

SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD

Written by

Rodriguez Fruitbat

Mpsfx@hotmail.com

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Morning sun glares through the security bars of an open window, highlighting dust in the air. Cars HONK.

JOEY ROSE, a tall 41-year-old ex-actor who has given up on life, squints at a "See The Stars" tour bus idling outside. The noise and black exhaust aggravates an obvious headache.

He shuts the window.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Shower water sprays over a messily cropped mohawk mullet. He drinks from an overflowing mug of coffee. Washes his armpits with a washcloth.

He turns off the water and steps out of the shower in the small bathroom.

Slips and falls on his back in a puddle of water.

JOEY
God help me.

INT. APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Joey fries eggs in the corner kitchen of the cramped studio apartment. Slaps two strips of bacon into a grease filled pan. Bad idea. Hot grease splatters onto his bare chest.

He jumps back and knocks over a mug. Coffee splashes onto a movie poster of "The Centaur's Desire."

Joey doesn't wipe it off. Just stares at the image of his younger, leaner self. Rippling abs. Long flowing hair.

On the ground, a maiden covers herself with her ripped dress, staring up with a mix of fear and lust.

EXT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The sun has moved behind the mountains. Tourists amble past Joey's window. A couple stops to look at a star on the sidewalk.

BACKPACK GUY
Hey, remember this guy?

BLOND GIRL
He was that comedian, right? I used
to love his movies. Whatever
happened to him?

INT. APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

The couple's shadows linger on the window blinds.

BACKPACK GUY (O.S.)
OD'd two years ago. But his career
died way before that.

They move on.

Joey sits in the dark at a desk covered in papers and beer
cans. He stares at the screen of a dirty laptop.

JOEY (V.O.)
They say the path to greatness...

Joey's hands hover over the keyboard. He takes a drink of
beer and hits delete.

JOEY (V.O.)
The first time I saw the lights of
Sunset Boulevard, I thought I had
reached heaven...

He throws his beer bottle across the room in frustration,
smashing it against the kitchen wall. A hard POUNDING
follows the sound of a BABY'S CRY next door.

MALE NEIGHBOR (O.S.)
I'm trying to put the God damned
baby to sleep! I swear to fuck I'll
come over there, you piece of shit!

The baby cries louder.

Joey sighs. Grabs his vest. Heads to the door.

INT. HALLWAY

MRS. APPLEBAUM, an elderly lady with sun-leathered skin
approaches with her groceries. She looks away in disgust as
Joey edges past her.

JOEY
Good evening Mrs. Applebaum.

MRS. APPLEBAUM
I still need last month's rent.

JOEY
(calling back)
Going to get it right now, Mrs.
Applebaum. Stay beautiful!

She shakes her head as she walks away.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD. - NIGHT

People pass by. In the city where dreams are made, no one makes eye contact unless it helps their career. Joey is less interesting than the dude in the Batman costume.

Except maybe to the odd tourist...

A red tour bus stops nearby.

TOUR GUIDE
Look off to your left folks. Do any of you remember Joey Rose, the actor who played Houg the Centaur? Ladies, you know what I'm talking about.

The bored tourists look over. A few of the middle aged ladies blush and smile. They take photos with their phones.

TOURISTS
Ahhh... ohh. Ahhh...

FLASH. FLASH. The lights briefly take him back...

EXT. THEATRE - RED CARPET - THE PAST - NIGHT

Reporters flash their cameras. Female fans, young and old, strain for a better look. Joey stands tall. Proud. His blond hair waves in the wind.

A woman breaks from the crowd and rushes toward him. Guards move to stop her, but Joey motions to let her approach.

He leans down and gives her a passionate kiss as the cameras flash.

The crowd cheers. They call his name...

EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD. - NIGHT

TOUR GUIDE

I'm sorry to say, it's not all
glitz and glamour here in
Hollywood. Makes you wonder, once
you've fallen this far, can you
ever pull yourself back up?

Joey flips off the tourists as the bus accelerates past.

Up ahead a black car puts on its brakes and pulls into an
alley. The passenger side window unrolls. A HUSKY MAN in his
40's leans over.

HUSKY MAN

(seductively)
So, who are you?

Joey approaches the window and leans down to look in.

JOEY

I'm Houg.

The man inspects Joey.

HUSKY MAN

(smiling)
I bet you are.

JOEY

You selling something, or are you
just here to chat?

HUSKY MAN

Maybe you'd like to get in the car?

JOEY

Do you have some shit or not?

HUSKY MAN

I've got this.

He flashes a badge. Another man, OFFICER CHANSKIE (late
30's) a tough but caring father figure, walks up from
behind.

OFFICER CHANSKIE

How many times are we gonna have to
do this Joey?

JOEY

You don't HAVE to do anything,
Chanskie. Ever hear of entrapment?

OFFICER CHANSKIE
Come on. We kept the cell warm for
you.

Handcuffs clap onto Joey's wrists.

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

OFFICER CHANSKIE
Joey!

Joey sleeps on a bench. He opens his eyes and wipes a stream
of drool from his mouth.

Two homeless drunks huddle in the opposite corner of the
cell.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
You pissed in my cell again!

Joey looks at the puddle in the middle of the floor.

JOEY
When are you going to provide
proper facilities? I have rights.

DRUNK 1
Can we PLEASE move cells? That's
nasty.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
We'll get it cleaned up. Get
moving, Joey. Your manager's here.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Officer Chanskie hands Joey his wallet and keys.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
I don't enjoy this you know. I'm
trying to help you before it's too
late. I've seen people go down this
road.

JOEY
I'm just playing the hand I was
dealt.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
From where I'm sitting it looks
like you were dealt some pretty
sweet cards. You just folded early.
(MORE)

OFFICER CHANSKIE (CONT'D)
I don't want to see you in here
again. Get some help.

Joey turns to leave.

JOEY
Don't pretend you care.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
Hey!

He moves to block Joey's exit.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
I've been shot at, spit on, I've
even had prostitutes piss on me,
and I don't get paid nearly enough
for that. So don't you tell me I
don't care. I wouldn't be doing
this shit if I didn't.

JOEY
Nice speech. They say that in
Hollywood, sincerity is everything.
Once you can fake that, you've got
it made.

Joey pushes his way past and through the door.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Joey takes off on a fast walk down the sidewalk.

ALAN SORENSON (50's), sweating in his cheap suit, jogs to
keep up.

ALAN
Prostitution? Really?

JOEY
Jesus Alan. I was just trying to
get a fix. Cops were bored and
tried to throw the soliciting in
for fun.

Alan follows Joey into...

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

JOEY
Can I borrow twenty for groceries?

ALAN

What about your royalty checks?

JOEY

They barely cover the rent now days.

ALAN

I just spent a hundred and fifty bucks freeing you.

JOEY

You know what freedom is? Being able to pay my own bail. How about you get me a job?

Alan hands him a twenty-dollar bill as they approach the counter.

ALAN

Well, since you mention it... I've got a bachelorette party.

JOEY

I mean a real job. Another movie. You have to get me back on top. I'm dying here.

ALAN

It pays three hundred bucks.

This stops Joey for a moment, he considers.

JOEY

(to the cashier)

Give me a bottle of Gordon's and put the rest on the scratchy lotteries.

INT. BAR - PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

MUSIC pounds. A rowdy crowd of women throws back a round of shots. They CHEER with abandon.

DJ

I want everyone to give a shout for Sandra, who's celebrating her last night of freedom.

The group erupts in cheers again.

DJ

Now, I've been told that Sandra was
a huge "Houng and the Restless"
fan.

The party girls laugh and cheer. Sandra looks around,
wondering what the joke is.

DJ

We've got a little surprise for
you.

Sweeping romantic music plays. The lights dim. Fog rolls
onto the stage.

Out of the darkness, Joey struts onto the stage. Fans blow
his long wig and billowing, unbuttoned silk shirt.

He stares majestically into the distance. As the music
builds he begins to dance. The women eat it up.

Joey smiles. Loves the attention. He gets into the moment.

SANDRA

Take it off!

His shirt comes off. The women HOOT at the site of his beer
gut.

INT. BAR - PRIVATE ROOM ENTRANCE - NIGHT

AMANDA, model-thin and collagen enhanced, and her TIPSY
FRIEND try to peek inside to see what the cheering is about.
They show their invitations to a bouncer.

TIPSY GIRL

We're with Sandra's party.

AMANDA

Sounds like it's already started.

The bouncer waves them inside.

INT. BAR - PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

Joey leans down to let Sandra hug him. She giggles as he
squeezes her ass. The others cheer.

He looks across the room and notices Amanda. He pulls away.

JOEY

Shit. Let go!

SANDRA
What the hell?

It is only seconds before Amanda sees Joey. Momentary shock registers on her face.

AMANDA
Holy shit! Joey?

Joey steps back... and off the stage, crashing onto a table of glasses.

When he looks up Amanda is over her initial shock. She doesn't even try to contain her laughter.

INT. APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

The door flies open. Joey rushes in and grabs the bottle of Gordon's from the counter. He takes a huge drink and collapses into the desk chair.

Looks at a framed picture. Joey and Amanda, a beautiful, happy couple posing at the beach. Punches it.

Take another drink.

Opens up his laptop and stares at the document on the screen. It's blank except for the title:

"HOLLYWOOD BOUND

The Joey Rose Story"

Another pull from the bottle. He shuts the screen roughly.

Sweat beads on his forehead. He pants.

In a fit of rage he pounds the desk.

JOEY
FUUUUUUCCKKKK! FUCK, FUCK, FUCK!

The Male Neighbor pounds on the wall.

NIEGHBOR
(muffled)
Shut uuuuuup!!!

Joey walks over and kicks the wall. Puts a hole through it.

The neighbor's fat bald face appears on the other side.

NEIGHBOR

What the hell! You're going to pay
for this shit, god damnit!

The baby next door SCREAMS, full-lung.

Joey storms out.

EXT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

He barrels out onto the sidewalk, almost knocking over a
young couple.

BOYFRIEND

Dude, what the hell!

Joey holds up the bottle threateningly. The couple scrambles
back.

Joey breaks into a full run down the sidewalk. People dodge
out of his way. He crosses traffic, cars SCREECH to a stop.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD. - NIGHT

He paces the street. Passersby are intimidated.

JOEY

This is what you want right?!
Everyone loves a tragedy!

Two young women shy away and hurry along. He catches a male
prostitute staring.

JOEY

What?! You got a problem? You ain't
got shit on me, Mr. Tits!

Mr. Tits crosses to the other side of the street.

A heavily tattooed GANGSTER with prison-built muscles stares
at him.

JOEY

You want some? Huh?

STREET GANGSTER

Nah man. All good.

The Gangster moves on.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - DAY

The sky lightens as the city wakes up. Empty streets fill with cars and tourists.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Joey wanders the street with his head down. He's beat.

Sunlight hits Joey. He looks up as the rays of the sun illuminate a stunning cathedral.

Joey has never been even tempted to go to church. This time... He pauses at the entrance, unsure.

Shoves the doors open.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

He walks down the center aisle of the empty church and stops at the altar. Light shines through stained glass windows. A crucifix looms overhead.

Joey is a striking image at the altar. He hangs his head, then slowly drops to his knees.

JOEY

What is your plan here? I don't
even know why I exist anymore.
Can't you just tell me? I just...

He wants to say more, but doesn't know where to start. He bows his head in silence.

The noise of a group exiting a room behind him breaks his moment. The group chats as they gather around a table to pour coffees.

Joey gives up and walks out.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Joey looks to the sky.

JOEY

Anything?

There is no sign from God. Just an airplane leaving a brown trail.

