The Scorsese Club

by

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FADE IN:

INT.  REX’S GARAGE - DAY

BANG!  BANG!  BANG!

BEN FLANAGAN(12), dressed in a tuxedo, wildly fires an M60 machine gun. The gun weighs about as much as he does.

CHUCK MILLS(13), dressed in fatigues with belts of ammunition wrapped around his body, acrobatically evades the bullets while returning fire with a shotgun.

DIMITRI SMOLOLVONAKOV(13), also in fatigues, throws a grenade at the action.

BOOM! Smoke smothers the room. When it clears, Ben and Chuck are on the ground, machine guns aimed at each other.

CHUCK
It’s over, scumbag. Surrender.

BEN
Oh, well...uh...line?

REX(O.S.)
Cut!

REX MORGAN(13), a kid in a black beret, puts down his video camera and storms onto the scene.

The other guys remove their costumes:

Ben is fair skinned and slender.

Chuck is athletic, could bench press a mule.

Dimitri is tall, lanky, looks like a space cadet.

CARA, a golden retriever, lays off to the side. The white on her snout shows her age.

REX
No, no, NOOOOOO!

Rex chucks his script across the room in aggravation, then kicks a fog machine that’s set off to the side.

REX
You clearly haven’t been doing your two hours of nightly required script reading. I expect that kind of dedication outta you!

(MORE)
REX (CONT'D)
Do you have any idea as to how much blood and sweat I’ve put into this?

Rex gets into Chuck’s face.

REX
And you! How many times do I have to say it? You can’t smile and you can’t look at the camera!

CHUCK
Sorry.

REX
Uh huh. See I don’t think you are.

CHUCK
But this story doesn’t make sense, Rex. Why is Dimitri playing a weapons specialist yet he blows up the room while he’s in it? How is the audience supposed to buy that?

REX
This is an art house film, dude! It doesn’t have to make sense!

Rex points to a framed movie poster on the wall; SWITCHBLADE SEVEN. Its art includes explosions and guys with guns.

REX
Great direction makes great movies! My dad knew it, my granddad knew it, and I know it! It’s inherited!

CHUCK
What was your dad’s name again?

REX
Rexisis Galileo Morgan the third.

Chuck chuckles.

REX
Yeah. L-O-L. That’s all you’re good for, Mills. Why do you guys even bother coming over?

DIMITRI
Yeah, guys, the proof is in the pudding.

Rex drops his arms in bewilderment.
REX
I don’t even know what to say to you anymore, Dimitri. I can’t even understand what the heck you’re saying half the time! You make about as much sense as a baked potato!

BEN
Relax, Rex! We just wanna have some fun.

REX
F-fun?! You think this is supposed to be fun? You think Scorsese has time for fun on any of his sets? Huh? Well, do ya? Huh? Huh? Do ya? Lemme tell you something, Flanagan; this is a business and if you wanna make it in Hollywood then you better shape up that half-deflated thing you call an outlook on life!

BEN
We’re not going to Hollywood and I’m pretty sure you aren’t either.

REX
Ben, could you and your poor attitude please step into my office for a second?

Confused, Ben simply takes a step forward. Rex yells.

REX
You’re fired! All of you! Now get out! And take your dumb dog, too!

Chuck, Dimitri, and Ben with Cara exit the front door.

REX
You’ll all be sorry for screwing around on my set! I’ll have y’all blacklisted!

Dimitri peeks his head back inside.

DIMITRI
Can I use your bathroom?

REX
Get out!

Startled, Dimitri bumps his head as he slides back out.
EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

The group walks along a quiet upper-middle class suburban street. Cara’s on a leash.

BEN
His dad made the one movie like 15 years ago. He talks like he’s the son of Spielberg or something.

CHUCK
I think your dad did way more than his dad did.

BEN
Proof is in the pudding. Right, D?

DIMITRI
Right, guys.

CHUCK
Dudes, I know we just got fired ‘n all, but I think this could be cool. I mean, we don’t need Rex to make our own movies anymore. And your dad might have some gnarly stuff like props somewhere, right?

BEN
He doesn’t show me.

DIMITRI
Yeah, I’ve got a script, guys.

BEN
You? You write?

DIMITRI
Yeah. I posted it on this website for other people to read and it got pretty good reviews. I’ll send you guys the link.

Dimitri sways off toward his house.

BEN
Dude, you wanna play some Zombie Hunter or something?

DIMITRI
Nah. I gotta help my grandpa with the attic. I’ll see ya guys later.
Dimitri goes into the house. Ben, Cara, and Chuck stop in the middle of the street.

**BEN**
I didn’t know he wrote.

**CHUCK**
Might not wanna encourage him. The script’s a product of Dimitri’s head, you know?

A car comes to a stop behind them. The ANGRY DRIVER squeezes the wheel.

**BEN**
Yeah, who knows what goes on in there?

**CHUCK**
Maybe Cara does.

They look at Cara, who stares off into space.

**CHUCK**
Cara...yoo-hoo. Dude, your dog’s going deaf.

The angry driver grinds his teeth.

**BEN**
Yeah, I know. She’s old but fast. You shoulda seen her at the park-

HONK! The driver lays down the horn. Ben and Chuck look at him for a second then turn back to each other.

**BEN**
...so you wanna play Zombie Hunter?

**CHUCK**

**BEN**
How far are you?

**CHUCK**
On the book or the report?

Chuck heads off to his house. Ben stands there with Cara.
HONK! The driver lays down the horn again.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Ben’s father, STEVE(40), tall and athletic, barks on the phone. His desktop computer has an error message.

Ben’s mom, JODIE(40), long auburn hair and pretty, reads a newspaper on the couch.

STEVE
I told you - the error doesn’t let me start up at all so I can’t even get to the control panel! I’ve got my whole database on there. Can you please help?

COMPUTER TECH (V.O.)
Certainly. What’s the problem?

STEVE
I just told you the problem!

COMPUTER TECH (V.O.)
And what problem was that?

STEVE
The computer goes to an error screen whenever it starts up!

Jodie mimes taking deep breaths.

COMPUTER TECH (V.O.)
Maybe the electricity is out.

STEVE
Then how is it turning on?!

COMPUTER TECH (V.O.)
Magic! Muwahahaha!

Steve hangs up. Jodie gets up and rubs his back.

STEVE
I can’t believe this! How does that company stay in business?!

JODIE
Steve, calm. Count down from ten.

Ben and Cara enter.
BEN
Oh hi.

They perk up at his presence.

STEVE
Ben! Hi!

JODIE
How was your day?

BEN
Bad. Rex fired us.

JODIE
Awe, why did he fire you?

BEN
Because his diaper was wet, I don’t know. He called us all useless.

Jodie strokes his hair.

JODIE
Were you being useless, honey?

STEVE
You weren’t mean to him, were you?

BEN
No. I’m always stuck acting in his stupid movies. He never asks me if I have any ideas or anything.

STEVE
Hm. That’s about right.

JODIE
Well, I have something that may cheer you up.

Jodie presents him with a small package.

JODIE
Early birthday present from Grandma.

BEN
Oh! Gimme! Maybe it’s a phone!

JODIE
Fat chance.

He rips into the card first.
BEN
"To a wonderful grandson. Have a radical 13th birthday...dude."

He drops the card in disgust.

BEN
Where’s the money?

JODIE
Ben, money isn’t everything.

BEN
Must be a killer gift!

Ben rips off the paper, recoils at the label. In big red letters: “Junior Business Card Holder – Just Like the Pros!”

BEN
The hell kind of gift is this?

JODIE
Language!

Jodie checks out the label.

JODIE
This is a wonderful gift!

Steve looks at the label, laughs under his breath.

BEN
See! Even he’s laughing!

Jodie glares but then turns to an encouraging tone.

JODIE
You take this upstairs and go find a use for it! Dinner’s at seven.

Ben mumbles as he exits. Cara follows.

BEN
Yeah, I can smash it on Rex’s head.

INT. BEN’S ROOM – NIGHT

Typical young teen’s room. Posters, toys, and sports equipment everywhere. Cara jumps onto the bed.

Ben sits in front of his laptop and tosses his gift across the room. He types away with intense focus.
BEN (V.O.)
Captain's Log - Today, after years of pent up hostility, Rex decided to go his own way and pursue his film efforts elsewhere. While I'm happy to be rid of his leash around my butt, I'm also worried-

An instant message pops up on the screen.
<Pork_Skins>: eyyy ben! scriptsurf.com/tsc

BEN
Dang it, Dimitri.

<pooparoni_and_cheese>: hang on im writing a blog
<Pork_Skins>: lolz o rly?

Ben minimizes the conversation and continues with his rant.

BEN (V.O.)
-I'm also worried that without his guidance and equipment I won't be able to film anymore. Am I even ready to direct on my own? Will my friends still hang around? While I'm not Mr. Popular, I-

A beep is heard. The instant message window from Dimitri blinks. Another beep. And another. And another.

Ben opens the window. Dimitri scrolls with gibberish.

BEN
Dang it, Dimitri!

He sighs, opens a new window and types. A page comes up with the poster and heading SWITCHBLADE SEVEN(1997).

In the crew section it reads "DIRECTED BY REXISIS G. MORGAN". Below that it reads "PRODUCED BY STEVE FLANAGAN" with a thumbnail photo of a younger Steve beside it.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING

Flutters of middle school students scurry to chat with their friends. Dimitri hits on TWO GIRLS at the same time.

BRUNETTE GIRL
Dimitri, I do not want to go out with you. You, sir, are strange.
Nah, nah, nah, babe. Look, guys, I know what will change your minds.

Ben and Chuck are off to the side. Chuck plays on his phone.

Hey, check out what I texted Rex!

Chuck shows Ben the phone.

“Tell your mom I had a great time last night.” What’s the point?

I dunno. To bug him.

His phone vibrates. Their eyes burst open.

What’s that mean?!

I think it’s part of the female body but I’m not sure.

Dimitri sings upbeat in a deep voice. He shuffles his feet around and flails his arms in a bizarre dance form.

Gotta make you understand
Never gonna give you up
Never gonna let you down
Never gonna run around
And desert youuuu!

Dimitri finishes with confidence, grins at the two of them.

So, how about the both of you come with me to the movies on Saturday?
The Brunette slaps him across the face. The Redhead slaps him across the other side.

BRUNETTE GIRL
Get outta here, prune-face!

Dimitri walks over to the guys in defeat as the bell rings.

BEN
Smooth, D.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY
Balls of paper are thrown across the classroom from students not ready to start the day.

Ben, Chuck, and Dimitri enter at the same time as Rex.

REX
Hello Ben.

BEN
Hello Rex.

REX
How has your day been?

BEN
Simply splendid.

Rex cringes and then they sit on opposite sides of the room.

MR. SHIELDS(50s), big smile and balding, enters the room.

MR. SHIELDS
Stand up you bunch of communists!

The class stands and place their hands over their hearts.

Mr. Shields proudly leads the Pledge.

MR. SHIELDS
I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America!

STUDENTS
And to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible-

MR. SHIELDS
With liberty and justice for all!

Mr. Shields raises his fist.
MR. SHIELDS
Yeah! Power to the people, baby!

The class sits as he writes “BOOK REPORTS TODAY! YES!” on the whiteboard.

MR. SHIELDS
All right, brew crew, you know the drill. Let’s see what you knuckleheads have been up to the past couple of weeks. Who wants to go first?

CHUCK
Mr. Shields, do we really have to do the reports today?

MR. SHIELDS
Is the Pope Catholic?

CHUCK
It’s debatable, sir.

AARON(13), a deadpan tall kid, waves his hand.

MR. SHIELDS
All right, Aaron. Get us started.

Mr. Shields takes a seat in the back of the class. Aaron comes to the front with his book shielded from everyone.

AARON
Okay. I chose to read a very well known book for my report.

He turns the cover around.

AARON
It’s called the Bible. It’s this really cool anthology of adventure stories with heroes and villains and naked girls. My mom is always saying that I should follow the lessons of the Bible and now I see why because it’s an action packed reading experience.

The class giggles.

AARON
I’d now like to recite a passage to you that inspired me as I was reading. It’s called Piss-alms 23. “The Lord is my shepherd; (MORE)
AARON (CONT'D)
I shall not want. He maketh me lie down in green pastures—"

MR. SHIELDS
Aaron, sorry bud, but there’s laws with church and school and stuff and just sit down. Good job.

AARON
Kay.

Aaron sits down. Ben raises his hand.

MR. SHIELDS
Ben, take us away.

Ben goes to the front of the class and presents.

BEN
I read a biography on George Lucas, the dude who made Star Wars.

A BUCK-TOOTHE NERD cheers.

BUCK TOOTH
Star Wars!

Ben’s quiet for a second.

BEN
...yeah. Anyway, it talked about how he started out as basically a nothing and could barely fund his first movies back in the 60s. But it also talked about how he stuck with it and worked hard and eventually gave us three, not six, but three of the best movies of all time, not counting Indiana Jones. One quote that stood out to me he took from Mick Jagger: “Kick on the starter, give it all you got, you got to never, never, never stop.” And that’s it.

Mr. Shields leads a nice applause.

LATER

Dimitri presents. He shakes, voice cracks.
DIMITRI
The-the-no adults on the island is
like when-when I was in Russ-Russia
be-before I came here to my gra-
grandparents and I was in fost-
foster homes because com-com-com-
The class giggles as he stutters.

DIMITRI
Com-com-com-communism s-s-sucks!
The bell rings. The students pack up.

MR. SHIELDS
Have a good day, amigos!

Students pack up and leave. Mr. Shields stops Ben, Chuck,
Dimitri, and Rex as they head out.

