

CLEAN BREAK

A THESIS IN
Creative Writing and Media Arts

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MASTER OF FINE ARTS

by
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CLEAN BREAK

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ABSTRACT

Clean Break is a feature-length screenplay about a pool hustler named Jimmy Grey and Blake, Jimmy's three-month pregnant girlfriend. The couple attempt to take one last vacation before the baby arrives. On the evening before their departure, Jimmy makes an errant move in placing a large bet against a vindictive bookie. The result of Jimmy's gambling is a severe beating and all of his travel money being stolen. Jimmy has to think fast in order to save his trip, so, he plans a new route for him and Blake to travel with pool stops along the way so he can make some extra money. Regardless of Jimmy's attempts to show Blake that their future will be bright, the pool activities on their pseudo-vacation further isolated Blake. In the end, Blake has to decide whether there truly is enough evidence of change or whether she's been hustled out of a secure future.

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EXPLICATION

My thesis is a feature screenplay titled *Clean Break*. It's a ninety-eight page script about a young pool hustler and his three-month pregnant girlfriend's attempt to go on one last couple's vacation. *Clean Break* is a romantic drama with sports and road trip elements. *The Hustler* and *The Color of Money* are excellent examples that set the bar for the genre, which themselves have romantic elements and travelling in them. My goal, however, was to make a tragic love story about a guy who plays pool, not a love story about pool. *The Verdict* was a big inspiration for me this semester. The movie orbits around a court case but very little attention was given to the actual trial in David Mamet's script. I wanted to cast my characters in the world of underground pool hustling, but not let that world dominate the narrative.

The greatest source of inspiration for this script was Robert Wise's 1949 classic *The Set-Up*. Originally, I tried to adapt the structure of the narrative as closely as possible but it proved too difficult. The main obstacle was simply the logistical differences between the sport of pool and boxing being too great. *The Set-Up* plays out in real-

time and for a pool tournament to play out in real time I would have written a multiple-hour script. The closest I got to the form of *The Set-Up* was an attempt to have the whole story take place over one night. Although I completed a draft that, for all intents and purposes, achieved the one-night mark, I would eventually abandon the form of *The Set-Up* and develop my own structure. In the end, I felt like I had to choose between trying to capture the heart of *The Set-Up* or its spectacle, so, I chose the former.

One of the heart elements I believe I was able to emulate was the wavering and loneliness of Audrey Totter's Julie in the form of my female protagonist's isolation and wavering support for her reckless pool-hustler boyfriend. Julie chooses isolation in the movie, refusing to go into the boxing gym. She is constantly checking the radio for the boxing updates, proving her support but unwilling to show it by attending. She considers leaving Stoker altogether but rips up her train ticket in the end and showers him with full support. In contrast, Blake is isolated, but not by choice. She wants Jimmy to be around more, like Julie does Stoker, but their lifestyle does not provide that quality time. While Julie and Blake both want their men to be present, Blake decides in the end not to support her man in whatever path he chooses but rather she

leaves him isolated for the first time when she walks out on him. In *The Set-Up*, Julie's isolation and ultimately her decision to return is always by her own agency. Blake's isolation is imposed on her until she discovers her own agency and then ultimately chooses to isolate herself from Jimmy.

Another element incorporated was the betrayal of Jimmy by his manager. This betrayal is very much the dynamic crux of *The Set-Up*. In *Clean Break* the betrayal is the inciting incident that launches the movie into the second half. One major shift my betrayal has is that it doesn't sever the relationship of my protagonist and his manager, like it does between Stoker Thompson and Tiny. Instead, Jimmy is taken care of by his betrayer and even financially supported. This dichotomy of the amicable relationship between the betrayer and the betrayed was a great pleasure to write in. As I wrote this portion, I felt strong influences from my experiences watching Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing*. In one of the final moments of the film, Mookie asks Sal for his wages after Mookie helps incite a riot that destroyed Sal's pizza shop. Sal pays him and I always thought it was audacious for Mookie to even ask Sal for the money and wild that Sal would. What irked me as

strange and incongruent when I first watched the movie now strikes me as complicated and human.

ORIGIN

The seed of this story began in the Fall 2013 semester in Whitney Terrell's Advanced Creative Writing course. Originally, it was a fourteen-page short story intended to be lengthened into a novella. After that semester, I shelved the project to focus all of my attention on writing for film and theatre. It wasn't until Mitch Brian's screenwriting course in the Spring 2015 semester that I would revisit the story. The primary goal in that class was to get through the first act. In the next semester, Fall 2015, I worked with Mitch to develop the story more fully by completing a treatment, map out a beat sheet and complete the first draft. At the end of Fall 2015, I was able to finish a full-length first draft, over two years since I first started the story. The first draft was 132-pages long. It felt great

The following semester, Spring 2016, I presented this first draft for peer review in Mitch Brian's Advanced Screenwriting course. The result of the peer review made me realize that if the script were an engine, it wouldn't turn over. The sparks were there in the beginning but it just wouldn't run beyond that. It was couple weeks into the

semester and I was faced with a very difficult task of re-working a 132-page script. This proved to be my biggest challenge yet. I tried to re-structure the story but there were so many moving pieces that when I touched one thing it felt like it created a dozen more problematic areas. From there I had about three months to complete a new script. Since the original draft had taken me a year of hard work to finish. I reworked another beat sheet and treatment and passed it along for peer review where it too was ripped to pieces and rightly so. At this point, I was discouraged but I got at it again and rewrote another treatment, another beat sheet and began writing what I have presented to you today. There was a time in the revision process where I had retitled the story *Love is a Longshot*. While I really like this alternative title, it felt too melodramatic in the end. The return to the original title feels better as it is more closely tied to pool and foreshadows the ending.

LOOKING AHEAD

Since beginning the Creative Writing and Media Arts MFA program in 2013, I was able to adopt my wife's daughter and have had two more children of my own. At times I've worked multiple jobs while in school, eventually transitioning into working solely as a freelance videographer. My family has weathered it all and my

perspective on what success looks like coming out of this program is completely different than when I started. Originally, my goal was to be prolific. I wanted to have three screenplays finished by May 2016. I wanted at least one of them polished enough to submit to the Austin Film Festival. Instead, I have one unpolished script, of which I scrapped the original version only to write another draft in a fifth of the time. That decision, to attempt writing another script from scratch in my final semester, was only possible because I knew I had gained the tools in the previous years and had the confidence to order my schedule in order to accomplish it. I may not have become the prolific writer that I was hoping to become, but I have become the effective writer that I need to be.

I don't encourage everyone to go to school for film. There is a number of great examples of big-time players who never stepped foot in a film school lecture hall. For me, the program was about learning discipline, which I lacked very much before. I learned that in order to improve the quality of my writing I needed to also improve the quality of my life. If I want to be an effective writer, I have to also become an effective friend, husband and father. I realized that success was not in mastering any one aspect of my person but learning how to grow in them all. I still

believe I can be that prolific writer, but it is not going to happen in the sprint format. Ultra-marathon is what I'm gearing up for.

EXT. SMALL TOWN VARIOUS - DAY

Various shots of a small town, Raytown, Missouri. Water tower, diner, Shriner's club building, cops loitering at a diner.

A spritely voice talks over the images. This is BLAKE MILLER, mid-20's female.

BLAKE (O.S.)

