

Hook, Line & Cyber

by

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FADE IN:

CLOSE-UP: A tired old video monitor. A VHS tape is being looped:

Quick VIDEO TESTIMONIALS from satisfied customers and DATING SERVICE CLIENTS. They have all been filmed sitting on a couch against a cheap background and speak directly to camera.

And let's just say they're not the "best" looking people in the world.

TESTIMONIAL 1 (MALE)

Meeting girls is easy. The hard part is getting them to spend the night. And cut the grass in the morning.

TESTIMONIAL 2 (FEMALE)

Well... usually I'll suggest something really casual... no pressure... like... going to the bowling alley for some rice pudding.

TESTIMONIAL 3 (FEMALE)

(extremely awkward, no expression on her face)

I like to kiss like there's no tomorrow.

The next testimonial is a COUPLE - only the man speaks.

COUPLE TESTIMONIAL 4 (MALE)

Man's best friend is not a dog. I think it's actually an old gym sock stuffed with bacon fat.

Her reaction - she's mildly confused.

TESTIMONIAL 5 (FEMALE)

And right away he had these *pet names* for me. Like... Pumpkin Guts.

TESTIMONIAL 6 (FEMALE)

This guy was *tri*-sexual. We're talking seafood.

TESTIMONIAL 7 (MALE)

My favorite thing to watch is cougars with camel toes doing the chicken dance.

TESTIMONIAL 8 (FEMALE)

(no expression)

I don't know what's best for me.

EXT. HOSTEL ROOFTOP PATIO - DAY

CLOSE on our hapless hero MARTY TWYKER (30's, messy hair). He's been battered, beaten, and abused. He's dressed in a woman's kimono... now sports a severe sunburn... and speaks as one would after too many white Russians.

MARTY
 (looking straight ahead, as if to camera)
 Never... ever... meet someone you met online.

The Camera pulls back to reveal that he's not offering his own taped testimonial, but is, in fact, on the grungy rooftop patio of a hostel, speaking to no one in particular.

A young woman named CLARE (30's, frumpy but lovable) overhears from a nearby deck chair.

CLARE
 Sorry?

Marty does not turn around. He's too drunk to care.

MARTY
 Nothing.

Clare tries to lighten the mood.

CLARE
 Rough night?

MARTY
 You would never believe me.

They don't speak. GULLS can be heard in the distance. Clare perks up a little in her seat.

CLARE
 Try me.

EXT. PANORAMA OF TORONTO SKYLINE - NIGHT

Title Card: TORONTO - 3 MONTHS AGO

EXT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

A neon sign reads "SEXY GIRLS!! AND WE HAVE STEAK!"

INT. STRIP CLUB - EVENING

Chicken wings. Stale beer. A handful of lonely dudes in the dark. Women in g-strings dance on elevated platforms with little enthusiasm. This is the club that time forgot.

INT. STRIP CLUB KITCHEN - EVENING

Dirty pots, a short order cook who's asleep in a chair, and our hapless dishwasher Marty... who is now wearing an apron and stands in front of a laptop he's propped on a small shelf full of napkin holders and ketchup bottles.

He's lost in thought, scrolling through profiles of women on a dating website.

A tired old burlesque stripper GISELLE (50's, sagging skin, nipple tassels) CLOPS by in her high-heels.

GISELLE

Hey Marty.

MARTY

(not looking up)

Hey Giselle. Lookin' good.

GISELLE

(smiling)

How'd ya know it was me?

MARTY

The sound those nipple things make.

(She nods)

And the whole, you know... one leg shorter than the other.

She shrugs it off with a tired smile and exits.

The club manager CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK -- all brill cream, bad English, and bargain bin tuxedo -- whips through the kitchen doors, spitting and cracking a handful of sunflower seeds, his only hope of quitting smoking.

He's hit with a waft of something evil and glares at the dishes stacking up beside an oblivious Marty.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK

What tha fack?

Marty looks up.

Chris grabs a pair of KITCHEN TONGS and retrieves a giant, sopping BRA from the quicksand marsh of a sink.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK (CONT'D)
It smell like someone took shit... then
get their hair perm.

MARTY
One sec -- I just got an instant message.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK
Here's instant message...

He SLAPS Marty square on the forehead with his open palm. Marty recoils like a hurt puppy.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK (CONT'D)
All day, internet, internet...

He notices the page full of dating profiles.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK (CONT'D)
What is this? You want woman??
(gesturing out to the club)
You have room full of the boobies... and
the va-geen falling down to floor... and
you all day in here tap-tap-tap!

MARTY
That's not real.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK
No real, eh? That ghosts on stage? They
ghosts, eh?! Taking all my goddamn money?

MARTY
How do I know the one for me just happens
to live in a 12-mile radius from my
hometown?

Chris is not paying attention -- he's combing his hair in the reflection of a greasy, cracked mirror.

He gestures to Marty's laptop with his comb.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK
That machine so choking with the porno...
I bring in priest for exorcist!

MARTY
Think about it, Chris. Now it's anybody's
ballgame. I can hit on girls all over the
world.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK

Ah! Too much mala-kia!

(doing a violent, jerking-off
motion with his fist)

Turning your brain to mush! Why don't you
swish your dick in here and unclog the
sink!

Chris exits.

Marty looks back to the screen, unfazed. He quickly zips
through THUMBNAILS of female profiles.

One of them stands out -- he double clicks -- enlarging the
photo...

INSERT -- A beautiful blonde girl's face fills the screen...
with the profile name "VALENTINA"

MARTY (O.S)

Woah.

He reads her profile...

MARTY (CONT'D)

California. Figures...

A small icon blinks that she's "ONLINE NOW"

Marty types a message.

C/U: Hi Valentina. U there?

He waits for a moment. Nothing.

He looks to the stack of dirty pots. Back to the screen.
Nothing. The cursor blinking.

He can wait. He snaps on some rubber gloves draped over the
sink, half-checking the screen over his shoulder.

He drains the dirty sink and starts filling the other half with
soap and water. His computer PINGS. He's got a reply. He drops
what he's doing -- the water still running -- and whips back
over to his laptop.

C/U -- her return message: HI :)

Marty smiles. He thinks for a beat, rubbing an itch with the
side of his arm, and awkwardly types with his gloves still on.

INSERT: His typing is gibberish... his fingers banging around
too many keys at once...

MARTY (CONT'D)

Shit.

INSERT: Backspace, backspace, backspace...

He tries to bite the gloves off with his teeth. They snap back in his eye. He bends over, holding his face...

He finally gets them off, whipping them across the room...

... one hits the sleeping Cook in the face -- he doesn't stir.

... the other lands on the grill...

Marty types his message...

Another PING!

This is it...

Marty types away with a smile...

... oblivious to the overflowing sink... and a rubber glove on fire...

CUT TO:

A MUSICAL MONTAGE of Marty courting his new online "love interest"

- Marty eating a giant bowl of Captain Crunch cereal, laughing at something on-screen

- Marty sitting on the toilet, talking to her on an outdated portable phone

- Marty standing next to his printer, showing photos of Valentina to his buddy FRANK (30's, overweight, curly hair) -- Frank's eyes bulge

- Chris opening the door of the meat locker to discover Marty sitting on a milk crate, typing away -- he rolls his eyes

- Marty opening his mail in front of his neighbor -- a letter from her -- he smiles, and trips over his neighbor's lawn mower.

- Frank coming out of the washroom, completely satisfied, handing back Marty his photos and a bottle of hand cream -- Marty makes a face.

INT. STRIP JOINT / BACKSTAGE LOUNGE - NIGHT

Marty is on his break, lounging around the couch with his laptop.

Three worn-out strippers -- IVANNKA (30's, Russian), YOLANDA (40's, Black), PHOEBE (30's, Asian) -- are bored, playing Sudoku, doing their nails, adjusting their outdated 80's thongs. Ivannka's ever-present mute BOYFRIEND is in the corner, reading the paper.

MARTY

It's not embarrassing. People meet online all the time. And they lead happy and healthy lives. They're not all perverts and degenerates.

YOLANDA

Slow down, Dr. Phil.

MARTY

How do you think Ivannka met *her* husband?

Ivannka speaks in broken English, with a voice as low and scary as a man's. She gestures with her cigarette.

IVANNKA

No, no. He pretend husband. I still wait for citizenship. In case they check.

The group looks to the lummoX in the corner for confirmation. He gives them a dumb shrug.

PHOEBE

(filing her nails)

I say go for it. Go down there. See this bitch in person.

MARTY

Oh, I don't know.

PHOEBE

I always tell myself to take the chance. I've got three holes to fill and only so much time on this earth.

Marty considers this, confused and grossed out.

MARTY

It's a lot of pressure.

PHOEBE
Stop hiding behind your little laptop. Get out there.

MARTY
But I don't wanna blow it.

IVANNKA
Blow what -- she's already interested.

YOLANDA
How long you been talkin' to this one?

MARTY
(he shrugs)
Three months?

YOLANDA
On the phone and shit?

MARTY
Yeah. For hours sometimes.

YOLANDA
Jesus. You might as well be married.

PHOEBE
You go down there and get yourself some.

YOLANDA
Ya, you go down there... then you go *down* there, you know what I'm sayin'?

The strippers laugh, and give each other high 5's.

MARTY
It's not about that. We've connected on a deeper level. It's kinda scary.

YOLANDA
Uh-huh. Like that bitch from Winnipeg?

FLASHBACK:

INT. AIRPORT / ARRIVALS - DAY

Marty is holding a handmade cardboard sign that reads "buttaflygirl2006" -- her online nickname.

A large, HOMELY GIRL with braces notices the sign and starts waving anxiously.

Marty's eyes bulge -- she is nothing like her photos.

He tries to casually fold the stiff cardboard in two/three/four -- he gets more and desperate, but he's too weak. He quickly drops the sign and runs for his life.

BACK TO:

INT. STRIP JOINT / BACKSTAGE LOUNGE - NIGHT

YOLANDA

And what about Buffalo girl? The vegetarian who ate meat?

FLASHBACK:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Marty in a wrinkled suit jacket, sitting at a table alone... or so we think.

He is sweaty and his eyes are half-crossed, trying to hide the fact that his date is "busy" under the white tablecloth.

Muffled MOANING sounds can be heard.

Marty's body is jerked violently against the table. Patrons begin to take notice.

A WAITER (30's, male) watches Marty as he bites into his knuckle to distract himself from the pain.

He points to the picture on the menu.

MARTY

(weakly)

I'll have the... scrambled egg pie.

WAITER

(correcting him, deadpan)

The quiche.

Marty stifles a whimper and nods.

They watch as a FEMALE HAND comes up from under the table like a periscope... gropes around blindly... finds the plate of salad... and returns again to the depths... *with* the salad.

More MOANING ensues, Marty looks around, mortified.

BACK TO:

INT. STRIP JOINT / BACKSTAGE LOUNGE - NIGHT

The same mortified look on Marty's face.

Yolanda is now leaning over the back of the couch, looking at the photo on the screen.

YOLANDA

This her?

(Marty nods)

Damn, girl!

(she slaps him)

And that's not reason enough to get your skinny white ass on a plane? Shit. I will PAY you to go down there for a week.

PHOEBE

I'll pay you to get off that goddamn computer for a week.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK pops his head in at that very moment.

CHRIS THE GREASY GREEK

OHHH! But that's what I PAY him for!!

He does his favorite jerking-off motion and exits.

Marty stares at the photo on the screen, deep in thought.

MARTY

I don't know.

PHOEBE

What the hell's keeping you here, Marty?
Seriously. A room full of dirty dishes?

Marty considers this for a moment.

IVANNKA

There be more deeshes when you come back.

He looks at his friends, considering, then back down to his laptop.

INSERT - Valentina's PHOTO on the laptop screen.

The trace of a smile on Marty's face.

INT. 24-HOUR GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Marty is in his pajamas and a house-coat, doing a little late night shopping. He's holding a plastic basket full of the essentials -- Kool Aid, donuts, Captain Crunch cereal.

His buddy Frank is rearranging soggy vegetables with little enthusiasm.

FRANK

Tell me. Why is it that we are friends?
You and me. Tell me.

MARTY

Because we both work ridiculous jobs at
ridiculous hours and no one else will have
us?

Frank considers this for a moment, caught off guard -- then
dismisses it with a wave of fresh produce.