MR. SHIELDS
Benjamin, Charles, Rexisis, D; got
something here that may interest
you. My cousin is a producer for
one of the major studios and this
year he’s helping to put on a
festival aimed for young
filmmakers. With all this young
talent emerging on the Internet,
they wanna get ‘em while they’re
young and he asked if I had any
students who were into that kind of
thing and I said “yeah, I got a
couple buttheads that fit the
description.”

Ben and Rex exchange dirty looks again.

Mr. Shields hands the flier to Ben, who reads it.

BEN
The San Francisco 15-Minute Junior
Film Festival. Top prize: VIP tour
of Hollywood and...5000 dollars...

EXT. HALLWAY - SCHOOL - DAY

The four walk through swarms of students during passing.

REX
If you think I’m gonna ask you to
be in my crew...
BEN
You couldn’t win this.

REX
Ha. Typical. One less plebeian to think about.

BEN
What? You think we can’t win?

REX
Benjamin, you suck at making movies. Your whole family sucks at making movies. My family has a history in the industry.

BEN
Your dad made one movie. One.

REX
And went out on top in flaming balls of glory, Ben! Movies are in my blood. My father, my grand-

CHUCK
What’s your full name again?

REX
Shut up. I can just imagine D up there accepting an award: t-t-thank you, c-c-c-communications!

Dimitri smacks his head.

BEN
Oh yeah? Well, I bet we not only enter that festival but that we actually place higher than you!

REX
Oh yeah? You wanna bet?

BEN
Yeah!

REX
Okay, okay. Loser has to do the other’s math homework for a month!

Chuck and Dimitri look at each other.

BEN
Alright, you’re on!
REX
Alright!

They shake hands, each one trying to squeeze the other’s really hard. The bell rings. They release.

REX
You guys made the biggest mistake of your lives by not taking our stuff more seriously. Later days.

Rex bumps into Ben as he heads off.

BEN
You made the mistake, jerk...

EXT. LUNCH TABLE - SCHOOL - DAY

Chuck barks in Ben’s face while Dimitri pulls out a large fajita from his lunch bag.

CHUCK
Are you crazy?! What were you thinking? He’s gonna destroy us!

BEN
I don’t know! He was getting in my face and I didn’t like it.

CHUCK
He’s got the camera, he’s got the hi-tech editing software, he’s got-

Dimitri picks through the fajita, takes out pieces of onion.

CHUCK
What the hell are you doing?

DIMITRI
Taking out the onions.

CHUCK
But the onions help give it its flavor.

DIMITRI
I don’t think so. Onions are bad. Evil. I don’t believe in them.

Chuck rolls his eyes.
CHUCK
Hey Ben, wanna see something funny?
(shouts)
Party at Ben’s house!

BEN
What are you doing?

CHUCK
Getting you some new friends!

BEN
What’s funny about that?

CHUCK
No one came over!

Ben fumes.

CHUCK
Okay, anyway. I never back down from a challenge, especially to Rex, so I’m with yea on this.

BEN
I think I made a mistake. None of our stuff is any good.

CHUCK
Well hold on. The way I see it is that we don’t have any stuff. All of our stuff has been directed by Rex. I mean, you’re always complaining how he never listens to any of your ideas and never lets you do anything! Maybe this is your opportunity to show your stuff! Plus it’s a good way to make friends with the in crowd.

Ben strokes his non-existent goatee. He looks across the playground where Rex chats with some STUDENTS.

He and Ben again exchange dirty stares. Chuck pounds his fist on the table, causing Dimitri to jump an inch.

CHUCK
See! You see?

BEN
See what?
CHUCK
I see you staring at him! You wanna beat him! And you know what? We can show him that we’re better! You can direct because you know what you’re doing, Dimitri can do the technical stuff because he’s weird like that, and I can star because I’m the best looking.

Ben thinks about this for a second.

BEN
I’m way better looking than you.

CHUCK
No, no, Ben, trust me.

BEN
No, no, no, you trust me.

Chuck pulls up his shirt sleeve and flexes his biceps.

CHUCK
Please.

DIMITRI
Guys, we don’t have a camera or any equipment or even a crew!

Ben and Chuck simmer. A moment passes. Now Ben slams his hand on the table causing Dimitri to jump another inch.

BEN
We’ll find a camera.

DIMITRI
How?

BEN
Some way. We’ll make it happen. I actually feel inspired now. Rex never let us be ourselves, but now we can. Maybe my dad can help us. Maybe we can finally get into his trunk in the attic!

CHUCK
Now you’re gettin’ it!

DIMITRI
And a crew?
BEN
We’ll find one.

DIMITRI
How about those guys?

Dimitri points across the playground to the BADFELLAS(all 13), a group of five punks with their hair slicked back and dressed in polo shirts with popped collars.

The group consists of their leader, GINO, a short kid with extra hair grease, his two bodyguards ERICK and DOMINIC, and TWO HENCHMEN whose faces can’t yet be seen.

Ben gapes with horror.

BEN
The Badfellas? No!

DIMITRI
Why? They have connections.

BEN
No! Dimitri, they can give us nuclear wedgies. That’s one step above atomic! That’s where they actually pull the underwear over your head and back down to your feet! It’s an art that only a few have been able to master since the beginning of time!

DIMITRI
I go commando.

BEN
...that’s disgusting.

Ben shrivels his face.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - SCHOOL - DAY

A grass field with a backstop. The CLASS is in their P.E. uniforms of shorts and t-shirts.

Dimitri’s at bat. Pitcher Aaron throws a spongeball underhand. Dimitri chops it back to him, runs to first.

Aaron launches the ball toward first but it smacks Dimitri in the back. From Aaron’s grin, it was probably intentional.

The P.E. TEACHER, a nervous wreck with a bad comb-over, slams his clipboard on the ground.
P.E. TEACHER
Aaron, knock it off! I swear! D, throw was in time, you’re out.

Dimitri returns to behind the backstop with Ben and Chuck.

DIMITRI
Commies! Damn commies!

Next to bat is OLIVER KEMP(13). He’s pale with a barrage of freckles and a mischievous smile.

He whispers something to WALLACE(13), a jock with too much gel in his hair. The P.E. TEACHER knows something is up.

P.E. TEACHER
Oliver! Don’t waste my time!

OLIVER
I won’t.

Oliver bunts Aaron’s pitch and takes off for third. He pulls his shirt over his head, revealing a smiley face drawn on his torso with his nipples as eyes.

OLIVER
AHHHHHHHHH!

P.E. TEACHER
The heck’s the matter with you?!

He rounds second then heads for first. Aaron, ball in hand, takes aim and zings one right at Oliver’s head.

WHACK! Oliver crashes to the ground. The students cheer but the teacher isn’t amused.

P.E. TEACHER
Oliver, sit down! You just earned yourself an F for the day! I swear you’re gonna be the death of me.

Oliver crawls next to Dimitri.

BEN
Dude...what was that?

Oliver speaks with a lisp due to his retainer.

OLIVER
Wallash shaid he’d pay me fifty bucksh if I did that.
BEN
Don’t you already owe him like a grand for Dumguska?

CHUCK
He owes everyone money.

OLIVER
Yeah, including your mom. I’ll get right on that.

DIMITRI
What’s Dumguska?

BEN
Dumguska was named after that thing we learned about in science about that meteor in Russia a hundred years ago.

DIMITRI
Oh, Tunguska, guys.

BEN
Exactly. Before you moved here last year there was an event where every toilet in all twelve bathrooms on campus overflowed. That’s cause this genius here flushed a cherry bomb and all of the pipes exploded.

Oliver proudly nods.

CHUCK
Yeah, and he would have gotten away with it but Wallace was there and got a picture of him in the act.

OLIVER
Yeah, sho I pay him a few bucksh here and there to keep him quiet.

BEN
What happens if you don’t pay him?

OLIVER
Then I promished him my shtuff.

CHUCK
What shtuff?
OLIVER
My Playsttion, my Playboy
subehcription, my video
camera...stuff like that.

Ben perks up.

CHUCK
Stuff like that. I shee.

OLIVER
Shut up!

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SCHOOL - DAY

Ben, Chuck, and Dimitri change into their street clothes.

BEN
Dude, I think we should ask Oliver
to be in our crew!

CHUCK
That dork?

BEN
He’s got a video camera!

CHUCK
Ben, look at the man. Go on. Look at him.

They look at the other end of the room where Oliver is
whipped with shirts from a group of guys.

BEN
Come on! We should give him a
chance! He may be the x-factor!

CHUCK
X-factor?! Him? The only thing he’s
a factor of is 0! The guy’s a total
turd burglar! Everyday he asks
someone for lunch money or candy
money or money to get those fire-
popper thingies from the ice cream
man and he never returns it! And
let’s not forget Dunguska! There weren’t any toilets for a week!
Everyone was just peeing
everywhere! He’s like a zit that
won’t pop...on your butt!
DIMITRI
Those are tough.

BEN
Be that as it may, but-

CHUCK
And not only that, but my friend
Silly Billy-

BEN
Whoa. Silly Billy?

CHUCK
Yeah, terrible, I know. But he sits behind Rex in math and said that he’s in talks with a new crew who know what they’re doing. What does this guy know?

They look back to Oliver, who nails the P.E. Teacher with a water balloon and flees. The teacher pursues.

P.E. TEACHER
Oliver! That’s it! That’s it!

BEN
What if we just invited him over to talk? Get to know him.

CHUCK
Like an interview?

BEN
...that’s an even better idea!

CHUCK
Yeah. Well, Ben, you’re the director. If you think it’s best. (shouts)
Party at Ben’s house!

INT. ENTRYWAY - BEN’S HOUSE - DAY

Ben enters. Cara happily greets him. They head upstairs.

JODIE (O.S.)
Hi Ben! How was school?

BEN
School’s school.
INT. BEN’S ROOM – DAY

Steve is on Ben’s laptop. Ben and Cara enter.

BEN
Oh hi.

STEVE
Hey, sorry. I’ll be off in a sec.

BEN
Computer still busted?

STEVE
Yeah, I don’t know what its issue is. I just had to send out some e-mails to clients.

BEN
Wanna borrow my phone?

STEVE
You don’t have a phone.

Ben grins.

STEVE
Nice try.

Cara picks up a tennis ball and gloms it.

BEN
We’re gonna make a new movie.

STEVE
Oh yeah? With Rex?

BEN
No. We’re done with Rex. We found another guy with a camera.

STEVE
Oh. I’ve got that old camera I did for interviews if you need it.

BEN
Do you think we can use some of the stuff in your old trunk?

STEVE
Uh...we’ll see. I’m not sure the stuff in there would help-

Cara drops the slobby ball on Ben’s pillow.
BEN
Dude! Gross!

Steve closes his e-mail and stands up.

STEVE
It’s all yours.

Cara jumps on the bed and gloms the ball some more. Ben gets on with her and tries to get it away.

STEVE
Can we talk about something?

Cara’s tail wags in Ben’s face.

BEN
Yo.

STEVE
Jodie!

Jodie enters.

STEVE
Ben, you’ve noticed that Cara’s been a little hard on hearing lately, right?

Ben tries to pull the ball out of Cara’s mouth.

JODIE
We took her to the vet today and the doctor said she’s developing something that occurs in goldens as they get older. It’s this thing called lymphoma-

Ben pulls hard. The ball pops out her mouth and zings across the room, crashes into models on his dresser.

BEN
We can just give her some vitamins, right? Like when she had that stomach thing?

STEVE
Unfortunately, there’s no real cure for lymphoma. There’s surgery and drugs out there for chemotherapy that can help but-

BEN
Well, we’ve gotta get ‘em!
JODIE
It’s all very expensive, hun. We’re talking thousands.

Cara jumps off the bed, digs for the ball in a pile of toys.

STEVE
We’re tied up against the wall here. The economy’s trash and I haven’t been able to make as many sales. Lately it’s been next to nothing. If this new job I applied for comes through then-

BEN
She looks normal.

STEVE
It’s early. She’s okay for now. But she’s on a timer.

Ben gazes off into space.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Ben walks Cara into a lightly wooded area. They sit against a tree. She breaths in his face.

BEN
Dude, your breath stinks. That was pretty dumb of you to get sick. Why’d you go and do that?

He pets her, long and slow strokes.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out the festival flier. He reads the prize text over and over, then, a smile.

BEN
Rock and roll!

INT. BEN’S ROOM - DAY

Ben shoves toys and papers off his desk, slips into a business suit, and tears the box for the Junior Business Card Holder open - seemingly all at the same time.

INT. BEN’S ROOM - LATER

The room is cleaned up. Small plants sit on his desk along with the Junior Business Card Holder and a bowl of fruit.
Ben, Chuck, and Dimitri sit in leather chairs dressed in business suits. Cara grinds up against them and sheds fur.

**CHUCK**
Dude! Dog! Get away! This is a rental. Gotta have it back to the tux shop by six.

**BEN**
Those are your church clothes.

**CHUCK**
Yeah, but saying it’s a rental sounds soooo much cooler.

A knock on the door. Jodie pokes her head in.

**JODIE**
Ben, Mr. Kemp is here.

**BEN**
Thank you! Send him in!

She winks and exits. Chuck hands his phone to Ben.

**CHUCK**
Here, pretend you’re talking.

**BEN**
What? Why?

**CHUCK**
Because you’ll look cooler doing it you laxative! Talk!

Oliver enters as Ben bellows a hearty laugh on the phone.

**BEN**
Yes, yes, we’ll discuss that at our next meeting. Alright, ta.

(he “hangs up”)

Mr. Kemp! Welcome! Have a seat!

Oliver sits across from his interviewers and takes a card. Written in red ink on cheap printing paper is “BEN. FILMMAKER. CALL FOR PHONE NUMBER.”