Everywhere I look my horizon is blocked by something. Trees, a Walmart, a stop light, this hill, that hill. Everything bumps into everything else here and that's what makes everyone in the mid-west so familiar with everyone and I get that, it's just that I've never seen nothing else. You ever heard of a vanishing point? It's when two lines run side by side, like lines on a highway. Well, if you can see them running long enough, eventually it looks like they become one. My world's too tight. I can only see how things so close, so familiar, come together.

CU Still image of a beach.

BLAKE (O.S.)

That's where we'll be. Cocoa Beach, Florida. Cape Canveral, Ron Jon's, sea gulls.

INT. CLOTHING STORE - DAY

The image of the beach, which turns out to be a magazine clipping held by a sales clerk, SKYLAR, a girl the same age as Blake.

The picture is lowered out of the frame revealing Blake stepping out of the dressing room in a one piece swim suit.

BLAKE

My only question is should I go one-piece or two?

Blake turns to the side and runs her hands down her figure revealing a baby bump.

SKLAR

Aren't you afraid of sharks?

BLAKE

Terribly. I haven't decided if I'm going in the water yet or not.

SKYLAR

You're going to drive all the way to Florida to go to the beach and you don't know if you'll go in? Why not just go to Longview lake? They have a beach.

Blake exits the dressing room in a two-piece.

BLAKE

That's a sand bar that men in dump trucks and bulldozers built. I want the real thing, that's been there since the dawn of time. I want to crawl out from the waters onto the sand like my most ancient ancestors. To evolve into a new creature. That's hard to do in your hometown.

SKYLAR

You're the strangest girl I know.

BLAKE

I'm the most romantic girl you know and you know what that makes me?

Blake twirls around and holds one hand out.

BLAKE

Fabulous!

INT. NAIL SALON - DAY

CU on Blake's hand. Another hand grabs hers and starts pushing back her cuticles.

Blake is sitting at a manicure table across from her asian male nail tech, ROBERT.

BLAKE

I'm not even going to brush off my feet before I get in the car. I want to bring back as much sand as I can. It'll be like getting sprinkled with pixie dust every

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

time I get in my car. I know that sounds crazy, but I think it's because I'm going crazy.

ROBERT

I've noticed red flags for years.

BLAKE

Says the pot to the kettle. Robert, between the two of us, you're the crazy one, still working here.

ROBERT

You're an enabler, for one. Go somewhere else.

BLAKE

You'd have to be dead for me to consider going elsewhere.

ROBERT

Two, my parent's wouldn't last three months if I left.

BLAKE

You can't feel bad and stick around your whole life, or their whole life. I know you have dreams that don't include nail buffers. At some point, you have to look out for you.

ROBERT

Missy, you're about to be grounded in 6 months. Trust me, you're crazier than me. You know at some point, you have to look after...him?

BLAKE

I think she's gonna be a her.

ROBERT

Either way, it doesn't matter because, breaking news, babies cost money.

BLAKE

We do just fine.

ROBERT
 We? You and your pool hustler
 boyfriend. I swear you live your
 life inside a lusty paperback
 novel.

Blake smiles.

ROBERT
 I'm just saying, why not save your
 money and go to Longview Lake? They
 have a beach there.

BLAKE
 I'd rather be eaten by a shark.

Robert reaches to turn on a sink faucet.

INT. HAIR SALON - EVENING

CU on a sink faucet. Blake's lowers her head into frame and
 rests her neck on the edge of the sink. Her hairdresser,
 VERONICA, begins washing and massaging.

There is one other hairdresser, JENN, and one patron, CINDY,
 getting her hair cut.

BLAKE
 I want it all.

VERONICA
 Babymoon? I didn't even get a
 honeymoon.

CINDY
 Honeymoon? I hardly had a wedding.
 The pastor and judge came over and
 we performed the service in our
 back yard. Mom made Chicken Divan
 for our meal.

BLAKE
 Chicken Divan?

VERONICA
 It's the fancy way to say Chicken
 Broccoli Casserole.

CINDY
 See my point?

All the ladies laugh but Cindy.

JENN

Veronica, you had a honeymoon.
Don't act like you didn't.

VERONICA

Sure, you didn't see me for a week,
but I wouldn't say three nights at
the Hillside Inn and then moving
into his parent's basement as sweet
as honey.

JENN

All of y'all are ungrateful. You
got a man. You got love and all you
can talk about is what you don't
got.

CINDY

Oh, no doubt my plate is full, but
love from my man is a side dish not
the main course.

The women all laugh again.

Veronica and Blake move from the sink to the chair and
vanity next to the other women.

BLAKE

What's your main course then?

CINDY

Oh, honey! Bless your heart! It's
the same dish you got in the oven.

BLAKE

That's cause you got three.

CINDY

(looks at Blake)

One is enough to send you any
strong fibered women to a looney
bin.

JENN

It's good to have family nearby. I
know your brother keeps an eye on
you. How your folks?

Veronica gives a cautionary stare to Jenn.

CINDY

Blake, I will tell you this, even
though he's a side dish, he's my

(MORE)

CINDY (CONT'D)

side dish and that has brought me loads of peace over the years.

BLAKE

You're making me hungry with all this side dish talk.

VERONICA

For real or metaphorically? Are you thinking about marriage?

BLAKE

No, no, no. Not now. Maybe later.

CINDY

Do you guys talk about it?

BLAKE

Kind of.

VERONICA

Kind of like when you bring it up?

BLAKE

I don't really ever bring it up either.

JENN

Cause you're afraid he'll pack up and run?

Blake doesn't reply. The awkward silence catches the attention of Blake's girlfriends.

BLAKE

When we're good, we're great. There's nobody that touches us, but most the time I'm afraid we're nothing.

Veronica wipes tears from Blake's face.

VERONICA

Is that why you're going on the road trip?

BLAKE

Oh, no. I want to see the beach. I have since I was little and I figure that whatever may come down the road, this may be my only chance.

JENN

Okay, cause I was thinking you should just go to Longview beach.

Veronica wipes tears from Blake's eyes again.

BLAKE

Look at me crying like a little baby when I'm supposed to be a big girl now.

VERONICA

(gently in Blake's ear)

Don't you worry about a thing, Beauty.

BLAKE

I guess it's my own damn fault for falling for a pool hustler.

CINDY

Blake, every man is a hustler.

The women all laugh. Jenn sprays Cindy's hair with a water.

INT. STICKS AND STONES - EVENING

CU on a spray bottle nozzle spraying window cleaner.

Pull out to reveal a homeless man cleaning the windows inside this grimy pool hall. This is BILKO.

At a table nearby, a tall corn-fed shooter wearing a cowboy hat scans his table, lines up a shot and sinks it.

Bilko cleans a window near the Cowboy's table where another shooter is standing by drinking a beer and fishing through a bowl of mixed nuts.

This is JIMMY, Blake's Jimmy, early 30's, ruddy. He hasn't looked once at what the Cowboy is doing.

BILKO

This guy anything to think about?

JIMMY

He's a thing, but not too much of a thing.

BILKO

Look, Jimmy, you're driving me nuts. I got like seven bucks, can't you just tell me if you're rope-a-dopin' or what? You've been like a fucking rollercoaster.

JIMMY

You want insider info? You know they put people in jail for that kind of shit.

Bilko slaps Jimmy's hand and grabs the bowl of mixed nuts.

BILKO

It's no worse then picking the cashews out of the mixed nuts, you ingrate.