He turns to go, and bumps into something. Someone actually. LINDSEY (32), a legless woman in a wheelchair. She's beautiful.

Her wheel rolls off the curb. Joey catches the chair before she topples over.

LINDSEY
What, are you fucking blind?

JOEY
Oh God. Are you ok?

LINDSEY
I was until now.

He helps her chair back up onto the sidewalk.

LINDSEY
Don't touch me. I can do it myself.

She rolls herself away from the curb.

JOEY
I'm sorry. I wasn't watching where I was going.

LINDSEY
Oh good, a self-aware actor. My favorite kind.

He smiles.

JOEY
So you know who I am?

She tries to roll away, but one wheel is bent slightly. Just enough to rub the frame. He watches her push, stop, push, stop.

JOEY
Need a hand?

LINDSEY
Want to buy me a new wheelchair?

JOEY
I wish I could.

LINDSEY
Actors are all the same. Good at pretending to care.

JOEY

I'm not an actor anymore.

LINDSEY

So Hollywood shat you out too? Let me guess, they were looking for a younger and stronger centaur.

JOEY

More like a computer generated one.

LINDSEY

Sorry to hear that. I have to go.

He looks at her bent wheel.

JOEY

Not very quickly.

He's got her on this. A city bus approaches.

LINDSEY

Take me to the bus stop. If anyone I know sees me being pushed by you, I'll shoot myself.

Joey pushes her toward the bus stop.

JOEY

Funny. I was just thinking about shooting myself before I met you.

LINDSEY

Stop here.

The bus pulls up to the curb. Drops a wheelchair accessible ramp.

JOEY

So, that's it?

LINDSEY

Yeah, nice knowing you.

The ramp lifts her up.

JOEY

What's your name?

Lindsey hesitates. Stares hard at Joey. Finally...

LINDSEY

It's Lindsey.

The door closes.

INT. BUS

She sneaks a look back at Joey. He winks. She quickly looks away, embarrassed.

A smile forces its way onto her face.

INT. ALAN'S OFFICE - DAY

It is not an impressive office.

There is a desk. Joey's movie posters adorn the walls. The blankets and clothing on the couch give away the fact that Alan actually lives in this room.

Joey watches Alan eat a sandwich at his desk. Mustard drips onto Alan's shirt. He dabs at it. Makes a yellow smear.

JOEY

They're not going to pay me?

ALAN

You bolted after ten minutes! I barely convinced them not to charge you for the damages.

JOEY

Fuck Alan. I need the to pay my rent. Can't you get me something?

ALAN

I got you that cell phone.

JOEY

Two years ago we were turning down six figure offers.

ALAN

Hollywood's a fickle bitch.

JOEY

If I were actually paying you, I'd fire you.

ALAN

I'm here every day. Working the phones. You know I love you, but you're uninsurable. No one wants to take the chance on you fucking up another film.

JOEY
Damn, Alan. Harsh.

ALAN
They could always use a centaur at
the fair.

JOEY
Fucking hilarious. Can you do me
one favor, at least? I need you to
help me find this girl I met. She
seemed like an actress.

Alan pretends to type on his laptop.

ALAN
Female actress. Got it. No prob.

JOEY
I'm not finished dip-shit. Her name
is Lindsey, and she's got no legs.
Just get her number.

ALAN
I'll see what I can do.

JOEY
Are you sure you can't help me with
rent? I know you've got some of
that film money stashed somewhere.

ALAN
How about you earn your own by
finishing that autobiography?

JOEY
Sure, I'll get right on it. How
about a fifty, for groceries?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Joey waits at a corner, acting casual. A large pickup truck
passes and stops. Joey approaches the passenger window.

ANDRE (45), the type of guy who sweats just from walking to
the porn shop, leans across the seat to look out.

JOEY
What do you want, fat ass?

ANDRE
Don't remember me, Joey? Andre.

Recognition flickers across Joey's face. He shudders.

ANDRE

I thought you might want to party.
Like the old days.

JOEY

You got some shit?

ANDRE

Enough to tranquilize a horse.

Joey looks at the truck. The front seat is filled with garbage.

This guy is really disgusting.

JOEY

Better be good.

He jumps in.

The truck speeds away.

EXT. VARIOUS STREETS - NIGHT

Joey avoids eye contact as he is driven through busy streets, then up into Topanga Canyon.

EXT. BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Headlights round the corner of a steep driveway. The truck rumbles up and rolls to a stop.

The driver's door opens. Andre steps out heavily.

Joey jumps out. Stretches his legs.

He looks around. The property is nestled in a small canyon, but big enough to hold a small horse corral and stable. Joey whistles, impressed.

JOEY

Nice place.

ANDRE

Reminds me of the country, not a
neighbor in sight.

Andre leads Joey to a small bungalow. Joey looks back at a mare in the corral, she turns away.

He enters the house. The door shuts behind him.

A light turns on in the window.

INT. BUNGALOW - NIGHT - LATER

MUSIC pounds. Joey tosses back a few pills and chases them with a swig from a bottle.

He laughs as Andre dances into a lamp. Knocks it over.

ANDRE

Told you this shit was good.

JOEY

You have no idea how much I needed this.

Andre stumbles onto the couch next to Joey and puts his arm around him.

ANDRE

No man, I get it. I do. Sometimes you fucking need a break, right?

JOEY

(slurring)

Totally. Know what I had to do today? I hadda dance for a buncha drunk-ass MILFs.

ANDRE

Doesn't sound like a problem to me.

JOEY

It's embarrassing. I'm like a frickin' circus pony to them.

Andre busts out laughing.

ANDRE

Circus pony! Hah! Ain't that a kick in the balls?

JOEY

S'not funny. Then my fucking bitch ex-fiancée shows up. I don't have any real friends, jus' my sleazy-ass manager and some ol' middle-aged fans. And they only like me when I'm dressed like a centaur. It's sick.

Andre hands him more pills.

ANDRE

You were a fucking star, man! I've followed you since your first movie. You were a sensation. Ah, fuck 'em.

Joey downs the pills with a big swig.

JOEY

Fuck the critics!

ANDRE

I know producer who's looking for actors like you.

JOEY

Yeah?

ANDRE

Online entertainment. That's where the real money is. Fucking saved me from bankruptcy. Look at this shit!

Andre opens a box on the table and pulls out a stack of twenty-dollar bills. He waves them at Joey, who stares longingly.

JOEY

Wait. Fuckin' porn?

ANDRE

The best kind.

JOEY

You're in porn?

ANDRE

What do you think?

Joey squints his eyes at the blurry three hundred pound man.

JOEY

(laughing)

Hahahah! You had me going. I gotta go, man. I'll owe you for the pills.

Joey stands up. He stumbles a bit.

JOEY

Hoo! These are getting to me.

ANDRE

You've got a job any time you want.
Doesn't pay as much as it used to,
but it'll put some food on the
table. Just call this number.

Joey squints at the card and reads.

JOEY

The Skin King?

Andre sticks the business card into Joey's shirt pocket.

ANDRE

People still like you man.

JOEY

Nah... I burned all my bridges.
Right to the fucking ground.

Joey laughs and looks at the floor rising and falling
beneath him.

He tries to focus on Andre, who is no longer laughing. No
longer dancing. Just watching.

ANDRE

I like you.

Joey is too wasted to respond. He just tries to keep his
balance.

Andre unbuttons his shirt revealing a thick blanket of chest
hair. He moves in closer and puts his hand on Joey's cheek.

JOEY

I don' wanna...

ANDRE

Shhhh...

JOEY

No.

Andre drops to his knees. Joey's eyes roll back into his
head.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BUNGALOW - DAY

Joey opens his eyes. The ceiling is at an odd angle. He
struggles to get his bearings.

Something is not right.

He jumps to his feet and stares in horror at Andre's body. Andre's face has been beaten. Blood drips onto the floor.

Joey squeezes his fist and looks at his red, swollen knuckles.

Panic time.

JOEY

No, no. You idiot. Idiot!

He runs...

EXT. BUNGALOW - DAY

...and skids to a stop on the dirt path. His footprints lead from the truck to the bungalow.

The horse in the corral stares with sad eyes.

He runs back inside...

INT. BUNGALOW - DAY

He finds a cloth and wipes his fingerprints off the bottle.

Looks around the room. Glass and marble everywhere. It is hopeless.

EXT. BUNGALOW - DAY

Joey drags Andre's body down the steps and to the corral.

JOEY

Sorry to do this. Better you get the blame than me.

He's talking to the horse. He opens the gate and props Andre against the wood fence.

Joey runs off into the trees.

The mare looks at the body, then at Joey. Walks off down the road.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Joey wanders the streets, ignoring the occasional gawking tourist. Crosses through traffic. Oblivious of the HORNS.

He passes strip clubs, massage parlors and pawnshops.

Finally stops on a bridge over the L.A. river.

He stares down at the concrete below. Climbs up onto the rail. Just as he's about to jump, his cell phone RINGS.

He rolls his eyes and answers.

JOEY

Alan, I can't talk right now. I'm right in the middle of something.

ALAN (V.O.)

(over phone)

I made some calls about Lindsey.

Joey drops back down off the rail.

JOEY

Yeah?

ALAN (V.O.)

She was a stunt actress up until a few years ago. Lost both legs on a western film.

JOEY

No wonder she was so pissed-off. You got her number?

ALAN (V.O.)

No. Listen Joey, she's bad news. After the accident she did a couple of late night cable flicks under the name Lindsey Legless, then dropped off the map. Apparently she's a big time heroin junkie.

JOEY

Heroin?

ALAN (V.O.)

Yeah. She's the last thing you need.

JOEY

Thanks Alan. I've got to go.

ALAN (V.O.)
Joey, wait -

Joey hangs up and takes off running.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

At best, the back alleys of Hollywood are dirty places. At night, they're dangerous.

Joey steps over a sleeping homeless guy. Carefully avoids another very angry looking man who is arguing with himself.

He KNOCKS on a nondescript metal door. The muffled, deep voice of WADE answers.

WADE (O.S.)
Da fuck you want?

JOEY
Wade, man, where's Dom?

A moment of silence.

WADE (O.S.)
That you, Joey?

JOEY
Yeah.

WADE (O.S.)
He's not here. Fuck off, Joey.

Joey POUNDS on the door, loudly.

JOEY
Dom! I need to talk to you!

The homeless man raises his head at the commotion. The door opens quickly.

WADE
Get in here, now.

INT. DOM'S HANGOUT - CONTINUOUS

Joey steps into a dark back room of a converted industrial building. Several junkies drool on old couches.

Wade is a burly man who almost matches Joey's impressive height, and definitely out muscles him.

WADE

You want the cops to come? What the fuck are you doing here? You know we ain't got shit for you.

JOEY

I just want to talk to Dom.

DOM (O.S.)

Who is it?

WADE

It's that shit-bag, Joey.

DOM storms in. He's a true grease ball. Slicked back hair. Tattoos. Soul patch on his chin. Thick black-rimmed glasses.

DOM

You've got to be fucking shitting me. Unless you're here with triple what you owe me, I'll have Wade make you his bitch.

JOEY

I'm this close to landing another gig. I'll get your money -

DOM

Fuck him up Wade.

Dom turns to walk out.

JOEY

No! Wait! I know where to get some cash, I swear. I'll bring you whatever you need tomorrow. That's not why I'm here though. I just need some information. Have you ever dealt to a legless girl named Lindsey?

DOM

Get me *four* times what you owe me then *maybe* I'll remember. Until then I ain't telling you shit, dealer-client privilege. And next time I see you without my money you're dead.

Wade opens the door for Joey and smacks him on the ass on his way out.

WADE

Nice seeing you, princess.