Ben reads over a sheet of paper.
BEN
So, Mr. Kemp, my agent forwarded me your resume and I must say that we’re most impressed with your qualifications. For example, it says here that you’re in 7th grade.

OLIVER
Yeah. We have P.E. together.

BEN
Hm, interesting. And it also says you got a B- in Mr. Collins’ math class? No easy task.

OLIVER
Yeah. I cheated on the tests.

Ben puts the resume down and goes into his pitch.

BEN
Well, Oliver, we here at...

Ben turns his chair around, whispers to Chuck and Dimitri.

BEN
Fellas, what’s our company name?

They all shrug. Ben turns back around.

BEN
...at Name To Be Decided Later Films, want you to be part of our most established filming crew.

OLIVER
Why?

Cara jumps onto the desk and snatches an apple, jumps down.

BEN
You got a lot of potential, man. I can see it all over you!

DIMITRI
And you have a camera!

Chuck smacks Dimitri. Ben fidgets.

BEN
...among other things.

OLIVER
My camera? That’s what you want?
BEN
Well, you’d be playing a huge role in our company as well. A top investor!

OLIVER
Ehhh, I don’t know. I heard Rex Morgan ish planning shome big Hollywood movie. Maybe I should check him out inshtead. You know hish dad made Shwitchblade Sheven?

CHUCK
You know whose dad produced Switchblade Seven?

Chuck points to Ben, who stands up and gets into a heartfelt speech-mode.

BEN
You see, the thing about Rex Morgan is...he’s insane. Besides, Oliver, this isn’t about making movies. Oh no. This is about standing up for what’s right. This is about brotherhood. This is about taking our dreams and making them reality! This, Oliver, is about taking what’s in our mind, putting it on paper and then turning that into a major motion picture! Oh yeah! This is what that’s about!

Ben presents Oliver with the festival flier.

BEN
And you’ll also get an equal share which may help to pay off Wallace until you graduate college.

The prize figure jumps out at Oliver.

OLIVER
Pssh, I’m in. Plush, guysh in the biz get lotsh of women.

CHUCK
Why don’t you just admit to blowing up the toilets?

OLIVER
No! Wallash ish evil. I won’t give him the shatishfaction!
DIMITRI
But other people know. Won’t they figure out it’s you anyway?

OLIVER
Hey, if they can’t prove the crime, I ain’t doin’ the time.

A knock is heard on the door. Ben shouts.

BEN
Mom! Hold off my appointments!

Ben’s sister, JOANNA(15), steps into the room. Oliver is instantly mesmerized by her; older woman.

JOANNA
Mom wants to know if your little friends want to stay for dinner.

BEN
Look, dear sister, as you can see I’m doing a lot of business right now and I’d appreciate it if you didn’t barge on into my office until after rush hour. Okay?

Joanna laughs.

JOANNA
Yes sir, Mr. Big Shot! Sorry!

OLIVER
That’s quite all right!

JOANNA
And you are?

OLIVER
Name’sh Oliver! Oliver Kemp!

JOANNA
Sup, Oliver. I’m Joanna.

Oliver falls into a trance as he stares into her eyes.

BEN
Okay, yes, thank you very much. Tell mom that we’ll be staying for dinner and ask her to contact my clients’ agents to make sure it’s okay.

Joanna bursts out in laughter but Ben is clearly serious.
JOANNA
You mean ask mom to call their moms
to make sure it’s okay?

BEN
Precisely. Now be gone!

Joanna rolls her eyes then exits in a cloud of laughter.

OLIVER
What a babe! Holy cow! Dude, how old ish she?

BEN
Fifteen. She’s in high school.
She’s out of your league. Forget it, pal.

Oliver evilly grins.

CHUCK
You know, we really do need a business name.

BEN
Yeah. Hmmm.

OLIVER
Man From Nantucket Picturesh!

CHUCK
Lol-lol-lolerez Productions!

DIMITRI
The Free Uwe Boll Movement!

Ben waves them off.

BEN
No. It needs to have a kick to it.

CHUCK
How about 21st Century Chuck?

DIMITRI
21st Century Chuck? Why not 21st Century Dimitri?

CHUCK
Well... 21st Century Dimitri just sounds stupid, whereas 21st Century Chuck kinda makes you chuckle.

Oliver chuckles.
OLIVER
I guess it doesh.

DIMITRI
I like it, guys.

OLIVER
Yeah, it’sh okay.

Ben holds his fist up with pride.

BEN
Fellas, we’re now an official organization!

EXT. LUNCH TABLE - SCHOOL - DAY

Ben, Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver sit at their table. Sheets of notebook paper are spread out. Chuck grabs one.

Buried in the papers is a page that reads “By Dimitri Smololovonakov.”

CHUCK
Alright, I’ve got another idea. It’s called “Tough Guy” and it’s about this tough guy who goes around and beats anybody up who gets in his way.

BEN
Well, what’s the plot?

CHUCK
Uh. Don’t get in Tough Guy’s way.

BEN
And I guess you’re gonna be the one playing Tough Guy, right?

CHUCK
Well, yeah.

Wallace knocks on the table. Aaron is with him.

WALLACE
Hey, Oliver. C’mere a sec.

OLIVER
I’ll be right back.

They lead Oliver across the playground.
BEN
That’s the stupidest idea I’ve ever heard of.

OLIVER (O.S.)
AHHHH!

CHUCK
Told you he was bad news.

EXT. BEHIND HANDBALL WALL - SCHOOL - DAY
Aaron has Oliver pinned up against the handball wall. Wallace interrogates him.

WALLACE
Where’s my money, Kemp?!

OLIVER
I’ll get it to you!

WALLACE
Wrong answer! Aaron!

Aaron gives Oliver a wet willy. Oliver screams. Ben, Chuck, and Dimitri arrive on the scene.

BEN
What the heck are you guys doing?!

WALLACE
He owes me money! Aaron!

Aaron gives him another wet willy. Chuck and Dimitri laugh.

BEN
How much?

WALLACE
We had a deal for ten bucks a month and he’s two months behind. Now, if you’d like me to snitch...

Wallace reveals a picture from his wallet. It’s of Oliver, dumb grin and all, holding a cherry bomb over a toilet.

OLIVER
NO!

BEN
What if we make you a new deal?

Interested, Wallace nods to Aaron, who releases Oliver.
WALLACE
Yeah? What?

BEN
We’re making a movie and we could use another guy. Come to our meeting this weekend and I’ll pay you a fair share to rip up the picture. What do you say?

OLIVER
But that picture was taken from his phone. He’s probably got it shaved on his computer!

BEN
Well, if he tries to use that after we pay him then I’ll tell the school that he knew about the toilets but didn’t tell anyone.

WALLACE
Yeah? Well I’ll tell that you also knew but didn’t tell! So there!

BEN
I’ll tell that you told that I told that you knew.

WALLACE
I’ll tell that you told that you knew that I knew that you told that I knew when you knew.

BEN
Well I’ll tell that you told that he knew when I knew that you told that I knew when you knew.

They stare each other down, then Wallace smiles.

WALLACE
I like your style, Flanagan. I always thought you were a dork, but I guess you’re alright. But I can’t figure out why you’re standing up for him? He’s a bum.

BEN
I’ve just got a feeling.

Hesitant at first, Wallace shakes his hand.
BEN
We’ll call you with the times.

Wallace and Aaron exit.

OLIVER
Thanksh, man.

EXT. LUNCH TABLE - SCHOOL - DAY

Ben, Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver unpack their lunches and feast. That’s when Rex, now in a polo with a popped collar, and a couple FRIENDS snobbishly walk over.

The friends are Badfella members NIXON(13), a kid with a tie, and JOSHUA(13), a kid with a thick mullet. Rex shuffles through the papers on the table.

REX
Brainstorming ideas are we? How sweet. How’s that coming, Ben?

BEN
What do you guys want?

REX
I just wanted to introduce you to my new crew. On my right is my new friend, Nixon! His father has directed several Hollywood B movies such as “Forrest Gunk” and “The Empire Strikes Out.”

CHUCK
And you take pride in that, Nixon?

NIXON
Ha! You fail at sarcasm.

CHUCK
That wasn’t sarcasm but alright.

REX
And on my left is my new friend, Joshua! Joshua has won six awards for his acting in the children’s theater!

CHUCK
Well, I guess that makes you a pansy, huh?

Joshua steps into Chuck’s face and snarls like a rabid dog.
JOSHUA
GRRRRRRRR!

Rex restrains Joshua and points.

REX
Look over there.

They look over to the bathrooms where Gino and the rest of the Badfellas are stationed.

REX
I made a deal with the ‘Fellas. Mess with us, you mess with them.

BEN
How much are you paying them, Rex?

REX
A fair share of the prize money and Switchblade Seven memorabilia!

Gino knocks his fist on the head of a SHRIMPY KID.

GINO
Hello! Anybody home?

The guys watch with intent. Seconds later, the kid is slammed into a garbage can by the gang.

Ben and his friends are horrified.

REX
Exactly! So don’t mess with us!

BEN
You can’t just give away stuff from Switchblade! Especially to Gino!

REX
I can do whatever I want. I’m a hair to it. Muwahahahaha!

CHUCK
Yeah, well, we ain’t backin’ down.

REX
Oh good! Care to up the stakes?

BEN
To what?
REX
The losers have to run around the playground at lunch singing a girly pop song...in their underwear.

Rex and his guys laugh. Ben and his guys look nervous.

CHUCK
That’s the best you got?

REX
What’s the matter, Mills? Scared?

Dimitri nods.

BEN
We’re not scared. You’re on.

They shake on it, each boy squeezing really hard.

NIXON
Let’s get out of here.

JOSHUA
Yeah, my underwear is going up my butt again. So long, pedestrians!

Rex and his gang leave with their noses high in the air.

EXT. BIKE CAGE – SCHOOL – DAY

SILLY BILLY(11), a freakishly short kid, unchains his bike and rolls it out to the playground.

EXT. PLAYGROUND – SCHOOL – DAY

He slips the chain into his backpack and prepares to ride off until a pair of hands grab the handlebars. It’s Gino.

GINO
Yo. Nice bike you got there.

Silly Billy trembles. Gino’s gang emerges behind him.

SILLY BILLY
Thank you, Mr. Sir.

GINO
I’ll tell you what, kid. Let me have your bike and I won’t beat today’s hot lunch out of you.
Silly Billy looks at Erick and Dominic, then to Joshua and Nixon, who all tower over him.

SILLY BILLY
No. I’m going home.

Silly Billy tries to ride away, but he’s dragged off his bike by the more powerful Erick.

GINO
Have it your way, Spud.

Erick gets Silly Billy in a headlock while Gino and Joshua dig through his backpack. They pull out his binder and rip papers out of it.

GINO
You did this to yourself, kid!

Silly Billy struggles in the headlock.

SILLY BILLY
Let me go!

ACROSS THE PLAYGROUND

Ben, Chuck, and Dimitri are headed to their route home.

CHUCK
What’s wrong with the Millard Fillmore idea?

BEN
Nobody knows who Millard Fillmore is you bozo!

CHUCK
I do.

BEN
Yeah, because you’re doing your history project on him!

CHUCK
He was a fascinating man, Ben!

They look ahead where Silly Billy is getting bullied.

BEN
Ugh. Not them.

CHUCK
Hey! That’s Silly Billy!
Ben does a double take.

BEN
He’s like two feet tall.

DIMITRI
You should help him.

BEN
What? No. Why?

DIMITRI
You’re a major motion pelicula director now, dawg. You gotta be tough. You said that cool “kick on the starter” quote. Plus my grandpa says annoying the bad guys is what my folks used to do to the Commies before I was born. And you just got us into a whole bunch of trouble with ‘em so what do ya got to lose?

Ben considers this. His face becomes determined.

BEN
That I did. Kick it. Men, onward!

They march over. Gino pulls pencils out of Silly Billy’s backpack and snaps them.

GINO
You’re mad at yourself, not at me!

Ben shouts with authority.

BEN
Hey!

Gino drops the backpack and points to himself in shock.

GINO
You talkin’ to me?

BEN
Yeah. Leave him alone.

Gino casually approaches Ben, who gulps.

BEN
...please?
GINO
I know you. You’re the guys that are competing with my buddy Rex, right? Think you can make movies?

Ben’s lips tremble. He looks to Dimitri who holds up fists; renewed confidence.

BEN
You’re damn right we can!

GINO
Yeah, right. You ain’t winnin’ nothin’, kid, cause I’m gonna make sure Rex wins at whatever cost. Do the words executive producer mean anything to you?

BEN
Yeah, we’ll see. In the meantime why don’t you just leave him alone?

GINO
Well what’s it to you, butthead?

Gino shoves Ben.

GINO
Gonna get your dad to ruin another studio?

Gino shoves him again. Chuck steps in and shoves Gino

CHUCK
Shut up! What’s your dad ever done other than giving birth to you, you pizza-faced snot rocket?

Gino talks back with a poor Darth Vader impression.

GINO
Chuck! Leave these idiots and join me and together we can rule the school as mob leader and jock!

Chuck violently shoves Gino again.

CHUCK
I said shut up!

Erick releases Silly Billy and gets into the scuffle. Joshua gets behind Dimitri and gives him a wedgie.
DIMITRI
Whoa, guys!

Ben helps Chuck out with pushing Erick away, but they become overpowered when Nixon and Dominic get involved.

Dominic holds Ben in place while Gino pops his collar especially high and forms fists.

GINO
Hold him in place, boys! I’m about to float like a butterfly and sting like a bee!

Gino takes a few practice punches to warm up.