JIMMY

They put Martha Stewart in jail for insider trading. They'll sure as hell throw your stinkin ass in there.

BILKO

Oh hell, you're already wasted aren't you?

Jimmy holds up an "I object" pointer finger.

JIMMY

Not true.

COWBOY

Hey, Pal! I said, "It's your shot."

Jimmy uses his "I object" finger as a "one minute" finger for the cowboy but still doesn't look at the table.

JIMMY

Bilko, this is what I will tell you. Always bet on me, even money, never all-in and you'll always, ALWAYS, be on top by the end of the night.

COWBOY

I said, "It's your shot, Pal!"

JIMMY

(aloud)

I'm gonna run the table. How much?

COWBOY

Why don't you just turn around and shoot?

Jimmy walks backwards toward the cowboy.

JIMMY

I'm gonna shoot the moon blind. How much?

The pool hall manager, late 50's stocky man, named E.M. HENSON looks over and rolls his eyes when he sees Jimmy's antics.

COWBOY

I don't know how y'all deal with jackasses out here, but, where I'm from, we got a real specific method.

JIMMY

(to Bilko)

What's he doing now?

BILKO

He's rolling up his sleeves.

JIMMY

We'll make it friendly, ten bucks.

BILKO

He's having a hard time rolling them up because his forearms are so big.

JIMMY

I'll give you two to one.

BILKO

His hat just came off.

JIMMY

Three to one.

BILKO

He's walking over now. A Cowboy taking their hat off means business. I mean it has to...He's right behind you.

JIMMY

Four to one. Final offer.

Jimmy turns around wincing to find the Cowboy with his hand stretched out. They shake on it.

CUT TO:

Jimmy is pissed to find the ball position is unfavorable. He tries anyway, but comes up two shots shy.

The Cowboy cleans up the remaining shots. Bilko and Henson both look annoyed at Jimmy.

CUT TO:

Jimmy walks over to the Cowboy after the match. The two shake hands.

JIMMY

What did I beat you? 7-3?

COWBOY

Your memories not so good is it?

JIMMY

I don't normally lose.

COWBOY

6-4.

JIMMY

6-4? So, you owe me forty.

COWBOY

And you owe me forty for that side bet, so, we're good.

JIMMY

Run'em again? Another 10?

COWBOY

I think I'm gonna look elsewhere.

JIMMY

There is no elsewhere here. I am the game.

COWBOY

I sure hope not.

JIMMY

Why's that? Not good enough for you?

COWBOY

Because you annoy me.

Henson walks over to hand Jimmy a beer.

HENSON
How'd you do, Jimmy?

JIMMY
6-4

Henson nods his head in approval and clinks Jimmy's beer with his own.

HENSON
What can I get you, Cowboy?

The Cowboy puts his hat back on and lights a cigarette.

COWBOY
Any big games you could set up?

HENSON
How big?

COWBOY
Fifty a game, to start.

HENSON
I might have a couple big fish I could call, but they all have teeth.

COWBOY
You just tell me where to cast.

JIMMY
Woah, woah, woah, big games? You didn't even beat me.

COWBOY
But you annoy me, remember?

JIMMY
I would have smoked you, but I was only three beers in. This makes four.

COWBOY
Your ego's soaring at a high altitude. Careful you don't crash.

JIMMY
Fifty bucks a game, I hardly call that hot action.

HENSON

I'll make that phonecall.

Henson walks over to the bar that is being occupied by Bilko and a dapper patron, mid-50's male, named SLIM JIM.

Bilko is behind the bar pouring a pint when Henson walks behind and picks up the cordless phone.

HENSON

(to Bilko)

I hope that's for him.

BILKO

I cleaned all the windows.

HENSON

I didn't ask you to do that, plus they still look like shit.

SLIM JIM

That beer's on me.

Henson rests his elbows on the bar.

HENSON

(on the phone)

Yeah, this is Henson. Over at Sticks and Stones. Who is this? Okay, my name's on a tab over there somewhere. I want a Large Sicilian.

CUT TO:

INT. PIZZA SHOP - NIGHT

A young girl is sitting at the counter taking Henson's order.

PIZZA GIRL

Hand tossed or thin crust? Okay. Would you be interested in adding a two liter or a dessert?

CUT TO:

INT. STICKS AND STONES - NIGHT

Henson is still standing at the bar talking.

HENSON

No. Just the pizza will do.

Henson hangs up to find Slim Jim and Bilko both giggling.

HENSON

What's gotten into you two?

BILKO

Slim heard you say, "I want a large Sicilian." He thought you were ordering a date for tonight.

HENSON

No, I told that Cowboy I'd round up some big game to hunt.

BILKO

Like they do with those safaris in Africa. You choose on a menu what kind of animal you want to hunt. They drive you up to the animal in a jeep and then POW.

SLIM JIM

Poor guy doesn't realize he's the one being hunted.

AROUND THE POOL HALL

People whisper around the pool hall about Jimmy about to hook the cowboy.

JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy racks the balls as Henson walks over.

HENSON

Got ahold of an old ace, goes by Southpaw. You may have heard of him. Used to be pro. Haunted Vegas for a bit, but comes out of the woodwork from time to time.

COWBOY

When do you think he'll be here?

HENSON

Maybe an hour, probably two. You want a beer?

JIMMY

That's great! Enough time for us to get a couple games in.

COWBOY

I'll take a whiskey and a can of your finest bug spray.

HENSON

If you got a pest problem, I'd suggest stomping on it.

The cowboy turns to Jimmy.

COWBOY

Ok, kid. Let's do it. Twenty a game. Can you cover that?

JIMMY

Of course I can. Can you?

The cowboy laughs and pulls out a fat roll of cash with a rubber band around it.

JIMMY

That's a lovely rubber band you got there.

The cowboy reaches out his hand.

JIMMY

How many games?

COWBOY

Until one of us cries mercy.

Jimmy shakes hands with the Cowboy.

AROUND THE POOL HALL

The handshake got a lot of attention.

THE BAR

People start coming to Henson and placing bets. Bilko places three dollars on Jimmy.

SLIM JIM

(to Henson)

Aren't you tired of hustling?

HENSON

Yeh, but not having money makes me even more tired.

JIMMY'S TABLE

The cowboy unscrews his pool cue and puts it in the case. He then pulls out a black cue and assembles it.

JIMMY

For real?

Bilko walks up to Jimmy with another beer.

BILKO

I got three on you.

Jimmy fist bumps Bilko.

JIMMY

That's what I'm talking about. You might not have more on the line, but you're gonna walk out with more than some of these--

(looks into the crowd
with disdain)

--these unbelievers.

Jimmy and the Cowboy line up at the table and shoot a ball off the rails to see who has option for the break.

JIMMY

Look at that stick. Is it too early to cry mercy?

The cowboy counts down from three and both men shoot off the rails.

SERIES OF SLAM CUTS:

- 1) Jimmy finishing a beer
- 2) Hard ball striking
- 3) Money exchanging hands
- 4) Jimmy winning/Cowboy racking a new game
- 5) Bilko's money growing

These shots repeat in similar order until Jimmy has a long range shot on the eight ball. He's grabs his beer and sinks the shot one-handed to everyone's cheer.

Jimmy throws the triangle on the table and picks up a fresh pint.

The Cowboy puts on his jacket and hands Jimmy his wad of cash.

JIMMY

You should keep the rubber band.
It's a lovely rubber band.