The door SLAMS behind Joey.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS BRUSH - NIGHT

CRICKETS and distant SIRENS define the urban wilderness.

Joey climbs up the hillside through the trees wearing a black hoodie. He sees lights ahead.

He hangs back out of sight. Scopes out Andre's ranch. The horse is still gone, but the gate is closed.

Maybe he didn't kill Andre after all?

Joey quietly makes his way around to the dark back door of the house. It is unlocked. He opens it up.

JOEY

Hello?

He cautiously enters.

JOEY

Andre?

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room has been cleaned up. No body, no drugs. Someone has scrubbed the place clean. This was not a police investigation.

He heads straight to the cash box. Empty. He kicks the table.

Joey searches around until he finds a safe hidden in a cabinet. Its unlocked door swings open. Empty.

JOEY

Fuck!

He grabs a few tissues and wipes his new fingerprints off the cabinet and safe.

Looks down at his dirty footprints on the floor. He finds a mop in the kitchen and mops his way to the back door.

Sets the mop down. Wipes his prints off the handle.

Steps out and shuts the door behind him.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET - NIGHT

A couple of pedestrians watch Joey emerge from the trees onto the sidewalk. He brushes leaves from his hair and stomps the dirt from his feet.

Joey pulls the hood over his head and walks down the street.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

He paces back and forth in front of the church. Occasionally looking up at the door. Finally, he works up the nerve to climb the steps.

The sign on the door reads:

*Hey Sinners, good news! The
confessional is open. Everyone
welcome.*

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Joey is alone in the sanctuary. He slowly approaches the confessional booth.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH

Joey looks around in the dark. A little unsure of what to do. He speaks into the grated window.

JOEY

Hi. Uh, this is my first time in the confession. Actually, I've never really gone to church. I guess I didn't really even know what sin was until I was brought to L.A. as a child. Now it's like I'm trapped in contest to see who can sin the most.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Time passes. People come and go.

INT. CONFESSIONAL BOOTH

Joey hangs his head. He wipes a tear from his eye.

JOEY

So that's it. I don't even know if I can be good. The only thing keeping me going is the hope of finding a girl I just met. Even that's a long shot.

Joey pauses and sighs. Silence. He taps the grate.

JOEY

Hello?

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Joey steps out and looks at the priest's side of the booth. He pulls back the curtain. There is no one inside.

Joey slumps. He walks toward the front door.

As he passes a table of flyers one catches his eye. He picks it up. Reads:

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
A Message of Hope.
Join us Sat. at 10 AM

He looks off to the side of the sanctuary. Coffee and donuts are laid out on a table by the door. A sign reads "N. A. meeting, 10 AM".

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT DINING ROOM - DAY

Tables have been folded and stacked against the wall.

About ten people sit in a circle of chairs in the middle of the room.

Joey enters quietly.

DANNY (18), a former child star wearing sunglasses and a Justin Bieber hairstyle, finishes up.

CHILD STAR

They don't know. They don't know!
They think I'm this lucky kid who had it all and threw it away. But they don't know shit. Things were fucked up from day one. Two weeks in, and I'm sitting on the directors lap, smoking a joint in the dressing room. I was thirteen!

(MORE)

CHILD STAR (CONT'D)
How is a thirteen-year-old supposed
to deal with that?

He puts his hand to his eyes and hangs his head.

A huge BIKER, (50s) with a spider tattooed on his neck puts
his arm around Danny.

BIKER
We're all with you brother.

JEFF, a 26-year-old with a lumberjack beard, 1890's short
styled hair and hoop rings in his ears, claps.

JEFF
Boundaries, please.

The Biker removes his arm.

Danny wipes snot away with his sleeve. Looks up with a red
face and his best screen smile.

CHILD STAR
No, it's fine. Thank you.

JEFF
Very good. Thank you for sharing. I
think we can all relate. Each one
of us has our own story.

Joey feels uncomfortable and begins to back out of the room.

JEFF
I see we have a new visitor. Please
come in!

Jeff jumps up and pulls another folding chair to the circle.

JOEY
I'm all good, thanks.

A toilette FLUSHES in the adjoining room. Everyone
respectfully ignores the sound.

JEFF
Welcome to our group. First time?

JOEY
I think I've got the wrong room.

The bathroom door opens.

Joey is pleasantly surprised to see Lindsey roll out. She
sees Joey and rolls her eyes.

JEFF

Are you sure?

JOEY

I guess I can stay for a few minutes.

JEFF

Great! Would you like to introduce yourself? First names only here. I'm Jeff.

JOEY

Joey.

Joey smiles at Lindsey as she pulls up to the circle.

LINDSEY

I'm ready to share.

The others MURMUR in surprise.

JEFF

Really? Well okay! Lindsey, tell us-

LINDSEY

I was a stunt performer. An insanely good one. Then one day, I'm doing a fall from a horse. I've done it a hundred times, but this time an explosion goes off at the wrong time. The idiot fucking horse gets spooked, backs up and does a dance on my legs. Fucking mush.

She stares at Joey. Testing him.

LINDSEY

The production company shuts down. Assholes didn't have proper insurance. My husband leaves me a week later. I'm popping Oxys for the pain. No one would hire me. After all that, banging "H" started to seem like a great idea. I'd shoot it right into my stumps. It became the only friend I needed.

The group shifts uncomfortably. Joey stares.

JEFF

Well... Thank you for telling us about yourself.

LINDSEY

I guess I'm saying, you really don't want to get to know me. Everyone here has problems, but I am FUCKED UP. Seriously. And you know what? I'm better off alone.

JEFF

Let's reflect on that over the coming week. We all struggle with our earthly desires. We know what we do is wrong but we do it anyway. These are issues that we can't handle on our own. But I have good news. You aren't alone. You are loved. And if you chose to accept this love into your heart it will save you. Let's pray.

Everyone bows their heads. Joey watches Lindsey.

INT. MAIN HALL - DAY

The group mills around the coffee table. Some chat quietly. Others stand alone, drinking their free coffee.

Joey brings two cups over to Lindsey. Offers her one.

He towers awkwardly over her wheelchair. She shakes her head in disbelief and takes the coffee.

LINDSEY

You still want to talk to me?

JOEY

I know how fucked up things can get.

(beat)

I'd be bitter too, if I were you.

LINDSEY

So you think I'm bitter? Fuck you.

JOEY

(smiling)

Obviously you're not bitter. You're the queen of good cheer.

LINDSEY

Alright, smart-ass. What's your story? You were a big shot. Shouldn't you be living on an island somewhere?

JOEY

Are you saying I should have saved my money? Well shit, where were you two years ago? You obviously know how fast money goes when you're partying. I was living large, king of the hill, then one bad movie later and I was box office poison.

LINDSEY

You can still work if you wanted to. So you're not a fucking star anymore. Work in TV, or do a commercial.

Joey sits down. His shoulders slump.

JOEY

I can't even get those parts now. I missed a few days of shooting because of some bad tranq's, and everyone thinks I'm a junkie. One producer told me CGI is cheaper than my insurance.

LINDSEY

I hate to break it to you, but you are a junkie. We all are and always will be. Even when we're sober. It's not something you get over.

JOEY

So what's the point of this then?

He waves at the room.

LINDSEY

These meetings are a shot at an almost normal life. I've been sober eighty-nine days now. One more, and I beat my previous record. Tomorrow I'm going to celebrate ninetieth by eating ice cream and binge-watching Westworld.

Jeff claps his hands.

JEFF

Alright folks. That's it for today. We'll see you here next week. Stay sober.

Jeff ushers people towards the door.

LINDSEY
Are you coming to the next one?

JOEY
Well, I don't really need to...

She writes her number on a Narcotics Anonymous pamphlet.

LINDSEY
If you change your mind, give me a
call. I'll save you a spot.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD. - DAY

Joey struts proudly down the street. His hair waves in the wind. His shirt blows open to reveal his still impressive chest muscles.

His confidence shines.

Two moms sit at an outdoor cafe feeding their babies. They smile at him and whisper to each other. One baby drops his bottle, which rolls onto the sidewalk.

Joey kneels down to pick it up and hands it back.

JOEY
Dropped something.

MOM #1
Oh my god. I can't believe I'm
meeting Joey.

MOM #2
I remember you. When does your next
movie come out?

JOEY
I'm just headed to my manager's
office to find out.

MOM #1
I hate to ask, but can we get a
picture with you.

JOEY
Are you kidding? Of course.
Anything for fans.

They jump up and crowd in next to him to take selfies. The cameras flash. Joey smiles proudly.

EXT. ALAN'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

He enters a run-down office building.

INT. STAIRWELL

After several flights of stairs to Alan's office Joey is a bit winded, but still smiling.

INT. ALAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Joey walks right in.

A young aspiring ACTRESS (18), stands in front of Alan's desk. She quickly pulls her shirt closed. Embarrassed. Her audition interrupted.

JOEY

He's not a casting director, you know.

ALAN

Don't listen to him. I can get you in front of all the casting directors. You're fantastic. You'll be auditioning in no time.

JOEY

Sorry, but Alan's an unscrupulous fuck. You should stay far away from him. And most of Hollywood for that matter.

Joey picks a bra off the desk and hands it to the Actress.

She hurries out the door.

ALAN

Was that necessary?

JOEY

You're a piece of shit Alan.

ALAN

What do you want?

JOEY

You gotta help me get back on top.

ALAN

I'm not a magician.

JOEY

I need money asap. I'll do another bachelorette party. Anything.

ALAN

There are no more bachelorettes. You fucked it up. That's it. They never want to see you again. Are you okay?

JOEY

Great! Things are... great. Really good. I saw Lindsey again. We really hit it off. Got her number.

Joey shows him the pamphlet with her number on it.

ALAN

So you want a few bucks to impress her?

JOEY

I've got some debts to pay. Can I at least get an advance on my next project?

ALAN

There are no next projects and I don't have any money. Business isn't exactly booming, and you just ran off my only other potential client.

JOEY

I know you've got money. I earned you a fortune. And you're so cheap you probably never spent a dime.

ALAN

What are you doing with that junkie? I warned you about her.

JOEY

(pleading smile)
Aren't we all junkies? In a way? Where's your heart?

ALAN

Go home. Work on your book.

INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Keys RATTLE in the front door. The handle turns. Joey enters. His smile turns to shock.

His apartment is trashed. Wade sits on the counter.

WADE

You weren't kidding. You've literally got nothing of value. Except this shitty laptop.

JOEY

I need that. It has my autobiography on it.

WADE

Is it worth anything?

JOEY

It's just the first sentence.

WADE

I'll keep the laptop to pay for my trip over here. Where's the cash?

MRS. APPLEBAUM (O.S.)

(from the hallway)

Joey?

Joey takes a step back to the door. Wade shows him the gun in his belt.

WADE

Go ahead and close the door.

MRS. APPLEBAUM (O.S.)

Do you have the rent money?

JOEY

Soon, Mrs. Applebaum!

Joey shuts the door.

JOEY

I almost had it I swear.

Wade pulls the gun out.

JOEY

Wait!

Joey digs out the business card that Andre had given him from his shirt pocket.

JOEY
I've got a plan, but I need one
more day.

WADE
Why don't I believe you?

JOEY
No really, here.

He hands Wade the Skin King's business card.

JOEY
I really don't want to do this, but
it pays. Should be enough to cover
everything I owe.

Wade looks at the card. Laughs.

WADE
You gotta be fucking kidding me.

JOEY
What's so funny?

WADE
Let's go for a walk.

EXT. DOM'S HANGOUT - DAY

Joey hesitates as Wade opens the door.

JOEY
Come on man. What are we doing
here? I told you, I just need one
more day.