That’s when a set of hands pulls Dominic away and shoves Nixon aside.

Ben and Chuck look up to their savior – DEREK(14), an eighth grade jock.

DEREK
Gino, why do you always get your goons to pick on kids half their sizes?

Joshua gets into Derek’s face.

JOSHUA
What’s it to you, bub?

DEREK
Who’s this fruit?

JOSHUA

Derek grabs Joshua by the back of his pants and gives him a wedgie over to a trash can, shoves him in.

DEREK
Nice to meet you, Joshua Peters.

Derek turns back to Gino and his gang.

DEREK
What’s gonna happen, huh?

Gino holds his hand up and calmly speaks. No fight today.

GINO
Let’s go, boys.
Gino and his gang help Joshua out of the trash and step off campus. Gino points back to them.

GINO
You’re all dead men.

They leave. Ben and his crew blow a sigh of relief.

BEN
Thanks, dude.

DEREK
Yeah, no problem. I saw what you did, man. Standing up to Gino and his boys like that. They coulda killed you.

BEN
They would have if you hadn’t come.

DEREK
Probably.

BEN
My friend, I have a business proposal for you. We could use a head of security on our movie sets and I was just wondering...

DEREK
You make movies?

BEN
Yes, Benjamin J. Flanagan, major movie director.

Ben shakes his hand and gives him a business card.

BEN
I’ve made several big blockbusters, but what we’re working on now is so big that it doesn’t even exist yet.

DEREK
That’s pretty cool, man. I wouldn’t mind helping you out if that’s what you’re asking.

BEN
That’s what we like to hear!

DEREK
Let me know when you need me.
BEN
Will do, buddy!

Derek heads off. Ben walks over to Silly Billy.

BEN
You okay, kid?

SILLY BILLY
Are you gonna beat them, sir?

Ben surveys the area. He looks kind of like an action hero.

BEN
Maybe, kid. Maybe.

INT. BEN’S ROOM - DAY

A plastic camcorder case is opened. A hi-tech video camera is inside. It’s got a wide lens, an arsenal of buttons, and a mounted microphone. Looks real professional.

Ben, Chuck, Oliver, Dimitri, Wallace, Aaron, Derek, and Cara circle around it.

OLIVER
My camera. My dad used it for his job before they got a new one so he gave it to me. Night vision, 10 hour battery, HD resolution, and a 12x optical zoom. Top of the line.

BEN
Is 12x optical good?

OLIVER
Well, I’m able to clearly see the girl across the street when she changes her shoes, yeah, pretty good.

Ben checks off stuff on a sheet of paper.

BEN
Sweet, so, crew, camera...now we just need an idea.

CHUCK
I’ve got one. How about we make a video of you trying to ask a girl out?
BEN
How about we make a video of you trying to ask a guy out?

CHUCK
Touche.

WALLACE
How about a road comedy?

DEREK
How about we make something to put on the Internets?

BEN
The Internets aren’t a guarantee. Festivals are a good way to separate ourselves. I mean, you don’t see M. Night Shyamalan uploading his films trying to make an extra buck.

CHUCK
Maybe he should.

DIMITRI
What about a cooking show, guys?

OLIVER
I have an idea. Okay, it’s about an American soldier who has to kill Kim Jong-il before he takes over the world.

DIMITRI
Commies!

CHUCK
Dude, he died.

OLIVER
He’ll be a zombie! Beshidesh, I’m down for anything ash long ash we’re filmin’ here.

BEN
Oliver, I swear, if you hit on my sister-

DEREK
Is she hot?

OLIVER
Dude, she’sh sho hot.
WALLACE
Hey, when do we get paid?

BEN
Well, when we win.

WALLACE
Win? I’m on commission?

Ben hands Wallace the flier.

BEN
Uh, I don’t really know what that means but just look at the prize money. Is this something you really wanna walk away from?

Wallace nods approval.

BEN
Now, while our resources are limited, I believe that we do have the tools to satisfy. Our only obstacle is beating Rex!

DIMITRI
Yeah, guys. We have to find a way to beat him!

Joanna enters the room, shocked at the number of guys.

JOANNA
Ben, do we have any...holy...when did you make some more friends?

All of the guys are mesmerized by Joanna’s beauty.

CHUCK
See guys. This is Ben’s sister.

Oliver leans against the dresser, tries to be cool.

OLIVER
Hi there.

JOANNA
Hi. Olive, right?

OLIVER
Oliver, but you can call me Olive. Sho, I’ve sheemed to have losht my phone number. May I have yoursh?

Aaron leaps up and kicks Oliver hard in the shin. WHAM!
AARON
Dork!

Oliver grabs his leg in pain and screams at Aaron. The two of them wrestle on the ground. Joanna rolls her eyes and exits.

OLIVER
You fathead!

Derek and Wallace separate Oliver and Aaron.

BEN
Guys! We have to brainstorm!

AARON
Hey! What if we made a movie about why Ben’s sister is a total babe!

BEN
Hey! What if we didn’t?

DEREK
She is pretty hot, though.

OLIVER
Yeah. Have you guysh sheen Ben’sh mom? She’sh pretty shmokin’, too!

Ben puts his hands on his head.

BEN
Oh my God!

CHUCK
Now that you mention it, Ben’s mom is pretty hot.

BEN
Dude!

OLIVER
Yeah! Joanna’sh hot. Mrs. Flanagan’sh hot. What went wrong with you, Ben?

BEN
Okay! Enough! Let’s focus! What can we do here?

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Ben, complete with a black beret, surveys the area. Dimitri works the camera. The others await direction.
BEN
All right, gang, let’s try this on for size...

LATER

Everyone is dressed in karate uniforms. Chuck screams at the top of his lungs and lunges a wooden sword at Oliver. Derek and Wallace engage in a wooden sword fight of their own.

LATER

BEN
...it’s the future...long distance space travel is possible...but on one mission, something goes horribly wrong...

LATER

Oliver kicks and screams while sprawled out on the ground. Aaron kneels and grabs his leg. Oliver reaches out to Cara.

OLIVER
Cara! Help! He’s going to eat me! He’s a cannibal!

Aaron opens his mouth and inches it closer to Oliver’s calf.

LATER

BEN
...and then they’re trapped on...the Planet of the Apes from Another Planet!

LATER

Chuck, dressed in futuristic attire, drops the blast shield on his helmet. He emerges from behind a tree and runs.

Derek and Wallace, also dressed in futuristic attire, fire their laser pointing guns.

LATER

Oliver continues to reach to Cara.

OLIVER
Help! Cara! Please!

Cara wags her tail and barks. It’s all a game to her.
OLIVER
Don’t bark you dumb dog! Attack him! He’s gonna eat me!

Now Aaron’s mouth is really close to Oliver’s calf. Oliver notices this and goes out of character.

OLIVER
Aaron, you’re gettin’ a little close there, aren’t you, bud?

With his mouth wide open, Aaron grins and gets closer. Now Oliver panics.

OLIVER
Holy! Help! Please! Help!

LATER
Chuck runs through an aisle of trees. Derek emerges from behind one and shoots Chuck with his laser. Chuck crashes into him and the two tumble to the ground.

LATER
Cara barks. Aaron gets closer.

OLIVER
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

INT. FAMILY ROOM – NIGHT
Ben and Chuck watch the footage on the TV. The camera is hooked up on the side.

BEN (V.O.)
Dude, he actually bit him!

The video stops.

BEN
Well, it’s a start.

CHUCK
That made me wanna pee. B-R-B.

BEN
Good luck.

Chuck exits. Jodie and Steve emerge from the kitchen, each with a hand carrying a cake. Jodie whistles.

Ben turns around.
JODIE
Happy birthday, hun!

BEN
My birthday isn’t until tomorrow!

JODIE
We know. Your father has what they’re calling an “intensive interview session” tomorrow where he meets with different people at what may be his new company so he’ll be gone all day.

STEVE
We just wanted to have a lil’ thing with you tonight and give you this.

Steve hands him a rectangular box. Ben rips into it.

BEN
A phone?! Muwahahahaha!

Inside is a used clapperboard. The production label reads SWITCHBLADE SEVEN. Ben’s ecstatic and snaps it a few times.

BEN
Whoa! You’re giving me this?!

STEVE
I figure you can do more with it than I can right now.

Ben claps it a few times and accidentally whacks his fingers.

BEN
Ow. This is great!

Cara puts her snout between the board and stick. Ben lightly claps it. She gets into a play stance.

STEVE
Ben, we’re sorry we couldn’t give you anything major this year. When things pick back up we promise we’ll make it up to you.

BEN
How is she?

Chuck exits the bathroom, blows a sigh of relief.
STEVE
She’s as good as she can be. She’s still a good candidate for chemo.

CHUCK
Who? Your mom?

STEVE

CHUCK
Oh. Charlie had chemo also. Helped him for a while.

JODIE
Charlie was a great dog, too.

CHUCK
Yeah. Dude, maybe if we win we can, like, pay to fix her. Make her like that bionic dog on TV!

Ben smiles with a touch of awkwardness.

BEN
It could work. But dude, check this out!

Ben shows Chuck the board. He’s ecstatic too.

CHUCK
Whoa! Was this from the attic? They let you keep this?

BEN
Yeah!

CHUCK
I was talking to your dad.

Steve smiles.

STEVE
Yeah, we divied things up at the end. I got props, the board...

Ben whacks Chuck’s fingers with the clapper.

JODIE
How’s your movie coming?

CHUCK
It sucks.
BEN
Chuck, no. It’s just a masterpiece that hasn’t happened yet.

CHUCK
Yeah, and my “D” in math is just an “A” in progress, right?

BEN
That’s a good way to look at it.

STEVE
Remember something, guys; you’re at the age where you don’t have to take this too seriously. Just have fun with it.

Ben twitches at that; he does take this seriously.

INT. ATTIC - DAY
Dimly-lit room. Aaron holds out the clapperboard.

AARON
Star Wars Episode 7, The Return of Vader. Scene 1 of a few.

He slams the stick down on his finger.

AARON
Ow. Action!

Chuck and Ben on scene in costumes resembling Luke and Han.

CHUCK
The Force will be with you. Always.

BEN
I’ve just got a bad feeling, Han. It’s like he’s back...

Derek bursts into the room dressed all in black, complete with a sock pulled over his head. He speaks in a very deep voice, doing his best to impersonate Darth Vader.

DEREK
Daddy’s home!

BEN
Vader! Bring it!

They grab baseball bats and fence while making the signature lightsaber sounds.
They duel until Derek takes a wide swing and knocks a tower of boxes over.

The boxes nearly topple Oliver, who slips away before they crash onto a table of power tools.

A hammer flings up from the impact, zips by Dimitri’s eye to its final insertion on the wall.

AARON (O.S.)
Cut!

The aggravated actors drop their “weapons.”

AARON
Okay. My mistake. Bad idea.

Another tower of boxes collapses.

BEN
You okay, D?

Dimitri casually shrugs.

DIMITRI
It’s dark in here, guys. The camera’s having trouble seeing you.

BEN
Hmmm. We need some of those lights that you can put on the ceiling.

DIMITRI
Ceiling lights?

BEN
...that’s an even better idea!

CHUCK
Hey, look!

Chuck kneels next to a trunk labeled SILVER STREAK STUDIOS.

CHUCK
Maybe there’s some in here!

AARON
Hey, yeah! Let’s see what your dad’s got!

BEN
He doesn’t like anyone going through that stuff. See the lock?
The trunk has a heavy duty lock on it. Cara sniffs it.

CHUCK
Come on, Ben. He gave you the clapper. He’s practically inviting you to check this out.

BEN
I’ve asked but he says no. C’mon, we can figure out another way to get lights.

OLIVER
What’s your guy’sh movie budget?

INT. BEN’S ROOM - DAY

Ben smashes open his piggy bank with a hammer and counts up the money inside.

CHUCK
Those do open from the bottom...

BEN
Seven, eight--

CHUCK
You’re pretty poor, dude.

BEN
Nine, ten--

CHUCK
Seven, eleven, eighty-one!

BEN
Fourteen - guys, count your money!

The guys reach into their pockets and pull out their spare change and crumbled up dollar bills. Wallace doesn’t budge.

BEN
Okay. I’ve got eighteen dollars.

CHUCK
Uh. 14 cents.

AARON
Four seventy-five.

DEREK
I have five bucks total.
They put their money in a pile.

Dimitri fumbles with a pile of crap. His dollar bills are stuck together with wads of gum and other gunk. He puts the bills in the pile one by one.

DIMITRI
Nine, ten, eleven-

He accidentally rips the last bill.

DIMITRI
Uh. Ten.

He puts one of the dollar halves in the pile.

DIMITRI
Ten-fifty.

Cara walks over and licks up the gunk.

BEN
So, that gives us about forty dollars, thirty goes to the entry fee, and that leaves ten bucks. What can we get with that?

OLIVER
A night with your mom? Looolz.

Ben glares. Wallace crosses his arms.

BEN
What about you?

WALLACE
You didn’t say anything about me giving you any money.

BEN
I think we gotta spend money to make money, Wallace.

WALLACE
I vote we crack open that trunk.

The guys seem high on that idea but Ben waves it off.

BEN
Nope. Not happening.

Wallace points to Oliver.
WALLACE
Well then as long as that schmo owes me money, I ain’t puttin’ in nothin’. Unless...

BEN
Unless what?

WALLACE
Unless I get collateral.

BEN
Collat!-...what’s that?

WALLACE
I’ll put in money, but I want something of his that I’ll hold onto until he pays me back.

OLIVER
Um. What do you want?

Wallace evilly grins.

WALLACE
Your retainer.

OLIVER
What?! I need thish! My teeth will shift without it!

