THE SHADOW OF THE SENEX

Revision 4

Ву

Damien Paul Michael

c Copyright 2013 Damien Paul Damien Paul Michael 624 E. Nelson Rd. #7

Damien Paul Michael 624 E. Nelson Rd. #15 Moses Lake, WA 98837 dmichael1958@hotmail.com (509) 350-9162 FADE IN:

1 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

1

We fade in on the face of JAMES, thirty-six. Holding a PHONE to his chest, he stares out the second floor apartment window.

PARKING LOT

a young couple kissing at their car.

We hear -

VOICE (FILTER)

James? James?

JAMES

puts the phone to his ear. As he talks, we hear someone else moving about the apartment in the B.G.

JAMES

Sorry, Carrie. What?

CARRIE (FILTER)

Did you hear what I said about the gifts?

JAMES

No. Sorry.

CARRIE (FILTER)

My relatives want the gifts back! I can't do this by myself!

JAMES

Carrie, I'm leaving tomorrow.

CARRIE (FILTER)

(Angry)

You're the one who called the wedding off!

In the B.G. we see James' friend KAREN, thirty-four, standing in the doorway. She watches him for a moment, concerned.

JAMES

Alright! I'll be by around seven. Is that alright? (Silence) Carrie?

We hear crying on the other end. Karen goes back to packing.

CARRIE (FILTER)

Alright. That's fine.

James hangs up. Karen walks in.

KAREN

Everything alright?

JAMES

(Sings the Animals)

I gotta get outta this place! If it's the last thing I ever doooo!

Karen smiles and throws a box at him.

KAREN

Pack!

1A INT. LIVINGROOM

1A

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DANA, James sister, thirty-eight, is helping Karen struggle with a suitcase. They finally get it closed. James walks in with a bottle of sparkling wine and three glasses.

KAREN

Oh, you know how to make an evening.

JAMES

A toast to a new life.

He pours the sparkling. Dana reaches for hers.

DANA

Gimme, gimme!

KAREN

Champagne even!

JAMES

You can only call it champagne if it's from Champagne, France. Or made from grapes there.

KAREN

You are the wine god. Cheers.

They toast and drink.

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Thank you.	KAREN
No prob.	JAMES
Dana, you'	KAREN re James' sister. What id like when he was
Strange.	DANA
Speak for	JAMES yourself.
How?	KAREN
He used to	DANA lock himself away in his ive in his own world.
	JAMES t she says now.
	DANA else did I used to say?
We had a b	JAMES ig family gathering at and she brings over her dy
Oh yeah	DANA
	JAMES lls Cindy
	DANA a crush on.
Did not!	JAMES
	KAREN ad a crush on his big

JAMES No, I didn't!	k
DANA Yes, you did.	,
JAMES Whatever. Anyway. This one here tells Cindy that I jack off all the time in my room.	k k
Karen roars into laughter.	*
JAMES Not funny.	,
DANA Hysterical.	*
KAREN Did you really?	+
DANA Yes, I admit it. But it was the truth. One day	,
JAMES Don't you dare	+
DANA Our mother tells me to get him for dinner	k k
JAMES Do not complete this story!	+
KAREN Please complete it.	k
DANA I walk in	,
JAMES Dana!	+
KAREN Oh no.	+
DANA Nudie magazine.	*

Oh my god!

KAREN

(Laughing)
James, who cares? You know how many
times I caught my little brother
masturbating?

DANA

But, now... in defense of my little brother. He was also a creative soul... is, a creative soul. Case-in-point.

Dana reaches into a box and pulls out something wrapped in a beach towel. She unwraps it revealing a model of the BIONIC ARM from The Six Million Dollar Man. It is slick but rough looking.

KAREN

I never saw this before. What is this?

JAMES

It's from an old television show our dad used to watch. I got hooked on it. Always wanted one of these.

DANA

He built it himself.

KAREN

Seven years I've known you and you still have the ability to surprise me.

DANA

If only he could have applied this kind of detail to his school work.

CUT TO:

2

2 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

James, Dana and Karen are sitting next to each other on the livingroom floor. The bottle is empty and James is a bit tipsy. Dana gets up and puts on her coat.

DANA

Well you two...? Have a safe drive.

James and Karen get up and they hug Dana.

We will. Thanks for embarrassing me. I'll get you back some day.

DANA

Talk, talk, talk.

KAREN

Thanks for your help.

DANA

No problem. Be well.

Dana leaves. Karen and James pick up the bottle and glasses and take them to the kitchen.

JAMES

How come you and I never...

KAREN

No, no, no! Don't even finish that sentence!

JAMES

Why?

KAREN

Well, for one, you just broke up with your fiance. And two...

JAMES

So?

KAREN

Two... we're just friends. And three...

JAMES

What?

KAREN

The wine is clouding your judgment.

JAMES

My judgment is not cloudy.

KAREN

James, let's not start out this way. I don't want to feel uncomfortable about us rooming together.

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Okay. That's cool. I was just wondering.

James puts his coat on.

JAMES

Okay. I'm going to go do the ex-fiance thing and I'll be back to finish up so I can get the hell out of this place.

KAREN

I'm going back to my parents. I'll see you in the morning.

JAMES

Okay.

3 EXT. I-5 FREEWAY - DAY

3

The CAMERA holds on a U-HAUL rig towing a CAR.

4 INT. U-HAUL

4

James is driving. Karen sits on the passenger side munching out of a bag of CHEETOS. James looks nervous as he stares out the windshield.

Karen hands the bag over to him.

KAREN

Cheetos?

JAMES

No, thanks.

KAREN

Cheesy goodness.

JAMES

No!

KAREN

What's the matter?

JAMES

I hate driving big-rigs.

This isn't a big-rig, cowboy, it's a U-Haul.

JAMES

Still... just don't bug me. And towing a car doesn't make it any better.

KAREN

Then let me take over.

JAMES

You drive the first half and I drive the second. That's the deal.

KAREN

You know, we're coming into LA traffic. If you hate driving through Bakersfield, you're in for some deep doo-doo.

JAMES

I checked Google maps, there's a shortcut to bypass all that.

KAREN

There are no shortcuts. Once you're in LA, it's traffic.

JAMES

Yes there is! Just wait!

KAREN

Dude, ten bucks you get us lost.

JAMES

Trust me.

KAREN

Fine, it's your money. Cheeto?

JAMES

No.

KAREN

Made with real chedder cheese.

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5 EXT. PALMS BLVD - APARTMENTS - NIGHT

The truck pulls up in front of the apartments. Karen gets out of the passenger side and opens the driver's side, pulls James from his seat. He leans over and grabs his knees. Karen is laughing as she pats him on the back.

KAREN

You owe me ten bucks.

6 INT. KAREN'S APARTMENT

6

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It's a two bedroom apartment with furniture more practical than stylish.

Both Karen and James walk in carrying some BOXES. James drops the boxes and looks around.

JAMES

Nice place.

KAREN

Thanks.

7 INT. KAREN'S APARTMENT - LATER

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There are a few boxes on the floor of the living room. Karen is helping James unpack.

She opens the LONG BOX and pulls out the BIONIC ARM he assembled as a young kid.

KAREN

I have to say this is kind of cool.

He gently takes the prop from her and displays it proudly.

KAREN

Is that what it's supposed to look like?

JAMES

I didn't exactly have a studio workshop at my disposal. I had to take short cuts.

KAREN

I've seen what happens when you take short cuts.

He carefully puts it away, then takes out his wallet and gives Karen ten dollars.

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	Are you ready to take on Hollywood?		*
	JAMES Nervous, but I'm ready. I think I'll do well.		,
	KAREN Yeah?		*
	JAMES I did well back home. I mean, that's all I heard. "You should move to Los Angeles."		* *
	KAREN Except here there are a thousand other people who were told to move here as well. Competition is fierce.		* * *
	Oddly, this response gives James pause. Probably never occurred to him.		*
8	INT. BEDROOM - DAY	8	
	The bedroom is sparse at this point. A few boxes and clothes, no furniture. James is sleeping on top of a sleeping bag, on top of an air mattress. He has blankets over him. He looks around the room and slowly gets up.		
9	INT. APARTMENT	9	
	James comes out of his room and goes to Karen's door and knocks. No answer. He slowly opens the door and peeks in one there. He closes the door.	No	*
10	EXT. WESTWOOD VILLAGE - DAY - ESTABLISHING	10	
11	INT. COFFEE SHOP	11	
	James is seated at a table filling out an application, sipping coffee. He appears aggitated. Karen come in. She spots him but first goes to the counter to place her order with the BARRISTER. She turns and approaches the table.	<u>c</u>	*

KAREN

Hey you.

Неу	JAMES What's up?			
On k	KAREN oreak. What'	N 're you doing'	?	
App	JAMES lication.	5		
You	KAREN okay? You s	N seem annoyed.		
Beer	JAMES n doing this	S all morning		
Mocl	BARRI na!	ISTER		
Karen gets her	coffee and	d comes back.		
How	JAMES s work?	5		
		N Non't you let Ou on at the N		
	JAMES open is the tions, I me	e schedule? Fo	or	
That	KAREN might be a			
Thar	JAMES nks anyway.	5		
thou		N . just as a hold off on a	acting	
Why?	JAMES	5		
		N Dank account. N only three h		
Poir	JAMES			

More money would be a better cushion in case the acting doesn't pan out.

JAMES

I don't know.

KAREN

Something to think about.

JAMES

I don't think so.

KAREN

Well, you can take more time to think about it. The schedule here is not going to fair much better.

JAMES

Are you kidding me?

KAREN

I'm just saying.

JAMES

This place would be good.

KAREN

The best job would be a waiter. So very open.

JAMES

I'm not waiting tables.

KAREN

But you'd work in a coffee shop.

JAMES

Sarcasm?

KAREN

Very. It doesn't make sense. If you want an open schedule you can't be choosy.

James growls.

JAMES

This is so aggravating!

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No one said it would be easy.

JAMES

I kind of wish people would stop saying that.

KAREN

It's true.

JAMES

You know what? Don't. I'm annoyed enough as it is.

Karen is caught off guard by this new attitude.

KAREN

Sorry. I'll stop talking.

She studies him for a moment as he finishes the application, then gets up.

KAREN

I'll see you tonight.

James just waves as she leaves.

CUT TO:

12

12 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

James is asleep on the sofa. A video case for THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE lay on the floor and the television is on.

Karen comes in the front door and stops when she sees James. She quietly stands and watches him as he sleeps. From the television we hear -

REV. SCOTT (FILTER)

If you stay here, you'll certainly die...

Karen deliberately closes the door firmly, waking James.

KAREN

Sorry. Didn't mean to wake you.

JAMES

Liar.

James sits up and stretches.

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Well, got a job.

KAREN

Coffee shop?

James nods.

KAREN

Congratulations!

JAMES

Learned how to make a killer cup of coffee.

Karen switches off the television and sits in front of the sofa.

KAREN

I was thinking about Carrie.

JAMES

My ex? Why?

KAREN

How many times have you been engaged? What is this? Two?

JAMES

Yeah. Why?

KAREN

Was it because of them, or you?