WADE
Shut up.

Wade lets Joey in, then follows.

INT. DOM'S HANGOUT - DAY

A trashy girl looks up from a couch. Rubs her eyes and tries to focus. The sight of Joey is a disappointment. She lays back down and buries her head in the cushions.

Joey looks around uncomfortably as Wade leads him down a hallway.

Wade KNOCKS on a door.

WADE
(calling)
It's Wade!

DOM (O.S.)
Come in.

Wade opens the door. Dom looks up from his desk.

INT. DOM'S OFFICE - DAY

WADE
Someone's here to see you.

DOM
So you finally got my money?

JOEY
(confused)
I, uh...

Joey looks to Wade for guidance.

WADE
Better. He's looking for the "Skin King." Wants to work off his debt.

Wade tosses the business card on the desk.

Dom leans back in his chair, very amused.

DOM
Well, well! The great Hollywood romance star. Looking to make his big comeback with internet porn!

It starts to dawn on Joey.

JOEY
You're the Skin King?

DOM
Multi-leveled business strategies.
It's a whole new world these days.
Got to be smart to stay on top.

JOEY
With porn?

Dom gets up, takes a digital camera from his desk and walks around Joey.

DOM

Drugs and porn. Perfect synergy.

He takes photos of Joey from various angles.

DOM

Look at yourself. One day you're here for a fix, the next you're here to act in my movies to for pay it. It's beautiful. Everyone wins.

JOEY

I don't know. This might not -

DOM

You really don't have much choice now, do you? How else are you going to repay me? Is Hollywood knocking at your door?

Joey shifts uncertainly.

DOM

Now listen, I want you to be happy. We'll both come out ahead on this.

Dom smiles and touches him. Joey recoils.

DOM

I'll even help you find that girl.

JOEY

I already found her.

DOM

Some extra bill money then. Look, porn barely pays any more, but with your name, even as tainted as it is, we could have something big. I'll make you a good deal.

JOEY

My manager -

DOM

Isn't doing dick for you! Where are the big offers? Are you even getting auditions? Your film career is over. Who gives a shit about those Hollywood pricks anyway, right? I'm your manager now.

JOEY

But -

DOM

Come on, man! This is your chance
to get back on the screen!

JOEY

What would I have to do?

Dom winks at Wade. He's won.

DOM

Don't worry about a thing, we'll
guide you through the whole way.
You're going to love it. Everyone's
a little shy at first, but when the
action starts, you'll forget the
camera's even there. Let me show
you something.

Wade moves to a door at the back of his office.

JOEY

What? Now?

DOM

Hey, you're lucky I want you at
all. As it happens, my biggest
actor just blew his last money
shot. We found him dead at his
house, trampled by his own horse.
He was three hundred pounds of pure
sex. See, we're a specialty shop
here. You'll fit right in.

Dom opens the door to a huge warehouse with a sex dungeon
set in the middle of it. Joey recoils at the smell.

An incredibly tall DOMINATRIX in leather paddles a midget
hanging in a sex harness.

DOM

Welcome!

Wade tosses Joey a bathrobe.

INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Joey stumbles through the door. Tosses a brown paper bag
onto the table and runs to the bathroom.

The sound of the shower starts.

A closer look at the bag reveals a small stack of twenty-
dollar bills spilling out.

A SHORT TIME LATER

Joey emerges. Towels off his hair. He looks at the money on the table, then at his trashy apartment.

Empties the vodka bottle into the sink.

Dumps pills into the toilet.

Puts on his best shirt and looks in the mirror. It has a hole in it.

He swipes the money from the table and leaves.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Joey emerges from a Melrose clothing store with a new button down shirt. With his cleaned up look, people around him react to his natural handsomeness.

He looks around in pride. Pulls out his phone and dials Lindsey.

JOEY

Hey. Is this Lindsey?

(beat)

Yeah, it's me.

(beat)

Definitely, I'll be there next week. I think it was really good for me... Hey, I was wondering... If you weren't busy now, I thought you might like to meet me for a coffee?

(beat)

Really? I'm down on Melrose I'll be up in a few minutes.

Joey ends the call and takes off at a run.

He dodges past people, takes a turn at the corner and dances across the street. He weaves in and out of traffic. Cars honk.

A mom steps out in front of him with a stroller, he leaps over bench to avoid her and keeps running.

JOEY

Sorry!

Finally he reaches Hollywood Boulevard and comes to a halt. He catches his breath and searches through the crowd.

He spies Lindsey rolling out of a coffee shop in her chair. She has two coffees. He waves and walks over.

LINDSEY
That was quick.

JOEY
You didn't have to do that, I wanted to treat you.

LINDSEY
It's just coffee. Where are we going?

JOEY
Let's just go for a walk.
(looks at her chair)
You know what I mean. I thought we could just enjoy the night.

Joey carries the coffees and they head up the street towards the Mann's Chinese Theater. Her chair squeaks every time the bent wheel rubs the frame.

JOEY
I'm going to get that fixed.

LINDSEY
Don't worry about it. There are better things to spend a hundred dollars on.

A few people notice Joey as they pass. One takes a picture.

LINDSEY
Don't they ever irritate you?

JOEY
The tourists? I hated them when they wouldn't leave me alone, then when my career crashed I hated them for abandoning me. Now? I guess I'm just tired of being angry. I'll take what I can get. You know what I mean?

LINDSEY
I guess so.

A group of people wearing a mix of fantasy and anime costumes catch site of Joey. One wears a centaur costume.

JOEY

Oh shit, Larpers. I take it back,
they're the worst. Turn around.

Joey turns and walks right into...

A massive, heavily tattooed JUICER (30), in a tight UFC T-shirt, and his boy, DYLAN (6).

Joey tries to back away but it's too late...

JUICER

I can't believe it. The fucking
centaur! Check it out, Dylan. This
guy used to be Joey.

JOEY

Still am.

Joey tries to smile. The Juicer pets Joey's back, showing
Dylan.

JUICER

He used to dress up like a horse in
movies.

Joey brushes the Juicer's hand away.

JOEY

Okay, okay. Very funny. Nice to
meet you. Have a good night.

He looks over his shoulder, the Larpers close in. He tries
to leave, but the JUICER grabs his arm.

JUICER

Hey, will you give my boy a ride?

JOEY

I'm on a date here, so why don't
you just move along, okay buddy?

Dylan's face turns red. He tugs his dad's arm.

JUICER

You got a problem bro? I'm just
asking for God damned ride for my
kid.

DYLAN

(crying)
I don't want to!

The Juicer's veins bulge on his muscles.

LINDSEY
Hey! Back off asshole.

JUICER
Why don't you tell wheelie to keep
her mouth shut?

The Juicer shoves her wheelchair with his foot.

One swift punch from Joey sends the Juicer sprawling onto
the sidewalk. He's out for the count.

The crowd that had formed around them cheers. Dylan tries to
wake his dad up. A guy in a superman costume swoops in to
give mouth to mouth. The Juicer moans.

LINDSEY
(smiling)
So this is a date, huh?

JOEY
We should probably leave.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - NIGHT

Joey pushes Lindsey along a sidewalk past nice Hollywood
hills houses. They stop at a spot to look out over the city.

LINDSEY
The guy never knew what hit him. He
was going into full-on roid rage
and you just knocked him flat!

JOEY
I didn't want to.

LINDSEY
He deserved it. He'll never fuck
with you again, that's for sure.

Joey stares out at the city. The lights glitter.

LINDSEY
I've never been to this spot. It's
so quiet.

JOEY
I come up here to get away.

LINDSEY
Do you remember your childhood at
all? Before you came to L.A.?

JOEY

Bits and pieces. Mostly feelings.
We were poor. My mom saved all her
money just to move here. I also
remember a kind of freedom that
I've never had since.

LINDSEY

That's Hollywood. Once it swallows
you up, you're trapped.

JOEY

Until it vomits you out, and you
wish you were back in.

LINDSEY

Would you ever go back? Leave
Hollywood for good?

JOEY

I thought about it when things got
really bad. Now? I don't know.

He looks her in the eyes.

LINDSEY

I think you should stay.

They kiss in front of the full moon.

INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

On the wall there is a movie poster for "Centaur Nights."
Joey, rippling muscles and long blond hair, kisses a fair
maiden.

Joey sleeps on a mattress below the poster.

A KNOCK wakes him up.

MRS. APPLEBAUM (O.S.)

I heard you snoring, I know you're
in there.

JOEY

What do you want, Missus Applebaum?

MRS. APPLEBAUM (O.S.)

It's Friday. You promised me the
rent.

Joey gets up and grabs the stack of cash off the table.

Opens the door.

JOEY

I told you I'd get the money. Why do you always worry so much?

He removes several hundred dollars and hands it over. She counts.

MRS. APPLEBAUM

This covers last month's rent. We're already halfway through this month.

JOEY

Sure, of course. Here you go.

He hands over more. She walks away, leaving him with one hundred dollars.

He shuts the door and makes a call.

JOEY

It's me. What are you doing this afternoon?

(beat)

Great. We're getting your wheel fixed.

(beat)

No, I insist. It's your ninety-days-sober present.

(beat)

Five o'clock? Perfect, I'll swing by your place.

EXT. A BUSY HOLLYWOOD STREET - DAY

Joey and Lindsey pass a crowd in front of a trendy restaurant.

JOEY

Excuse me, lady coming through.

People step aside to make room for Lindsey to pass. PAULO (30's), a slick director with a trendy entourage, turns around.

PAULO

Holy shit, Joey! I thought you died.

JOEY

I've been around. You just never call.

PAULO

It's been crazy busy. I just finished directing Mermaniac, and I've got two more scripts in development. God, I wish there were two of me.

JOEY

Good problem to have, I guess. Hey, I want you to meet Lindsey -

PAULO

The studio said they might be pushing Mermaniac for a Teen Choice award.

Joey looks back to Lindsey. She's getting crowded out as people push toward the restaurant entrance.

JOEY

Well, it was great seeing you. We've got to run.

PAULO

It's early! You got to join us for a quick drink.

TYLER (28), a personal assistant who looks more like a Calvin Klein model, calls back from the entrance.

TYLER

We got our table.

PAULO

Make space for two more...

Paulo stretches to catch a look at Lindsey through the crowd.

PAULO

Just one chair.

They push through. Joey makes his way back to Lindsey.

JOEY

Ten minutes, tops.

INT. TRENDY RESTAURANT

The music pumps. Patrons shout to be heard. Paulo sits at a large corner booth surrounded by his entourage.

Tyler sits on his right. CELINE (18), an attention craving aspiring actress, on his left.

ANTON (38), Hollywood sleaze, sits with his arm around Celine. He laughs too enthusiastically whenever Paulo talks.

Joey and Lindsey are uncomfortably squeezed in next to the table. They lean out of the way when the WAITRESS brings a round of drinks.

PAULO smiles as the stunning Waitress leans over to set down the drinks. He winks at her.

PAULO

I know who I want at my next audition.

ANTON

Hahahaha! That's great!
(To the waitress)
He's serious you know. Call me.
We'll arrange a meet.

He hands her a business card. She's used to this crowd. She smiles politely and leaves.

PAULO

The waitresses here may be ice on the inside, but they are smokin' hot on the outside, right Joey?

ANTON

Hah! Hahahaha! You've got to put that in your next movie!

PAULO

So how did you meet this one?

JOEY

I met Lindsey at a church.

Paulo acts like he's been shot. Anton guffaws.

PAULO

Oh my god. Joey at a church? My entire world-view has just shattered! Let's drink. To Joey going straight!

They all lift their glasses, except Lindsey.