BEN
Wallace, come on...

WALLACE
I’m not getting stiffed by this guy again. Not even for an Oscar.

Everyone looks to Oliver, who stands up and paces.

OLIVER
Nope! Not doin’ it! Shcrew that.

CHUCK
Then why don’t you just admit to blowing up the toilets? Don’t you have any pride?

OLIVER
No! I don’t!

WALLACE
He just seems to love giving me money!
Wallace pulls the picture out of his wallet, shows it off.

CHUCK
Is that still on your phone?

WALLACE
I printed it. I don’t trust technology. Cheap manufacturing, you know? When I blackmail someone I want the real thing, baby!

CHUCK
Whatever. Kemp, take one for the team, man. It’ll all work out.

OLIVER
Look, shteroid boy, I shaid no!

Oliver sits back down and fumes. Chuck whispers in his ear.

CHUCK
Joanna! Rawr!

Oliver fumes some more.

CHUCK
Chicks dig businessmen. Or if you don’t get us the money, then maybe I’ll move in on her! Can you imagine us making out? Oh man-

Oliver stands up and shoves Chuck.

OLIVER
You’ll never get her, Millsh.

Oliver spits his retainer to the ground. His lisp vanishes.

OLIVER
There’s your retainer.

Wallace picks it up, sniffs it, adds a twenty to the pile. Everyone stares at him. Did he really just do that?

INT. MALL - DAY

The whole crew struts through a busy mall, trying their best to look like big shots.

BEN
Remember, we’re famous directors looking for new talent.
DIMITRI
Maybe we can pick up some chicks here, guys.

OLIVER
Ben, your sister should work at Victoria’s Secret.

BEN
Dude, seriously...

OLIVER
Hey, better get ushered to it, pal. I’m already planning how I’m gonna ask her out.

BEN
You’re not asking her out.

DEREK
Can I ask her out?

BEN
No! No one is asking her out! In fact, new company policy: anybody who asks Joanna out will get their faces eaten by Dimitri.

Dimitri sadistically grins.

DEREK
But what if Dimitri asks her out? He can’t just eat his own face. It’s not possible.

CHUCK
Yeah, care to explain that, Ben?

Ben rubs his temples.

BEN
You guys are like diarrhea.

CHUCK
I know what’ll cheer you up...
(shouts)
Party at Ben’s house!

BEN
(shouts)
Party at Chuck’s house!

Across the walkway, Joshua and Nixon spot their rivals and hide behind a plant as Ben and Chuck continue to shout.
INT. GINO’S GARAGE - DAY

Joshua and Nixon blab to Gino and the gang. The garage is decorated with leather chairs, a pool table, and a bar.

NIXON
We followed them to this light shop where they bought something but we couldn’t tell what it was.

GINO
...lights?

JOSHUA
Yeah! That was it!

Rex stands beside Gino, who has a lollipop in his mouth.

REX
So they actually think they can play with the big boys, huh? Gino, what should we do?

GINO
Forgetaboutit, Rex. Our film will be worlds better than theirs.

Rex walks over to a trunk of props. It’s also labeled SILVER STREAK STUDIOS. He pulls out a replica machine gun.

REX
I hate those guys. If I had my way I wouldn’t even let them into San Francisco just so when we win their ugly faces won’t be there to put a damper on things.

He pulls the trigger, emitting realistic gun fire sounds.

GINO
Wanna crush their hopes, spirits, and dreams, huh? That’s cool. You got a history with ‘em, don’t ya?

Rex returns the gun to the trunk. Also lining the walls is a fog machine, lights, and C-stands.

REX
Our dads worked together. My dad directed Switchblade and got to keep all this stuff here. But Ben’s dad wouldn’t give him any more work so that’s why he only has the one big credit to his name.

(MORE)
I’ve always wanted to make movies as a way to follow in his footsteps, but those guys never cared. They just used me for the props. Could care less about my ideas or what we could film.

GINO
Well, lemme tell you something, bud; we’ll make sure you win. Us Italians are all about family and we want you to follow in your fatha’s footsteps. And if those guys become an issue...

Gino grabs a replica pistol from the trunk.

GINO
...then they’ll be road kill. Capice? Muwahahahahahaha!

They all evilly laugh in unison. Rex turns on the fog machine, clouding everything up.

As the fog clears, their laughs die down until they’re nothing more than few mutters. Awkward.

INT. BEN’S ROOM - DAY

The gang hangs out while Dimitri assembles the ceiling lights. Oliver runs his fingers along his teeth.

OLIVER
My teeth feel so naked.

BEN
Awe, just relax, Olive.

OLIVER
Oliver! Not Olive! I’m not a pitted fruit, thank you very much!

CHUCK
You didn’t seem to mind when Joanna called you Olive.

OLIVER
Well, she is my future wife. Ben and I are practically relatives right now.

BEN
Yeah, a cold day in h-
Aaron bursts into the room, nearly decapitating Cara. He’s got a briefcase with him.

AARON
Guys! I have the coolest thing!

Aaron opens the briefcase and passes around sheets of paper with movie posters on them. Then he holds up one that has the Switchblade Seven poster printed on it.

BEN
Raiders of the Lost Fart, Crouching Dimitri, Hidden Fly, Chuck Kong...what is all this?

AARON
Well, we need a cool poster for our movie so I studied your dad’s poster online and put together a few samples of my work!

The Raiders poster features Ben’s face on Harrison Ford’s body. It looks pretty legit.

OLIVER
Where’d you get Ben’s picture for this poster?

AARON
Oh, that was easy. I just followed you guys around with a camera for a few days.

OLIVER
You did what?

AARON
What do you guys think?

Chuck’s got the “Chuck Kong” poster.

CHUCK
Is this what I’m gonna look like with facial hair?

DIMITRI
These are pretty cool, guys. I am a true ninja. Fight the power!

WALLACE
How come your dad doesn’t have a real poster for the movie?
BEN
I’m not sure. Might be one in the trunk. But these aren’t bad.

AARON
Oh! And here’s one for Oliver!

Aaron passes the poster to Oliver.

OLIVER
Oliver Pants Off? What the-

His eyes burst open, drops the poster like a hot potato.

OLIVER
Dude, what the hell?!

Laughter from the guys, but Oliver turns bright red.

OLIVER
Aaron, I’m gonna kick-

DIMITRI
The way you yelled there reminded me of Hitler from one of those YouTube reaction videos.

More laughter. Oliver shakes from anger, about to explode.

OLIVER
Hitler. I remind you of Hitler?...

More laughter. Dimitri holds his finger beneath his nose and yells in German. Steam blows out of Oliver’s ears.

OLIVER
That’s it! I’ve had it! You guys suck! Ever since I started hanging out with you chumps I’ve lost my retainer, everyone knows about the cherry bombs, I’ve had to wear a dress, vampire boy over there bit me, I have to sing a girly pop song in my underwear if we lose, and now Lenin over here says I remind him of Hitler cause he’s just so frickin’ funny!

DIMITRI
Lennon had some good songs, guys.

OLIVER
Lenin! Not Lennon! You cockroach!
Chuck pulls out his phone.

CHUCK
I think I’ve got a pic of Joanna on here. Maybe that’ll calm you down.

BEN
Dude, what?

CHUCK
She’s hot, Ben. I’m sorry.

DEREK
Oliver, we all get crazy some-

OLIVER
Dude, no, I don’t even know what your name is so just shut up.

Oliver picks up his camera and heads for the door.

BEN
Dude! Where are you going?

OLIVER
I’m done with this! Switchblade Seven? Pssh. More like Switchblade Shut Up!

Oliver exits.

BEN
I think we went too far.

CHUCK
Yeah, Ben. How could you?

BEN
How could I what?

CHUCK
I dunno. I just figure the director takes the blame.

BEN
Well, Joseph Stalin over here was the one comparing him to Hitler!

DIMITRI
Those are funny videos, guys! I’m just going with the flowing!

Ben turns to Aaron.
BEN
And you! What have you even brought
to this movie? Why are you here?

CHUCK
Yeah, what are you anyway? Like,
Wallace’s assistant or something?

WALLACE
Yeah, he’s my assistant. So what?
We’re here on business.

AARON
Yeah, I’m here on business.

Ben rubs his head.

BEN
Dude, our camera just walked out.
We’ve got nothing now. Nothing!

AARON
Chuck’s phone has a camera.

BEN
No, only newbs and Daniel Tosh use
phones as cinematic tools.

Tensions calm down in a few seconds of silence.

BEN
You’re like the Grover Dill of
assistants.

DIMITRI
24 hours of A Christmas Story,
guys.

INT. GINO’S GARAGE – DAY

Gray drapes cover the furniture. Rex dances like a ballerina
while Gino and his gang work the camera/lights.

GINO
Cut! Yo, Rex! This is retarded!

REX
It’s called art, dude!

GINO
No, it’s called retarded and I
won’t have any of it!
REX
Gino, who’s the professional filmmaker here?

GINO
You are but look-

REX
No, no. Just trust me. I’ve been in this business a long time. Nobody believed my dad knew what he was doing but he still made it big. Don’t worry, man. I promise you victory. Capice?

Gino smiles and pats Rex’s back.

GINO
Rex, ma’ man. You the man. Just one iddy biddy little thing...

Gino puts his finger in Rex’s face.

GINO
Don’t you ever say “capice” again!

INT. BEN’S ROOM – DAY

Steve opens a gigantic camera case and pulls out a mammoth direct-to-VHS video camera. This thing’s a tank.

He gently places it on the desk. The wood strains beneath the weight. Steve gets the adapter and plugs it in.

STEVE
Our interns used it on a lot of shoots and interviews. It’s been sittin’ up there for years. Still works, though.

Dimitri browses through some of the VHS tapes still in the case. One of the labels is “R. Morgan Interview.”

DIMITRI
Hey, an interview with Rex’s dad. Can we watch this, Mr. Flanagan?

Steve slips in and takes the tapes.

STEVE
I’d prefer it if you didn’t. Or at least let me watch it first.
Steve stands up.

STEVE
Everything cool?

BEN
Cool! Yeah!

Steve ruffles Ben’s hair.

STEVE
Go get ‘em.

He exits. Chuck picks up the camera and attempts to hold it in position but the weight is too much for him.

He stumbles around and then drops it. WHAM! Horrified, Ben tries to pick it up but struggles as well.

BEN
Careful! What are you doing?

CHUCK
That thing’s too heavy. Where’s the real camera your dad was using?

BEN
He was a producer. He didn’t use a camera.

CHUCK
Let’s check out the attic and try to get into that trunk.

BEN
No! That’s my dad’s stuff.

CHUCK
C’mon. It’s just been sittin’ there for years. Let’s put it to good use!

BEN
No! He doesn’t want us fooling around with it!

CHUCK
I don’t get it. Why’s your dad so secretive about it? He doesn’t even have a poster of Switchblade.

Ben’s getting fed up.
BEN
I don’t know. He just doesn’t like getting too into it.

CHUCK
Maybe we can blackmail Oliver and then pay your dad to tell us.

Ben grinds his teeth.

BEN
Unbelievable. Seriously, do you guys even wanna win this or not?

CHUCK
Dude, chill. What’s wrong?

BEN
I’m pissed off! Nothing’s getting done! Everyone’s just goofing off!

CHUCK
Are you upset about Cara?

DIMITRI
What’s wrong with Cara?

CHUCK
She’s sick.

DIMITRI
Maybe you should get some medicine.

Ben loses it.

BEN
I know I should get some medicine! That’s what I’m trying to do!

CHUCK
You’re afraid to lose her, huh? It’s okay, Ben. I know what it’s like. But fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to the dark side.

BEN
Wha...this isn’t Star Wars!

CHUCK
It’s true, though. My sister told me that when Charlie died last year.

(MORE)
CHUCK (CONT'D)
I mean, if you’re just angry about everything then this movie has no chance.

BEN
You don’t know what you’re talking about. Just quit it.

Chuck gets to his feet and heads for the exit.

CHUCK
All right. Whatever. Later, Rex.

BEN
Fine! We don’t need you!

MONTAGE

A) Dimitri and Ben work together to hold the camera as they follow Wallace and Derek in a stealth sequence.

B) Dimitri wraps the exposed tape around its shell in a feeble attempt to fix it.

C) Wallace and Derek trip over Cara and then crash into Dimitri and Ben. Everyone falls down.

END MONTAGE

INT. BEN’S ROOM – DAY

Ben lays on his bed, draws on a sheet of paper. He uses Cara as a foot rest. Her breathing is slow. Steve enters.

STEVE
How’s it goin’?

BEN
Eh.

STEVE
Watcha got there?

Ben shows him the paper. It’s a rough sketch of a poster called SWITCHBLADE EIGHT with a “DIRECTED BY BENJAMIN J. PLANAGAN” caption.

STEVE
A sequel. Rex always hated them.

Steve points to the character on the page with slicked back hair and big sunglasses.
STEVE
Who’s this?

BEN
Jack Nicholson.

STEVE
Ha. I see it now.

BEN
Why’d you stop making movies?

Steve exhales.

STEVE
It’s like I told you; it’s a hard business. A lot of different people you gotta work with and you gotta get along with ‘em otherwise you’re gonna have problems.

BEN
I know...I’ve learned.

Ben looks especially bummed.

STEVE
Let’s go.

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Steve unlocks the trunk and opens it. Random props and other documents are inside.

BEN
Whooooooa.

A couple broken replica guns, pictures, scripts. Ben unrolls a poster; it’s the actual Switchblade Seven poster.

BEN
So you do have one.

STEVE
Yeah. I just assume not look at it. Too many not great memories.