The Cowboy exits the pool hall. Jimmy gets some encouraging back slaps from different patrons on the way to--

THE BAR

Most of the patrons are gone, but Bilko has a big smile on his face and hands Jimmy a beer.

Henson gets off the phone and takes Jimmy's beer away.

HENSON

This guy doesn't need a beer. He needs to sober up.

Henson tosses a slice of pizza in front of Jimmy. Slim Jim elbows up to the bar to pay his tab.

HENSON

(to Jimmy)

Do you know who that was on the phone? That was your wife.

JIMMY

I'm not married.

HENSON

Why you don't lock her down, I don't know. You're a fucking idiot. I get these calls from guy's wives asking if I seen their man. I'm like, "Lady, hire a fucking PI, get a GPS tracking thingy if you want to know where your guy is.

JIMMY

That's why I'm not married. Not interested in being anyone's pool widow.

HENSON

That's where you're an idiot. If your girl calls up, she's sweet to me. She leaves you messages, doesn't want to disturb you while you work. I mean, Jimmy, you hit the fucking lottery and you don't know how to cash your ticket in.

JIMMY

What'd she want?

HENSON

To remind you to pick up sunscreen on your way home.

BILKO

It's past midnight. Good luck.

SLIM JIM

What's the sunblock for?

JIMMY

Going on a babymoon It's a bonding trip she guilted me into going on.

HENSON

Biggest moron I know. Girl's beautiful, fun, willing to bear his child and he is going to bitch and moan about going on a trip to the beach. Biggest moron I know.

JIMMY

It's not that I don't love her or want to bond or anything. I think the fact that we're having a baby says something about how much we've bonded. In some ways, I don't want to go because I love her.

HENSON

This ought to be good. Tell us why not going would be a good thing.

JIMMY

I need to work, not spend money on a trip. It's not everyday a cowboy walks in with heavy pockets. I need to be here when they do.

SLIM JIM

You need to go pro is what you need to do. You're too good, Jimmy. If all you do is hustle, eventually you're gonna get bit.

JIMMY

I've been bit before.

Slim Jim and Henson both laugh at Jimmy.

HENSON

You've never been bit before. Not like Slim is talking.

SLIM JIM

Jimmy, I hustled before I played pro and the biggest difference I saw between those that stuck to hustling and those that played straight pool, the pros still loved the game in the end and had money in their pockets when they were old.

JIMMY

I love the game. I work with the game.

SLIM JIM

Maybe, but when you're fighting like you do to get by, it's easy to start putting people into two categories, either obstacles to overcome or targets to take down.

BILKO

Preach.

JIMMY

There goes my buzz.

SLIM JIM

There's a big tournament in Vegas in a week. I'm gonna go, as a spectator if you want to tag along.

JIMMY

We'll be in Florida then but thanks for the offer.

HENSON

You're gonna be gone when?

CUT TO:

EXT. STICKS AND STONES - NIGHT

Henson locks up the front door while Jimmy and Bilko are standing outside.

JIMMY

I told you a while ago that we were taking a trip to the beach.

HENSON

I thought you meant Longview Lake.

BILKO

Me too.

The three of them walk around the corner of the building into a parking lot.

JIMMY

How would I go to Longview Lake for a week?

HENSON

I'm just saying, a little more of a heads up would be nice. I don't live off of you but this thing we got worked out helps...speaking of this thing we got worked out.

Jimmy stops and pulls the cash out of his pocket. He counts the bills and hands Henson a cut of the money.

BILKO

I can't remember if we have a thing worked out or not, Jimmy.

JIMMY

We don't.

BILKO

Just thought I'd check.

Jimmy and Henson walk toward the car in the parking lot. Bilko keeps walking down the sidewalk.

BILKO

I'm this way. G'night guys.

Jimmy and Henson wish Bilko a good night.

HENSON

It's like this. I know I'm not your manager or anything but we got a system, you know?

JIMMY

If you're not my manager, then stop trying to manage me.

In the background, Bilko can be seen climbing up a fire ladder to the roof of Sticks and Stones. Henson notices.

HENSON

Bilko, don't climb up there. What the fuck are you thinking?

BILKO

I live up here.

HENSON

Is that what you meant by you had a place? Come sleep on my couch.

BILKO

I like it up here better than your place.

HENSON

How long have you been sleeping up there?

BILKO

Two months.

HENSON

Goddammit.

BILKO

Goodnight.

HENSON

Tonight and just tonight.

JIMMY

You haven't noticed before?

HENSON

Nobody fills me in around here.

Jimmy jiggles the handle of the passenger car.

HENSON

You need a ride or something?

JIMMY

I'm drunk.

HENSON

So am I.

JIMMY

I don't have a car.

HENSON

This is exactly what I'm talking about. Your damn generation always expecting something but never asking.

JIMMY
I love you too.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Empty suitcases and travel items are categorized and spaced meticulously on top of a bed.

LIVING ROOM

Blake is asleep on the couch. Scrapbook material is scattered on the coffee table.

Jimmy walks into the apartment. He grabs a beer from the fridge before going to the couch.

JIMMY
Blake. It's late. Come on. Let's go to bed.

BLAKE
Have you ever had a beignet?

JIMMY
If it's a shot, then yes.

BLAKE
It's like a donut.

JIMMY
I've had those.

Jimmy helps Blake off the couch.

BLAKE
They're smaller.

JIMMY
Like a donut hole?

BLAKE
They're different.

Jimmy supports Blake as they walk to the--

BEDROOM

JIMMY
What makes them so different?

Jimmy turns the light on.

BLAKE
They're made in Lousianna.

JIMMY
Blake, what the fuck?

BLAKE
What?

JIMMY
(laughing)
Why isn't this shit in the bags?

BLAKE
I didn't want to pack it up until I
knew we had everything we needed.
(points to an empty
space)
See, this is where the sun block
goes. Did you pick some up?

JIMMY
Oh, shit. No.

BLAKE
How many drinks have you had?

Jimmy starts to snake his way onto the bed trying to fit in
between the objects but laying on a lot of them.

JIMMY
This is probably my third beer
today.

BLAKE
Like, after midnight today?

Jimmy reaches out for Blake to join him in bed.

BLAKE
Jimmy, I worked very hard on this.
I had like fifty things to do. I
asked you to do one, you didn't do
it and now you're ruining
everything.

JIMMY
Oh, shit. I don't want to ruin
everything.
(reaches out)
Here, help me up.

When Blake reaches out for him, Jimmy pulls her onto the bed.

JIMMY

Now everything's just right.

BLAKE

Jimmy, stop jacking around. We gotta lot of work to do tomorrow and you're gonna disappear before it's finished.

JIMMY

No, I'm not. I'll be here all day until the tournament.

BLAKE

You can still be gone even when you're here.

JIMMY

Let's not talk about how I am going to fail. I want to hear more about donuts.

BLAKE

They're beignets. You can't order a donut when you get there. All of our stops in Louisiana are about food. Crawdads, gumbo, po-boys--

JIMMY

(eyes closed)

Donuts.

BLAKE

Beignets.

Jimmy sits up and pulls the chain on the fan light off, then pulls a bottom corner of their comforter and covers them with it. More of the items get disturbed.

BLAKE

Are you even listening or are you just appeasing?

JIMMY

I'm listening. Your sultry voice is taking me into dreamland. Tell me more.