CELINE

Wait. You're not a nun are you?

Joey leans over to Lindsey.

JOEY

(whispers)

Just take a sip, we'll be gone in five minutes.

Lindsey puts on a pretend smile. Reluctantly lifts her glass.

ALL

Cheers!

HOURS LATER

The group listens, enthralled with Lindsey's story. She knocks back a drink of gin and tonic. Sets it down next to several empty glasses.

LINDSEY

So I get in the car, and I'm like, "Where's the fucking roll cage?" The producer says they can't afford one. I say, "you can't afford a seat belt either?" The fucking shoulder belt's been cut out. The stunt coordinator says the last time they tried this stunt the driver was killed. The belt kept him from ducking when the car landed on its roof. Now I'm pissed. What the fuck do you want me to do? He ties a rope to the passenger door handle and says "If you flip, just pull your self down with this rope."

ANTON

Fuck.

CELINE

Is that how you lost your legs?

Paulo leans forward, curious.

Joey loves it.

LINDSEY

Nope. Fucking nailed the flip. If you want to know about my legs, I'm going to need another drink.

Tyler stands up in the booth and WHISTLES loudly.

TYLER

Waitress! Another round!

LATER STILL

Lindsey tries to keep her eyes open. Anton makes out with Celine.

Tyler takes a picture of Joey and Paulo with their arms around each other.

They're all trashed.

PAULO

I missed you, man.

JOEY

We had some epic fucking times!

PAULO

We've gotta do a movie, you know?

JOEY

Totally. How come we never worked together?

PAULO

You were doing that romance shit, but you know what? You're a stud. You should be doing big action.

JOEY

I love action. I always wanted to kick ass on screen.

INT. RESTAURANT BATHROOM - NIGHT

The muffled drums of the music pound through the walls. Photos of drunken girls flashing their breasts in the restaurant decorate the room.

Paulo bursts in through the door. Joey follows with Lindsey. Tyler enters last and locks the door behind them.

He pulls a bag of coke from his pocket. Sets up at the sink.

PAULO
Don't tell my producer. Anton hates
this shit. But fuck it, right? You
only live once.

Paulo does a line.

JOEY
Solid advice.

PAULO
Woo! Go for it.

LINDSEY
Fuck it!

Lindsey grabs the straw. Snorts. She instantly wakes back
up.

Joey momentarily considers what just happened, then shrugs
and dives in.

INT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS MANSION - DAY

Joey wakes up on the floor. His head rests on Tyler's lap
who is passed out on the couch.

He looks around. The house is beautiful, though obviously
trashed from an after-party last night. Bottles on the
floor. Clothes on the furniture.

He calls quietly.

JOEY
Lindsey?

No sign of her.

The sliding glass door is wide open to the backyard. He
stumbles outside and squints in the sun.

He smacks his lips, parched. Grabs a glass from a table and
takes a drink. He cringes and looks in the glass. A
cigarette butt floats in the dirty water.

He pukes into the pool.

Wanders off down the hill.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Joey reads a schedule posted outside the church. There's an N.A. meeting at three PM. He heads in.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - DAY

Joey looks in. The meeting is in progress.

Lindsey sits off to the side. She looks rough. And angry.

Joey makes his way to the circle while everyone stares.

Jeff actually glares at him. He knows exactly what Joey was up to last night.

JEFF

Please continue.

CHILD STAR

When they told me I had to share a dressing room, I just flipped. They couldn't even spare one room?

BIKER

Wait, that's your excuse?

JEFF

We're here to support each other,
not judge.

Joey trips over a metal chair. It CLATTERS loudly to the floor. The noise pounds his headache.

He finds a spot next to the Child Star. Sits.

The kid sniffs. Looks over at Joey's puke stained shirt. Scoots his chair over.

JEFF

Are we all settled?

JOEY

Carry on.

JEFF

So Joey! How long have you been
sober?

JOEY

Are you wearing Lululemons?

Jeff crosses his legs. His tight pants stretch comfortably.

JEFF

Let's focus on you.

JOEY

Alright. My name is Joey and I'm not an addict. I've been sober for about...

He looks at his watch. Laughs.

JOEY

Actually, I think I'm still drunk -

LINDSEY

Why don't I share?

She wheels up to the group.

JEFF

You don't have to...

LINDSEY

Today would have been my ninety-first day sober. Back when I was doing stunts, I used to be able party as hard as anyone on the weekends then kill it at work all week, but then... You've heard of people feeling phantom limbs after an amputation? Well they didn't tell me the phantom limbs would scream like they're on fire. I had to eat Oxys like they were candy. The pain eventually faded, but the pills didn't.

JOEY

I'm sorry...

Lindsey stares at Joey.

LINDSEY

Some people choose do this shit to themselves, it sucks, but you made your own bed. I never asked for it.

Lindsey's face is red. She wheels out of the room.

JOEY

Lindsey, Wait!

Joey scrambles to his feet. His feet slip on the slick linoleum and he falls awkwardly.

He stands up and limps out of the room after her.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Joey catches up to her at the bus stop. The same place where they first met.

He spins her chair around.

JOEY
Will you just talk to me for a
minute?

LINDSEY
Let go of my chair.

He does. Backs away.

JOEY
What was all that in there?

LINDSEY
That's shitty life. I'll always be
an addict. It fucking sucks, but I
have to live with it. You don't.

She turns away.

JOEY
I want to. I like you.

LINDSEY
I busted my ass to stay clean until
last night. You're not good for me.

Joey's phone RINGS. The bus turns the corner and approaches.

LINDSEY
Better answer it. Hollywood's
calling.

The bus pulls up and starts to lower for the wheelchair.

Joey ignores the RINGING.

JOEY
Please. Just give me a chance.

The ramp lifts her up.

LINDSEY
I can't talk to you right now.

The doors close behind her and the bus drives away. Joey's phone RINGS again. The display says "Alan". He answers, annoyed.

JOEY

What!?

(beat)

Why?

(beat)

Okay, fine. I'll be there in a few.

He watches the bus turn a corner. She doesn't look back.

INT. ALAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Joey opens the door.

Paulo sits on the desk chatting with Alan. He stands up, smiles broadly. Holds his arms out for a hug.

PAULO

There he is! My favorite actor!

Joey looks at Alan, confused.

ALAN

Paulo called me up this morning. He had some very interesting things to talk about.

JOEY

(defensive)

Whoa, hang on. I had nothing to do with anything. I was just trying to have a nice date with -

ALAN

No, no. Paulo's here on business.

Paulo laughs heartily.

PAULO

You never change, my friend. Man, I missed you!

JOEY

What's going on?

ALAN

Just listen.

PAULO

Remember those scripts I was developing? Well, you're all wrong for those. But, while those are in the pipe, the studio wants me to take on one of their biggest franchises. Now this one, you'll be perfect for!

Joey looks to Alan to confirm that this is real. Alan nods.

JOEY

What is it? Like a fantasy picture? I'll do any part. Even if it's just a few lines.

ALAN

It's a lead role.

PAULO

Co-starring. It's a sequel to The Littlest Detective.

JOEY

With that kid?

PAULO

Yep. Hayden Lloyd. He is super hot right now.

ALAN

Rising fast.

PAULO

This time he gets assigned a partner.

Alan spreads his arms theatrically.

ALAN

You!

JOEY

That's... great. The studio is on board with this?

PAULO

Absolutely. I told them and they loved the idea!

ALAN

Remember your three-picture deal?

JOEY

That was for the Centaur's Bride trilogy. They said the third one was dead.

ALAN

Turns out, they still have to pay half your fee whether it's made or not. Technically, the contract doesn't actually state the title of the movie. It's win-win.

JOEY

So that's it? No audition or anything?

Paulo roars with laughter again.

PAULO

He's shocked! That's how I roll. I told the studio you ARE this part. Paulo gets what Paulo wants. There are just a couple of little conditions, but otherwise, we're golden!

JOEY

Conditions?

PAULO

Little ones. No big deal. Then we're good to go.

Paulo looks to Alan for clarification.

ALAN

Well, they want you to cut your mullet. I know it's your signature look, but it doesn't work for the movie.

Joey shifts uncomfortably. Touches his hair.

JOEY

And?

ALAN

Lose twenty pounds.

JOEY

Anything else?

ALAN

Your contract contains a... zero tolerance clause. If you do anything that even slightly casts a bad light on the project or the studio, you're fired. No drugs, no public drunkenness, fights... If you even so much as show up one minute late for work, you're fired. That won't be a problem, will it?

JOEY

None at all.

Paulo gives him a bear hug.

EXT. DOM'S HANGOUT

Joey POUNDS on the door. He sweats in the hot So-Cal sun.

JOEY

Open up! Dom!

He knocks again. Nothing.

He backs up, frustrated. No windows or any other way in.

He lifts his leg. Just as he kicks the door starts to open. BAM! The door SLAMS against the wall.

Wade flies across the room.

Joey rushes in. Wade MOANS on the floor.

JOEY

Oh shit, Wade. Are you alright?

WADE

(weakly)
Damn-it Joey...

JOEY

I'm just... I need to talk to Dom.
Is he... I'll go ahead and head on
back.

Wade is too out of it to respond. Joey steps over him.

INT. DOM'S OFFICE

Joey enters. No Dom.

He looks around the office. Shuffles through various porn fetish DVDs. They all have the "Skin King" logo, no straight porn. Joey shudders.

He jumps when the door at the back of the office opens. A tall DOMINATRIX in a full-on latex body suit backs in.

She calls back into the other room.

DOMINATRIX

Where?

DOM (O.S.)

By the dildos!

Joey looks for a place to hide, no luck.

The Dominatrix turns to see him standing there. She gasps.

He picks up a whip from a shelf full of dildos.

JOEY

Looking for this?

DOMINATRIX

(calling)

Dom? The stallion's here!

Dom rushes into the room.

DOM

What do you want? Where's Wade?

JOEY

He uh... He fell down. He's going to be fine. I'm pretty sure.

Dom is behind his desk in two steps. A gun emerges from the drawer. He holds it casually.

DOM

You know I operate by appointment only. How come you never call ahead, Joey?

JOEY

You can't release that video.

DOM

(laughing)

Oh, that's what you're here for? Do you know how many times I've heard that?

(MORE)

DOM (CONT'D)

Don't worry, as soon as it's online, you'll be begging me to shoot another one.

JOEY

No. I mean, I've got a job. I'll give you back the money.

DOM

It's not that easy.

JOEY

I'll pay for the whole shoot. Double. I finally got a chance at another movie. I need this! You just can't let that video get out.

Dom fiddles with his gun.

Aims it at the tile floor in front of Joey and fires. A tile EXPLODES.

Joey leaps back with his hands out.

JOEY

Whoa, whoa!

DOM

Do you know how much sex-tapes are worth? With your name, and your beautiful body? Not to mention the Larpers, they'll go fucking ape shit for this. I can get thirty grand in the U.S., alone. When this hits the Asian markets I'll clear a hundred grand easy. It's porn gold.

JOEY

Can't we just -

Dom aims the guns at Joey's face.

DOM

Get the fuck out.

INT. STUDIO SOUND STAGE - NIGHT

Carpenters hammer away in the background, finishing up the three-quarters set of police station.

Actors gather around a long table, chatting and introducing themselves.

Joey enters. He's sporting a stylish dressy shirt and a sharp new haircut. He looks good.

Paulo spies him and rushes over. He enthusiastically kisses Joey's cheeks.

PAULO

Right on time. I knew you wouldn't let me down.

JOEY

(nervous)
Of course.

PAULO

Hey everyone. Welcome our co-star and my good friend, Joey Rose!

Everyone CLAPS and CHEERS.