JAMES

Both, I guess.

KAREN

You've always had mediocre jobs. Fly-by-night girlfriends. Two failed engagements. The only constant in your life seemed to be theater. It seems like that's your priority... almost to a fault.

 ${\tt JAMES}$

What does that mean?

KAREN

Well, your attitude towards jobs is a little skewed.

I want to be an actor.

KAREN

That doesn't give you the right to be rude to people. I was just trying to help.

JAMES

And I do appreciate it.

KAREN

Are you worried? Is that it?

JAMES

What worries me is that they're always looking for young people. I think I moved here too late.

KAREN

You're just going to have to work harder to sell yourself.

JAMES

That kid in Terminator 2 was discovered sitting on the side of the road!

KAREN

James! That's one in a million! Is that how you're going to pursue acting? Sitting in coffee shops hoping someone walks in and says, "That's our leading man!"?

JAMES

Just trying to figure things out.

KAREN

I'm on your side, James. I really am. You have to know that.

JAMES

I do.

KAREN

I hope so. (Beat) So... are we cool?

JAMES

Absolutely.

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Karen starts to get up but James stops her with a hug that is a bit too friendly. Karen smiles, pulls away and then goes to her room.

13 EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY - ESTABLISHING

13

14 INT. COFFEE SHOP - RESTROOM

14

James is washing his hands at the sink. The cap and apron tells us this is his new job. DONNIE, younger than James by about ten years, maybe more, and very light hearted comes in. Just above the sink is a SIGN.

DONNIE

This new?

JAMES

What?

DONNIE

This sign.

JAMES

I really don't know.

DONNIE

You the new guy?

James tips his coffee shop CAP in response. Donnie smiles.

DONNIE

Hi. Donnie. Comedian extraordinaire.

JAMES

James. Actor.

DONNIE

(Reading sign)

"Health laws require that employees wash their hands with soap and warm water..." Okay, let's see.

He reaches over and feels the water James is using. This irritates James.

DONNIE

Good, good. (Reading) "...before work and visiting the toilet." Visiting, they say. We are *visiting* the toilet when we come in here.

James smiles as Donnie goes to the urinal.

DONNIE

Hey mr. toilet? How are you doing? Fine? Life good? Sure is warm weather we're having. Thirsty?

James starts to leave as we hear Donnie begin to urinate.

DONNIE

Hey! Do you like comedy?

JAMES

Yeah.

DONNIE

I'm doing a gig at the Laugh Club! If you get a chance...!

JAMES

Sure.

15 INT. COFFEE SHOP 15

James comes out of the back and sees Karen standing in line. He waves to get her attention and then goes to her.

KAREN

Hey you. How's it going?

JAMES

It's a job.

TAMRA, the assistant manager walks up. She's very pleasant.

TAMRA

James, can you clear up some of the tables and then go ahead and take your ten.

JAMES

Sure.

TAMRA

(To Karen)

Can I help you?

KAREN

Mocha, please.

That's on me. Put it on my tab. This is Tamra.

KAREN

Hi.

TAMRA

Hi. Okay. Four twenty-five.

KAREN

(To James)

Thanks, doll-face.

Karen goes to a table and sits. James walks up with a rag and starts wiping down a table next to her.

KAREN

So demeaning.

JAMES

Like I say.

KAREN

Did you talk to them about auditions?

JAMES

Yeah. Seems there's a few talented people here.

DONNIE

Caramel?

PATRON

Here!

JAMES

Evidently, that guy's a comedian.

KAREN

Who?

JAMES

The guy at the counter. He was talking to the toilet. He's doing a show tonight.

KAREN

Is he funny?

k k

I don't know. The toilet thing was all I saw.

KAREN

We should go. That would be fun. What time are you off?

JAMES

Nine.

KAREN

We should go.

Tamra walks up with Karen's drink.

TAMRA

Here you go. Mocha.

KAREN

Thanks.

JAMES

Hey Donnie! What time are you on tonight?

DONNIE

Ten. You coming?

JAMES

My friend and I. This is Karen.

KAREN

Hi.

DONNIE

Dude, you're in for a great time!

KAREN

He seems nice.

JAMES

Yeah.

KAREN

I'll invite Nacine.

She gets up.

JAMES

Headed out?

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Yeah. I'll see you at home.

JAMES

Sure.

KAREN

Thanks for the coffee.

She walks out.

16 INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

16

James is mopping. Tamra and Donnie are helping customers. James goes about his work with all the enthusiasm of a death row inmate.

It's a slow evening and Tamra walks up and helps straighten up the area.

TAMRA

How are you doing James?

JAMES

Good. You?

TAMRA

Can't complain. Any auditions?

JAMES

It's been hard.

DONNIE

Do you have an agent?

JAMES

I'm working on it.

DONNIE

Dude! My agent is going to be at my show. I'll talk to him, maybe I can get you in.

JAMES

Really?

DONNIE

He's kind of a character, once you get past the rudeness. Are you good?

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I've been acting for fifteen years.

Donnie shrugs. This means nothing but James is clueless and becomes defensive.

JAMES

Are you good?

DONNIE

I'm very good! That's why I have an agent.

JAMES

I guess we'll find out tonight.

DONNIE

Don't take what I say wrong. You're going to hear that question a lot in this town.

JAMES

Okay.

James' pride just doesn't relent. He puts the mop down.

JAMES

It's nine. Is it alright if I go?

TAMRA

Sure.

James takes the mop and bucket to the back.

DONNIE

You know... if he's put off by my asking he ain't seen nothing yet. They treat you like crap in this town. Either take the heat, or get off the pot... as they say.

17 INT. BUS - NIGHT

James and Karen are squeezed up against other passengers.

JAMES

So, tell me again why we're taking the bus?

KAREN

You want to drive through Hollywood traffic on a Friday night?

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Good point.

A moment of silence as they ride on.

JAMES

I hope this guy's funny.

KAREN

It's not easy, that's for sure.

JAMES

He had the balls to ask me if I'm good.

KAREN

What? Who?

JAMES

Donnie. He says he can get me in to see his agent. (mocking) "Are you good?"

KAREN

What did you say?

JAMES

I told him I've been doing this a long time.

KAREN

That just means you're experienced.

JAMES

What's the difference?

The bus comes to a stop.

KAREN

Seriously?

They make their way to the exit.

18 EXT. SIDEWALK

Karen and James walk side by side.

JAMES

Very serious. I know what I'm doing.

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But that doesn't necessarily mean you're good. Who's the guy that runs the community theater back home?

JAMES

Zane?

KAREN

He's been doing it for a long time and you've said he isn't that good.

JAMES

I get the point. All I'm saying is that I know my abilities.

KAREN

But... so does Zane.

They approach the LAUGH CLUB. There is a line formed outside.

KAREN

Here it is.

They get in line.

JAMES

But Zane and I are different when it comes to acting.

KAREN

How?

JAMES

I take it serious. This is what I want to do. It's just theater to him. You know, he-and-his-friends-getting-together-to-do-a-show-in-the-barn, sort of mentality.

KAREN

Do you think you're good?

JAMES

I think I'm very good!

KAREN

Then why didn't you just say that?

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I just thought it was nervy of him to ask. I mean, who is he, right?

KAREN

Don't burn any bridges, you never know who he can turn out to be.

JAMES

Whatever.

The line starts moving.

KAREN

Come on. Let's go have fun.

19 INT. LAUGH CLUB

19

James and Karen are standing in the back looking around. We see a young girl stand up and start waving to them.

KAREN

There's Nacine.

They make their way through the tables. NACINE, thirty years old is seated with ADAM, forty-three.

KAREN

Hey doll. Have you been waiting long?

NACINE

About half an hour, but they had a nice jazz band on.

KAREN

Hey Adam. James, this is Adam. Adam, my friend James. He's a new Angelonian.

ADAM

Hi James.

JAMES

Hi.

Nacine puts her hand out to James.

NACINE

Hi. I'm Nacine.

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James.

KAREN

Oops, sorry. Nacine, James. James, Nacine.

As they sit a WAITRESS walks up.

JAMES

Corona.

KAREN

Make that two, please.

The Waitress walks off.

NACINE

You're an actor.

JAMES

Yep.

NACINE

How's it going?

James shrugs.

NACINE

Not going good?

JAMES

To say the least.

NACINE

I know the feeling. That's what brought me here from Santa Cruz.

JAMES

No luck?

NACINE

I did a few jobs but I don't even try anymore. Ten years was enough rejection.

JAMES

Well, that's not very encouraging. If something doesn't happen soon, I'm out.

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* * * * ADAM

No! You can't! You know, you don't have to be an actor to enjoy LA. I love it here.

KAREN

You tell him!

JAMES

And I need to get out of this job.

NACINE

Where do you work?

JAMES

Coffee shop.

ADAM

Do you like wine?

KAREN

You have no idea.

NACINE

You're a winey?

JAMES

I love wine! Why?

NACINE

Adam owns the Wineshoppe on Westwood.

KAREN

James can tell you crap loads about wine.

ADAM

It's good money too.

KAREN

That would be right up your alley.

JAMES

Are you open to me going on auditions?

ADAM

I could totally work with you on that.

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That would be so awesome!

KAREN

Thank you you guys. He's been needing something like this.

JAMES

You have no idea!

NACINE

Plus, a lot of his clients are celebrities. You could develope a total repore.

JAMES

Oh, my god! Rock and roll!

The LIGHTS DIM and the HOST steps up on stage.

HOST

Hey y'all! How's everyone doing?

Cheers!

HOST

Okay, okay! (To someone in the audience) Hey! get your hand outta there!

The GUY yells something back.

HOST

Is that your girlfriend or mom?

Laughter. The Guy yells again.

HOST

Don't even try, monkey-boy! You'll lose bigtime!

Laughter.

HOST

Okay! This first guy comes to us from all the way over on the west side! Give it up for Donnie Morrisey!

Donnie bounds up on to he stage.

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DONNIE

Hey good people from Hollywood! Do you like my hair?

Cheers and boos. Donnie looks at our group in the front.

DONNIE

And look! We have a double date going on here.

James smiles, reaches over and takes Karen's hand. She pulls it away.

DONNIE

Oh no! Did you just see that? Dude grabbed his girlfriend's hand and she pulled it way!

Audience laughs. James is embarrassed.

KAREN

(Laughs)

He's not my boyfriend.

DONNIE

Oh my god! Honey just broke up with her man right here in front of everybody!

Karen is laughing along with the audience. James is not.

KAREN

We're just friends.

DONNIE

Oh man! Dude, she just dissed you in front of everybody.

JAMES

Whatever Donnie! Why don't you get us a coffee!

DONNIE

Uh-oh! Boy just tried to heckle me! Whatdaya say folks? Is it on?

The crowd starts chanting "Go-Go-Go!"

DONNIE

(To Karen)

Okay, little lady, stand up.

Oh god.

DONNIE

(To James and Adam) Stand up! Come on!

They stand, James on Karen's left and Adam on her right.

DONNIE

Okay folks! Right or left? Which one should she be with?

Much to James' chagrin, the crowd chants "Right! Right! Right!" Donnie throws his hands in the air.

