MY OWN DEATH

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

We HEAR a relaxed voice of JEFF HOPEFUL as we SEE; a green chameleon transforming its color to brown.

JEFF(V.O) Sometimes we pretend to be different.

We SEE a porcupine erect its bristles.

JEFF(V.O) Perception gets into reality.

VARIOUS SHOTS -- a caterpillar feeding on a green leaf; a chrysalis transforming into a butterfly; a mature butterfly taking off from a tree into space.

JEFF(V.O) We destroy and hurt. It gets boring and we eventually go back to being us.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We ZOOM BACK from a panorama of Hollywood to find 25-year-old JEFF HOPEFUL, rugged kind of handsome, black hair,(who for some time will be known as BOB TALENT)dragging a black "body bag" through a messed up house towards the door, too drunk.

He trips over a moved chair and falls, breaking the glass of scotch in his hand...

EXT. GOLDEN AGE THEATRE - NIGHT

THE "QUITE A CONUNDRUM MOVIE" RED NIGHT PREMIERE.

BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE/Fashion/Professionalism/Cameras/ Journalists crowding the place.

Movie stars pose for pictures in front of pull-ups. Some celebrities taking brief interviews nearby.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jeff struggles to raise from the floor, a few shake ups, and as he does so, the broken glass cuts his hand deeply. Finally, gets to his legs -- continues to drag the bag.

ANGLE ON BLOOD -- dropping from his wound to the floor; trailing him as he makes his way to the door.

He grabs another bottle of scotch and a lighter from a table near the front door and steps out.

EXT. BOB'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jeff drags the black bag towards a YELLOW LAMBORGHINI parked right outside the front door; his blood still trailing him.

He opens the car's trunk, mindless of who sees or what they think, lifts the bag into the trunk, it rolls off the edge and falls on him.

Through the NEIGHBOR P.O.V: Jeff grapples with the bag for awhile until it lands inside. He slams the "thing" shut and takes the driver seat. He races the lamborghini out of the compound.

ANGLE ON THE NEIGHBOR; She dials 9-1-1! on her cellphone, pretty scared.

INT. GOLDEN AGE THEATER - NIGHT

Cameras, Microphones everywhere. Seventy or more journalists, all hungry for a story. From legit to amateur paparazzi.

ON-PROJECTOR SCREEN: THE "GREAT NECKS PRODUCTIONS" LOGO APPEARS, THEN THE "QUITE A CONUNDRUM" PREMIERE NIGHT".

A BIG APPLAUSE as MICHAEL MORGAN, SHARON KENDRIK, the movie director and two producers take the stage.

JOURNALIST #1 We're broadcasting live...

JOURNALIST #2 ... Here at the golden age theater...

JOURNALIST #3 ... And right behind me, Michael Morgan, Sharon Kendrik, Travor Hopkins...

JOURNALIST #4 ... the film's director just stepped on stage...

As the five take seats...

INT/EXT. CAR(MOVING), VARIOUS - NIGHT

Jeff drives the car down the street dementedly, creening road signs and phone cables, sipping his scotch.

Suburbs lead us into a forest. Forest gives way to hills.

EXT. HILLS - NIGHT

The car skids into a huge rock. Headlights shatter to black.

Jeff slowly, not steadily lurches out of the car; His half-full bottle of scotch first, forehead greatly bruised.

He stands there like a lunatic. Then stumbles around the car wetting its seats with liquor, pours much on the "black bag" in the trunk. He gulps some of it, too.

Going through his pockets, Jeff finds a lighter we saw him grab from the table in the house earlier...

He sets the car on fire; stands still witnessing as the fire grows even bigger, spreading throughout the entire vehicle.

INT. GOLDEN AGE THEATER - NIGHT

Michael Morgan stares for Sharon, who trains her gaze toward an empty seat tagged "WRITER".

She looks at her watch, a bit nervous than she's excited, nods for PARKER(20s). Parker dials her cellphone as she makes her way to the back.

A VOICE IN THE AUDIENCE SCREAMS:

VOICE IN AUDIENCE Where's the writer?

EXT. HILLS - NIGHT

KABOOM!! The car EXPLODES as Jeff trudges away. Its Impact throws him into a distance. He THUMPS the ground like a dinosaur.

INT. GOLDEN AGE THEATER - NIGHT

Michael Morgan taps his microphone testing its efficiency, as journalists push even closer. He looks towards Kendrik, she nods - "assurance".

> MICHAEL MORGAN Good evening, gentlemen and ladies. Tonight shall be recorded in Hollywood's history...

INT. BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The police is all over the place. Taking pictures of the crime scene.

DETECTIVE CARLIE, hands in gloves, marks evidence points as she takes some notes in a small pad.

DETECTIVE HARLEY STORM(40) picks a BLONDE HAIR STRAND from the floor, puts it into a small bag.

DETECTIVE PAYNE continues a thorough scrutiny of the house, broken glasses, stuff on the floor, moved chairs, broken photographs of BOB TALENT(25), blonde head. etc.

INT. GOLDEN AGE THEATER - NIGHT

As Michael Morgan continues to talk... WE PULL BACK to find JOURNALIST #1 speaking on her cell.

JOURNALIST #1 (into phone) When? Are you absolutely sure of this? Okay, thanks.

She hangs up the phone. Off her mortified look, it's far from good news. She pushes through fellow journalists to the front as Michael Morgan concludes his speech...

MICHAEL MORGAN ... With that my friends --

JOURNALIST #1 Is it true Bob Talent is dead? I have just received the news right now from my very reliable source.

The panel trade incoherent gazes. A MOMENT OF SHOCK !!

JOURNALIST #3 Is that the reason his seat is still empty?

Kendrik looks at the writer's seat, doesn't want to believe the reporter. The rowdy journalists go nuts!!

EXT. BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

DETECTIVE STORM AND PAYNE walk out of the house to find DETECTIVE SHAWN(30) completing his brief interrogation of the NEIGHBOR.

BOB'S NEIGHBOR That's all I saw.

SHAWN Thank you very much.

The neighbor proceeds towards her house as Payne and Storm approach Shawn.

A couple of news reporters and onlookers are behind the police line doing their job.

DETECTIVE STORM What do we have?

SHAWN I'll tell you what we don't have, the writer's whereabouts.

DETECTIVE STORM (re: neighbor) Did she manage to see the killer? SHAWN

Certainly. He's a male, mid twenties, black hair, reasonably tall, slender and "movie-star handsome" as per her description.

DETECTIVE STORM I need all the blood samples examined immediately.

INT. BREAKYOURFACE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

DAMON BREAKYOURFACE(late 30s), a roughneck, is watching breaking news on TV... By his sides are his "hyena-men" DUCKETT and ZODIAC.

ON TV SCREEN:

REPORTER

...Bob Talent went missing ahead of his first movie premiere tonight at the golden age theatre here in Los Angeles. The prevailing evidence so far indicates that he might be greatly injured if not already dead. Whatever the motive behind this, the police have begun thorough investigations into the case.

Breakyourface turns the TV off, too pissed.

BREAKYOURFACE Fuck. Find the fucking faggot that took him.

ZODIAC

Right now?

BREAKYOURFACE Right now, fool! Whatta fuck are you waiting for?

Zodiac starts for the door.

EXT. HILLS - NIGHT

Jeff's eye lids tremble. They eventually open. Blood all over him. "Is it his?" He looks for his body parts shockingly, he's whole...

Nearby, a wolf lies there dead, leg detached. It's blood on Jeff.

With great effort he raises, head pounding like hell. He walks back to the "car-in-flames" and looks at it, assessing his damage.

He takes off his torn jacket painfully. Rips a part off it's arm and wraps it around the wound on his hand. He throws rest of it inside the car and stumbles away.

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

Off the sounds of rising birds; we find Jeff walking his way back to the main route.

INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - DAY

TANYA(20s) approaches detective Storm's desk with a file in hand.

TANYA Detective Storm?

She hands over the file to him.

TANYA(CONT'D) DNA from all the blood samples belongs to a one Jeff Hopeful.

DETECTIVE STORM

All of it?

TANYA Including the prints from the entire crime scene.

DETECTIVE STORM What about the hair strand?

TANYA Doesn't have a match.

DETECTIVE STORM Thanks, Tanya.

Tanya recedes. Storm pins Jeff's headshot from the file onto the board as he reads through the file. He turns to DETECTIVE PAYNE, CARLIE and SHAWN, all on their desks.

DETECTIVE STORM

Guys. listen up. Our suspect is Jeff Hopeful. He has not been arrested before but that doesn't mean he's not dangerous. I want this picture run on every television and social media page we can have access to, including an "armed and dangerous" in the news. Payne. Get on Bob Talent's financials. Find out every detail of it even if he owed someone a single penny and Shawn--? SHAWN Hopeful's crooked past, boss. I'm on it.

EXT. FLEE PITT HOTEL - DAY

Establishing. A poorly maintained hotel building in a none-too-fair neighborhood.

A police car stops in the PARKING LOT. Detective Shawn steps out of it and walks into the building.

As he does so -- we PULL BACK AND HIGH to SEE; SAUL HANKS, mid 40s, rotund with a BOUFFANT HAIRSTYLE - "the landlord".

He is standing in his office window, having observed and somewhat expecting the detective.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Jeff stumbles down the crowded street. As he walks past a waffle shop, his eyes land on a TV SCREEN: "Bob Talent is missing".

Jeff's picture appears as the "prime suspect" in the case on the same screen. He revises his speed, shielding his bruised face from the seemingly over-gazing pedestrians.

Jeff continues toward a street vendor, lifts a baseball cap from the vendor's merchandise and wears it.

INT. HANKS' OFFICE - DAY

Detective Shawn gets seated as mister Hanks still clears his chair of numerous fashion magazines. Then sits.

SHAWN So. Mister Hanks. How long did Jeff Hopeful stay here?

HANKS Close to three years.

SHAWN Anything you can tell me about him?

HANKS The boy was a dreamer.

SHAWN

What do you mean?

INT. GREAT NECKS RECEPTION - DAY(EIGHTEEN MONTHS EARLIER)

Jeff Hopeful waits in the middle of a long submission queue of writers. He's holding a 197 paged standard banded script in his hand. MICHAEL MORGAN, 55, a "devil-may-care" producer walks in along with his female assistant. All eyes on him. They all look admiringly.

WRITERS Oh my god! Michael Morgan? I love that guy.

MELISSA (to Michael Morgan) Good afternoon, Sir.

He just waves at her and continues toward his office. So full of himself.

-SOME HOURS LATER-

The line has gradually reduced towards a tired MELLISA - the receptionist, mid 20s, until:

MELISSA

Next.

Jeff steps in front of her beaming.

MELISSA

Name?

As she types on her computer.

JEFF

Jeff Hopeful.

She looks at him subdued.

JEFF

What?

MELISSA (back to her computer) Title?

MELISSA "My own death."

MELISSA Seriously? Do you honestly think your script will be read, Jeff?

JEFF

Why not?

MELISSA Because... this is like the third time you're submitting the same (MORE)

MELISSA (cont'd)

"thing". And I'm gonna tell you exactly what I've told you before. It's too long. Cut some scenes off.

JEFF Oh you gonna wanna feel the changes this time.

MELISSA Look. "Mister Hopeful". Our interns have a lot of scripts to read.

JEFF Hire some professionals. I'm kidding... It's long that I can't deny but for the best.

MELISSA Are you even listening to me?

JEFF

Of course. (script on table) There you go. One hundred and ninety seven glorious pages.

MELISSA We'll get back to you.

They won't.

JEFF No further questions?

MELISSA That's it. I'm familiar with your family tree.

Jeff shrugs -- steps away from the table beaming. Melissa sighs, tucks Jeff's script below the pack as Jeff exits.

MELISSA

Next.

EXT. GREAT NECKS BUILDING - DAY

Jeff emerges out of the front door still excited. He makes a fist of JOY and screams:

JEFF

Yes!

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jeff walks down the busy street up to the pedestrian crossing. He waits for a moment -- the light goes green, he crosses.

INT. FLEE PITT HOTEL - JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

A stuffy writer's desk sits next to a bad-unmade-bed with a set of very old scratched leather seats.

Jeff's girlfriend NAOMI(20s) is packing her three big suitcases. She's packing "most" that belongs to her.

She picks a picture of Jeff from the desk and looks at it for a moment, regrettably -- places it back carefully.

EXT. DIFFERENT STREET - DAY

Jeff is still walking. Now a bit drained by the journey. We SEE him disappear through a distance.

INT. FLEE PITT HOTEL - JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

Jeff barges in to find NAOMI pulling the last of her suitcases almost to the door.

JEFF Um, babe, what's going on?

NAOMI What'd your eyes see?

JEFF You're moving out... I thought you changed your mind about this?

NAOMI

I'm leaving.

JEFF

Leaving?

NAOMI I don't think we're compatible, Jeff.

JEFF After three years?

NAOMI

You've changed. Everything in here has changed. You don't have a job. The Jeff I knew would never be that lazy. He was always two people but you lost the smart one. You must change, Jeff. It's not fun anymore.

JEFF

Come on, Naomi... You know am doing my best to make ends meet.

NAOMI

I am so done pretending things will be fine everyday. I'm tired being part of your writing journey to nowhere too.

JEFF That's not fair.

NAOMI

This whole time with you wasn't fair. Not to me, maybe fair to you, Jeff but I have a life and dreams of my own. I'm stuck with you.

