and reads.

GIRL #1
Another giant snake? God.

She promptly tosses it in the trash can.

Another GIRL (#2) appears, a clone of Brittany.

GIRL #2
Wanna have a smoke?

GIRL #1
Sure. It gives me that sexy Demi Moore rasp after each cigarette.

They step off as the paper over the air conditioning breaks off.

A gust of air ruffles the trash and Jeff's letter becomes airborne. It flips around in mid-air for a moment, then comes to rest in a near empty basket of letters marked: FORWARD TO B. GARRISON.

A moment later a frazzled assistant, GARY, early 20s, steps up and grabs all the letters in the basket.

INT. OFFICE

Gary rushes to his desk to catch a ringing phone. Behind a door to a spacious office with BRUCE GARRISON: VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT on the door.

GARY
Bruce Garrison's office.

INT. JEFF'S APARTMENT-DAY

9:15

Groggy, Jeff makes his way to the kitchen. The TV flicks on and the morning news bounces off the walls.

NEWSCASTER #1
The President will be returning to
Washington this morning after a
luncheon in his honor at the
Excalibur Hotel...

He checks the coffee machine, and the cabinets, and finds nothing. In the 'fridge, he discovers an old Starbuck's cup with a little coffee inside.

He puts it in the microwave. He eyes a pile of newspapers on the counter. He fishes out the classifieds.

JEFF
Might as well put that college education
to use.

INT. TITAN PICTURES-DAY

The ultra-executive offices.

HARRISON GARRISON, PRESIDENT, on one corner office with double glass smoked doors.

STEVE BLACK and JOHN BLUE, late 20s and suit types, approach and stand before the SECRETARY. She acknowledges them and enters the office.

Black and Blue look nervous.

BLACK

I don't want to do this.

BLUE

It isn't our fault.

BLACK

Let's cut to the chase and fire ourselves.

BLUE

If I fire you, then you can't fire me.

BLACK

We'll do it together.

The Secretary re-appears.

SECRETARY

Go on in.

INT. OFFICE

HARRISON GARRISON, early 50s, imposing, sits behind his giant desk. Various framed posters of bad movies are around the immaculate office.

BLACK

Although Kill Again III has reached four-hundred million worldwide, we have suffered losses on Showgirl Assassin, Siege at Cannery Row, Volcano Revenge and Hamlet.

BLUE

It was probably those John Goodman nude scenes.

Garrison glares at Blue who squirms in his seat.

BLACK

Titan Pictures is presently in the red for 187 million dollars. We need a hit within a year to stay afloat, which means we need to start production on that supposed hit within six weeks.

Garrison glares at the two men--and then suddenly smiles. As he speaks, Harrison opens a cigar box and pulls one out. He lights it up.

HARRISON

Well, we will be "a-okay" with Ultimate Command.

Harrison holds up a script and then puts it down.

HARRISON

I fly out today and meet with the backers in New York. They have 200 million burning a hole in their pocket. This is a sure thing.

Black and Blue trade wary glances. Harrison notices.

INT. OUTER OFFICE

HARRISON (O.C.)

What?

Suddenly the Secretary cringes as a phone crashes through Harrison's glass door from the office.

INT. OFFICE

HARRISON

How did we lose the script? We had an option until the sixth!

BLACK

Someone inverted the numbers on the contract from seven-six to six-seven. July sixth to June seventh. We never noticed. The writer did and brought it over to Warner.

Harrison steams.

HARRISON

Do you have his address?

BLUE

(wary)

Yes?

HARRISON

Good. Then you know where to mail your resume. You're fired!

Black gestures to Blue.

BLACK

Just him?

Harrison just glares at Black, who throws up his hands.

BLACK

Okay.

EXT. OFFICE

Heads bowed, Black and Blue exit.

Harrison follows a moment later and glares at all the gawkers. He leans over, snatches up his phone, and steps back into the office.

EXT. BRUCE GARRISON'S OFFICE-DAY

Gary, work flowing off his desk, rolls his eyes as he hears a muffled female giggle from the other side of the closed door.

INT. BRUCE GARRISON'S OFFICE

BRUCE GARRISON, late 20s and cocky, sits behind his desk with a BUSTY WOMAN on his lap.

BUSTY WOMAN

Tell me about the part again.

BRUCE

You'll play the drop dead gorgeous girlfriend to the handsome professional surfer/international spy.

BUSTY WOMAN

You think I'm drop dead gorgeous?

BRUCE

I'm a vice president. I know these things.

The phone beeps. Bruce becomes agitated before he hits the button on the console.

BRUCE

I said I was in a meeting.

GARY

Sorry but it's your uncle.

Bruce becomes tense.

BRUCE
Put him through.

He hushes the woman. Harrison's voice comes over the speaker phone.

HARRISON (V.O.)
Bruce!

BRUCE
Uncle Harry?

HARRISON (V.O.)
I need a script. We lost Ultimate Command.

BRUCE
Uh. You need a script?

HARRISON (V.O.)
Goddammit! I do a favor for my brother and give you a job and this is what I get! What are you doing down there?

Bruce pushes the woman off his lap and begins to search his desk. He comes across a file marked ACCEPTABLE SCRIPTS. But nothing inside!

BRUCE
Working, sir. Reading scripts.

He pushes past the woman and flings open the front door.

HARRISON (V.O.)
I would guess that, percentage wise, you probably have a couple you are looking at?

BRUCE
Oh. Yes sir.

HARRISON (V.O.)
Then you wouldn't mind regaling me with some log lines, would you?

Bruce grabs the forwarded letters off Gary's desk and rushes back into the office. As he promptly trips, the letters fly out of his hands and find a nest, out of reach, under a file

cabinet. Bruce notices one still in his hand.

BRUCE

Uh. No sir.

He reads the letter without a second thought.

BRUCE

"A giant snake, mutated from a government experiment, makes its way into the White House on the eve of an important international summit."

Bruce winces at this. Silence from the other end of the line.

HARRISON (V.O.)

Huh. Kinda like Godzilla meets White House Down. A Godzilla snake, though. And you like this?

Bruce opens one eye.

BRUCE

Uh. Yes, sir. It captures both movies very well.

HARRISON (V.O.)

As long as it captures the investor's money. Have a copy ready for me before I leave for the airport at one pm. If this doesn't work, then we're all out of a job.

Harrison hangs up. Bruce buries his face in his hands.

INT. JEFF'S APARTMENT-DAY

9:47 glows from the bedside clock.

"Ring!" and Jeff grabs the phone.

JEFF

Hello?

INT. BRUCE GARRISON'S OFFICE

BRUCE

Jeff Aufe or Aaron Whey please.

JEFF

This is Jeff.

BRUCE

Jeff, this is Bruce Garrison, Vice President of Development at Titan Pictures.

Jeff awakens rather quickly.

JEFF

Uh. Hello. Sir.

BRUCE

We received your query letter and would like to read Executive Terror.

JEFF

Oh. Great. Yes sir. We'll drop one in the mail today.

BRUCE

Well, actually, we have a unique situation here. We need a copy in our hands at the studio before one o'clock or we won't be interested.

JEFF

One?

BRUCE

Yes. My boss is flying out to a meeting today. If this works out you'll make a sale by Monday. But if we don't have a script, we don't have any money, and if we don't have any money, you don't have any money. Whatta ya say?

JEFF

We'll be there well before one.

BRUCE

Great.

EXT. BRUCE'S APARTMENT-DAY

Dressed, Bruce bursts out of his apartment, takes a dozen steps in three and sprints down the street.

INT. AARON'S APARTMENT-DAY

9:53 reads an overhead clock.

Aaron, very sad, sits on the couch, dressed in shirt, slacks and tie. He absently flicks TV channels with his remote: talk show, talk show, talk show.

A nice little framed photo of Amy and himself.

Aaron looks closer and, suddenly, a photo of him and a very pregnant Amy in a muu-muu. Her hair in curlers and several dirty kids are around them.

He has to shake his head.

The picture switches back to normal.

EXT. AARON'S APARTMENT

Jeff rounds the corner and sprints across the courtyard.

INT. AARON'S APARTMENT

TV ANNOUNCER

Men who think their lives ended after their girlfriends got pregnant. Coming up on the next Sally O'Malley-Sanchez Show.

Aaron gives this a raised eyebrow.

Jeff bursts through the door as he gasps for air.

AARON

Jeff? What's wrong?

JEFF

I just got a call. We got a read at Titan Pictures.

INT. ROOM

Aaron and Jeff rush into their make-do office. Aaron turns on the computer.

AARON

By one? A little weird.

Jeff smiles.

JEFF

I told you to have faith.

Just then, the conglomeration of cables back fire and burn out. A brief crackle and a puff of smoke comes out of the computer. Dead. Doornail. You get it.

JEFF

Of course.

Aaron tries the power switch. No good.

JEFF

What about the backup disks?

AARON

Back ups? Uh.

JEFF

Of course.

Jeff grabs his head in agitation.

JEFF

The copy shop!

EXT. APARTMENT-DAY

Jeff and Aaron rush out of the apartment.

AARON

I have to be at work at ten-thirty.

JEFF

Are you aware of what's going on?

AARON

Yeah. But this is the first read we've had in the six years we've been writing.

They climb into Aaron's car.

JEFF

More the reason we have to take this seriously. We could be one shot wonders. Zoom, right to the top.

INT. CAR

They drive.

JEFF

You want to sell this, right?

AARON

Well. Uh. Yeah.

JEFF

You seem a bit hesitant. Big money and fame and clout doesn't seem attractive?

AARON

No. But we haven't gotten any of that yet.

JEFF

Yet? God, it's like pulling teeth with you. How do you think dreams are made? Risk. Putting it on the line.

AARON

And what are YOU putting on the line?

They exchange looks.

JEFF

Turn right. It's on the corner.

INT. COPY, OVER AND OUT-DAY

The CLERK (#2) lifts the box of purple-covered manuscripts (like the cover of Jeff and Aaron's screenplay) under the IN basket and hands it to Dave, Colleen's friend and another messenger. The back of Dave's jacket reads ONE SPEEDY MESSENGER.

Outside, the car pulls to the curb and Jeff jumps out, shortly followed by Aaron.

Dave takes the box and walks out as he passes the two come in.

Jeff thrusts the receipt onto the clerk. As the clerk searches for the order, Dave straps the box on the back of his motorcycle.

JEFF

I resent that remark.

AARON

What remark?

JEFF

I risked plenty on this endeavor. I purposely put off a lucrative career in my father's business to concentrate on OUR writing. Well, before he died and all.

AARON

Uh. I guess.

JEFF

Yes. I'm sure you did.

Sure enough, the clerk can't find the script.

CLERK #2

Are you positive you left the order at this shop?

JEFF

Excuse me?

CLERK #2

It's not here.

JEFF

Do you know what that was? I...I... Aaron steps up.

AARON

We left it here.

CLERK #2

What was it?

AARON

A screenplay. Three hole paper. Purple cover.

The clerk's eyes widen. He looks at the IN basket and the area the box was just in.

CLERK #2

You know, it might of fallen into his box.

JEFF

Whose box?

CLERK #2

That guy.

He points and Jeff and Aaron watch as Dave pulls away. Just then, another car parks behind Aaron's car.

Jeff runs out.

EXT. COPY, OVER AND OUT

Dave disappears down the boulevard.

