

CHASING THE DREAM

Created by

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Written by

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SUPER:

"Dream as if you'll live forever. Live as if you'll die today."

- James Dean

FADE IN:

EXT. CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY - DAY

Just crossing into California. A white, red, blue, and yellow car drive in formation as they get closer to Los Angeles.

PATSY (V.O.)

Our cars are packed with clothing, hyped up kids, and stressed out moms. We're chasing the dream, and making the trek to Los Angeles for pilot season. We have no idea what we're in for. It's either going to make us or break us. HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD!

INT. PATSY'S CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY

PATSY REYNOLDS (40's), and HARPER REYNOLDS (14) freckles, with blue eyes, lead the car caravan.

Their favorite song, "Hero" by Mariah Carey is playing, and they sing along.

PATSY

Every time we hear this song, something good happens.

HARPER

Maybe it's a sign Mom.

Harper makes ghost sounds.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CALIFORNIA - DAY

A dense, menacing fog rolls in so visibility is poor.

INT. PATSY'S CAR - HIGHWAY

Patsy can see in the rearview mirror that Connie is flashing her headlights maniacally off and on.

Harper turns around to check.

PATSY

What is Connie doing? She's flashing her lights. I wonder if something's wrong with her car?

HARPER

It's hard to see, but you need to pull over, Mom.

EXT. SNACK AND GO - CALIFORNIA - DAY

The four car caravan pulls into a Snack and Go convenience store and park.

TINA ELLIS (40's), and her daughter JENNIFER ELLIS (14) blonde hair, emerald eyes, stretch as they get out of the car.

CONNIE LOPEZ (30's), and her son DANNY LOPEZ(12) biracial, overweight, bolt from their car, as he just threw up red licorice and Fritos everywhere.

PING ZHANG (40's), and her daughter MIKA(15) dark hair, with perfect features, stand in disbelief.

PATSY

Connie are you okay?

CONNIE

Danny threw up and is having stomach issues.

Mika starts gagging.

PING

Nice. Can we help?

Connie grabs some clean clothes out of a suitcase, a trash bag and a big towel.

CONNIE

Can you please see if we need a key for the bathroom?

PING

I will.

PATSY

I'll buy some cleaning supplies and clean your car up.

TINA

I'll get some soda and crackers for Danny.

CONNIE

Thank you. I'm sorry you guys.

PING

It's okay. Stuff happens.

CONNIE

Oh and can you see if they have handsoap or something. He's gonna need to be cleaned up.

On top of being stinky and embarrassed, Danny has an attitude.

DANNY

I don't feel good. It was from your driving.

CONNIE

Don't start Buddy. Let's get you cleaned up.

HARPER

It's okay, Danny. I threw up on our way to Disneyland. All over my brother.

Ping runs out with cleaning products, air freshener, and a squirt bottle of hand soap.

PING

The bathroom is closed. A pipe broke.

Ping hands Connie the hand soap.

Connie sees a garden house at the side of the building and grabs Danny's hand.

CONNIE

Let's go.

EXT. SNACK AND GO - CALIFORNIA - DAY

Connie turns the water on, hands him some soap and blasts Danny's body.

She holds the towel up to cover him, and puts his soiled clothes in a trash bag.

DANNY

Their gonna see me naked.

CONNIE

Well, right now they see you with throw up all over yourself. Use the soap.

DANNY

It's cold.

CONNIE

After you get it all cleaned off, you can put some nice, clean, warm clothes on.

DANNY

Something's not right with you.

CONNIE

Look kid, I don't need pilot season. I can turn this car around and go back home.

Danny emerges cleaned up, with new clothes on. His face and body is red from the cold water.

DANNY

That hurt, Mom.

CONNIE

We figured it out, so zip it.

Connie throws the stinky, bagged clothes in the trash bin.

DANNY

You just threw my favorite shorts away.

CONNIE

And you are working my last nerve. We'll get new shorts. Move it.

EXT. SNACK AND GO - CALIFORNIA - DAY

Patsy and Connie clean the car out and spray air freshener.

Harper throws the trash away for them and then sits on a cement retaining wall.

Mika distances herself, while filing her finger nails.

Jennifer talks on her cell phone.

They all fill their gas tanks up, and stand in a line looking out at Los Angeles in the distance. They're ready to make the decent into the City of Angels.

PATSY

The fog lifted. Are we ready to go?

CONNIE

We are, thanks to you guys.

DANNY

I'm not riding in our car. It smells.

CONNIE

Oh, sure you are. If I have to, so do you. Thank you guys for cleaning it up.

PING

You're welcome.

CONNIE

Danny, what do you say?

Connie nudges him. Danny is in jerk mode.

DANNY

Thanks. Can we go?

Tina tries to break the tension.

TINA

Well, we're almost there. Oakwood here we come.

EXT. OAKWOOD - NIGHT

A big Oakwood sign can be seen from Barham Avenue.

SUPER: Burbank, California - Oakwood Corporate Housing

The caravan of cars come to a stop in the parking lot.

INT. OAKWOOD - NIGHT

Patsy and Harper settle into their studio apartment. They get a call from Harper's manager, CARRIE VANGUARD (40's).

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

PATSY

Hi Carrie, how are you?

CARRIE

Good. I was checking to make sure you made it. Harper has an audition tomorrow for a candy company.

PATSY

Wow. That's great. Are there sides?

CARRIE

No, there may be some dancing, but it's all freestyle. I'll text you the information on where to go.

PATSY

Dancing? Well, okay. We're really excited to be here.

CARRIE

I'm glad you're here too. Bye.

END OF CALL

HARPER

Dancing? I'm not a dancer.

PATSY

It sounds like it's not a big deal. It's freestyle. Just have fun and I know you'll be great.

HARPER

That's easy for you to say. You're not the one that has to do it.

PATSY

I can call her back and tell her you don't want to do it.

HARPER

Oh right, Mom. What a great way to start pilot season off. I can't tell her I don't want to do it.

PATSY

Look, I'm sure it isn't easy. But, you're the one that wanted to do this.

Harper's stomach growls.

HARPER

You're right. I'll do it. Can we eat? I'm so hungry.

PATSY

We're meeting everyone for dinner, so let's have some fun.

INT. CLAIM JUMPER RESTAURANT - BURBANK - NIGHT

Tina and Jennifer are seated next to Connie and Danny.