She pulls her suitcase past him, out of the apartment and turns.

NAOMI

Goodbye, Jeff.

The door clangs shut in his face. He glares it for a moment -- trudges to his bed and lies on the back soul-crushed.

He gets up and walks towards the fridge, opens and picks out the last drink. He sits behind his old computer to open it.

So angry, Jeff smashes the bottle onto the wall instead. He knocks stuff to the floor, breaking Naomi's picture.

He picks the picture, gazes it and when his tear drops on it -- he smashes it to the wall screaming!

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON a wall clock; reading "10:20".

REVEAL: Jeff still sleeping on the couch. A rapid knock hits his door. He stirs but hesitates to get the door.

The knocking continues, a bit more annoying. Jeff sighs a "disgust" and finally grabs that door. It's SAUL HANKS.

JEFF

Mister Hanks?

HANKS

(coming in)
Funny thing about time is it flies.
Do you believe it's five months
past your last half-payment
already, Mister Hopeful?

JEFF

Luck hasn't been with me of late but I promise you'll be the first person I think of... HANKS

Luck needs you to find a job first.

JEFF

I have a job.

HANKS

Then scoop my nine grand from your miserable earnings and pay me right now.

Jeff looks a dullard.

JEFF

I am this close to my greatest breakthrough, Mister Hanks.

HANKS What has changed this time?

JEFF

My script --

HANKS

I hate to act as your dream crusher, Hopeful but I was born in Hollywood. Not every junk makes it to the silver screen. This hotel doesn't pluck its money for bills from trees... And I'm not willing to bald without a single profit from your room.

JEFF

I know...

HANKS Then find the whole payment within the next two weeks. Or I'll have no other choice.

Hanks walks out frustrated. Jeff sits on his bed, stares no plan.

He slides his hand beneath the mattress and all it scoops is a sum of eighty five(\$85)dollars after repeated counting.

JEFF This is all I have?

He searches under the bed. Nothing. He sits on the bed genuinely disappointed, hard to tell whether in himself all the cash in his hands.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

Jeff punches some numbers on his cellphone and listens. It goes straight to voice mail.

OPERATOR(V.O) You've reached Greggy. Please leave a message.

JEFF

Hey. Greggy. It's me, pal. Jeff. I'm in a kinda tight situation here, man. Could you send me a few thousand bucks? I'll pay back of course. I promise. Thanks.

OPERATOR(V.O) Message has been recorded. Press one to send message. Press two to delete.

He presses:

OPERATOR(V.O) Message has been successfully delivered.

He searches for another number and dials.

INT. LAZARUS'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

LAZARUS is making love to his girlfriend OPHERIAH. The doorbell sounds. He turns. She grabs his neck:

OPHERIAH

Don't.

The bell sounds again. She hates whoever is on the other side of the front door.

OPHERIAH(CONT'D)

Gosh.

LAZARUS Could be the pizza guy.

Laz gets down, wraps the robe on him and heads for the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lazarus semi-opens the front door to see a troubled Jeff standing outside.

LAZARUS

Jeff?

JEFF I'm in a critical financial crisis, Laz. I need your help.

Opheriah pops her head out of the bedroom.

OPHERIAH(CONT'D) Honey, you coming back?

LAZARUS

(to her) Gimme a sec.

He turns back to Jeff.

LAZARUS I can't be of help. My girlfriend just moved in man and you know what that means. Hope you find a shoulder to lean on, buddy.

Laz shuts the door and bolts back to the bedroom.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM LOBBY - DAY

Jeff walks towards his door carrying as much groceries as sixty five dollars could buy -- enters.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

His phone rings! Jeff sets the groceries on the couch first, looks at the caller ID and answers with great pleasure.

JEFF Greggy. I'm glad you called pal.

EVE(V.O) This is Eve. Greggy passed away last week.

JEFF Is this some kind of a joke?

The woman on the other end of the line sobs.

JEFF Omigod, you're serious. I'm so sorry to hear this, Eve.

A CHILD's voice calls Eve from a distance in the phone.

CHILD(V.O) Mom? Grandpa is leaving us!

EVE(V.O) I have to go, Jeff.

JEFF I'm really sorry for your loss, Eve but I need --

The phone goes dead.

JEFF(CONT'D) Your help. Hello? He freezes for awhile. As he moves backwards to the bed a rapid knock hits his door. Jeff hesitates to open the door. He knows who that is.

HANKS(0.S) I know you're in there, Hopeful. Open the door.

Jeff goes for the door. Mister Hanks is right there with a white envelop in his hand. He holds it out for Jeff.

JEFF

What's this?

HANKS It better be that goddamned pay check from your movie mogul, Jeff.

Hanks hangs on watch as mister Hopeful hopefully opens a "REJECTION LETTER" from Great Necks Productions.

HANKS

("huh") A rejection letter? Fault the gods for abandoning you, Mister Hopeful.

EXT. FLEE PITT HOTEL - DAY

Two well-built men fetch Jeff's old stuff out of the building in just two shifts. A small crowd of hotel tenants is spectating.

Nearby, Jeff is pleading to the landlord: But mister Hanks has had enough of him.

JEFF I just need a few days to figure how to get the money.

HANKS Consider your debt my contribution to the failed dream. Your days are over, Jeff.

Hanks releases a loud exhale when the men are done taking out everything. He switches the "VACANT PLATE" back on top and walks back to his office -- men following him.

Jeff drops his gaze to his stuff, stands there for long as if he doesn't know where he is.

INT. HANKS' OFFICE - DAY

Back to Present. Detective Shawn deflates from the story as Hanks now brushes his hair.

HANKS It's the last day I heard of him. Until his virulent fate last night. Shawn writes in his pad.

INSERT HIS PAD: Outlined notes read: MICHAEL MORGAN. DEPRESSED. DESPERATE. LAZARUS. HOMELESS. NO FRIENDS.

BACK TO SCENE:

SHAWN Any of his family members you know that I can talk to?

HANKS I never saw his family.

SHAWN Thank you very much for your help.

Shawn starts for the door. Before he exits:

HANKS

Detective Shawn?

Shawn turns.

HANKS(CONT'D) Jeff Hopeful was a bad debtor but I don't think he murdered the writer.

SHAWN

I hope not.

He exits.

INT. AUTO SHOP - DAY

SLOW MOTION -- THE DOOR PUSHES OPEN AND IN COMES DUCKETT, BREAKYOURFACE CLOSE BEHIND AND AS FAST AS THEY STEP INSIDE -- BAMM!! DUCKETT SHOOTS IN THE HEAD THE GLOOMY GUY BEHIND THE COUNTER. A BOUNCER BUMPS IN FROM ANOTHER ROOM ONLY TO GO DOWN THE SAME WAY: A MIST OF BLOOD AND BRAIN SPLATTERS OVER THE DOOR, A LITTLE BIT OF IT ON BREAKYOURFACE'S SUIT.

ANOTHER ROOM: -- Bigger. Old newspapers, a green screen, a still camera on a tripod, books, movie stars photographs all over the walls, etc.

Duckett and Breakyourface enter to a frightened CAESAR CAPELLA non-expectant of the unannounced guests. Breakyourface shakes his head reluctantly.

BREAKYOURFACE Caesar Capella. I sent you a message.

CAESAR I have a reputation to keep.

BREAKYOURFACE Still the answer I hate. He nods for Duckett and BAMM!! Duckett hits Caesar's face with the non-business end of the gun. He falls to the ground.

BREAKYOURFACE You made his documents!

CAESAR

I don't ask for their names.

Breakyourface strikes Caesar, extremely hard, across his rocky face.

BREAKYOURFACE(CONT'D)

Gimme his cock-fucking name, that's all.

CAESAR

I didn't get his name! Can't you get that?

Caesar glares Breakyourface defiantly. Breakyourface grabs the gun from Duckett and rests it on Capella's head, opens its safety.

BREAKYOURFACE

We can do this in a very liberal way or I splatter your fucking brains the way your stupid men went down.

CAESAR Okay. Okay. I'll tell you what I know.

BREAKYOURFACE Now you're talking.

He pulls a chair for Caesar.

INT. AUTO SHOP - DAY(-THIRTEEN MONTHS EARLIER-)

The BOUNCER hands over a ringing phone to Caesar. Caesar answers it.

VOICE ON PHONE Caesar Capella?

CAESAR

(into phone) Speaking.

VOICE ON PHONE I need a passport and a social security number. The name is Bob Talent.

He pulls a pen from the bouncer and a saviette from the table. He scribbles "BOB TALENT" as he continues into phone.

CAESAR(CONT'D) Where do you come from?

VOICE ON PHONE Does it matter?

CAESAR (into phone) Yes, mister Talent it does matter.

VOICE ON PHONE Not to me.

CAESAR Okay. I'll figure some place I guess.

The phone goes dead. On the saviette he writes UTAH.

INT. AUTO SHOP - DAY

Back to Present. Caesar is sitting on the chair now. Ice on his black eye.

BREAKYOURFACE Do you have the number?

Caesar gets out the drawer on his desk, searches for the saviette he wrote on thirteen months ago.

INT. GREAT NECKS RECEPTION - DAY

Detective Shawn approaches Melissa.

SHAWN L.A.P.D. I'm here to speak with mister Morgan.

MELISSA

Okay.

She dials her office phone.

MELISSA (into phone) Some cop is here to see you. Alright.

She hangs up, stands.

MELISSA

Come with me.

Shawn follows Melissa through a long office hallway.

INT. AUTO SHOP - DAY

Caesar finds the saviette. There's a phone number written down on it. He holds it out for Breakyourface.

BREAKYOURFACE What happened next.

INT. AUTO SHOP - DAY(-THIRTEEN MONTHS EARLIER-)

SLOW MOTION -- THE DOOR PUSHES OPEN AND OUR P.O.V. WHOEVER WE ARE ENTERS STRAIGHT TO THE GLOOMY GUY ON THE COUNTER.

GLOOMY GUY

Can I help you?

No answer. We instead look towards a BOUNCER standing on a door leading to another room. The bouncer nods for us and we come his way as he opens the door to:

ANOTHER ROOM: Our P.O.V. enters to find CAESAR CAPELLA at his desk.

CAESAR

Sit, please.

Sit.

CAESAR

Bob Talent, right? I'll have your documents ready in five days.

REVEAL: BOB TALENT(25), smart guy in a good suit, blonde head, manicured nails. To a very very good eye this guy resembles Jeff.

He removes a brown envelope of money from his jacket and puts it on the table.

BOB TALENT(CONT'D) Make it three. I'll need a driver's license too.

CAESAR (eyes in the envelop) Hope it's all accounted for.

BOB TALENT Ahundred bucks plus.

Caesar grins.

FLASH!! BOB'S ID PHOTO IS TAKEN.

INT. AUTO SHOP - DAY(-THREE-)

ANOTHER ROOM: At his desk, Caesar hands over the documents to Bob Talent.

CAESAR Just the way you said.

Then hands over another envelop.

What's this?

CAESAR An after sale product. Your birth certificate.

Bob smiles. He'd forgotten this. He pulls out the document and his smile fades.

BOB TALENT Emerich? Who asked for a middle name?

CAESAR Most folks from Utah have one.

BOB TALENT

Utah?

BOB TALENT You're a brand new product in town, Mister Bob Emerich Talent.

Bob grins, appreciating Caesar's genius.

INT. AUTO SHOP - DAY

Back to Present. Breakyourface cocks his head in disbelief and Duckett holds his finger even closer to the trigger. Tough eyes in contact with Caesar.

> BREAKYOURFACE I don't believe you.

> > CAESAR

He never mentioned his real name.

Breakyourface laughs dazedly. He believes the guy. Gestures for Duckett to loosen up. Caesar releases a loud exhale.

He picks a serviette from the table and hands it to Breakyourface: to wipe the blood on his suit. Breakyourface drops the serviette on the dead bouncer as they exit:

BREAKYOURFACE

Clean your mess.

INT. MICHAEL MORGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Haphazard. The room resembles a giant printery itself, desks full of scripts.

Shawn comes in to find Michael Morgan lying on the couch with his eyes closed, earpiece in its rightful position.

SHAWN Mister Morgan? He doesn't turn:

SHAWN(CONT'D) Detective Shawn. L.A.P.D. I'm here to ask you a few questions about Jeff Hopeful.

MICHAEL MORGAN I have watched his news more times than I have about my latest movie.

He turns in a careerist's manner, sits upright.

MICHAEL MORGAN Find yourself a seat, detective Shawn.

SHAWN

Thanks.

Shawn piles the fifty scripts spread in the only small chair on top of the other. He sits with one butt, across from the couch, his one hand preventing Morgan's scripts from falling.

> MICHAEL MORGAN What do you want to know?

Shawn holds out Jeff's picture. Michael takes it.

SHAWN(CONT'D) Have you met?

MICHAEL MORGAN With this guy?

Michael recollects his memories...

EXT. GREAT NECKS BUILDING - DAY(-SIXTEEN MONTHS LATER-)

Jeff waits at a distance from the main entrance. He is holding his script while sipping a non-branded soda.

The doors of the building open. Michael Morgan emerges out with his assistant. He is talking on a wireless earpiece. They walk down the steps to his waiting Sport ride. Jeff notices and follows.

> MICHAEL MORGAN (into earpiece) I'll grant you a single idiot but is off my set the moment he screws up. No, no, no, no, that won't work. I'm meeting the money men this afternoon and if that script is not the best --

JEFF Mister Morgan? Michael turns; eyes on Jeff.

