AXEING THE ZOMBIE
INT. WAREHOUSE SET - NIGHT

JAKE, twenty two, dressed as a zombie with ragged dirty cloths, bandages that are unwrapping, and a wooden splint on his left leg, stumbles forward. ZEKE HOWARD, handsome, bare chested, with a black trench coat and black pants, jumps out from behind a crate and swings a large fake battle axe into Jake's groin.

Jake staggers. Staggers. Knees turned in. Then falls onto the ground in pain.

JOHN (O.S.)
Cut! Zombies don't have balls. You're fired.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jake sits at attention on the couch in zombie costume drinking an orange juice, watching a zombie movie, studying.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Jake, you're not getting fake blood on the couch again are you?

JAKE
No they weren't able to kill me today.

CYNTHIA
Ready to go to acting class?

EXT. WAREHOUSE SET - NIGHT

CU of Jake. His eyes move wildly about. A chain saw BUZZES in background.

JOHN (O.S.)
Don't flinch this time or you're fired.

Jake's P.O.V. as Zeke is held suspended ten feet above him holding a giant chain saw.

JOHN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Action!

Zeke falls quickly towards him.

CUT TO BLACK
FADE IN.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jake is on the couch again, half-zombied, with two black eyes and a splint on his nose watching RETURN OF THE KILLER TOMATOES.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
Did you get the milk?

JAKE
Yeah. Right after I got out of the hospital.

CYNTHIA (O.S.)
You got hurt again?

JAKE
Being a zombie is dangerous work.

CYNTHIA, twenty, in clown costume with a huge smile and painted on tears, sits beside him.

CYNTHIA
Want to talk about it?

JAKE
Look. There is Clooney. All I want is my Clooney moment, a spoken part in a bad movie.

CYNTHIA
You'll get there, just keep smiling and learning. Play a zombie don't become one. You've been in four John Zammero zombie movies, you must be doing something right if he keeps asking you back.

EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - MORNING

JOHN ZAMMERO, dressed in a white tennis uniform with a purple sun visor, drives Jake around the back lot.

JOHN
Josh, I need to talk to you.

JAKE
Mr. Zammero, my name is Jake.
JOHN
Mat, you know I fired you two weeks ago right?

JAKE
You fire me twice every movie.

BACK TO THE FUTURE CLOCK TOWER SET

JOHN
But I meant it. In fact, I always mean it. Do you know what the rate of turnover is for zombie extras in my movies?

JAKE
No, what is a rate of turnover?

JOHN
The number of zombies extras that stay to work on the next movie. My rate of turnover is .001 Percent. You know who that .001 Percent is?

PSYCHO SET

JAKE
No idea.

JOHN
You. And I'm getting tired of coming up with new and unusual ways of offing you. I've had you hanged, drawn and quartered, fed to mutants, and sawed in two. On IMDB they are starting to think you are my trademark or some shit. I don't even know how you get back on set.

John stops the cart right outside the BATES MOTEL and looks at Jake for the first time.

JOHN (CONT'D)
So, you are fired. Do you got it? Why the hell do you want to be a zombie in my movies anyway? There cannot be any money in it. Even I don't make money from my movies... And I'm the director.
JAKE
I don't. But how can I tell my wife that I got fired as a zombie extra? It is the easiest acting gig in Hollywood. All you have to do is dress up in raggedy clothes and pretend to die.

JOHN
Who is your wife?

JAKE
She plays an extra in the remake of KILLER CLOWNS FROM OUTER SPACE being made on lot 25.

JOHN
I asked you who, not what. Anyway, why don't you ask her to help you get a job on that set? Fuck up someone else's movie for a change.

JAKE
That would require me to tell her I let her down.

JOHN
You make about as much sense as a slasher movie. Just think to yourself, what would Norman Bates do?

JAKE
Kill her?

JOHN
Stuff her and tie her to a rocking chair.

John starts driving again.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Have you at least started acting classes and gone to the studio therapist like I told you last time I fired you?

JAKE
Yeah...

INT. PSYCHOLOGISTS OFFICE - DAY

A room with wall to wall wood paneling. Jake sits on leather couch.
PSYCHOLOGIST
What do you like about being a zombie?

JAKE
Every day I go to work at the accounting office, sit behind the computer and punch in numbers. I don't feel special. When Mr. Zammero kills me in his movies it's like I'm the zombie. I'm special at least for the death scene.

