

EPK

by

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VIDEO CAMERA POV

EXT. SOUND STAGE - DAY

The image is GRAINY and UNSTABLE as it tries to focus on the entrance. The evening sun peaks over the edge of the building.

After a few seconds, the CAMERA moves closer to the entrance. The image bounces with each footstep. Clearly, an amateur.

INT. SOUND STAGE - DAY

The camera weaves past LIGHT STANDS, FLOPPY FLAGS, and various crew members all working at their own speed. Every now and then, a face will glance up at the camera and return either a smile or try to ignore it.

In the center of the room, a film set: A sofa, two chairs, and a fire place. A little crude, but it'll do.

The camera moves closer to approach TAMMY WEATHERS (42), reading her script on the sofa. The camera stays on her for a few seconds. It studies her.

LATER

The camera rests on VIC TRUMBLE (29). Goatee, fedora, and heavy, tired eyes. He sips from a cup of coffee.

CAMERAMAN (O.S.)

Why did you wanna make this movie?

VIC

Um, I don't really - that's a great question, by the way. I guess I felt like this idea, this story really grabbed me, y'know? We've had a great cast, a great team behind this, and, um. This is it, our last day. So, hopefully, everything goes right and I don't, uh, have to blow anyone's brains out.

He takes another sip.

CAMERAMAN (O.S.)

What genre's this movie supposed to be?

VIC  
Drama. Definitely a drama.

CAMERAMAN (O.S.)  
Any violence?

VIC  
(shrugging)  
Maybe a little. Depends how I'm  
feeling.

He chuckles.

CAMERAMAN (O.S.)  
Well, thank you very much, Vic.

Vic shakes the Cameraman's hand.

VIC  
No problem.  
(points behind him)  
Just don't follow Tammy into the  
ladies room with that, got it?

He chuckles again. An awkward pause.

VIC (CONT'D)  
You can take that out, right?

INT. SOUND STAGE - BASE CAMP - DAY

The camera flows up to a table furbished with assorted pastries, finger sandwiches, and granola bars. None of it edible.

The camera moves up to see BURT (22) making grilled cheese sandwiches on a small grill. Overqualified, at least for this gig.

He looks up at the camera.

BURT  
This is what crafty looks like,  
people. Looks like fun, don't it?

The camera tilts down to grab a granola bar. It lifts back up to Burt. LOUD, CRINKLING from the granola bar bleeds into the audio.

Suddenly--

1ST AD (O.S.)  
 Abby singer goes off in ten  
 minutes! Ten minutes!

INT. SOUND STAGE - DAY

The camera moves in towards the set.

Vic kneels by Tammy and RICHARD THOMAS (19) on the sofa.  
 Every word from Vic's mouth sticks with velocity.

VIC  
 This is the lynch pin of the entire  
 film. Everything's built to this.  
 (to Richard)  
 Rich, you don't want your mom to  
 pull the trigger. Everything in  
 your body says "no".  
 (to Tammy)  
 But he can't stop you. You're too  
 far removed to listen. And then you  
 lift the gun and--  
 (pantomimes gun to head)

Tammy and Richard nod.

TAMMY  
 I think we're good, Vic.

VIC  
 Good?  
 (looks at both)  
 All right. Excellent. Let's do  
 this.

Vic stands back up. Tammy and Richard chat between each  
 other, as Vic walks over to TYLER DANIELS (34) behind the set  
 camera.

VIC (CONT'D)  
 Keep 'em both in focus.

TYLER  
 Keep it deep?

VIC  
 Yeah. Keep it deep.

A moment.

TYLER  
 Are we gonna set her up with the  
 squib or what - what's the deal?

VIC  
No squib. We don't need it.

Tyler looks at Vic.

TYLER  
No squib?

Vic shakes his head.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
I wasn't told about this - Vic, I thought we had something clear. How are we gonna cover it if this is her last--

VIC  
No. Squib. I've got it figured out - it's all in here--

He points to his head. A pause.

VIC (CONT'D)  
No squib.

LATER

A 2nd AC (26) holds a slate between Tammy and Richard.

2ND AC  
21 Alpha, take one.

He snaps the slate and quickly runs out of frame.

The camera ZOOMS closer on Tammy and Richard.

VIC (O.S.)  
Action.

In the span of a second, Tammy and Richard switch into character.

RICHARD  
We can take care of this. Doctors, psychiatrists, anybody. Thing's are gonna get better.

TAMMY  
No. They won't get better. Everything's just spinning out of my hands. You, me, or nobody can fix this.

RICHARD  
Don't say that.

The camera quickly turns to Vic. With each passing second, he grows more and more excited.

The camera turns back to Tammy. She reaches down to the floor and

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?!

TAMMY  
I'm sorry.

She pulls the trigger.

A LOUD blast blows through the barrel and into Tammy's skull. Blood and brain matter coat Richard and the sofa around her.

Tammy's body falls to the floor.

A horrified Richard jumps back, feeling the blood around his face.

The camera DROPS to the floor. The Cameraman and several members of the crew run over to Tammy's limp, increasingly pale body.

TYLER  
What the fuck happened?! We said no squibs!