BLAKE

I made some mixes for us, but
they're themed, so, you're going to
have to guess--

Jimmy is clearly sleeping while Blake continues talking.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

FADE UP ON Jimmy sleeping alone. The items have been removed
from around him and the suitcases are gone.

Loud noises heard from the other room.

Jimmy, hungover, wakes up and investigates the

LIVING ROOM

Nobody is in there but the front door is open.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

Blake is trying to carry a heavy suitcase down the stairs.

JIMMY

Hey, stop that! You aren't supposed
to carry heavy shit.

BLAKE

Who else will?

Jimmy takes the suitcase from her.

JIMMY

Why didn't you wake me?

BLAKE

I tried.

Jimmy carries the suitcase back in the apartment.

BLAKE

Bring that back.

JIMMY

We aren't leaving until tomorrow.

BLAKE

There's a lot of stuff to do before
then.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Jimmy is prepping the stove and grabbing items from the fridge to make eggs.

BLAKE

I don't want to wait until tomorrow
and you're going to be of no use
then.

JIMMY

I'll help you pack the car before I
leave. Right now, we need fuel.

CUT TO:

Jimmy makes some intricate scrambled eggs including chopped
veggies sauteed and shredded cheese.

Jimmy and Blake sits down.

JIMMY

Tell me this doesn't look
delicious.

Blake digs in but won't give Jimmy the benefit of admitting
it's delicious.

JIMMY

Just trust me. I know what you
need. Let's get our bellies' full,
yours already is I guess, and then
we can pack, but it's no good to be
stressed while we work.

BLAKE

I'm going to be stressed if we
aren't ready to go by the morning.

JIMMY

First things first. These are some
damn good eggs aren't they?

BLAKE

Damn good.

CUT TO:

Dirty dishes fill the sink as Jimmy clears the table.

He walks out of the kitchen toward the bedroom.

BLAKE

Where are you going?

JIMMY

I'm gonna hop in the shower real quick. Wanna join me?

BLAKE

I want you to take these down for me.

JIMMY

I told you I would before I left. Chill out.

Blake glares at Jimmy.

JIMMY

Don't you try to turn me to stone. I'll be out in two shakes.

Jimmy enters the bathroom. Blake grabs the keys and leaves.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Blake looks down at the gas gauge. It's on 3/4 of a tank.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Blake tops off the gas tank of her Toyota Corolla.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Blake picks out sunblock and waits in lane for the checkout.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Blake enters the apartment. The shower can still be heard.

CUT TO:

Jimmy leaves the bathroom and notices the suitcases are missing from the front door.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

From the steps, Jimmy can see Blake rolling the suitcase down the sidewalk.

JIMMY

Hey, what did I tell you?

BLAKE
 You don't even know what time it
 is.

JIMMY
 What time is it?

BLAKE
 It's a quarter to three.

Jimmy rushes back into the apartment.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Jimmy rushes to get dressed. He goes in the closet and opens an old cigar box. There's a wad of money in it. He takes out a little more than half of it, closes the box, opens it back up and takes out a little more.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Blake is in the driver's seat and the car is running. Jimmy, barefoot, rushes to the car and gets in the passenger's seat.

INT. CAR - DAY

JIMMY
 Thank you. I'm sorry.

Jimmy starts putting on his shoes.

JIMMY
 I told you I would help before I
 left and I didn't.

BLAKE
 When is it going to be more than
 I'm sorry?

JIMMY
 I don't know. Soon.

CUT TO:

EXT. STICKS AND STONES - DAY

Blake and Jimmy pull up to the entrance.

INT. CAR - DAY

JIMMY
 Just imagine, tomorrow we'll be on
 the road getting closer and closer
 (MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

to the beach.

BLAKE

You better be ready to go in the morning.

JIMMY

You better be ready.

BLAKE

I'm serious.

JIMMY

What if we just moved down there?

BLAKE

Baby steps. Let's make it there first.

JIMMY

I'm serious. What if we get down there and just stay?

BLAKE

I'm serious too. Let's get there first.

Blake and Jimmy kiss.

JIMMY

Are you still mad at me?

BLAKE

Yes.

JIMMY

Even after that power kiss?

BLAKE

I still love you.

JIMMY

That's all I need.

Jimmy leaves the car.

INT. STICKS AND STONES - DAY

The grimy pool hall is packed with people. Jimmy looks around the crowd and sees Henson. Henson points to his watch and then holds up five fingers.

Jimmy makes his way to "table 5" and shakes hands with his opponent, QUICK RICK, who is ready to go. Jimmy keeps his

jacket on and breaks the rack of balls.

CUT TO:

Jimmy sinks the eight ball and slides a wooden ring for his first victory.

CUT TO:

Jimmy banks a shot to sink the eight. Another wooden ring.

CUT TO:

Another wooden ring. Jimmy shakes hands with Quick Rick.

Jimmy takes off his jacket and walks to

THE BAR

Jimmy orders a beer from Bilko.

JIMMY

How'd you sleep last night?

BILKO

It's the best. You should grab a sleeping bag and come up there sometime.

JIMMY

Sure thing.

Henson walks up.

HENSON

Bilko get out from behind there.

BILKO

Jimmy ordered a drink.

HENSON

Stop ordering from him. If you get wasted again and lose in the fourth round again, I'm gonna be pissed.

JIMMY

Make sure you make your money in the next two then.

HENSON

This is a joke to you. You're gonna be on the beach for who knows how long and I'm gonna be here running a pool hall without a ringer.

JIMMY
Pop Tart's still in town.

BILKO
You mean Flop Tart.

HENSON
That guy wouldn't have a leg to
stand on if he was a spider.

JIMMY
He's not that bad.

HENSON
He's not you.

BILKO
Nobody is.

JIMMY
Bilko, three shots. On me.

HENSON
You didn't pay last night's tab.

Jimmy pulls out the wad of cash and gives him a hundred.

HENSON
Holy shit, Jimmy. What's that from?

JIMMY
It's travel money. Let's flip some
tables tonight and make this grow.
Who knows, the beach might grow on
me and I might want to stay down
there.

The three of them take a shot together. Jimmy hands Henson
five bills.

JIMMY
Put me down for five in the second.

HENSON
Your money's no good tonight.

JIMMY
Why not?

HENSON
I'm not running the numbers.

BILKO

Mendocini and his slimeballs are.

JIMMY

You let that scumbag come in here and bully you around.

HENSON

It's not exactly an option to say no, plus, he gives me a fair cut, so what am I going to do?

JIMMY

I'd rather chip into his take than yours anyway.

BILKO

He doesn't like players making side bets. If you want to make money tonight, you either gotta win out or set something up with him.

JIMMY

I get it if I bet for my opponent to win, but I'll be betting myself.

HENSON

It's not worth it.

JIMMY

You really put a wrinkle in my plans tonight. Now I regret buying you a shot.

HENSON

(pours Jimmy a shot)

Life is full of regrets, get used to it.

CUT TO:

TOURNAMENT TREE

There is a large bracket on a chalkboard. CU of Jimmy's name next to Quick Rick's. Quick Rick is crossed out. Jimmy's name is now written next to PARSON BROWN.

JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy shakes hand with Parson Brown.

Jimmy sets his pint down. The pint glass becomes empty and another on, full, appears next to it.

Jimmy makes a beautiful shot.

SLAM CUTS: 1st wooden ring, 2nd and the 3rd.