Their car blocked-in by the new vehicle. The DRIVER sits on a cel phone. Aaron appears.

JEFF

Hey, partner. Please?

Jeff gestures to the imprisoned auto.

DRIVER

In a minute. Driving on a cel is not allowed.

Jeff stunned. He sees Dave get smaller and smaller.

JEFF

Are you a natural asshole, or do you have to work at it?

The driver just turns away.

JEFF

(to Aaron)

Follow me when jerk-off moves.

With that, Jeff runs off after the messenger.

AARON

I...

Aaron gestures to his watch and then studies the parking situation.

EXT. STREET

Jeff bobs and weaves through the pedestrian traffic. He gains on Dave a little. But then the messenger turns a corner!

EXT. BOULEVARD

Colleen comes out of a business building with several manila envelopes. She has on her LIGHTNING MESSENGER t-shirt.

Dave turns the corner and she waves before the bike speeds away.

Jeff appears, collides into Colleen and the two land on the pavement. Get to their feet as their eyes finally meet.

A moment. A cautious fixation.

Then Colleen's look turns bitter as Jeff's eyes find Dave's bike in the distance as it disappears around another corner.

COLLEEN

Late for a kegger?

A look over her head.

JEFF

Dammit!

Colleen shrugs and collects the manila envelopes.

COLLEEN

That's okay. Don't apologize.

Jeff picks up one of the envelopes as she faces him. Another moment.

JEFF

Yeah. Uh. I'm sorry.

COLLEEN

No, please, don't. It ruins the fantasy I have about guys like you.

JEFF

Look, I said I was sorry.

Aaron turns the corner in the car, stops, distracts Jeff.

JEFF

(to Aaron)

I lost him. What did his jacket say?

AARON

Speedy messenger? Something like that.

COLLEEN

Are you looking for the guy on the bike?

JEFF

Yeah.

COLLEEN

(wary)

Why?

JEFF

Do you know him?

AARON

He picked up something by mistake that belongs to us.

JEFF

Please. We're harmless. We're screenwriters.

AARON

Yeah. It's our script.

JEFF

A sale hangs in the balance.

Looks both over, a little curious.

COLLEEN

Uh. I think he does a daily pick-up at First Western Bank on Third. He was headed in that direction.

JEFF

Thank you!

Jeff kisses her on the cheek. Both are taken aback for a moment before they snap out of it.

JEFF

(to Aaron)

Let's roll, partner.

COLLEEN

Uh?

They jump into the car.

EXT. FIRST WESTERN BANK

Dave pulls into the parking lot, climbs off the bike and eyes a homeless man rummage through a nearby trash bin. He cautiously takes the box of purple manuscripts into the bank.

INT. CAR

Aaron looks at his watch: 10:11.

AARON

If we don't find this guy, then you're on your own. I'm going to be late.

JEFF

Yes, sir. Mister Domestic, sir.

AARON

Why do you gotta do that? Why do you resent Amy so much?

Jeff gives Aaron a hard look and then turns away.

JEFF

(half-heartedly)
I don't hate her.

AARON

I can't be like you with all those women.
(resolute but strained)
She's the best thing that's ever happened to me.

JEFF

The turn's right there.

EXT. FIRST WESTERN BANK

The car pulls into a space and Aaron and Jeff jump out. A moment later a bottled water truck pulls in and blocks the car.

AARON

I...

Jeff continues in and Aaron follows him.

INT. FIRST WESTERN BANK

They enter and find Dave at the end of the line for a teller. He has the box in his hands.

JEFF

Oh great.

DAVE

Huh?

JEFF

You have our script in there.

Jeff reaches for the box and Dave pulls away.

DAVE

Who are you guys?

Aaron holds Jeff back.

AARON

Sorry. Back at the copy shop, our screenplay dropped into that box. It's on top there.

Aaron gestures to the box.

AARON

Right on top.

Dave slowly picks up the script and reads the cover.

DAVE

Executive Terror?

JEFF

That's the one. I'm Jeff. He's Aaron. See. Right on top there.

Jeff gestures to the screenplay.

DAVE

Well. I guess.

Jeff smiles and reaches out his hand. Dave begins to pass the script over. A white van pulls up to the door behind the messenger. The door opposite where Aaron and Jeff entered.

SEVERAL MEN, in heavy black clothes, exit the van and enter the bank. Everyone led by Larry (the ox from the video store). The others are JON, TONY and MIKE, all goons.

As Jeff's fingers touch the cover, guns appear in the men's hands. Aaron's eyes widen.

LARRY

Everyone get down! This is a robbery!

A shot rings out. Screams.

Larry pushes Dave and he drops the box. The screenplay and the other manuscripts scatter across the floor.

JON

Get down! Get down!

Everyone hits the deck.

The two writers on the ground. Jeff eyes the stream of purple covers across the room.

Tony leaps the counter and begins to shovel money into a bag.

Aaron notices Jeff fidget around.

AARON

(whisper)

Stay still. They'll leave.

Larry stands over them and pushes the muzzle of the rifle into Jeff's back.

LARRY

Shut up or die!

JON

(to Tony)

Let's go!

Tony finishes the last teller window and leaps over the counter without sealing the duffle. Sure enough, he slips and the bag dumps over the floor and over the purple-covered script. Jeff bites his tongue.

LARRY

You idiot!

Mike helps the bag-man shovel the money and, by accident, the script into the duffel. Jeff bites his tongue.

LARRY

Hurry up!

The money into the bag and run out.

LARRY

Let's go.

The bad guys rush out to the waiting white van. It peels away.

Jeff on his feet again.

JEFF

Let's go.

AARON

Are you crazy. I'm not risking my life over this.

Jeff glares at his partner.

JEFF

That script is my life.

With that, he runs out the door and after the van.

Sirens in the distance. The water truck seen through the doorway blocks their car.

Aaron has a dilemma on his hands and it shows in his expression.

A moment later he bursts out of the bank and after his friend.

THEIR EXIT

caught on a bank surveillance camera.

EXT. STREET

He sees Jeff scamper out of sight.

AARON

Shit.

Aaron breaks into a run.

INT. VAN

The robbers take off the masks and rejoice in their new fortune.

In the distance through the back window appears Jeff, unnoticed.

EXT. STREET

The van reaches a stoplight as Jeff takes cover behind a car. With huffs and puffs, Aaron reaches him.

AARON

What do you think you're doing?

JEFF

Keeping tabs on them.

AARON

A little hard to have a car chase on foot, don't you think?

JEFF

(matter-of-factly)

This is L.A., dummy. Ever hear of traffic?

The light turns green and their prey makes a right.

Jeff spots a parallel alley.

JEFF

Come on.

Mister Jeff "Piss and Vinegar" takes off as Aaron rolls his eyes and shortly follows.

EXT. STREET

The van inches through traffic.

INT. VAN

JON

(to driver)

Can't you go any faster?

LARRY

This is L.A., dummy. Ever hear of traffic?

INT. ALLEY

Jeff and Aaron side-step all the debris and delivery trucks. Aaron not too well.

EXT. STREET

The van finds a patch of clear traffic and speeds ahead as the two writers burst out of the alley. They see their disappearing futures.

JEFF

God dammit! God dammit! God dammit!

INT. CAR

A car slowly drives toward Aaron and Jeff. The radio plays the news.

NEWSCASTER

The President will be attending a luncheon this afternoon before boarding Air Force One back to Washington. The President is...

The driver shuts off the radio.

EXT. STREET

COLLEEN (O.C.)

Hey!

The two boys turn to see Colleen in a beat-up sedan.

COLLEEN

You find what you were looking for?

Jeff and Aaron look at each other.

JEFF

You gotta help us.

COLLEEN

What?

JEFF

Some guys robbed the bank and made off
with our script. They're in that van.

The van WAY in the distance.

COLLEEN

Uh. What kind of movie script is it?

They look at each other.

AARON

Action.

COLLEEN

Get in!

They pile into the car and Colleen promptly does a 180 in a
hail of squealing tires.

INT. CAR

The two boys hang on for dear life.

Jeff, in the back seat, notices an array of equipment: a
parachute, bungee cord, sparring gloves, nunchakus.

COLLEEN

It's the white van?

AARON

Yeah. You know, we should actually call
the police.

JEFF

No! They have to have a hideout or
something. We'll call then. Someone
jumps out now and they change cars
and it's all for nothing.

COLLEEN

Didn't you write it on a computer?

AARON

Uh. Yeah?

COLLEEN

Don't you have a backup of your stuff?

JEFF

I thought we did.

AARON

No! You're not going to blame this on me!

JEFF

I wasn't the one who blew up all our work.

AARON

You're also the one who didn't type all our work. You'd just babble on about some stupid story or dumb character. I had to sit there and work it all out on paper.

Jeff holds up two fingers "a-la" quotation marks every time he accentuates something.

JEFF

Yeah. Well, if it wasn't for my "babbling", you'd be watching "Wheel of Fortune" every night with your "wife" instead of writing "stupid stories" that will probably make us rich!

COLLEEN

Do you have to do that finger thing? My grampa does that.

AARON

She's not my wife yet and she's ten times better than those silicone storage centers you call girlfriends.

COLLEEN

All right already!

They quiet.

COLLEEN

So this sale is a sure thing?

AARON

Well...

JEFF

...absolutely!

COLLEEN

So, maybe you'll need a stunt coordinator when it does get made? Being an action picture and all.

The boys curiously look at her and then at the pile of equipment in the back seat.

JEFF

You?

COLLEEN

Yeah. Me. I am helping you, right?

AARON

Uh. Yeah?

COLLEEN

That's how this town works, right?

JEFF

I guess.

AARON

We wouldn't know from experience.

COLLEEN

I've graduated stunt school and did stunts in "Kid Squad" and "Little Guys with Guns". I know what needs to be done.

AARON

Kids' movies?

Colleen gives him the evil eye. He sinks into the seat. Jeff leans forward and studies her.

JEFF

I don't mean to be rude but, aren't you a little short for a stunt woman?

The van takes a right.

Anger criss-crosses Colleen's face. She yanks the wheel hard and Jeff tumbles to the side. "Smack" goes his head on the door.

Colleen matter-of-factly glances to the back seat as Jeff massages his cranium.

COLLEEN

First rule of safety. Fasten your seat belt.

Aaron smiles to himself.

EXT. STREET

The van starts through a progressively deserted and run down area. It turns another corner. The sedan slows down.

INT. SEDAN

JEFF

What are you doing?

COLLEEN

There's no traffic and they'll see us. Besides, I think they're going to the deserted cannery around the corner.

They look at the woman.

AARON

Sounds logical.

JEFF

(to Aaron)

Logical? What're you? Spock?

INT. TITAN STUDIOS-EXECUTIVE BUILDING-DAY

Bruce Garrison comes out of the restroom as he pulls up his zipper. His attention focuses on his groin area which has a spatter of water. He brushes and rubs the area.

Two women turn the corner and hesitate at the sight before them. Bruce shrugs and tries to look nonchalant.

BRUCE

It's, uh...I was...carry on.

Bruce rushes away.

GARY

on the phone as Bruce approaches.

GARY
Yes. I will. Yes sir.

Gary hangs up.

GARY
That was just...

BRUCE
Any word from those writers?

GARY
No but...