Across from them is Ping and Mika and Patsy and Harper.

They all place their food orders.

TINA

So, have you guys heard from your agents or managers? Any auditions set up?

Patsy feels a little uncomfortable talking about the audition, because she doesn't want to make anyone feel bad.

PATSY

Ummm we did. Harper has a commercial audition tomorrow.

TINA

That's so great! Jennifer has an audition too.

PING

Are these auditions open to anyone?

PATSY

I'm not sure how it works. I can ask Harper's manager.

PING

Oh that'd be great. Thank you.

CONNIE

Danny's starting an acting workshop tomorrow. We've heard there aren't many auditions for young biracial males.

The table goes silent.

HARPER

I'll tell you guys about any auditions I have, so maybe you can get in on them.

CONNIE

That's nice, Harper. Thank you.

Danny speaks in a Darth Vader voice.

DANNY

I want to go home. I don't like it out here.

Connie is tired and not up for his shenanigans.

CONNIE

Are you kidding me? After all we went through to get here. You're so ungrateful.

DANNY

You're the one who wanted to do it. I wanted to go to Disney World with my Dad.

CONNIE

Your dad is going with his girlfriend.

DANNY

He would've taken me, if I asked him.

Connie knows where the conversation is going, and shuts it down.

CONNIE

Okay, Danny. We'll take about this later.

Everyone at the table is uncomfortable.

HARPER

Hey, do you guys want to go play the pinball machine till dinner comes?

MIKA

Yeah, I'll go.

JENNIFER

I'm gonna go call my friend.

The kids split so the mom's can talk.

CONNIE

That kid drives me nuts. He's so up and down. I don't know what's going on with him.

PATSY

That's a tough age. Their hormones are changing.

TINA

Are you sure he wants to do this?

CONNIE

This was his idea. I'm far too busy to add another thing on my plate... just because.

PING

Maybe he's upset about your divorce?

CONNIE

He probably is. But, we have to figure our new life out.

The energy at the table has taken a turn.

PATSY

Things will pick up for everyone. We just got here. All of the kids are really talented.

PING

I hope so. Mika didn't have many auditions in Denver, either.

PATSY

Ping, Mika sings, dances, acts and she's beautiful. It's just a matter of time.

Patsy's phone rings.

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

PATSY

Hi, Carrie. What's up?

CARRIE

Hi, Patsy, I'm just making sure you got my text with the time and place tomorrow?

PATSY

I did, thank you. Can I ask if this is an open audition for anyone? We have some friends kids that might want to go.

There's silence on the phone.

PATSY

Hello???

CARRIE

Patsy, just to give you a heads up about how this works. I spend a lot of time getting my clients in for auditions. You really should keep it to yourself what auditions Harper is going on.

PATSY

Oh, well I didn't know that.

CARRIE

I don't mean to be rude, but that's how this business works. You can't trust everyone.

PATSY

Okay, well I will remember that. Thank you.

PHONE CONVERSATION - END

Patsy is slightly embarrassed because she knows they heard the conversation.

PATSY

I guess it's not an open audition. I'm sorry.

The kids come back just as the food arrives.

Danny still has an attitude.

DANNY
Where's my milkshake at, Mom?

CONNIE
They'll bring it. Cool your jets,
Buddy.

Just as Connie says that, the SERVER delivers Danny's chocolate shake.

In the voice of the dog Brian Griffin from family guy, Danny responds.

DANNY
Thank you. We cool. You're a good
man.

The server laughs and everyone dives into their plates. It's been a long day.

EXT. AUDITION SPACE - SANTA MONICA - DAY

Harper and Patsy arrive a little early for the audition, despite driving around for fifteen minutes to find a parking space.

Patsy can't parallel park and ends up partly on the sidewalk and in the street.

Harper gets out and directs her once again.

HARPER
Mom, turn the wheel. Not that much.
Do you need me to park?

PATSY
You're fourteen. I can do this.

People are laughing on the sidewalk, as the car finally finds a resting place.

HARPER
C'mon Mom.

PATSY
Parallel parking stresses me out.

HARPER
Stresses you out? I'm the one who
has to go in now, and audition.

INT. AUDITION SPACE - SANTA MONNICA - DAY

Tall, leggy models wearing leg warmers and Danskin outfits and shoes, file in. They're all about ten to fifteen years older than Harper.

HARPER

What is this? They look like professional dancers.

PATSY

You'll be fine. You've got this.

They call names out and Harper is one of them.

Patsy sits on a bench outside the auditioning room. She can hear everything.

INT. AUDITION ROOM - SANTA MONNICA - DAY

A choreographer announces that she will show the routine one time and they need to perform it.

The clients from Asia are in the room.

CHOREOGRAPHER

And one, two three and four. Turn, jump...

Patsy can hear the clients laughing and Harper letting out squeals as she tires to perform the routine.

INT. AUDITION SPACE - SANTA MONNICA - DAY

Harper comes out of the audition looking like she's in shock.

HARPER

Mom, these were professional dancers. The clients were laughing at me!

PATSY

I'm sure you did fine.

Patsy is just as horrified as Harper is.

HARPER

Carrie better find out exactly what they need next time. I'm never doing this again. If they say they need a dancer, I'm not it.

PATSY

Okay, Harper. I'll talk to Carrie about it. I'm proud of you.

They walk to the car in silence.

There is a ticket on the windshield. Patsy parked the car in the middle of the metal parking machine and it should have lined up with the front of her car.

PATSY

God. Perfect.

INT. MODELS INC. - LOS ANGELES - DAY

Jennifer and Tina are at an interview for Models Inc., seeking representation. Jennifer is 5'9" tall, blonde hair, emerald eyes, beautiful skin and features and a body that guarantees her to be a super star.

SABRA

Hello, my name is Sabra and I'm an agent at Models Inc.

Jennifer suddenly becomes shy.

TINA

Nice to meet you, Sabra. This is my Daughter Jennifer and my name is Tina.

Jennifer hands her a resume and portfolio.

SABRA

Have a seat, ladies. Do you live out here?

TINA

We're from Colorado and travel back and forth.

SABRA

Is it Jennifer or Jenny?

JENNIFER

My friends call me Jenny.

Sabra flips through her portfolio.

SABRA

Okay. Your book is great. How old are you?

JENNIFER
I'm almost 15.