FRANK

It's because I speak the truth. And you
respect that.

(he throws an empty box)

Of course your view of women is fucked up.
You're around strippers all day. And you
have *actual conversations* with them.

He makes a disgusted face.

A CUSTOMER approaches.

CUSTOMER

Excuse me, where would I find garlic
bread?

FRANK

(looking, pointing)

Down at the end of this aisle... on the
left... beside that gay guy wearing all
the denim.

Frank's SUPERVISOR overhears from a few shelves over and is not
pleased.

SUPERVISOR

Frank. What did I tell you?

FRANK

(rolling his eyes)

No editorializing.

Frank grabs his empty box and ushers Marty to the next aisle.

TRAVELING --

FRANK (CONT'D)

You know what I'd like? You know what I'd
really like, besides maybe kleenex going
on sale instead of cans...

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
 so my arms aren't ripping from their
 fucking sockets...

The Supervisor looks over, unimpressed.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 I'd like us to run out of things to
 complain about, so we could actually *get*
on with our fucking lives. Wouldn't that
 be a kick?

Frank lowers his voice as they round another corner...

CONTINUOUS -- ANOTHER GROCERY AISLE

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Of course I want you to be happy. Of
 course I want you to --

An ELDERLY CUSTOMER interrupts.

ELDERLY CUSTOMER
 Do you have tapioca?

FRANK
 (without missing a beat)
 Right at the bottom there, sir. But you
 might want to hurry before that very large
 woman--

SUPERVISOR (O.S)
 FRANK!

FRANK
 (over his shoulder - to
 Supervisor)
 I got ya!

They continue to...

ANOTHER AISLE --

Frank stops and pretends to straighten cans on the shelf, all
 the while looking out for his supervisor.

MARTY
 I think I'm gonna take a chance.

FRANK
 I think you should take a chance.

Frank knocks a CAN to the floor, denting it. Marty crouches
 down to place it in his basket. He stands up.

MARTY

I think I'm gonna take a chance.

Frank knocks another can to the floor.

As Marty bends to retrieve it, Frank crouches down and joins him at floor level. The conversation continues in a hushed voice.

FRANK

I think you should get a return ticket.
 (he gestures with the can)
 Use the money I'm saving you with these.

Marty smiles at the joke.

MARTY

I think this is the one.

Frank stops, unconvinced.

FRANK

The one, huh.

MARTY

Yeah.

FRANK

There's a real connection.

MARTY

Like never before.

FRANK

Like the one from Niagara Falls? The
 military enthusiast?

FLASHBACK:

WOMAN #3, well passed her prime, dressed as a parade majorette - complete with epaulets, large fuzzy hat with chin strap, white boots.

She marches in place, twirling her baton. Loud MARCHING MUSIC blares from an old record player.

Marty is having the time of his life, and is casually marching in place without realizing it, eating from a giant bowl of Captain Crunch cereal.

They have to yell to be heard over the music.

WOMAN #3
 (still marching)
 NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOUR
 TROMBONE!!

MARTY
 (all smiles)
 WHAT?!

WOMAN #3
 TROM-BONE!!

She walks up behind him and ducks down, OFF-CAMERA. We can almost feel his pants being yanked violently to the floor.

Tighter on his eyes as...

SFX: a blaring TROMBONE over Marty SCREAMING like a little school girl.

BACK TO:

INT. 24-HOUR GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Marty's blank expression.

FRANK
 And the one-way to Tucson? Albuquerque?
 Grand Rapids?

FLASHBACK: 3 QUICK CUTS IN A ROW.

CLOSE on Marty's shocked face.

MARTY
 (to person O.C)
*High school?! I thought you said hair
 school!*

CLOSE on the woman in Albuquerque.

ALBUQUERQUE GIRL
 (disgusted - to Marty O.C)
 Hot dogs and grape pop? Jesus - how OLD
 are you?!

Marty exiting a house in a hurry, holding his clothes. He yells to whoever has just kicked him out.

MARTY

No, I said I *wanted* to have sex with you!
I didn't say I was GOOD at it!

BACK TO:

INT. 24-HOUR GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

FRANK

All of them -- *one way... no stoppin'*
me... got a real good feelin'.

Marty considers this for a moment.

MARTY

Well, that... was --

FRANK

And when you call me from the checkout
counter begging me to wire you some money
for a flight home? And it's obvious
you've been crying for hours? And you
blame it on the air conditioning?

Dead silence.

They both stand upright, and consider this for a moment. Then
they continue as if nothing happened.

MARTY

I think I'm gonna take a chance.

FRANK

I think you should take a chance.

MARTY

I think I'm gonna take a chance.

Beat.

FRANK

I think you should get a return ticket.

EXT. CAR / TRAVELING - DAY

Marty and the three girls (Yolanda, Ivannka, Phoebe) are jammed
into some horribly small YUGOSLAVIAN CAR. Ivannka's mute
"husband" is at the wheel.

INSERT - Signage for Pearson International Airport - Toronto

EXT. PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT/TORONTO - DAY

The car slows into the DEPARTURES unloading area.

Marty falls out with the rest of them, wrestling to juggle his laptop and his giant BACKPACK complete with a Canadian flag sewn on the back. Ivannka's man stays in the car.

Yolanda, a little teary-eyed, fixes his collar like a nervous mother and takes a step back to admire his new clothes.

YOLANDA

Motherfuckin' spring has sprung.

IVANNKA

(gesturing with cigarette)

Eet's like my Bubbcha tole me. All you need in dis world ees passport... and some lube.

The group reacts, not quite knowing how to take that.

Phoebe steps forward to kiss Marty on the cheek.

PHOEBE

Don't come back until you're happy.

He smiles and shoulders his pack.

He continues to look at them before SLAMMING into the wrong set of glass doors. The group winces, losing their enthusiasm to wave.

INT. AIRPORT CHECK-IN LINE - DAY

Marty stands in line with others, passport/ticket in hand.

An AIRLINE OFFICIAL (female, Black, 40's) in a dark blue blazer patrols the line, handing out CUSTOMS CARDS and helping anyone with that tourist/airport "deer-in-headlights" expression. She is all "oh no you dih-int"

Marty stops her with a question.

MARTY

(re: his card)

Miss, we need to fill out exactly where we're staying?

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

Mm-hmm. We need an address, sir. They can refuse you entry. I've seen it happen.

MARTY

(starting to panic)

But I never thought to ask her -- I mean, not that I asked her... she doesn't even know I'm coming... but I couldn't just *assume* that I'd be staying at *her* house...

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

We need an address, sir.

Marty thinks for a moment, then quickly unzips his backpack. He pulls out some CRUMPLED PAPERS -- printouts of maps and tips from the internet. He straightens one of them for her to see.

MARTY

What about hostels?

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

What the hell's a hostel?

MARTY

It's like a hotel... for hobos. And Germans.

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

(not impressed)

Where are you headed, sir?

MARTY

(showing his ticket)

L.A?

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

(examining ticket)

One way? To Los Anja-leez? Nhmm-mn. Not lookin' good.

MARTY

What? Why?

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

You an actor?

MARTY

No.

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

Thank fuck. Musician? Writer?

Marty shakes his head. She waits for a beat.

AIRLINE OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

Actor?

MARTY

No.

(Pause)

You already --

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

So they're not gonna find no motherfuckin' headshots in yo' bag?

MARTY

No!

AIRLINE OFFICIAL

(suddenly pleasant - handing him his ticket)

Well good luck then.

CONTINUOUS --

INT. CUSTOMS BOOTH - DAY

Marty is ushered off to the next Customs booth, where a bored CUSTOMS OFFICIAL (40's, male) waits.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

Next!

Marty moves up, his laptop case strung over his shoulder. He hands over his documents.

The Official opens his passport, all business.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

How long you staying?

MARTY

Ummm...

(trying to make a joke)

... until my money runs out?

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

(zero expression)

We don't like that answer.

MARTY

Well, I have a credit card, but I don't really like to use it because --

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

Business or pleasure?

Pause. Marty has to think for a minute.

MARTY

Pleasure.

The Customs Official eyes the LAPTOP CARRYING CASE. Marty's face drops.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Uhh... well, see... I met this girl... on the internet... and --

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

Are you some sort of Canadiana mail order bride?

MARTY

No. No! I just thought... that... you know... we've talked for so long that --

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

So this is a big step for you.

MARTY

(proudly)
Oh yeah.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

So we'll be seeing you on the Springer show sometime in March.

He stamps Marty's passport and hands it back.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

Next!

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - DAY

30,000 feet. Clear skies out his window seat. Marty has his laptop open and is listening to music with the airline headphones.

He is on an Instant Messaging Service with Valentina, staring at the blinking cursor, tapping his fingers nervously.

He looks over at the LADY (50's) beside him who's engrossed in a TRAVEL MAGAZINE.

MARTY

I should tell her. Right? Give her some time to prepare. I don't want her to have a heart attack or anything.

LADY ON PLANE
 (not looking)
 You could be a real nut job.

MARTY
 (not listening)
 I just gotta... take the plunge
 (he looks out the window)
 Not literally... because... you know...
 we're so *high*.

Marty tries to laugh at his own joke. She's not even paying attention.

He looks back to his laptop, a little embarrassed.

INSERT: Marty types the words... GUESS WHERE I AM RIGHT NOW?

He waits for a moment, looking out the window.

His laptop PINGS. He squints to read the message. It's not good news.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 (to Lady next to him)
 Do you know how far Palm Springs is from
 L.A?

LADY ON PLANE
 About two hours I would imagine.

Marty thinks for a moment, a little deflated.

MARTY
 I should've told her. That was stupid.
 People don't like surprises. Why would I
 just assume that she had no life and she
 would just be *waiting* around for me.

Marty looks over to his neighbor for some sort of sympathy.

She is busy with her magazine.

He looks at the open pages and notices something familiar...

MARTY (CONT'D)
 Oh my god!

The Lady shoots him a look -- passengers turn their heads.

He reaches over and spreads apart the pages of her magazine. She's taken aback.

Marty's POV: A TRAVEL AD with a smiling Valentina running along the beach.

MARTY (CONT'D)

That's her! That's the girl I'm meeting!

The Lady looks over, bored and unimpressed.

LADY ON PLANE

Sure, it is.

MARTY

I swear to god! Look at her!

Marty is giddy, and nervous. Without thinking he RIPS the page from the magazine. He holds it up to his face.

The lady shoots him a look that says "you *didn't* just do that".

MARTY (CONT'D)

She told me she did a little modeling on the side... but this... this is fantastic.

INT. LAX AIRPORT - ARRIVALS - DAY

Marty walks through the terminal with his backpack and laptop. With a stunned look on his face, he's easy prey for LESTER GARBANIAN (40's, moustache, gold blazer), who approaches holding a handful of flyers.

They continue to walk and talk -- with our "solicitor" all the while looking out for airport security.

LESTER

Lester Garbanian. Listen - I know what you're thinking - does my moustache come with an airbag?

(off Marty's blank look)

No. It doesn't.

(laughing at his own joke)

What about you - you need a cheap car rental?

MARTY

Oh, I don't know how long I'm gonna --

LESTER

Gotta have a car in L.A, sir.

MARTY

Well, I was thinking I might --

LESTER

This is the town of the auto-mo-beel, sir.

MARTY

I think I'm more of a bus guy.

LESTER

No one takes the bus.

MARTY

I can just walk.

LESTER

Can't walk in L.A.

MARTY

I don't know if I can afford a car.

LESTER

Ten dollars a day, my friend... now that is fan-friggin-believable!

(nodding to the rental booths)

You'll pay 30 or 40 over there. And I'll take you to the lot myself.

Marty stops and considers it for a moment.

MARTY

Ten dollars?

They resume walking to the exit.

LESTER

For you, ten dollars. Unless you want insurance, but you really don't need that, you look like a decent driver, am I right?

As he puts his arm around Mary he notices the Canadian flag sewn onto his backpack.

LESTER (CONT'D)

So you're Canadian?

EXT. TONY'S DRIVING SCHOOL & CAR RENTAL - DAY

Marty sits in the front seat of a RENTAL CAR that's seen better days, adjusting the seat and mirrors.

He's oblivious to the fact that Lester is in the midst of a heated conversation with a Mexican garage worker, who is cursing rapidly in Spanish and gesturing towards the car.