BRUCE
Did you call them?

GARY
You didn't tell...

BRUCE
...I have to hold your hand all day long?
I've got things to do. I've got this
studio to run!

GARY
Your uncle?

BRUCE
What relevance does he have to what I'm
talking about?

GARY
None. But he's coming down here to
(recites)
"take the script out of your idiot hands
before you fuck up and set it on fire."
Or something like that.

Gary smiles. Bruce stunned.

BRUCE
He's coming now?

Gary shakes his head "yes". Pause.

BRUCE
I. Uh. Gotta go. Over there.

Bruce takes off into a run through the office.

EXT. STREET-DAY

Jeff steps out of the car and peers around the corner.

Sure enough, the van pulls to the gate of a giant dinosaur of a building. One of the bad guys jumps out, opens the gate and lets the van pull up. He closes it up and leaps back in. The van pulls out of sight behind the building.

Jeff crosses back to the car.

JEFF

Okay. It is their hide-out.

(to Aaron)

Why don't we just call the cops?

AARON

I ran out without my phone.

JEFF

Me, too.

They look to Colleen. After a moment she checks her pocket and produces a phone.

COLLEEN

Dead battery!

Aaron steps out and reaches into his pocket. He counts his change.

AARON

I've only got twelve cents.

Jeff rolls his eyes.

JEFF

911. You don't need change.

AARON

Oh!

JEFF

Now go. Fast.

Aaron rushes off around another corner. Jeff intently eyes the cannery. Colleen comes over, too.

COLLEEN

What're they doing?

Jeff squints at the building in the distance.

JEFF

I don't know. It's too far.

She nods matter-of-factly.

COLLEEN

Then maybe these will help.

Binoculars appear in her hand. Stunned, he looks at her and then the glasses. Colleen smiles.

COLLEEN

Go on.

He takes the binoculars and gives her another befuddled look.

INT. TITAN STUDIOS-EXECUTIVE OFFICES-DAY

Harrison Garrison charges through and up to Gary.

GARY

Mr. Garrison.

HARRISON

Where is that piss ant little shit for brains?

GARY

Let's see.

Gary, hand to chin, looks over the office.

GARY

I think I saw him go back towards the coffee room.

Sure enough, he points in the direction where Bruce went. Harrison charges off.

BRUCE

ducks behind the cubicle of a WORKER.

BRUCE

Act natural if you know what's good for you.

HARRISON

Bruce! Bruce!

Harrison passes and Bruce slips out behind him. The younger Garrison ducks through a door.

INT. COPY ROOM

Bruce closes the door and finds himself with no way out.

OLD MAN HARRISON

looks around the area and settles on the copy room. He begins to charge forward. Steps before the door, Gary slips in front of him.

GARY

You know, Mr. Garrison. It's my stupidity. I sent that script out to be copied because the copier was broken and plum forgot. Bruce chewed me out like he should and personally went to the copy shop to pick it up for you. He said he would be back right away. This is top priority to him.

The old man eyes the young butt smoocher.

HARRISON

Well...alright. Just tell the little shit to have it in my hands before I step into my limo at one o'clock.

Harrison turns and exits. After a moment Bruce appears and eyes the kid.

BRUCE

You've really got a future in this business.

GARY

I'll have your job someday.

BRUCE

All right, you've had your fun. Get back to work.

EXT. SIDE STREET-DAY

Aaron comes around a corner. He finds a pay phone. He picks

it up and the cord comes out with it.

INT. CANNERY

The bank robbers unload from the van and step over to several other cars. They begin to change their clothes and divide the money as they pop beers and high five each other. Guns everywhere.

EXT. SIDE STREET

A fat man steps from a now revealed phone booth. Aaron rushes over and dials 911. The emergency OPERATOR answers.

OPERATOR

911. What's the emergency?

AARON

Yeah. There was a robbery at First Western Bank about fifteen minutes ago?

OPERATOR

Do you have any information?

AARON

They're hiding in the old cannery located on Davenport. We followed them there.

OPERATOR

Don't do anything. We have units on the way.

AARON

Okay. Thank you.

Hangs up. Another dime sits on the ground.

EXT. STREET

Colleen looks taken aback.

COLLEEN

A giant snake?

JEFF

Yes.

COLLEEN

In the White House?

JEFF

Yeah. Great, huh?

She gives him a very sincere smile.

COLLEEN

I like it.

INT. O'FLAHERTY RESTAURANT SUPPLY-DAY

The accounting office.

Amy sits at her desk. The phone rings.

AMY

This is Amy?

EXT. SIDE STREET

Aaron on the phone.

AARON

Amy, it's me.

AMY

It's ten thirty-six and you're not here.
What's wrong?

AARON

I'll be there. I just had a problem. With
the car.

AMY

What's wrong?

AARON

I don't know. The car just stopped. I'm
waiting for the tow truck. Will you talk
to him?

AMY

Daddy?

Aaron winces at that word.

AARON

Yes. Daddy.

She sighs.

AMY

Yeah. I guess. How long will you be?

AARON

About an hour. Maybe an hour and a half.
Amy?

AMY

Yes?

Pause. Aaron has a quick flash.

INT. HOUSE-DAYDREAM

Pot-bellied and ten years older, Aaron sits on a recliner with tie undone. The place a mess and six kids run around like wild dogs.

EXT. SIDE STREET

Aaron shakes off the image.

AARON

I'll be there.

AMY

I know.

AARON

Bye.

EXT. SIDE STREET

Aaron hangs up.

EXT. STREET

Jeff pulls the binoculars from his eyes.

JEFF

Dammit.

COLLEEN

What?

JEFF

In the movie "Thief Story", the bank robbers went to a warehouse long enough to change clothes and pick up alternate cars.

COLLEEN

Yeah. And that was based on a true story.

Again, Jeff surprised.

JEFF

Yes. You like action movies?

COLLEEN

No. I wanna be a stunt woman from all the Woody Allen flicks I've seen.

Jeff a bit flustered.

JEFF

I just never met a girl, uh--woman-- who liked action.

They have yet another moment. Colleen snaps out of it.

COLLEEN

You think they'll leave before the cops get here?

An awkward resolution comes over Jeff.

JEFF

I can't take that chance. I've gotta go in.

COLLEEN

I agree.

JEFF

You do?

COLLEEN

(sarcastic)

No!

JEFF

If the cops get here in time, the script'll get put into evidence or something. If they don't, these assholes'll take it. Either way, I'm screwed.

COLLEEN

But...

JEFF

You want to be the stunt coordinator,
right?

COLLEEN

Yeah.

Jeff uncomfortable with this decision.

JEFF

Then just keep an eye out.

COLLEEN

For what?

JEFF

For... whatever needs an eye...kept
out for it.

Jeff awkwardly inches out to the street and toward the fence
of the cannery.

He finds a hole and tries to squeeze through but, of course,
gets himself tangled in the process. He pulls free, crouches
down stupidly and runs across to the building.

"What to do?" paints Colleen's face.

EXT. CANNERY

Jeff sneaks through a back doorway. Behind and below sits a
freeway off-ramp.

EXT. STREET

COLLEEN

This is stupid. But a good opportunity.
But stupid. But in a good way.

Aaron appears.

AARON

Where's Jeff?

COLLEEN

Uh...

The words get caught in her throat. She smiles nervously.

AARON

No!

He looks to the cannery.

AARON

Why didn't you stop him?

COLLEEN

It's a free country?

AARON

But he's a moron. MOST people figure that out in the first five minutes.

COLLEEN

I tried to talk him out of it?

AARON

No. He's going to get himself killed and haunt me for the rest of my life. I don't need the hassle.

Aaron retraces Jeff's steps with the same style and subtlety.

COLLEEN

But...

She watches as Aaron disappears behind the building.

COLLEEN

They're going to get themselves killed and cheat me out of this job. No way!

She crosses to the car.

INT. CANNERY

Jeff watches helplessly from a side room as the bad guys count out the loot.

Larry finds the script in the empty duffel bag.

LARRY

What's this?

Jeff bites his tongue.

Tony steps up and takes the script.

TONY

It's a screenplay.

Larry doesn't understand.

TONY

For the movies?

Tony looks it over.

TONY

"Executive Terror". Good title. You know, I was going to be a film producer once. I took a class.

Larry grabs the script and throws it across the room and behind their backs.

TONY

Hey!

LARRY

You wanna stick to your present career?
A robber of banks?

Jeff eyes the script and the close proximity of the guys with the guns. Heaps of trash and such litter the area between him and the prize.

He takes a deep breath, slowly opens the door and slips out. His eyes intent as he takes a step. And another. And another.

TONY

Whatcha gonna do with your share?

MIKE

I was thinking of opening a nice little yogurt shop in the Valley.

TONY

Yeah. Everyone likes yogurt.

MIKE

But low fat. Kids eat enough junk as it is.

TONY

Statistics say that most kids are overweight.

LARRY

Would you please shut up!

Mike turns around!

Jeff ducks behind a crate as the hood grabs another beer.

The writer's expression shows his wired nerves. The goon turns back.

Jeff crawls on all fours toward the purple book. He carefully side steps a loose board and a crumpled newspaper before he gets his hands on the script.

He loses track of his foot for a moment and it finds an old soda can, "CR-INK!"

"CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!" go the automatic rifles.

JEFF

Don't shoot. Don't shoot.

Jeff slowly stands with his hands (one holds the script) over his head.

LARRY

Who the hell are you?

JEFF

We had a little mix up at the bank. This is mine. Of course, that money there is yours. And being that I suffer from attention deficit disorder, there is no way that I'll remember your faces. So I'll be going now.

He takes one step. "CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!"

JEFF

Sure, I can stay for a while.

Police sirens punch through the walls. The bank robbers turn toward the sound behind them. Jeff takes this moment to duck into a side door as Larry pulls off a few rounds.

MIKE

It's the cops!

LARRY

And that guy led them to us! I'm gonna
kill him.

INT. STAIRWELL

Not the door to pick: windowless with a staircase that leads
to the upper floors. Jeff scampers up.

EXT. CANNERY

Police everywhere. A LIEUTENANT has a bullhorn.

LIEUTENANT

This is the police! Anyone inside come
out with your hands up!

INT. CANNERY-1ST FLOOR

MIKE

Don't come in! We have hostages!

Tony looks at him and Mike shrugs.

MIKE

What?

2ND FLOOR

Wide-eyed, Jeff stumbles inside and looks around.

Piles of old boxes and pieces of equipment scattered about.
Big rotating windows line the walls. He crosses to a window
and finds the drop way too high.

Footsteps!

He swings around to a hiding place as Larry enters, his eyes
and trigger finger intent.

"Creak, creak" goes the wood floor under the footsteps of
the gunman.

LARRY

Come on out, boy. I ain't gonna hurt you.

Jeff breaths hard. He realizes the noise and clamps a hand
over his own mouth.

EXT. CANNERY

TV news trucks now show up. A ridiculously beautiful reporter, KATHERINE GUTIERREZ drags her CAMERAMAN along.

KATHERINE

I heard that two guys went after the gunmen on foot. The bank's got tape of them.

INT. CANNERY

Larry creeps around the area.

LARRY

Come out. Just be our hostage. You won't get hurt.

Jeff hears creaking boards in front of him. He inches back-- and right into the muzzle of the goon's gun. With a wince, the writer turns around with his hands up.