SABRA
Are you home schooled?

JENNIFER
I am.

SABRA
Mom, is it a problem for her to miss school?

TINA
Not at all. Jennifer is an A student and her studies are flexible.

SABRA
We have a spot for her at the agency. I can book her today for an athletic wear print ad. It shoots tomorrow. How's that sound Jennifer?

Jennifer's energy is a bit low.

JENNIFER
Sounds good.

SABRA
Mom, does that work for you?

TINA
It's awesome! Thank you.

Tina has more enthusiasm than Jennifer.

SABRA
I'll get the paperwork and let you look over it.

Sabra excuses herself.

TINA
Are you excited to do this?

JENNIFER
I wouldn't be here, if I wasn't.

TINA
Okay, just checking. I couldn't really tell. It's gonna take some time away from your friends.

JENNIFER

Maybe some time away from you too.

Tina is shocked.

TINA

You better watch how you talk to me. You're a minor and I'm the one that has to sign the contracts with you.

JENNIFER

Whatever.

Sabra walks in and hands them both a copy of the contract to look at.

Tina reads every word and Jennifer pretends she's reading it.

TINA

Looks good. Jennifer do you have any questions?

JENNIFER

No.

They both sign the contract and Sabra gives them the information for the print ad shoot.

SABRA

Thank you both!

TINA

Thank you.

Jennifer takes her portfolio, pulls her phone out and dials as they leave.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Tina isn't too happy with Jennifer. She grabs her phone and hangs it up.

JENNIFER

What the hell! Why'd you do that? I was calling Phoebe to tell her about the contract.

TINA

Either you shape up or we'll go back home. I'm not going to put up with your attitude.

JENNIFER

So let's go home -- Tina. That works for me.

TINA

I'm not sure that Models Inc., or Los Angeles is the right fit for you.

They get in the car and Jennifer slams the door.

INT. CHILD ACTOR'S WORKSHOP - BURBANK - DAY

Connie and Danny sit in the audience watching students do scenes. The teacher Marc Assante, welcomes them both.

MARC

Guys, let's say hello to Danny and his mom Connie.

STUDENTS

Hello Danny and Connie.

MARC

Danny why don't you come up here and we'll do some improvisation. You know what that is, right?

DANNY

I do. I had to pretend I was a jellyfish in one of my classes.

MARC

I'll bet that was challenging. I'm going to pretend I'm your dad and you have to tell me why you're mad at me.

DANNY

Okay.

SUPER: SCENE

MARC

Son, I'm not sure what the problem is, but if you don't shape up, you won't be able to come over here anymore.

DANNY

You're never here for me anyway. You left me and my Mom and spend all your time with your girlfriend.

MARC

That's not true. You need to quit listening to what your mother is telling you.

DANNY

My Mom isn't telling me anything. I'm not little anymore. It's you and your girlfriend all the time. You don't want me around.

MARC

Her name is Annie and you need to respect her.

DANNY

I hate you. You left us. I don't have a dad.

Danny breaks down and tears fall freely.

MARC

I'm sorry you feel that way, because I love you.

Marc grabs Danny and holds him tight.

Danny wails and a crater of emotions, escape him.

END OF SCENE

DANNY

Very nice, Danny.

The audience claps and Connie while proud, is in tears.

MARC

One of the hardest things for an actor to do is to be vulnerable. You opened yourself up and listened to what was being said to you. Great job!

Danny regains his composure and feels happy.

DANNY

Thank you!

MARC

We'd love to have you in our class. It's every Tues., and Thursday at 11 am.

Danny and Connie watch the rest of the class and a lightness surrounds them both.

INT. CONNIE'S CAR - BURBANK - DAY

Danny is so excited and Connie is relieved. She knows where he was pulling his emotions from, but it doesn't matter. He opened up and was vulnerable.

CONNIE

That was so good, Danny.

DANNY

Thanks. I really like that class. I want to go again.

CONNIE

Okay, I'll get you signed up.

DANNY

Some of the stuff I said, was about my Dad. He doesn't want me around.

CONNIE

Danny, things will get better, I promise. This is new for all of us. I do know that your dad loves you.

DANNY

Whatever. Can I go swimming?

CONNIE

Yes you can.

Connie starts the car and they head back to Oakwood.

INT. IT'S A WRAP - BURBANK - DAY

Ping and Mika search up and down the rows of used clothing, that comes from the studios.

MIKA

Gosh, I love this store. This dress was from the Gilmore Girls.

PING

Nice. You should get it.

MIKA

What if there aren't any auditions for me?

PING

We need to think positive.

MIKA

Everyone else has auditions and I don't. I don't look like the rest of them.

PING

Things are changing in the industry. It isn't because you're not talented.

MIKA

Sometimes, I wish I was white.

Ping is crushed and not sure how to respond.

PING

Oh don't say that. The best part of you is your color and your features ...and your heart.

MIKA

You're my Mom. You have to say that.

PING

Mika, I mean it.

MIKA

Thank you. Why don't writers put more colors in their scripts?

PING

That's a good question. You love to write. Maybe you should write a script and put whatever people and colors you want in it?

MIKA

When Danny threw a fit about wanting to go back home, I wanted to punch him.

PING

He's going through a lot.

MIKA

He'll go on auditions. I see a lot of biracial boys in shows. I don't know what they were talking about.

PING

You have to always be proud of what you are. That will make your diversity stand out.

MIKA

I think I'm gonna put a diversity challenge on my social media sites.

PING

That sounds like a great idea!

MIKA

Let's go to Oakwood, I'm hot.

PING

Okay, baby.

EXT. OAKWOOD - POOL - NIGHT

All the mom's and kids are at the pool.

Patsy brings drinks and cookies for everyone.

PATSY

How did everyone's day go?

TINA

Our's was great! Jennifer got signed with Models Inc., and they have her booked for a print job tomorrow.

Ping grabs a couple of cookies and is in heaven.

PING

How nice. Off subject, but these cookies are so good.

They all laugh.

TINA

How did Harper's audition go?

PATSY

Well, she didn't quite fit the part. They were looking for professional dancers.

TINA

Too bad.

CONNIE

You never know what they're looking for out here.

PING

How did Danny's day go?

CONNIE

He loved his acting class and actually had a breakthrough concerning his dad.

TINA

How did that happen?