DONNIE

Cha-Ching! You have been served!

James sits. He's not happy at all. Then to make matters worse...

DONNIE

Come on you two! Give us a hug!

Cheers and laughter as Karen and Adam hug each other.

20 EXT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD - DAY

James is walking up the street checking addresses. He stops in front of a small office door that reads:

MERIDIAN TALENT AGENCY

He walks in.

21 INT. MERIDIAN AGENCY

A small waiting area. There are a few chairs and small bookcase of magazines. The place seems empty and quiet. James just stands and looks around at nothing.

Two doors lead to offices. One reads: CARROLL MONTGOMERY. It opens and CARROLL walks out. He is in his early fifties and short. Dressed casual but nice. He comes out with a young man, TOM and they shake.

CARROLL

Good luck with that.

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	TOM Thanks Carroll!	*
	The young man leaves and Carroll eyes James. He makes no attempt to shake his hand.	*
	CARROLL Who are you?	*
	JAMES James Lyndsey. Donnie Morrisey	*
	CARROLL Oh yeah. Come on in.	*
	They walk into -	*
22	INT. CARROLL'S OFFICE 22	*
	Carroll takes his seat behind his desk and motions for James to sit. James sits across from Carroll.	*
	CARROLL Tom there just landed a Budweiser commercial.	*
	JAMES Cool.	*
	CARROLL So, how do you know Donnie?	*
	JAMES I worked with him at the coffee shop.	*
	CARROLL You funny too? Comedian?	*
	JAMES Uh, no. I'm an actor.	*
	CARROLL The thing is, I only handle comedians. Do you do any stand up?	*
	JAMES i tried once or twice.	*
	CARROLL That doesn't do me any good.	*

	JAMES Is there anything you can do for me? Maybe you can hip-pocket me.		
	CARROLL I don't hip-pocket. Who needs the extra baggage?		
He thinks	a moment as he studies James.		
	CARROLL Well, maybe I can suggest someone. What can you show me?		
	JAMES I've got a monologue from Exorcist Three.		
	CARROLL The Gemini Killer, blood draining speech?		
	JAMES Yes.		
	CARROLL Got anything else?		
Carroll's abruptness throws James off kilter. He's not quite sure how to handle it.			
	JAMES Uh, well I can		
	CARROLL Just do the Exorcist one. Go!		
James is thrown for a loop by the sudden start. He tries desperately to collect himself.			
	JAMES Uh um okay uh "I like plays the good ones" uh		
As he stammers through the monologue, we -			
INT. THE W	INESHOPPE - BREAKROOM 23	}	

James sits at a long table where a bottle of CHARDONNAY sits open. In front of him is a small WINE GLASS, a PENCIL and PAPER. James pours himself a glass of wine, sniffs and then sips it. He begins to write. He appears sullen.

23

James stiffens a bit when Adam walks in and sits.

ADAM

James, let's see what you did.

He looks at James' notes and smiles.

ADAM

You really do know your wine. Good job.

Adam stands and shakes James' hand.

ADAM

Welcome aboard.

JAMES

Thanks.

ADAM

That was pretty fun on Friday. Thanks for the invite.

JAMES

Hilarious. Also, about what we talked about earlier... about auditions.

ADAM

Not a problem. Just give me advanced noticed and we can work it out.

JAMES

Thank you.

ADAM

Now come on. I want to show you something I think you'll appreciate.

24 INT. WINESHOPPE SALES FLOOR

24

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*

James and Adam are standing in front of a locked glass case with expensive wines. Adam is smiling as he shows off his prize possession -

ADAM

Here's the real test. A 1998 Petrus Pomerol. Guess how much?

At least... what? Three grand?

ADAM

Nice. Nice. Close. Thirty-nine hundred.

JAMES

I'm surprised you don't have that in the safe!

ADAM

Half inch bullet proof glass on this case. Doesn't do me any good to keep them locked in a safe.

He hands James a set of KEYS.

ADAM

These are for when you need to get into the case.

JAMES

Alright.

Adam looks O.S. and smiles.

ADAM

Hey you!

Karen walks up.

KAREN

Hey.

JAMES

Hey you.

KAREN

How's it going so far?

JAMES

Good.

KAREN

(To Adam)

Ready?

ADAM

I just have a few things to finish. Give me ten minutes.

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	Okay.	KAREN
Adam awall	ks away. Ja	ames is uncomfortable.
		JAMES it was just a comedy didn't have to take rious.
	What?	KAREN
	What's ha	JAMES ppening here?
	We're hav	KAREN ing lunch.
	So is this	JAMES s like a romantic thing?
	What?	KAREN
	Nothing.	JAMES Just kidding. (He's not)
		KAREN you never told me what How did the audition go?
	Could have	JAMES e been better, I guess.
	Why? What	KAREN happened?
		JAMES as an ass! He kept pushing couldn't relax.
	Like how?	KAREN
	I kept war	JAMES go-go! Pissed me off. Then nting to show him else but he said no.
	Well, he's	KAREN s just one quy.

Yeah, but if he would have just given me a second chance, I know I could have done better.

KAREN

I'm sorry James.

JAMES

Yeah, well. Par for the course, the way this day seems to be going.

Something O.S. catches Karen's eye.

KAREN

Oh my god!

JAMES

What?

KAREN

Adam is helping Courtney Cox!

James slowly looks over his shoulder.

JAMES

Oh my god!

KAREN

Okay, don't keep staring.

JAMES

Wow! That's my first famous person. I'll go hit her up for a job.

KAREN

I dare you.

JAMES

I'd probably puke the minute I tried to talk.

Karen laughs.

KAREN

Here he comes.

JAMES

Great.

Adam walks up.

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KAREN

Courtney Cox?

ADAM

She's a regular. Quiet, but nice. So, you ready?

KAREN

Sure.

JAMES

See ya.

James walks away.

KAREN

Okay... um... see ya.

ADAM

Is he okay?

25 EXT. CAFE - LATER

Adam and Karen are sitting at a table. A light lunch with drinks.

MACIA

So James had a bit of a fancy for you?

KAREN

I honestly thought he was over it.

ADAM

Look, if this is going to make things uncomfortable...

KAREN

No, no, no. James just needs to refocus.

ADAM

Refocus?

KAREN

Right now I'm the only one he really knows in this town.

ADAM

How did you guys meet?

* * * *

25

* * *

KAREN Do you really want to talk about James?
ADAM Call me paranoid but I did just hire him. I would rather there were no hard feelings.
KAREN About seven years ago we were rehearsing a play in college. James and I started talking and afterward he asked me out.
ADAM Not interested?
KAREN To hear him tell it, I not only said no, but I made a 'yucky' face.
ADAM The yucky face?
KAREN I don't remember that. Anyway, we became friends.
ADAM So the candle went dim but never out.
KAREN Look, I doubt he's going to be a problem. He really wants to pursue acting.
ADAM What about you?
KAREN Theater was fun, but I just liked hanging with my friends. What about you? Were you ever an actor?
ADAM Never thought about it. But being in this town I had to deal with it.
KAREN It's done well for you.

	In a round-	ADAM -a-bout way. I'm very ne business.		
There's co	ncern on hi	is face.		
	James is ar	KAREN mazing with wine. He's o very well for you.		
	(Smile	ADAM es) is the yucky face?		
	-	KAREN at James does when he story		
She grimaces her face.				
	=	ADAM ne's still friends with		
		KAREN that irresistible.		
	Is that a f	ADAM Eact?		
	_	KAREN don't believe me?		
Adam grimaces his face and shakes his head 'no'.				
		KAREN You're so easy.		
		ADAM y obvious, isn't it?		
Karen winks.				
	In all seri	KAREN iousness, James is going for you. As far as 's going to be a make or ation.		
	Is he good?	ADAM ?		

KAREN It's hard to tell. James was spoon fed back home.			
ADAM Big fish in a small pond syndrome?			
KAREN Extremely.			
ADAM It's sad, though, when you think about it.			
KAREN What's that?			
ADAM People are so passionate about their craft and they get here and they're treated like crap. Really. When you think about it.			
KAREN It definitely filters out the man from the child. And that's what I'm talking about.			
CUT TO:			
INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT 26			
James is sitting on the sofa, watching an entertainment news show.			
MALE ANNOUNCER Big opportunities for three local comedians as Comedy Central will feature them in their young comedians show.			
FEMALE ANNOUNCER That's right Dan. We caught up with the trio as they finished a set last night at the Improv.			
JAMES You've got to be kidding me.			
ANGLE: TELEVISION			
We see the FEMALE ANNOUNCER sitting with the three comedians. One female and two guys - one of which is Donnie.			

26

FEMALE ANNOUNCER

We're sitting with Donnie Morrisey, Fran Dyer and - simply, Herman.

JAMES *

Grimaces his face as Karen walks in. He mutes the television.

JAMES

So I decided that agent is a joke. A two-bit hustler.

KAREN

What's that?

James points to the television.

JAMES

So how does Donnie rate?

KAREN

Oh my god! Wow!

JAMES

Yeah. Wow. Jerks me off and hands Donnie Comedy Central.

KAREN

James. Maybe Donnie just knew how to handle him.

JAMES

Fine. If that's what it takes then I can be a jerk too.

KAREN

I didn't say he was a jerk. I just said he knew how to handle him.

JAMES

Okay, so how do you handle a jerk without being a jerk yourself?

KAREN

I don't know. Ask Donnie what he did. I'm sure he's dealt with his fair share of agents.

JAMES

He owes me another audition.

* * *

* * *

KAREN

James, he doesn't owe you. I mean, maybe you had an off day.

JAMES

Off day my butt, he didn't have to be an ass.

KAREN

James, most agents aren't going to be sweet to you.

JAMES

See? I don't understand that. We're the ones who make them the money, right? How can you make money if you treat your product like crap?

KAREN

I'm sure it's a two-way street.

JAMES

Sure, but him acting like that doesn't make me want to work with him.

KAREN

Okay... we're going in circles here and I have to go to bed.

JAMES

Fine. I'll talk to Donnie.

KAREN

Exactly. You need to talk to someone in the business.

Karen goes to her room. James clicks on the sound again.

MALE ANNOUNCER

Thank you, Sarah. We wish them all the luck. Next up...

27 EXT. WINESHOPPE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

27

28 INT. WINESHOPPE

28

Adam is helping James stack cases of wine. In the B.G. we see a young woman, JULIE BRYON slowly making her way up the aisle. Adam notices her.

* * * * * * * * * *

ADAM

Don't look now, but you're about to help your first celebrity.

As she gets closer, James is surprised to see her.

JAMES

Oh my god! That's Julie Bryon!

ADAM

Go get her.

Adam walks away and James turns to face her.

JAMES

Hi. Can I help you... um... find some wine... today?

She is petite with blonde hair and blue eyes and very sweet. Very down to Earth.

JULIE

I was looking for a particular red that I tried some time ago. I don't remember the name but it has a clown on the label. Kind of quirky looking.

JAMES

Um... yeah... I think I know what you're looking for. It's, uh... right here.

James leads up another aisle and pulls a wine from the rack.