LARRY

You little shit. How'd you find us?

Behind the man appears Aaron from another doorway. He inches closer. Jeff's eyes widen before he turns stupidly serious.

JEFF

Don't you know?

LARRY

What the hell you talkin' about?

Aaron side steps a pile of trash. He realizes he has no weapon and grabs a nearby crowbar.

JEFF

Seems a guy as smart as you would of figured it out by now.

Larry applies a little pressure on the trigger and on his teeth.

LARRY

Maybe you should fill me in.

Aaron steps on a loose board. Jeff quickly slams his foot down.

JEFF

Sorry. Charlie horse.

LARRY

Talk!

JEFF

You have a rat in your little squad.

The slide of the gun pulls back.

LARRY

Really? Who?

Jeff loses his cockiness. Aaron very close now.

JEFF

Who?

Aaron raises his weapon as he steps on another loose board. Larry whips around with the gun in the pipsqueak's face. Jeff drops the script, leaps forward and grabs the gun.

They struggle around, slam into this and that, but the big bastard won't let go!

All three collapse and the weapon skirts across the floor. Dazed, the two writers get their bearings as Larry looms over them.

LARRY

You boys are gonna die.

COLLEEN (O.C.)

Hey!

The bad guy whips around and gets a chunk of wood across the head for his trouble. He drops and Colleen appears. Both boys look at each other, stunned.

Jeff scurries over to the rifle and points it at the unconscious monster. Aaron finds the scuffed manuscript.

COLLEEN

(to Jeff)

What did you say to that guy? Wasn't it from "Tangled Web of Bullets"?

Yet again, Jeff pleasantly startled.

JEFF

Yeah.

Aaron grabs a piece of cable and ties the bank robber's hands behind his back.

AARON

Where'd you come from?

COLLEEN

There's a side road. I parked there.

She crosses to the window.

COLLEEN

I lassoed the roof and climbed up.

Sure enough, a rope hangs down. Again, Jeff and Aaron look at each other.

AARON

Good job.

(to Jeff)

You wanna be careful with that?

Aaron gestures to the gun in his hand.

JEFF

(insistent)

I think I know how to use a gun.

Of course, Jeff gets too casual and the gun goes off. A short burst of rounds bounce around the area as Colleen and Aaron duck for cover.

EXT. CANNERY

The Lieutenant hears the faint gunfire and crouches down.

INT. CANNERY

Jon hears the gunfire.

JON

They're firing on us!

INT. 2ND FLOOR

Jeff embarrassed.

JEFF

Sorry?

Aaron angrily crosses and rips the gun out of his hands.

EXT. CANNERY

LIEUTENANT

They're firing on us!

And the accidental fire fight commences as bullets shear through the structure.

INT. CANNERY-2ND FLOOR

All three crouch down as the occasional stray bullet finds their area.

COLLEEN

Why don't we get outta here.

They rush to the window and begin to climb down.

EXT. CANNERY-BACK

Colleen easily scales down, then a haphazard Jeff. Aaron tucks the script in his back pocket and begins to descend.

EXT. CANNERY-FRONT

The gunfire dissipates and replaced by brief silence.

EXT. CANNERY-BACK

The script inches its way out of Aaron's pocket and Jeff watches as it sails across the sky and seemingly right over the chain-link fence.

JEFF

No!

It bounces off the edge of the fence that leads down to the freeway off-ramp and lands safely on the cannery side.

Jeff breathes a sign of relief and steps forward. He absently kicks a piece of wood that slides across the ground, hits the script and sends it under the fence and over the concrete embankment.

He watches in horror as the purple manuscript skips down and

conveniently lands in the back of a convertible car that pulls up for a moment.

The driver, George (from the bar), doesn't notice as the script plunges into the narrow area between the convertible and the back seat...

JEFF

Hey! Stop!

...and doesn't hear them over the music that pumps out of the car next to him. The rag-top pulls away and stops at another light.

Aaron surveys the situation.

EXT. CANNERY-FRONT

The Lieutenant turns to one of the OFFICERS.

LIEUTENANT

What's the status in back?

OFFICER

In back?

The Lieutenant rolls his eyes.

LIEUTENANT

Don't you think that coverage in the back would be a good idea?

OFFICER

Yes sir.

LIEUTENANT

Then get to it!

EXT. CANNERY-BACK

AARON

(to Colleen)

Can you get down there with the car?

COLLEEN

Yeah. There's a dirt road.

AARON

Go.

Colleen rushes off as Aaron squeezes through a hole in the fence. Jeff follows.

INT. CANNERY

Jon checks the nearby truck. He finds nothing.

JON

No ammo? Who was supposed to bring
ammo?

Tony cautiously raises his hand.

JON

You are really a lousy bank robber.

MIKE

Maybe we can sneak out back.

The men rush to the rear.

EXT. DIRT ROAD

Colleen crashes through another chain-link fence and careens out to the street.

EXT. STREET

Jeff and Aaron run toward the convertible, but the light turns green and the car speeds up and around a corner. They slow and then stop, beat with fatigue and exhaustion.

EXT. CANNERY-BACK

The bank robbers come out the back and a throng of cops and SWAT immediately pounce upon by them.

EXT. STREET

AARON

Dammit! You had to kick it into the
street?

JEFF

What's gotten into you? I thought you
wanted to get to your little job and
your little girlfriend.

AARON

Look, just because you can't keep a relationship going past two weeks...

JEFF

...by choice! Who needs all those "restrictions"?

AARON

Not you, Mister Perfect! Someone even half as great as Amy would be more than you'll ever deserve!

JEFF

Don't get fooled, brother. Your little girlfriend isn't as angelic as you think.

This stops the interchange like a train wreck. Jeff realizes he has gone too far as Aaron possesses an intent expression.

AARON

Excuse me?

JEFF

Never mind. Sorry.

AARON

(matter-of-factly)

No. Really. I'm curious.

Well, a little late for him to get out of this now.

JEFF

Uh. Before you two met. I knew Amy.

AARON

Oh really! I was led to believe that you two were, what? Strangers?

JEFF

We had this short "thing". Before you two met. We thought it best you didn't know.

Aaron smiles as he inches closer to Jeff, who back up as he does.

AARON

Would this "thing" be sexual in nature?

Jeff winces.

JEFF

Kinda?

AARON

Well, I'm glad you told me. Thank you.

Jeff relaxes.

JEFF

You are?

AARON

Yes I am. And by the way.

"Smack"! goes his fist against Jeff's jaw. Aaron shakes it in pain.

AARON

What is she? Your leftovers? "Poor shy Aaron! I think I'll throw him a bone!"

Aaron picks up Jeff, whose nose runneth over with blood, and slams him against a wall.

Colleen arrives, leaps out and tries to break them apart.

COLLEEN

All right! That's enough!

She gets caught in the middle of the haphazard wrestling.

AARON

Everything just comes to you! Everything is oh so easy! Women! School! Money from your daddy!

With that, Jeff lunges forward and pushes Aaron up against a mail box.

JEFF

There was never any real money.

Aaron startled by this.

AARON

What?

JEFF

I've got eighty dollars in the bank.

Over the two Colleen sees the convertible come back to the corner and wait at a light.

COLLEEN

Uh. Guys?

JEFF

A little chink in my armor.

Colleen presses between the two.

COLLEEN

Could you finish this when we get your script back?

They see the convertible drive away and are instantly to her sedan.

INT. SEDAN

They keep sight of the convertible but can't seem to get close.

JEFF

Don't lose him.

She gives him the evil eye.

JEFF

What?

COLLEEN

Should I explain it to you?

EXT. CANNERY-DAY

The cops bring out the bank robbers, and Larry, as the TV news shoots away.

LARRY

I'll kill those two little bastards if I get my hands on them!

Katherine and cameraman look at each other.

KATHERINE

The two from the bank.

EXT. STREET

11:02 on the little clock glued to the dashboard.

The sedan follows the convertible. The traffic thick.

First, Colleen gets caught behind a school bus. She weaves around that and then caught behind an ambulance. With frustration they keep an eye on the convertible.

INT. SEDAN

Jeff tends to his nose with a t-shirt.

COLLEEN

Hey! I paid six dollars for that.

JEFF

Fashion. That's all you women care about?

She gives him a nasty look and then returns to the traffic.

COLLEEN

Why were you guys fighting anyway? I thought you were partners.

AARON

Funny how life is, huh? Wanna know about my partner? My best friend?

JEFF

Blah, blah, blah.

COLLEEN

I really don't.

AARON

He slept with my girlfriend...

JEFF

...BEFORE they met!...

AARON

...AND he's a liar.

JEFF

I didn't lie about that!

AARON

You said you inherited one-hundred and twelve-thousand dollars from your dad.

JEFF

Well, I exaggerated!

AARON

Really? By how much?

JEFF

Ninety-eight thousand.

AARON

No, that's a lie.

COLLEEN

(to Aaron)

You're kinda splitting hairs.

AARON

Sure, take his side.

JEFF

(to Colleen)

Thank you.

(to Aaron)

And what do you care?

AARON

How do I know that you haven't lied about anything else? Besides, why would you lie about that?

JEFF

Maybe I didn't want to say "by the way my father worked twelve hour days for all his life to build up his business only to lose it all on a bad deal." That a good reason?

Aaron hesitates.

JEFF

By the way, why are you so enamored with my life? Maybe it's because you don't have one of your own?

A shrug.

AARON

I have a life.

Up ahead the convertible pulls into a parking structure attached to a sprawling shopping mall.

COLLEEN

I think we can catch him.

EXT. STREET

The sedan disappears into the structure.

INT. SEDAN

The lot full of cars that wait for parking spaces. Colleen pulls into a No Parking area.

COLLEEN

Come on, boys. We can cover more ground on foot.

They jump out of the car.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE

The two argue as they follow Colleen up the ramp.

AARON

I do have a life. Beautiful girlfriend. Beautiful child on the way. A promising career.

JEFF

No, what you have is somebody else's life. You want what I want: excitement, flash, fame, fortune and lots of gorgeous women.

COLLEEN

That's poetic but can we keep to the task at hand?

Brief pause.

JEFF

But you have...

COLLEEN

I didn't think so.

JEFF

...to compromise with this little Beaver
Clever thing.

The two face off.

COLLEEN

Look, fellas, could you save the mid-
life crisis for later? You need my
help on this, but I can't do it alone.

In the corner of her eyes and across the intersecting
levels, Colleen sees the convertible pull into a parking
space.

George, the driver, steps out and locks the door. The top
now up.

COLLEEN

There it is!

They tear across the lot toward the man.

INT. ELECTRONIC SHOP

A bored SALESPERSON in an empty shop.

He picks up a video camera hooked to monitors around the
store. He begins to creep around.

SALESPERSON

Jack Gabbon, live on the scene of
breaking news.

INT. MALL

COLLEEN

Sir! Sir! Sir!

They reach George. Aaron, by his expression, the first to
notice that this man is a bit skittish and in a rumpled suit
and tie.

COLLEEN

This is going to sound a little strange...

JEFF

...but it's very true...

COLLEEN

...yes. You have our screenplay in your car, behind the seat.

George checks his watch.

JEFF

It fell there from above when you were driving off the freeway.

GEORGE

No. No it didn't.

He tries to walk away but Jeff heads him off.