CONNIE

They did an improvisation and it happened to be about a boy and how he felt about his dad. It was cathartic for Danny.

PATSY

That's beautiful.

They eat cookies and drink coffee while the kids splash in the pool.

CONNIE

Patsy how is your marriage surviving this Hollywood thing?

PATSY

It's hard. We had fractures in the relationship before Harper and I came out here. He doesn't understand the acting thing, or why I support it. He thinks Harper should focus on business classes as she gets older.

TINA

She's only 14. There aren't too many business classes out there for that age group.

PATSY

I think the issue is, that when he was a kid his dreams weren't supported. When Harper books projects in Denver he's so proud though.

PING

These men. As long as we do things their way, they're happy.

CONNIE

Ping, what does your husband think of all this?

PING

He doesn't really care, but I do have to get a job out here to help finance it.

PATSY

I do too.

CONNIE

Me too.

PING

I hear they're hiring at the stables down the street. They need stall cleaners.

CONNIE

Really?

PATSY

You mean cleaning the horse poop up?

PING

Yes. We have a friend that owns it and they need a lot of help.

PATSY

Let's go get signed up.

Jennifer and Harper are talking by the side of the pool, and Jennifer starts screaming. She throws her phone on a pool chair, while Harper stands there soaked, and goes after Danny in the water.

JENNIFER

You little creep. You got my phone wet.

DANNY

Bitch.

CONNIE

Danny, watch your mouth.

JENNIFER

He got my phone wet. Harper and I are soaked.

DANNY

I jumped in the pool and it splashed them.

TINA

Jennifer, why did you even bring it with you? You're always on the phone.

JENNIFER

Because I'm waiting for a phone call.

HARPER

Danny you did that on purpose. Not a cool thing dude.

DANNY

I didn't. I didn't even know you guys were standing there.

HARPER

I'm gonna dry off and go to the game room. Does anybody else want to go?

MIKA

I'm just gonna lay here.

DANNY

I'm in.

JENNIFER

I guess I'll go. Anything to get away from here.

They all get out of the pool and the mother's are left feeling disappointed, yet anxious about their kids.

TINA

I'm sorry, Connie.

CONNIE

Don't be. Danny can be a little asshole and he needs to watch what he's doing.

TINA

I don't know what's wrong with Jennifer. She's seems angry all the time. I don't think she likes me.

PING

Oh, I don't believe that.

PATSY

They're all at that age where they're testing the boundaries. Harper isn't an angel... believe me. We don't always see eye to eye.

CONNIE

Ping can you call your friend at the stables?

PING

I'll go do it right now.

Patsy cleans the cookies and drinks up and Ping leaves to make the call.

PING

Mika, I'm going back inside. Don't stay too late.

MIKA

I won't, Mom. I'm a big girl.

EXT. EVER WOOD STABLES - BURBANK - DAY

It's 6 a.m. The ladies arrive in Connie's SUV at the stables.

Ping's friend JIM WARNER (50's) greets them.

PING

Hi Jim. These are my friends, Connie, and Patsy.

JIM

Hey ladies. I understand you're looking for some flexible work hours?

CONNIE

We are. Our kids are in the industry so you never know when they'll have an audition or a job.

JIM

We have 15 stalls here and they need to be cleaned daily. I can keep you busy.

PATSY

Sounds great!

JIM

Why don't you each grab a shovel and I'll show you what you need to do.

PING

The horses aren't in there right? I'm short and they scare me.

JIM

They'll be in the field when you're cleaning.

PING

Good.

JIM

The shovels, wheelbarrows, and whatever you need, are lined up over there. I have a call to make.

Jim leaves them hoping they can figure it out.

Patsy is wearing tennis shoes, Ping is wearing flip flops, and Connie is wearing sandals.

PATSY

We have to stand in that stuff?

PING

I don't think there's another way to do it.

CONNIE

Oh well. I never liked these sandals anyway. It gives me another reason to go shopping.

INT. HORSE STALLS - DAY

They slide into the piles of horse poop and get the giggles.

CONNIE

Yuck! What are they eating?

PING

This is why I never wanted a dog.

PATSY

Wait till Tina hears what we did today.

CONNIE

Oh that's right. Jennifer has her shoot today. I'll bet that'll be fun.

PING

I hope our kids appreciate what we're doing for them.

PATSY

How many more stalls do we have to do?

SUPER: FOUR HOURS LATER

INT. HORSE STALLS - DAY

Stall after stall they fill buckets and wheelbarrows with poop.

Jim walks up to them, laughing, checking their work out, and the poop on their feet.

JIM

Hey, you did real good. You each made \$100.00 today.

PATSY

That will help.

JIM

Did you not see the rubber boots lined up by the shovels?

They slowly turn and eye the tall rubber boots.

CONNIE

Oh my gosh. How'd we miss those?

JIM

If you guys want more work, let me know. You did a great job! Thank you.

PING

Thank you, Jim. We'll talk about it
and let you know.

PATSY

Is there a hose we can wash off
with?

JIM

Sure. It's on the other side of all
those rubber boots that are lined
up.

Jim walks off still laughing.

They rinse their shoes and feet off, blotting them with
coarse paper towels.

EXT. EVER WOOD STABLES - PARKING AREA - DAY

Connie, Ping and Patsy limp back to the vehicle.

PATSY

Oh, I hurt. I'll never complain
about a desk job again.

CONNIE

My hips feel like they're out.

PING

How do they poop so much, just
eating grain?

CONNIE

What do you guys think? Do you want
to do it again?

PATSY

Well, I know I need to make money,
yet be flexible, so I'm in.

PING

I need to think about it for
awhile. I'm so low to the ground
that I smell my feet much sooner
than you guys do.

CONNIE

First, I need to have a drink and
lay down.

Patsy's phone rings.

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

PATSY

Hi Carrie.

CARRIE

Hi Patsy. Harper has an audition for a feature film. They're looking for a girl next door type, that can act.

PATSY

Sounds good.

CARRIE

I'll text you the information and you can print the sides up. I know there are computers and printers at Oakwood.

PATSY

Thank you.

END OF CALL

Patsy doesn't say anything and nobody asks her what it's for.

CONNIE

Let's get going. I need a shower.

Patsy feels a little uncomfortable because she knows they heard her call.

PATSY

Look, you guys are my friends. I know we aren't supposed to talk about auditions. But Harper and I both would be happy for any of our kids to book something.