JAMES

It's called Ptomaine Blageurs, by Bonny Doon.

JULIE gets excited and takes the bottle from him.

JULIE

Oh my god! That's it! It is so good. The label is great!

 ${\tt JAMES}$

It's an off beat winery but they have a great rep. Robert Stegman is the artist.

JULIE

I'm having tri-tip.

* * * * *

It's a syrah and the smokiness will taste great with the tri-tip grilled.

JULIE

Thank you so much.

JAMES

Enjoy.

She walks away and as soon as she's out of his sight he falls to his knees with his hands over his head.

JAMES

Oh-my-freaking-god!!!

29 INT. APARTMENT

29

Karen is on the sofa. James is standing and has obviously just told her about his day.

KAREN

Oh-my-freaking-god!

JAMES

I'm saying! Can you believe that?

KAREN

Is town great or what? Last summer I'm walking down Ocean Boulevard in Santa Monica, I'm passing that hotel there and there's this crowd gathered on the sidewalk blocking my way. I'm really annoyed until I hear this familiar voice and I look over to see Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson standing at their car yelling to someone in the restaurant. Only in this town, James.

JAMES

This was my first time. Adam helps them all the time. Dustin Hoffman, Courtney Cox. I watch from a distance.

KAREN

And...?

* * * *

•

It got me thinking... these people come into the shop all the time?

KAREN

Yeah?

JAMES

To be talking to someone like Julie Bryon... I mean... wow! I can get her advice.

KAREN

But you have to be careful with that James.

JAMES

What does that mean?

KAREN

You can't just start hitting her up for a job when she comes in for wine.

JAMES

I'm just saying I have to start taking advantage of every opportunity.

KAREN

But you don't want to be stalker about it.

30 EXT. MELROSE AVE - DAY

30

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James is standing in front of THE IMPROV. On the front is a banner:

JOIN COMEDY CENTRAL THIS FRIDAY AND THE YOUNG COMEDIANS

James pretends to be reading the various ads. The doors open and a couple of MEN walk out. They smile at James and continue on their way.

He keeps 'reading'. Finally he gets frustrated and starts to leave when the doors open again and Donnie walks out with another GUY. Donnie is a bit dubious about James' presence.

DONNIE

Hey James! You looking for an autograph? How's it going?

Good, good.

The GUY pats Donnie on the shoulder and leaves.

DONNIE

See ya man! (To James) So... what's up?

JAMES

Uh, Tamra said you might be here.

DONNIE

Okay. And you saw Carroll?

JAMES

Yeah, actually, that's why I'm here. First of all, great set the other night. Boy, you got me, didn't you?

DONNIE

It's all in good fun.

JAMES

Sure, sure. And boy, you sure started something. They're like going out now.

DONNIE

Who?

JAMES

My friend Karen and Adam. The ones I was with.

DONNIE

Oh, okay. So... Carroll?

JAMES

Well, you know. The day wasn't the best. Personal things going on. I let them get to me and he didn't really see the best that I could do.

DONNIE

I'm sorry man, I thought he might be able to help.

JAMES

Well, you've been in this town, you know what it's like to audition and the pressures and all that...

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

DONNIE

Well, as the old Indian says in Josie Wales, You must endeavor to persevere.

JAMES

Right, right. But I was wondering... is there a chance you could get e back in to see him?

DONNIE

Gee, James, I don't know. If you couldn't get past the first audition, you know?

JAMES

But it's just like what I said. Too much going on in my head. I know I can do it. If I could just get one more chance.

DONNIE

Yeah, but it's my butt on the line if you're no good. I can't be pushing people on him, you know?

James begins to get defensive, smiles but becomes a bit more forceful.

JAMES

I totally get that. I really do. I just figure you know how it is. We have our good days and our bad days. That was one of my bad days.

James' attitude gives Donnie pause. He thinks about it. He really doesn't want to, but -

DONNIE

Look, Carroll's a tough nut, and he knows a lot of people. Let me talk to him. But just this one time. If he's not impressed then he's not impressed.

JAMES

All I need is one more chance.

DONNIE

Okay. (beat) You coming to the taping next week?

James is surprised and excited.

Absolutely! Yeah!

DONNIE

Okay. Cool. See you Friday.

JAMES

Hey. Good luck, break a leg and all that... and thanks again about Carroll. I really appreciate it.

They shake and James goes on his way. The look on Donnie's face shows he's not very comfortable about this.

31 INT. WINESHOPPE OFFICE - DAY

31

Adam is at his desk on the phone.

ADAM

James. Adam.

JAMES (FILTER)

Hey, Adam.

ADAM

I know it's Saturday, but you're going to need to get your butt in here right away.

32 INT. APARTMENT

32

James is in bed.

JAMES

What's up?

ADAM (FILTER)

Julie Bryon is here to see you.

JAMES

Hold on.

James gets up and goes to Karen's room and knocks.

KAREN O.S.

Yeah?

JAMES

It's me!

KAREN O.S.

Come on in!

James holds the phone to his chest as he walks into Karen's room.

JAMES

Adam says Julie Bryon is at the shop to see me.

KAREN

If Julie Bryon is there to see you, you don't stand there and tell me about it. You go - now!

33 INT. WINESHOPPE

James walks in the front door, Adam walks up to him.

ADAM

She's over in the reds.

James looks to where Adam indicated.

We see Julie Bryon browsing in the red wine section.

James looks stunned at Adam.

ADAM

I told her you would love to work with her.

JAMES

Why me?

ADAM

Really?

James walks over to the red wines. Julie smiles.

JULIE

Hi. I hope I'm not bothering you.

JAMES

No. Not at all.

JULIE

I'm Julie Bryon.

JAMES

I know. It's nice to meet you. James. I'm a... big fan, by the way.

33

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JULIE

Thank you. So, I'll tell you what brings me in today. Do you have a few minutes?

JAMES

Sure.

JULIE

My friends and I love wine, and we love food, so I decided to make an evening of it.

JAMES

A wine tasting dinner?

JULIE

I need someone who can work with my husband since he will be cooking the meal. Do you collaborate well?

JAMES

Very. Yes. That would actually be fun. I've never done that before.

JULIE

Well, he's very easy to work with but very stubborn about his food.

JAMES

I'm your man.

JULIE

Good. But I would also like to make it a special evening. Not just the regular wine tasting dinner. Any suggestions?

James thinks a moment or two, then smiles.

JULIE

Hmmm...?

JAMES

You now what might be fun? Have you ever done a component tasting?

JULIE

I have but I'm sure most of my friends have not.

* *

It's a great way to learn how to identify the various spices.

JULIE

Let m e talk to my husband.

JAMES

It's just a thought.

JULIE

No, I like that! Can I call you with the details?

JAMES

Absolutely.

JULIE

Okay. I'll talk to you soon. And thank you.

James smiles as she walks out. He stands there hyperventilating as Adam walks up.

ADAM

So, what's up?

JAMES

I'm going to throw up.

34 INT. WINESHOPPE BREAKROOM- DAY

34

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James is sitting at the table with his laptop, browsing.

ANGLE: LAPTOP MONITOR

We see a website for actors. It is a profile for James with his headshot. He clicks on a tab for MESSAGES. When it opens we see - NO NEW MESSAGES.

CLOSE UP: JAMES

as he grunts. Adam comes in.

ADAM

James.Julie Bryon is on the phone

JAMES

Okay.

We follow James into -

* * * *

* *

35 INT. OFFICE 35

James sits at the desk and picks up the phone.

JAMES

Hi. James.

JULIE (FILTER)

Hi, James. Julie Bryon. I was wondering if you would be able to meet with my husband and myself this afternoon.

James spots -

CLOSE UP: WINE

A case of BLACKBAND VINYARD wines.

JAMES O.S.

Oh, absolutely. What time is good?

JULIE (FILTER)

Is an hour okay?

James reaches down and picks up a bottle, inspecting it.

JAMES O.S.

Tell me where.

JULIE (FILTER)

Bolero Cafe on Wilshire? Do you know where that is?

He places the bottle back in the case.

CLOSE UP: JAMES

JAMES

I can find it. I'll see you in about an hour?

JULIE (FILTER)

Great. Bye-bye.

JAMES

Bye.

He hangs up, gets up and leaves the office.

CUT TO:

36

36 INT. WINESHOPPE BREAKROOM- DAY

Adam is setting out some new wines for tasting when James walks in and starts to put on his coat.

ADAM

Going to meet with Julie?

JAMES

Yeah. (Beat) What is that wine I saw in the office?

ADAM

My dad's winery, a long time ago.

JAMES

Really?

ADAM

Yeah. I grew up with wine making. That's how I learned what I know today.

JAMES

It's no longer around?

ADAM

It went belly up before the advent of the internet.

JAMES

Now that's the kind of wine history I need. Mine is kind of boring. Is it good?

ADAM

Five star at it's peak. Not many cases left but I break out a bottle every now and then.

JAMES

Okay. Well, I'm off.

ADAM

Good luck with that.

CUT TO:

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37 EXT. WILSHIRE BLVD - DAY - ESTABLISHING 37 The bustling traffic of Wilshire Blvd. We see James' car as he parks. 38 EXT. BOLERO CAFE 38 Julie and her husband CAMERON are sitting at an outdoor table. They both wear sunglasses and ball caps. Empty snack plates and a new bottle of Chardonnay with three glasses. James walks up and Julie waves to him. He walks over to them and Cameron stands to shake his hand. CAMERON You must be James. **JAMES** Yes. Hi. How are you? CAMERON Cameron. Good. Have a seat. I was about to crack open a bottle of wine JULIE How are you James? JAMES Good. Thank you. You? JULIE Very good. Cameron pops the cork on the Chard. CAMERON So where are you from, James? **JAMES** Stockton. Northern California. CAMERON I know Stockton. **JAMES** Really? CAMERON I have actually been through there.

. * * *

Wow! Small world.

JULIE

What brought you this way?

JAMES

Acting. No shock there.

CAMERON

That's the going story. And you're a wine connoisseur, I understand.

JAMES

I know my way around a bottle or two.

CAMERON

Where did you get your wine knowledge?

James smiles. He thinks about this as Cameron pours the wine.

JAMES

My dad. He had a small vineyard called Blackband. Taught me everything I know.

JULIE

Really? I never heard of it.

JAMES

Well, like acting, it's a tough industry. Unfortunately it went belly up before the advent of the internet, so you'll never find it there.

CAMERON

Well, that's too bad. Good wine?

JAMES

Very good.

JULIE

Cameron and I had the opportunity to try a now defunct wine about two years ago. What was that called, honey? *

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CAMERO	N(
CIMITIC	J T N

Oh man... what was that? Very nice wine too. We had the Cab.

JULIE

Aroma.

CAMERON

Yes! That's it! Very much lived up to it's name. Can people still get their hands on Blackband?

JAMES

My dad has a couple of cases. I'll see what I can do.

CAMERON

Well, listen, why don't we order a snack and then we can go over the menu.

JAMES

Sounds good.

Cameron waves for a waiter.

JULIE

Oh, and James, we were thinking the component tasting would be fun

JAMES

Oh, that's good!