He approaches Marty, all smiles, dangling the car's FOB/KEYCHAIN to seal the deal.

LESTER
 You're all set.
 (re: the fob)
 Now this thing might stick a little... so
 just press it a few times. It'll go.

He demonstrates for Marty, pushing the tiny AUTO-LOCK button...

... oblivious to the fact that one of the GARAGE DOORS has started to close. Mexican workers turn, gesturing to the door and cursing in his direction.

He presses the button again...

... the HOOD of a nearby car flies off and hits the pavement with a BANG!

He turns, thinking it's a noise from the garage, then hands the keys to Marty with a shrug.

LESTER (CONT'D)
 You'll figure it out.

He leans inside the window and gestures towards the dash.

LESTER (CONT'D)
 Now if any of those little lights come on,
 just give the dash a good whack. It's just
 a fuse. No biggie. You got a cell? In case
 of emergencies?

MARTY
 Uhh, no I --

LESTER
 You gotta have a cell phone in L.A.

He whips open the flap of his blazer -- the lining is strapped with CELL PHONES of all makes and styles. Marty cocks an eyebrow.

MARTY
 I'm... good.

Lester eases up on his sales pitch, leaning back to light a cigarette. He pulls out a FOLDED MAP from his pocket.

LESTER
 Suit yourself. At least let me throw in a
 map of the stars homes.

He tosses the map onto Marty's lap.

MARTY
I'm really not into the whole celebrity
thing.

Lester's face drops, his tone now cold and serious.

LESTER
You think you're better than them?

MARTY
What? No! I just --

LESTER
They do a great service to the world. They
make us laugh... AND cry.

Marty stops, unsure how to address that last point.

MARTY
Yes. Yes, they do.

LESTER
(now off in his own world)
They know what it's like to be
misunderstood. They know what it's like to
--

Marty puts the car in neutral... in mid-sentence... and slowly
lets the car roll away -- the way you might tiptoe away from a
crazy person.

INSERT: TRAFFIC CHOKING THE L.A FREEWAYS

EXT. SUBURBAN L.A STREET - DAY

Cars block an intersection. Commuters blast their HORNS. Marty
cranes his neck to see what the hold-up is.

There seems to be some commotion up ahead -- a radiator sprays
a fountain of steam -- YELLING can be heard O.S.

A young man (LAMARR, 20's, Black, manic smile) is wobbling
along the rows of cars, looking back at the scene.

He notices Marty staring -- Marty pretends to look elsewhere.

He approaches Marty's car and gestures through the window.

LAMARR
Did you see that shit?

MARTY

Uhh...no. I can't really --

LAMARR

I can't be having that shit.

MARTY

Something happened to your car?

LAMARR

I can't be messin' 'round with no police.

MARTY

Well... maybe there's someone who's a witness?

LAMARR

My buddy's garage is right up the street. He's got a tow-truck. I will *fix* this.

Lamarr opens the door and gets into the passenger seat of Marty's car.

Marty is taken aback.

MARTY

Oh. You need... you want me to...

LAMARR

(smiling)

Right up the street.

Marty cranes his head to survey the accident scene again.

MARTY

You're just gonna... leave the --

LAMARR

(smiling)

Right up the street.

Marty examines the mess of traffic.

MARTY

Well, which way should I --

Lamarr leans over to crank the steering wheel -- Marty hits the gas a little too hard -- they plough through some garbage cans in the arc of their U-turn.

DRIVING -- 5 MINUTES LATER

Lamarr is eating Marty's junk food and is quite at home in the front seat.

LAMARR
(smiling)
The *internet*?! That is some crazy shit!

They pass a PIXELATED BILLBOARD for the STAPLES CENTRE: "NBA finals. Tip-off 7:30pm"

MARTY
I thought it would be kinda romantic if I just showed up and --

LAMARR
You ever been to the Staples Centre?

MARTY
No, this is actually my first time in --

LAMARR
(laughing)
I can't afford tickets, neither. They gonna go apeshit tonight.

MARTY
If they... win? Or lose?

LAMARR
That don't matter. Don't need no excuse to go apeshit.
(Pause)
Oh - make a right here!

MARTY
Here?

Lamarr grabs the steering wheel and jerks it to the right -- the car swerves.

Marty is shaken -- Lamarr is all smiles, like an excited little kid.

They slow down through an alley lined with bushes and garbage cans.

LAMARR
(shaking his head, smiling)
The internet. You are gonna *surprise* that girl like nobody's business! With that French accent and everything.

Marty makes a face - he doesn't have an accent.

LAMARR (CONT'D)
Right here! Stop!

Marty SLAMS on the brakes. Lamarr gets out. Marty looks around - there is no garage in sight.

Lamarr starts pushing away the bushes, uncovering fake branches that have been covering CARDBOARD BOXES.

He quickly starts loading them in the back of the car, the sound of bottles CLINKING.

LAMARR (CONT'D)
Travel to the ends of the earth just to get some.

Lamarr moves Marty's backpack from the backseat to make more room for the boxes. He puts it down on the asphalt beside the car. Marty doesn't notice.

MARTY
(blushing)
I'm not trying to *get some*. It's more about --

LAMARR
(smiling)
And she could be some 300-pound psycho!

Lamarr SLAMS the back door and hops back in the front seat. He's enjoying this.

LAMARR (CONT'D)
Just rip yo' head right off!

MARTY
Are we going to that garage?

LAMARR
(smiling, pointing)
Right up the street.

The car pulls away -- leaving Marty's backpack on the asphalt.

EXT. FANTASIA DANCE CLUB / BACK ENTRANCE - DAY

Marty pulls the car into the loading area of a large black-bricked building.

Lamarr gets out and starts unloading the boxes without a word. Marty watches him make a few trips through the double doors before getting out of the car.

Before he can ask what's happening...

LAMARR

(all smiles)

No matter what you're doin', you get your
ass *back* here after midnight. It's gonna
be off the *hook*!

Marty looks up at the building, not quite sure what kind of
establishment it actually is.

MARTY

What is this --

(the door SLAMS shut)

-- place?

Silence. Lamarr does not seem to be coming back.

Marty pulls away...

... from the OPPOSITE ANGLE we see that the building is
actually a giant dance club called "FANTASIA"...

... a giant VINYL BANNER hangs from the roof -- it advertises
Friday/Saturday nights... and features VALENTINA in a seductive
pose.

EXT. VENICE BEACH STREET / HOSTEL - DAY

Marty slowly drives past a hostel. He stops, holding up his
PRINTOUTS to compare -- it's not quite like the photo.

He pulls over to the curb. He gets out, tucking his laptop
under his arm. He surveys the parking signs, thinks against
paying for the few minutes it will take him to sign in, and
walks across the street.

INT. HOSTEL / VENICE BEACH - DAY

TRAVIS RUNK, the hostel's odd-looking owner/manager sits behind
the sign-in desk. He has the appearance of a grizzled old Viet
Nam vet, wearing a fishing vest complete with lures and
colorful flies. His eyeglasses are thick and huge, making his
eyes appear twice the size.

Marty walks up to the counter.

TRAVIS

You pay the meter outside?

MARTY

Umm. No...

(looking back)

(MORE)

MARTY (CONT'D)

I thought I would see if you had any rooms before I --

TRAVIS

They're sons-a-bitches 'round here. I'd pay the meter.

Marty thinks for a moment, then turns around back outside.

CONTINUOUS --

EXT. VENICE BEACH STREET - DAY

Marty crosses the street to the AUTO-METER. He pulls out his credit card. He slides it inside. He tries to pull it out. It won't budge. He tries to loosen it. Nothing. He pulls and pulls. He looks around for help, absently checks the rates on the machine -- pulls at his card again. Nothing. His card is locked.

He crosses back to the hostel.

INT. HOSTEL LOBBY - DAY

MARTY

It kinda ate my card.

TRAVIS

It does that.

MARTY

Well... how do I get it back?

TRAVIS

Wait for the vultures, I guess. They'll get it out.

MARTY

The vultures?

TRAVIS

Meter maids. Meter *persons* - whatever the fuck they go by.

MARTY

Oh.

(Marty thinks for a beat)

How often do they come around?

TRAVIS

Depends.

He slides the REGISTER across the desk for Marty to sign.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

I can watch for you. Tell you when they
come by.

Marty looks back at his car for a minute, then pulls out his
printouts, still not convinced.

MARTY

So your rooms are thirty-five dollars a
night?

TRAVIS

Sixty-five.

Silence. Marty's face drops.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

It's high season.

Marty looks around the lobby. It's empty, save for an ancient
OLD WOMAN in the corner, who is hunched over an equally ancient
COMPUTER.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

What you really pay for is the view.

Marty is confused. He looks out the window to the nondescript
street. Some view.

Travis points his finger up, clarifying.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

The rooftop patio.

MARTY

(re: the computer)
So you guys have internet?

TRAVIS

(shaking his head)
That's for solitaire. But you might pick
up a signal down the street.

Marty thinks for a moment.

MARTY

Can you take messages here?

TRAVIS

On the phone?

MARTY

Yeah.

TRAVIS
I'll need a credit card.

Marty makes a face. Of course.

MARTY
Could I... see the rooms?

MOMENTS LATER

INT. HOSTEL ROOM - DAY

Travis opens the door of a room at the end of the hall.

They step in.

The room is disgusting. Dirty carpet, holes in the wall, bare lightbulbs, a rusty sink drips in the corner.

Travis notices that the door leading to the back alley is off its hinges.

TRAVIS
That shouldn't be like that.

He crosses the room to close it --

-- just as HOODLUMS on bikes tear by and throw a PAINT/WATER BALLOON against the back window --

-- it SHATTERS with a loud, wet BANG!

-- Travis drops to the floor like he's back in the war, his eyes wild...

After a moment, he straightens himself like nothing happened, and casually continues with his tour.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Sooo... there's fresh towels, you got yourself a sink... and the crapper's down the hall.

Marty's face is completely pale.

MOMENTS LATER.

EXT. HOSTEL - DAY

Marty exits the hostel with his laptop. He sits down on the front steps for a moment to check for a signal. Nothing.

He crosses the street, takes another tug at his credit card in the ticket machine for good measure. Nothing.

He looks down the street. The ocean is a few hundred meters away.

EXT. VENICE BEACH STREET - CONTINUOUS

Marty wanders down the street. He notices the sign/logo for a very popular and overpriced coffee chain.

INT. COFFEE SHOP / VENICE BEACH - DAY

Marty walks up to the counter. A coffee BARRISTA (20's, female) looks at him with dull eyes, chewing her gum like a cow.

MARTY

You guys have internet, right?

The Barrista rolls her eyes, and gestures with her head to the side.

Marty looks over and notices the rows and rows of people tapping away at their laptops. He feels like an idiot.

BARRISTA

(with zero expression)

Don't tell me. Your sequel to Schindler's List.

MARTY

Uhh. No. I just need to check my email real quick.

BARRISTA

It's five dollars.

MARTY

Five dollars? Really? 'Cause I just need like two minutes.

BARRISTA

It's five dollars.

Marty's not impressed, but people are starting to line up behind him. He goes for his wallet -- she stops him with a look that tells him he's a moron.

BARRISTA (CONT'D)

You don't pay me. You just log in with your credit card number.

MARTY
Credit card?

MOMENTS LATER

EXT. VENICE BEACH STREET - DAY

Marty exits the coffee store, deflated. He walks towards the beach, and quickly notices a smaller, funkier cafe with a sign that reads 'WE HAVE INTERNET'.

He crosses the street with renewed hope.

INT. HIPPIE CAFE / VENICE BEACH - DAY

Horrible incense and tie-dye. Marty wrinkles his nose at the stench.

An equally horrible performance art/spoken word piece is underway on a small, makeshift stage. A POETESS (40's) in beads and a muumuu is in mid-diatribes, and gestures like a woman possessed. Marty walks in lightly as to not disturb them.

A SURFER DUDE in dreadlocks sits behind the snack counter, watching the performance, eating from a plate of hash and mushroom brownies.

Marty picks a table near the front window, furthest away from the stage. He opens his laptop and looks for a signal network. It's locked.

He approaches the Surfer Dude.

MARTY
Hi. Do you know the network name for this place?