JEFF

That white convertible is yours, right?

GEORGE

No. It's not mine.

AARON

Maybe we should...

George tries to get away again and Jeff stops him again.

JEFF

Listen, it's really important. If you don't open it, we'll break in.

AARON

No, we...

With that a huge 9mm appears in George's hand. The muzzle finds its way to Jeff's temple. People all around them scream and scatter for cover.

INT. ELECTRONICS STORE

The salesperson scrambles behind a display but manages to keep the video camera rolling on the incident at hand.

INT. MALL

In George's other hand sits a small box with one button. About a dozen people cower nearby, unable to get away.

AARON

Aw jeeze!

GEORGE

Don't move! I'll blow us all up!

COLLEEN

Now take it easy, partner.

GEORGE

Who are you? How did you know?

JEFF

Know?

GEORGE

Don't toy with me! How did you know I loaded my car with explosives and was planning to blow up this mall?

Pause. They all exchange puzzled glances.

COLLEEN

Uh? I think you know.

GEORGE

Her. But how did she know?

COLLEEN

Like all women know.

GEORGE

Well, she's going to pay for leaving me for another man.

(mocking)

"George, I want this dress. George, I want that necklace." I'm just an engineer but I loved her. But no, she needed more! How's she going to spend his money now when all the stores are in a heap of rubble?

His thumb gets closer to the button in his palm. Colleen eyes a poster in the window of a video store for "The Revenge Killer." Her eyes shoot back on the crazy man.

COLLEEN

You're right, George!

He hesitates.

COLLEEN

I know how you feel. We all need a little love, a little companionship, somebody who understands us.

The mad bomber's expression softens.

COLLEEN

And it hurts when you lose it. There's an emptiness. A hurt that you don't think will ever go away. I've felt it, George. I have.

She begins to slowly step forward. Even the others intently listen to her.

COLLEEN

But you can love again. You can have it again like I've found with this man here.

She touches Jeff, who also falls for it.

COLLEEN

I didn't know how much until now, George. I was scared to love again, afraid of being hurt. But I know now that I've found the man that I want to spend the rest of my life with.

Colleen gropes for Jeff's hand.

COLLEEN

You don't want to hurt anybody, George. If you hurt us, you hurt love. You kill our love. A true love. Is that fair, George? Is that fair?

A tense pause. George breaks down to tears and drops to his knees as Colleen grabs the gun and Jeff grabs the detonator. They breath a sigh of relief. The crowd breaths a sigh of relief. Jeff looks longingly at Colleen.

JEFF

What you said. It was...

COLLEEN

"The Revenge Killer". You ever see it?

Colleen gestures to the video store and the poster in the

window.

JEFF

Uh. Yeah?

COLLEEN

I gave him the speech from the end.
Remember?

JEFF

Oh yeah!

They realize that they still hold hands. Self consciously they pull away.

AARON

We should wait for the bomb squad.

GEORGE

(through tears)
It won't do any good.

All three look at him.

AARON

Excuse me?

GEORGE

It's on an irreversible timer. There's
about ten minutes left.

The crowd gasps and disperses in a panicked rush.

Aaron and Jeff just shake their heads as Colleen smiles at George.

COLLEEN

George, can I please have the keys?

The little man hands them over.

COLLEEN

Thank you.

With that, she slugs him, turns and walks toward the convertible.

JEFF

Uh, strange as it may seem I agree with
my friend.

AARON

Former friend.

JEFF

We should wait for the bomb squad.

COLLEEN

There's no time. There's a children's hospital on the one side of this place...

EXT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Right there. Kids everywhere.

INT. MALL

COLLEEN

...and a retirement home on the other.

EXT. RETIREMENT HOME

Whatta ya know! A retirement home! Old folks wheel, hobble and shuffle by.

INT. MALL

AARON

Of course there is.

They reach the convertible and Colleen opens the trunk. Sure enough, a big metal cylinder bolted to the trunk and it counts down from 6:37.

JEFF

What is that?

She slams the door.

COLLEEN

Something we have to get out of here.

AARON

We?

She opens the door.

COLLEEN

Then get your script but make it fast.

The engine roars to life as the rag top lowers. Aaron looks

between the boot and the seat. He thrusts his arm inside.

AARON

It's fallen underneath. I can't reach it.

COLLEEN

I gotta go, boys.

JEFF

I'll go with you.

Jeff runs around to the passenger side and Colleen pulls the car out of the space. The two guys exchange glances. She throws it in drive.

AARON

Wait!

The car stops abruptly with a "chirp" from the tires. Aaron looks at his watch.

AARON

(pause)

Someone has to get the script.

With that, Aaron jumps in and they are off in a hail of screaming tires. Once again, the guys hang on for dear life.

She finds a side ramp, bursts through a wooden arm and careens into the street.

INT. CONVERTIBLE

Colleen intent.

JEFF

Uh. Where are we going?

Her eyes go wide as she slams on the brakes and slides to a stop next to the curb.

COLLEEN

Oh shit. Oh shit. Oh shit.

JEFF

Calm down. It's all right.

They look at each other during a tense silence. Aaron gestures at his watch.

JEFF
We'll get through this.

AARON
Uh. Six minutes?

JEFF
Oh! There's an abandoned quarry off the
110 and Mainway Avenue.

AARON
That's fortunate.

Colleen's foot slams down the accelerator and they are off.

INT. TRUNK

4:47. 4:46. 4:45.

EXT. STREET

The convertible careens around a corner. Aaron yanks at the seat as he tries to fish out the screenplay. He keeps an eyes on his watch.

INT. TRUNK

4:30. 4:29. 4:28.

EXT. STREET

Colleen deftly swerves around traffic.

JEFF
Just don't kill us before we blow up.

COLLEEN
Mind shuttin' up?

Jeff smiles.

Another turn and Aaron almost flies over the side.

INT. TRUNK

3:51. 3:50. 3:49.

EXT. STREET

The convertible rounds a truck and finds a school bus in a

dead stop right in its path. The boys scream.

Colleen slams on the brakes, even pulls the emergency, before she haphazardly swerves around the yellow bus. Of course, a gas truck right there, too! More little girl screams from the two men.

Tire rubber stretches to the max, she takes another corner but it takes a couple pumps of the brakes to get the car to slow down.

She swerves around more traffic before she slides to a stop again. In the crosswalk a row of children cross.

INT. TRUNK

3:04. 3:03. 3:02.

EXT. STREET

All three wait, somewhat embarrassed. Aaron checks his watch as Colleen nervously taps the steering wheel. A stolid TEACHER, about 70, brings up the rear and gives them the evil eye. They all nervously smile back.

"Screech!" and the car runs off.

INT. TRUNK

2:41. 2:40. 2:39.

EXT. STREET

Aaron rips apart a portion of the convertible top and can see the script down inside. He reaches in as the car takes an unexpected turn. Aaron barely gets a grip as he is thrown onto the trunk and flaps about like a flag.

Colleen and Jeff don't notice their partner's predicament.

JEFF

We get outta this and I'm buying you dinner.

COLLEEN

With what? I thought you were broke.

AARON

Uh. Guys. Could...

JEFF

There's more to a guy than his wallet,
you know!

AARON

Hey, uh...

COLLEEN

(defensive)

Are you asking me out? Like a date or
something?

Jeff shrugs.

JEFF

Uh. Not exactly.

COLLEEN

You just wanna bag me, huh?

JEFF

No. Well, I would, hypothetically,...

AARON

Goddammit help me!

Jeff notices Aaron hang on for dear life.

JEFF

Oh shit!

He leaps toward the back seat and grabs Aaron's arm as
Colleen slams on the brakes. Both tumble into a heap in the
back seat. She pulls the emergency brake as the foot pedal
is almost gone.

"Per-klunk" and the engine dies.

COLLEEN

No!

She tries frantically to start the car as the boys untangle
themselves.

INT. TRUNK

1:59. 1:58. 1:57.

EXT. STREET

Aaron and Jeff notice a sign in front of a school: CENTER FOR INCREDIBLY GIFTED STUDENTS IN THE ARTS AND ACADEMICS.

JEFF

What happened?

COLLEEN

Another stupid question and I'm putting you in the trunk!

AARON

We've got under two minutes!

JEFF

The quarry is only two blocks over.

AARON

Maybe we should run.

COLLEEN

I'm not leaving this here.

JEFF

Then we'll push it. Take off the brake.

Colleen and Jeff exchange a look. She removes the brake. Jeff begins to push.

AARON

Push it? Where?

JEFF

To the quarry. Come on, Aaron!

Aaron glances at his watch and then reluctantly joins in as Colleen still tries to start the car.

AARON

You know we only have about a minute and a half.

JEFF

We'll do our best.

AARON

We'll be the heroes we've always written about.

Jeff smiles.

JEFF

Yeah.

A befuddled expression comes over Jeff.

JEFF

Aaron, I should tell you something.
Seems like the appropriate time. It's
about Amy. I...

Aaron curious.

"Va-room!" and the car awakens from its slumber.

COLLEEN

Let's go, boys! Time's a wastin'!

They jump in and the car speeds off.

INT. TRUNK

:59. :58. :57.

EXT. STREET

Colleen swerves through traffic. She pumps the brakes
several times but to no avail.

COLLEEN

Hold on, fellahs! The brakes are gone!

Eyes like saucers, Jeff latches his seat belt.

Aaron almost has his hand on the script.

INT. TRUNK

:45. :44. :43.

EXT. STREET

The convertible careens off the side of a building before it
takes a hard right. Tires scream.

Jeff waves off people in a crosswalk.

JEFF

Out of the way!

COLLEEN
We're going to have to jump!

INT. TRUNK

:20. :19. :18.

EXT. QUARRY

A CLOSED sign posted on the front gate.

"Crr-ash!" goes the gate as the convertible plows through it.

COLLEEN
Get ready!

AARON
I almost have it!

Colleen and Jeff open their doors.

AARON
Got it!

He tries to pull his arm out but gets stuck!

COLLEEN
Jump!

Colleen and Jeff leap out and tumble across the ground. To their shock they see their friend still in the car!

INT. CAR

Aaron pulls at the trap.

INT. QUARRY

The car rolls over a hill as Jeff and Colleen give chase.

INT. TRUNK

:9. :8. :7.

INT. CAR

Aaron pulls free with the script in his hand. He turns around and sees the edge of the giant quarry hole before him.

AARON

Oh shit.

EXT. QUARRY

Jeff and Colleen run toward the ridge. Several high piles of gravel scattered around. A small shack sits in the background.

INT. HOLE

The car slams to the floor of the hole, tires up. It blows.

EXT. QUARRY

A huge fireball belches from the quarry as Jeff and Colleen cringe from the heat.

Terror stricken, Jeff approaches the edge and looks down to the burning wreckage.

JEFF

No. God no.

She comes up behind and touches his arm.

JEFF

I should've told him the truth.

Colleen and Jeff's eyes meet.

JEFF

I should've told him the truth.

COLLEEN

I know.

They look into each other's eyes and come closer, closer.

From behind one of the piles of gravel appears Aaron, dirty and battered but with the purple script in hand. He crosses over to the two, who don't initially notice him.

AARON

Hello?

They finally see him.

JEFF, COLLEEN

(startled)

Ah!

Jeff hugs his friend.

JEFF

You're alive!