PING

Mika and I would be happy too, but we'd be more happy if we did!

They all start laughing.

CONNIE

Imagine if we were the ones auditioning?

PATSY

That would be funny! My memory is shot, so I'd never be hired. I couldn't remember my lines.

CONNIE

It really must be a lot of pressure on our kids to do this stuff?

PATSY

I agree. It's not for everybody or their parents.

CONNIE

Some of the casting people are so rude and so are the agents and managers.

PATSY

This is a tough business.

PING

Who knew we'd be shoveling poop to support their habits?

CONNIE

I didn't. I hope we don't have to do this for long, and all our kids book something.

PING

That would be nice.

PATSY

I don't know if I told you guys, but earlier this year, Harper was up for a feature film.

PING

Wow. That's so cool.

PATSY

Wait... The girl is 5'7" and 110 pounds. They said she weighed too much, and her freckles were too noticeable. Not pretty enough. She didn't get the part.

CONNIE

That's messed up. She's gorgeous.

PING

No wonder these people get eating disorders, and have plastic surgery.

PATSY

Oh and get this. After they said that, they told her manager, that Harper was hands down the best actress they had seen.

CONNIE

Wow. What a load of crap.

PATSY

It really hurt her feelings and it took a lot for her to get over it.

PING

Mika said she wished she was white.

PATSY

Oh my God! That child of yours is so beautiful. It's this frigging industry that needs to change.

CONNIE

Danny has said, why does darker skin hurt so bad?

PATSY

Why did the precious little guy say that?

CONNIE

Because he was being bullied for being biracial. A group of kids at school, were spitting on him.

PATSY

God, that makes me mad.

CONNIE

He then said, mom is dark skin always gonna hurt?

PATSY

I'd like to smack the parents that instill that racism into their kids.

CONNIE

You have no idea how many fights I've gotten into, protecting my kid.

PATSY

I think we need to write and produce our own projects.

Then we can cast our beautiful
rainbow colored kids in them.

CONNIE

There's discrimination everywhere.
What about age? Aside from kid
shows, the demographic they cater
to is usually 18-39. There's a
whole world beyond 39.

PATSY

Yes, and that older demographic,
are the very ones at home watching
television, and they also have the
money to go to a movie.

PING

What are we getting our kids into?

PATSY

If Harper didn't feel she had to do
this, we wouldn't be out here.

Ping fidgets while being affected by the aroma.

PING

My stinky body needs to get in a
shower. Let's pick this
conversation up later.

They get in the SUV, roll the windows down and head for
Oakwood, tired, smelly, and a bit discouraged.

EXT. OAKWOOD - POOL - NIGHT

Mika, Harper, Danny and Jennifer lounge in lawn chairs
underneath the stars.

MIKA

Do you guys get nervous
auditioning?

DANNY

I always do.

JENNIFER

Sometimes.

HARPER

I think we get nervous because we
want it so bad.

MIKA

Jennifer, is it harder on you because you model and act?

JENNIFER

What do you mean?

MIKA

It seems like there must be so much pressure on you to look perfect, and be perfect.

JENNIFER

I'm almost fifteen, and I get treated like I don't have a brain. I love my Mom, but she's always answering for me. So I figure I'll let her.

HARPER

Do you think you have more or less chances of getting things because you're so pretty?

JENNIFER

I don't know. I heard a casting agent say, I was pretty but couldn't act. It makes me mad.

HARPER

You sing, dance, act and model. You do it all. Don't listen to those people.

MIKA

I think they're jealous.

JENNIFER

People think they know me, and they don't.

DANNY

Well, I get called fat ass at school. They make fun of me because my Dad is dating a woman in her twenties, and my skin is darker than theirs.

JENNIFER

That's all jacked up. Sorry you went through that... A woman in her twenties? That's not much older than we are.

MIKA

If guys do it, they're cool. If women do that, they're hoes.

DANNY

Hoes?

Mika winks at everyone.

MIKA

You know, a garden tool.

Danny is totally confused, but he is twelve.

JENNIFER

Boy Danny, you have a lot to learn.

Harper receives a text from Patsy to come in and Danny starts jumping around.

HARPER

Well, I need to go in.

DANNY

Me too. I need to go to the bathroom.

Danny farts.

MIKA

We know.

JENNIFER

Gross!

INT. HARPER AND PATSY'S STUDIO APARTMENT - OAKWOOD - NIGHT

Patsy lays down with her head wrapped in a towel and her feet wrapped in socks doused with lavender oil.

Harper joins her on the Futon they both sleep on.

She fans the air.

HARPER

Why are you wearing socks, and that lavender is pretty strong.

PATSY

We worked at that stables today to make some money and we didn't wear boots. Our feet were covered in horse poop.

HARPER

Nasty, Momma.

PATSY

How was your evening with the kids?

HARPER

It was nice. We all talked and shared our feelings about stuff.

PATSY

Did you figure anybody out?

HARPER

Maybe, Jennifer. I understand her a little bit better and some things that make her mad.

PATSY

Why would she be mad? She seems to have so much going for her.

HARPER

That's the problem. A lot of pressure is put on her because of the way she looks. Sometimes she doesn't get credit for being able to act too.

PATSY

We know the industry is unfair. You have to be tough, to make it out here.

HARPER

So people say she can't act and people say I'm not pretty enough. I guess it all feels the same.

PATSY

You're beautiful and I need you to hear me when I say that. You are also one hell of an actress.

HARPER

Thanks, Momma.

PATSY

My Dad used to say "organic originality is what keeps us authentic and relevant."

HARPER

Oh Grandpa. What did that mean exactly?

PATSY

It means we stand out when we're authentic, and true to who we are. You alone are enough, dearest Daughter. Don't forget that.

HARPER

Awww. You're just partial.

PATSY

Maybe, but you don't pay me enough to lie.

HARPER

You're just like Grandpa. I miss the little guy and his sayings.

PATSY

I do too, but his words and spirit are always with us.

HARPER

What are we gonna do tomorrow?

Patsy's face contorts in sheer horror.

PATSY

Oh no! I forgot. You have an audition tomorrow afternoon.

HARPER

Mom -- tomorrow? Really? Are there sides?

PATSY

Yes, I'm sorry. I forgot, but I did print them, and made an extra copy if you want to run lines.