CAMERON

We would like to have you there to kind of officiate over that part of the evening. Is that alright?

JULIE

And we'll pay you for your time, of course.

James is stunned at the offer. Quiet as this news soaks in.

JULIE

Is... that okay?

JAMES

Sure. I would be honored.

Cameron pours more wine.

CAMERON

Let's toast.

They clink their glasses.

FADE TO:

39 EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING 39

Over this we hear the laughter of a group of people.

40 INT. JULIE BRYON'S HOME

40

The group of MEN and WOMEN are sitting around the living room. There are TV trays set up in front of everybody with small LIQUEUR GLASSES. James is standing at a table holding one of the glasses in his hand.

JAMES

I kid you not. The wine was so convoluted with various components that it was actually banned in Australia... where it was made, by the way. But no. Back to acidity.

WOMAN

Isn't acidity bad?

JAMES

On the contrary, acidity is a nice balance in wine for the sweetness. Which brings us to the next taste test. Pick up the white wine... good, take a whiff. Smells great, doesn't it? Now swoosh it around in your mouth. You're going to get a sense of the apple, a slight acidity and sweetness. (They do it) Now, pick up the acid component, swoosh it around in your mouth and then swallow it. Then... take another sip of the wine.

They all do as he suggests. When they drink the wine we hear various sounds of amazement.

JAMES

Right? Did you taste the difference? What did you taste?

MAN

The wine tasted sweeter. How did that happen?

JAMES

The acid that you drank suppressed your sense of acid just enough to let the sweetness of the wine come through. What does that tell you?

JULIE

Balance.

JAMES

Exactly. Acid works with sweet to give the wine balance. Also, the more acid, the less P.h. The less P.h., the longer lasting the wine.

Various 'aahs' as he picks up a cup for the next taste.

CUT TO:

41 INT. JULIE BRYON'S HOME - LATER

41

James is gathering up his stuff into a BOX as the people sit around talking. Julie and Cameron walk up to him.

JULIE

Thank you so much for the education. That was amazing.

CAMERON

Really very nice.

JAMES

Well, great! I'm glad you guys liked it.

JULIE

So, look, you have a great personality, very nice guy, so I am going to...

She takes a pen from James and writes a number on the box.

JULIE

Give this guy a call and tell him I sent you. He's an agent. I can't promise anything, the rest is up to you, but... (Shrugs)

CAMERON

I knew she was going to do that.

JAMES

Well, thank you. You didn't have to do that. Thank you.

James takes out his cell phone and holds it up.

JAMES

Is it okay if I take a picture?

JULIE

Sure.

She hands the camera to Cameron and then stands next to James with her arm around him. Cameron takes a picture and hands the phone back to James.

JAMES

Thank you so much.

CAMERON

This is for you.

Cameron hands James an envelope.

JULIE

We'll show you out.

JAMES

Oh, no, no, no! You two enjoy your party. I can get it.

James picks up the box revealing a BOTTLE of BLACKBAND WINE sitting on the counter.

JULIE

Oh, and by the way... we're looking forward to trying this.

JAMES

You're very welcome. Enjoy.

JULIE

We will. Thanks again.

CUT TO:

42 INT. JAMES' CAR - NIGHT

He is sitting on the drivers side looking in the envelope Julie gave him. He has a stunned look on his face.

JAMES

Holy crap!

CUT TO:

43 INT. KAREN'S APARTMENT - LATER

43

42

James is standing over Karen, who sits on the sofa, staring in the same envelope.

KAREN

Holy crap!

JAMES

Right?

KAREN

James! There's over a thousand dollars here!

JAMES

I'm saying! And... she gave me the number to an agent or someone.

KAREN

Get out!!

JAMES

I didn't even have to smack up to her!

Karen looks at the box.

KAREN

Who is this?

JAMES

Don't know, but, she told me to tell him that she sent me. Check this out.

He takes out his phone and shows her the picture of he and Julie.

KAREN

And already as your wallpaper. See? Did I not tell you something like this would happen?

You the man, K!

KAREN

Are you going to call?

JAMES

Hell yeah! I don't know what to do. What monologue should I do?

KAREN

What about the one from Malice, that Alec Baldwin does. What is it? The one about, you know, *I am God*! That one!

JAMES

Maybe. (Beat) You know what one would be intense? The one from Exorcist three. The one that Brad Dourif does.

KAREN

You think?

JAMES

Absolutely! I did it for drama day at the college. They loved it!

KAREN

They did?

James is a bit put off by Karen's response.

JAMES

What do you mean? You were there!

KAREN

I know. But it seemed like it was, you know... okay.

JAMES

Well, okay. Malice it is.

KAREN

I think that'll be best.

JAMES

I say we go celebrate. My treat.

The door bell rings. Karen answers it. James is surprised to see Adam.

	James.	ADAM
	Hey Adam.	JAMES
	So? How'd	ADAM it go tonight?
	Good.	JAMES
	person I	KAREN g coy. He's the first know to get a thousand p for a two hour job.
	Wow! Jame	ADAM s! Good job!
Adam shak	es his han	d.
	So you	JAMES guys are going out?
	Late nigh	ADAM t drink.
		KAREN Adam the rest. He scored on with a prominent agent.
	Very nice guys say.	ADAM . Break-a-leg, I guess you
		JAMES I'm thinking maybe the three monologue would work
	But we vo	KAREN ted against it.
	Why? What	JAMES was wrong with it?
	strong. I Dourif, y	KAREN a bit, I don't know, mean, if your Brad es! Absolutely! You just e at a certain level to one off.

You don't think I'm at a certain level? I've been doing theater for fifteen years, doll!

KAREN

You've been doing theater for fifteen years back home. It's a whole different level here.

JAMES

I don't believe this! You don't think I can do it!

KAREN

James, you have to show them your best side and the Malice monologue is great! You've knocked that one out of the ball park!

JAMES

Okay... we'll see. Whatever.

James starts to walk to his room.

KAREN

James, don't take it the wrong way. It's just that the Malice monologue will...

JAMES

No, I get it! It will show me off better. Fine. I'll do that one then. You guys have a great time tonight.

Karen is stunned by this change in attitude as James goes into his room and shuts the door. Karen leads Adam out.

43A EXT. APARTMENT

43A

Karen and Adam are walking to his car.

ADAM

Did I come at a bad time?

KAREN

No. I don't know. I think he's overthinking what to do.

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ADAM

It's just seems like he's not to happy with us hanging out.

KAREN

Well, he's got to get used to it.

ADAM

He just seems like...

KAREN

Adam, I've known James for seven years and this interest he's got with me has just recently reared it's head. It's just as surprising to me, believe me.

ADAM

It's just that these things can wreak havoc when people work together. I have a business to run.

KAREN

I know. I really don't think James would screw that up. It's his job, you know?

ADAM

Are you sure?

She's not.

CUT TO:

44

44 INT. WINESHOPPE - DAY

James walks in and is greeted by Adam with huge smile.

ADAM

Congratulations are in order!

JAMES

What? Why?

ADAM

Julie Bryon called this morning, raving about the dinner! "James did an awesome job and was thoroughly entertaining".

* * * *

Oh my god! Really? She said that about me?

Adam is a bit overly appreciative. Over-compensating for what he thinks could be an uncomfortable situation.

ADAM

Wait! It gets better! Next month are the Emmy Awards and Ms. Bryon is having an after awards shin-dig in her home! We - my friend - are supplying the wine for the event! Ten-thousand-dollars!

JAMES

What??

ADAM

Nice job.

James is speechless as Adam pats him on the back.

CUT TO:

45 EXT. SUNSET BLVD - DAY - ESTABLISHING

45

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James is walking up the street, a note in hand and checking addresses. We see a door with a sign that reads:

CREATIVE INTERNATIONAL AGENCY

James goes inside.

46 INT. CREATIVE INTERNATIONAL

46

A fairly swank office. Large. James walks up to a receptionist with a desk plate that reads: AMBER JENSEN.

AMBER

May I help you?

JAMES

My name is James Lyndsey, I have an appointment with David Gary? I was referred by Julie Bryon.

AMBER

Oh yes, David is expecting you. Go ahead and have a seat.

James takes a seat in the waiting area.

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FADE TO:

47 INT. CREATIVE INTERNATIONAL - LATER

47

Not sure how long, but James has been waiting patiently. Finally -

AMBER

James? David will see you now.

JAMES

Thank you.

James walks into -

48 INT. DAVID'S OFFICE

48

DAVID GRAY is a very distinguished man. He sits behind a very nice desk that furnishes a large, beautifully decorated office. He is straight forward with no time for small talk, but pleasant. He smiles when James enters.

DAVID

James?

JAMES

Yes sir.

James shakes his hand.

DAVID

Have a seat. So, tell me about yourself. What's your experience?

JAMES

Predominantly theater. I did a small role in a very low budget independent film in Sacramento last summer.

DAVID

Do you have a reel tape?

JAMES

Unfortunately, no. I apologize.

DAVID

I understand. Well, here's the thing. Consider yourself lucky. The only reason you're here now is because of Julie.

I understand, and I appreciate the opportunity. I certainly don't want to waste your time. I have my resume here.

James starts to hand it to David, who just pushes it back to him.

DAVID

At this point a resume does me no good. People can put anything on a resume.

JAMES

Again, I understand. What do you need from me?

DAVID

What have you got?

JAMES

I have a monologue from the Exorcist three.

David puts out his hand, inviting James to start. James is nervous but takes a few moments to relax. Shrugs his shoulders, loosens his neck and then slowly looks at David. His expression is forced, affected. When he starts, it is overdone. Not very good.

JAMES

"I like plays. The good ones... Shakespeare... I like Titus Andronicus the best; it's sweet. Incidentally, did you know that you are talking to an artist..."

CUT TO:

49 EXT. CAFE - LATER

49

James is sitting at a table outside. A cup of coffee and a snack. He is neither eating or drinking. He stares off to nowhere in particular. A sullen expression on his face.

Karen walks up, excited.

KAREN

There you are!

Hey.

KAREN

I've been trying to call you.

James takes out his cell phone and turns it on.

JAMES

Oh yeah.

He sits silent. Not responding to Karen.

KAREN

So?

JAMES

It, uh... it went good. Yeah. He's going to... he's not sure he can represent me himself, but he's going to refer me to another guy.

KAREN

(Not buying it)

James?

JAMES

It sucked, K! Okay? He thought I sucked!

KAREN

He didn't say that, did he?

JAMES

Well, no, but you could see it. Then he just brushed me off. 'Maybe this isn't the right time for you. Thank you for coming in.'

KAREN

I'm sorry, James.

JAMES

The thing that gets me the most is Julie. He's going to tell her and she's going to think I suck as well.

KAREN

She's an actor. I'm sure she'll understand.

I think I'm going to call her! Maybe she could suggest something. She knows the guy, and...

KAREN

That may not be a good idea, you know?

JAMES

But if I could just get in there again! Show him what I can do! I was nervous, you know?

KAREN

I don't know, James! If she asks, just tell her what happened. Let her suggest something - if she wants!