1ST AD  
Did we use blanks?  
(to crew members)  
Back up! Don't crowd her! Give her some fuckin' space!

TYLER  
No! Nothing practical, just a prop!

The 1st AD pries the gun out of Tammy's hand. He inspects it up and down.

1ST AD  
This is real...  
(to crew members)  
Who the fuck gave her a live round?!

Nobody answers, before--

VIC  
It's perfect.

Everyone turns to Vic.

TYLER  
What?

Vic takes a moment. He speaks in a calm, collected manner, despite the chaos around him.

VIC  
She did great.

The 1st AD drops the gun.

A chill SILENCE, before--

VIC (CONT'D)  
Well, I'm satisfied. Let's move to the martini.

Nobody speaks.

VIC (CONT'D)  
What's with you guys? We have one more shot to go and we're outta here! Vamos! Gone! Done!  
(to 1st AD)  
Tell 'em - tell 'em we need to--

1ST AD  
What the fuck's wrong with you?  
What the fuck's wrong with you?!

Vic reaches into his waistband.

1ST AD (CONT'D)  
You sick fuckin' bastard! You're sick! How could--

Before he can even finish, Vic pull out another PISTOL and shoots the 1st AD point blank in the head. The 1st AD falls to the ground, blood misting out the back of his skull, as Vic crouches down to his level.

VIC  
Now, tell me - why would you make us stop when we're so close? Hmm? I thought this was a collaborative effort.  
(shakes his head)  
Always about you, isn't it?

Vic looks back up to the crowd of crew members too petrified to even breath.

VIC (CONT'D)

I know, I know - he made a mistake. See, that's a big rule in this business - and I'm glad you're learning it here: do not back talk your director. He didn't, and now, we don't have a 1st Ad. His loss, not mine.

Suddenly, a PA breaks away from the crowd. The camera follows him as he rushes to the exit.

He doesn't make it. TWO BLASTS ring out and catch the PA in the back. He falls to the ground as a pool of blood surfaces under him.

The camera pans back to Vic, who holds the smoking weapon in his hand. Decidedly not satisfied, to say the least.

VIC (CONT'D)

See, now I'm not even gonna bother with him. Fuckin' high school dropout, thinks he's an intern. Not for me. Not on my time.

CAMERAMAN (O.S.)

(whispers to himself)  
Oh, god. Oh, shit...

The camera turns away - anything to escape Vic's presence - until--

VIC (O.S.)

Whoa! Hold it - stop! Stop!

The camera slowly brings itself back around, as Vic approaches the camera.

VIC (CONT'D)

Don't be nervous. You're gonna -- listen to me. You're gonna want all this shit for EPK--  
(draws attention to gun)  
Right?

Suddenly, Vic quickly aims the gun off screen again. He unloads several rounds as crew members SCREAM. The camera frantically shakes, almost dodging shots.

CUT TO:



LATER

A weeping Richard sits before the camera. He can't move an inch, and yet everything inside him desperately wants to. Behind the camera, QUIET, UNCONTROLLABLE SOBBING from the Cameraman.

VIC (O.S.)  
So, you understand this part of the scene, right?

Richard regretfully nods.

VIC (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
You wanna see your mother again, don't you? She's there on the floor, and you'd do anything to see her, don't you?

Richard nods again.

VIC (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
You're at the home stretch, Richard. Let's make it to the finish line.

Richard breaks into hysterics.

Vic leans into frame.

VIC (CONT'D)  
(whispers)  
Uta Hagen would be proud.

He gives a thumbs up and turns, stepping over Tammy's pale corpse as if it were film equipment.

The camera follows Vic as he walks off the set. Pulling back, the camera reveals the lifeless, gunshot bodies of all the crew members, scattered throughout the stage. A blood bath.

Vic walks over to the set camera. He tries his best to maneuver it.

VIC (CONT'D)  
Shit, I should've asked Tyler how to--

He gets it working.

VIC (CONT'D)  
Perfect!  
(to Richard)  
See, easy peasy.

He looks through the eye piece.

VIC (CONT'D)  
Okay, lean a little closer,  
Richard. Almost there,  
and...beautiful.

The camera pans to Richard on the couch, a fidgety, sobbing mess.

VIC (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Okay, keep the energy going  
and...action!

Richard slowly brings the gun to himself, as if a force outside of him is holding him back. He slides the barrel inside his mouth. Sweat and tears drench his face and drip down to the gun.

Richard cocks the gun.

The camera quickly averts itself away from Richard and onto Vic, who glows with exuberance.

A BLAST echoes through the stage. A brief SILENCE, before a final THUD.

Vic jumps up from his camera and rushes to the set. Richard's body slowly starts to form a pond of blood and brain matter. The wall behind him soaked.

Vic kneels down to Richard's body and scruffs the hair. He can't contain himself. He breaks into tears.

VIC (CONT'D)  
We did it. We did it.

He looks up in almost a heavenly bliss and tries to catch his breath. Serenity.

Behind the camera, the Cameraman's SOBBING returns. The camera shakes a little, frantic of what's to come.

Vic reemerges from his bliss and wipes away his tears. He looks into the camera with a calm, welcoming smile.

VIC (CONT'D)  
You wanna work on my next project?

CUT TO BLACK.