HARPER

You need to get it together, Patsy.

Harper studies the sides. She likes the script.

Patsy adoringly watches Harper and gets teary eyed.

HARPER

Mom, why are you staring at me?

PATSY

I can't help it. I love you.

Harper hugs Patsy and they both tear up.

HARPER

I love you too, and thank you for bringing me out here. I know it's caused some problems for you and Daddy.

PATSY

Our issues have nothing to do with any of you kids.

HARPER

You are a good woman, Patsy Reynolds.

PATSY

Thank you, Harper Reynolds. Now, do we need to go over lines, because I'm old, tired and need to get some sleep?

HARPER

Nope, I've got it down.

EXT. SONY STUDIOS - CULVER CITY - DAY

Harper stands outside the car directing Patsy's parallel parking.

A crowd gathers on the sidewalk and they cheer when she gets the job done.

Patsy bows.

PATSY

Thank you. Thank you.

HARPER

Mom, you're getting better. This time only took ten minutes and only one sign got knocked down.

They laugh and it calms Harper's nerves a bit.

PATSY

I'm a quick study. Watch out Hollywood.

Harper looks at a map Carrie sent.

HARPER

We need to take the train, or tram,
whatever to the top.

PATSY

I hope I don't get motion sickness.

HARPER

Did you bring a bag?

PATSY

I did.

INT. SONY STUDIOS - CULVER CITY - DAY

The reception area is lined with girls in many colors and sizes.

Harper signs in and they are lucky to find two chairs next to each other.

PATSY

Good, we get to sit this time.

Darlene Decato, who Harper always goes against and is also from Colorado, comes out of the audition room, trying to psych everyone out.

DARLENE

It's tough in there. Make sure you can dance.

HARPER

Dance? What movie is she auditioning for? There's no dancing in it.

PATSY

It's Darlene Decato, my love. She does this to people every single time.

HARPER

I'm gonna show her.

Corky the assistant casting director comes out and calls Harpers name.

CORKY

Harper Reynolds.

HARPER

That's me.

CORKY

Nice to meet you. I'm Corky. I love your name.

HARPER

Thank you.

INT. AUDITION ROOM - CULVER CITY - DAY

Two MEN and one WOMAN sit writing notes. Corky introduces Harper.

CORKY

This is Harper Reynolds.

HARPER

Hello. Nice to meet you.

CORKY

When you're ready, slate your name and tell us who you're with.

Harper takes a breath and calmly does her slate.

HARPER

My name is Harper Reynolds and I'm with Stargazer Talent Management.

CORKY

Ready when you are.

HARPER (MONOLOGUE)

Where are you Momma? Why did you leave me behind? I can't take it anymore. He hurts me. I became his punching bag when you left. I look at the moon every night hoping that you're looking at it too. I miss you.

Harper tears up and puts so much emotion into it, that the room is silent.

CORKY

Thank you, Harper, that was great!

HARPER

Thank you.

INT. SONY STUDIOS - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Harper walks out of the room and does a little dance for Patsy.

PATSY
Are you done?

HARPER
I am. Let's go.

EXT. SONY STUDIOS - TRAM - DAY

Patsy drills her.

PATSY
Well, how did it go?

HARPER
I think I booked it. I can feel it.

PATSY
How many people were in the room?

HARPER
Two men, one lady, and the casting guy Corky that came and got me.

PATSY
Oh my God. I'm shaking.

HARPER
It's mine, Momma. I really want it.

PATSY
Okay, then it's yours. Are you up for some ice-cream?

HARPER
Always!

They high five.

When they get into the car, "Hero" by Mariah Carey comes on the radio station. They crank it up.

It's their good luck song and it feels right.

EXT. BEN AND JERRY'S - BURBANK - NIGHT

The big Ben and Jerry's sign flashes on Burbank Blvd.

Patsy and Harper sit outside at a quaint blue little table, eating a chocolate fudge ice-cream cone.

PATSY

I'm so proud of you.

HARPER

Thank you, Momma.

PATSY

Whenever you get that feeling, about auditions, you're usually right. What's it feel like?

HARPER

It feels like getting an A+ on a test. You just know what you know.

PATSY

This is a big deal. I know the studio is putting a lot of money into it. A lady in the waiting room said Meryl Streep is supposed to be in it.

HARPER

Oh my gosh! Wouldn't that be something? Well, pack your bags woman, cause we're going on location.

PATSY

Where's it filming at?

HARPER

The breakdown said Toronto.

PATSY

That works for me.

HARPER

Keep your phone with you all the time.

PATSY

I will. This ice-cream is making me sleepy. Maybe we need to get back to Oakwood.

HARPER

I'm tired too. Thanks for taking me today.

PATSY
We're a team.

They hug and walk down the street.

Harper puts her arm around her short Mom's shoulders.

PATSY
I wish I was taller.

HARPER
You're my short little Momma
doodle.

PATSY
Nice.

Patsy gets a text from Carrie.

HARPER
What's it say?

PATSY
It says Call me!!!

HARPER
Maybe she heard something already.

She dials the number, her hands are shaking.

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

PATSY
Hi Carrie, this is Patsy Reynolds.

CARRIE
Hey, Patsy. Is Harper with you?

PATSY
She is.

CARRIE
Put this on speaker.

PATSY
I did.

CARRIE
Harper you are in the top two for
the movie and actually at this
point you are their number one
choice. They put a pin in you.

Harper and Patsy squeal with excitement.

PATSY

Pin?

CARRIE

She's marked for the job. Now it's not a done deal and they're still auditioning people. But, Corky the assistant casting director said you blew them away.

HARPER

Oh my gosh! This is so cool. Thank you Carrie.

CARRIE

You also have another commercial audition.

HARPER

They aren't looking for dancers, right?

CARRIE

Right, but you do have to wear a swimsuit.

Harper's color drains and she looks panicked.

PATSY

Thank you.

CARRIE

Gotta go. Bye.

END OF CALL

HARPER

I'm not wearing a swimsuit.

PATSY

Honey, if that's what they want, then you have to wear one.

HARPER

Why, so they can make fun of how large I am?

PATSY

You're not large.

HARPER

I'm not going to the audition.

PATSY

For right now, let's be excited
because you're up for a movie with
Meryl Streep.

Harper walks ahead of Patsy and waits for her at the car.