AARON

Yeah. I jumped.

COLLEEN

Are you all right?

AARON

I think so. Nothing really hurts.

Their eyes find the burning wreckage.

COLLEEN

Did we really do what I think we just did?

JEFF

I think so.

They all breath a collective sigh of relief. Pause.

AARON

(to Jeff)

Tell me the truth about what?

JEFF

Huh?

AARON

I heard you. You were going to tell me the truth about something.

JEFF

Uh. No I wasn't.

AARON

Yeah. I heard it. Even when we were pushing the car, you were going to tell me something.

Jeff shrugs.

JEFF

No. Nothing. I must of been delusional.
From the stress. Yeah. That has to be
it.

Pause. Aaron studies the partner.

AARON

(insistent)

Naw! It was something. What is it?

JEFF

Nothing. Just me babbling again.

COLLEEN

You definitely said something about
telling the truth.

JEFF

No. You're wrong.

COLLEEN

You sounded perfectly sane. Hardly
delusional.

JEFF

Well, I was. As a fruitcake.

AARON

Come on! It's about time you leveled
with me for a change.

COLLEEN

I'd like to hear this, too.

JEFF

All right!

Pause.

JEFF

About Amy?

Aaron nods, wearing a curious expression.

JEFF

(machine-gun delivery)

Well, she sorta broke up with me because she was the first woman I really ever loved and I told her and she said that she didn't feel the same way and thought it best we split up so you, ironically, won the only woman I thought I could spend my life with. Ironic because of your lack of history with women and all.

Pause. Colleen looks at Aaron, who fidgets.

AARON

I have a history. Not a big one but a history nonetheless.

She nods.

COLLEEN

Don't you have anything to tell him?

He looks back to Jeff. Both uncomfortable.

Aaron whips around to Colleen.

AARON

I really don't.

She slaps his shoulder.

DAVIS (O.C.)

How touching.

The three twist around and come face to face with three imposing men with handguns: DAVIS, the leader; ATKINSON: a dim-witted second in command, and FAVOR, a gigantic, muscular monster with a mean eye.

Their hands go up. Aaron has the script in his right hand. Jeff grabs the other half in his left.

COLLEEN

You've gotta be kidding. Again?

DAVIS

Who are you?

The three are at a loss for words. Aaron's eyes narrow as he looks up to the bad guys.

AARON

Just drop the guns and we'll let you live. You think you've gotten this far because you're smart? We've let you get this far just to make our case. You can never outrun the law.

The three gunmen glance at each other for a moment. Davis looks at Aaron.

DAVIS

"Civil Action". I saw it.

Aaron sighs. Colleen and Jeff roll their eyes.

AARON

It was a midnight cable movie. Who knew?

DAVIS

(to Favor and Atkinson)

Take them.

Favor grabs Aaron's face in his huge hand and pulls him along. Atkinson covers the other two. They cross to the shack and a black van.

ATKINSON

Do we go on with the plan?

Colleen looks across the quarry to a small airport. She thinks. Sirens are heard in the distance.

DAVIS

We have to get him at the Excalibur.

Favor enters the shack.

ATKINSON

What about the risk?

Colleen assesses this. Favor exits with a large rocket launcher.

JEFF

Whoa.

DAVIS

We may have to sacrifice ourselves for the cause.

Atkinson and Favor warily glance at each other.

DAVIS

But not today.

He looks at his captives and smiles.

JEFF

Look, guys. We don't know what you're up to. So, if you just leave us here, there's nothing we could really tell. Right, Aaron?

AARON

Tell what? I have no clue what's going on here.

JEFF

He's a bit slow.

Colleen's eyes widen.

COLLEEN

They're going to kill the President!

Jeff and Aaron wince.

JEFF

Thank you, woman we don't know.

She realizes what she has done.

COLLEEN

Or--maybe--they're not going to do that. What do I know?

DAVIS

Gentlemen, we have our patsies. Put them in the truck.

Favor pushes them all into the van.

AARON

I don't want to die for the cause. Whatever that may be.

The van pulls out.

EXT. STREET

The van easily slips away from a throng of fire trucks and police cars.

INT. VAN

The captives sit, frozen, as the police pass them by.

Colleen looks over the gunmen.

COLLEEN

Why do you guys want to kill the president anyway?

DAVIS

Somebody has to get rid of the Jew loving black lover before he sells out the whole white race.

JEFF

Yes, I'm sure. But does it have to be us?

COLLEEN

Wow. Guys like you really exist?

ATKINSON

You may not see it now, but it's the only way to put the white man back on top.

COLLEEN

What? You couldn't get on Jerry Springer instead?

Aaron and Jeff smirk as Favor glares at them.

JEFF

But it's not our place to criticize.

DAVIS

We are not a circus sideshow, miss. We love our race and will do anything to protect it.

Pause.

ATKINSON

Actually, we tried to get on Jerry but...

DAVIS

...shut up!

INT. QUARRY

Fire trucks and police cars everywhere. The news trucks at the gate. Katherine talks to a cop. She rushes over to her cameraman, who stuffs his face with a sloppy hot dog.

KATHERINE

We have to get to the Main Street Mall.

The Reporter climbs into the truck.

CAMERAMAN

I just bought this.

She jumps out, grabs the hot dog, throws it away and hands him a banana.

The cameraman looks at the banana, cringes and tosses it away. He gets behind the wheel.

INT. BAD GUYS' VAN-DAY

The van pulls past a cordoned-off block with a posh hotel and continues down the street.

Aaron dazed.

AARON

I'm not going to make my appointment with Amy's dad. I'm screwed.

Colleen and Jeff look at Aaron, then to themselves.

EXT. BLDG.

The van pulls behind an office building under construction. Trash chutes stretch from the roof to trash bins on the ground. No one around.

The bad guys exit and open the doors to the hostages.

DAVIS

Out!

The three captives disembark, too.

INT. BLDG.-ELEVATOR

They ride up on a service elevator as the other floors pass by. Favor has the big gun over his shoulder.

DAVIS

We wait for the Jew-loving black lover,
set off the missile and blow him up. We
then quickly get down the elevator and
set off the C-4, killing these three.

The "three" cringe at this prospect.

DAVIS

The Zionist Occupied Government agents
will think they set it off and won't
start an immediate search, thus giving
us time to get away.

JEFF

You know we are standing here.

Favor slaps Jeff up-side the head with his one free hand.
Atkinson snatches the script from Aaron's grasp.

ATKINSON

What's this?

AARON

Hey.

Aaron grabs for the script but Favor clamps the little guy's
hand in his own. He winces at the pressure from the big
man's grasp.

AARON

Please. Have a look.

Atkinson thumbs through it.

ATKINSON

Isn't this a movie play?

JEFF

It's-called-a-screen-play.

ATKINSON

Yeah. Mind if I read it? You won't need
it, being dead and all.

COLLEEN

Tact. T-A-C-T!

ATKINSON

What's it about?

AARON

Giant snake. In the White House.

ATKINSON

Oh. Sounds exciting. Did you guys write it?

JEFF

(grits teeth)

Yes.

Atkinson bends it and slips the script into one of the large pockets in his Army jacket.

ATKINSON

You know, I wanted to be a writer.
Didn't have the time with my racist activities and all.

Aaron, Jeff and Colleen stunned. Davis shakes his head in disgust.

The elevator arrives.

ATKINSON

We're here.

They step off.

INT. BLDG.-FLOOR

The hostages thrust into wooden chairs and tied with rope. Atkinson takes out a pack of C-4 explosives with a timer and sets it on a table. He produces a remote detonator in his palm.

DAVIS

When we set off the C-4, the intense fire will burn away the rope.

COLLEEN

You know, seeing a psychologist doesn't have the stigma it used to.

IN THE ADJOINING ROOM

Favor sets the rocket launcher on a turret near a tarp covered window which overlooks, a few blocks away, the entrance for the Excalibur Hotel.

EXT. HOTEL

A banner over the hotel front door reads LIBERAL VETERINARIANS OF AMERICA PRESIDENTIAL LUNCHEON.

INT. BLDG.

Davis and Favor, massive arms crossed, wear ski masks and stand before the three hostages. Atkinson shoots them with a video camera but unsure of the equipment. The red light on the camera flashes.

ATKINSON

Okay.

DAVIS

I am the leader of the Aryan Secret Society.

COLLEEN

A.S.S?

Aaron and Jeff smirk. They all three get a smack up-side the head.

COLLEEN

Hey! I am a woman, you know.

DAVIS

(to Atkinson)

Just keep going.

(posturing)

We've made a daring and devastating blow against your evil Jew run government.

JEFF

Isn't the President Catholic or something?

"Smack".

JEFF

Ow!

DAVIS

You might think that we were killed during our attack but these are the ones that were killed.

COLLEEN

It's true. I'm one-eighth Jew.

JEFF

A cousin of mine is Jewish.

AARON

My grandfather was black.

Jeff and Colleen quizzically look at him.

AARON

He was.

DAVIS

Heed my words, America. We are still out there, ready to defend white people from the mongrel hordes waiting to topple us from our rightful throne.

Davis freezes. An awkward pause.

DAVIS

You can turn it off now.

Atkinson lowers the camera and the red light disappears.

ATKINSON

That was great.

DAVIS

You think so?

Favor pats him on the shoulder.

ATKINSON

Oh yeah. It'll get played on CNN for sure.

Davis misty-eyed.

DAVIS

I'm thinking Donahue.

ATKINSON

Wasn't he cancelled? Decades ago.

DAVIS

They'll bring him back. Just for this.

The three idiots take a moment to bask in their glory. The hostages dumbfounded.

COLLEEN

Je-sus.

ATKINSON

Why don't we have some donuts while we wait for the President. I packed them with the rocket launcher.

DAVIS

Great.

Atkinson sets the camera down and absently pushes the record button. The camera points right at the other room. The bad guys exit.

The hostages left to contemplate their fate.

Silence.

Colleen's eyes dart around as she looks for a way outta this mess.

JEFF

Ever since I was a kid, I wanted to have some sort of adventure. Get the bad guy, save the girl. Just like in the movies. Or comic books. But I'd give anything right now to be sitting at home with my wife, watching "Wheel of Fortune" and eating pretzels.

Colleen tries to hide it but taken with what Jeff says.

AARON

On a Friday at noon?

JEFF

Yes, on a Friday at noon!

Aaron shrugs.

JEFF

I didn't go to work after college because I thought I could do better. I didn't really go because I was afraid. Afraid of turning out like my father. Being trapped. I've been praying everyday that my dream would come along and save my pathetic little life. But it's a little late for that.

Jeff looks at his friend.

JEFF

If we get outta here, don't screw up your thing with Amy. You're a lucky man, my friend.

Aaron smiles reflectively.

AARON

I realized that today. Beautiful, smart, funny woman like Amy and I was thinking I could do better. Get a more "exciting" girl, like in the movies. I wanted that life that you wanted.

But Aaron shakes his head from side to side.

AARON

But movies are fantasy, full of people who aren't me. The real dreams are made with real people in the real world.

Now Aaron looks at his friend.

AARON

You weren't wrong in what you wanted for us. I would've never written a word without you.

Jeff smiles.

AARON

We just let the dream get out of its cage for a while.

Jeff loses his good cheer.

JEFF

If we only had a second chance.