Surfer Dude looks up a for a moment, stoned out of his gourd. He has to focus on Marty's face for a moment.

SURFER DUDE
(gasping)
Aunty Em?!

Marty looks behind him, confused.

MARTY
Aunty Em's... Cafe?

The Surfer Dude is out to lunch, staring at his hand in front of his face.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Umm. I just... I just need to check my email... and I need the security key... for your internet?

SURFER DUDE

(smiling)

I wrote that down somewhere.

He goes back to watching the performance on stage. Marty waits politely. After a moment he looks over to watch, as well.

MARTY

(whispering)

What is this?

SURFER DUDE

This is life.

POETESS

(on stage)

And regret clings to me... like a dog's breath...

She bows dramatically, spent. There is a smattering of APPLAUSE.

POETESS (CONT'D)

Thank you for listening. Tips would be greatly appreciated.

She sets the plastic TIP JUG in motion, which slowly bobs around the room.

BACK TO:

Marty turns back to the Surfer Dude.

MARTY

So, could I get that number?

SURFER DUDE

What number?

Marty gives up.

MARTY

I'm just gonna... go outside. See if I can pick up a signal somewhere.

The Surfer Dude smiles, pleased with this new plan. He offers the plate of brownies to Marty as a goodbye.

SURFER DUDE

Compadre.

Marty shrugs, takes one, and thanks the guy with a smile and a tip of his brownie.

CONTINUOUS --

EXT. PARKING LOT / VENICE BEACH - DAY

Marty walks across a parking lot next to the beach, his cheeks bulging with brownie.

He is walking with his open laptop as if it were a divining rod... waiting for that precious signal. There is brownie smudged all over his face.

He stumbles blindly towards the beach... stopping every few feet to change direction...

SIMULTANEOUS TO THIS --

EXT. BEACH FILM SET - DAY

A film crew is setting up the next shot for a classically bad beach movie. Crew members lug gear, extras in bikinis mill about, bored.

The PRODUCTION TEAM has set up a few tables for their laptops, paperwork, magazines, etc. -- a canopy shades the DIRECTOR and his cronies standing near the MONITOR.

Marty stops to watch the action from afar.

Giving up on getting a signal for a moment, he closes his laptop and sits against the wooden rail separating the lot from the bike path.

He takes off his socks and shoes. He stuffs his socks inside and steps off the railing -- not knowing the sand is scorching!

He hops and skips and speed-walks like an idiot towards the production canopy.

He stops a few feet away from a long table of snacks -- chips, veggies, granola bars, chocolate.

There are PRETTY GIRLS everywhere, but he's oblivious... smiling like a fool... starting to feel a little "fuzzy"... convinced he needs to eat that entire bowl of barbecue chips right now.

A buxom STARLET (20's, playing an extra) in a bikini watches as Marty sets his laptop down on the table and grabs the bowl. She moves in for the kill.

STARLET

So... what did you think of my little twirl back there?

Marty's eyes are half-crossed; this food is orgasmic.

MARTY

Ohhh... sooo good.

The Starlet reacts, pleased with herself. She looks over to see if her BOYFRIEND (6'5", oily musclehead, also an extra) has noticed.

She moves in closer, speaking in a hushed tone.

STARLET

So, what would it take to get a bigger part?

Marty turns to face her, his face full of brownie smudges and chip bits. She reacts, trying not to look repulsed.

The 1st ASSISTANT DIRECTOR interrupts with a yelp:

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

We're back, people!

He taps Marty and the Starlet on their backs, politely, urging them to join the others. Marty follows blindly, now gorging on fistfuls of popcorn.

BEACH MUSIC is cued.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

(yelling out)

And we're dancing! Dancing!

The extras start dancing, pretending to have the time of their lives.

Marty starts swaying to the music, still eating. It becomes apparent very quickly that he has no sense of rhythm.

The Starlet bobs up and down next to him, trying to be sexy and coy while yelling over the music.

STARLET
 (yelling)
 So you're a writer AND an actor?! Is there
 anything you *can't* do?

MARTY
 (yelling)
 I also wash dishes!

STARLET
 (purring)
 Ohhh... you're domestic!
 (licking her lips)
 That's hot!

The Assistant Director rushes over to the dancing duo.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
 When we cut the music you're not actually
 talking, remember?! You're just *miming* the
 words!

The Starlet nods her head knowingly. Marty has no idea what
 he's talking about. The A.D exits.

STARLET
 (yelling)
 So - do you know any famous people?

MARTY
 (yelling)
 I think I saw George Clooney waiting for a
 bus!

She makes a face, but continues to pretend that she's
 interested.

Marty is delirious, dancing like he's on fire.

The Starlet is getting more and more rambunctious -- making the
 'call me' gesture, the 'you and me' gesture, the 'let's get
 kinky' humping the air gesture.

She starts running her fingers through Marty's hair like it
 owed her money. He's half-dazed, but loving it.

The (film crew) CAMERA whips past Marty...

The Director's POV from the MONITOR:

Marty's huge, stupid grin... the food on his face... the
 brownie stuck in his front teeth.

DIRECTOR
 (almost to himself)
 What the f--?

The hash brownies are really starting to kick in...

MARTY'S POV: the film set is now a tilt-a-whirl of color and sound.

The MUSIC IS CUT -- the extras keep bobbing up and down.

Marty starts dosey doe-ing the young starlet, laughing hysterically.

The Starlet's Boyfriend can't take anymore -- he slams his plastic cup to the sand and cuts through the crowd of dancers.

He grabs Marty by the shoulder and whips him around, knocking over nearby extras.

Marty is still laughing.

BOYFRIEND
 You think this is funny?!

He cocks his arm back to let Marty have it -- the Starlet lunges for his giant arm, hanging off his bicep like a swing.

STARLET
 (pleading)
 He's the writer! He's trying to help me!

The Boyfriend continues to buck and scream like a bull...

... but Marty's "perception" is a little off...

... all he sees is the Boyfriend dressed as the Wicked Witch (from the Wizard of Oz)... screaming...

BOYFRIEND
 (as witch)
 We're all out of cheese!!

Marty stops laughing and starts SCREAMING like a woman. He bolts across the set flailing his arms.

MARTY
 (screaming)
 NOOOOOOO!!

The Boyfriend follows.

The Director and his Assistant react -- what the hell is happening?

Marty runs awkwardly through the sand -- after a moment he starts to make a full circle around the film set, realizing he's forgotten his precious laptop.

He snatches it from the food table. As he runs past the production table he notices some of the production crew sitting in front of their laptops -- they have stopped their typing and are looking at him like he's completely crazy. He stops and looks at their screens, as if comparing.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Could I just... check my email real quick?

He snaps out of it -- and continues running towards the parking lot.

He's now in full stride. He turns to see the Boyfriend still huffing through the sand after him.

He races by a BIKE RENTAL kiosk, and grabs the first set of handlebars he sees -- it's a bicycle built for two -- he stabs at the pedals, but can't hold his laptop and steer at the same time. He veers off to the right in a semi-circle and crashes in a heap.

He immediately bolts upright and continues running.

He shifts his laptop to his other arm and stabs at his right pocket -- he pulls out his KEYCHAIN/FOB as if discovering it for the first time -- and scans desperately for his car.

A METER MAID (30's, female) stands beside his rental, starting to write a ticket...

The Boyfriend is in hot pursuit...

Marty spots his car and frantically stabs at the fob buttons...

MARTY (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Start the car! Start the car!

He outstretches his arm and makes more frantic stabbing motions...

... the back window SHATTERS!

... the Meter Maid stops in mid ticket... eyes bulging...

... a PATRON from a nearby cafe screams and points in Marty's direction...

PATRON
He's got a gun!!

Marty's eyes bulge -- he whips his head around -- the Boyfriend has fired shots??

Remembering something he once saw on television, he starts zigzagging in a random pattern across the lot... the best way to avoid bullets...

He races by the window of the Hippie Cafe, screaming...

SURFER DUDE
(still behind the counter)
Cooolll...

... the Meter Maid finishes writing the ticket crouched at ground level, discretely sticks it under the wiper, and slithers off into the bushes...

Marty reaches the car, slams himself inside, and SCREECHES away.

EXT. L.A STREET - DAY

A deserted stretch of road. Marty has pulled the car over, the trunk popped open.

He's standing on the curb, using the car hood as a desk for his laptop, which is now up and running. He's still a little twitchy from the brownies.

He is looking at the screen when an oversized cargo van SLAMS its brakes beside him.

A shady THUG leans out the window.

THUG#1
Were you followed?

MARTY
(annoyed)
Yes! You think I normally drive like that?

The TWO THUGS look at one another, before getting out of the van.

THUG#2

Why is your trunk wide open? Why don't you just a have a sign that says 'look over here'?!

Marty holds up the fob/keychain.

MARTY

It's this damn thing! I think it's possessed!

They slide the van door open... the interior is packed to the ceiling with speakers and various other electronics. Marty is oblivious -- his computer has just PING'ed! -- telling him he's got mail.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Oh my god! She's back!

THUG#2

They're back?

The two Thugs panic, looking over their shoulders.

MARTY

(happily)

She wants to meet tonight!

The Thugs are confused, but continue to load large STEREO SPEAKERS onto the curb next to Marty's rental.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Do you guys know where *Waterhead Lounge* is? She says it's right near her house. Maybe I should just call her for directions.

The Thugs don't have time for this.

THUG#1

We don't care where you're dumpin' this shit. That's not our problem.

Marty finally notices the speakers and stops typing.

MARTY

Woah, woah, woah, guys...

He walks to the back of the car, still fuzzy from the hash brownies.

MARTY (CONT'D)

(angry)

What is *with* this town?! People just *put* shit in your car?!

THUG#2

You might wanna get off that little computer and *start* loadin'.

MARTY

Are you *kidding* me? You know how long it took me to get a signal?

The Thugs stop.

THUG#1

You waitin' for a signal?

MARTY

All goddamn day!

THUG#1

You mean, *another* one?

MARTY

(yelling)

Any one!

The Thugs are confused -- they return to their van in a hurry.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Could you take the speakers back? Please?

Thug#1 looks in the side mirror of the van -- doesn't like what he sees.

THUG#1

You should really haul ass outta here.

MARTY

No, maybe *YOU* should haul ass outta here. And take your shitty little speakers with you!

They pull away in a hurry.

MARTY (CONT'D)

(yelling after them)

I don't even own a cd player!

Marty returns to the laptop on the hood. He's lost the signal.

MARTY (CONT'D)
(screaming to sky)
AAHHHH!!!!

A POLICE CRUISER slows down next to Marty -- he stops screaming instantly.

The TWO COPS inside size up the situation -- a smashed back window, stereo speakers on the curb, laptop on the hood, and Marty's dilated pupils.

COP#1
You got a receipt for those?

Silence.

MARTY
I was... I was just...

The thug's intended DROP-OFF CAR slows down, as well. An ODD-LOOKING DUDE in the passenger seat surveys the scene -- the speakers on the curb, Marty talking to cops -- they casually keep driving.

COP#1
Don't tell me... you're having a party...
and you just borrowed those from a friend.

MARTY
Oh, no, no... I don't... have any friends.

He nervously walks to the open driver's side door, about to get in.

COP#2
(gesturing to the back)
What happened to the window?

Marty's face drops.

MARTY
They're... really loud speakers.

The cops don't change their expressions. Marty motions innocently.

MARTY (CONT'D)
I'm just gonna... go...

COP#1
Now you're dumping trash on the street?

Marty spins on his toes.

MARTY

Oh! No! No! I ummm...

He goes to the curb to retrieve the speakers.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I would... never... never do that...

(hoisting up a speaker)

I'm... *Canadian*.

The Cops are not impressed. Marty starts loading the speakers in the car.

MARTY (CONT'D)

(cradling a speaker)

I'm just... really... absent-minded today.

I'm meeting this girl... from the

internet... and... it's a lot of

pressure... you have nooo idea... 'cause

she --

(deadpan)

-- oh my god my backpack!

Marty finally notices his backpack is gone from the backseat.

MARTY (CONT'D)

It was...

(pointing)

It was...

He looks at the Officers. They're waiting...

MARTY (CONT'D)

(changing the subject)

... only yesterday... when we were...

oh... so young.

The Cop's face. Is this guy on glue?