Jimmy's name continues to climb up the tournament tree after similar sequences. He pairs up with SANDRA DEE, CUBANO, EISNTEIN.

A tall man in all black watches as Jimmy beats Einstein and the two shake. This is one of Mendocini's thugs, SMILEY.

POKER TABLE

At this poker table are four well-dressed men, also large in stature. One of them is in his early 60's with salt and pepper hair. This is MENDOCINI.

Smiley walks up to Mendocini and whispers in his ear.

TOURNAMENT TREE

Einstein's name is crossed off and Jimmy's is written in the next bracket next to Slim Jim.

JIMMY'S TABLE

After Jimmy and Slim Jim shake hands, Bilko brings Jimmy another beer.

From afar, Henson locks eyes with Bilko and gives the "cut him off" neck slicing gesture. Bilko tries to take the beer back but Jimmy grabs his hand and wrestles it from Bilko.

SLIM JIM

What time are you leaving tomorrow?

JIMMY

Leaving?...Oh, leaving, to the beach. Too early.

SLIM JIM

Don't stay up too late.

JIMMY

Ok, Dad.

The two laugh while lining up to shoot off the rails to determine who gets the break.

SLIM JIM

I know you've been carving this whole room up, but I plan on putting you to bed early.

JIMMY

Can't I stay up a little longer.

They countdown and shoot off the rails.

CUT TO:

THE BAR

Henson is talking to a couple of ladies when Smiley elbows up to the bar with a car magazine in his hand. Henson diverts his attention to Smiley.

HENSON

May I help you?

SMILEY

There's been a change of plans.
Your boy's gonna dive in the final.

HENSON

Jimmy's not much of a swimmer.

SMILEY

Maybe buy him an ice cream afterwards.

Smiley slide the magazine over.

SMILEY

I'm not much for American muscle,
but you gotta love these
late-models.

Henson opens up the magazine to see a decent stack of hundreds resting inside.

SMILEY

What do you think of those cars?

HENSON

The green one is pretty sweet.

SMILEY

So, is it done?

Bilko walks up to the bar.

HENSON

Yeah, we're good. Do you mind if I hold onto this for a while?

Smiley raises his arms and walks away.

Henson pours two shots, drinks one.

HENSON

Take this one to Jimmy. On the house.

Bilko takes the shot away.

Henson looks over at Jimmy and pours another shot for himself.

JIMMY'S TABLE

Bilko rests the shot on the rail of the table which is eye level with Jimmy, who is leaning over to shoot.

JIMMY

One second I'm wrestling my beer from you, the next your bringing me a shot. Will you please make up your mind?

SLIM JIM

You must be banking off Jimmy tonight. Buying him drinks, or are you trying to get him to tank?

Jimmy shoots a tricky shot that runs the eight ball the length of the rail and in.

BILKO

This is from the boss man.

JIMMY

He's gonna miss me.

Slim Jim prepares the triangle to rack the next game.

Jimmy looks across the pool hall and sees Henson. He raises the shot and takes it.

SLIM JIM

Forget Vegas, I might stick around here and hold the ace spot while you're gone.

JIMMY

If it's money you want, why'd you quit the pro circuit?

SLIM JIM

I don't need any money. I did well in my time. The circuit helped me get my head on straight about my future. That's why I think you should make a run.

JIMMY

Well, if you don't need any money, then the ace position here would be right up your alley. The moment you have an opportunity to make a buck, you're told to hit the brakes.

Jimmy lines up the break and he misshits the cue ball, making it barely move.

Slim Jim steps up and takes over.

SLIM JIM

Don't you be opening windows now, Jimmy.

Jimmy walks over to his stool along the wall and falls when he tries to sit down. Bilko is there to quickly help him up.

BILKO

Woah, there! I think you're done.

JIMMY

It's this old-ass carpet peeling up. It's a tripping hazard.

Bilko looks down at the carpet which is not peeling.

BILKO

Sure it is.
(takes out a modest wad
of cash)
Check this out!

Jimmy handles the money.

JIMMY

Bilk, you're a millionaire.

BILKO

This is that seven dollars I had the other night. I've been betting

(MORE)

BILKO (CONT'D)
 you just like you said.

JIMMY
 This is that?

BILKO
 (takes the money back)
 Yes sir. When you sober up, I'll
 buy you a beer.

JIMMY
 That's gonna be a while. Can I get
 an advance?

The two of them watch Slim Jim work the table. Jimmy feels
 the wad of cash in his pocket.

JIMMY
 How about you and me go in on
 something big tonight? I'll be the
 money partner, you put in the sweat
 equity.

BILKO
 How many beers in did you have this
 idea?

JIMMY
 The idea came to me a shot ago.

CU Slim Jim slides a wooden ring over. Score is 1-1.

Jimmy hits a tricky shot in. Score is 2-1.

Slim Jim takes over a game and sinks the eight. 2-2.

NEARBY JIMMY'S TABLE

Bilko and Henson are watching this great match.

BILKO
 The kid is feeling his mojo
 tonight.

HENSON
 I know this kid. I practically
 raised him. If he squeaks by Slim
 Jim, the next guy up is bound to
 waste him.

BILKO
 The Silversmith guy? Never heard of
 him.

HENSON

Some sleeper Mendo brought in. The
guy's been sandbagging all night.
Plus, he's a quaker when it comes
to booze.

BILKO

I bet our guy goes all the way.

HENSON

Trust me, don't bet this round.

JIMMY'S TABLE

CU of a stick sliding the third wooden ring over. Pull back
to reveal it's Jimmy.

SLIM JIM

It's just a matter of time before
you take your show on the road.
When that day comes, I'll have a
front row ticket.

The two shake hands.

CUT TO:

TOURNAMENT TREE

Slim Jim's name is crossed out and Jimmy's placed next to
MATTIE SILVER.

CUT TO:

POKER TABLE

Mendo's men are taking bets. Bilko steps up to Smiley.

BILKO

Three grand on Jimmy.

Smiley looks Bilko over and then glances back to Mendo who
heard the size of the bet. Mendo rubs his fingers together
to say "show me the money".

SMILEY

You want to make a bet like that, I
need cash on hand.

Smiley looks to the next gambler but Bilko pulls out the
cash and gets his attention again.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

CU of two double shots and a pint being carried to Jimmy who's sitting on his stool.

JIMMY

Why are you being so sweet to me?

HENSON

I'm sorry for jumping on you last night. If you want to go, I want you to feel free. You're like a son to me and I hate the idea that you'd leave here while we were in a mix.

JIMMY

You're a softy, is what you are. You gave me shit, I threw it back at you. It's just shit though. You wipe it off.

Henson raises his shot glass.

HENSON

Let's wipe it off then.

They shoot.

JIMMY

Ain't nothing getting between us.

Bilko shows up as they put the shot glasses down. Jimmy grabs a cue stick.

BILKO

What the fuck, you guys? Are you trying to toss the final?

JIMMY

I'm solid. I can see all of the shots now, before we even play. This kid's out of the match, he just thinks he's in.

BILKO

Oh, yeah. Did you plan on playing with a house cue for the final?

JIMMY

Oh, shit.

Jimmy laughs as he replaces the house cue with his own.

BILKO

"Oh, shit" is right.

Jimmy shakes hands with MATTIE SILVER, an early-20's male with platinum blonde hair and a silver canine tooth.