MICHAEL MORGAN(CONT'D) (into earpiece) No business.

They enter the car and drive away. Jeff gazes the car as it disappears.

INT. MICHAEL MORGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Back to Present. Michael gives back the picture to detective Shawn.

MICHAEL MORGAN(CONT'D) No. We never met.

SHAWN He was one of the entrants in the submission window you opened last year.

MICHAEL MORGAN So they say.

SHAWN

Do you think Talent's winning might have evoked Jeff to kill him?

MICHAEL MORGAN

You're misinformed, detective. Bob Talent's script was hand delivered by his manager. It wasn't part of the submitted crap. None of those scripts you're holding is worth five million bucks.

SHAWN Thank you for that correction. Um. Bob Talent's manager... who's that?

MICHAEL MORGAN Sharon Kendrik.

SHAWN Sharon Kendrik.

MICHAEL MORGAN

Yeah.

When Shawn lets go of the scripts, to grab a pen from his pocket, the whole lot falls down to the floor, disaster.

INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - DAY

Carlie is behind her computer when detective Storm walks in talking to Payne.

DETECTIVE STORM Any international bank accounts?

DETECTIVE PAYNE

None.

CARLIE

Guys? You gonna want to hear this.

They crouch over to her desk as she turns away from the computer.

CARLIE

Bob Talent was born thirteen months ago.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Thirteen months?

CARLIE

He had no records whatsover. No finger print matches, no DNA, no social security number until thirteen months back and his picture still doesn't have a match even with Interpol databases.

DETECTIVE PAYNE (jokingly) Do you believe in aliens?

CARLIE Gimme one reason not to.

DETECTIVE STORM The fact that his neighbor saw Jeff Hopeful dragging his body out of the house.

DETECTIVE PAYNE (re: Carlie) Aliens die too, right?

DETECTIVE STORM He changed his name.

CARLIE A common vice in Hollywood. How did you know?

DETECTIVE STORM We have no other hypothesis for his mystery being right now.

DETECTIVE PAYNE (assertively; quietly) Alien.

Carlie laughs.

DETECTIVE STORM(CONT'D) (re: Payne) I need you to trace Bob Talent back to where he started.

DETECTIVE PAYNE That could take "thirteen months".

DETECTIVE STORM Do it, even if it takes you ten years watching a million hours of street surveillance just to spot him.

Payne hangs his head.

EXT. JUNKYARD - DAY

Jeff trudges toward a dumped BOXBODY, enters into the back seat.

INT. BOXBODY - DAY

He unwraps the stained cloth on his bad wound painfully, picks a rough paper on the car's floor. He squeezes the paper until softened.

He uses the paper to wipe blood plasma off his wound carefully, lies in seat and covers his face with the cap, falls asleep.

EXT. BOXBODY - NIGHT

Jeff stirs. He lurches out of the car.

EXT. LAZARUS' HOUSE - DAY

Jeff knocks on the door reluctantly. The door opens and Lazarus appears.

LAZARUS Jeff? Man you look like shit.

JEFF Your girlfriend?

LAZARUS She's out of town, why?

JEFF (coming in) I'm in great trouble.

INT. LAZARUS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Laz slams the door behind him. In great terror.

LAZARUS(CONT'D) I know... Your image is all over the media for killing a writer.

JEFF

That's not true.

LAZARUS Where have you been the past one year and very many months?

JEFF It's a long story. I need your immediate help right now, Lazarus.

LAZARUS (your asking too much) What do you want?

JEFF Look out the window.

Laz doesn't. He watches his back.

LAZARUS What's there?

JEFF I'm no gonna hurt you know that.

LAZARUS I don't know anything.

JEFF

I didn't kill any writer. You should know that of all people.

He wants to believe him.

LAZARUS

Okay.(but)What's out the window. Can I look out through the keyhole at least? I mean, there could be some sniper waiting to smash my head.

Jeff chuckles.

LAZARUS

What?

JEFF I didn't know you were this a chicken. Just look out and tell me what you see.

Laz takes a peek through the keyhole to see $\ensuremath{\mathsf{--}}$

A STATION WAGON STOPPING NEARBY:

JEFF It's been on my tail the whole day.

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Zodiac speaks on phone.

ZODIAC I have my eyes on him.

BREAKYOURFACE(V.O) Don't loose him. He'll lead us to the writer.

INT. LAZARUS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Laz lifts his head off the hole. Towards Jeff.

LAZARUS Call the cops... Said you never murdered the guy.

JEFF

I can't.

LAZARUS

Why?

JEFF It's, complicated. The least you know about this, Lazarus the better. Trust me.

LAZARUS What'd you want me to do?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Lazarus nonchalantly walks on the street dressed in Jeff's cloths, under a hooded coat. THE STATION WAGON IS SLOWLY TRAILING HIM.

A POLICE OFFICER on a PHONE BOOTH notices the blood stains on Laz's shirt, approaches him suspiciously.

> POLICE OFFICER Excuse me. Are you all right?

Lazarus points to the direction of the station wagon as he speaks to the cop.

LAZARUS(CONT'D) Uh, yeah. I just dropped my niece's rabbit to the vet clinic over there. LAZARUS(CONT'D) Then helped the doc with a dog operation. I'm a veterinary student.

POLICE OFFICER

Oh.

When the cop turns to see a VET CLINIC, Zodiac races the wagon past the two in fright.

The officer lightens up, mesmerized as Laz extends a hand with his eyes on the receding wagon.

LAZARUS(CONT'D) Thanks for the marvellous job you do to make our streets a better place, officer...

INT. LAZARUS'S HOUSE - SHOWER - NIGHT

Jeff washes up. Cleans the dirty wound with cottonwool grimacing in pain.

He leans back quietly. Lets himself free as the sprinkler does its job continuously.

INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - NIGHT

At his desk, Payne yawns as he stirs a shitty cup of coffee in his front. A piece of donut is on the same table.

On his computer, he's watching several hours of street footage from archives, various days from different P.O.V.s; Outside "SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT" and "BOB'S HOUSE". Date and Time stamps keep changing.

INT. LAZARUS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lazarus bumps in beaming.

LAZARUS I did it. Jeff?

Laz moves through his entire house calling for Jeff! Jeff is a long way gone. Laz's pride turns into a great disappointment.

He sits on his bed hardly believing Jeff never murdered the writer in question.

EXT. BUS(MOVING) - DAWN

Jeff camouflages inside this sparsely occupied commuter vehicle. The bus passes a "CALIFORNIA WISHES YOU A SAFE JOURNEY" sign.

He looks back reflecting on the lot he has left behind regrettably.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

The torched lamborghini is discovered by the police. Detective Storm, Payne study the site's perimeter, photos being taken. A dozen reporters are nearby spreading the news.

Payne holds the wolf's detached limb, turns to Storm.

DETECTIVE PAYNE What could have blown its limb off?

DETECTIVE STORM

I have no idea.

Carlie and Shawn look inside the car's trunk. Burned Jewry, watches, burnt suits, etc.

Her hand moves through the stuff. Her face asks a millions questions and so do we: "What the fuck?" "Where's Talent's body?". She looks over the car but other detectives haven't seen any dead body yet.

> SHAWN Looks like he took out the body first.

Storm turns to the two.

DETECTIVE STORM What's in the trunk?

CARLIE

A mess.

A TV REPORTER suddenly crosses over to Storm with her microphone.

TV REPORTER Is this the site where Bob Talent was torched, detective?

DETECTIVE STORM We can neither deny nor confirm, woman! This is a crime scene.

He waves the camera away none-too-pleased. The reporter heads out of the police line continuing into her camera.

TV REPORTER(CONT'D) You heard it yourself. Could that be the end of Bob Talent's blossoming career? It's all left to the police behind me to answer...

INT. BREAKYOURFACE'S OFFICE - DAY

A GUY's head is jammed between Duckett's knees as Breakyourface kicks the crap out of his face. Stakes of cash are spread over the table after being counted.

Breakyourface nods for Duckett to let go of the guy's head after multiple kicks.

Blood from the guy's mouth, nose bleeding, some black eyes. Breakyourface grabs the guy's hair for a close eye contact.

> BREAKYOURFACE (to the guy) Your his messenger?

The guy nods.

BREAKYOURFACE Deliver my message. Tell the cocksucker he pays thirty grand a week not twenty.

The guy gets up and stumbles away, past Zodiac who's approaching a raging boss, now cleaning his hands in a bowel on the table.

BREAKYOURFACE (to Zodiac) Where's he?

ZODIAC

I lost him.

BREAKYOURFACE (casually) You lost him.

Breakyourface dries his hands with a towel -- suddenly strikes Zodiac across his face.

BREAKYOURFACE THEN FIND HIM! KEEP YOUR FUCKIN' EYES ON HIM I SAID!

Zodiac heads out like a fool.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT - DAY

Detective Payne walks in to Parker, working behind her computer.

PARKER

Can I help you?

DETECTIVE PAYNE (flashes his budge) LAPD. She knows why he's here.

PARKER I honestly don't know much.

DETECTIVE PAYNE

Who does?

PARKER Miss Kendrik. But she just went out for a meeting.

DETECTIVE PAYNE

I can wait.

PARKER

Be my guest.

She points over to the waiting bench.

INT/EXT. BUS(MOVING) - DAY

A view from far. Old structures come to life. Not a city but definitely smaller than a county. Jeff's eyes navigate from the bus's interior out the window.

People are gazing the bus hopelessly. A small market with no buyers. Children playing alongside the gravel road.

The bus drives past a teenage couple quarreling. We can't hear what they say but this intense moment seems to have captured Jeff's attention, as if reminding him of his own life.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT - DAY

Detective Payne yawns, exhausted for over-waiting. Parker notices.

PARKER There's a coffee shop across the street, detective Payne.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Maybe later thanks. Parker, right?

PARKER

Yes.

DETECTIVE PAYNE How close were you to mister Talent?

PARKER

Just friends.

DETECTIVE PAYNE What was his relationship like with other people? PARKER

Like I said, detective my position here restricts me from much interaction with our talent.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Your Talent--?

PARKER Hollywood's term for a client.

DETECTIVE PAYNE

Oh.

At this time Sharon Kendrik walks in...

PARKER There she comes. Guess your persistence has profited after all.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

Executive with a touch of class. Detective Payne enters right behind a 40-year-old, no-nonsense SHARON KENDRIK.

Sharon kendrik takes a sit behind her desk as detective Payne still marvels about the office.

> KENDRIK Sit anywhere you feel comfort, detective.

> > DETECTIVE PAYNE

Thank you.

Payne takes the couch.

DETECTIVE PAYNE(CONT'D) My sincere condolences for your loss, miss Kendrik.

KENDRIK I appreciate that.

DETECTIVE PAYNE How did you meet Bob Talent?

KENDRIK He met me. Right here in my office.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT - DAY(-13 MONTHS EARLIER-)

Bob Talent walks in: towards Parker with a good backpack, full of life.

BOB TALENT Hello Parker.

PARKER Hey. Have we--?

BOB TALENT We gonna be friends.

PARKER (she smiles; "odd") O-kay. How can I help you then?

BOB TALENT I'm here for Sharon Kendrik.

PARKER She's expecting you?

BOB TALENT Bryan Pike recommended her agency.

PARKER Bryan Pike. As in the movie producer?

His eyes scream YES!!

PARKER Please hold right there.

She picks the phone, dials.

PARKER (into phone) Some gentleman -

BOB TALENT (whispers) Bob Talent.

She grins with a questioning look.

PARKER(CONT'D) (into phone) Is here to see you. No. He's a Bryan Pike type. Alright.

Off the phone:

PARKER She's all yours.

Bob knows where Kendrik's office is. How? The same question we ask ourselves.

PARKER(CONT'D) Wait, is Bob Talent your real name?

He nods.

It's unique.

BOB TALENT Gracious, mademoiselle.

He makes a quick bow and continues for Kendrik's office as Parker smiles.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

TIME CUT TO:Sharon Kendrik reading the last page of Bob's script; Bob quietly watching her.

KENDRIK

"Fade out".

She sighs - a sigh of satisfaction not exhaustion. Puts the script back to the table and elevates her eyes to Bob.

KENDRIK I've heard all the good names of Hollywood but not Bob Talent.

BOB TALENT Bob Talent is a brand new product in town.

KENDRIK

I like it.

BOB TALENT (a bit out of character) BINGO! Sorry.

KENDRIK Go ahead. I love to see my clients scream out loud.

BOB TALENT

Client--?

KENDRIK Isn't that why you're here?

BOB TALENT Of course. I'll definitely scream loud. Just not on my first date.

Kendrik smiles for a moment. Then:

KENDRIK I'll email the contract so you'd go through it before signing.

BOB TALENT

Thanks, again.

They shake hands. Bob Talent walks out -- Kendrik stands.

INT. MICHAEL MORGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sharon Kendrik walks in to find Michael Morgan behind his desk reading a script. She's holding Bob Talent's script in her hand.

MICHAEL MORGAN

Sharon?

KENDRIK Drop everything else you're reading.

She drops the script to his front. Michael closes the script in hands -- opens the one just dropped on his table.

MICHAEL MORGAN "Quite a conundrum". What's this?

KENDRIK A fast truck to your next destination.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

Bob Talent signs the management agreement in the presence of the company LAWYER. Bob doesn't have one.