The cruiser slowly starts to pull away.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Wait!

The cruiser stops.

MARTY (CONT'D)

You guys know where the Waterhead Lounge is?

COP#1

(re: Marty's laptop)

Why don't you Google it.

COP#2

Yeah. Why don't you Google yourself while you're at it.

They enjoy their joke before pulling away.

Marty puts the last speaker in the back seat, cursing his luck.

He spots a row of PAYPHONES across the street. He crosses.

CONTINUOUS --

FOUR PHONES that have seen better days.

Marty curses himself under his breath.

MARTY

(grumbling)

Who the *hell* uses payphones?

Marty lifts the receiver on the first...

-- he double clicks, then triple clicks the lever -- no dial tone.

-- he lifts the second phone off the cradle... the cord dangles loose, having been yanked out/sliced.

-- the next phone is covered with syrup, urine, flies, miscellaneous goo -- he passes.

-- the fourth phone is stuck, as well -- he props one foot against the base to loosen it, then both feet -- it pops free with a loud SHHMUUCK!

He dials, holding the germ-infested phone away from his face.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I'd like to make a collect call.

(Pause - he listens)

Toronto.

INT. 24-HOUR GROCERY STORE / TORONTO - NIGHT

Franks sleeps on a pile of orange crates in the back room, the phone RINGING behind him.

BACK TO:

EXT. L.A STREET - DAY

Marty on the phone -- it's still RINGING.

MARTY

Come on...

He hangs up.

EXT. DRIVING - NIGHT

Marty tries to navigate the L.A freeways, his printouts and map of the stars scattered all over the front seat.

He squints to read the overhead signs, getting further away from where he wants to be.

He exits off the freeway and drives past a sign that reads "SOUTH ALAMEDA STREET - COMPTON" -- which, of course, means nothing to him...

One of the console lights FLICKS on. He taps the dashboard. Nothing. He taps it a little harder -- another light comes on. Marty makes a face. He SLAPS the dash with his palm - which instantly knocks out his front headlights(!)

SIMULTANEOUS TO THIS...

SPANISH THUGS in bandanas and gang colors watch as a strange car (with its back window blown out) kills its headlights... the signal for a drive-by shooting...

... they hit the ground and pray...

... windows are SLAMMED shut...

... store owners duck behind their counters...

Marty slowly cruises by, oblivious. There is no garage or gas station in sight. Come to think of it, there's no life at all.

The moment he stops the car he's surrounded by gang members -- the CLICKING of guns cocked at his head.

Marty's face drops. He raises his arms in surrender, and looks towards the apparent GANG LEADER.

Dead silence. Even the crickets stop and wait.

MARTY

I *really* need to check my email.

The gang members look at one another. Is he for real?

The Gang Leader considers this for a moment. He looks at the blown out window in the back -- then the giant speakers on the seats -- then back at Marty. His menacing demeanor drops, and he's actually quite pleasant.

GANG LEADER
(with Spanish accent)
You need to get high.

Marty tries to be polite, speaking in a hushed whisper.

MARTY
Oh, I don't do "the weed".

GANG LEADER
No, dipshit. Elevated.
(gesturing with his gun to the
sky)
Out of the pocket.

EXT. BACK ALLEY / FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

The Gang escorts Marty up a FIRE ESCAPE, his laptop under his arm.

Once on the roof Marty stops. From this vantage point the city is a SEA OF LIGHTS. A sea of dreams. Just like the movies.

MARTY
Wow. What a view.

GANG LEADER
(unenthused)
Ya. The land of opportunity, homes.

One of the gang members hands Marty a rusty coat hanger... instructing him (in Spanish) that he should hold it above his head, like an antenna. Other gang members try not to laugh.

He opens his laptop... unaware that they are now quietly filing back down the fire escape.

The Gang Leader stays, scratching his stubble for a moment.

His POV from the roof: his boys scurrying back to Marty's car.

They jimmy the doors in an instant and start unloading the SPEAKERS.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)
(not even looking at Marty)
Anything?

Marty checks the signal.

MARTY

Nope.

One of the speakers gets jostled on the curb with a low THUNK! -
- the fabric cover pops loose...

... there are no guts to the cabinet... only gold OSCAR
STATUETTES inside...

The gang members react -- what the hell is this? They look up
to the rooftop, their leader is too far away. They replace the
cover and continue unloading.

The Gang Leader backs towards the fire escape. He climbs down a
few rungs, smiling at Marty's stupidity.

GANG LEADER

How 'bout now?

Marty stares at the screen. Nothing.

MARTY

(looking up)

Maybe if I --

Marty stops, realizing he's alone. He hears muffled VOICES from
below. He sets down his laptop and walks towards the edge of
the roof.

He sees the car doors wide open, the gang members walking away
with the speakers.

MARTY (CONT'D)

(almost to himself)

Aw, man...

He pats his pocket for the keys and pulls out the fob.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Ya, some alarm system. Piece o' shit...

He points the fob and presses one of the buttons.

The stereo speakers EXPLODE! -- knocking out the gang members.

Marty's eyes bulge. He holds the fob up to his face, terrified
and confused.

A dog BARKS in the night.

After looking to see if anyone has noticed, he pretends he's an innocent onlooker and quietly slips away.

A MONTAGE of MARTY DRIVING/ASKING FOR DIRECTIONS:

- convenience store owners shake their heads.
- homeless people shrug their shoulders.
- teenagers handing out club flyers on the corner point, Marty points as well, trying to remember.
- Marty looks at the map in his car.

EXT. WATERHEAD LOUNGE - NIGHT

Marty pulls the car over -- the SIGN for the WATERHEAD LOUNGE glows. He can't believe he's found it! And he's early.

INT. WATERHEAD LOUNGE - NIGHT

Marty takes in the lounge. It's expensive looking.

He approaches the BARTENDER (30's, male), trying to act cool and casual. He nods a hello, and sits down on one of the stools which is comically undersized. Or the bar is just really high. Marty looks like he's four years old.

The Bartender sizes up his clothes. No tips here.

Silence.

MARTY

So... is this the *whole* lounge area?

The Bartender reacts.

BARTENDER

Uh, ye-ah.

Marty nods, please with the answer. He looks around.

MARTY

I'm... supposed to meet someone here.

The Bartender nods. Good luck with that.

BARTENDER

Drink?

Marty thinks for a moment. He's feeling very adult.

MARTY
 I'll have a cranberry juice.
 (coyly)
 With an olive.

The Bartender is confused and disgusted, but turns to make the drink regardless.

Marty looks around the room, swinging his feet off the stool like a kid.

MONTAGE/TIME LAPSE

- Marty waits at the bar, his drink is just ice. The Bartender is busy in the background.
- He looks towards the door. Nothing.
- Marty asks the Bartender for the time. She's two hours late.
- 3 hours later. Marty on the payphone at the front entrance. No answer.
- Marty slumped over the bar, distraught.
- Marty forces himself off the stool, the Bartender feels bad and offers him a 'shit happens' shrug.

EXT. WATERHEAD LOUNGE - NIGHT

Marty mopes on the curb. He's reluctant to get in his car... just in case she shows.

He looks down the street. On the opposite side there are people lined up in front of a dance club.

Without realizing it, Marty finds himself slowly walking along the sidewalk -- examining the building's black exterior. It looks familiar for some reason. The building he left Lamarr? He squints up at the sign:

"FANTASIA"

As he moves closer he notices a giant VINYL BANNER that is draped over the front of the building from the roof -- a blonde girl who seems strangely familiar...

Surely it can't be...

Marty is stunned, his mouth wide open.

It's VALENTINA.

CONTINUOUS --

EXT. FANTASIA DANCE CLUB - NIGHT

3 giant BOUNCERS (30's, Black) mill about with clipboards, guarding their precious red rope. The CLUBBERS in line are too cool for their own good.

Marty approaches the front doors, still looking up at the banner, amazed.

MARTY
(pointing up)
Do you know that girl?

BOUNCER #1
What girl?

He follows Marty's finger.

BOUNCER #1 (CONT'D)
Yeah, sure. It's his girlfriend.

He motions to his buddy beside him, who smiles at the joke.

MARTY
I know that girl.

BOUNCER #1
(deadpan)
That's your best line to get in here --
you know that girl?

MARTY
Do you know who took that picture?

BOUNCER #2
What the fuck he look like? Barbara
Walters?

MARTY
(to Bouncer #2)
She's not really your girlfriend?

The Bouncer reacts. Who is this dude?

MARTY (CONT'D)
'Cause I've been talking to her for
months. Online.

BOUNCER #1
Sure you have.

MARTY

I swear to god. I flew to L.A to meet her...

(pointing to the bar down the street)

... at that bar... and she never showed up.

BOUNCER #2

Then that makes you a pretty big fuckin' loser.

A CLUB-GOER (20's, male) in line gets impatient with Marty's tactic.

CLUB-GOER

Get in line!

BOUNCER #3

Hold up, hold up. You flew from where?

MARTY

Toronto.

The Bouncers all go "OOHHHH!"

BOUNCER #2

That is some serious intercontinental blue balls!

MARTY

(distraught)

We talked on the phone all the time. Once for 5 hours.

Bouncer #1 is still unconvinced.

BOUNCER #1

You got the wrong girl, boy. Lotta pretty girls in L.A.

They turn their backs to him, they've had enough.

MARTY

No, that's her!

(digging into his pocket)

She sent me pictures all the time!

Marty pulls out one of his computer printouts.

BOUNCER #2

(trying not to laugh)

You print this at home?

Marty nods his head.

BOUNCER #1

You know you can probably get a better one
on her website. Autographed even.

The Club-Goer interjects, verifying this.

CLUB-GOER

Yeah, 24.99!

His DATE looks at him, pissed off that he knows such things.

MARTY

I don't want an *autograph*. I wanted to
meet her!

BOUNCER #2

Of course you did.

MARTY

I was willing to change my life for her!

BOUNCER #2

Of course you were! Just like the 5000
other guys who visit her site every day.

MARTY

No, this was a... *dating* site.

Bouncer#1 looks at him as if to say "who you tryin' to kid"

BOUNCER #1

That girl. On a dating site.

Marty nods.

BOUNCER #1 (CONT'D)

That girl.

The Bouncers smile and turn their backs to him again.

Marty is despondent. He backs up to look at the banner once
again.

Bouncer#3 feels for him, and gestures towards the red rope. He
puts his arm around Marty's shoulder like a big brother.

BOUNCER #3

That takes guts -- doin' what you did.
Travellin' across the country... with no
hope in hell of ever meetin' a fine girl
like that...

(MORE)

BOUNCER #3 (CONT'D)
 comin' to a club like this dressed like
 that... goin' through life lookin' like
 you do. That takes heart and soul. Tell
 you what...

(he unclips the rope)
 ... I will *let* you into this fine
 establishment.

Marty doesn't know whether or not to be flattered or offended.

MARTY
 Well... thanks. But I didn't really come
 here to --

BOUNCER #3
 You get in there. *Plenty* of lonely people
 just like yo' self.

Marty considers it for a moment -- what else can possibly go
 wrong tonight?

MARTY
 Well. Lamarr did say it was the place to
 be.

The Bouncer's pleasant demeanor drops.

BOUNCER #3
 You friends with *Lamar*?!

Marty nods. The Bouncer CLIPS the rope in front of him again
 and turns his back. This conversation is over.

Marty takes one more look at the banner before dragging his
 feet down the sidewalk.

CONTINUOUS --

EXT. L.A STREET / SPORTS BAR - NIGHT

Marty passes by a bar just as the place erupts in CHEERS. Bar
 patrons are SCREAMING, pounding on tables, hugging each other.

MARTY'S POV: The giant TV's mounted on the wall -- a basketball
 team jumping around in victory.

FANS spill out of the bar, doing their victory dance.

A LOUD RUMBLE behind him -- increasing in volume...

He turns -- another MOB OF FANS is running up the street from
 the opposite direction...

-- they too are wearing basketball jerseys/caps, HOOTING and HOLLERING, waving GIANT FOAM FINGERS...

Marty turns, his eyes bulge.

Fans are darting in and out like hyenas, shaking mailboxes and storefront windows. Rocks are thrown - this is getting serious...

A small group is now circling Marty's car up ahead...

They throw MOLOTOV COCKTAILS against the windows...