BEN
Really? I thought making movies was supposed to be fun.
It can be. But Switchblade lost our studio a lot of money and we never recovered. A year or two later we were out of business. That’s why I went into sales. Rex’s dad, though, kept making pitches to me but there wasn’t anything I could do for him.

Ben opens a photo album to an old picture of Steve and Rex’s dad on a movie set.

And then he died.

Steve examines the picture.

He had a lot of personal issues, too. Alcohol, drugs. The truth is I never knew which Rex would show up on any particular day. I don’t know if your buddy knows the whole story of his dad yet. Probably not, but I’m trusting you not to tell him. He’ll find out on his own if he doesn’t already know.

He’s not my buddy.

He’s a different kind of kid, I’ll give you that. But you guys have been buddies for years. This’ll all blow over. The thing you need to remember is that he never had someone to tell him these stories. His mom I know keeps out a lot of details so Rex’s perception is that his father was a great director and passed on in the passion of it all.

But he wasn’t?

Eh. I think Rex is a better director than his father.

So...torn pictures, papers, broken props. This is nothing but junk!
STEVE
Exactly! It’s all junk. Garbage and bad memories. You’re beyond all the trash in here.

BEN
I thought there would be, like, equipment and weapons and stuff.

STEVE
You don’t need guns or explosions or flash to make a good movie. You need heart. Switchblade had no heart. That’s why it failed. We thought guns and cool special effects were the answer but there was no story. Your movie’s gotta come from inside, as cliche and cheesy as that sounds.

BEN
That would have made a good character development line.

STEVE
Yeah, too bad Switchblade didn’t have any of that either.

Ben hands the poster back.

STEVE
Just remember, bud; you’re at the age where you don’t have to take things too seriously. You and Rex both. Enjoy it.

The trunk is closed.

EXT. LUNCH TABLE - SCHOOL - DAY

Ben and Dimitri eat by themselves. Wallace and Aaron join them. Aaron pulls Oliver’s retainer out of his mouth.

WALLACE
Yo-yo, I got da dough.

AARON
Yo-yo, Wallace’s got da dough.

WALLACE
We’ve still got a deal, Flanagan. No money, no retainer.
Wallace opens up his lunch bag and bites into his sandwich.

BEN
Dude, what’s Oliver’s deal? Why would he rather pay you all this money than just admit it?

WALLACE
He’s afraid that if the school finds out, they’ll make his parents pay for the toilets and they don’t make much of da dough so...

BEN
What do his parents do? He’s got that great camera...

WALLACE
Well, before his dad got fired he had a pretty good corporate gig with blowing whistles or something and his mom, I think, works, like, ten hour shifts in a restaurant.

BEN
Then why do you give him such a hard time to pay you?

WALLACE
Cause he’s stupid enough to pay it. He’s a bum.

BEN
He’s not a bum. He’s been alright.

Ben peers over to the Badfellas lunch area. Rex is there.

BEN
I’ll be right back.

EXT. BADFELLAS LUNCH AREA - SCHOOL - DAY

Ben walks to the table. The ‘Fellas rise from their seats.

REX
What do you want?

BEN
I just wanted to talk to you.

REX
Yeah? And?
BEN
I thought maybe we could call a truce. I had an idea for a movie, sort of a sequel to Switchblade.

REX
My dad never did sequels.

BEN
Maybe he wanted to. Maybe we can do it in his honor.

Rex chuckles.

REX
That’s sad. Half your crew has walked out so you come over here and beg for forgiveness. You want out of the bet, too?

BEN
I’m not begging, I just-

REX
I’ve heard enough. Boys...

Joshua and Nixon lift Ben up and shove him into a wheeled garbage can, then kick it back toward his own table.

EXT. LUNCH TABLE - SCHOOL - DAY

The garbage stops at the table. Dimitri and Wallace help their friend out. Derek comes over.

DEREK
I saw that. Should we beat ‘em up?

Ben wipes trash off of him.

BEN
I don’t care about them.

DIMITRI
We’ll get ‘em in the contest.

BEN
We can’t beat them.

DIMITRI
Why do you say that?

Ben takes a seat, defeated.
BEN
I thought I wanted to make movies just for fun but as we’ve gotten more serious I’ve realized it’s hard work. Now I know why Rex always had a pear up his butt. It’s a tough town, man.

DIMITRI
You wanna help Cara, too.

BEN
Like an actor, D. That was my motivation. I thought I could help my family out. Be the hero, y’know?

DIMITRI
Yeah, but you can’t always be scared of that. Remember before Chuck’s dog died? He snuck him into Trent’s math class and he pooped all over the floor.

WALLACE
I remember that.

DIMITRI
He spent as much time as he could with Charlie cause he knew what was gonna happen. You gotta enjoy it now while you got it.

BEN
Well, you’ve never lost-

Ben stops in his tracks. Dimitri raises an eyebrow.

BEN
When was the last time you saw ‘em?

DIMITRI
I don’t even remember. No one knows where they went. Not even my grandfolks. I want to make this pelicula for them wherever they are. If we get famous, maybe they’ll find me.

BEN
I’m not sure they’ll be any reward for future films, Dimitri.
DIMITRI
Well, so what? This is fun! I think that’s what you forgot. It’s not about the Robert De Niro. I mean, the extra pork skins would be nice. My grandfolks had nothin’ growin’ up with the Commies. I know that you wanna use your prize for Cara. I wanna help, too.

WALLACE
It’s gonna be tough finishing without a good camera.

DIMITRI
We direct it. It don’t direct us.

BEN
Do you guys still wanna make movies after this?

They all nod as one.

DEREK
Yeah. But we’ve gotta finish this one first.

Ben suspiciously looks at Wallace.

BEN
And you?

WALLACE
My interest is peaked, Flanagan.

Ben nods, determined.

BEN
...we gotta get the crew back.

EXT. TANBARK PIT - SCHOOL - DAY

Chuck is in stealth mode, crouched behind a SIXTH GRADER. Ben suspiciously approaches him.

Chuck grins and then pulls the kid’s pants down, revealing cartoon underwear. The kid falls to his knees and cries.

BEN
How’s it going?

CHUCK
Great! I’ve pantsed six kids today!
BEN
Looks fun!

CHUCK
It is! Wanna help?

BEN
Yeah...look, about the other day...I’ve been taking things too seriously for the wrong reasons and I shouldn’t. Tell your sister...you were right.

CHUCK
...dude, this isn’t Star Wars. Loooolz.

BEN
Loooolz.

Ben playfully punches Chuck’s arm. Chuck punches him back.

EXT. BADFELLAS LUNCH AREA - SCHOOL - DAY

Ben and Chuck creep up to the Badfellas in stealth mode, where Rex addresses his peers from the head of the table.

REX
Nixon, the soundtrack you guys developed is hauntingly effective. Kudos to you!

GINO
Yes, Kudos. Kudos to the ‘Fellas, kudos to our film, and kudos to our inevitable impending victory!

Gino bobs his head back and evilly laughs.

Chuck crouches behind Rex. Ben crouches behind Gino.

Simultaneously they pull their pants down in one easy swoop!

REX
You butt rockets!

Ben grabs a sandwich and smears it on Gino’s shirt, then the two of them run away in triumph.

The Badfellas prepare for a chase, but Gino holds them back.

GINO
Easy, boys. We’ll have our chance.
INT. BEN’S ROOM – NIGHT

Ben chats on the phone while Dimitri skims through a copy of his forgotten script.

BEN
Yeah, I invited him. He’ll be over in about twenty...Sounds good. See you then...Lolz.

He hangs up.

DIMITRI
They’re coming?

BEN
Yeah, Kemp will be here in twenty and Chuck will be here after he’s done with dinner.

DIMITRI
Coolio.

Silence.

BEN
You never get mad, do you?

DIMITRI
I practice Zen, Ben.

Dimitri turns a page in his script.

BEN
What’s that?

DIMITRI
My script.

BEN
Oh. The one I never read.

DIMITRI
Yeah. It’s okay.

Ben shakes his head, sits down on a chair.

BEN
I’m sorry. I should have read it.

DIMITRI
You still can.
Ben takes the script. His eyes open in amazement as he flips through the perfectly formatted 20 page document.

BEN
Holy cow! When did you learn to write like this?

DIMITRI
I have a lot of spare time.

BEN
D, this is incredible! It’s perfectly formatted and everything! What’s this about?

DIMITRI
Stuff.

BEN
Thanks. What stuff?

DIMITRI
You and me and the guys and our attempts to make a movie and all the stuff we go through. Might make a good flick.

Ben checks out the title; “The Scorsese Club.”

BEN
The Scorsese Club. This is brilliant! I just wish we could do this now. I mean, it’s original, good story, it doesn’t require a huge payroll—

DIMITRI
We can still do it.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

As the sun sets over their “film set,” Ben, Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver all sit around a boulder to contemplate.

BEN
Thanks for coming, Oliver. We owe you an apology.

Oliver reveals his front teeth, which have begun to shift over each other. The guys squint in disgust.
BEN
Yeah, about that. I’ll get your retainer back from Wallace tomorrow. But we’re sorry.

OLIVER
It’s cool. I just don’t want my family to know about the toilets. If the school were to make them pay then they’ll murder me. We don’t have much of the cash, so...

CHUCK
Why did you even do it?

OLIVER
It was funny.

BEN
Money’s not everything. If anything, I think the things you don’t have make you appreciate what you do have a little more.

DIMITRI
I’m poor too, guys.

BEN
But come on, gang! We can’t let this bring us down! All we’ve been through has opened my eyes. There’s always gonna be speed bumps in life. So what if you hit one too fast? You gotta just make your way over it and keep going! Don’t stop. Never ever! I mean, does anyone really wanna sing in their underwear? We gotta keep going!

The guys nod their heads.

CHUCK
So what do we do, Mr. Director Man?

BEN
Well, up until now all we’ve had are scenes without a story. But now, my friends, we have a plan and an idea and a secret weapon...Dimitri!
INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Ben, Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver sit around the kitchen table with the script and storyboards laid out.

BEN
It’s amazing that our horrible raw footage is actually gonna come in handy.

CHUCK
Raw is good?

BEN
Raw is fresh.

MONTAGE

A) The entire gang acts out a dramatic scene.

B) Wallace returns the retainer to Oliver.

C) Ben smacks the clapper on his fingers.

BEN
Son of a-

D) Ben and Oliver capture video into a computer

E) Rex and Gino edit their movie on a computer

F) Oliver flirts with Joanna, who slaps him in the face.

END MONTAGE

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The phone rings. Steve answers. Jodie’s at the table.

STEVE
Hello...yes, Mr. Adams...today? Really?...is that so?...My wife? (holds phone down)
He wants to meet you!

JODIE
What, are you ashamed of me or something?

STEVE
(smiles, holds phone up)
Sounds good. We’ll see you there!
Steve hangs up the phone and speaks with excitement.

STEVE
The other applicant for the job flaked out! My potential future boss wants to have dinner with us tonight! Like, soon!

Jodie stands up and they happily bounce up and down.

JODIE
He wants to give you the job!

EXT. DRIVeway - DAY

Steve and Jodie load into their SUV, drive away. A PAIR OF EYES watches their every move from across the street.

INT. BEN’S ROOM - DAY

Ben, Chuck, and Dimitri huddle around the laptop. Oliver plays tug-of-war with Cara and his sweater.

OLIVER
Give me the shweater you dumb dog!

Cara releases. Oliver crashes into a pile of toys.

CHUCK
When I was a kid I used to think that Cast was actually an actor in every movie ever.

OLIVER
You musht have been a shtupid kid!

BEN
Now we need some opening credits.

CHUCK
21st Century Chuck Presents...

DING DONG! The doorbell rings. Ben heads for the exit.

INT. ENTRYWAY – BEN’S HOUSE – DAY

Ben opens the door to be greeted by Gino and the Badfellas sans Rex.

Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver watch from upstairs.
GINO
Afternoon, Flanagan.

BEN
What do you want, Gino?

GINO
Special orders from Rex. He took
great offense to your stunt the
other day and wants your studio to
go the way of his old man’s.

BEN
And where is Rex?

GINO
Finishing the final cut of our
film. It’s a masterpiece.

BEN
Well ours is, too.

GINO
Really? We’ll see about that.

Gino attempts to go upstairs but is pushed back by Ben.

BEN
Gino, you don’t want to mess with
me right now, dude. I’m tired, I
haven’t slept-

GINO
Look at this, boys! The baby is
tired! Waaaaaah!

They all do a snort-like laugh.

Gino tries once more to get inside but is pushed back again.
Now things are serious.

GINO
If you touch me one more time,
I swear I’m gonna-

Ben suddenly shoves Gino to the ground.

GINO
Boys! Attack the naysayer!

The gang charges. Ben bolts for the upstairs, where the other
guys run into his room.
INT. BEN’S ROOM – DAY

Ben dashes in and slams and locks the door behind him. The guys search the room for protection.

Chuck picks up a hockey stick that leans against a wall.

Dimitri takes a baseball bat.

Oliver picks up a foam dart gun.

Ben pulls a squirt gun from out of his closet.

INT. HALLWAY – BEN’S HOUSE – DAY

The Badfellas circle around the door.

JOSHUA
Before we go in...let’s kick down the door!

GINO
Oh yeah, and get in serious trouble? I got a better idea.

Gino pulls out a lock pick and goes to work. Joshua and Nixon bang on the door.

INT. BEN’S ROOM – DAY

The guys have their gear in ready position, set for an epic battle. Dimitri takes a practice swing. Ben pumps his gun.

The knob jitters from Gino’s work. The pounds get louder.

The door swings open. Joshua bursts into the room pounding his chest and screeches like a manic monkey.

JOSHUA
YEEEEEE-ARRRRRRR!