SILVER

It's an honor. I've heard a lot about you.

JIMMY

I've never heard anything about you.

Awkward silence.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Did that come off strange? I'm a little passed drunk.

SILVER

That's a fact I could already smell.

The two line up to shoot off the rails when Jimmy starts to laugh.

JIMMY

I got it. What you said.

The two line up again to shoot off the rails. Jimmy has to step aside again to laugh.

NEARBY JIMMY'S TABLE

There is a huge crowd gathered in a semi-circle around the final table. Henson is nearby nervously watching.

Smiley approaches.

SMILEY

Everything on the line?

HENSON

Of course.

JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy chalks his cue and shoots a really soft break. It barely taps one of the corner balls.

Silver plays a similar safety shot.

Jimmy promptly sets up and shoots another safety.

Silver sets up just as quick, but then stands up, chalks his cue and sets up on a different angle.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

Silver slides a wooden ring across. He's up 1-0.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy lines up a difficult two-bank shot. He misses. Silver takes over.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

Silver slides a wooden ring over. He's up 2-0.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy walks over to the ledge his beer is resting on. Bilko is waiting for him.

BILKO

What's the matter, Jimmy?

JIMMY

Nothing's the matter with me. This kid is air tight. I open up a little and he just sucks all the air out.

BILKO

Why don't you save that beer for afterward?

JIMMY

Why? I'm still gonna win. I just didn't know I'd have to take this kid so goddamn serious.

Bilko buries his face in his hands. Jimmy's walks back to the table. Henson walks up to Bilko.

HENSON

He's not too discouraged is he?

BILKO
 Disillusioned more like it.
 (takes his hands away
 from his face)
 Henson, I made a very bad mistake.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy stands as attentive as a soldier while Silver breaks and continues to play.

In the background, Henson can be seen arguing with Bilko.

CU of Silver's shot rimming out.

Series of Slow-Motion Shots, but audio is moving very fast:

1. Jimmy lines up and shoots
2. Jump cut: 1 ball drops, 3 ball drops, 8 ball drops
3. Wooden ring sliding over

The images SPEED RAMP to catch up with Jimmy chalking his cue and the sound of people clapping.

CU Jimmy is breathing fast and heavy.

Silver sets the rack.

Series of Slow-Motion Shots, but audio is moving very fast:

1. Jimmy breaks
2. Jump cut: 9 ball drops, 10 ball drops, 12 ball drops
3. Henson stoic, catches eyes with Smiley, Henson nervous
4. Jump cut: 11 ball drops, 14 ball drops, 15 ball drops
5. Jimmy takes another shot

The images SPEED RAMP to catch up with Bilko hysterically relieved and the sound of people cheering. Henson looks concerned.

HENSON
 I've made a huge mistake.

CUT TO:

NEARBY JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy walks over to drink his beer. Henson gets close to Jimmy's ear.

HENSON

You idiot! Why the fuck did you throw in?

JIMMY

Bilko, dammit.

HENSON

It was your dumbass idea.

JIMMY

Are you catching flak or something? Fuck'em. It's your place.

HENSON

Mendo wants you to take a dive.

JIMMY

Tell him to jog on.

HENSON

I already took the deal.

JIMMY

When?

HENSON

When you were playing Slim.

JIMMY

That's why you brought me the nice whiskey, you snake.

HENSON

You have to take the deal.

JIMMY

No, I don't.

HENSON

This isn't spring training, these guys play full contact.

JIMMY

You're going to have to tell him the truth, that I didn't have anything to do with this.

HENSON

He won't care. I'm already in deep
shit, there's no reason for both of
us to take a hit.

Silver finished the rack.

JIMMY

I can take a hit as long as I take
my money too. I'm sorry for your
situation, but it has nothing to do
with me.

Jimmy walks to the table and breaks.

He walks around and lines up a shot that covers the length
of the table.

All the other balls have disappeared from the table except
the cue ball and the three-ball. The camera tracks the
three-ball as it moves. Before it gets to the hole, it turns
into the 4-ball, then the 1-ball, 7-ball, 6-ball, 5-ball and
finally the eight-ball falls in the hole.

Bilko jumps into Jimmy's arms. Everyone is celebrating,
except a few. Lots of back pats for Jimmy.

Smiley looks back at Mendo, who shrugs his shoulders.

CUT TO:

THE BAR

Jimmy and Bilko are thrilled. Henson is busy bartending.

BILKO

What are you drinking?

JIMMY

Water. A big one.

BILKO

Excuse me, bartender. I need a
manhattan and a glass of some
fancy-ass water.

(to Jimmy)

You're a fucking ace.

Jimmy and Henson exchange glances while Henson delivers the
drinks. Bilko and Jimmy raise glasses.

BILKO

Oh, Hen. Get a drink. Our boy just sunk their battleship.

HENSON

I'm good. There's a lot of work left to do tonight.

Bilko and Jimmy cheers.

BILKO

A fucking ace.

HENSON

(to Jimmy)

A lot of work left to do. I'm sorry for your situation.

JIMMY

(to Bilko)

Time to make a withdrawal.

BILKO

If you say it's time, it's time.

Bilko finishes his drink and leaves.

CUT TO:

POKER TABLE

Mendocini is looking over a notebook and Smiley is paying out nearby when Bilko walks up.

SMILEY

Mr. Moneybags, how can I help you?

BILKO

Just here for my winnings.

SMILEY

A payout like yours goes straight to the top.

Bilko is directed to Mendocini, who peers up from his notebook.

MENDOCINI

If I knew you better, I'd rub your belly for good luck. You put twenties down all night and then bam, three large in the final.

BILKO

I'm not lucky. I'm just good.

MENDOCINI

Oh, yeah! You got a tip you could pass my way?

BILKO

Always bet Jimmy to win.

Mendocini hands Bilko the stack of cash.

MENDOCINI

Thanks for the tip. I'll keep that in mind.

Bilko starts to walk away.

MENDOCINI

You be careful walking around here with so much money.

BILKO

Thanks for the tip.

Mendocini nods his head to a couple of his thugs, one has large fists and SAUSAGE FINGERS, the other is VERY TALL.

CUT TO:

THE BAR

Jimmy is on the phone when Bilko arrives at the bar.

JIMMY

Yeah, Honey. No more drinks for me. Don't get up. I'll grab a ride.

Jimmy hangs up.

JIMMY

You're the best, Bilk.

Bilko discreetly hands Jimmy the stack of cash.

HENSON

I can't be seen near you guys.

Henson throws some coasters in front of Mendocini's thugs who just arrived at the bar.

Jimmy takes out five one-hundred dollar bills and passes it to Bilko.

BILKO
No, this is too much.

JIMMY
I'm drunk. Just take it.

Jimmy sees Mendocini's thugs looking at them.

JIMMY
We've got admirers.

BILKO
I'll lead them outside and bolt for
my loft. You get out then.

JIMMY
Thanks, Bilk. See you in a bit.

BILKO
Have a great trip!

Bilko stands up and heads for the stairs. When he glances over, the thugs haven't moved. Bilko glances at Jimmy who realizes the same as Bilko. Jimmy shrugs his shoulders.

Jimmy stands up and puts a bill on the counter for his tab.

JIMMY
Thank for everything, Henson! I'll
see you around.

The thugs follow Jimmy up the stairs. At the top of the stairs, Jimmy turns and sees the thugs immediately behind him.