Marty's jaw hits the ground -- it's total chaos.

It takes him a moment to realize what is happening. He moves towards his car...

MARTY

HEY!!

For some reason there is now an orderly line of HOODLUMS holding clubs, bats, 2 x 4's, nunchuks, Molotov cocktails... all waiting patiently to have a go at Marty's rental. Each one waits for the last, the way you would in gym class.

More fireballs EXPLODE against the car...

Marty is exasperated, but he has little energy to stop them...

He looks up and down the street, his is the only car they're destroying.

After a moment...

MARTY (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

There ARE other cars, you know!

The line-up continues, each trying to outdo the last.

EXT. VENICE BEACH STREET / HOSTEL - DAY

The blackened corpse of Marty's rental car sits in its usual parking spot outside the hostel.

INT. HOSTEL - DAY

Marty lies on the fecal bed of his hostel room, staring at his ceiling. He's not quite sure what to do with himself.

He barely has the energy to hold up the crumpled page from the airline magazine -- Valentina stares back at him.

Travis KNOCKS on his door.

TRAVIS (O.S.)
You got a phone call!

INT. HOSTEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Marty crosses through the front entrance to the sign-in desk. Travis is holding an old rotary phone behind the counter -- he hands it to Marty -- and goes back to unloading a giant FLAT SCREEN TV from its box. Styrofoam packing material falls out.

Marty cocks an eyebrow, thinking for a moment.

MARTY
Any word on my credit card?

Travis stops what he's doing and thinks for a moment.

TRAVIS
Nope.

He goes back to unpacking.

Marty's not convinced. He turns his back and lowers his voice for privacy.

MARTY
Hello?
(Pause - listening)
You got my message?

[INTERCUT phone conversation with Marty on the lobby phone and Frank back in Toronto]

Frank is at his desk at home, garbage everywhere. He's cradling a portable phone under his chin, distracted by some lame video game on his computer.

MARTY (CONT'D)
(into phone)
I'm freakin' out here. She's not answering her phone! There's no emails! Nothing! It was *her* idea!

FRANK
Maybe she sucked out. Met some other dude.

Marty is still holding the crumpled magazine photo. He looks at it absently.

MARTY
She wouldn't do that.

FRANK

You don't *know* this girl.

Marty is struck with a horrible thought.

MARTY

What if something happened to her?

FRANK

(nonchalantly)

Then you'll be charged for murder. Dude, just forget it. I don't mind sending you the money... I'm not gonna tell you "I told you so"... just cut your losses and come home... save yourself some dignity.

PULL BACK to see Frank wearing nothing but a Viking helmet, moth-bitten tightie-whities and black dress socks.

He lifts his ass cheek to FART.

BACK TO:

Marty spots a name in the corner of the photo. He holds it up to his face:

CLOSE-UP -- PHOTO CREDIT: BAZZ FANUCCI

MARTY

Are you near your computer?

FRANK

Is the Pope Jewish?

MARTY

Look up this guy's name for me.

EXT. MALIBU HIGHWAY - DAY

Marty zips by on a MOPED that's not fit for the highway. He is nervously hunched over the handlebars, wearing goggles and an oversized pink helmet with a giant sticker that reads "RENTAL".

EXT. PHOTOGRAPHERS HOUSE - MALIBU - DAY

A million dollar house on stilts, overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHERS HOUSE - MALIBU - DAY

Marty walks through the open living room. Walls of glass, modern art on the walls, white everywhere.

ARTSY-TYPES, HASBEEN ACTORS, and HANGERS-ON from a Warhol wet dream are making deals, drinking from champagne flutes, petting their token Shih Tzus. 24-hour party people.

Marty speaks to the first WOMAN who makes eye contact.

MARTY
I'm here to see Bazz?

WOMAN
(deadpan)
That's nice.

She goes back to her conversation.

A young MODEL flitters by wearing a bikini.

MARTY
Excuse me, do you know where I can find
Bazz?

She points to the outside pool area and scampers away.

EXT. PHOTOGRAPHERS HOUSE / POOLSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Marty walks out onto the terrace. More of the same types of people, only in swimsuits and ridiculously overpriced sunglasses.

There is SPLASHING in the pool.

A manicured hedge leads to an elevated deck and giant hot tub.

BAZZ FANNUCCI (50's, white beard, shocks of white hair, a real loose cannon) is soaking in the tub wearing nothing but an open Hawaiian shirt.

He stares up at the sky, bored with the gorgeous BIMBOS on either arm.

Marty approaches.

MARTY
Mr. Fannucci? I called earlier about
speaking to you. I guess I spoke to your
assistant?

BAZZ
I have an assistant?

MARTY
Well, it was a woman... so I'm assuming --

BAZZ
I can't speak to you like that.

MARTY
(speeding up, before he's kicked out)
Oh. Well... I realize that you're probably very busy... and you don't like to meet with just *anyone* off the street but --

BAZZ
Get in.

MARTY
Sorry?

Bazz gestures to the water.

BAZZ
Get in.

MARTY
Ohhh. I don't... I don't have my, uh...

BAZZ
No pants allowed.

Marty reacts. Bazz casually gestures to a small sign beside the tub. It reads "NO PANTS ALLOWED"

Before talking himself out of it, Marty slips out of his trousers and nervously throws them away.

He awkwardly straddles the ledge of the tub, slips, and falls in headfirst. He snaps himself upright, wipes the hair from his face, and calms himself -- as if nothing happened.

Awkward silence. The two bimbos are unimpressed. Bazz is indifferent.

MARTY
I was wondering if I could ask you about a girl.

Bazz casually gestures to the bimbo on his left.

BAZZ
You want this one?

She doesn't react. Marty is confused.

MARTY
What? Oh! No! No! God, no.

BIMBO
You're no prize yourself.

MARTY
Oh, no -- I don't mean... no...
(to girl)
YOU... you... are...
(looking for the words, he cups
his hands in front of his chest)
... *tremendous*... I was --

A large, HAIRY TOE rises out of the suds and hovers dangerously close to Marty's lower lip.

He looks at it... then at Bazz... who seems to be staring at Marty's mouth with a quiet intensity... and sinking lower in the water to reach his target.

The toe disappears.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Uhhh... ye-ah... well there's this girl
that you've worked with...

The toe appears again, yearning to be touched by Marty's mouth.

BAZZ
(distracted)
Ah-huh.

Marty continues, the toe still hovering.

MARTY
And... umm... I was hoping you could tell
me what agency she was --

Bazz snaps his body upright.

BAZZ
Hold it!

Marty's face drops.

MARTY
I know that's probably weird, or it
violates some sort of client/model
confidentiality thing, but --

Bazz shoots out of the tub as if smelling the air -- he spins around -- his white, naked ass at eye level with Marty's face. Marty winces.

Bazz cranes his neck to look over the hedges.

BAZZ
 (yelling - to everyone)
 WE'RE GOLDEN!

All of the party-goers literally drop what they're doing -- hors d'oeuvres, champagne flutes, Shih Tzus -- and start herding toward the stairs leading to the beach.

MARTY
 (stunned)
 What the --

A BRITISH WOMAN (50's, pretentious) standing nearby snaps her CELL PHONE closed and fills him in with a tired wave.

BRITISH WOMAN
 The golden hour... before sunset. Supposed to be magical. Photogs have a real hard-on for it.

Marty is half-listening, scrambling to find his pants which are nowhere in sight.

He quickly grabs what looks like a robe and unravels it. It's a woman's SILK KIMONO. He's got nothing else -- he cinches the belt around his waist -- it barely covers his ass.

MARTY
 (to British woman)
 Oh! Miss!

She stops.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 Could I *please* borrow your phone? I'll bring it *right back* to you. I'm kinda worried about somebody.

She hands it to him, bored with this whole party.

MARTY (CONT'D)
 Thank you so much.

She exits down the steps. The poolside is now a ghost town.

Marty walks over to the edge of the hedges and dials.

Marty's POV of the beach down below:

EXT. BEACH PHOTO SHOOT - SUNSET

Bazz's minions are scurrying about, setting up reflector stands, laptops, loading cameras, priming models...

Someone picks up!

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Hello?

MARTY

Valentina??

A MUFFLED VOICE comes through at the other end.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Val?

Marty turns his back to the action down below, stabbing at the keypad -- accidently switching on the external SPEAKER.

FEMALE VOICE

Oh my god! Marty?

MARTY

(elated)

Ya, it's me!

FEMALE VOICE

Marty - you there? Marty? I think I'm losing you...

Marty is horrified. He pulls back the phone to look at the signal bars... they're full(!)

MARTY

(desperately)

Valentina!

FEMALE VOICE

I'm so glad you called me -- I tried sending you an email...

MARTY

Are you okay?

Marty starts pacing around the pool, nervous and excited.

CONTINUOUS --

EXT. BEACH PHOTO SHOOT - SUNSET

Make-up girls are obscuring our view of the girl they're getting ready. She wears a terry-cloth robe, a bikini underneath...

They part for a second, offering a clear view of VALENTINA. She is talking on her cell phone, moments away from her shoot.

BACK TO:

Marty pacing around the pool, speaker phone still on, cradling the phone like it was treasure.

FEMALE VOICE

I'm fine, I'm fine -- I didn't want you to think that I got cold feet or anything. Some things came up, but I'll explain everything. Can you meet me tomorrow?

MARTY

Of course! You sure you're okay?

FEMALE VOICE

(yelling)
I can't hear you Marty!

Marty again checks the signal bars -- they're fine.

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)

Where are you now?

MARTY

I'm at this crazy photographer's house! You've worked with him before! His name's --

FEMALE VOICE

You have a pen?

He desperately scans the tables for something to write with.

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)

Marty? I think my phone's dying...

MARTY

Woah, woah! One sec!

He's picking through trays of fruit, cigarette butts, someone's thong...

VOICE

Marty?

He finds a LIPSTICK and whips it open.

MARTY

Go ahead!

He writes on the hem of the kimono in LARGE LETTERS.

MARTY (CONT'D)
HANCOCK...PARK. 2 o'clock. Got it.

FEMALE VOICE
I'm really nervous about this, Marty.

MARTY
No, don't be -- it's gonna be --

CLICK. The signal is gone.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Hello?

He closes the phone, in a daze. He's finally going to meet her.

He drops his arm with a sigh -- the phone slips into the deep end with a SLOOP!

He watches it sink.

He scans the deck in a semi-panic -- catching sight of a large, extendable POOL NET near the hedges. He runs for it.

EXT. BEACH PHOTO SHOOT - CONTINUOUS

Valentina poses for Bazz. He races around her, snapping different angles.

BACK TO:

Marty grabs the net, struggling with its awkward length. He knocks over vases, plates, cabana umbrellas -- navigating the net towards the deep end.

He runs towards the pool, trips over an inflatable something-or-other and sails over the bushes SCREAMING...

Bazz at work facing the camera. In the background we see the silhouette of a man sailing over the edge of the cliff, through the air towards the ocean.

Bazz pauses for a split second, thinking he's heard a man scream. He resumes shooting...

NEXT DAY --

EXT. DESERTED BEACH - MORNING

Marty has washed up on a desolate strip of beach. He's on his back, his hair and kimono knotted with seaweed. He is completely sunburnt.

He hears a MUFFLED VOICE and squints into the sun.

Marty's POV:

Valentina leans over him with a worried, love-sick look -- mouthing the words "are you okay?"

Marty can't believe his eyes, he blinks rapidly.

He regains his senses and realizes it is in fact a middle-aged MEXICAN MAN, leaning in to check his vitals. Another Mexican man is poking him with a piece of sea debris.

Marty pulls himself upright, wincing from the pain.

A group of MIGRANT WORKERS are seated on nearby rocks by the highway.

Marty tries to get a handle on his surroundings. GULLS chatter above. His head is killing him.

MARTY
(slowly and loudly)
Is this Mexico??

No answer from the workers.

An oversized PICK-UP TRUCK with an enclosed cab pulls over onto the shoulder of the highway.

The Mexican Man quickly climbs to his feet, gesturing to Marty that he should follow.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Are we anywhere near Hancock Park?
I need to get to Hancock Park!

The Man beckons him to come - others motion that he should hurry.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Can I get a ride? To the park?

The workers nod their heads in a hurry, yelling "si,si" and clamber into the back of the truck.