BEN
Freedom!

Ben fires water off at Joshua and soaks him. Gino and company storm in and a bunch of wrestling matches ensue.

Gino works his way through the battle and spots the laptop on Ben’s desk.

Chuck pulls up the back of Joshua’s pants using the toe of his hockey stick and gives him a massive wedgie.
Erick gets Oliver in a headlock and gives him a noogie.

Gino grabs the laptop and bolts out the door. Ben shoves Nixon aside and chases after him.

INT. ENTRYWAY - BEN’S HOUSE - DAY

Gino sails down the stairs and opens the front door, but Ben comes crashing down and slams it shut.

GINO
You’ll have to do better than that!

Gino runs into the kitchen with Ben hot on his tail.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Gino runs into the back, where he finds himself trapped. Ben confronts him. Gino holds the laptop over his head.

GINO
Don’t come a step closer.

BEN
Please! Don’t! You don’t wanna win like this do you?

GINO
...yeah. I really think I do.

BEN
Oh. Can I please have it back?

GINO
You know, Flanagan, people like you really tick me off.

BEN
Why?

GINO
Because you’re a rodent. A scab. A loser. You know it and I know it. Hangin’ out with the same group of zeros everyday-

Ben smugly grins. Gino’s ticked.

GINO
What are you smilin’ at, jerk?
BEN
You’re sweating. You push everyone around at school and they just take it. But we’re not. You can’t push us to the ground anymore so now you’re getting desperate. You’re at the end of your line.

GINO
Pssh. I push everyone around cause I’m better than them. That’s why I’m doing this; to prove that I’m better. And now I’m gonna prove that I’m especially better than you. You like Britney Spears?

Gino prepares to smash the laptop.

BEN
Well, there’s something I know that you don’t, Gino.

GINO
And what’s that, Nostradamus?

BEN
My dog is about to bite your ass off.

Gino looks behind him where Cara viciously snarls. Gino lowers the laptop, terrified.

GINO
Whoa. Good dog. Don’t wanna hurt Big Gino.

Ben’s right hand is in the air.

GINO
Good dog. Easy! Yo, Flanagan, is your dog deaf or somethin’?

BEN
Heh, well, yeah...

Gino’s eyes bulge open.

BEN
All I have to do is lower my hand. The question you gotta ask yourself is “do I feel lucky today?” Well, do ya, punk?
Both gangs emerge from the house in a big scuffle. For some reason Chuck’s shirt is gone. Joshua’s underwear is pulled over his head. They all stop and stare at the showdown.

BEN
Give me the computer, Gino.

Gino passes the laptop over to Ben.

BEN
Thank you. The side gate is right beside you. Beat it. All of you.

Gino’s gang scurries over to the gate and opens it up. Gino points back to Ben.

GINO
This ain’t over, Flanagan. I got a poodle at home that barks at golden retrievers every time I walk her-

Ben socks Gino right in the face. Gino crashes into his gang members and looks back at Ben in disbelief.

GINO
Let’s blow this joint, boys!

Ben angrily stares until they exit. He then collapses to the ground and rubs his hand in pain.

BEN
Ow! Ow! Ow!

The guys walk over. Chuck pats Ben’s shoulder.

CHUCK
First time punching someone, huh? Yeah, I remember my first time. It left a pain in my fingers for five days. Of course, the kid had braces so, ya know. The second punch was a lot easier-

Chuck goes off in a ramble while Ben pets his dog.

BEN
Good girl.

INT. BEN’S ROOM – NIGHT

Ben is wide awake. He admires his business card.
EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Steve loads several pieces of baggage into the SUV while Chuck and Oliver argue.

CHUCK
How much junk did you bring? You pack like a woman!

OLIVER
I just brought enough shtuff sho I’d be shafe!

CHUCK
You brought like six pairs of socks! We’ll only be gone for the weekend!

OLIVER
What if I shtep in shome mud or shomething? Huh? Then what? I guessh I could jusht walk around with muddy feet the resht of the time like you would, right?

Steve takes a break.

STEVE
Kid, you pack like a woman.

Chuck smiles. Ben, Dimitri, Jodie, Joanna, and Cara exit the house. Aaron walks down the street holding a poster board.

AARON
Sup guys? As you requested-

He shows off the poster; a full-size print of "The Scorsese Club," with Ben, Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver in suits and sunglasses with serious gangsta faces.

Ben holds a DVD copy of their movie next to the poster.

BEN
Whoa. Nice job, dude! We’d invite you but, yeah, no more room.

AARON
It’s okay. I’ll be ballin’ with Wallace and Derek tonight so let us know how it goes.

Ben shakes hands with him.
BEN
Will do, Aaron. Thanks.

Aaron looks directly at Oliver with a warm smile.

AARON
Good luck, Kemp.

Steve and Jodie kiss goodbye.

STEVE
You’re sure you don’t wanna come?

JODIE
I should keep an eye on the old lady.

They look at Cara; she looks a bit out of it.

STEVE
Gents! On we go!

EXT. FREeway - DAY
The SUV cruises steadily along the freeway. The guys wave to cars that pass them by.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - DAY
The San Francisco fog smothers the bridge as they make their way closer to the City by the Bay.

EXT. ORION POST THEATER COMPLEX - DAY
The five guys arrive at the doors of the theater. It looks straight out of the 60s. They’re all excited.

BEN
Look at this! It’s huge!

DIMITRI
Guys! Guys! Guys! Aghhh!

CHUCK
Opening night! World premiere! Box office smash!

Two young teens, MERLIN and KATE, stop by and hand Chuck a shirt. It reads PASSION OF THE CHRIST 2: MARY STRIKES BACK.
MERLIN
Hi! Stop by this evening for the screening of the Passion of the Christ 2!

KATE
Yeah! Mary kicks some serious butt! It’ll make people change their lives like the first one!

Merlin hands Chuck a “Passion” T-shirt.

MERLIN
Compliments of Jesus Lives Entertainment.

CHUCK
Can I have one more?

Merlin hands him one more and then he and Kate enter the building. Ben questionably looks at him; what the heck?

CHUCK
For Aaron.

EXT. ORION POST THEATER COMPLEX – NIGHT

The boys strut up to the main entrance with Steve close behind. They’re all in sharp suits and then some.

Chuck wears sunglasses and chats on his phone. Dimitri has a top hat and cane but wears out of place tennis shoes.

DIMITRI
Big pimpin’ movie stars, guys!

OLIVER
We’re dressed the part, too!

Oliver’s fancy bow-tie spins.

INT. LOBBY – NIGHT

The place is packed with young teens, parents, and suits. Ben shakes hands with a random 13 year old BOY.

BEN
Benjamin J. Flanagan, big movie director. Nice to meet you!

Ben moves further into the theater where he snatches a paper and pen out of a WOMAN’S hand and scribbles his autograph.
BEN
Here you go, ma’am!

Steve admires the theater and whispers to himself.

STEVE
My son the director...

A hand grabs Ben’s shoulder; it’s a sharply dressed Mr. Shields, suit and tie.

BEN
Mr. Shields!

MR. SHIELDS
Ben! Glad you made it!

BEN
What are you doing here?

MR. SHIELDS
Someone’s gotta host this joint!

Mr. Shields hands Ben a schedule and heads off.

CHUCK
Oh my God...

Chatting with others is NIKKI, 30s, sexy dress.

BEN
Nikki Chambers, model for-

OLIVER
Victoria’sh Shecret.

Chuck snaps a pic with his phone. Ben opens the brochure.

BEN
She’s on the judging panel.

Dozens of movie titles are listed with their screening times and locations. He spots The Scorsese Club on the page.

BEN
8 PM, gang. Two hours to scope out the competition.

INT. THEATER 12 – NIGHT

A theater with about 50 seats but holding half. The gang sits in back. Chuck stumbles; his sunglasses are still on.
BEN
Can you actually see in those?

CHUCK
Dude, real stars never take their shades off.

Ben will buy that, slips his own shades on.

Dimitri follows suit, puts on a pair of cardboard 3D glasses.

Mr. Shields runs into the theater and acrobatically leaps around down in front. Must be high on caffeine.

MR. SHIELDS
WOOOOOOOOO! YEAH!

The audience cheers as he calms down. The guys are stunned.

MR. SHIELDS
Seriously, the film’s description told me to enter this way. So! What drives you? What gets you up in the morning? This next film out of Pasadena examines an adult world through the eyes of a child. Mark Dennison and Cori Lewis present “Through My Eyes.”

The lights dim and the film starts. The opening shot takes place atop a skyscraper. A GIRL rides her bike along the top and leaps into the air to a neighboring building.

Ben and Chuck look at each other, mouths wide open.

MONTAGE
A) A flick with a KID strutting through the downtown of a large city.

B) A film shot in sepia tone with characters in dated costumes.

C) A lively audience engages in a flick that features kids singing and dancing.

INT. THEATER 3 - NIGHT

Another film is underway. ATILLA(13) aims a gun at BERT(13) in an alley.
ATILLA
I knew you’d be back to finish the job. Killed my brother, tried to kill me. My scars are my memory.

BERT
Yeah, and now to finish the job!

Atilla and Bert duke it out. Their choreography is top notch.

The film finishes up as Atilla guns down Bert with a realistic gunshot sound effect.

ATILLA
Hasta la vista, sucka.

The film fades out to the credit “THE SCRATCH REVENGE – A FILM BY ATILLA BALAZAR AND BERT FLIRT.”

BEN
Bert Flirt?

INT. LOBBY – NIGHT

The four guys stand there in bewilderment. A BOY from the musical sings for the people at the snack bar.

BEN
I didn’t realize these movies were gonna be so good.

CHUCK
Yeah. Maybe you were onto something about taking things more seriously. Or maybe Rex was.

Ben fidgets and pulls out the schedule.

BEN
Well, let’s find out.

INT. THEATER 10 – NIGHT

A packed house. Rex chats with people in the audience. Ben and company sit in the back.

Mr. Shields enters and goes to the front of the theater.

MR. SHIELDS
Greetings. If you had to name the three most important things in your life, what would they be? (MORE)
MR. SHIELDS (CONT'D)
Don’t answer that; it’s rhetorical.
But our next picture, “The Love
That I Lost,” examines human nature
and its tendencies to chase after
dreams that can’t come true while
ignoring what really matters.
Brought to you by Badfellas
Productions out of San Carlos, “The
Love That I Lost” by Rexesis G.
Morgan the Fourth, Gino Mussolini
Benidelli, Joshua Jerusalem Peters,
and...Richard Nixon.

The lights dim. The film rolls. A melodic piano tune plays in
the background over a montage of gray drapes.

Rex dances into the scene with passionate ballet moves and
spreads his fingers to caress the drapes.

REX (V.O.)
I have lost it. I need it back.

THE LOVE THAT I LOST - LATER

Rex and Joshua sit at a table in a dark room.

JOSHUA
Tell me: is it worth it? All the
madness? All the insanity?

REX
It’s worth it. I believe in it.

THE LOVE THAT I LOST - LATER

BOOM! Rex walks through an explosion as if it weren’t there.

REX (V.O.)
Chasing dreams that can’t come true
is what they say. But I’ll find it.
It’s what I love.

A MOTHER and FATHER look on in sadness as Rex passes by.

THE LOVE THAT I LOST - LATER

Rex stands at a grave. The headstone belongs to Rexesis G.
Morgan the Third.

JOSHUA (V.O.)
Tell me: is it worth it? All the
madness? All the insanity?

Rex solemnly looks at the camera and the picture fades out.
The crowd stands as one to thunderously applaud. Rex bows.

Ben is stunned stiff. His eyes bulge out.

EXT. LOBBY - NIGHT

The crowds exit. Ben and his group sluggishly make their way through until Rex and his boys cut them off.

    REX
    Hey, was your film the one that
got that huge standing ovation?
    Oh wait, no, that was mine!

Rex sarcastically laughs.

    CHUCK
    Your film sucked and you know it.

    REX
    Charles, your insults are as
dense as your brain.
    (to Dimitri)
    Nice shoes, D.

Ben’s had enough. He’s clearly frustrated.

    BEN
    Rex, why don’t you just back off?
    We’ve got a pretty damn good movie
    going up soon, too.

    REX
    Oh! Whoa! Them are fightin’ words,
    Flanagan! Just get ready to lose,
    losers! I’ll be pickin’ out a good
    song for Monday!

Joshua bobs his head in front of them as the Fellas leave.

    CHUCK
    I lied. Their movie was actually
    pretty good.

    BEN
    Yeah. It was really frickin’ good.

    OLIVER
    I’m wearing boxersh on Monday.

    DIMITRI
    Maybe we should color code, guys.
BEN
Dude! Our movie hasn’t even screened yet!

CHUCK
Got one more inspirational speech in you?

The others are visibly nervous.

BEN
Yeah, I do! We can still win this. We can still get our paychecks, dang it! I look at you guys and I see the best damn crew any 13 year old ever assembled in the history of the universe. Whether we were fighting each other or fighting the Fellas we still made it here. Now, we’ve got a movie premiering in a few minutes. Do you guys wanna continue talking about underwear or do you wanna see where all of your hard work has gone? It’s showtime!

INT. LONG HALLWAY - NIGHT
The crew marches down a hallway. A crowd is with them.

They arrive outside theater 7. An easel is by the door with a full size print of their poster.

INT. THEATER 7 - NIGHT
It’s another packed house. The Badfellas are down in front. Ben and his guys take seats toward the back.

Mr. Shields runs down the aisle to the front of the theater.