KENDRIK You didn't invite your lawyer?

BOB TALENT I hate third parties in my success.

Kendrik and her lawyer smile.

BOB TALENT I could use Parker though.

KENDRIK Do you trust her?

BOB TALENT

I like her.

KENDRIK Already? Is that acceptable, Mister Weber?

LAWYER If she likes him too. It's okay.

Sharon dials her office phone.

KENDRIK (into phone) Could you come in here for a minute?

PARKER

Yes, mom?

KENDRIK Mister Talent has chosen you for a witness. Can you do that?

BOB TALENT (for Parker; quietly) Please say yes.

He winks for Parker -- she smiles.

PARKER(CONT'D)

Of course.

BOB TALENT Done. I officially have a witness.

The lawyer extends the contract to Parker who already knows where to sign, signs and gives it back. The lawyer puts out another copy to Parker.

LAWYER

And this.

She signs.

BOB TALENT (for Parker) Thanks.

PARKER

You're welcome.

Parker heads back to her post. Kendrik stands.

KENDRIK Guess we're done here?

LAWYER

Of course.

The lawyer gives Bob his copy of the agreement.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Bob Talent sits on the couch for a moment. Quietly. Then lies on his back gazing the ceiling - just the way Jeff does.

INT. MICHAEL MORGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sharon Kendrik waits as Michael Morgan takes his time feeding two "ugly" puppies. Then comes back to his desk.

MICHAEL MORGAN (re: dogs) Most people think I don't care.

KENDRIK

I know you do.

MICHAEL MORGAN I bought them from a pauper. He was yet to feast on them, huh?

KENDRIK (fairly mocking him) Oh hail to the savior.

MICHAEL MORGAN (back to business) Where in hell did you dig up this guy?

KENDRIK He found me actually.

MICHAEL MORGAN Five hundred thousand right now.

KENDRIK Quite a price for ripe tomatoes you know. We're talking a blockbuster that's going to make you five hundred millions, Michael.

MICHAEL MORGAN I'm no gonna sign a million bucks to a "no-one-knows" writer, Kendrik.

KENDRIK I'm actually going for more.

MICHAEL MORGAN Are you kidding me?

She's not.

KENDRIK

You're my favorite choice, Michael simply because this is your kind of movie. Plus it's now five years since you delivered. Now is your time to step back at the helm.

Michael takes a great thought.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

Back to Present. Detective Payne swallows a smile inquisitively.

Kendrik elevates her eyes from a document on the table to the TV screen DISSOLVING TO:

INT. MICHAEL MORGAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT(-12 MONTHS EARLIER-)

EYES ON THE TV SCREEN: Sharon and Michael enjoy TRACY HOFFMAN anchoring in front of Great Necks Productions building.

TRACY HOFFMAN ... Michael Morgan just announced a green light to the film's production six hours into signing a whooping five million dollars check making...

INSERT BOB'S PICTURE OVER HOFFMAN'S VOICE:

TRACY HOFFMAN(CONT'D) Bob Talent the highest paid new-comer in the screen writing business.

Michael Morgan turns the TV off.

MICHAEL MORGAN I love the way she brought out the new-comer bit. It's gonna make people curious about this movie.

KENDRIK And you a grand fortune, my friend.

EXT. BOB'S HOME - DAY

Establishing. A fine home in a friendly neighborhood. Sharon Kendrik's Audi pulls into the house's frontyard.

INT. AUDI - CONTINUOUS

Bob in the front-passenger seat, Parker in the back seat and Kendrik behind the wheels.

KENDRIK Quite a home, huh?

BOB TALENT This is where you live?

KENDRIK No, mister Talent. This is where you will live.

BOB TALENT

What?

INT. BOB'S HOME - DAY

Brilliantly furnished. Bob is frozen right behind the front door. He's not used to staying in decent places.

Parker sets the wine bottle on the table as Kendrik turns to see; Bob unbelievably shake his head about the house's interior decor.

KENDRIK

Come on, Bob.

BOB TALENT This? The whole house is mine?

KENDRIK You deserve every little bit of it.

BOB TALENT (for the house) Where have you been all my life?

POP!! The wine bottle opens as the three laugh out loud. Parker pours wine in the glasses while Bob and Kendrik take seats.

Bob looks at the expensive bottle of wine, then the glass in his hands. He still can't believe it's him. Kendrik and Parker are used to this kind of stuff.

> BOB TALENT Save my wicked hands, oh God.

He sips the wine as Kendrik and Parker laugh.

INT. BOB'S HOME(BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Bob sits on a well-made bed. Alone. He strokes the expensive duvet for a moment. Trying to believe the good life.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

We find Kendrik casing some documents while talking to Bob.

KENDRIK Have you written for TV before?

BOB TALENT No. Is it different from a film script?

KENDRIK Not quite. Except the whole lot of work you deliver in a single day.

BOB TALENT I can handle the challenge. I'll setup your first meeting with a TV producer then.

BOB TALENT

Thanks.

Kendrik starts for the door.

INT. TV EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Bob and Kendrik sit on the couch across from the TV EXECUTIVE behind his clean desk. They are concluding the meeting.

TV EXECUTIVE Tell me one last thing you'll add to my team.

BOB TALENT Aptitude. I posses gifted hands that deliver before the preferred deadline.

Kendrik looks at the executive like Bob just proved a point.

TV EXECUTIVE Alright. You have the job.

BOB TALENT

Really?

KENDRIK He'll process that fact in a moment. Thank you for seeing us on a short notice, mister Trent.

They trade hands.

INT. LAMBORGHINI SHOWROOM - DAY

Bob walks to a salesman in a good suit. They shake hands. Talk briefly. Then move through the room studying different car models.

EXT. LAMBORGHINI SHOWROOM - DAY

A yellow lamborghini races out of the showroom into a street. Bob is riding it screaming! He just paid for it.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT - DAY

Bob walks towards Parker swinging his new keys. He is extremely overjoyed.

BOB TALENT Do you have friends, Parker? PARKER

Yeah. Why?

INT. BOB'S HOME - DAY

A FULL HOUSE PARTY !! People dance, sing, drink.

Over to the couch, Bob and Parker are watching on as people spoil themselves in fun. Parker downs glasses of wine into her guts like she's sipping water.

> PARKER Aren't you gonna drink with me?

BOB TALENT I hate the guy I become when I drink.

PARKER Then why did you host the party?

BOB TALENT To be poor is not a good fate.

She smiles, and downs another glass.

EXT. BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

With a few drinks on his head, Bob trudges up the stairs towards his bedroom as the tireless party goers still have fun...

INT. BOB'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

He picks his phone from his jacket. Punches some numbers on it and listens. The call goes through but before it's answered -- Bob hangs up.

He lies by himself quietly; not happily, listening to the resonant sounds banging from downstairs.

Off his look, something seems to be bothering him. He is alone.

INT. TV WRITER'S ROOM - DAY

A group of writers is exchanging ideas. Bob is inside the same room but absent minded.

He's pretty much taken up by his thoughts. Not contributing a word.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Bob walks in all exhausted; not by work but his thoughts. He pours for himself a glass of scotch -- sits on the couch and sighs first.

He gazes the glass for awhile, releases a loud exhale again and drinks the scotch. He leans back for a moment thinking. He stands up determined and proceeds to his bedroom.

INT. BOB'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bob pulls out a bag from underneath the bed. Pulls out a bunch of old pictures.

Happy people in the pictures of Jeff with his family. "A woman of nineteen smiling in Jeff's hands". Bob looks at these photos obsessively. "Why does he posses Jeff's picture?"

He puts the pictures back into the bag after a long gaze. He pulls out from the same bag a cellphone. He switches the phone on. There's a voice mail on it:

WOMAN(V.O) Hello? Your mother died. She was buried two weeks ago.(to herself)I don't even think this number is still in use.

The phone goes dead. Bob freezes. "He seems to have loved whoever's mother dearly". He smashes the cellphone to the floor, cries, sobs, yells.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

RAINING! Flowers in hands, under the umbrella, Bob approaches a new tombstone.

He lays the flowers on the stone and kneels there for a moment, not minding his good suit.

BOB TALENT So sorry I skipped your last wedding.

He strokes the tombstone with his fingers gently, kisses it then walks away, truly heart-broken.

INT. BOB'S HOME(LIVING) - NIGHT

Socking knees, Bob pours himself a glass of wine. He gulps it and refills the glass immediately. He gulps the drink and refills the glass -- drinks until he passes out.

INT. BOB'S HOUSE(STAIRCASE) - DAY

Bob drops there drunk. He buzzes continuous snores instantly.

INT. BOB'S HOME(BEDROOM) - DAY

On a small table, Bob's cellphone rings. "KENDRIK CALLING". The phone rings until it stops - adding a "sixth" missed call on it.

Down to the floor, the smashed cellphone still lies.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

Kendrik puts her phone to the table. Across to her desk is the TV EXECUTIVE looking intense.

KENDRIK This is not like him.

TV EXECUTIVE What's like him? You told me this guy was a miracle, Sharon but he is a terrible liability.

KENDRIK I'll talk to him.

TV EXECUTIVE Don't bother. We already decided to drop him.

KENDRIK Then why are you here?

TV EXECUTIVE

To inform you in person that we're pressing charges against him.

KENDRIK

We don't have to take it this far, Trent. This will trash my reputation.

TV EXECUTIVE

Your client will trash your reputation, Sharon not us. He's done with mine already.

KENDRIK

Lemme speak with him first. He'll deliver I promise. He's a really good writer.

TV EXECUTIVE

TV EXECUTIVE (cont'd) him to bring back the network's money instead or he'll face our lawyers in court. God save your agency too.

He walks out mad.

INT. BOB'S HOME(TOILET) - DAY

Bob pukes his guts almost out. His nose looking terrible, as if to detach off his face.

He slowly walks into the shower - head aching like hell, and rinses his mouth.

He trudges back into the living room and pours himself another shot. He sips.

EXT. BOB'S HOME - DAY

Kendrik's Audi enters the premises, stops. She steps out and heads to the door.

She knocks on the door multiple times but with no answer. Pulls out her cellphone and calls. It goes straight to voice mail.

She peeks inside through the curtain slats to see -- the entire house messed up.

KENDRIK What's going on with you?

She looks worried, goes back to her car and drives away.

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Bob puts a chunk of money on the table. Fellow players gaze him surprisingly.

PLAYER #1 Are you seriously staking ahundred grand?

BOB TALENT It's a stake when you're gambling. I came here to win.

PLAYER #2 (jokingly. for Bob) May the loosing odds be in your favor, pal.

The cards slide over the table. And the game begins. Critical. Tense. Exciting, expressions from the four players. TIME CUT TO:-- tension between the two. Player #1 observing the stake of cash on the table. Bob is looking at his cards. It's Bob's turn to touch down.

He opens the cards and the fellow players scream! A scream of joy as Player #1 pulls the cash towards him.

PLAYER #1 I told you, man. Nobody rules over me in this place. Do you wanna go again?

BOB TALENT My money is my best friend.

As Bob pulls out another bundle of cash from his jacket --we:

CUT TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Bob spreading money all over a stripper dancing over his table as he sips a bottle of martini.

INT. BOB'S HOME(BEDROOM) - DAY

Bob stirs. Two naked girls are sleeping by his sides. He's partly drunk but needs to touch his makeup. He heads for the shower.

INT. STREET BASEMENT - NIGHT

DIMLY LIT:--

Bob walks in to an off-rule fighting taking place. Twenty or more goons cheering -- MONEY EXCHANGING HANDS.

He gazes as the two guys in RING punch the crap out themselves; maliciously. Bob waves cash out of his pockets screaming:

BOB TALENT Fifty thousand bucks to the fucking bastard whose nose breaks off first.

The fighting goes bizarre!

EXT. PARK - DAY

Bob Talent, now stressed, is arguing with his FINANCIAL CONTROLLER(40) on a bench.

BOB TALENT This is my money we're talking about. FINANCIAL CONTROLLER And this is what you hired me for. You're running bankrupt, mister Talent.

BOB TALENT Bob Talent would never go broke.

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER Not as per your current bank statement. You have less than fifty grand left in your account. Not enough to sustain your lavish lifestyle and that's not the terrible news.

BOB TALENT What'd you mean?

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER You haven't paid your taxes yet. IRS will be on your dirty-tail soon and you'll have nothing to say. You will end up like Wesley Snipes, Bob. You're going to jail.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

Bob Talent, palish, walks into Sharon's office. She's pretty mad at him.

KENDRIK Where have you been?

BOB TALENT I lost my mother.

KENDRIK

Should I cry for your loss? You lost the writing job with the network too and you're looking at a good amount of years in prison if you don't take back the money by the close of this month. You can't afford to mess up now that your movie premiere is coming.

BOB TALENT I'll take care of it.

KENDRIK

How?

He never answers, just walks out.

KENDRIK(CONT'D)

Talent!

INT. BOB'S HOME(LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Bob sits back in the couch reading his bank statement. He cringes in disbelief when his finger tip hits "CURRENT BALANCE. \$49,023US. He silently regrets his past financial behavior.

INT. TV EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Bob Talent enters to find the TV-Executive and Sharon Kendrik already in the room. He sets the TWO BRIEFCASES in his hands on Executive's table.

KENDRIK

What's that?

BOB TALENT

His money.

Bob slides the briefcases over to the executive -- who opens one briefcase "FULL" of cash. He looks at Bob, his face with a million questions.