Marty gets to his feet, his whole body aches. He limps towards the truck. They help him in like a wounded soldier.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Hancock Park?

The man next to him offers a tired nod, not understanding a word. The back doors are closed and the truck pulls away.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS ESTATE - MORNING

Marty has been regaling the workers with Valentina stories the whole time. They are bored stiff. He's still in mid-sentence when the truck doors swing open...

MARTY
... and I think this might be the closest
anyone's got to really caring for me...

He waves to the workers walking away, without missing a beat.

MARTY (CONT'D)
This has been great, fellas. Seriously. I
really needed to get that off my chest.

Migrant workers spill out of the truck, rolling their eyes, glad to be away from Marty. The Mexican FOREMAN hands them gardening tools as they hit the ground.

Marty squints in the light. He gets out to scratch his ass, his kimono now giving him a wedgie. He looks around, confused. The foreman hands him a rake.

MARTY (CONT'D)
(slowly, deliberately)
Is this Hancock Park?

FOREMAN
(in Spanish)
You with the fucking park! Would you like
us all to drop what we're doing? And hold
your hand?! And maybe get you some fucking
ice cream, too?!

Marty tries to smile pleasantly throughout the tirade, not understanding a word. The Foreman adds one final obscene gesture and storms off, disgusted.

Marty drops the rake in his hands and slowly backs towards the 12-foot bushes lining the property. The other workers are busying themselves.

He starts patting down the wall of shrubbery, looking for an opening or exit.

He starts shimmying along the tree line, as if doing lateral jumping-jacks.

The other workers stare at him blankly.

He continues shimmying, his back now facing the bushes, trying to smile at the confused workers.

He continues his dance around the front of the property, catching the eye of the Lady of the House - stepping into her spotless SUV with the children.

He stops momentarily to explain.

MARTY

(patting the bushes)

It's a new way of... promoting growth.
Gently... *massaging* the follicles...

He sees the opening at the mouth of the drive and makes a run for it.

Her look of confusion.

Marty sprints down the street... passing by the gates of million dollar homes.

CONTINUOUS --

A washed-up, overly-tanned CELEBRITY (50's) is grabbing the morning paper at the mouth of his driveway. He too is wearing a silk kimono that barely covers his ass.

The two stop dead in their tracks -- sizing up each other's outfits.

After a moment.

CELEBRITY

Did you have to chew your arm off to get out?

MARTY

Pardon?

The Celebrity is distracted by the scribbled writing on Marty's kimono -- HANCOCK PARK. He gently touches the hem of it to read it.

CELEBRITY

(coyly)

Is this code for something?

Multiple CLICKS of a camera O.S --

-- FREEZE FRAME on Marty and The Celebrity caressing the fabric.

A PAPPARAZZI covered in fake foliage and camouflage make-up pops out of the hedge lining the street.

He toasts the two lovers with his long-lens camera.

PAPPARAZZI

This is gonna put my daughter through college.

He casually walks away.

The Celebrity is unfazed. He shrugs.

CELEBRITY

So they sell a few papers.

Marty tries to smile, a little confused.

The Celebrity looks at him with longing.

CELEBRITY (CONT'D)

I'm not ashamed.

(coyly)

Are you?

Awkward silence.

Marty slowly backs away and continues down the road.

CONTINUOUS --

A SECURITY CRUISER patrols the neighborhood with two OFFICERS inside.

Their POV from inside the car -- Marty scrambling along the edge of the road.

SECURITY OFFICER 1

That doesn't look like him.

SECURITY OFFICER 2

(sarcastically)

No, it's just some *other* pervert in a kimono.

The cruiser slows, the windows rolled down. Marty spots them and pretends to be examining the hedges.

SECURITY OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)
I hate to do this, Mr. Lannigan --

The car stops.

MARTY
(visibly lying)
I was... just on my way to --

SECURITY OFFICER 2
But could you read my screenplay when you get a minute?

He passes a MANUSCRIPT to Marty through the window.

SECURITY OFFICER 2 (CONT'D)
It would mean the world to me.

Marty is dumbstruck, but covers quickly.

MARTY
Oh! Absolutely.

Officer 2 looks over at his buddy to gloat.

Marty looks down at the script, his heart-rate returning to normal.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Could you guys do me a *huge* favour?

SECURITY OFFICER 2
Whatever you want.

EXT. SECURITY PATROL CAR - TRAVELING - MOMENTS LATER

Security Officer 1 is at the wheel, gritting his teeth at his partner.

SECURITY OFFICER 1
(an angry whisper)
This is SO out of our jurisdiction.

Marty sits in the back of the patrol car, flipping through the script.

Security Officer 2 checks on Marty over his shoulder.

Marty is flipping through the pages, feigning interest.

MARTY

I've got a... *really* good feeling about this.

EXT. HANCOCK PARK / LA BREA TAR PITS - DAY

Marty waves goodbye to the Security Officers as they pull away.

He picks a bench near the sign that reads 'Hancock Park' and plants himself.

He waits.

TIME LAPSE --

Marty changing positions on the bench, looking around, pacing, cursing himself, walking in a larger circle around the bench. Waiting. Slumped over. Watching every person that walks by.

BACK TO:

EXT. HOSTEL ROOTOP PATIO - DAY

Clare fills in the blanks.

CLARE

She never showed up.

MARTY

I waited on that bench for three hours.

CLARE

(slowly shaking her head)
That's horrible.

Marty is lost in thought.

MARTY

I'm a fucking idiot.

Silence.

CLARE

Maybe she got cold feet.

MARTY

Yeah.

He takes a drink -- then re-thinks his answer.

MARTY (CONT'D)

At least have the decency to show up! A quick "hi/bye..."

(MORE)

MARTY (CONT'D)
 this is too much for me/I have to go." I'd
 respect that at least. You know?

Silence.

CLARE
 So what are you gonna do now?

Marty slumps back on the patio recliner with a sigh.

MARTY
 I'm goin' home. My buddy's gonna wire me
 some money. I just gotta wait.

Clare seems affected by Marty's story.

CLARE
 That's sad. I feel bad for you.

Marty is drunk, staring off towards the water.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 You know... there's this agency... right
 here in L.A...

SUPER: 2 YEARS AGO

INT. OFFICE - LOS ANGELES - DAY

The offices of "HE SAID/SHE SAID" Dating Services.

The gorgeous VALENTINA sits in a nondescript waiting area, her legs crossed. She is holding onto a portfolio of some sort, absently watching the VIDEO MONITOR mounted in the corner of the ceiling.

INSERT: VIDEO TESTIMONIALS from the company's dating service are on repeat -- [shot in the same style as the clips from Scene One]

TESTIMONIAL 6 (MALE)
 If you think about it, computer dating is
 the wave of the future. Our kids will
 probably be dating robots.

COUPLE TESTIMONIAL 3
 That's how this relationship works. I make
 her food and she lets me touch her in
 inappropriate places.
 (Pause)
 Like the mall.

A nearby door SNAPS open -- her attention shifts to RAJ (50's, East Indian) who smiles a quick hello and invites her inside.

INT. RAJ'S OFFICE - DAY

A messy, modern office. Subdued lighting. Raj is seated behind a desk littered with PHOTOS. Valentina sits across from him.

RAJ

As long as we keep things realistic. No glamour shots, of course. You at the beach, with friends, your dog...

Raj has little energy - he's gone through this a thousand times. He examines one photo before placing it in his 'keep' pile.

RAJ (CONT'D)

This is good.

VALENTINA

That's my mother and I at --

Raj holds up his hand, cutting her off.

RAJ

Uhp-buhp.

(trying to be pleasant)

We don't need to know.

Valentina smiles, somewhat embarrassed.

A FEMALE ASSISTANT enters the room. He hands her the photos -- she exits without a word.

RAJ (CONT'D)

We just need a minute to scan them.

Awkward silence. Valentina stirs in her seat, slightly uncomfortable.

She watches Raj scrawl his signature on a checkbook.

VALENTINA

It's for school. (Pause). It's just kinda weird. You know. The whole thing.

He hands her the check, unfazed. He offers a tired shrug.

BACK TO:

INT. OFFICE - PRESENT DAY

The OFFICE MANAGER (male, 40's, frumpy tie) and a tattered beige FILE FOLDER in motion...

... taking his time through the inner sanctum of "He Said, She Said" Dating Services.

Bad lighting. Mini cubicles littered with junk food, sticky notes, personal pics. Employees (mostly female) with headsets clicking through their 8-hour shifts.

As he moves down the aisle we see that each girl has a PROFILE PAGE on her respective monitor. We catch bits of dialogue from each...

EMPLOYEE 1
 (reading aloud what she's typing)
 No-I-never-got-your-email... ba-by...
 (checking a list, to herself)
 When does this fucker's membership expire?

EMPLOYEE 2
 (reading aloud as she's typing)
 Sure we can meet sometime...

They laugh.

EMPLOYEE 3
 (aloud - to anyone)
 Ok, never Google the word finger...

EMPLOYEE 4
 (unenthused, she's heard it all)
 This guy wants me to shit on him.
 (to employee beside her)
 What would you charge for that sort of thing?

The Office Manager walks by just in time to answer that --

OFFICE MANAGER
 That's extra-curricular. Stay on target people.

We travel over the wall of cubicles to finally rest on...

CLARE (yes, the very same Clare from the Hostel), SANDRA (20's, Black) and TOULOUSSE (20's, metro-sexual). They are leaning back in their chairs to brainstorm.

The Office Manager plops the file folder on Clare's keyboard.

OFFICE MANAGER (CONT'D)
 These are a few years old, I think. Just juice 'em up a bit.

He exits. Clare halfheartedly opens the folder. More PHOTOS of yet another gorgeous blonde.

INSERT -- A yellow sticky note on Clare's monitor that reads "RULE #3 -- Remain Emotionally Uninvolved"

SANDRA (O.S)
What about Kiki?

CLARE
Too stripper.

SANDRA
Meesha?

CLARE
Too KGB stripper.

TOULOUSSE
And she has to work at a gym. We've got too many in real estate.

SANDRA
Memberships?

Toulouse thinks on this for a moment.

TOULOUSSE
(snappy)
Health bar.

C/U: Sandra types the words "HEALTH CLUB/FITNESS" in the column marked OCCUPATION.

CLARE
Won't that bring in all the muscle-heads?

TOULOUSSE
(he shrugs, typing away)
Little dicks, big wallets.

Sandra laughs, Clare quietly moans to herself.

CLARE
Is this what I get for taking creative writing?

SANDRA
That's right, baby. You're gonna write your ass out of a student loan.

Clare halfheartedly flips through the new photos. This girl is beautiful. She sighs.

CLARE

Why would this girl need the money?

SANDRA

Maybe her modeling career isn't goin' the way she wanted it to.

CLARE

She probably has an agent by now.

Toulouse wheels over his chair to take a look.

TOULOUSSE

She looks familiar.

Sandra stops what she's doing, pretending to be shocked.

SANDRA

What?? A blonde bimbo? In L.A?!

She laughs at her own joke.

TOULOUSSE

I'm serious. I think I've seen her before.

Clare sorts through the photos.

CLARE

We've got Halloween... track pants... one with dear old mom...

(examining the background of another)

Is this Europe?

Toulouse grabs the photo and wheels away, all business.

TOULOUSSE

I'm on it.

The last photo is a 5 X 7 -- the girl smiling on the beach, the sun hitting just so.

She holds it up, staring into her big, blue eyes... waiting for the name to come.

CLARE

(slowly)

I'm thinking... VALENTINA.

Sandra stops typing and runs it over in her head.

SANDRA

Nice.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL PLAZA / OFFICE - LOS ANGELES - EVENING

Clare is exiting the office with Sandra, her cardigan in one hand, a file folder in the other.

SANDRA

Tell me you're not taking work home with you.

CLARE

(shrugging)

I dunno. I might crop some pics. Touch them up.

SANDRA

They're supposed to look bad.

CLARE

Then maybe I'll feed them to my cat.

Sandra rolls her eyes. They continue on their way to the bus.

CLARE (CONT'D)

It's not like I have anything better to do.

They cross in front of a large, storefront window... oblivious to a cheap TRAVEL POSTER which features a smiling blonde girl...

... the very same "VALENTINA" from Clare's file folder.