MR. SHIELDS
HEY. What’s the hardest part about making a film? A good crew? A script? Equipment? Unfortunately the characters in this next film don’t have any of those. Out of San Carlos, the team of 21st Century Chuck...
(crowd chuckles)
Kinda makes you chuckle...anyway, Benjamin J. Flanagan, Charles M. Mills, Dimitri P.
(MORE)
The opening credits run followed by a group sequence with Ben directing an action scene.

BEN
Cut! This isn’t working!

CHUCK
Yeah, I’m not feeling too much adventure here.

BEN
We just need one half decent idea!

DIMITRI
One word, guys: Bootlegging!

THE SCORSESE CLUB - LATER

Ben and Chuck stand before an electronics store CASHIER.

BEN
Good day. We’re major filmmakers looking to purchase films to inspire our minds with radically obscure ideas and I see that you have quite a movie collection here. I went online and found a list of the top 10 most in-your-face films and was wondering if you had any.

Ben hands the list to the cashier.

CASHIER
Blood Sucking Freaks, Cannibal Holocaust...120 Days of Sodomy?! Do you even know what that means?

THE SCORSESE CLUB - LATER

“The Return of Vader” scene plays which stirs up laughter from the audience. Oliver is on-screen in a dress and wig.

DEREK
Daddy’s Home!
More laughter as Ben and Derek duke it out on screen.

OLIVER
Be careful, my love!

CHUCK
You know he’s your brother, right?

AARON
Cut! This is getting gross.

Oliver throws his wig at Aaron.

OLIVER
You think?!

More laughter from the audience.

THE SCORSESE CLUB - LATER

Ben, Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver sit around a table. Their acting is pretty good here.

BEN
Guys, are we even gonna be friends after this? I mean, yeah, now we’re hanging out with each other, but when this movie is all said and done will we still be buds?

CHUCK
Biz partners can still be pals.

THE SCORSESE CLUB - LATER

Ben lectures his crew in an inspirational speech.

BEN
Come on, gang! We can’t give up! Did Martin Scorsese give up after he missed out on the Oscar five straight times? Did he give up when Christ made his last temptation? Did he give up when “Bringing Out the Dead” flopped at the box office? No! He stuck with it!

THE SCORSESE CLUB - FINAL SCENE

The gang turns in a finished copy of their film to Jodie, who is dressed like a serious businesswoman.
BEN
We don’t know if it’s exactly what your studio wanted, but it’s close.

JODIE
Thank you, boys.

Ben turns around and walks off down the street as slow, dramatic music starts up. With one more heroic look up the street, the film fades out.

Warm applause breaks out. The guys exchange handshakes.

The audience piles out.

Steve applauds. His cell phone rings, call from “HOME”.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

A few people here and there. Steve answers the call.

STEVE
What’s up?

INTERCUT - BEN’S HOUSE/LOBBY

JODIE
Cara’s not doing too good.

STEVE
Oooh. What’s the matter?

JODIE
She can’t stand up and she’s not breathing right.

STEVE
Are there new growths?

JODIE
I’m not sure. Might be the same one pushing on her insides.

STEVE
Well what are you thinking here?

JODIE
Something needs to be done tonight. If they can work on her, great, but if not...I think she’s in pain.

Steve shuts his eyes.
STEVE
Ben just had his premiere.

JODIE
How’d it go?

STEVE
Good. Went good. The awards aren’t until tomorrow.

JODIE
Well I don’t know what to tell you. I called Dr. Lancaster and he said we can bring her in but we don’t know what the diagnosis is gonna be and if we can’t do anything to help her...you know...

STEVE
Yeah. Yeah, I know.

INT. LOBBY - LATER

Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver wait in line at the snack bar.

Steve kneels by Ben. He’s already delivered the news.

BEN
How long does she have?

STEVE
We don’t know. They’re gonna bring her into Lancaster’s but after that we don’t know what’ll happen. He may be able to do a procedure to help her but if not-

BEN
Then this might be her last night.

STEVE
Might be, pal. I know your awards are tomorrow so I didn’t know if you guys wanted to stay or head back. It’s your call.

Ben takes deep breaths. Everything spins. Steve hugs him.

BEN
What about...them?

STEVE
They’re part of it, too.
BEN
What if they don’t want to leave?
We wanted to win this for her. They
award the money tomorrow...to get
her those drugs. To get her-

Steve firmly grabs his shoulders.

STEVE
Ben, Ben! That was your plan? To
win and pay for her treatment?

BEN
It was. And they wanted it, too.

STEVE
Kid, there’s no way your mother and
I would let you pay for it.

BEN
What? But it’s my money.

STEVE
Right, it’s your money. All yours.
Cara’s issue is an adult problem.
Let us worry about it. We’ll find a
way. But what have I been telling
you? You’re 13! Enjoy these years.
You shouldn’t want to win because
of a situation like Cara’s, you
should want to win because these
are the best days of your life.
Don’t hold yourself against a wall.
Besides, I got the job.

Ben perks up.

BEN
Well that’s good news.

STEVE
It is!

BEN
We also made a bet with Rex that if
he placed ahead of us we’d have to
run around school singing a girly
pop song in our underwear.

STEVE
Oh. Well...can’t help you there,
pal.

(MORE)
STEVE (CONT'D)
You know, when Rex’s dad kept
bring ing me ideas after the studio
had failed I was never straight
with him. I always said “yeah,
maybe” and kept his hopes up.
That’s why he kept coming back. I
couldn’t just be firm with him.
Maybe this is your chance to be
straight with your friends. You may
be surprised.

Chuck, Dimitri, and Oliver return, each with a hot dog topped
with all sorts of gunk.

OLIVER
I’ll pay you back, D. I shwear.

DIMITRI
Yeah, right. It’s on me, guys.

They all sense the solemn tone.

DIMITRI
What’s going on, yo?

BEN
Cara’s not doing good. She might
not make it through the night.

Like a freight train.

OLIVER
We got awardsh comin’ up, though.

BEN
I know.

CHUCK
We’ve worked so hard to get here.

BEN
I know.

DIMITRI
What do you wanna do?

BEN
It’s a great movie. But I wanna
know what you guys think.

They look at one another. An awkward silence until:
CHUCK
I think you should go. That’s what
I would do if I were you.

Ben nods. Onto Dimitri. He thinks for a second.

DIMITRI
Standing up there with a trophy
would make my parents proud
wherever they are, guys. But
wherever they may be, I think my
work alone made them proud.

Ben nods. Oliver bites his lip.

OLIVER
They give the cash out tomorrow,
guysh! Come on! I could pay off
Wallash! It could be over!...
(sighs)
But you gotta do what you gotta do.
Maybe I should, too.

BEN
Let’s go home.

STEVE
I’ll bring the car ‘round front.

Steve exits. Rex, Gino, Joshua, and Nixon march over.

REX
Ben, Ben, Ben. Bravo. Really
impressive stuff with the directing
and the acting. I didn’t know you
had it in you. But what’s this I
hear about you leaving?

BEN
Cara’s sick. We gotta go.

Rex actually looks remorseful. Nixon sarcastically groans.

NIXON
Awwww...Cara’s your sister, right?

BEN
Dog.

Gino nervously fidgets.

REX
You’re still gonna be at the
awards, right?
BEN
I’ll see ya Monday.

The team heads for the exit. Rex’s smug is gone.

GINO
Forgetaboutthem.

INT. SUV - NIGHT
Quiet ride. Ben looks out the window, the others are asleep.

INT. WAITING ROOM - VET’S OFFICE - NIGHT
Ben and Steve enter. Jodie and Joanna are there. Other than that it’s empty. They all embrace.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - DAY/NIGHT
The sun rises and sets over the City by the Bay.

INT. MAIN CHAMBER - ORION POST THEATER COMPLEX - NIGHT
Mr. Shields is on stage with the panel of TEN JUDGES including super model Nikki. They address the huge crowd.

NIKKI
First we’d like to say that the entries this year were just fantastic and you all should be proud of yourselves.

INT. WAITING ROOM - VET’S OFFICE - NIGHT
The tired family waits. Their eyes are baggy.

FAT JUDGE (V.O.)
You guys didn’t do us any favors by making your movies so dang good, so our decision was a hard one. But after extensive debates, we came to a winner. This year’s Best Picture is like no other we’ve ever had. It was different in all aspects of creativity and execution and had a great uniqueness to it.

Ben reads one of his business cards over and over.
BAD HAIRCUT JUDGE (V.O.)
Third place in this year’s
competition goes to the comedy “The
Scorsese Club” by Benjamin J.
Flanagan, Charles M. Mills, Oliver
S. Kemp, and Dimitri P. Schm-blah-
blah-ooga-booga of 21st Century
Chuck.

DR. LANCASTER(40s), in a white coat, exits the exam area.

FAT JUDGE (V.O.)
Second place in this year’s
competition goes to the
fantasy/comedy “Runnin’ with Van
Halen,” by Christie McCoy and
Brandon Beedmont of Riverside North
Productions. Congrats!

The Flanagan’s eagerly stand up.

NIKKI (V.O.)
And the winner of the 2012 San
Francisco 15-Minute Junior Film
Festival is...

Dr. Lancaster delivers the news. They all blow a massive sigh
of relief.

NIKKI (V.O.)
“The Scratch Revenge” by Atilla
Balazar and Bert Flirt of Lunar
Blue Productions! Come on up, boys!

INT. MAIN CHAMBER - ORION POST THEATER COMPLEX - NIGHT
The “Scratch” crew, lead by BERT FLIRT, dash up to the stage
and celebrate.

BERT
Yeah! All right!

Rex, Gino, and their gang sit in anger and fume.

INT. SURGERY RECOVERY - NIGHT
Cara rests on a table, her belly fur shaved off. Fresh
stitches go up and down her torso.
INT. MAIN CHAMBER - ORION POST THEATER COMPLEX - NIGHT

Upon arrival, each boy receives a trophy from Nikki.

Bert drops the trophy and attempts to open mouth kiss her but is angrily shoved away.

NIKKI
Pervert!

BERT
Come on, babe! Yeah!

Security rushes onto stage. Bert dodges them and break dances, much to the audience’s amusement.

INT. SURGERY RECOVERY - NIGHT

Ben puts his hand on Cara’s paw. She ever so slightly raises it. He smiles.

EXT. ORION POST THEATER COMPLEX - NIGHT

The applicants gather outside to congratulate each other.

Gino, Joshua, and Nixon confront Rex.

GINO
You said we’d win! You promised we’d win! You really think we’re gonna do that singing bullcrap? Hell no! You’re takin’ the fall all on your own, bro! Don’t you ever hang out with us again, you lil’ pot-faced twerp!

They each shove Rex aside until he stands all alone.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

A banner is taped up which reads “CONGRATULATIONS 21ST CENTURY CHUCK!” Ben’s family, his crew, and PARENTS of the crew members are there.

A stack of presents rests on a table. Chuck and Aaron are in their “Passion” T-shirts.

Oliver arrives on the scene. His clothes are filthy.

BEN
Dude! How’d it go?
OLIVER
They jusht made me clean a couple
bathroomsh! That’sh it!

Oliver holds up the cherry bomb picture and rips it apart.

Ben sees someone at the other side of the yard: Rex. They meet halfway.

REX
Alright, here I am. What did you want? Wanna embarrass me or something? I’ll do the underwear thing next week, but you wanna rub it in? Go ahead. I’m ready.

Ben holds out his hand.

BEN
Thanks for coming. Congratulations on your movie.

Hesitant at first, Rex shakes his hand.

REX
Thanks, Ben. You too.

Everyone circles around a cake which reads “HAPPY 13 YEARS AND ONE MONTH, BEN!” Cara rests off to the side.

Jodie walks over to her son and kisses his head.

JODIE
Happy birthday, hun. Again.

Ben slams his hand on the table to get everyone’s attention.

BEN
Thanks everyone for coming. Honestly, a few weeks ago I wouldn’t have thunk this was possible...but look at all of this. We didn’t win...but I’d say third place ain’t half bad either.

STEVE
Can we expect a sequel any time soon?

BEN
Well, I don’t know about that.
CHUCK
Hey, Ben...what is next for us?

FADE TO BLACK

SUPER: ONE MONTH LATER

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - DAY

SUPER: 21ST CENTURY CHUCK PRESENTS

Ben struts down his neighborhood street in a black leather jacket and beanie.

SUPER: BENJAMIN J. FLANAGAN IS

As he walks by the camera...

SUPER: SHAFT

INT. OFFICE - DAY

He walks into a business office. Steve and a SUIT walk in the background.

DIMITRI (V.O.)
Yo! We’re on!

They do a double take and then hit the floor. Chuck, dressed in “gangsta” clothes, walks beside Ben.

CHUCK
Yo Shaft! What’s hangin’, g? I told you I be back, foo!

BEN
Yo, who delivers six times out of ten?

CHUCK
You man! But dawg, I need some shiz you know?

BEN
Aight, don’t trip.
Oliver jumps out of nowhere and snatches Ben’s wallet from his pants. Ben casually turns around and points to Oliver.

BEN
Stop!

Oliver turns around.

OLIVER
You talkin’ to me? I shaid are you talkin’ to me?

Ben reveals a pistol and exaggeratedly points it at Oliver. Oliver summons his own pistol and does the same.

A stand-off for a second until Ben rolls on the ground, fires a shot into Oliver, complete with a bullet sound effect.

He then turns to the camera and fires once more.

FADE TO BLACK.

ROLL END CREDITS

DING DONG!

FADE IN:

EXT. BEN’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ben opens the front door to a group of PARTY CRASHERS. The group of wild hair-colored twenty-somethings are equipped with beer kegs and boom boxes over their shoulders.

PARTY CRASHER
Yo, is this where the party’s at?

Ben slams the door shut.

FINAL FADE.

THE END