BOB TALENT You wanna count it?

The executive throws an eye towards Kendrik, unbelievably. Out of words. Sharon Kendrik is lost in her own imagination.

EXT. TV BUILDING - DAY

Kendrik scurries out of the building grilling Bob.

KENDRIK Do you mind telling where you got all that money?

BOB TALENT

My account.

She grabs Bob's hand and they come to a sudden halt.

KENDRIK(CONT'D)

Don't you ever dare lie to me again, Talent. You have less than fifty grand in your savings.

BOB TALENT

Are you spying on me?

KENDRIK

I'm your manager which partly means spying on you. And you're going to tell me exactly where you found that money. Right now.

BOB TALENT Lemme worry about my personal life. KENDRIK

What affects your personal life affects my business. Is there anything you want me to know?

Bob nearly breaks. But:

BOB TALENT

Absolutely not.

He starts moving. She didn't believe him.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

In thoughts, Bob sips the last shot. He places a bank note on top of the glass and walks out.

EXT. SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT - DAY(-MOVIE PREMIERE DAY-)

Bob pushes through a clamoring crowd of reporters, elbow-to-elbow, microphones, cameras, flash lights, all on him, asking about the movie's premiere. He eventually succeeds into:

INT. SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT - DAY

Bob enters into a bright ambience inside. People moving through the room. Parker is talking into her phone as we hear another phone ringing in a different room.

PARKER

(into phone) I can't guarantee your meeting today. Why? Because she's very busy. Busy with Michael Morgan at the golden age theatre right now. The writer is our client. Yes. Thanks.

She hangs up, very stressed.

PARKER

Ugh!

BOB TALENT

You okay?

PARKER Haven't had my ears off the stupid phone since morning.

BOB TALENT Are always premieres this crazy?

PARKER

Yet to begin.

She notices: Bob is a bit out of his usual character, more of a meek now except the bold makeup on his face. Something

PARKER

Are you okay? You need to be in your best moods you know. It's your show tonight.

He wants to believe her.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK MANAGEMENT - DAY

Back to Present. Detective Payne writes down some notes as Kendrik is ready to depart.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Do you have any idea where he came from, his family maybe or a friend?

KENDRIK

No.

DETECTIVE PAYNE You're basically telling me that you guys don't mind your clients backgrounds, right?

KENDRIK The movie business gives no damn about your past, detective only your future.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Did you bother find out where mister Talent got the money he paid the Network from?

KENDRIK My role was to handle over the check not to baby sit him.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Isn't that what management means?

KENDRIK

We're done here.

Kendrik stands.

EXT. LAZARUS' HOUSE - DAY

Zodiac approaches the front door. He pulls from his bad jacket a silencer and screws it on his pistol.

He gets a flat knife from the rear pocket of his pants. As he does so, his ID flies into a FLOWER POT on the porch. He never sees that. He uses the knife to pick the door's lock.

Tenuously but steadily enters the house, his gun taking a first peek inside. He pushes the door shut behind him.

The commuter bus stops at the POST OFFICE. Not more than a single old building with a bench outside.

Jeff steps out of the bus very new to the town. He has no luggage, just him. He looks around figuring where to start. He heads towards the business side, following most people.

INT. DINER - DAY

Jeff takes a seat. A WAITRESS approaches, places the old menu on the table and waits for his order. Jeff remains still. His mind away from him. Until:

WAITRESS Are you okay?

JEFF (oblivious) What?

WAITRESS Do you want to order...?

JEFF Yeah. Anything for five bucks?

WAITRESS Five bucks? Sure.

She starts toward the counter wondering.

MONTAGE -- OF GOING NOWHERE

-- Jeff picks the last candy-stick from the plate and chews it sparingly.

-- Different diners enter -- eat -- and go but Jeff remains still.

-- The waitress clears all the tables except Jeff's.

EXT. LAZARUS' HOUSE - EVENING

Opheriah inserts a key in an already opened door. Looks suspiciously with a small suitcase by her side.

INT. LAZARUS'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Opheriah steps inside the living room quietly. No one is there. She continues into the BEDROOM:

OPHERIAH

Lazarus? Honey I'm home.

Lazarus is not in the bedroom. She sighs a relief unbelievably. Undresses. Wraps a towel around herself and heads for a shower.

INT. LAZARUS' HOUSE - SHOWER - CONTINUOUS

She steps in to see Lazarus lying dead in a pool of his own blood. A bullet in his head. A folded note in his mouth. Opheriah SCREAMS!!

INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - EVENING

At Payne's desk, detective Storm and Carlie enter to find Payne printing a picture of BREAKYOURFACE'S STATION WAGON. Storm picks the paper from the printer's tray.

> DETECTIVE PAYNE (re: photo) It's registered to Damon Breakyourface, a loan shark downtown with a very long list of crimes.

> DETECTIVE STORM How's he connected to the current case?

DETECTIVE PAYNE I have spotted two of his men (displays their pictures)Duckett and Zodiac in that car; either outside Bob's home or Kendrik's office fifteen times last month.

CARLIE

Do you think he has something to do with Talent's murder?

DETECTIVE PAYNE

Considering Bob's past financial behavior I'd say yeah. He might have borrowed from the guy and when he failed to pay --

CARLIE He sent Hopeful to finish him.

DETECTIVE PAYNE

There.

Storm studies Zodiac and Duckett's images quietly, but thinking. Then:

DETECTIVE STORM Why would Breakyourface have these roughnecks around him and then send Hopeful to kill the writer? It doesn't add-up to me.

Payne just realizes that.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Maybe he didn't want the writer to know it were him.

DETECTIVE STORM Bob would be dead anyways, does it matter?

Storm's cellphone RINGS! He picks it from his jacket and answers.

DETECTIVE STORM (into phone) Storm. Where?

INT. LAZARUS' HOUSE - SHOWER - NIGHT

Detective Shawn draws a curtain for Storm and Payne to see Laz's body. Untouched. Shawn holds out a glove and Storm takes it.

Hand in a glove, Storm unfolds the note from Lazarus' mouth. "BOB TALENT" is written on it. They all look confused.

> DETECTIVE PAYNE (re: Storm) What do you think?

DETECTIVE STORM I don't know what to think right now.

SHAWN Looks like some kind of a message.

DETECTIVE STORM Yeah but by who? To who?

None has the answer.

INT. LAZARUS' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carlie speaks to a terrorized Opheriah.

OPHERIAH I went out for just two days and found him dead.

She sobs. Carlie doesn't know what to say. Except:

CARLIE

I'm really sorry.

OPHERIAH

What terrible monster did that to him?

Am afraid I can't answer that question right now, Opheriah but I promise we will get him.

Storm, Payne and Shawn proceed out of the bedroom to Carlie and Opheriah. The note in Storm's hand.

DETECTIVE STORM (re: Opheriah) May I have a word?

OPHERIAH

Of course.

She pushes a bit. Storm sits next to her. Shawn and Payne continue outside. Hands out the note to Opheriah.

DETECTIVE STORM(CONT'D) The note from his mouth.

She reads.

OPHERIAH "Bob Talent?" The murdered writer?

In addition to her sorrow, Opheriah is even more confused.

DETECTIVE STORM(CONT'D) Did you know him?

OPHERIAH

No, but Lazarus was friends with that guy being hunted for the writer's murder.

CARLIE

Jeff Hopeful?

OPHERIAH Yeah. Could that bastard have killed my boyfriend too?

Storm has no alternative explanation.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Jeff has not planed to depart yet. ANOTHER WAITRESS comes to him.

ANOTHER WAITRESS We're setting out for dinner.

JEFF

Okay.

He remains intact. She elevates her eyes over to the counter and shrugs for the chef: observing them, as if to say "he's not going anywhere". As the waitress leaves -- a woman walks in: Clearly the woman we earlier saw in Bob's photos except for a few years and more pounds added.

She's SARA ROOMSBURG, 20s, fat but not overweight, not so good-looking but she's a nice one.

Just as Sara sets to sit on a table next to Jeff's - she recognizes him.

SARA

Jeff?

He turns:

JEFF

Sara?

He knows her, too - "this universe loves me". She shifts towards his table.

SARA

Are you okay?

JEFF Why is that the first question everyone in this place asks?

SARA (you look like a sty) Do I have to answer?

JEFF I had an accident.

SARA

(concerned) Oh my god, are you okay?

JEFF Still asking the same question.

SARA This world is very small platform. May I?

Refers to the empty seat on his table.

JEFF

Sure.

Her cellphone RINGS!! As Sara opens her purse to pick out her cellphone -- Jeff sees a small picture of a girl and immediately switches the conversation to her.

JEFF

She's yours?

SARA Yeah. Excuse me. Sara answers the phone as Jeff pulls the picture out of her purse -- and studies it. SARA (into phone) Lora dear. I'm so sorry. I'm not gonna make it tonight. I'll cover the shifts I promise. Thanks. She hangs up. JEFF (eyes on the photo) She's cute. SARA She's Ara. JEFF Do you live with her father? SARA Nope. JEFF Why? You tell me. JEFF You're kidding me. INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - NIGHT

Detective Storm pins a picture of Lazarus on the board. Jeff, Bob Talent, Breakyourface, Zodiac and Duckett's head-shots already there. Storm is tense. Not to anyone in particular. "Maybe Jeff Hopeful."

Detective payne, Shawn and Carlie are sitting on their desks but facing the board.

DETECTIVE STORM(CONT'D) What do we have...? Two dead guys relating to the same killer -

He circles Jeff's picture with a red marker.

DETECTIVE STORM(CONT'D) But lack a clear motive all of us.

Shawn raises his hand, more like an elementary kid.

SHAWN Um. Excuse me, sir. DETECTIVE STORM Yes. Detective Shawn.

SHAWN I wouldn't confirm Lazarus yet basing on the fact that he was good friends with Jeff Hopeful.

DETECTIVE STORM Lazarus failed to help Hopeful on his rent sometime, remember? A madman requires less effort to cast a stone.

CARLIE What about Payne's theory?

DETECTIVE STORM What theory?

CARLIE

That Break - whatever guy could have something to do with this whole conundrum. His guys were stalking Bob Talent.

The rest agree: Storm turns back to the board and studies the whole equation once again.

DETECTIVE STORM These guys were just keeping an eye on Bob.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Aren't we supposed to visit mister face to find out why?

DETECTIVE STORM Carlie and I will do that tomorrow. The two of you proceed with your adventures.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Jeff and Sara emerge out of the door side-by-side arguing but quietly. There's love between these two.

JEFF

I was so --

SARA Transfixed on the illusion of becoming famous, Jeff that you even forgot we had unprotected sex.

JEFF Why didn't you tell me? SARA Why didn't you call me?

JEFF I had no idea. I, I --

SARA

Yeah, right, forget it. She doesn't even know you exist.

JEFF (He halts; she doesn't) Seriously? What'd you tell her about her father?

SARA

The truth.

JEFF (follows) What truth?

SARA

That her father's gone. He'd never be part of our lives. What are you doing in this place anyway?

JEFF I should be asking you the same question, Sara. What's a qualified nurse like you doing in this ramshackled village?

Before Sara can answer... Sounds of a MATCHING BAND pierce the silent streets. People flash out of their old buildings and in just a few minutes the entire trading center is crowded.

Jeff looks a bit confused though enjoying the fun forgetting his miseries for a moment. Sara is overwhelmed by this.

> JEFF What's the fuss about?

SARA The "crimson festival." It's on in five days. It's gonna be great this year.

Huh? Jeff just shrugs.

EXT. SARA'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Establishing. A three roomed structure engulfed by think trees. It's perimeters fenced with flat wood.

Sara's truck stops next to a swing in the cottage's sides. Ready to meet his daughter, Jeff steps out of the truck. A bright but cozy decor of the classics with alphabet posters and colorful wallpapers. Old furniture. Classic books. Metallic plates and porcelain jugs.

Sara enters, Jeff close behind. He wonders about the mysterious equipment inside. Old, some rusty yet still strong...

SARA(CONT'D)

Mommy's home.

ARA, 6-years-old, jolly and unbelievably smart for her age, dashes out of her bedroom armed with a paintbrush.

She's dressed in a stained oversized-shirt. Her maltese running after her - painted pink.

SARA Omigod, honey--?

ARA

We painted her. Pink.

Jeff nearly bursts into a laughter, he swallows it.

JEFF

Impressive.

Ara drills the "grinning-stranger" with a cop eye.

SARA

This is Jeff.

JEFF Your Mother and I --

SARA

Studied together.

His face asks "Really?"

What?

SARA (quietly; for Jeff) Not now.

ARA

SARA(CONT'D) Uh. Say hello to Jeff.

She extends her hand.

ARA Hello, Jeff? JEFF

Hey, Ara.

ARA(CONT'D) What happened to your face?

JEFF

Accident.

ARA

Sorry.

She runs after her dog: towards the bedroom:

ARA(CONT'D) Don't drink and drive next time.

JEFF

I wasn't -

Ara enters.

JEFF

Right.

Sara shrugs as YASMIN(early 20s), Ara's nanny comes out of the same bedroom ready to depart, bag hanging over her shoulder.

SARA Yasmin. So sorry I'm late.

YASMIN It's cool. Our day was fun anyways. Nice seeing you, Jeff.

JEFF Nice seeing you, too, Yasmin.

YASMIN See you tomorrow, guys.

SARA

See you.

Yasmin heads out.