PSYCHOLOGIST
How is your relationship with your wife?

JAKE
She is a clown, always happy. I think. It is kind of hard to tell with the face paint.

EXT. ENTRANCE JAWS SET - DAY

JOHN
I have an idea Paul. Maybe we can come to some sort of accord.

Jake takes a swig from the flask.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Are you drunk zombie'ing again? I told you not to do that in front of me. Common man. Drop the flask.

Jake drops it and it bounces out of the cart across the street toward the JAWS set.

JAKE
What is this idea?

JOHN
You tell your girl you got fired, and I'll give you a speaking role in my next horror movie.

JAKE
You will?

JOHN
But you got to do it on camera.

JAKE
Why?
JURASSIC PARK SET

Two JANITORS are scrapping gum off of a T-Rex. John slows down to watch, intrigued.

    JOHN
Think of it as a test.

    JAKE
What type of test?

    JOHN
A test to see if you can follow stage directions.

    JAKE
And I get to be a speaking role.

    JOHN
At least three lines.

    JAKE
Pull over, I think I'm going to be sick.

    JOHN
If that's how you feel..

    JAKE
No, the alcohol.

John slams on the breaks.

    JOHN
Don't puke on cart.

Suddenly, a tram full of tourist turn the bend in the round.

    JOHN (CONT'D)
Heads up fuckstick. Tourists. Smile and wave now. I need every fan I can get.

The tram pulls up beside them. John and Jake get out to greet them both waving their arms.

    TRAM DRIVER
And here we find John Zammero folks! The director of such famous zombie movies as: THE ZOMBIE ATE MY MOM, ZOMBIES VS. THE MUTANTS, ZOMBIES IN TEXAS, and ZOMBIES IN KING AUTHORS COURT! And next to him is the zombie that has become his trademark!
JOHN
(only loud enough for Jake to hear)
Take a bow you asshole.

Jake bends over and starts throwing up.

AUDIENCE
Gross! Wicked! This is so much better then Disney's tour!

TRAM DRIVER
And there is some of John's world famous special affects!

Tram roars in applause.

JOHN
Thank you! Everbody! Thank you! ZOMBIES IN KING AUTHORS COURT is now available in a special director's cut! Go to www.zombiesincourt.com and see how my friend here dies this time!

More applause. Tram drives away, back on the tour.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Nice improv with the puke. That looked realistic.

JAKE
Thank you, but that stunt tasted better going down.

JOHN
Now, back to business.

John hits the gas.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Do you meet your wife on lot today?

JAKE
Yeah, we're having lunch on the TERMINATOR: SPARE PARTS AND WORM HOLES set. Did you know they figured out a way to bring back Michael Biehn's character? James Cameron is a fucking movie genius.

JOHN
That will work great. I can get that cast to film you doing it. Cameron owes me a favor.
JAKE
You know James Cameron?

JOHN
I'm a famous fucking director. Why does everyone act so fucking shocked when I know someone? For Fuck sake, what does it take to get respect in this town.

WAR OF THE WORLDS SET
In silence they drive through the set.

MISC. SET

JAKE
I'm sorry. You've always been good to me. And your movies are amazing, right up there with ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATOES in my book.

JOHN
Thanks Jake. So, are you going to do it?

JAKE
For a speaking role? Hell yeah!

JOHN
But you can't tell the wife about the new gig till you get home.

JAKE
I can't?

JOHN
That is the deal breaker. I want to film her reaction so it is as natural as possible.

JAKE
Not sure you'll see much of a reaction.

JOHN
Why?

JAKE
The clown makeup.

JOHN
Still don't tell her. I want to capture something true on film for once.
JAKE
So she'll hate me till we get home tonight. I think I can live with that.

JOHN
Is it a deal?

JAKE
Deal.

JOHN
I'll have my lawyers write it up.

JAKE
You're making me sign a contract?

JOHN
You wouldn't want me to back out, now would you? I wouldn't trust me. I'm a fucking zombie movie director.

JAKE
Right.

JOHN
Good luck.

John stops the cart.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Get out. I'll see you after you do it.

JAKE
Will I have to notify someone?

JOHN
Nah, the Terminator crew will know, as long as you do it near the set they'll get it on film.

JAKE
Gotcha.