Paulo guides Joey to mingle with the group. Celine, the young actress from the bar, greets him with a hug.

INT. SOUND STAGE - LATER

The cast sits around a long table with their scripts. Joey at the end to the left of Paulo.

Paulo takes notes. Occasionally whispers to Anton on his right, who nods in agreement. Anton records the reading with his laptop camera.

HAYDEN, an irritating eleven-year-old, is Shaun, the Littlest Detective.

WILSON (55), a wrinkled, slightly effeminate acting veteran, reads as The Chief.

Celine texts on her phone, totally bored.

SALLY (62), an actress who has spent the later part of her career off-Broadway, reads her lines.

SALLY

George never could handle his wine. It was only a matter of time before he walked off that balcony.

HAYDEN

How do you explain the blood in your apartment?

SALLY

It was George's. After I heard the scream I rushed down to the street to help him. I had his blood on my hands when I went back up to call the police.

PAULO

(reading stage direction)
The Chief knocks.

Wilson knocks on the table. Mocks opening a door.

WILSON

(overly gruff)
Shaun. I need a minute.

HAYDEN

Please wait here, Mrs. Chandler.
(beat)
Her story checks out Chief. Just got word from forensics, his wounds were consistent with blunt force trauma from the fall.

WILSON

Well, I just heard from headquarters. George has important friends. They're sending over an investigator to help with the case.

HAYDEN

What?! This is an open and shut suicide case. It doesn't make any sense.

JOEY

Does it make sense for a man to take a swan dive right after making a fifty-four million dollar business deal?

HAYDEN

Who are they sending?

WILSON

Sam Steel.

HAYDEN

I thought he was suspended?

Joey holds up his page to read.

JOEY

I -

Paulo stands up.

PAULO

Let's break here. Great job today.
Rest up, we shoot tomorrow!

Anton stops the video recording.

Wilson leads the group in self-congratulatory applause. His tough chief demeanor disappears, replaced by a slight effeminate British accent.

WILSON

Oh wonderful! I love this script,
Paulo.

SALLY

Hayden, you are just as cute as a
button. Everyone was fantastic.

Hayden rolls his eyes as she pinches his cheek.

HAYDEN

Of course I was good. I've done
three of these already. I am Shaun.

CELINE

When is my line?

Anton puts his arm around her.

ANTON

You'll have to read the script to
find out sweetie.

Joey sneaks away to graze at the food table, too nervous to schmooze. He eyes all of the good food and desserts. Reluctantly grabs a carrot to eat.

Looks back, everyone is still congratulating themselves.

He takes out his phone and checks it. The chat window consists entirely of texts from him with no responses from Lindsey.

"Hey", "U There?", "Hey", "What are you up to?", "Call me."

Pulls up Lindsey's number and tries calling. No answer.

PAULO

Enjoying the snacks?

JOEY

I've never seen so much goat
cheese.

PAULO

You're going to be great.

JOEY

I love the script.

Paulo leans in and speaks so the others can't hear.

PAULO

Just don't fuck it up. I'm counting
on you.

Paulo slaps Joey on the back.

Joey watches Paulo walk away. He looks back at the table.
Empties a plate of cookies into his backpack. Packs away an
unopened bottle of sparkling juice.

He checks his messages again. Nothing.

Then he remembers the "Find my Friends" app. Searches for
Lindsey. A locator appears on the map. She's headed down a
street.

He rushes out.

EXT. A HOLLYWOOD STREET - DAY

Joey spies Lindsey at a crosswalk. She works her way across
the street, slowed up by a crowd of tourists pushing past
her. The light turns green before she reaches the sidewalk.

An impatient ASSHOLE in a convertible lays on his HORN.

Lindsey stops in front of him and SLAMS her hand on his
hood.

LINDSEY

Fuck yourself to hell, asshole!

ASSHOLE

How about you move your crippled
ass off the street, bitch!

She turns her chair to face the car. She's not moving.

Asshole puts his car into reverse. The car behind him edges
up so he can't maneuver. Honks. Traffic starts to pile up.

LINDSEY
My crippled ass is fine right here.

Joey runs up, out of breath.

JOEY
Lindsey!

LINDSEY
Oh, fucking wonderful.

ASSHOLE
Hey "Lindsey", your stud's here.
You can fuck off now.

Joey glares at the Asshole. Flips him off.

LINDSEY
What do you want?

JOEY
I need to talk to you.

ASSHOLE
How about you and your girlfriend
talk somewhere else?

Joey slaps the hood of the car as a warning.

JOEY
I've been trying to call you. I'm
sorry about the other night. It got
out of control. I swear it won't
happen again.

LINDSEY
I can't be around you. We aren't
good for each other.

The Asshole HONKS his horn.

JOEY
I'm going to kick the shit out of
this guy!

LINDSEY
I don't need your help. Just leave
alright?

ASSHOLE
Both of you fucking leave.

Lindsey swings a bag a groceries down hard, denting his
hood. This time he lays on his HORN without letting go.

Joey walks around to the driver, reaches in and slams the Asshole's head against the steering wheel. The horn stops.

LINDSEY
I can handle myself!

JOEY
Okay. I won't get involved.

Joey bounces the Asshole's head off the wheel again. HONK.

JOEY
I'm going.

He slams the guy back against the seat.

Lindsey reluctantly cracks a smile.

LINDSEY
Don't mess with me Joey. I can't
have my heart broken again.

JOEY
I won't bother you anymore.

The Asshole tries to push the door open. Ready for a fight.

Joey tries to hold it shut, but the Asshole is pushes his way out.

JOEY
Hang on...

Joey quickly pulls the door open and the Asshole falls out onto the street. Joey steps on his back to hold him down.

Lindsey cracks up.

Police SIRENS approach in the distance.

LINDSEY
I think we should go now.

JOEY
Yep!

Joey comes around and pushes her wheelchair to the sidewalk. They take off down the street.

EXT. SANTA MONICA PIER - SUNSET

They lay on the beach by the pier. Lindsey's wheelchair is parked in the sand next to them. She rests her head on Joey's chest.

He unscrews the bottle of sparkling grape juice that he had taken from the set and hands it to her.

JOEY

Promise you won't leave me again?

LINDSEY

I swear. But now you're stuck with me for life.

Joey holds her tight and kisses her.

LINDSEY

I wish my high school friends could see me now.

Joey watches a homeless man in Speedos pull a partially eaten sandwich from a trashcan and walk away.

JOEY

Livin' the dream.

She sits up and turns to him.

LINDSEY

I'm serious. Right now, they're probably all back in my boring old bumfuck backwater hometown working in a ketchup factory. Here I am, laying on a beach in California with my movie star boyfriend.

JOEY

Pshh. Not quite.

LINDSEY

You will be soon.

JOEY

I'm not so sure about that.

LINDSEY

So it's a shitty movie. It's a stepping-stone to bigger and better.

JOEY
It's not the movie I'm worried
about.

LINDSEY
Come on, they're going to love you.

Joey stands up.

JOEY
Doesn't matter. I've already fucked
it up. Like I always do.

He turns away. Ashamed.

LINDSEY
What aren't you telling me?

JOEY
They told me "one mistake..."

LINDSEY
Oh Joey. What did you do?

JOEY
It was before I even got the job.
Before we were dating.

LINDSEY
(worried)
What was? If you really love me,
you have to tell me everything.

Joey hesitates. Afraid to tell her the truth.

JOEY
There's this drug dealer, Dom.

LINDSEY
The Skin King?

JOEY
You know that asshole?

LINDSEY
What can I say? I used to buy a lot
of drugs. What does he have on you?

JOEY
A video.

LINDSEY
Oh shit. That kind of video?

He hangs his head.

LINDSEY
Ohhhh...

JOEY
I'm sorry. I screw everything up.

Joey tries to hide the tears in his eyes.

She doesn't know what to think. She doesn't blame him... She shakes it off. Determined to support him.

LINDSEY
We have to destroy it. If that comes out, your career is done.

JOEY
Don't you think I already tried!?
It's just all fucked.

He turns away.

LINDSEY
Do you want to blow this chance?
You can't just give up like you always do.

This stings. He stops for a moment. Then leaves. Ashamed.

LINDSEY
I didn't mean that! Joey!

Her wheelchair is stuck in the sand. She can't catch him.

She pounds the beach with her fist. The last light of the sun disappears below the horizon.

EXT. DOM'S HANGOUT - DAY

BANG, BANG, BANG! Lindsey pounds on Dom's door.

LINDSEY
Open this goddamned door or I'm
burning this place to the ground
you piece of shit whore abortion -

The door flies open. Wade sticks his head out and looks around. He pulls her chair inside.

WADE
Just shut up and get in here!

INT. DOM'S OFFICE - DAY

Dom nods at Wade from his desk.

DOM
Give us a minute.

Wade leaves and shuts the door behind him.

Dom pours a glass of whiskey and offers it to Lindsey.

LINDSEY
I don't drink anymore, Dom.

Dom shakes his head and sets the drink on the desk.

DOM
What is happening in this town? You
used to be one of my best
customers.

LINDSEY
What can I say? I've turned a new
leaf.

DOM
Okay. So why were you at my door
yelling like a crack queen on fire?

LINDSEY
You shot a video with Joey.

Dom smiles. He loves being in a power position. He slides the whiskey back toward her.

DOM
Ah. So you and Joey are a thing?
You know I can't discuss business
with someone who won't even have a
drink with me?

LINDSEY
I told you I can't.

DOM
So you don't truly love him?

Lindsey stares at the glass.

She leans over and picks up the drink. Defiant.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

The guard lets Joey onto the lot.

He strolls dejectedly through the alleys until he reaches the sound stage.

The cast and crew are outside, getting ready for the first day of shooting.

Paulo spies him and approaches. He calls back over his shoulder.

PAULO

Breanna!

(to Joey)

Glad you showed up! Let's shoot this piece of shit, then we'll both be on to bigger and better. Ah, here she is!

Breanna (mid-20s), a no-nonsense make up artist on her way up the ladder, eyes Joey with skepticism.

PAULO

Breanna, this is Joey. Bree's the best makeup artist I've ever worked with. She'll show you to your trailer and make you look like incredible. See you on set.

Paulo rushes away before Joey can even speak.

JOEY

So...

BREANNA

Come on.

She walks. Joey hurries after her.

EXT. JOEY'S TRAILER - DAY

Joey's trailer is the smallest model. Dwarfed next to Hayden's massive luxury trailer.

BREANNA

I'm not happy about this, but it'll have to work.

They enter.

INT. JOEY'S TRAILER - DAY

A makeup table and well-lit mirror are crammed next to a small couch.

Breanna looks him up and down. Shakes her head.

BREANNA

First scene's on the beach. Lose the shirt.

Joey strips down. She pokes his protruding gut. Pinches his back fat.

JOEY

It's really hard to lose twenty pounds. Is there anything you can do?

BREANNA

It won't be easy, but that's what they pay me for.

She looks at her watch and sighs.

INT. DOM'S OFFICE - DAY

Lindsey leans back on the couch. Her eyes at half-mast.

Dom has his arm around her. Like a creepy friend.

LINDSEY

I don't know what it is. I love him you know? He has this energy about him, but at the same time he's this mysterious dark creature that needs to be saved...

Dom laughs.

DOM

I still can't believe it. You and Joey. It's so perfect. You sure you two don't want to work for me?

LINDSEY

No! He belongs on the big screen. You should have seen him when he was with that director guy. He just lit up.

DOM

We'd be making movies. Look, I've already got a cover designed for Joey's debut.

He shows her a one-sheet printout of "Broke Ass Mountain."