INT. SARA'S HOUSE(LIVING ROOM) - NIGHT

Ready for bed, Sara brings a thick blanket to Jeff. She finds him stroking the couch.

SARA (re: couch) You like it?

JEFF It's a pretty odd fabric in this kind of environment. (sits) I carried it with me from L.A.

JEFF How did you end up here?

SARA

My calling I guess. We had a study tour to this place while I was still in college and found out the health sector was lacking, so, I chose to serve my country here.

JEFF

Wow.

SARA

Which brings me to the same question, Jeff. How did you end up here?

JEFF

(he lies) Adventure maybe. I took the first bus on stage without knowing where I was coming.

SARA Well. I guess that's what they call fate.

She hands over the bedding, stands.

JEFF

Thanks.

SARA (jokingly) Don't get too comfortable.

JEFF

Never.

SARA

Good night.

JEFF

G'night.

She proceeds to her bed smiling. Jeff releases a loud exhale. He has arrived in paradise.

INT. STUNT PERFORMERS CLUB - DAY

It's basically a strip club. Detective Storm enters along Carlie -- dazzles at the strippers for a moment until a humorless bouncer approaches. Yah cops?

DETECTIVE STORM You guessed right. I need your boss.

BOUNCER He's in a very important meeting.

Storm flashes Bob Talent's bank statement in the bouncer's face upside down. Carlie notices.

DETECTIVE STORM(CONT'D) I have a warranty to turn this hell upside down.

BOUNCER

Wait here.

The bouncer proceeds toward A TABLE in the VIP SECTION where:-- BREAKYOURFACE is sitting with another man of his kind. Duckett and Zodiac standing on guard behind him.

A stripper is on top of his table flashing her nude-goodies in their dingy faces.

CARLIE(CONT'D) Isn't that Bob Talent's bank statement?

DETECTIVE STORM He can't read.

CARLIE How did you know?

DETECTIVE STORM I flashed it upside down.

She chuckles. Breakyourface signs for the detectives to approach. He taps the stripper's ass and she comes down the table, points to empty seats and the detectives take them.

BREAKYOURFACE(CONT'D) Detective Harley Storm.

DETECTIVE STORM Must be a tiring business watching all the pussies you have in here.

BREAKYOURFACE Gets better with time.(re: Carlie)You got me a flexible one?

CARLIE

(sarcastic)
I'm terribly expensive for your
kind. Hopefully, if you ever
upgrade.

BREAKYOURFACE I like her already.

He grins. Back to business.

BREAKYOURFACE What brings you here, detectives? I pay my taxes in time.

CARLIE We're here to discuss the writer.

BREAKYOURFACE

The writer?

DETECTIVE STORM The one you murdered remember? Your men right behind you were spotted by my surveillance several times stalking Bob Talent before his death.

BREAKYOURFACE This is what your surveillance weren't able to see.

INT. BREAKYOURFACE'S OFFICE - NIGHT(-THREE MONTHS EARLIER-)

Bob and Breakyourface sit on chairs across from each other. Duckett and Zodiac maintain gloomy faces on their legs.

BOB TALENT

My name --

BREAKYOURFACE I know who you're, Mister Talent. I just wanna know what you are.

BOB TALENT What'd you mean?

BREAKYOURFACE

So many people do things that sabotage not only their relationships but their bodies, and mental capacities, and mostly their lives. Do you read me?

BOB TALENT

("NO") Yeah. BREAKYOURFACE Good. What else do you do for a living?

BOB TALENT Writing is all I do.

BREAKYOURFACE Doesn't sound a profitable business to me.

Bob gives Breakyourface time as he takes a deep thought studying every bit of Bob's face. Then:

BREAKYOURFACE How much are we talking?

BOB TALENT A million bucks. Can you pull that?

BREAKYOURFACE I can pull anything, Bob, but can you pull it back? I really hate my job when it comes to breaking someone's face first.

BOB TALENT I will pay you back.

BREAKYOURFACE Of course you will.

INT. BREAKYOURFACE'S OFFICE - DAY

Back to Present. Detective Storm and Carlie look a little convinced with Breakyourface's story.

CARLIE(CONT'D) Why don't I believe you?

BREAKYOURFACE I'm too a smart businessman to murder my own business, detective.

Storm pulls out Lazarus' picture and drops it on the table. Zodiac cringes a little.

DETECTIVE STORM(CONT'D) What about this guy?

BREAKYOURFACE What about him?

DETECTIVE STORM He was found shot in his house last night. BREAKYOURFACE Isn't that where you come in, detective?

INT. HOSPITAL - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Sara enters to find LORA(mid 20s)taking off her clinical coat. They chat throughout their change of cloths.

SARA

Lora. So sorry am late.

LORA Is sorry becoming your new bestfriend?

SARA

Jeff is here.

LORA Ara's father?

SARA

Yup. He spent the night at my place.

LORA Are you insane?

SARA Nothing happened I swear.

LORA

Sara, wake up.

SARA

He had an accident... and was robbed. I bumped into him at the diner, Lora, what did you want me to do?

LORA

This guy abandoned you when you most needed him.

SARA

About that... I never really told him I was pregnant.

LORA What? You told me Jeff left you.

SARA I did... Leave him I mean.

LORA

Why?

SARA

He was in a stupid relationship with his dream and I kinda thought he'd never be a good father... Mood swings I guess. You do know what pregnancies do, right?

LORA

You lied to me? Did you make me hate an innocent man six years long for nothing?

Lora looks at "Judas Escariot" in Sara.

SARA I'm truly sorry, Lora. I needed a convincing story to make me look a good single mother.

LORA When do I get to meet him?

SARA When you help me find him a job first.

Lora drills Sara with a cop eye.

SARA(CONT'D)

Please.

INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - DAY

Payne delivers his findings to Detective Storm and the other members of the team.

DETECTIVE PAYNE Bob Talent had no past, no friends, no nothing. The guy was a ghost...

SHAWN

So's Jeff Hopeful. He lost his father three years back, his mother two months ago and the only person that'd lead us to him is dead.

DETECTIVE STORM Did you talk to Lazarus' neighbors?

SHAWN They saw nothing.

DETECTIVE PAYNE What about Breakyourface?

DETECTIVE STORM It's a dead end.

CARLIE He's heartless but not the kind that would kill his debtor.

They all grow silent. Seemingly at the bitter end of such stories. Then:

SHAWN

Now what?

DETECTIVE STORM (eyes on Jeff's headshot) Jeff Hopeful has to be somewhere.

EXT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

Ara approaches Jeff - swinging himself lightly. He feels at home.

ARA

Jeff?

He turns.

JEFF Yes. Ara. Come over here.

She gets to him. He lifts her to the swing, gets behind it and begins to push her back and forth. They both enjoy the moment. Until:

> ARA Can you do makeup?

JEFF Makeup? Sure. Why?

ARA I want to look like a princess.

He stops the swing, touches her hand and looks in her eyes.

JEFF You don't need makeup to look like a princess, honey. You already are.

ARA But I want to look like her.

JEFF

Okay. Go setup the kit.

Ara jumps off the swing, runs back into the house excitedly.

INT. SARA'S COTTAGE(ARA'S BEDROOM) - DAY

Jeff walk in to find Ara on a small stool already dressed in beautiful gown. She's looking herself in the mirror.

JEFF

I love the dress.

ARA

Grandma made it. She said it's for a princess.

Jeff smiles, indeed: carries the mirror away from her sight:

ARA I need to see myself transform.

JEFF You need to see a princess welldone. So. What'd you want me to begin with?

ARA

My hair.

JEFF

Okay.

He picks the hairbrush and begins to straighten her hair. -- we:

TIME CUT: Ara's hair welldone, straight and very neat. Jeff inserts a butterfly hairslide into the head carefully.

A FACEBRUSH wipes her skin. He begins to apply the first layer of makeup on her innocent face.

CUT TO: HER MAKEOVER: Ara is now a real princess in fairy tales. Jeff applies lipgloss on her little-lips. And everything is done. He gazes her: So proud of himself.

ARA (curiously) What?

Jeff fetches the mirror -- but before he places it to her front:

JEFF Close your eyes.

ARA

Why?

JEFF So you can feel the power of transformation.

She closes her eyes.

67.

JEFF

No peeking.

ARA

Okay.

He puts the mirror to her front.

JEFF (spanish accent) I now present to you the beautiful princess of this kingdom: PRINCESS ARA.

Ara opens her eyes carefully to see her STUNNING NEW IMAGE !!

ARA

Wow.

She's extremely overjoyed.

CUT TO: SARA LOOKING AT ARA. SHE'S IMPRESSED BY JEFF'S MAKEUP SKILLS, TOO.

SARA Wow. Honey, you look like a princess.

JEFF That was the idea.

SARA

Really?

JEFF

Hell yeah.

INT. SARA'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Jeff is lying on the couch face-up gazing the old ceiling. Sara approaches from her bedroom ready for bed holding her cellphone.

> SARA I just talked to a friend about your job.

JEFF (sits) My job--?

He grimaces a little tension - but deflates quickly. She sits.

SARA(CONT'D) You need one if you're to sleep on a bed. Your bed I mean not mine. JEFF

(grins) Okay. I don't know how to thank you for this.

SARA Don't thank me yet. The meeting is on monday but I'm not sure you'll--

He silences her with a sudden kiss. It's weird at first but then -- she kisses him back. Kisses grow into caresses. Sara begins to unbutton his shirt:

JEFF

Um.

SARA

What?

JEFF

You sure this is the right place?

His eyes trained at Ara's bedroom. Sara notices.

SARA

Maybe not.

She grabs Jeff's hand and inside her bedroom they dash.

INT. SARA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sara locks the door first. Then kisses Jeff again. She pushes him to the bed -- on his back -- she begins to striptease for him.

Jeff has waited for too long -- licks his lips. Eyes full of lust for both. She offers a blowjob -- he returns a CJ.

JEFF JUMPS ON TOP OF HER LIKE A HUNGRY WOLF -- THEY MAKE LOVE LIKE NEVER BEFORE. JEFF ATOP SARA, UNTIL HE CUMS LOUDLY, SPASMODICALLY. THEY LAUGH DAZEDLY.

JEFF

That was --

SARA

A quickie.

JEFF

Yeah.

They lay on their backs catching a breath. He jumps back on top of her.

INT. SARA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jeff is awake, holding his chin in his LEFT HAND. He's looking at Sara regretfully. She stirs to his gaze and smiles.

SARA

Hey.

JEFF Hi. Last night was --SARA Awesome. It's been long since I changed my oil. JEFF Me too. She notices the TATTOO on his hand. SARA Is this -- a caterpillar? JEFF Yeah. SARA On your hand? Oh I hate caterpillars. JEFF There's nothing in a caterpillar to show it'd transform into a butterfly. SARA Wow. Sara strokes the tattoo gently. SARA(CONT'D) I like it. JEFF Now you do? SARA Yeah. JEFF Should we tell Ara now? Before she can answer -- a loud knock hits the door: ARA(O.S)Mom? They gaze each other, busted...

EXT. FESTIVAL - DAY

GYMNASTS and CARAVANS full of life are lighting up the festival grounds as melodies blast from different stages. Food stalls. Bouncing castles. Swimming pools. And kids toys everywhere. A thousand people are having fun with their children on this one time event.

Our P.O.V. whoever we're... PULL BACK to find Sara and Jeff riding on the same carriage of a roller coaster with Ara and Yasmin riding on another.

Sara is screaming at the top of her lungs totally freaked by heights but Jeff, Yasmin and Ara enjoy the tight turns..

CLICK! CLICK! Sounds of "our" camera taking multiple pictures of the four - our main focus on Jeff.

The roller coaster eventually comes to a halt. Jeff helps Sara jump out of the "thing".

Our P.O.V. follows Sara, Ara, Jeff and Yasmin as Sara complains through the crowded grounds of fun! Jeff trying hard to blend in.

SARA(CONT'D) I almost puked my entire guts out. I'm never doing this again.

ARA

Never say never, mom.

Laughter all around, except for Sara. They stop at a candy stall -- Ara orders for cotton candy.

CUT TO: -- A photographer taking Ara's picture. Then Sara's. Then Ara, Sara and Yasmin. Then Ara and Sara.

Jeff gazes on, wanting to be part of the family. Sara notices.

SARA (to Jeff) You gonna just stand there and watch?

Ara grabs Jeff's hand into FLAME and CLICK! The family picture is taken SMASH CUTTING TO:

INT. BREAKYOURFACE'S OFFICE - DAY

Zodiac places Jeff's family picture on the table - in front of his boss. Duckett in his usual position.

ZODIAC

He's in Utah.

BREAKYOURFACE (brightens) With family. How did you get this?

ZODIAC I have a cousin there. BREAKYOURFACE Ready yourself for a road trip, both of you.

INT. SARA'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Sara clears the table after dinner. Jeff and Ara are summarizing with the dessert. His eyes glued to the festival pictures on the table.

JEFF Can't remember the last time I had one. SARA A rural festival? JEFF A home cooked meal. ARA Your ex-girlfriend never cooked? JEFF She did, sometimes, but... ARA Was a terrible cook. JEFF Yeah. ARA My mommy is a great cook. JEFF Sure. ARA And a great singer too. JEFF Seriously? SARA/ARA No. Yes. All eyes on Sara.

> ARA Come on, Mom, sing for us.

SARA Maybe some other time guys. I'm dying to rest.