EXT. TERMINATOR SET - NOON

Jake limps over some fake human skulls. Stops looks around hoping that there are cameras on him. Picks up a skull and starts doing Hamlet, badly.
JAKE

Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy

Drops the skull and looks out over the mound of skulls. Jake stands in stoic pose thinking for a moment and then his eyes roll up into his head, as if that would help him remember the next line. His shoulders fall in defeat.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Line!

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

(O.S.)
He hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rims at it.

JAKE

Thanks Arnold.

Jake gets back in pose.

JAKE (CONT'D)

He hath borne me on his back a thousand...

CYNTHIA (O.S.)

Jake! You made it!

Jake turns toward the sound and looks down at CYNTHIA. She is in full clown regalia, with black tears painted on her cheeks.

JAKE

Why wouldn't I?

Jake limps down the mound of skulls and gives her a big hug. Zombie and Clown, Jake's bandages stick to her silk suit as the slowly part.

CYNTHIA

Michael Biehn told me a zombie with a wooden splint was causing trouble at the gate again.

JAKE

Biehn seen me?
CYNTHIA
Yeah, apparently he saw you take a piss on James Cameron's BMW too.

JAKE
Shit. That was his car? I thought it was William Shatner's.

CYNTHIA
No, it was James Cameron's. You're not looking really well. Are you OK Jake?

JAKE
I'm sorry Cynthia. I guess you know by now things aren't well with me. I've been drinking. Showing up late. I... I... Got something to tell you...

CYNTHIA
Go on. I can take it.

Jake looks at her big red demented clown smile.

JAKE
I got fired last week. John no longer wants me as his goto zombie.

CYNTHIA
That is great news!

JAKE
What?

CYNTHIA
You think I like being married to John Zammero's pet zombie? I was hoping you'd quit after they had you drawn and quartered. You can do so much more.

JAKE
But you were so happy when I finally got an acting role. And I know I suck at acting. Outside of zombie moviedom there isn't a script poor enough to need my acting chops.

CYNTHIA
I was happy that we could spend time together on set. Eat sandwiches outside the TERMINATOR set. I don't care if you act or run studio tours.
JAKE
That is the sweetest thing.

He reaches up and squeezes her big red clown nose.

JOHN (O.S.)
(into a megaphone)
And cut!

JAKE
What the!?

Jake looks around perplexed.

JAKE (CONT'D)
She wasn't suppose to know you were taping this John! You ruined it.

CYNTHIA
Why not? John gave me my lines last week.

JAKE
Last week?

John skips down the mound of fake skulls.

JOHN
Cynthia, you're amazing. You remembered all the lines. That was even a nice little improv thing at the end. Spec-fucking-tacular.

JAKE
What is this about?

JOHN
It is about your speaking part in THE ZOMBIES MEET THE ATTACK OF THE KILLER CLOWNS. You're rather slow.

JAKE
I'm still hung over.

JOHN
I understand completely.

JAKE
So this morning was just a ruse?

JOHN
I had to figure out some way to get you to act semi-natural. You always got a stick up your ass when the camera roles.

(MORE)
JOHN (CONT'D)
If you loosened up you could be a hero character.

CYNTHIA
Thanks for the speaking part John. It was fantastic, and on the set of a Terminator movie!

JOHN
Cameron's idea. It went so well I'll never hear the end of it. Like that prick doesn't have a big enough head. Michael Biehn comes back through a worm hole, sure whatever-the-fuck-you-say James. Next he'll have the TERMINATOR save the TITANIC.

JAKE
That'd be awesome!

CYNTHIA
You think James could get Leo and Kate back to revise their roles?

John looks disgusted and walks away.

JOHN
(mumbles)
Fucking actors. They think every stupid idea you spit out is amazing. A TITANIC-TERMINATOR movie, what an awful fucking idea. Maybe they could add FINDING FUCKING NEMO to it. Make it a total sell-out your artistic idea for cash venture. Where is Lucifer so I can sign on that dotted line?

John turns back to them when he reaches the top of the mound.

JOHN (CONT'D)
And you're both fired. I don't want to see either of you in again. But best of luck.

They turn to each other.

JAKE
I can live with that. How about you?

CYNTHIA
We got our first speaking role. Isn't it amazing?
JAKE

I love you.

Zombie and Clown kiss romantically, the mound of skulls rises behind them as a segment of TERMINATOR starts getting filmed.

FADE OUT