Joey is green-screened on all fours in front of a desert mountain. A greasy looking man with a beard and a cowboy hat stands behind him with a whip.

Lindsey shudders.

LINDSEY

I'm serious. This is his only chance for a comeback. If you release that video it won't just kill his career. It'll destroy him.

DOM

I'm not a bad guy -

LINDSEY

I know you're not...

Lindsey drunkenly reassures him. He takes a drink.

DOM

But it's business. I paid him well for it, and he had no problem taking my money.

LINDSEY

That was before he got this job. He can pay you back.

DOM

Do you realize just how much I can with Joey? I could finally get out of dealing drugs. Maybe I'll go legit and be a director.

LINDSEY

Name the price. We'll pay it.

Dom looks her over. Runs his hand down her arm.

DOM

Okay. But I'll need some insurance to hold you to your word.

Lindsey hangs her head. She nods.

INT. JOEY'S TRAILER - DAY

Breanna has worked her magic. Joey's hair is perfectly styled. Makeup highlights his star quality features.

She puts the finishing touches onto 300-style stomach makeup that makes Joey look like he has a six-pack.

Joey checks himself out in the mirror. He's looking good. Then he lets his stomach relax. The gut comes back.

BREANNA

Just suck it in for the beach scene. I'll get you a girdle.

JOEY

You are an artist. I don't know if it'll matter after today, but thank you.

He steps out of the trailer and squints in the sun. A production assistant ushers the cast into the sound stage.

Joey's phone CHIMES. He reaches back into the trailer and picks it up. He reads a text.

LINDSEY (TEXT)

Dom will sell the video back! It'll be pricey, but then you're clear. Kick ass on your shoot today!

Joey punches the air. He can't believe she did it!

JOEY (TEXT)

Nice! How did you swing that?

The PA waves Joey to the set. He puts the phone back in the trailer, sucks in his stomach, stands tall and hurries over.

INT. DOM'S HANGOUT - DAY

Lindsey slumps down on the couch, barely aware. Dom takes the cell phone from her hand and turns it off. Lays it on the coffee table next to a heroin needle.

DOM

Good girl.

He gets up and pushes a button on his desk. Seconds later Wade enters.

DOM

We're going to shoot the greasiest gangbang ever seen.

WADE

What people will do for love...

DOM

Well, to be honest she thinks it'll be a solo photo shoot, but you know how these things evolve.

He picks up a pair of handcuffs and smiles.

DOM

Start calling the boys. We need every actor we have.

WADE

How about Homeless Tony from the alley?

Dom puts his hand on Wade's shoulder.

DOM

This is why you're my second. You're always thinking. Get to work. We shoot tomorrow afternoon.

Wade heads out. Lindsey stirs and mumbles something incomprehensible.

He sits back down and strokes her hair.

DOM

You're going to be a star, baby.

EXT. SOUND STAGE - DAY

Joey and the rest of the cast and crew line up at the catering truck for lunch. Everyone is optimistic.

Wilson pats Joey on the back.

WILSON

My dear boy I must say it's a pleasure watching you work.

JOEY

Well, you make a great chief.

SALLY

The casting is brilliant. Having the overly masculine Joey as the partner both compliments and exacerbates the challenges faced by a child detective working in a man's world.

HAYDEN

It was my idea.

BANG. The sound stage door slams open. Paulo emerges and heads straight toward the cast. They shuffle nervously.

PAULO

Joey!

Joey looks to the others for support. Paulo stops and looks him straight in the eyes.

PAULO

I made a huge mistake with you...

Everyone holds their breath.

PAULO

I should have been casting you in all of my movies. You're not a romance actor, you're an action hero!

Everyone breathes a sigh of relief. The cast and crew break out in APPLAUSE and congratulations.

INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Joey looks around his depressing apartment. It's quiet. He clears a spot on the table and sets down a beautiful gift basket.

Checks his phone. No texts.

He calls. No answer.

He tries Alan, who picks up after the first ring.

ALAN (V.O.)

There's my boy! They loved you today! We're back in the game!

JOEY

Feels great. And hey, I can afford my rent now!

ALAN (V.O.)
Rent? Hell, you'll own a house in
the hills.

Joey smiles at the thought.

JOEY
You haven't seen Lindsey have you?

ALAN (V.O.)
No, everything alright?

JOEY
I just haven't heard from her all
day. I'm starting to -

There is a KNOCK at the door. Lindsey rolls in, looking
tired.

JOEY
Never mind, here she is.

ALAN (V.O.)
Fantastic. Call me if you need
anything. Any time, alright? I'm
here for you baby.

Joey puts the phone down. Excited to see Lindsey.

JOEY
Where have you been? How'd you get
Dom to not release the video?

She sets her purse on the table.

LINDSEY
I told him you'd agree to pay a
hundred grand to destroy it.

JOEY
A hundred grand! That's almost my
whole fee for the film.

LINDSEY
You'll have money left over,
royalties and a career.

JOEY
What an asshole.

LINDSEY
That's how he makes money. You
never should have gone to him.

JOEY

I guess you're right. I should be thanking you.

He tries to hug her, but she shrugs away.

JOEY

What's the matter?

LINDSEY

It's just been a long day.

JOEY

Let's celebrate. Any restaurant you want.

LINDSEY

I just want to go straight to sleep tonight. You can go out if you want.

She rolls into the bathroom and shuts the door. He stares after her, suspicious.

He looks through her purse. Nothing strange.

Makes a call on his cell phone.

JOEY

(whispering)

Alan. I need a favor...

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

It's a beautiful morning. Joey strolls along with Lindsey, carrying two coffees. He hands her a cup when they reach the sound stage.

JOEY

You sure you don't want to hang out and watch today? We're shooting the climax.

LINDSEY

(smiling)

No, this is your thing. I want you to be able to focus.

JOEY

I'll be thinking of you all day.

Anton walks by with his arm around Celine, who looks incredible in a sundress. They're all smiles.

ANTON

Hey Joey, come on. Big day!

Joey tries to put his arm around Lindsey. She looks away.

JOEY

You still like me?

LINDSEY

Of course. I'll miss you too.

JOEY

Are you sure everything's alright?

LINDSEY

I'm just tired. Have a great shoot today. You're going to nail it.

He bends to kiss her. She gives him a small peck.

Joey watches her roll away. Takes out his phone. Calls.

JOEY

She's on her way.

INT. CAR - DAY

Alan sits in an older SUV outside the studio gate. He wears sunglasses and a baseball cap. Very inconspicuous.

ALAN

I see her.

He takes a bite of a fast food breakfast sandwich. Watches her catch a bus.

JOEY (V.O.)

(over phone)

I owe it to her to make sure she doesn't start using again. Let me know if she does anything suspicious. What's she doing now?

ALAN

Getting on a bus. You just focus on your job. I'll text you updates.

He hangs up. Takes a last bite. Crumples the wrapper and tosses it onto a pile of garbage on the passenger seat.

Starts the car.

INT. SOUND STAGE - POLICE STATION SET - LATER

An elaborate hillside set has been built with a massive green screen behind it.

Joey stands on his mark while someone holds a light meter in front of him. Paulo watches the monitor and discusses the shot with Anton.

Joey's phone CHIMES. He checks his texts.

ALAN (TEXT)
She's getting off the bus.

JOEY (TEXT)
Where?

PAULO
Joey! Look up!

Joey straightens up. Holds his phone high. CHIME.

ALAN (TEXT)
Sketchy neighborhood.

Breanna approaches. Touches up a forehead wound with fresh prop blood.

JOEY (TEXT)
What's she doing now?

Joey waits for a response while Breanna works on messing up his hair and dirtying his face. Finally another CHIME.

ALAN (TEXT)
She's heading into an alley.

JOEY (TEXT)
What alley?

Joey grows impatient.

Hayden approaches and lays on the grass in front of Joey. Breanna adjusts his costume and adds a drip of blood to the corner of his mouth. CHIME.

ALAN (TEXT)
She's knocking on a door.

JOEY (TEXT)
What door? Describe it.

PAULO
Alright, let's do this.

ANTON
Quiet on the set!

CHIME.

ALAN (TEXT)
I don't know. It's a door.

JOEY (TEXT)
*Is there a homeless guy sleeping in
the alley? Call me.*

PAULO
Joey! Put the phone away!

He reluctantly drops the phone into his empty gun holster.

Fog machines start up. Rain and leaves start to fall. Giant fans are turned on.

PAULO
Roll cameras.

CAMERA GUY (O.S.)
Rolling!

SOUND GUY (O.S.)
Sound Speed!

PAULO
Action.

MOVIE SCENE

Joey stands atop a mountain, the city lights below. A storm whips the rain fog and leaves around him. He looks at Shaun's body on the ground. Yells in anguish.

JOEY
Shaun. Shaun!

PAULO (O.S.)
Louder!

JOEY
Shaun!!

PAULO (O.S.)
Again! Keep going! More passion!

JOEY
Shaun! Shauun!! Shaun!!!! Shaun!
SHAUNNNN!!! **SHAAAAAUN!!!**

His phone RINGS. He answers.

ALAN (V.O.)
(over the phone)
Someone just answered.

PAULO
Cut! Joey, what the fuck?!

JOEY
Hang on!
(into the phone)
Who? What does he look like?

The storm dies down.

Paulo and Anton argue with each other off screen.

ALAN (V.O.)
Like a wrestler.

JOEY
Wade. Fuck! She's at her dealer's.

ALAN (V.O.)
I told you she was bad news.

JOEY
She needs help.

ALAN (V.O.)
I'm done. You need to decide what's
more important, your career or a
girl you can't trust. Some people
you just can't fix.

Joey hangs up. Paulo stomps over.

PAULO
Do we have a problem here?

JOEY
No.

PAULO
I need you to focus. I'm trusting
you. Is this about that legless
girl?

JOEY
I'm fine, let's get this over with.

PAULO
Don't blow this for her. You're
finally back on top.

(MORE)

PAULO (CONT'D)
Stick with me and the women will be
throwing themselves at you. Legs
and everything.

Paulo turns to walk away.

JOEY
Hey!

Paulo stops. Looks back.

Joey stares him in the eye.

JOEY
Fuck you.

Joey walks out.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Joey watches several men enter Dom's place. He makes sure
there are no more, then runs up.

INT. DOM'S HANGOUT - CONTINUOUS

Joey opens the door slowly. Peaks inside. No one there.
He steps in. Heads down the hallway to...

INT. DOM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Joey finds Lindsey on the couch. Passed out. He quickly
checks the bathroom. No one there.

He listens at the door to the warehouse. Men TALK and LAUGH
on the other side.

He leans down. Shakes Lindsey.

JOEY
(urgent whisper)
Lindsey! Wake up!

She doesn't move. He picks up a needle from the coffee
table. Inspects it.

JOEY
What did you do...

The CHATTER in the other room quiets down. The doorknob
RATTLES, then pauses. He faintly hears Dom's voice.

DOM (O.S.)
Who's ready to start?

CHEERS and HOOTS erupt.

Joey scrambles into the bathroom. Leaves the door open a crack. He spies as Wade and Dom enter the office.

Joey texts Alan.

JOEY (TEXT)
*I'm at Dom's. Lindsey's been
drugged. Need a ride NOW. Hurry!*

Dom slaps Lindsey's cheek.

DOM
She's still out cold. How much did
you give her?

WADE
She'll wake up soon. Can't wait to
see her face when she does.

Wade walks toward the bathroom.

DOM
What are you doing?

WADE
I gotta take a piss.

DOM
Later. Help me carry her in.

Joey's cell phone CHIMES with a text.

Wade and Dom both look.

Wade throws open the bathroom door. Stands face to face with
Joey. His fist flies straight into Joey's nose.