JEFF Come on. Let's raise mommy's gutsy, Ara. JEFF/ARA (cheering) Mommy. Mommy. Mommy.

SARA

Fine...

Jeff and Ara set their seats to Sara's front. Prepare themselves for the show. Sara clears her throat reluctantly, then pulls LIONELL RICHE'S "HELLO" classic magically.

SARA

(singing) Have been alone with you inside my mind. And in my dreams I've kissed your lips athousand times. I sometimes see you pass outside my door. Hello. Is it me you're looking for? I can see it in your eyes, I can see it in your smile, you'all I've ever wanted...

As she continues to sing...

WE CLOSE ON JEFF'S FACE: Transfixed, barely blinking, falling in love with the performance and her again. She's wickedly talented.

-- CHEERS!!

INT. SARA'S HOUSE(ARA'S BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Sara covers Ara in her bed.

SARA Good night, sweetie.

ARA Good night, mom.

Sara kisses her. Puts the lights out and steps out of the door.

She leans on Ara's door for awhile -- eyes closed with a grin on her face, taking in the moment. Jeff is watching nearby but she's not aware.

JEFF Are you okay?

SARA (startled) Um. Sure.

She laughs, partly embarrassed and greatly overjoyed. Then starts for her bedroom. Jeff looks a bit confused -- shrugs.

EXT. MEGA SUPERMARKET - DAY

Establishing. Sara's truck stops outside a very large old building.

INT. MEGA SUPERMARKET - DAY

Jeff and Sara enter the antithesis of Walmart. Mostly stocked with basic needs. They walk through the hallway towards the manager's office.

Jeff looks none-too-pleased at the less than ten buyers shopping. He's behind civilization.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

A bald man, late 40s, is behind his tired desk balancing books. A nameplate on his desk reads "ELLIE BROWN". Sara knocks on the already open door.

ELLIE BROWN Nurse Sara. Come in.

They enter.

ELLIE BROWN Nice seeing you again. Have a seat please.

SARA

Thanks.

Both sit. Ellie looks at Jeff as if familiar to him. This is exactly what Jeff was afraid of.

ELLIE BROWN(CONT'D) This is the gentleman you told me about?

SARA

Yes.

JEFF (offers his hand) I'm delighted to meet you, sir.

ELLIE BROWN Justify your happiness.

JEFF

What?

ELLIE BROWN I said justify your happiness, Mister--?

JEFF

Hopeful.

ELLIE BROWN

Hopeful?

JEFF

Jeff Hopeful.

ELLIE BROWN Have we met before? Of course not. Why should I hire you?

TROUBLE!! Jeff has never done a job interview before. But as he struggles with the answer, Ellie Brown looks at him suspiciously. He has definitely seen Jeff before but where?

> JEFF(CONT'D) Well. What can I say... I'm a very determined person for starters, adventurous more, um, I love to work... and, yeah, I need to sleep on a bed.

He directs the latter to Sara. She smiles:

ELLIE BROWN (re: Sara) May I have a word with you?

SARA

Sure.

Sara and Ellie make their way to the balcony. Where Jeff's seated, can see Ellie Brown convincing Sara, she occasionally refers her bitter face to Jeff: Whatever the news Jeff knows it's not good.

As Jeff stands, possibly to depart, Sara scurries back in too pissed as Ellie comes after her calling:

ELLIE BROWN Nurse Sara wait.

SARA (to Jeff) Let's go.

Jeff is already in motion. They exit. Dammit!

INT. TRUCK(MOVING) - DAY

Sara is behind the steering wheel mad. Jeff gazes her, lost of where to start. Then:

JEFF I didn't get that job, did I?

SARA

Is it true?

She SCREECHES the brakes and Jeff bangs his head on the dashboard.

SARA

You know exactly what I'm taking about, Jeff. Did you kill a person? Is that why you escaped to this place?

JEFF I didn't kill anyone.

SARA

(in growing tone) Then why is your picture in all L.A. papers?

JEFF

It's a long story.

SARA

So's the journey ahead of us. You better start explaining, Jeff or I'll turn this truck and drive you straight to the sheriff.

INT. POLICE POST - DAY

Ellie Brown convinces the SHERIFF(60s). A NEWSPAPER with Jeff's picture is on the table.

ELLIE BROWN I have just seen him in my office right now.

SHERIFF Doesn't sound like a dangerous one to me. Especially if he was with nurse Sara.

ELLIE BROWN He is a murderer. In our town, Sheriff.(re: paper)This guy killed a writer.

INT. TRUCK(MOVING) - DAY

Sara starts the engine as Jeff grabs that seat belt.

JEFF(CONT'D) I didn't kill a writer, okay?!

SARA Then why is the police looking for you? It all started the day I was evicted from the hotel.

EXT. JUNK SHOP - DAY(-SIXTEEN MONTHS EARLIER-)

We find Jeff cashing in his stuff to a tired JUNKMAN on the store's entrance. Desk, bed, leather seats, fridge, all lying on the ground.

JEFF

300 bucks?

JUNKMAN It's all I got. Your merchandise looks tired, son.

JEFF I just replaced the fridge's compressor.

JEFF The fridge is all you got. The rest of it is just chaff. I bet the world's jerk would --

JEFF Fine. Hand me the cash. Before you change your mind and make it fifty.

The junkman looks at Jeff like he just proved the point. Then hands over the cash.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jeff sets his tired computer on the small table. A bag of his cloths is down on the floor. He opens the bag and when his eyes land on his script - an idea pops into his mind.

He picks the script out of the bag and proceeds out of the room.

INT. SHARON KENDRIK'S OFFICE - DAY

Executive, with a touch of class. Jeff enters to find a 40-year-old, no-nonsense SHARON KENDRIK behind her desk, alone.

She directs him to a seat and waits for his speech. Jeff gazes back, until realization flashes in his mind.

JEFF My name is Jeff Hopeful. I'm currently seeking representation for my latest great thriller screenplay, "My-own-death", about an ex-marine who fakes his death to force the government care for his family. She looks at him thoughtfully.

KENDRIK It undoubtedly has potential for success.

JEFF Would you like to read the script?

Before she can answer... Jeff pulls the script out and places it on her desk.

She turns to the 197th page -- weighs the script with her eyes for a moment, then looks at him:

KENDRIK Although it doesn't seem to be right for this agency.

JEFF What seems, usually isn't what is, Mom.

KENDRIK I wish you better luck in placing your work with an agent who'll make me look shortsighted, mister Hopeful.

He stands off his seat - silently cursing.

KENDRIK We appreciate your thinking of the Sharon Kendrik management.

He footslog out.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jeff gulps some drinks down his gut. He staggers to the bed and lies awake for a moment. Tormentedly. His script by his side. He snores.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jeff is sitting on the small chair -- gazing a blinking cursor on a blank page of his computer on the table. There's a full bottle of beer sitting on the same table...

INT. FLEE PITT HOTEL - JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

FLASHBACK! Naomi stands talking to Jeff, holding her suitcase.

NAOMI You've changed. Everything in here has changed. You don't have a job. The Jeff I knew would never be that (MORE) NAOMI (cont'd) lazy. He was always two people but you lost the smart one. You must change, Jeff. It's not fun anymore.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Back to scene. Jeff grabs the bottle of beer from the table and storms off towards the toilet.

IN THE TOILET: He pulls the lid open and drains the entire bottle of beer into the toilet; as he does so, Naomi's voice still rings in his mind:

NAOMI(V.O) The Jeff I knew would never be that lazy... He was always two people... Jeff was... Two people... You must change...

He slams the toilet cover back on! And whines down on the toilet's floor.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jeff cleans the entire room. Picks his messed up cloths, empty bottles of beer, everything back to their rightful places.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Jeff walks into the shower -- washes up; for quite a good amount of time as he continuously looks at his image in the mirror.

Now in the room; Jeff turns on his computer and opens a blank document but before he begins to type anything he closes it.

He opens a computer folder, name "MY OWN DEATH". Then opens his script file - "similar name".

ON THE SCRIPT'S TITLE PAGE: Jeff deletes the script's title; types "QUITE A CONUNDRUM" in its place. He starts editing the entire script.

A SERIES OF JUMP CUTS -- Jeff sitting in different postures and different locations of the room; working on the computer at different times of different days.

On screen WE SEE:

THREE MONTHS LATER

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The lone Jeff finally types "FADE OUT" on his 91-paged script. He releases a loud exhale.

He scrolls up to the title page, on the computer for a moment, then, saves the script on a flash drive and shuts down the computer.

INT. ANOTHER MOTEL ROOM - DAY(-THIRTEEN MONTHS EARLIER-)

"A MAN" gets dressed, into a brand new suit -- meticulously constructs himself. WE ONLY SEE HIS BACK.

Camera WRAPS AROUND; SEE his hands brushing his blonde head; knotting a bow-tie; adjust a rollex watch on his right wrist; He minds every detail very carefully, not forcefully.

HIS HANDS fasten the shoelaces. HE HAS THE EXACT CATERPILLAR TATTOO ON HIS LEFT WRIST, JUST LIKE THE ONE ON JEFF'S HAND.

NOW READY: He steps in front of a mirror but only him sees his image, we don't. He carefully studies his image for a moment, strokes his nose gently then smiles. Obviously satisfied.

EXT. BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT(-PREMIERE NIGHT-)

Bob's lamborghini pulls into a parking space. Bob sighs, stays in there for a moment. Worried. Thinking. Looks himself in the rear-view mirror but instead sees --

A STATION WAGON PACKED SOME METERS OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE. DUCKETT AND ZODIAC ARE KEEPING AN EYE ON HIM.

They step out of the station wagon and start towards Bob.

BOB TALENT

Shit.

Bob chickens. As he opens the car's door -- Zodiac bangs it shut. Duckett rests a gun on his head.

ZODIAC

We have a message.

Zodiac nods for Duckett and BAMM!! Duckett hits Bob's head with the back of his gun. Bob lands on the passenger seat.

DUCKETT

Pay your debt.

They scurry back into their car and drive away.

INT. BOB'S HOME (BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Bob sits on his bed beaten, tired, stressed, and his head hurting. He looks down on the floor to see a picture of Jeff and his mother; smiling broadly.

Mad at himself, Bob runs down the staircase into the living room.

INT. BOB'S HOME(LIVING ROOM) - CONTINUOUS

He pours a clean martini in a glass and downs it in a single gulp. He pours another and it goes down his guts the same way.

He pours another. And another. And another... Until the bottle is empty. He opens another full bottle of scotch and fills the glass, downs it in one shot. And another shot.

Now too drunk. He looks through the window, drinking another shot. "His eyes -- nose -- blond head." Bob looks at his weird image reflected over the window.

Very tense, Bob smashes the bottle on the wall. He knocks stuff to the floor groaning.

He takes the blonde hair off his head. It's been a fake piece all long. Not just the wig but him. He's all fake.

He peels off the fake nose -- pulls out the artificial dental formula from his mouth and drops everything to the floor.

He opens another bottle of scotch and uses it to wash the numerous layers of makeup off his face.

He is unbelievably Jeff! Drunk and desperate. He gazes everything. A blonde wig -- fake nose -- artificial dental formula -- all lying on a dump stained floor.

Jeff collects all his Bob Talent jewelry, numerous suits, ID papers. He puts all puts all this in the big black bag. A glass of scotch in his hand.

He drags the bag out of the door...

EXT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

Back to Present. Sara stops outside the cottage very worried. They stay inside there for awhile with Jeff.

SARA You have to tell the truth.

JEFF

I can't.

SARA

Why?

JEFF

Because, I made some terrible financial decisions during that period, Sara. I borrowed some money from a guy you don't wanna meet. He's looking for me too that's why I can't reveal myself right now. How much money?

JEFF One million dollars.

SARA One million dollars? Are you kidding me?

JEFF

Afraid not.

She holds her head in disbelief.

SARA(CONT'D) What have you done? Could this put our lives in danger?

JEFF I am so sorry, Sara.

INT. POLICE POST - NIGHT

Sheriff looks at the newspaper thoughtfully. He's actually looking at Jeff's picture in the paper. He dials the old phone on his table.

INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - NIGHT

Storm has packed up to leave the office when he hears:

POLICE CHIEF(O.S)

Storm!

He turns to see...

The POLICE CHIEF at his desk in his office. He is just hanging up the phone.

INT. POLICE CHIEF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Detective Storm steps to the doorway.

DETECTIVE STORM

Lieutenant.

POLICE CHIEF Jeff Hopeful was spotted in Utah today.

DETECTIVE STORM

Utah?

POLICE CHIEF I have just received a phone call from a sheriff in Garfield.

INT. STATION WAGON(MOVING) - DAWN

A STATION WAGON PULLS PAST "A WELCOME TO UTAH" SIGN. INSIDE IS BREAKYOURFACE, DUCKETT AND ZODIAC: FACE EXPRESSIONS BUSINESS.

INT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

A not-too-happy Sara heads out for work. Ara standing right next to Jeff, oblivious to the prevailing situation.

EXT. TRADING CENTRE - DAY

POLICE SIRENS arise through the quiet residents readying for work. POLICE CARS race past the idle market, down the direction of the police post.

EXT. LAZARUS' HOUSE - DAY

Dragging her suitcases out of the door, Opheriah notices a small "white-paper" inside the flower pot. "What's this?"

She crotches to pick "ZODIAC'S ID CARD" from the pot. "Whose the hell is this?"