INT. CLARE'S BASEMENT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Clare is reclining on her futon, her laptop on her stomach, her cat nestled between the cushions. MUSIC plays in the background. Incense sticks/candles burn nearby on the kitchen counter.

CLARE

(quietly)

This is an *actual* subject line.

(reading aloud)

"Insane teen girl banged by 7 without mercy".

(Pause)

Wow.

We realize she's been talking to her cat.

CLARE (CONT'D)

(to cat)

Do you think that's why they invented email?

The cat's face.

She scrolls to another page on her desktop.

CLARE (CONT'D)

Let's see how Valentina is doing. Or should we call her Val? I think we're on that sort of intimate level.

(she clicks to a new page)

Wow. *Only* 138 messages. And not one starting with 'night bus driver' or 'grannies giving head'.

Her computer PINGS --

INS. A pop-up shows MARTY'S pathetic mug -- and the caption "Online Now"

An Instant Message box follows... with the message "Hi Valentina :) U there?"

The cursor blinks. Waiting.

CLARE (CONT'D)

Well?

She looks to her cat, bored.

CLARE (CONT'D)

Do we answer the call?

(Pause - the cursor blinking)

Do we break another heart for 24.99 a month?

After a moment she realizes the ridiculousness of her situation.

CLARE (CONT'D)

I am talking to a cat.

INSERT -- her return message: HI :)

She waits for a moment before hitting ENTER, the cursor blinking...

The moment she presses the ENTER key we are hit with a MUSICAL MONTAGE of "happy courting" --

- Clare typing away at her cubicle, smiling.
- Clare overfilling her cat's bowl with food, cradling the phone between her chin/shoulder, laughing.
- Clare sitting near the ocean, talking on her cellphone.
- Clare talking into her headset at work -- Sandra looks over to see what she's so enamoured about -- Clare is oblivious.

INT. OFFICE - LOS ANGELES - DAY

Clare sits in the break room with Sandra. She halfheartedly scoops from a tiny yoghurt. Sandra is flipping through a magazine.

CLARE

I can't do this anymore.

SANDRA

(not looking)

That *is* disgusting. How do people put that in their mouths.

CLARE

No, *this*. This job.

SANDRA

You're gonna have a crisis of conscience now? For 8.50 an hour?

CLARE

There are people out there who are really trying to find someone. How is this helping?

SANDRA

(shrugging)

I was a telemarketer before this. What essential service do telemarketers have to offer? Bull-shit. This is a fantasy, baby. This is better than some damn movie or book you're gonna stare at for weeks. This is real life conversation.

CLARE

Yeah, real life.

SANDRA

Honey, it gets them through the week. Gets them through their jobs, their marriages, those little thoughts that tell them to jump in front of a train.

(MORE)

SANDRA (CONT'D)

They get to be whoever they want to be.

(Pause)

That shit is deep -- you should be writing *that* down.

CLARE

We're just preying on people's insecurities. And it just throws everything out the window. It ruins it for the people who actually have *real* profiles... and who are actually sincere... and who just wanna meet someone nice for once.

(she's now lost in thought)

Someone who doesn't talk to you like any other guy in L.A... he really... *listens*... and then he asks you things like what kind of junkfood you would be out of all the junkfood in the world and all you can come up with is a plain chip... and you both kinda laugh at how funny and sad that really is.

SANDRA

What?

Clare snaps out of it.

CLARE

Nothing.

INT. OFFICE - LOS ANGELES - DAY

Clare's cubicle. She's instant messaging with Marty, typing away with a smile.

INSERT: A thumbnail PHOTO of Marty in the corner of her Instant Message screen.

After a moment she springs back from her monitor with a muffled SHRIEK, pulling off her headset.

CLARE

(trying to keep cool)

Oh my god.

Sandra looks over, concerned.

CLARE (CONT'D)

He's on a plane from Toronto.

SANDRA

Who?

CLARE
Ohh gooodd. What have I done?

SANDRA
He's from where?

CLARE
Toronto. Canada!

Sandra does not seem alarmed at all.

SANDRA
Seriously?
(off Clare nodding)
What a waste of a plane ticket.
(she shrugs it off)
Hopefully he'll like the wax museum.

CLARE
This isn't funny, Sandra. He gave me no indication that he was thinking of coming.

SANDRA
He renew his membership?

CLARE
Months ago!

Sandra stops.

SANDRA
What do you mean, *months*?

Clare makes a face. Oops.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Oh no, you didn't.
(off Clare)
You didn't!

Sandra wheels her chair over. She snatches the yellow STICKY NOTE from Clare's monitor and sticks it to her forehead -- it reads "RULE # 3: Remain Emotionally Uninvolved"

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Let that sink in for a minute.

Clare wrings her hands, not knowing what to do.

Sandra nudges her away from the keyboard.

CLARE
What are you doing?

SANDRA
WE are going to make up some excuse why
 you can't possibly meet this poor fellow.

CLARE
 I can't do that!

Sandra stops and looks her square in the eye, all attitude.

SANDRA
 What - you gonna put a *wig* on... and go
 meet him for some *bowling alley rice*
pudding?

Clare stops for a moment, confused.

CLARE
 Is that code for something?

Now Sandra's confused -- they snap out of it.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 Ok! I'm away! Visiting my mom.

Sandra starts typing for her.

CLARE (CONT'D)
 But not too far away, 'cause it was just a
 last minute thing.

CUT TO:

[THE SAME SCENE FROM MARTY'S STORY]

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - DAY

Marty reads the return message on his screen. He looks up from his laptop, disappointed.

MARTY
 (to Lady next to him)
 Do you know how far Palm Springs is from
 L.A.?

LADY
 About two hours I would imagine.

BACK TO:

PRESENT DAY -

EXT. HOSTEL ROOFTOP PATIO - DAY

Clare has stopped talking. Marty is dumbstruck.

MARTY

Oh... my... god.

He backs away from her like she's on fire.

CLARE

I know, I know...

(wringing her hands)

It just *snow-balled*...

TRAVIS

Snowball? More like *blue balls*!

The two look over -- Travis is standing there with his mop. He realizes he's not welcome and goes back to his mopping.

Marty turns back to Clare, not sure what to say.

MARTY

You get paid? To pretend?

CLARE

It's just a stupid job. I never meant for any of this --

MARTY

You never meant -- We talked for hours every night! You never meant *anything* you said to me? Are you that crazy that you could pretend to be someone else for hours on end?

CLARE

That was *me*.

MARTY

(sarcastically)

Oh, *THAT* was you!

Marty stumbles over one of the reclining patio chairs, visibly drunk.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Maybe it was your roommate... or your dentist! Maybe we'll send him a photo that came with the frame for Christmas! And we'll all sit around and have a big laugh!

CLARE

I started to actually care about you...
for someone I've never even met! How
stupid is that?

(Pause)

I did show up. Both times.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. L.A STREET - NIGHT

Clare watches Marty as he passes by the Sports Bar across from the Waterhead Lounge. He stops and looks at the televisions -- she quickly leans behind someone to obscure herself.

EXT. HANCOCK PARK - DAY

Clare's face is obscured by brush.

She sees Marty sitting alone on a bench, waiting.

BACK TO:

CLARE

I wanted to tell you. But I didn't want to
disappoint you.

MARTY

I think I'm gonna be sick.

TRAVIS

(still mopping)

Well Jesus-H, do it in your shoes...

CLARE

You would *ask* me about things. It wasn't
about your face, or your pictures, or how
much money you make, or what you *do* for a
living. You would ask me things.

Marty can't speak.

CLARE (CONT'D)

And I would *want* to tell you. Not sit
there and ask myself 'when will this
godforsaken date be over'.

MARTY

(meekly)

You had a story for every picture.

CLARE

I'm sorry.

Marty walks towards the railing, looking off towards the water.

MARTY
I'm such an idiot.

CLARE
No, you're not. I'm the idiot.

Awkward silence.

MARTY
(not looking at her)
How could I think for one minute that a
girl like that would ever talk to a guy
like me.

Silence.

TRAVIS (O.S.)
But you're gay!

Marty and Clare turn to see Travis now sitting at the wooden rooftop Tiki bar.

He holds up the latest "HOT TOPIC" TABLOID -- the COVER features a photo of Marty and The Celebrity in kimonos.

Marty makes a face. He forgot about that.

[A headline in the corner also reads OSCAR GOES MISSING! with a photo of the coveted statuette]

Back to reality.

CLARE
Do you think you would've talked to me if
it was me in those photos?

MARTY
(defensive)
I don't know.
(Pause)
Why not?

CLARE
Be honest.

MARTY
Why would you...
(Pause)
You're a...cute girl.

Clare reacts, unconvinced.

MARTY (CONT'D)

What? You think I'm just some...
superficial douche-bag?

CLARE

You told me you didn't care too much for
all those girls prancing around your
job... the kind of girls every guy
fantasizes about. And then you tell me you
don't like porn because it's just a
fantasy, and it's not your life, and it
just depresses you.

MARTY

It does.

CLARE

It's just a fantasy?

MARTY

Ya.

CLARE

What are you chasing out here, Marty?

Silence.

CLARE (CONT'D)

Your dream girl? The one that's gonna make
it all worth it?

Silence.

We pull back to see that Travis is now sitting uncomfortably
close to Marty, totally rapt, waiting for Marty's reply.

Marty looks at him as if to say "do you mind?" -- then back to
Clare.

MARTY

But why me? What did I do to you?

CLARE

(sadly)
You did nothing.
(Pause)
I'm sorry.

Clare is about to walk away.

CLARE (CONT'D)

I'll pay you back for your plane ticket.

MARTY

I thought we had a real connection.

CLARE

We do.

MARTY

And that's rare. Right?

Clare does not answer. Instead, she pulls out one of her BUSINESS CARDS and sets it on the patio table closest to Marty.

CLARE

This is where I work. I don't think I'll be there much longer... but if you want to meet that girl... I could probably find out where she is.

She turns away. Marty watches her as she leaves.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A typical day at the office, keyboards clicking away.

Clare is standing by the window, waiting, too upset to work. After a moment she peeks through the vertical blinds. She spots Marty down below in the parking lot.

EXT. OFFICE PARKING LOT - DAY

Clare exits the building with a beige file folder. She looks over her shoulder, hoping her coworkers haven't seen.

She offers the folder to Marty.

CLARE

Here's the name of her modeling agency.

(Pause)

You could always tell them you saw her picture in a magazine.

(trying to lighten the mood)

Or a picture frame.

Clare tries to smile at her own joke.

Marty does not reach for the folder.

MARTY

I don't wanna meet her.

Clare is caught off guard.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I mean, who am I to her? Could you imagine? I just go up to some stranger.

CLARE

People do it all the time.

(Pause)

Don't they?

Silence.

MARTY

What would you like to happen, Clare?

CLARE

Sorry?

MARTY

What do you want? You. The real you.

CLARE

Marty. I'm in no position to answer that. I have no right to even --

MARTY

What do you want from me? I know you didn't ask me to come. I know I might've been rushing things and it was stupid for me to just --

CLARE

I want a do-over.

Marty stops.

CLARE (CONT'D)

No more lies. Or stories. I wanna fail on my own terms.

She holds out her hand for Marty to shake.

CLARE (CONT'D)

My name's Clare.

They shake hands, awkwardly.

MARTY

I never even asked you that.

CLARE

(try to make a joke)

Yeah. It's one of *those* names.

Marty is still shaking her hand.

MARTY
So. I'm missing my flight for this, Clare.

CLARE
Oh.

They are still awkwardly shaking hands.

CLARE (CONT'D)
I can... pay for your ticket.

MARTY
You're supposed to ask me 'and then what'?

They stop.

CLARE
And then what?

Silence.

Marty's answer is a simple shrug.

There's hope.

Clare leans in gently to kiss him on the cheek -- Marty reels back. (Has she crossed the line?)

CLARE (CONT'D)
(embarrassed)
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

MARTY
(feigning shock)
I don't even know you.

Clare stops.

After a moment Marty breaks -- he's only teasing.

He slowly walks away, hoping she'll follow.

CLARE
Sooo... you *don't* usually kiss strangers?

They walk... but not very close.

MARTY
I don't know where you've been. You could have germs.

CLARE
Germs? Don't you wash dishes in a strip
joint?

The conversation fades out...

FADE OUT.