The lights go out.

INT. DOM'S WAREHOUSE - DAY

Joey blinks. The room slowly comes into focus...

Fifteen men in revealing ogre and goblin costumes stand
around a Middle Earth style film set.

These men are disgusting. Greasy old dudes, bikers, drug addicts, male prostitutes. Some too fat. Some too skinny... Just nasty.

Joey tries to move, but he is tied down. His mouth gagged.

LINDSEY
(groggily)
What are you doing here?

He turns his head. Lindsey lies suspended, face up in the sex swing. She's wearing a sexy princess dress. Elf ears stick out from a long red wig held on by a silver headpiece.

DOM
They're awake! Let's get this party started.

The crowd erupts in CHEERS. They start to CHANT.

CROWD
Speech! Speech! Speech!

Dom holds up his hands, flattered. His robe falls open, showing red briefs underneath.

DOM
Alright, alright. I want to thank all of you for your support my new, growing porn empire.

Joey struggles with the ropes. Tries to SHOUT through the gag.

DOM
And of course this wouldn't be possible without our willing and adventurous participants. The famous Joey Rose and Lindsey Legless!

APPLAUSE.

DOM
In fact, Joey was here filming just last week. He's already back for more punishment.

LAUGHTER. The crowd's excitement builds.

DOM
Don't worry. We already have safe words worked out in advance. I'll stop you if I hear them.

(MORE)

DOM (CONT'D)
 Until then, they want you to know
 not to hold back. The more brutal
 the better.

Lindsey tries to lift her head. Her eyes roll back.

LINDSEY
 (weakly)
 No. I don't wanna...

DOM
 She's already in character! Are you
 ready?!? Roll the cameras! In
 five...

Joey closes his eyes.

DOM
 Four..

Joey's lips start to move in silent prayer...

DOM
 THREE... TWOOO!...

BANG! The door SLAMS open. Alan walks in with a handgun
 aimed at the crowd.

ALAN
 Nobody move!

Dead silence.

ALAN
 Untie them. Now!

Two men hurry over to untie Joey and Lindsey.

Dom slowly backs up to the props table. His hand feels
 around for his handgun that's sitting amongst the sex toys.

ALAN
 Help her up!

The men lift her up and hand her to Joey, who cradles her in
 his arms. She holds on tight. Her dress drapes down.

Dom's hand BUMPS the gun on the table. It CLATTERS.

Alan swings to aim at Dom.

Simultaneously, Dom raises his arm to aim at Alan.

BANG!!!

A single SHOT reverberates through the room. Alan and Dom stare at each other.

Dom looks in his hand. He holds a black dildo. The gun is still on the table. He looks down. A bloodstain spreads across his underwear. Dom drops the dildo.

Alan drops his gun to the ground, in shock.

DOM
You shot me!

ALAN
Run!

Alan turns and bolts. Joey slams through the crowd with Lindsey and follows Alan.

Dom swoons as the pain sets in.

DOM
Fucking get him!!

Fifteen nearly naked men rush for the door.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Alan dives into the SUV. Joey throws open the passenger door. Puts Lindsey in.

JOEY
Meet me at the studio! GO!

Alan starts the engine.

Joey turns and punches the first person to exit the door. The huge biker falls, blocking the door.

Joey runs down the alley in the opposite direction. Diverts attention from Alan's SUV as he races away.

JOEY
Over here! Come get me!

Wade pushes his way out and FIRES a handgun at Joey, who ducks around the corner just in time.

Wade waves his gun at the others.

WADE
Bring him back here or you're all dead!

Some run after Joey, others race for their cars.

Dom stumbles out, gun in hand. Dizzy from blood loss.

WADE

You need a hospital.

DOM

(through gritted teeth)

I want Joey! Let's go.

Wade helps him into a black muscle car. Jumps behind the wheel.

He guns it and they take off after Joey. The men in the alley dive out of the way.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Joey races down the street. Looks back.

Several men run onto the street from the alley. Wade's car ROARS as it barrels out next. They weave in and out of traffic, gaining on Joey.

Joey turns the corner. Traffic is backed up.

JOEY

Shit!

He jumps up and runs over the tops of the cars. Leaving smashed windows and irate drivers behind him.

Joey jumps to the sidewalk. Looks back.

Several cars skid to a stop, blocked by traffic.

Wade's car races down the sidewalk. People dive out of the way.

Dom leans out his window and fires his gun.

Windows shatter in front of Joey. Bullets hit parked cars.

He reaches a residential area and turns into a yard. Leaps a fence.

Wade screeches to a stop. Dom waves for the others to turn around and flank the neighborhood.

WADE

(yelling)

Head him off!

EXT. BACKYARDS AND STREETS - INTERCUT BOTH SIDES

Joey jumps the fences like hurdles. Shocking the occasional dog or homeowner.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Joey reaches the next street and heads across.

HONK! BAM! A car nails him. He goes down hard.

Rubs his left leg. Wade's muscle car rounds the corner up ahead.

He struggles to his feet.

He tries to jump another fence, but slams into it, his weak leg isn't strong enough. Wade's car screeches to a stop in front of Joey.

Two other cars box him in. Half naked men get out and block his exit. Pedestrians scatter.

Dom limps out with his gun.

DOM

It was just a video, asshole!

JOEY

You can hurt me and degrade me, but you never should have fucked with Lindsey.

Dom staggers. Lowers his gun as he grabs the car for balance.

DOM

You idiot. I knew Lindsey before she lost her legs. She was a dirty slut then and she always will be.

Joey runs straight at Dom.

Dom raises his gun and fires. His aim is wild but one bullet hits Joey as he barrels into Dom, knocking him to the ground.

Joey grabs Dom's head and slams it to the ground. It makes a sickening crack.

Wade pales in shock at the sound. Half naked men and onlookers stare with their mouths open.

SIRENS approach in the distance.

Joey runs.

Wade runs to Dom and kneels by his lifeless body. He tears up. Looks around helplessly.

WADE

What are you waiting for!?

No one moves. This has gone way too far.

Wade picks up the gun and fires after Joey. BANG! BANG!

WADE

Get him!

They get back in their cars and PEEL OUT.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

Joey limps up to the gate of the studio. Leaves a trail of blood drips on the street.

GUARD

Holy shit, Joey! What the hell happened?

JOEY

Had an accident. Have you seen Alan?

GUARD

Yes sir. He's waiting for you by the sound stage.

JOEY

Good.

Joey walks past the gate.. The guard calls after him.

GUARD

Can I call you an ambulance?

JOEY

I'm fine.

EXT. SOUND STAGE - DAY

Alan waits by his SUV. He looks up to see Joey stumbling toward him.

ALAN

Oh my god! We have to get you to a hospital!

JOEY

No. They'll find me there. I'll be alright.

ALAN

Come on. I've got a first aid kit.

Alan leads Joey to the SUV and helps him in.

INT. SUV - DAY

Lindsey waits in the back seat. She's still a little groggy, but looks stronger.

LINDSEY

You've been shot!

JOEY

It's nothing...

He leans back in pain.

Alan pulls a first aid kit out of the back hatch and brings it to Joey.

LINDSEY

We need to get the bullet out first.

Alan looks helpless. Lindsey reaches over and takes out a pair of large tweezers and a bottle of alcohol.

JOEY

She's got this. Just get us out of town.

ALAN

Do you need anything from your apartment? Your memoirs?

JOEY

Never got past the first page.

LINDSEY

Where are we going to go?

ALAN

Don't worry about a thing. I've got a place.

Alan closes the door.

Lindsey pulls off Joey's shirt and looks at his wound. He took a bullet in the shoulder.

LINDSEY

Oh Joey. I'm so sorry -

JOEY

He didn't hit anything important.

He winces as she wipes the blood away.

She hugs him. He cringes in pain. Hugs her back. Tight.

The SUV moves.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Distant sirens WAIL in every direction.

Alan inches out to the street. He checks both ways carefully before pulling out. It looks clear.

He turns onto the road.

INT. DRUG DEALER'S CAR - DAY

A shirtless, skinny DRUG DEALER covered in prison tattoos watches from an old beater of a car. Picks up his phone.

DRUG DEALER

I found them. They're leaving the studio. Heading east in an SUV.

INT. WADE'S CAR - DAY

Wade weaves through traffic. Yells at his phone.

WADE

Don't let them out of your sight.

He slams on the brakes. Spins 180 degrees to a stop in the opposite lane. Cars SCREECH to a halt to avoid hitting him.

He looks over at Dom's body sitting in the passenger seat.

WADE

I'm want to kill him myself.

He guns it.

EXT. WADE'S CAR - DAY

The rear tires SQUEAL as they spin on the asphalt. Smoke fills the air. The car ROARS away.

INT. ALAN'S SUV - DAY

Alan weaves through the city streets. Traffic is painfully slow. He turns onto the on-ramp for the eastbound freeway.

Only then does he see the flashing police car lights at the top of the ramp. Too late to turn around.

An officer checks inside each car before letting them past.

Alan inches forward. Starting and stopping.

In the back seat, Joey rests his head in Lindsey's lap, his eyes almost closed. His lower wounds are bandaged.

Lindsey carefully digs for the bullet in his arm with the tweezers.

The SUV lurches forward. The tweezers poke into the bullet hole. Joey cringes.

LINDSEY

What's going on out there?

ALAN

Police check. Stay down.

They duck down.

LINDSEY

They can't blame you. The studio has lawyers. They'll protect you.

JOEY

No. I quit.

LINDSEY

Joey! What about your career.

JOEY

I don't care about that anymore. Everything in this city is fake. You're the only real thing in my life.

She kisses him.

He touches a bruise on her cheek.

JOEY
I'm sorry I got you into this.

LINDSEY
Shh.

She comforts him.

EXT. ALAN'S SUV - DAY

Alan approaches the roadblock, sweating. Rolls down his window.

Officer Chanskie walks up. Recognition.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
Alan.

ALAN
Hi Officer Chanskie. Everything alright?

OFFICER CHANSKIE
There was a shoot out on Santa Monica Boulevard. One person dead. Know anything about it?

Alan puts his hands up. He knows he's done.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
You ask me whoever killed the guy did the world a favor. He was one of the worst.

Just then a throaty engine RUMBLE catches their attention. Wade's black muscle car comes to a stop at the bottom of the ramp. It waits.

Officer Chanskie's hand goes to his holster.

Two more cars pull up and wait by Wade's car. Chanskie eyes them, then looks in the back seat.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
You have somewhere to hide out?

ALAN
I have a little place.

OFFICER CHANSKIE
Have a nice trip. Don't come back.

He pats the door. Straightens up and talks to his radio.

OFFICER CHANSKIE

This is officer Chanskie. I'm going
to need some backup at -

Alan merges onto the freeway. Drives off into the distance.

DRIVING MONTAGE

City turns to desert...

Desert to Farmland...

Farms to Mountains...

The SUV winds through canyons and forests.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

A modest log house sits on a grassy hill that slopes gently down to a beautiful blue lake. Snow capped mountains stand majestically in the distance.

Lindsey sits in a chair on the porch. A knitted shawl keeps her warm in the cool mountain air.

Alan joins her from the cabin. Hands her a warm cup of coffee. She holds it with both hands and breathes in the steam.

They quietly look out at the expanse of land. Joey sits on a boulder overlooking a lake.

ALAN

So much for Hollywood dreams. Is he
going to be okay?

LINDSEY

Yeah. We all are.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Sunlight breaks through the clouds. Joey looks up at the sky, basking in the warmth.

He turns to look at the cabin and sees Lindsey and Alan.

Smiles and waves.

Finally free.

FADE OUT.