JAMES

Karen! You don't understand! You've never been into acting the way I have! I could have done better!

KAREN

James, don't do this. Promise me.

JAMES

But...

KAREN

James!

James fumes, sits there for a moment in silence.

JAMES

I was so close... for the first time.

KAREN

You'll get there again. Who's to say you won't?

JAMES

Get there again!? Are you kidding me? They all want teenagers! Look at me! How long will it be before I get there again?

KAREN

Don't mock me, James! All I'm saying is take it slow with Julie. You've just met her!

Oh what do you know? Acting was a hobby for you. It wasn't even acting, it was getting together with your friends!

KAREN

Don't jump down my throat because your audition went south!

JAMES

I'm just saying you don't understand!

KAREN

And I'm saying don't take it laying down! Get up and do something about it!

JAMES

That's what I want to do and you're telling me not to

KAREN

There are other options! You don't need to go back to Julie!

JAMES

Like what?

KAREN

Take classes! Take workshops! You can get auditions through them as well!

JAMES

And how long will that take? That's just more stops eating away at my career! Get real!

KAREN

You know what? Fuck you, James! You're soft because all those people back home never challenged you! Don't blame me for your inadequacies as an actor!

With that, Karen walks off.

James sits for a moment or two - fuming. Finally he gets up and walks away.

CUT TO:

he's a bit tipsy..

50 James walks in and stops short when he sees Karen sitting on the sofa, on the phone. She stops talking when she notices

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KAREN

I'll call you back.

She hangs up and sits back with her arms folded. Still very pissed.

JAMES

Go ahead and say it.

KAREN

That was unacceptable.

JAMES

Look. I know I can get past this.

KAREN

Get past what?

JAMES

It all comes down to a comfort issue.

KAREN

What are you talking about?

JAMES

You and me. Karen...

KAREN

Oh my god, James! Don't even go there!

JAMES

There's a reason we get along so well!

KAREN

No, we do not get along! Not anymore!

JAMES

You know what they say. With the right person by your side...

KAREN

James, if you can't do it by yourself, then the right person by your side is not going to help!

But it will!

He sits too close to her and she scoots away.

KAREN

James... go to sleep.

JAMES

You gotta hear me out.

KAREN

No I don't!

JAMES

There's a reason why I get so upset at you.

Karen gets up and stands away from him.

KAREN

Oh my god! Are you kidding me?

JAMES

Come on! Where do you think this is coming from?

KAREN

Go to bed!

JAMES

Why did you let me move in here?

KAREN

I thought we were friends and you needed a place to stay! How dare you take advantage of that!

JAMES

I wasn't taking advantage! That's the way I see it!

KAREN

Because you're drunk!

She stands next to her bedroom door, about to go it. She stops and looks at him.

KAREN

You know what? I don't want to talk to you when you're drunk!

She goes into her room. James slumps onto the couch.

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51 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

51

James is still slumped back on the couch. We hear the television. Dialogue from an old film surrounds us as the CAMERA pulls in tight on him.

MAN:

You're Norma Desmond. You used to be in silent pictures. You used to be big.

WOMAN

I am big. It's the pictures that got small.

James is in a daze as he stares at the television, not really watching.

CUT TO:

52 INT. APARTMENT - DAY

52

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James walks out of his bedroom brushing his hair. From the television we hear the newscaster:

NEWSCASTER

Emmy news is buzzing with the nomination of Julie Bryon as best actress in a dramatic series.

He watches for a moment and then goes to the bookshelf.

NEWSCASTER

This will be the third nomination and hopefully first win for her as she also celebrates her fifth anniversary with husband Cameron.

He pulls out an AGENTS GUIDE and begins flipping pages until he finds what he's looking for. Picks up his phone and dials.

FEMALE NEWSCASTER

We wish her the best, as well as all the nominees. Also in the works, a new movie by...

James turns off the television.

JAMES

JAMES (cont'd)

had a dinner at her home just last week and she told me that I should call your office. - Yes, I have some film experience - Yes, I have a head shot, and I would love to come in and talk with Mister Mann - Okay, sure. - Whenever is convenient for him - Friday is good - Two o'clock? Absolutely. See you Friday - Thank you. (hangs up)

He sits back on the sofa and smiles.

CUT TO:

53 INT. WINESHOPPE - DAY

James is stacking cases of wine when Adam walks up.

ADAM

James.

JAMES

Hey Adam.

ADAM

How are you doing?

JAMES

Best as I can be. Surviving.

ADAM

I need to ask you something.

JAMES

What's up?

ADAM

I had six bottles of Blackband and now there is only five. Neither Jenny or myself pulled any so I was wondering if you knew anything about it?

JAMES

No, I really don't.

ADAM

James... I'm not accusing anybody... if you know anything please tell me and we can move on.

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I don't know what to tell you Adam.

Adam doesn't believe him but there's no sense pressing. Adam just smiles.

ADAM

Okay... Um... the order for Julie Bryon just arrived. If you could set it against the far wall in the stockroom and put her name on it.

JAMES

I got it.

ADAM

So, I guess you're friend is doing his gig tonight at the Improv?

JAMES

Yeah, they're filming for Comedy Central. Are we still making it a group thing? It's free, so...

ADAM

Free?

JAMES

Yeah. He invited me, so...

ADAM

Sounds good.

Adam starts to leave.

JAMES

Oh, uh, Adam... is it alright if I cut out about an hour early today. I have an audition.

ADAM

Sure.

Adam walks off.

CUT TO:

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54 INT. DARYL MANN AGENCY

James is seated in the waiting area. He appears much more relaxed than his visit to the first agent. Confident, almost, as he smiles and bobs his foot to the music playing softly. Again it is a very posh office. Definitely a high-end agency.

A RECEPTIONIST sits at the desk doing her paperwork. Finally a beep from her intercom.

RECEPTIONIST

Mister Lyndsey? Mister Mann will see you now.

JAMES

Thank you.

James gets up and struts into -

55 INT. DARYL MANN'S OFFICE

Again, a very swank office with expensive furniture. DARYL MANN is an A list agent with an impressive record for making or breaking talent. He sits back in his seat as James walks in. His demeanor is stoic. He merely motions for James to sit and James does. At first he just looks at James with a poker face, studying him. James becomes slightly nervous. Finally -

DARYL

So, tell me again how you know Julie?

JAMES

She invited me to her home for a wine tasting dinner. I sell wine. We hit it off and when she found out that I was... am... an actor she suggested I call you. Just tell Daryl I sent you. So... here I am.

Daryl sits and mulls this over with a 'hmmm!'.

DARYL

That's very interesting. You see, the way it normally works is when an actor, the likes of Julie Bryon, suggests an agent, they usually call said agent to give them a heads up. 54

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Oh. She didn't call you?

DARYL

She said you seemed nice. You know wine like it's nobody's business, but... no... she did not give you my number.

JAMES

Mister Mann...

DARYL

I almost had my secretary call you and cancel.

JAMES

Yeah?

DARYL

But then I thought, if this guy's talent matches his balls then I should take a look.

JAMES

Oh... good.

DARYL

But then I had a talk with David Gray over at Creative.

James becomes more nervous,

DARYL

Mister Lyndsey, I've been in this business for a rather long time. I have seen actors come into this town and worm their way into agent's offices; casting director's, film director's and even writer's. And let me tell you that some people can be very inventive - on the cusp of entertaining even, to get themselves in front of someone like me. One day a pizza guy shows up with five free pizza's. You know what was on the bottom of each pizza when we all had our fill? Guess.

I would guess, somebody's resume?

DARYL

His headshot. Under each pizza. Now that's inventive. That's creativity. I called that guy in a heartbeat and now he's a working actor. He's not an A lister, but he's not selling wine either. On the other side of the spectrum we have people like you, who name drop and use other people's fame to weasel into my office. It's not inventive. It's not creative, and it's not entertaining.

Daryl stares at James.

JAMES

So... I guess I'll never work in this town again?

DARYL

From what I understand you haven't even started work in this town, so let's not ruin your losing streak.

With his tail tucked firmly between his legs, James walks out of the office.

CUT TO:

56

56 EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

James' car pulls up in front of Julie Bryon's home. He gets out of the car.

CUT TO:

57 INT. JULIE BRYON'S HOME

57

Cameron is preparing a meal in the kitchen. A 'beep' sounds from O.S. He goes to ${\mathord{\text{-}}}$

58 INT. DEN 58

A beautifully decorated den with an oak desk at one end. Behind the desk is a table near the window that holds four SECURITY MONITORS. On one monitor is the front gate where Cameron is surprised to see James standing there.

CAMERON

Honey? (Beat) Julie!!

JULIE O.S.

What?

CAMERON

You better come over here!

Julie walks over to the monitors. Before Cameron can say anything she notices James.

JULIE

Oh, you've got to be kidding!

CAMERON

Um, should we call the police?

JULIE

No. I'll go talk to him.

CAMERON

I'm going with you.

59 EXT. JULIE BRYON'S HOME - FRONT GATE

59

James is standing there, agitated as Cameron and Julie walk up. They do not open the gate but speak to him through the bars.

CAMERON

James? What are you doing here?

JAMES

Julie? Can I talk to you?

JULIE

James, you can't just show up here. What do you want?

James is a little put off by their attitude and looks at them perplexed.

I... um... is it okay if I come in?

CAMERON

I think right here is fine, James.

JAMES

Are you mad at me? I don't understand what's going on?

JULIE

Did you tell Daryl Mann that I sent you over there?

JAMES

All I wanted was a chance. I don't feel like I had the chance with the first guy!

JULIE

That's not right, James. You can not just do things like that!

JAMES

Well, yeah, but...

JULIE

What you did was abuse of my hospitality!

JAMES

You gotta understand, I've been out of the game for some time and hadn't had a chance to warm up. Please, if you could...

JULIE

I'm sorry it didn't work out but that's what happens. You have to go now.

JAMES

Please! If you could just get me in one more time...

CAMERON

James! It's over! Julie asked you politely to leave. If you come back we'll have to call the police!

JAMES

Why are you acting this way? I just came here to talk to you.

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* * * JULIE

Good bye, James.

They walk away and James yells after them.

JAMES

I did more for you than give a phone number, Julie! I could have just sold you the wine and sent you on your way! I gave my time!

CAMERON

And we paid you for your time! Good bye!

Pissed, James kicks the gate. Cameron takes his cell phone out and begins to call the police. James stands there watching, as if daring, then he resigns and storms to his car and drives off leaving skid marks.

CUT TO:

60 EXT. SUNSET BLVD - DAY

60

REVERSE SHOT: JAMES

is driving along pissed. Cursing under his breath. Soon, from behind we see the lights from a POLICE CAR. James looks in the rear view mirror.

JAMES

Son of a bitch! Now what?

He pulls over and waits as the police car pulls up behind him. The POLICEMAN gets out of the car and walks up to James's car. James rolls down the window.

POLICEMAN

License and registration?

James complies and pulls the documents from his wallet. The policeman looks them over, all is in order so he hands them back.

POLICEMAN

Mister Lyndsey, do you know why I pulled you over?