Patsy shakes her head, it's all a bit stressful.

Ping calls Patsy.

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

PATSY

Hi Ping.

PING

Hey Patsy, I'm at the store. Do you
need anything?

PATSY

We don't but thanks for asking.

PING

How did Harper's audition go?

PATSY

Well, she's in first position for
the part. It's not for sure until
you sign contracts, but it looks
like she may book it.

PING

Oh, that's exciting. I gotta go,
this woman just stole my cart.

PATSY

Bye.

INT. STORE - BURBANK - DAY

Ping goes after her cart and the woman who took it.

It's Mary Decato, Darlene's mom and she's eating an apple she
took out of Ping's bag.

PING

Excuse this is my cart. These are
my things. My apples.

MARY

What?

PING

You just took my cart. Hey, Mary.
It's Ping from Colorado. I'm Mika's
mom.

MARY

Oh, of course. Hi Ping. I'm sorry
about the cart.

Mary puts the half eaten apple back in Pings bag.

PING

How long have you and Darlene been
out here?

MARY

About three weeks now and we plan
on moving out here. Darlene is
working so much. She books almost
everything she goes out for.

PING

How nice for you guys.

MARY

What are the other kids up too? Is
anybody working?

Ping doesn't really like Mary or Darlene. She wants to brag a
bit about what Jennifer and Harper are doing.

PING

Well, Jennifer got signed to a top
modeling agency and is shooting a
big print campaign.

MARY

Ummm. It's a good thing she's
pretty.

PING

Harper is up for a movie with Meryl
Streep and it looks like she might
book it.

MARY

Darlene is up for the same movie
and we're pretty sure it's her's.

PING

Whatever. Gotta go, Mary.

Mary makes Ping crazy and as she leaves Mary is frantically
dialing in her phone.

EXT. STORE - PARKING LOT - DAY

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

MARY

This is Mary Decato. I want to know why my daughter Darlene didn't even get a callback for the movie with Meryl Streep?

CORKY

Mrs. Decato, you really shouldn't be calling the casting office.

MARY

Harper Reynolds, and her mother just told us that she booked the job.

CORKY

That isn't exactly true, but you need to talk with your daughter's agent or manager. Don't call us here. Ever.

END OF CALL

EXT. OAKWOOD - POOL - NIGHT

Danny, Mika and Harper hang balloons and put out paper plates, soda and a cake.

They're having a party for Jennifer because she did her first print campaign.

DANNY

I hope she'll be surprised.

MIKA

She will be. It's pretty cool that she did that job.

HARPER

It's awesome. People don't get how much work goes into print campaigns and the modeling.

DANNY

I hope she likes the cake.

MIKA

If she doesn't, I'll eat her piece.
Cake is my thing.

Harper chuckles.

All the mom's arrive and Jennifer strolls out, looking at her phone.

DANNY

Surprise!

JENNIFER

What are you guys doing?

MIKA

We wanted to say congrats on your print campaign.

HARPER

It's way cool. Congratulations,
Jennifer.

Danny hands her a piece of cake.

Jennifer takes one bite from it and throws it in the trash.

TINA

This is really nice of you guys. I know Jennifer appreciates it.

JENNIFER

I'm standing right here Mom. I can talk. Thank you guys for doing this.

MIKA

You're welcome.

Patsy gets a call from Carrie, she puts it on speaker and calls Harper over.

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

CARRIE

I'm so angry at you guys. Why did you tell some Mary Decato woman that Harper booked the movie? I've told you to keep quiet about the auditions. You may have blown this for Harper.

PATSY

What are you talking about? We haven't talked to Mary Decato.

CARRIE

She called the casting company and said you did. Corky the assistant casting director isn't very happy about this.

Ping slides away from the conversation as everyone can hear what's being said.

PATSY

I don't know what to tell you, Carrie. We didn't speak to Mary or her daughter.

CARRIE

I hope this didn't blow Harper's chance for the movie. We'll talk later. Oh, and the audition in the swimsuit for tomorrow has been canceled. Bye.

Patsy and Harper stand shocked and upset.

HARPER

What is she talking about, Mom? We didn't speak to Darlene or her mom.

PATSY

I'm in the dark. I don't know what's going on.

HARPER

This isn't fair.

Ping steps up sheepishly and distraught.

PING

I'm so sorry.

PATSY

For what, Ping?

PING

I ran into that bitch, Mary Decato at the grocery store. She was bragging about Darlene and asking all sorts of questions about our kids. I sorta told her that Harper was up for this movie and it looks like she may have booked it.

PATSY

Oh boy.

PING

I'm so sorry.

Ping is visibly upset.

PATSY

It's okay. Mary Decato is a snake. She called the casting office and said that Harper and I told her, Harper booked the job.

PING

I'll tell your manager what happened.

PATSY

You don't have to. I'll let her know.

CONNIE

People will do anything for their kids to work. It's awful.

TINA

A similar thing happened with Jennifer. Someone we knew, called her agent on their personal cell phone number and said we gave it to them.

CONNIE

Oh my gosh. What is wrong with people?

PING

It's hard to know who we can trust. This place seems to change people.

PATSY

The thing that really bothers me, is that Harper has always told people about auditions she's known about. She feels if it's her job to have she'll get it.

TINA

We can't be naive. That's not the way it works out here.

Ping is getting ruffled.

PING

Naive? I think it's better she's like that, than to be cutthroat about it.

Everyone stares at Ping and Tina.

TINA

That didn't come out right.

PING

I think maybe it did.

TINA

Wait --

PING

You guys hear about auditions all the time. Mika rarely gets called. If we didn't hear about auditions from other people, she'd never get in.

Mika steps forward next to her mom.

CONNIE

I think what Tina is saying, is that it's a competition. I can kind of see that.

PING

Wow Connie. Your kid gets discriminated against all the time because he's biracial. Some competition. That's really fair.

TINA

You think it's so easy for my kid because she's pretty? It's just the opposite. She's treated like a prop. No brains. No talent.

Jennifer is shocked at what her mom just said. It's the first time she feels her mom is in her corner. She puts her arm around her shoulders.

JENNIFER

Mom, it's okay. Calm down.

TINA

No I mean it, Jennifer. Each of us are going through some hard shit out here. It's a cutthroat business.

PING

So maybe we all need to stick together. You know circle the wagons?