EXT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

A scooter stops outside the driveway. At its helm is Zodiac's COUSIN and right behind him Breakyourface's station wagon.

COUSIN

(for Zodiac) Head straight. It's the only house you'll find.

He turns and rides back. Zodiac turns the car up the driveway. Big trees lead us to the only cottage as seen at a distance by the car's occupants.

BREAKYOURFACE

Stop here.

THEY STOP THE CAR 200 METERS FROM THE COTTAGE'S FENCE AND STEP OUT. ALL ARMED WITH SILENCED GUNS.

INT. GENERAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Nurse Sara enters a ward. Stethoscope around her neck.

EXT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

Breakyourface distributes his men quietly. Duckett to the back of the cottage. And Zodiac with him.

BREAKYOURFACE Nobody kills him. You got that? They assent, taking their positions. As they do so; Duckett hits a dismantled wheelbarrow accidentally...

BREAKYOURFACE

Careful. Idiot!

INT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

Jeff is adding a roof on Ara's plastic castle the two are building together on the floor when he HEARS the fuss...

Cautiously, Jeff looks out through the keyhole to see: Zodiac progressing towards the door, Breakyourface standing outside the fence.

JEFF

Shit.

Fucked up, Jeff lifts Ara and runs with her into Sara's bedroom. -- looks around searching for a place to hide her.

ARA

Are we safe?

JEFF There some bad guys out.

Beneath Sara's bed she goes.

JEFF Good.(crotches) Stay here... until I come back, okay?

She nods freaking out. Jeff runs back into the living room -- paces around looking for possible weapons in this old den: Nothing seems useful so far. And he has less time to think.

He grips a stained cooking pan from the table ...

EXT/INT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

Zodiac looks back at his boss, standing precisely at an accurate distance away from him. Breakyourface shrugs.

Zodiac kicks the long serving door broken... And just as his head peers inside:

-- BANG!!

Jeff lands the cooking pan on his head. Zodiac stumbles past Jeff... And BANG!! Jeff hits his cerebellum another time. His forehead kisses the floor.

Jeff raises the pan, aiming Zodiac's head once more but: Zodiac suddenly twists away and Jeff bangs the floor.

Zodiac grabs his hand dropping him down on the floor and raises over Jeff: sits on his stomach and punches the crap

out of his face. As Jeff continuously takes Zodiac's blows --we:

CLOSE ON: -- JEFF'S RIGHT FINGERS reaching a pair of rusty scissors under the table.

BREAKYOURFACE(O.S)

That's enough.

Zodiac groans and just as he lifts his last blow off Jeff's head -- Jeff plunges the pair of scissors into Zodiac's neck.

He screams out loud, blood oozing out of his neck like a slaughtered chicken. He scatters past Breakyourface towards the exit -- where he collapses.

Jeff attempts to stand when:

BREAKYOURFACE

Hello, Thief.

The pistol's barrel rests on his bleeding nose... His head bruised:

BREAKYOURFACE(CONT'D)

Nice place to hide...

Breakyourface drags a chair with his leg and sits -- looking at Jeff, a little pitifully than he'd actually mock him.

EXT. SARA'S COTTAGE(DRIVEWAY) - DAY

Police cars cruise past Breakyourface's station wagon quietly. No sirens. No warnings. They stop ahead of the station wagon.

Storm, Shawn, Carlie, Payne and some officers step out of the cars with well maintained rifles: the sheriff armed with a double-barrelled rifle reflecting his age.

> DETECTIVE STORM (re: Sheriff) You may stay.

SHERIFF This is my territory, detective.

INT. SARA'S COTTAGE - DAY

Breakyourface continues jabbering.

BREAKYOURFACE You might have fooled the police, son-of a bitch but not me, you know why? I studied every inch of your fucking face that night, Talent. That cracked-up nose you had. I (MORE) BREAKYOURFACE (cont'd) knew something was off. But I tell you what, Bob Faggot? There's one fucking little thing you can't makeup. Your Iris.

Breakyourface places the gun on Jeff's eye, cocks it.

BREAKYOURFACE(CONT'D) And that's exactly what I mark about my debtors.

JEFF (freaking out) I'll pay you I promise.

BREAKYOURFACE Of course you will.

He turns suddenly, as if hearing some noise from outside.

Jeff's eyes land on a old record-player suspended on the wall behind Breakyourface, grins reservedly. Jeff grips one leg on Breakyourface's chair.

As fast as Breakyourface turns back to him, Jeff tilts the chair violently dropping the bad guy on his back.

He pulls the record-player's turntable off the wall and BANGS the "old-thing" on Breakyourface's head.

Jeff bolts out through the cottage's back window as Breakyourface barks for his man!

BREAKYOURFACE He's bolting to the back, Duckett! I need the son-of-a bitch alive you hear that?!

EXT. BACK OF THE COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Duckett drops Jeff to the ground, aims a blow towards his face but Jeff moves swiftly and Duckett digs his fist into the ground.

Jeff raises and runs as Duckett follows -- his gun trained at him. But he can't kill him.

Breakyourface falls out of the cottage through the same window, bleeding.

BREAKYOURFACE Get the cocksucker!

Breakyourface checks the clip on his gun. Full. Slams it back into the grip and propel towards the same target.

Just as Jeff jumps over the fence:

-- BANG!!

A bullet lands on his leg. He smashes into the wooden fence and bangs his head pretty hard on a rock. Breakyourface blows the smoke from his gun.

> BREAKYOURFACE You can not run faster than a bullet.

He scurries towards Jeff cocking his gun -- just as he trains the gun to finish him:

DETECTIVE STORM(O.S)

Freeze!

Duckett turns, just in time for the Sheriff to blow a whole in his head.

SHERIFF

(shrugs) He said freeze.

Detective Storm and his team surround the scene.

BREAKYOURFACE (eyes on Jeff) He's a dead man anyway.

Seeing Jeff nonmotile and bleeding from his head, Breakyourface drops his gun and willingly surrenders: Payne drops him to the ground.

> BREAKYOURFACE You're late, detective.

Storm looks at Breakyourface like he just proved a point.

DETECTIVE PAYNE(CONT'D) And you're under arrest for a very long list of crimes, mister Break the face.

Breakyourface grins, hands finally in cuffs: Storm crouches over to feel Jeff's pulse.

DETECTIVE STORM Call the ambulance.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, L.A - DAY

Storm looks at Jeff, now lying on a HOSPITAL BED, one leg cuffed to the bed, a ventilator through his trachea, IVs in his arm and his neck cocked. A DOCTOR is diagnosing him.

DETECTIVE STORM When exactly is he going to wake up?

DOCTOR I can't define the exact time, detective. It could last for days or even months.

DETECTIVE STORM Months--?

DOCTOR Years for worse.

DETECTIVE STORM Call me when he comes through.

He walks out of the room.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Sara walks in to a middle-aged POLICE SERGEANT at the reception.

POLICE SERGEANT

Yes?

SARA I need to see whoever is in charge of Hopeful's case.

INT. POLICE STATION(HEARING ROOM) - DAY

Sara and detective Storm sit on opposite sides of the table.

DETECTIVE STORM How best do you know him?

SARA

He's a nice guy. He might be a little obsessed with his dream but Jeff's not a murderer.

DETECTIVE STORM There's no amount of explanation you can do to prove me wrong.

SARA

Maybe this will.

She drops a PHOTOGRAPH of Jeff -- clearly showing his caterpillar TATTOO and a WRITER'S MAGAZINE with BOB TALENT's cover picture -- also showing the SAME TATTOO on his wrist.

DETECTIVE STORM

What's this?

SARA The small tattoo on Jeff's wrist. (Storm looks at the photo) Your supposedly murdered Talent has it on that magazine too.

She pushes the magazine toward him. He studies both pictures.

DETECTIVE STORM Different people can have similar tattoos on the same parts of their bodies, miss.

SARA

Then explain to me why all the finger prints you found in your Bob's apartment belonged only to one Jeff Hopeful who in this case is the killer! Wouldn't you expect to find the owner's prints, too?

He can't respond. Eyes still on the pictures. She glares, as though wanting to hit sense into his head.

CUT TO THE SCENE AS VIEWED BY THE POLICE CHIEF, DETECTIVE PAYNE, CARLIE AND SHAWN THROUGH A UNIDIRECTIONAL WINDOW. THEIR FACIAL EXPRESSIONS WANT TO BELIEVE SARA BUT:

DETECTIVE STORM This could be the very reason why your boyfriend murdered Bob Talent.

The police chief shrugs - as if to say point.

SARA

What?

DETECTIVE STORM Mister Talent had whatever Jeff Hopeful craved for and you - just mentioned to me how obsessed he is.

BACK TO THE SCENE.

SARA There's no Bob Talent, can't you see that?!

DETECTIVE STORM It's not just about Bob Talent! Jeff Hopeful murdered another man, Sara -(eyes on photos) And what I see here are two people that don't even look like each other. SARA Which part of this Earth do you come from, detective where people don't make-up?

DETECTIVE STORM And this nose --

SARA

It's fake.

DETECTIVE STORM Where's it?

SARA Are you asking me? I don't know! Burned with that lamborghini you pulled from the woods, remember?

He wants to believe her but:

DETECTIVE STORM This evidence. All of it, is delivered by one person who for the part of this investigation has been hiding the suspect. Why am I beginning to think you as the killer's accomplice?

Storm looks in Sara's raging face -- he releases a loud exhale.

DETECTIVE STORM Look. I know you're concerned about your boyfriend's fate but I'm also concerned about Bob's family...

SARA Where's it?! Or his body to begin with?

No answer.

SARA Lemme know when you find one.

She grabs her purse from the table and walks out of the room angrily.

INT. POLICE STATION(SQUAD ROOM) - DAY

Storm walks back at his desk to find the motley officers, Carlie, Shawn, Payne, Tanya, waiting for him - for his response actually.

Everyone's attention is on Storm, as they quietly gaze him, waiting for him to break the ice.

DETECTIVE STORM Believe me I want to believe her.

CARLIE

I believe her.

SHAWN

Me to.

TANYA The single pair of prints and DNA from the "dead-Talent's" house all belong to Jeff.

OPHERIAH(O.S) Detective Storm?

They all turn to see Opheriah holding out Zodiac's ID Card to him.

OPHERIAH(CONT'D) I found this in a flower pot on the porch.

Storm fumbles the magazine onto the desk. Has no other alternative.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Sara enters, Ara by her side. They quietly walk towards Jeff's bed.

Sara sits on the chair by the bedside. She looks at him laying there, helplessly.

A tear rolls down her face -- she wipes it quickly, doesn't want Ara to see. But Ara has noticed.

ARA

Mom? Are you crying?

SARA

No, honey, my eyes are hurting. Do you wanna say something to him first?

She's scared.

SARA(CONT'D)

Talk to him. You know he can hear you, right?

Ara nods, touches Jeff's finger. Then calls him dad for the very first time:

ARA Dad. Please wake up. Mommy loves you. I love you. We all love you so much. Wake up please. Ara steps back.

SARA You're done?(Ara nods)Okay. Guess it's my turn now.

Sara gets up, holds Jeff's hand but before she begins to talk -- the door opens.

She turns to see: Detective Storm heading towards the bed with a key in his hand.

DETECTIVE STORM

Miss Sara?

SARA Detective Storm?

Sara withdraws from the bed, letting Storm insert the key into the cuff -- unlocks the end attached to the bed, too.

SARA

He's free?

DETECTIVE STORM There's no case. All the charges have been withdrawn. Jeff Hopeful is a free man now.

Storm starts for the door insatiably. As he opens the door:

SARA

Detective Storm?(He turns)Thank you for believing me.

He just nods, and steps out of the room. Sara takes Jeff's hand and kisses it.

SARA

Jeff, you're free.

She laughs, joyfully. A tear rolls down to Jeff's hand. She can't believe he's free.

At the door, Storm looks at them. Ara looks at Storm. He leaves.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Double doubles open and Sara emerges out pushing Jeff, alive, in a wheelchair, towards her car in the parking lot. Ara close behind. Everyone is happy.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

They step into the car. Sara takes the driver seat and Ara the back.

Jeff holds his head in his hands for awhile, then releases one of his loud exhale.

JEFF

I'm so sorry, guys.

SARA

That's like the ninetieth time, Jeff and the answer is going to remain--?

ARA (happily) What's past is passed.

He smiles. Everyone smiles, no hard feelings anymore.

SARA Where'd we go now?

JEFF Not before I do this.

Jeff kisses Sara.

ARA

Eweee!!

Ara covers her eyes but can still see through her fingers. They continue kissing mindless of Ara - who's continuously making fun of them..

FREEZE FRAME:

TV HOST(PRE-LAP)

Wow.

INT. TV STUDIO - NIGHT

Sara is seated besides Jeff - both facing a TV HOST who's interviewing them.

TV HOST Quite an intriguing hell-of a story.

JEFF

Yeah.

TV HOST Sara? How did you feel about all this?

SARA Betrayed - at first, but then it taught me one important life lesson. Which is--?

SARA

This world belongs to those who are willing to fight for what they believe is theirs. Jeff believed in his dream. I believed in him.

TV HOST

And you fought for him. Impressive. Such an amazing rare quality to find in a woman these days, right Jeff?

JEFF

True.

TV HOST

Any last message for someone out there struggling to achieve their dream right now?

JEFF

(into Camera) He. or She. Let no one tell you're a looser, unless you've lost your virginity of course.

A laughter...

FADE OUT.