JAMES

No sir. (He does)

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POLICEMAN

Mister Lyndsey, did you just come from Julie Bryon's home?

JAMES

Yes sir.

POLICEMAN

Do you want to tell me what happened?

James thinks a moment. Contemplates playing dumb but wisely decides against.

JAMES

Um, we just had a disagreement and I left.

POLICEMAN

Nothing else, Mister Lyndsey?

JAMES

Yes sir. I kicked the gate. I... I'm sorry about that. I'm not going back there.

POLICEMAN

Mister Lyndsey have you lived here in the Los Angeles area for very long?

JAMES

A few months now.

POLICEMAN

Mister Lyndsey, this is not like most other towns. There are a multitude of celebrities that live here and that can sometimes create difficult moments with fans.

JAMES

I understand sir.

POLICEMAN

I'm going to leave you with a warning. They did call us and if we have to talk to you again it may be in jail. I'm sure you don't want that.

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No sir.

POLICEMAN

Have a good day.

JAMES

Thank you.

The policeman walks back to his car. James curses again under his breath and slowly drives off.

CUT TO:

61 EXT. MELROSE AVE - NIGHT

Karen and Adam are with Nacine and James on the crowded street of Melrose. They are in a brisk walk as all are excited about their evening together. The three are talking very animated, James just looks upset.

NACINE

This is going to be fun. Thank you for inviting me James.

JAMES

Sure.

ADAM

Same here.

KAREN

Don't forget me.

JAMES

Pays to know people.

Karen walks up next to him.

KAREN

Are you okay?

JAMES

I'm fine.

KAREN

Look, the other night was just...

JAMES

Dude, I'm fine.

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They reach the THE IMPROV where we see two lines. The one on the left is for the regular crowd, which is very long and almost down the block. The one on the right is for V.I.Ps, hardly no one in that line. James and company get into the VIP line. At the door they are stopped by a rather large DOORMAN with a clipboard.			
	DOORMAN Name?		
	JAMES James Lynsey. We're friends of Donnie Morrisey.		
He checks	the clipboard and shakes his head.		
	DOORMAN No go bro. You're not on the list.		
	JAMES No. He invited us.		
	DOORMAN I have a party of two for Morrisey and they're already checked in.		
	JAMES That's us!		
	DOORMAN I'm counting four of you, bro.		
	KAREN James, it's okay. We can just get in line.		
	JAMES But he invited me! I'm a friend of his!		
	DOORMAN You need to skee-daddle bro! I got other people in line!		
	ADAM James, we can figure it out later.		
	JAMES No! That's not right! Somebody else took our reservations!		

* * **DOORMAN**

Bro! You need to go now!

KAREN

James! Let's go!

DOORMAN

Listen to your friends, bro, cuz you don't want me putting you out!

KAREN

James! Let's go!

JAMES

Look again!

DOORMAN

Don't need to look again Jimmy! I read just fine. Now go!

NACINE

Can we just go please?

DOORMAN

Yes, you can go please!

JAMES

This is screwed up, asshole!

James pushes the doorman, causing him to drop his clipboard. The large guy grabs James by the arm and twists it behind his back and then pushes James to the sidewalk.

DOORMAN

Leave now before I call the cops!

ADAM

James! Leave with us now!

The three help him up and pull him along down the street as James eyeballs the doorman.

They stop a few doors down by a restaurant.

ADAM

Alright. Look. Let's go grab a bite. My treat.

KAREN

You guys go inside, we'll be along in a bit.

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Adam and Nacine go into the restaurant. James leans against the building. Karen gathers herself as she watches James. Then -

Seven years I've known you and you still have the ability to surprise me. What the hell was that all about?

JAMES

KAREN

There's no reason for that! I should have been on the list!

KAREN

What did Donnie say to you? Exactly!

JAMES

He said, you're going to be there right? I said I would love to and he said okay!

KAREN

But did he actually say you were on his list?

JAMES

What else could he mean?

KAREN

He could have been asking if you were going to be there. That's it!

JAMES

That's ridiculous!

KAREN

James, he's just starting out. I'm sure he's limited to how many he can invite. He just met you.

JAMES

This is bull! You know what? He said something to his agent. That second audition was worse than the first one! And then this happens! He's trying to screw me!

KAREN

Now that's ridiculous!

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Well then he should have been clear!

KAREN

I think you were just reading into it.

James huffs and looks at her in disbelief.

JAMES

Okay, fine! It's all my fault!

KAREN

James...

JAMES

You know what? Just go inside and be with your boyfriend!

KAREN

You know what? I'm tired of being your punching bag. We need to part ways.

JAMES

What does that mean?

KAREN

You need to move out. Tonight. I'm done with this.

Karen walks into the restaurant.

CUT TO:

62

62A

62 EXT. MOTEL - DAY - ESTABLISHING

James' car pulls up and parks.

62A INT. MOTEL MANAGER'S OFFICE

The MOTEL MANAGER looks up to see James' car pull in.

63 INT. MOTEL ROOM

> James walks in and tosses his keys on the bed. He's exasperated and then sits on the bed. Soon a knock at the door. He answers it. It's Adam.

63

Hey Adam! Come on in.

Adam walks in. He seems upset.

ADAM

You want to tell what happened?

JAMES

With what?

ADAM

Julie Bryon.

JAMES

What do you mean?

ADAM

Julie Bryon almost canceled her order. She was this close!

JAMES

What does that have to do with me?

ADAM

She called this morning. I was on the phone for an hour with her.

JAMES

Adam...

ADAM

Did you cause a scene at her house?

JAMES

Did she tell you that?

ADAM

Not at first, no! She just wanted to cancel and I thought it might be the prices, so I tried to negotiate with her. Luckily I was able to save the sale.

JAMES

Adam, it was just a misunderstanding. That's all!

ADAM

A misunderstanding!? Really? Well, that misunderstanding could have cost the Wineshoppe a nice profit! * * *

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I'm sorry! But it's one customer, Adam! Look at all the celebrities who shop there!

ADAM

That's the problem, James! Celebrities look out for one another! If they hear some kook at the Wineshoppe started causing problems they're not going to want to come back. They're a close-knit community.

JAMES

That's what the cop said.

ADAM

The what? The what!?

JAMES

Oh crap!

ADAM

I thought you said it was a misunderstanding?

JAMES

You know what? She should never had said anything to you! That was wrong of her!

ADAM

That was wrong of her? Of her? She is my customer!

JAMES

You didn't lose the sale! I don't know why you're so upset! What do you want me to do? Just tell me! Go ahead say it!

ADAM

I don't know! Yesterday was a hell of a day for you. You have a problem with Karen, you cause a a scene at the Improv, and something happens with Julie Bryon that apparently involves the police!

JAMES

I don't know what to tell you!

Adam just stands a moment as he composes himself. Finally -

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ADAM

And you lied to me about taking the bottle of Blackband. You gave it to Julie.

JAMES

It was just PR for the shop.

ADAM

Julie Bryon is more than a good reason to pull out a bottle of Blackband. All you had to do was ask!

JAMES

So what? Am I fired?

ADAM

Here's the thing. Julie Bryon does not want to deal with you. That's how I saved the sale. I have to look out for my business. I spent fifteen years building up my reputation. (Beat) I'll bring by your final check tonight. I need the key.

James looks through his belongings.

JAMES

I must have left it at the apartment. I can go get it right now.

ADAM

No. Just... bring it by tomorrow and I'll have your check ready for you.

With that, Adam leaves James stunned.

James sits in silence, sulking.

Again there is a knock at the door. James answers the door. It's the MOTEL MANAGER. James just sighs.

MOTEL MANAGER

You got some money for me?

JAMES

I'm sorry. Look. I ran into some trouble but I will have money tomorrow. I promise.

MOTEL MANAGER

You said the same thing to me yesterday. You can't stay here for free.

JAMES

Honestly! I just lost my job!

MOTEL MANAGER

That's not my problem! I have a business to run! I either have money in my hand or you need to get out!

JAMES

I promise! I promise! If you wait until tomorrow I will pay you for the last two days!

MOTEL MANAGER

And let you skip out behind my back? No! Money or out!

JAMES

I can't skip! I got no place to go!

MOTEL MANAGER

Not my problem, man! You shoulda thought of that! Let's go!

Irritated, James slaps his belongings together and carries them out the door. The Motel Manager takes the key from on top of the bed.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. KAREN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

64

James is standing at the front door with his suitcase. Lights are off inside. James knocks. A moment later Karen answers the door. She keeps it open just a fraction and says nothing.

JAMES

Hey.

KAREN

What do you want?

JAMES

Just want to get the rest of my stuff.

She opens the door and walks away.

CUT TO:

65 INT. BEDROOM

65

James gathers up the few things he has left and then takes the SHOP KEYS from the small table next to the wall.

66 INT. APARTMENT

66

James walks out of his room. Karen just sits on the sofa watching television. James hands her the apartment key. She takes it and he stands there a moment or two.

KAREN

What?

JAMES

The thing is... I got kicked out of the motel and...

KAREN

No.

JAMES

Karen, I really am sorry. I...

KAREN

You know that comfortable feeling I didn't want spoiled? That line has been crossed.

The point is made. James slowly leaves.

CUT TO:

67 INT. BAR - NIGHT

67

James sits at the bar with his suitcase next to him. He obviously has had quite a bit as he looks quite toasted. The BARTENDER walks up. James points to his glass for another.

BARTENDER

I think you've reached your limit, pal.

JAMES

Just one more.

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BARTENDER

You've already had one more, and that was one more too many. I'll get you a seltzer.

JAMES

Wait! Look! I am a friend of Julie Bryon's.

BARTENDER

So? How's that supposed to get you a drink?

JAMES

Because. Look, you're an actor, right? Just tending bar, waiting for your big break?

BARTENDER

No.

That didn't work.

JAMES

Can I get just one drink?

BARTENDER

No.

JAMES

No, really...

BARTENDER

Oh. You mean really. I thought you were just kidding.

JAMES

So can I get a drink?

BARTENDER

No. Really. Out.

JAMES

Get out. Again, I have to get out. Story of my freakin' life!

He runs his finger around the inside of the glass and licks it.

JAMES

That's okay. I know where I can get a drink. And the good stuff. Better than anything you have here.

BARTENDER Knock yourself out, pal!

James grabs his suitcase and wobbles out the door.

CUT TO:

68 INT. WINESHOPPE - NIGHT

68

It is dark inside. We are looking out the front door. James walks up and unlocks the steel gate, then the door and opens it. He stumbles in and closes the gate and door.

He begins strolling up and down the aisles, periodically picking up a bottle of wine here and there and inspecting it. Finally he looks O.S. and smiles.

POV: JAMES

We are looking at the high end wine case.

MEDIUM: JAMES

walks over to the case, takes out his keys and unlocks the case. He takes a deep breath as he slowly takes the bottle of PETRUS from it's cradle on the top shelf.

James takes a cheap WINE OPENER from a CLIP STRIP hanging nearby. He sits on the floor and takes another deep breath as he cuts the foil and then screws in the cork screw and slowly pops the cork out. He sets the bottle next to him to let it breath. He leans over and sniffs.