Colleen's eyes wander before she snaps out of her daze.

COLLEEN

I think I can arrange that.

DAVIS

looks over the hotel through binoculars. He chews a donut.
A high school marching band sets-up outside.

Davis looks at his watch.

DAVIS

About five minutes.

Favor slides a rocket into the weapon with a harsh "click"!
The leader looks at Atkinson with an uncomfortable look.

DAVIS

Got milk?

Atkinson takes out a thermos and pours some milk.

AARON AND JEFF

watch Colleen as she shuffles, crouched over, across the room with the chair strapped to her back.

She tries to angle her hands toward a jagged band saw on the floor. Too low to reach and too high if she was on the floor.

COLLEEN

I need your help, guys.

JEFF

Help? With what?

Colleen rolls her eyes.

COLLEEN

We're about to get blown up. Why don't you have a little faith in me.

AARON

Come on.

Aaron awkwardly shuffles over to her, the chair on his back. Jeff shortly follows. Both guys are on either side of her. Colleen twists around, her back to the saw.

COLLEEN

You've gotta balance me.

AARON

How?

COLLEEN

With your legs.

JEFF

If we drop you that'll rip-up your back.

COLLEEN

Did you forget the blow-up part of this? Ka-boom?

JEFF

But...

Colleen's gaze grabs Jeff's eyes.

COLLEEN

I trust you. It's only been a couple hours but I know we're not going to die today. If we were, it would have been before this crap. We have lives to live and we're not going to let those goose-steppin' morons get us dead. I have faith in you.

A moment between them. She glances at Aaron.

COLLEEN

And you too, Alex.

AARON

Aaron.

COLLEEN

Sorry.

DAVIS

paces creepily around like some SS officer. Right in front of the only way to the elevator.

ATKINSON

It's actually going to happen.

DAVIS

Today we will reserve our place in
history.

AARON AND JEFF

strain as they balance Colleen's chair precariously on their
knees. She haphazardly rubs the ropes on the edge of the
saw.

COLLEEN

I need to get closer.

The chair slips dangerously down on their knees.

JEFF

You--gotta--hurry.

DAVIS

spies on the hotel entrance through the binoculars.

Atkinson thumbs through the infamous purple-covered
screenplay.

IN THE BINOCULARS

A SUITED MAN comes out of the hotel and speaks briefly with
the BAND DIRECTOR. The director tenses and cues up the band,
who begins to play a bad rendition of "Hail to the Chief".

A secret service car appears.

DAVIS

The eagle has landed.

FAVOR

readies the weapon.

ATKINSON

Eagle?

One hand away from the glasses, Davis slaps Atkinson on the
back of the head.

ATKINSON

Oh! The eagle!

THE PRESIDENTIAL LIMO

slides up to the entrance.

DAVIS

He's here. Wait 'til we have visual confirmation.

FAVOR'S

finger nervously tickles the trigger.

SECRET SERVICE MEN

spread out, look around.

DAVIS

finds the detonator for the C-4.

DAVIS

Patience. I'll give the command when he shows his Jew-loving face. After, leave the weapon, we run to the elevator and I'll blow the C-4.

THE PRESIDENT

steps out of the car, greeted by dignitaries.

DAVIS

Get ready.

ATKINSON

shoves the script into his pocket, wets his lips.

DAVIS

Ready.

THE PRESIDENT

waves to the crowd.

DAVIS'

lips begin to form "the word".

DAVIS

Fi...

AARON, JEFF, COLLEEN

Aaaarrrrrggggghhhh!

The three bad guys blind-sided by their three captives that should be tied up right now. The heroes armed to the teeth with two-by-fours.

The detonator flies out of Davis' hand as Aaron smacks him on the back. He stumbles away but still stays on his feet.

Atkinson scampers away as Jeff takes swipes at him.

Favor lurches forward and knocks the weapon through and out of the tarp-covered window.

The rocket launcher lands on the concrete below and promptly fires its missile, which quickly streaks into the building, impacts into the elevator, and disables it. A fireball belches out and the building becomes consumed by ever-growing flames.

THE SECRET SERVICE MEN

surround the President, fingers to ear mics. "Where did that noise come from?"

AARON

knocks the gun from Davis' hand and it skirts away.

Colleen smacks Favor on the back again, but with no effect. She swings again but Favor catches the board in his hand.

COLLEEN

Uh...

Atkinson gets his gun out. Jeff drops the board and charges his opponent. The two lock up and struggle.

Davis side steps a swing and cold-cocks Aaron, who stumbles back and collapses on the floor. He picks up the board, smiles, and stands over his victim.

DAVIS

I don't have much time. This'll have to be painfully bloody.

Favor grabs Colleen by the neck and picks her up off her feet. He slams her against a wall.

Davis raises the two-by-four.

Atkinson gets the upper hand on Jeff and rolls him over--and onto the detonator!

"Ka-Boom!!"

A chair shoots across the room and knocks the camera out of the window.

THE WALL

buckles out and the concussion sends the three racists across the room; Colleen, Aaron and Jeff swept into another corner.

The place on fire!

Favor quickly gets to his feet and grabs his two friends. He begins to drag them down the hall toward the elevator.

DAVIS

Let go of me! I'll kill them!

He fires a couple of shots in the good guys' direction. Jeff instinctively shields Colleen. Their eyes meet for a breath. Aaron grabs them both.

AARON

We gotta get outta here!

They get to their feet and follow the three jugheads.

FAVOR

lets go of his buddies and tries the elevator. He looks down the shaft and sees the cab mangled at the bottom. Smoke and flames climb up toward them.

THE FIRE

reaches a collection of acetylene torch canisters and

"Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!"

The building jostles violently.

FAVOR

kicks in the door marked STAIRS and hesitates. The way down just a big hole now.

Aaron, Jeff and Colleen appear down the hall. Davis fires wildly at them before his gun empties.

Favor grabs his two friends and pushes them into the stairwell that leads up.

The smoke gets thick.

COLLEEN

What do we do now?

Anger criss-crosses Aaron's face.

AARON

They have the script.

Aaron charges through the fire toward the bad guys.

JEFF

Hey!

COLLEEN

There's only one way outta here.

They follow.

EXT. BLDG.

The fire consumes floor after floor.

EXT. ROOF

Favor, Davis and Atkinson burst through the door and look around as they come to the edge.

Another fireball belches out of the interior below and rocks the structure.

AARON (O.C.)

Hey!

They whip around and see Aaron stand there with a enraged glint in his eyes.

AARON

You have something that belongs to us.

DAVIS

Your a lucky boy. You just won a free flying lesson. From me.

Davis charges forward as Colleen and Jeff appear.

Aaron thrust a foot into the racist's gut and gives him a hard right cross to boot, just like that. He stumbles back into the large hands of Favor.

The crazed writer glares at Atkinson.

AARON

As I was saying.

Atkinson takes out the script and throws it at the lunatic's feet.

Favor grabs the other two yet again and pushes them over the side.

Shocked, Aaron runs to the edge and sees them disappear into a huge, angled garbage chute that leads to the ground. The smoke from the fire obscures the street below. Colleen and Jeff appear at the edge, too.

A moment later another explosion breaks through a floor and snaps the chute in two.

AARON

No!

Aaron stumbles back as if hit in the gut. Close to tears.

AARON

All I want to do is see Amy again. Hold her in my arms.

Colleen steps off.

AARON

Smell the sweetness of her breath. Hear the song that is her voice. Feel the silk that is her skin.

Jeff puts a hand on his friend's shoulder.

AARON
Just one more time.

COLLEEN (O.C.)
Hey!

They look at her stand at the opposite edge.

COLLEEN
There's another chute one floor down.

Jeff looks at Aaron, removes his hand and wipes it on his pants.

JEFF
What a crybaby.

Jeff and Colleen run to the stairwell.

AARON
I just thought...

JEFF
Later, crybaby.

They all disappear into the building.

EXT. STREET-TRASH BIN

A little battered, the aspiring assassins tumble into the trash bin. They get their bearing and pull themselves over the edge of the huge container.

"Click! Click! Click! Click!"

They freeze as they look down the barrels of Secret Service and Police automatics.

A fire truck shoots water into the fire.

FAVOR
(wispy voice)
Help us.

Davis and Atkinson, in shock, look at the big man.

INT. BLDG.-TOP FLOOR

The three run to the edge and rip down the tarp. Sure enough, one of the chutes right there.

JEFF
(to Colleen)
You go first.

Colleen looks at Jeff and smiles.

COLLEEN
See you at the bottom.

She jumps inside and shoots off.

JEFF
You next, crybaby.

AARON
Now look! I thought we were dead for sure.

JEFF
All right, you go last.

Jeff leaps into the tube.

AARON
Hey!

Aaron jumps in, too.

INT. CHUTE

The three yell like they've never yelled before.

INT. TRASH BIN

They tumble, thankfully, into an empty bin but bounce off the side. Groans all around.

JEFF
Is everybody all right?

COLLEEN
I think so.

AARON
We're safe now.

But...

THE BUILDING

rips apart with a gut-wrenching explosion which belches out in all directions.

The trash bin knocked over and the three dumped out into the dirt. They scramble to their feet and run for cover.

Everything okay now.

Jeff looks to Aaron.

JEFF

(mocking)

We're safe now.

AARON

Look!

COLLEEN

Enough! Let me enjoy the pleasure of breathing for a moment.

They quiet for a moment. Aaron's eyes widen as he looks at his watch: 12:49.

He looks around.

AARON

Isn't Titan Studios nearby?

JEFF

Two blocks over, I think.

AARON

We've got ten minutes.

Jeff and Aaron's eyes meet. They smile and look at Colleen.

COLLEEN

We've come this far. What's two blocks?

They take off and run away from the devastation.

EXT. STREET

They round the corner at a full run.

INT. TITAN STUDIOS-BRUCE'S OFFICE-DAY

A huge limousine pulls up to the main building.

Bruce Garrison looks out to the car with a nervous dart in his eyes. He absently bites his nails.

EXT. STREET-DAY

Jeff and Colleen round another corner. They notice Aaron not there and stop. After a moment he appears with a huff and a puff. They drag him along.

INT. TITAN STUDIOS-HARRISON'S OFFICE-DAY

Stone-faced, Harrison watches the news. Of course, it features the blazing fire at the building under construction.

REPORTER

...three men were arrested at the site
that was only a block from where the
President was to speak.

The clock turns to 1:00 and, at that precise moment, the old man shuts off the TV.

INT. BRUCE'S OFFICE

Gary appears. Bruce still at the window.

GARY

Must be stressful to be you right now.

BRUCE

You are so close to being fired.

GARY

Something tells me you'll be out before
me. Speaking of that, could I just try
out your chair?

Gary steps forward as Bruce heaves a People's Choice award at him. The assistant narrowly escapes.

EXT. TITAN STUDIOS

Colleen, Aaron and Jeff arrive and are stopped at the front gate.

A row of taxi cabs parked at the hotel across the street.

INT. TITAN STUDIOS-EXT. EXECUTIVE BUILDING

Bruce waits by the limo. Harrison appears and towers over him.

HARRISON

Well?

Bruce wrings his hands.

BRUCE

I just wanted to...uh...

JEFF (O.C.)

...Mr. Garrison?

The three run up to them. He hands over the script to Bruce, who reads the title.