The kids aren't sure what that means, but the moms get it.

PATSY

Smart advice.

CONNIE

I think this industry makes you crazy. I don't want Danny to do it, if this is what it's about.

PATSY

I'm sure there are some good decent people in the industry. We just got here. We're on a learning curve.

TINA

Ping, I'm sorry if I offended you. That wasn't my intention.

They hug each other.

PING

I know. I'm sorry too.

Harper stands in silence. She's upset about what happened with the movie.

Jennifer stands closer to her mom, than she ever has.

Danny has had enough of the conversation.

DANNY

I'm going into the pool.

He jumps in with his clothes on and splashes everyone.

Mika shoves Jennifer in and Harper gets pulled in along the way.

The mom's also jump in the pool and start splashing around.

INT. ACTING WORKSHOP - BURBANK - DAY

Danny arrives early and is ready for his new acting class.

MARC

Okay, today I'm going to give you cold copy.

You don't need to memorize it, but you do need to go over it and be familiar with it. You can improvise. Danny use your own name for this.

Marc passes out the assignments.

Danny's scene is about a kid in a store who gets caught shoplifting. An actual POLICE OFFICER, was brought in for the scene.

SUPER: SCENE

A MANAGER points down an aisle. A police officer, pulls his gun on a dark skinned child, looking at candy.

POLICE OFFICER

Alright, son. Put your hands up in the air.

DANNY

But I didn't do anything wrong.

POLICE OFFICER

The manager saw you stealing a knife from the store. We need to check your pockets.

Danny is frisked and put into hand cuffs.

DANNY

I'm telling you I didn't steal anything. Let me go. Let me go.

POLICE OFFICER

The manager thinks you did.

DANNY

Ouch, these things hurt. Take them off me.

The officer checks Danny's pockets and comes up with nothing.

POLICE OFFICER

You need to calm down. You're gonna make this harder than it needs to be.

The manager walks up to ID Danny.

MANAGER

Yea, I think this is the one. They all look alike.

POLICE OFFICER

What do you mean you think he's the one, and they all look alike?

Danny starts to cry.

DANNY

This is all crap. I didn't take anything.

MANAGER

There were a few dark boys running around here. One in a blue shirt and shorts, took the knife. I saw him.

As Danny is being detained, two boys, one in a blue shirt and shorts run past them and out the front door.

Their arms are full of items.

MANAGER

Wait. Police help. I've been robbed.

DANNY

I want my Mom. Take these cuffs off.

The police officer runs after the kids, leaving Danny's character in cuffs.

Danny slides against a wall to the ground.

DANNY

Why does dark skin hurt so bad?

END OF SCENE

MARC

Very good you guys. Everyone really got into their part. Danny how did it make you feel?

DANNY

I never want to steal anything. Just because I'm biracial he blamed it on me.

MARC

That's called racial profiling and it's wrong. These are probably the kind of parts some of you guys are gonna be asked to do.

DANNY

I want to be the cop next time.
Those cuffs hurt.

POLICE OFFICER

I'm sorry about that. Being
detained isn't a fun thing.

MARC

All of you believed your side of
the story. That's what makes acting
work.

Connie stands at the back of the classroom in tears.

Danny walks up to her and gives her a hug.

MARC

You guys can go. I'll see you next
class.

INT. CONNIE'S CAR - BURBANK - DAY

CONNIE

Did you enjoy class this time?

DANNY

I did, but it kind of scared me.

CONNIE

Why?

DANNY

They had me in hand cuffs and
accused me of stealing because I'm
dark.

CONNIE

Has that happened in real life or
just in the scene?

DANNY

God, in the scene, Mom. It's an
acting class.

CONNIE

Excuse me. You were so believable I
wasn't sure if it had happened
before or not.

DANNY

Like you wouldn't know if it did?

CONNIE

I hope I never get a call like that.

DANNY

I think I want to stay in this class for awhile.

CONNIE

Good honey. I'm glad you found a class you're comfortable in.

DANNY

It's really awful when they judge us because of the color of our skin.

CONNIE

I know. You're really growing up. I love your sense of heart.

Connie tears up. Danny pats her shoulder.

DANNY

Don't cry Mom. Maybe you should be taking acting classes.

CONNIE

Me? Never. Too much pressure. Although I did play a pretty good dog in a grade school production.

DANNY

I'm sure that was exciting.

CONNIE

Hey, your mom can do a lot of things you don't even know about.

Danny pops a piece of gum into his mouth and blows a big bubble.

INT. PATSY'S CAR - HIGHWAY 101 - DAY

Patsy and Harper are coming back from the Dollar Store. Once again, "Hero" is playing on the radio.

Carrie calls in.

INTERCUT -- PHONE CONVERSATION

PATSY

Hi Carrie. I have you on speaker.

CARRIE

Pack your bags. Harper you booked the part.

HARPER

What? I booked it. Mom, she said I booked it.

PATSY

I need to pull off the highway.

They come to a stop in a 7-11 parking lot.

PATSY (CONT'D)

So the casting people believed we didn't say anything to Mary?

CARRIE

Apparently, this isn't the first time she's pulled this. One of the casting people remembered her from another movie they cast.

HARPER

I can't believe it. Thank you, Carrie.

CARRIE

You deserve this, kiddo. Now the hard work starts. You need to deliver the part to them.

HARPER

I promise. I will.

CARRIE

I'll send contracts over later, and yes ...you can now tell people you booked it!

PATSY

Thanks for letting us know.

END OF CALL

HARPER

Oh my God Mom. I can't believe I booked it.

PATSY

I know. It's so cool. You're working with Meryl friggin' Streep.

They both start screaming.

HARPER

Thank you, Mom.

PATSY

For what? You're the one that booked it.

HARPER

We booked it. I couldn't have done it without you.

PATSY

Well, it's pretty cool. You need to call your dad, and brother. I know they'll be excited.

HARPER

I know they will. I just want to hang on to this moment for just a little bit longer. Then I'll call them.

Patsy and Harper sit in the car eating donuts, and drinking soda.

This moment belongs to just the two of them. Away from any kind of hurt feelings, or judgement.

Patsy receives a text from Ping.

PING

Mika auditioned for a movie role a few months ago. They just called. She booked it!

HARPER

I love this business. This ones for you Grandpa.

She takes a big bite out of a donut.

FADE OUT.