JAMES

So that's what four grand smells like.

He gets up and walks over to a shelf of WINE GLASSES and takes one. He sits again next to the bottle and slowly pours a little into the glass. He swirls and sniffs. Smiles and takes a sip. Smiles again and drinks the rest. Then pours a half glass, drinks and leans back with his eyes closed.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

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69 EXT. WINESHOPPE - DAY

Adam walks up to the front door. He starts to unlock the door and is surprised to see it already unlocked. Startled, he looks through the glass, into the shop.

ADAM

Son of a bitch!

He opens the door and storms in.

70 INT. WINESHOPPE

70

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69

Adam stands over James. He is passed out. Adam reaches down and picks up the now empty bottle of Petrus. He is pissed. He takes out his cell phone and dials. We hear -

VOICE (FILTER)

Los Angeles Police department non-emergency line. May I help you?

SLOW FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

71 INT. JAIL CELL

71

James is laying on a cot. He is awake and facing the wall. We hear -

DANA O.S.

Jimmy.

James looks up.

REVERSE SHOT:

James sees his sister Dana standing with a GUARD.

MEDIUM: JAMES

sits up, embarrassed.

 ${\tt JAMES}$

Dana! What are you doing here?

DANA

The police called mom and dad.

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JAMES Oh my god!

DANA

No! You're lucky I was house sitting. They're in Vegas.

JAMES

Do they know?

DANA

No, they don't know! And I don't think they should!

JAMES

Kind of hard to do with a felony on my hands.

DANA

We'll talk about that. Come on.

The Guard unlocks the cell.

GUARD

You're free to go.

JAMES

What's going on?

DANA

I spoke with your boss at the wine store and he's not going to press charges.

JAMES

He's not? Why?

DANA

Are you going to stand there and ask stupid questions or come with me?

CUT TO:

72

72 INT. DANA'S CAR - DAY

James is sitting on the passenger side. Dana is driving.

JAMES

Dana, why did you pay for the whole thing? That was four grand!

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DANA

Don't worry, you're going to pay me back. Be lucky you didn't cause any damage in your drunken stupor!

JAMES

I barely remember anything.

DANA

Now, you want to tell me what's going on? Karen kicks you out of the apartment...

JAMES

You know about that?

DANA

She was the first person I called after I got the call.

She waits for him to respond but he just stares at his coffee.

DANA

Well...?

JAMES

It was just a misunderstanding!

DANA

You think I jumped in the car and drove six hours straight because of a misunderstanding?

JAMES

Oh my god! You know what happened with Julie Bryon?

DANA

That is so embarrassing!

JAMES

Did you talk to her?

DANA

Yeah! I'm going to stroll right over to Julie Bryon's house. I talked to your boss and I read the police report.

JAMES

I don't know what happened! I just wanted a chance!

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That's a hell of a way to get their attention, brother dear!

DANA

V	JAMES What do you want me to do?			
	DANA You're going to come home! That's what you're going to do!			
V	JAMES What??			
	DANA What choice have you got? You have no job and no place to live!			
James sighs and puts his head between his knees.				
ר	JAMES This is humiliating!	*		
N	DANA No doubt.	*		
I	JAMES I bet you're enjoying this.	*		
Dana is pissed. She pulls the car over and parks. *				
: : : :	DANA Enjoying this? Do you think I enjoy seeing my brother lying there in a jail cell? We're not kids anymore, James! I grew out of that teenage sibling rivalry years ago! I grew up!	* * * * *		
P	JAMES And I didn't?	*		
I	DANA I picked you up from <i>jail!</i>	*		
Dana gives that statement a chance to sink in.				
C	DANA Dh, you piss me off sometimes.	*		
Pause.		*		

DANA

I don't understand how you can do this to yourself! You have so much potential, James! It pisses me off!

JAMES

Why do you even care?

DANA

Because you could be doing something with your life! Why do you scmuts like this?

JAMES

I don't know. I admit it.

DANA

You know, I've always admired you. Even when we were kids.

JAMES

Me?

DANA

God, you had an imagination! I was so jealous, you know? The fact that you could stand up there on stage was something I could never do.

His anger softens as he studies Dana.

JAMES

You saw me on stage?

DANA

Yeah. And...

JAMES

What?

DANA

The stuff you used to build from scratch. I used to sneak into your room when you were gone because I liked looking at all that stuff you made.

JAMES

You snuck in my room...?

DANA

Including that ridiculous metal arm.

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James is stunned at this news and smiles big at Dana, who just ignores him.

DANA

And, yes...I saw one of your shows.

JAMES

Which one?

DANA

I saw a lot of your shows.

JAMES

What!?

DANA

Let's go.

She starts up the car and James reaches over and turns it off. His smiles fades. He thinks a moment.

JAMES

Did you think I was good?

DANA

Oh, James! Don't ask me that!

JAMES

No! You told that girl I jacked off to nudie magazines, so don't back off now!

Dana resigns. Thinks a moment.

DANA

As an actor?

JAMES

Yeah.

DANA

The truth?

JAMES

At this point, what harm could it do?

DANA

No. Sorry.

JAMES

No to the truth, or no as a good actor?

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DANA

Actor.

JAMES

Really?

DANA

You wanted the truth. I mean, you had your moments, but for the most part... no. I think those people pampered you too much.

JAMES

That's what Karen says.

DANA

She was your best friend. You should have listened to her.

Dana studies him. His blank expression is hard to decipher. He smiles at her, reaches over and turns the car back on.

JAMES

Whatever! We still have to go to the shop to get my paycheck.

DANA

No! You're paycheck paid for part of that four thousand dollar bottle of wine. You, dear brother, have no money! I'll take you to your car. If we leave now we can be home by seven.

JAMES

Mom and dad are going to want to know why I'm home.

DANA

I doubt, very seriously, that you are the first person to move to Hollywood with delusions of grandeur, only to move back home with your tail between your legs. I think they'll get it.

JAMES

I have to get my stuff.

DANA

Already loaded in your car. Including that creepy metal arm.

CUT TO:

	Revision 4	101.
73	EXT. STOCKTON CITY - DAY - HIGH SHOT - ESTABLISHING	73
74	INT. JAMES' PARENTS HOUSE - BEDROOM	74
	James is in his old room. On the floor is his open so Along the wall are shelves with models from his child few survived over the years. A mixture of sci-fi post theater posters.	lhood, a
	James takes the BIONIC ARM MODEL and places it on a set the picks up a model of the QUEEN MARY and inspects it Gingerly places it back on its stand. He then turns a looks at his bed, a single mattress.	•
	After a moment or two we hear his mother -	
	JOAN O.S. Jimmy?	
	He just sighs. He's not in the mood.	
	JOAN O.S. Jimmy!	
	JAMES Alright!	
	James leaves the room.	
		CUT TO:
75	INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS	75
	James comes down the stairs where Joan is standing.	
	JOAN I fixed you some lunch.	
	JAMES Oh, I'm sorry mom. I was going to run over to the theater and see what's going on.	
	JOAN Okay. Are you going to get yourself something to eat?	

JAMES
Yeah. I'll stop somewhere.

JOAN

Okay then.

Joan pulls him close with a hug.

JOAN

I'm sorry it didn't work out for you.

JAMES

Yeah. Well...

CUT TO:

76

76 EXT. COMMUNITY THEATER - DAY

James pulls his car into one of the stalls and gets out. He looks around the grounds.

77 INT. COMMUNITY THEATER

77

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James walks in the front door where we see several people in their late teens and early twenties, sitting with pizza and soda. A few get up when James enters and gather around him with hugs and greetings, pats on the back. Among them are ZANE and FRAN.

ZANE

James! What is going on?

They hug.

FRAN

I missed you so much!

During this greeting, James notices a young dark haired girl, BRYNN, twenty-two. She smiles at him.

JAMES

Just got back into town yesterday and thought I would come see what's going on here.

ZANE

Fantastic! We're taking a break. Hell week. We have a preview tomorrow night. You coming?

JAMES

Absolutely! Wouldn't miss it!

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* * Zane notices James can't take his eyes off this beautiful young woman.

ZANE

This is Brynn. She is a new rising star here. Brynn, come here.

She walks up and shakes hands with James.

JAMES

Hi.

BRYNN

Hi.

BRYNN

So you're the famous James. You're quite the celebrity here.

JAMES

Thanks. Are you in the show coming up?

ZANE

Absolutely! She's amazing too! Hey! Speaking of which - I've got the perfect role for you, dude! Don't even have to audition.

FRAN

It's going to be our two hundredth show. Huge, huge celebration. The paper, city officials, everything!

JAMES

Oh, I don't know.

FRAN

Why? Don't say that!

JAMES

The whole Los Angeles experience has left me exhausted.

ZANE

Ah, man! Really? Too bad. That's sad, dude! (Beat) But you have to come to our party tonight.

JAMES

Well, I was going to hang out with the folks tonight.

Brynn gives a frown, which James notices as well as Fran.

FRAN

It'll give you a chance to get to know Brynn.

BRYNN

Fran!

ZANE

Way to beat around the bush, Fran.

The attention definitely hits a chord with James.

JAMES

Okay. Let me call my folks.

He takes out his phone and starts to call. Fran grabs his phone when she sees the wallpaper.

FRAN

Is that Julie Bryon?

JAMES

Uh, yeah.

BRYNN

No way! Really?

JAMES

Yeah.

ZANE

This is crazy! How did you meet her?

JAMES

This was at her house, actually.

BRYNN

No - way!

ZANE

You were *not* at Julie Bryon's house!

JAMES

No. I was. That was in her kitchen.

ZANE

What were you doing in Julie Bryon's kitchen?

James scans the faces around him, the excited attention he so craved in Los Angeles. Once again, the big fish.

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We were running lines. I got cast in one of the episodes.

FRAN

(Excited)

You did not!

JAMES

I did. I was so lucky to get an agent as fast as I did. They loved me.

ZANE

No doubt. Look at the talent they had to deal with.

JAMES

Got to do a couple of small things. Did a small part on her show.

BRYNN

When do we get to see it?

JAMES

Well, check this out... cutting room floor.

BRYNN

Oh no!

ZANE

Ain't that the way it is. But you did it!

JAMES

Got a thousand bucks for a couple hours work. Not bad.

FRAN

Oh my god! A star in our midst! So what's happening now?

JAMES

Everything is on hiatus right now, that's why I'm here. I'll go back when the season starts up again. They're holding a place for me.

ZANE

Damn! And I had a great part for you in our two hundredth show. It was going to be big.

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FRAN

He cast Brynn in the lead female role and I kept telling him too bad James wasn't around.

The pats on his back as well as his ego is more than he can resist.

JAMES

Well... let me take a look at it. Maybe I can work something out with my agent.

ZANE

Yeow. You know, we can't afford to pay you anything.

JAMES

No matter. You guys are friends.

ZANE

Well, let me show what I have then.

James smiles at Brynn as Zane leads him to an office.

ZANE

So what is Julie Bryon like?

JAMES

She and her husband are great. We've kind of become friends.

ZANE

Wow!

And as they disappear into the office, we -

FADE OUT:

THE END

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