BRUCE

I just wanted to introduce the writers before you left.

Bruce gives the script, a little worse for wear, to his uncle. Harrison looks over the manuscript and then the three battered people before him.

AARON

We just want to thank you, sir, for this opportunity.

HARRISON

Don't talk to writers.

With that, Harrison jumps into his limo and it pulls away. Bruce breaths a sigh of relief as Gary appears.

GARY

Dammit!

BRUCE

(to Gary)

Ha!

Bruce starts to walk away.

JEFF

Mr. Garrison?

BRUCE

Tell them.

GARY

(sarcastic)

We'll keep in touch.

Gary spins on his heels, disappears, too, and leaves the three rather stunned.

EXT. TITAN STUDIOS

Aaron and Jeff give each other a dejected look.

AARON

I should go see Amy's dad. Just in case...if this doesn't.

Jeff nods.

JEFF

I should...do something.

Aaron begins to walk off.

JEFF

What about the police?

Aaron hesitates. They look at each other.

COLLEEN

Maybe it's better if we keep quiet. At least for now. Make sure we don't get blamed for something. A lot of stuff got blown up today.

The two guys agree. Both exhausted.

AARON

Hey. Why don't you two come over for dinner tonight?

Colleen and Jeff warily glance at each other.

COLLEEN

Uh. I don't know.

Aaron nods.

AARON

(to Colleen)

Well. Make sure we get your number.
When we sell the script and all.

Colleen nods.

AARON

(to Jeff)

Either of you wanna ride with me?

Aaron gestures to the cabs across the street.

JEFF

Naw. I'm gonna take the bus.

A bus stop at the corner.

JEFF

I wanna think about things.

COLLEEN

I gotta make a phone call to my boss.

She gestures to a phone booth.

AARON

Are you going to be okay?

COLLEEN

Yeah. I'll make something up.

Aaron nods and crosses the street.

Jeff and Colleen nervously glance at each other.

JEFF

Well. Uh. Your number?

She reaches into her pocket and hands him a business card:
FALL FOR YOU STUNTS.

COLLEEN

Just in case, huh?

JEFF

Just in case.

She nods and turns.

JEFF

Maybe, uh.

Colleen hesitates.

JEFF

Maybe we can get a drink sometime.

Colleen wary.

COLLEEN

Why?

JEFF

I don't know. To talk?

COLLEEN

(edgy)

Like a date?

JEFF

No. Uh. I just thought...

Jeff smirks.

JEFF

If this thing comes through, I promise
we'll give you a call about a stunt job.

He nods and sits at the bus stop. Colleen watches him, shrugs, and turns to the phone. She takes a few steps and then breaks down into an agitated shrug.

JEFF

looks at the business card for a moment and then drops it into his pocket. A shadow darkens his view.

Colleen stands over him.

COLLEEN

(agitated)

I just... What I wanted to say was...

She groans, grabs his face and lays a very passionate kiss on him. After a moment, he's released with a stunned look all over his mug.

COLLEEN

I like you for some unknown reason.
I assume you feel the same.

Jeff smiles.

JEFF

You could say that.

Another sigh escapes her lips and she sits down beside him.

COLLEEN

My life's over.

JEFF

I certainly hope so.

Reluctantly a smile pushes into her face.

EXT. BLDG.-DAY

Aaron parks his car in a lot by a building in a bleak industrial area.

He looks up to the door before him O'FLAHERTY RESTAURANT SUPPLY. A deep breath taken before he enters.

INT. O'FLAHERTY RESTAURANT SUPPLY

Aaron enters and steps up to the RECEPTIONIST stunned by the battered man before her.

RECEPTIONIST

Aaron?

Amy passes an open doorway to the side and disappears. She reappears a moment later and looks very nervous.

AMY

Aaron?

He beams when his eyes find the mother of his child. Arms go around a tense Amy.

AMY

What's going on?

AARON

I love you so much.

She relaxes a little.

BILL

What the hell is this?

Aaron confidently turns around and faces the man.

AARON

Before you say anything else, sir, I just want to tell you two things. One, I have a very good reason that I'm in the shape that I'm in. Two, I woke up this morning having a lot of doubts about coming to work for you. But I can tell you now that I'm looking forward to coming here. I love your daughter more than anyone can love another person.

RECEPTIONIST

Very politically correct.

AARON

I want her to be proud of me and I want my child to be proud of me. I hope you'll give me that chance.

Thick pause. Bill studies this kid. He looks at his very proud daughter.

BILL

Be here at 8:00 on Monday.

With that, he turns and walks off.

Aaron and Amy face each other.

AMY

Did you mean that? What you said?

He comically shrugs and smiles.

AARON

I was just trying to save my ass.

Amy pulls his head back by the hair.

AMY

Really?

AARON

It was true. It was true.

Aaron released and gives her a loving look.

AARON

The truth and nothing but the truth.

They kiss. The receptionist rolls her eyes.

AMY

So, what did happen to you?

AARON

Let's go to lunch. I'm starved.

INT. AARON'S/AMY'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

5:40. An uneaten delivered pizza sits on the table.

Amy on the couch with a perplexed look plastered on her face. Aaron sits on the coffee table across from her.

Disbelief turns to doubt as she eyes her boyfriend.

AMY

Come on. You just heard all that stuff on the news.

AARON

I'm telling the truth.

AMY

If you don't want to tell me, fine.

He leans in with an intense look in his eyes.

AARON

You'll know if I'm lying or not.

The truth radar comes on for a moment before her eyes widen.

AMY

Jesus.

Her hands find him.

AMY

You could've been killed.

AARON

But I wasn't.

AMY

What about the script?

That brings a somber look to his face.

AARON

They said they'd get back to us.

"Ding"! goes the doorbell.

Aaron stands, crosses the apartment and opens the door.

Nobody there. A step out into the hall and sees Jeff and Colleen embraced in an overt kiss. A smile creeps into Aaron's lips as he clears his throat. The two break apart and try to look nonchalant.

COLLEEN

Oh. Uh.

JEFF

You said there was a free dinner?

AARON

Right inside.

Enter as Aaron sneaks his friend a wink.

AARON

Amy. Colleen. Colleen. Amy.

AMY

The stunt woman?

COLLEEN

Yes.

JEFF

You told her?

AMY

Shouldn't you guys go to the cops?

The three look hesitantly at each other.

JEFF

Not me.

AMY

But they'll understand. You saved the President.

COLLEEN

And destroyed a building. I don't need a lawsuit, thank you.

AMY

I don't know about you but I need something with a lot of sugar.

Amy disappears into the kitchen.

"Ring!"

Aaron picks up the phone.

AARON

Hello? Oh, yes! Hello, Mr. Garrison.

Jeff and Colleen's eyes widen. Aaron listens and slowly loses his good cheer.

AARON

Yes. I understand. Thank you for your time.

He hangs up.

AARON

Titan passed. The meeting didn't go well.

INT. BOARD ROOM-DAY

Tons of mahogany overlook the New York skyline.

Harrison Garrison stands before a table full of impeccably dressed men from around the world.

He holds the battered purple covered script in his hand and looks stunned. The whole table laughs hysterically and points at him.

INT. AARON'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

All three look defeated. A scream from the kitchen. They rush in to see Amy speechless as she points to a tiny TV.

Aaron turns it up to a newscast.

NEWSCASTER #1

...with the incredible mysterious heroes that, in one day, captured dangerous bank robbers, averted a potentially devastating bombing at a local shopping center and saved the President's life.

Tape from all three incidents begins to flash on the screen: the bank's surveillance cameras, the mall shot by the clerk, the running video camera at the building.

NEWSCASTER #1

This has to be the most incredible story of the year, maybe even the decade.

Aaron turns the channel.

NEWSCASTER #2

If we only knew who these heroes were so we could thank them for the lives they've saved.

Another broadcast with a male NEWSCASTER (#3). Beside him a female NEWSCASTER (#4).

NEWSCASTER #3

These are the kind of examples that make this city great. Who are they? Real life Batmen?

NEWSCASTER #4

Batpersons.

The guy gets something in his earpiece.

NEWSCASTER #3

Wait. I'm getting word that we've found where one of the heroes lives and we have a crew on the scene. Let's go live...

Back one channel.

NEWSCASTER #2

We think we've tracked down the heroes...

And another channel.

NEWSCASTER #1

We now have a crew on scene at the home of one of the heroes, one Aaron Whey.

The picture turns to the reporter--in front of Aaron's building!

Calmly, all four exit the kitchen and go to the front door. Aaron opens it up and looks out to a throng of reporters, along with Katherine.

EXT. APARTMENT

VARIOUS REPORTERS

Mr. Whey! Mr. Aufe!

Police rush in to quell the hacks.

KATHERINE

Do you know that the Governor is absolving you of any liability in your actions today?

The four look at each other.

REPORTER #1

How do you feel about being famous?

REPORTER #2

What happened?

KATHERINE

Do you know four movie companies want your life stories?

This gets a visible reaction.

KATHERINE

Please! Tell us something!

Aaron calmly steps up. Everyone quiets.

AARON

I'm sorry but we are not the people you are looking for.

The throng of reporters groan loudly.

Aaron turns and ushers his friends inside.

INT. AARON'S APARTMENT

The door closes.

JEFF

What the hell are you doing? We're famous.

AARON

After today, I'd like to have a quiet evening with my girlfriend and my good friends.

Aaron looks at his partner.

AARON

There's always tomorrow.

Jeff smiles. Colleen and Amy agree.

JEFF

Where's that pizza? I'm starved.

INT. HOUSE-NIGHT

TWO YEARS LATER

A TV on. Black screen.

ANNOUNCER

This Friday, get ready for the ride of your life. And--it's--all--true.

An obvious DOUBLE OF AARON on screen. An overblown re-enactment of the roof incident.

Fire spreads everywhere.

Aaron #2 faces down the DOUBLES for DAVIS, FAVOR and ATKINSON.

AARON #2

I think you have something that belongs to us.

Atkinson #2 holds up the script.

ATKINSON #2

Come and get it, punk!

A moment later Aaron #2 in the midst of a breathless martial arts fight with the three. Of course, our hero thwarts the bad guys with a flurry of impossible moves.

COLLEEN,

arm in a cast. Amy holds a BABY. Jeff and Aaron sit on a huge plush couch in a beautiful home and watches the TV. Above them hangs a framed poster for EXECUTIVE TERROR.

Aaron into the scene. The sounds of explosions in the background.

AARON

I'm glad we insisted on making it
one-hundred percent true.

Raised eyebrows between Jeff and Colleen.

Amy looks at Colleen's cast.

AMY

What happened? Stunt go bad?

COLLEEN

Slipped in the shower.

JEFF

(to Aaron)

The studio called me again. They want
another script since Executive Terror
hit three hundred million dollars last
week.

AARON

We just have to think of something else.

JEFF

How about a sequel?

EXT. PENITENTIARY-NIGHT

High walls. Rainstorm. LIGHTNING. Gloom.

An ATCO LINENS truck pulls to the exit gate. A GUARD eyes
the DRIVER, his face shrouded in shadows, and then open the
gate. The truck pulls out.

INT. TRUCK

The driver lifts his head and it is--Larry the bank robber!
From the back appears George the bomber and Davis with his
knuckle heads.

LARRY

Boys, it's time to get a little payback.