JIMMY
You guys go ahead, I think I forgot
something downstairs.

SAUSAGE FINGERS
I think you got everything.

VERY TALL
Some might say, you got too much.

EXT. STICKS AND STONES - NIGHT

Jimmy struggles as the thugs drag him to the side of the building. Once around the corner, Sausage Fingers starts wailing on Jimmy.

From the roof, Bilko starts yelling at the thugs below him to stop.

As they loot his pockets, Bilko starts throwing milk crates and shoes at the thugs.

Very Tall stomps on Jimmy's right hand and Sausage Fingers gets one last shot to the face in when --

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. STICKS AND STONES - MORNING

Jimmy is sprawled across a pool table when the morning sun peeks through the murky window of the pool hall and crawls across his bruised face.

The noise of the front door being unlocked. Henson and Bilko walk in and turn on the lights.

Jimmy begins to stir.

BILKO

The same reason you didn't stay here. It's not comfortable.

Jimmy tries to sit up, but needs help because of his bumps and bruises.

BILKO

I checked in on him though. He slept all night.

HENSON

How you doing there champ?

Jimmy sits still trying to manage his agony. Bilko brings him a big glass of water.

JIMMY

Goddamn you, Henson.

HENSON

At least you have your health.

BILKO

That's about all you have left.

Jimmy winces as he gets off of the table. His right hand hurts badly.

JIMMY

What do you mean?

BILKO

Least of all, you're broke and got the shit kicked out of you. Most of

(MORE)

BILKO (CONT'D)

all, Blake is pissed.

JIMMY

Oh, shit! Shit! We're supposed to be gone. Henson, I need to borrow your car and some cash.

Bilko tries to give Jimmy back the cash he gave him last night. Jimmy refuses.

JIMMY

You don't owe me a thing. This asshole on the other hand.

Henson grabs money from the cash register.

HENSON

This isn't penance. I love you because I have to, we're like family. This is because I actually like Blake.

JIMMY

What does she know?

HENSON

Everything she needed to.

BILKO

She wouldn't let us bring you inside the apartment.

Jimmy leaves the pool hall.

INT. HENSON'S OLDSMOBILE - DAY

The radio is on when Jimmy gets in the car. He is frustrated when he can't find the controls right away and then accidentally turns on the windshield wipers.

JIMMY

Shit! Goddamnit, motherfucker!!

EXT. APARTMENT PARKING LOT - DAY

Blake's car is not parked in front, but Jimmy parks anyway.

EXT. APARTMENT - DAY

There is a note hung over the door's lock.

Note: "If I knew how to change the lock, I would have done that. Please pretend your key doesn't work."

Jimmy unlocks the door anyway.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Jimmy sees another note on the counter top.

Note: "I'm serious. Get out!"

JIMMY

Blake? Blake?

INT. HENSON'S OLDSMOBILE - DAY

Jimmy drives around until he sees the salon. He takes a sharp turn into the parking lot but winces in pain because he tried to use his right hand.

INT. HAIR SALON - DAY

Veronica is talking to Jenn, who is cutting another girl's hair. Jimmy walks in.

JIMMY

Excuse me, have y'all seen--

VERONICA

Oh, hell no! You're not supposed to be here.

JENN

You're supposed to be on the road.

VERONICA

Where's Blake?

JIMMY

That's what I was coming here for.

JENN

You fucked up.

VERONICA

Bad.

JIMMY

Thank you. I know.

All three of the women scowl at Jimmy.

JIMMY

Well, if you see her, please tell her I'm looking for her.

No response from the women.

INT. HENSON'S OLDSMOBILE - DAY

Jimmy pulls out of the parking lot, almost hitting another car.

INT. HENSON'S OLDSMOBILE - DAY

Driving down the main street strip, Jimmy sees the town's movie theatre and pulls in.

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - DAY

A friendly box office attendee greets Jimmy.

JIMMY

Good afternoon, sir!

Jimmy walks past the ticket booth.

TICKET BOOTH ATTENDEE

Sir, you need to buy a ticket.

The attendee nervously flags down GERALD, the theatre manager.

TICKET BOOTH ATTENDEE

We got a runner!

The manager stops Jimmy before he enters one of the theatres.

GERALD

Sir, you have to have a ticket to enter the theatre.

JIMMY

I just need to see my wife, she's pregnant.

GERALD

Congratulation, but having a pregnant wife doesn't grant you free movie tickets.

Jimmy thinks about just running into the screening room, but Gerald strengthens his grip on the door to the theatre.

BOX OFFICE

Jimmy looks at all of the different movie titles, considering each one for what Blake might enjoy.

JIMMY
One for Dance Like Nobody's
Watching.

TICKET BOOTH ATTENDEE
It's popcorn surprise day at the
concession stand. If you--

Jimmy walks away.

SCREENING ROOM

The movie is already playing. Jimmy looks around as his eyes
adjust to the dim light. He sees where Blake is sitting.

JIMMY
Is this seat taken?

BLAKE
Shhhhh, yes, it is.

Blake puts her purse in the seat next to her.

JIMMY
What about that one over there?

BLAKE
Yes.

Blake takes her jacket off her lap and places it on the
other seat.

It's clear from the light reflecting in Blake's eyes that
she's been crying.

JIMMY
Blake, I fucked up.

BLAKE
You don't say?

JIMMY
Probably worse then you realize.

BLAKE
Worse then all of our traveling
money?

JIMMY
I didn't think you knew. I was
thinking we might be able to extend
our trip if I just--

BLAKE

Risked it all on one fucking night.
The money WE saved up. I told you
we had more than enough as it is.
That's your problem. You don't know
how to be content. You can't see
you have everything you need right
in front of you.

JIMMY

I had it. I doubled up everything.

BLAKE

You're blind. You're telling me
that you doubled our travel money,
but you don't have a dime.

JIMMY

Damn, Blake. It's a miracle I'm not
in the hospital.

BLAKE

That's the most intelligent thing
you've said all day.

JIMMY

I'll take any progress at this
point. Look, I still want to make
this happen, just give me a day or
two and I'll get the money
together.

BLAKE

No.

JIMMY

What can I do to make this up to
you?

BLAKE

You can go see my brother.

JIMMY

For a loan? No way.

BLAKE

Oh, your pride is still intact
enough to not even consider an
offer from my brother.

JIMMY

Too many strings with your brother.

BLAKE

Go see him or we're not talking.

They both look forward in silence before Jimmy gets up.

CUT TO:

INT. HENSON'S OLDSMOBILE - DAY

Jimmy is pulling into the parking lot of Dell's Automotive, a polished up used-car dealership.

Jimmy parks the car in front of the office.

INT. DELL'S AUTOMOTIVE - DAY

As soon as Jimmy walks into the showroom floor, he is eagerly greeted by a slick-haired dealer named CARL.

CARL

Hi there, friend! What are you in the market for?

JIMMY

I'm not in the market. I'm here to see, Dell.

CARL

Ok.

Carl picks up the office phone to inquire about Dell.

CARL

He'll be out in just a moment. Feel free to have a seat.

Jimmy continues to stand.

DELL, a 6'2" girthy man, leans out of his office with a napkin tucked into his shirt.

DELL

Come on back, Jimmy!

INT. DELL'S OFFICE - DAY

There's a family photo on the wall next to a mounted boar's head. An open to-go container is sprawled on Dell's desk.

DELL

You hungry?

JIMMY

No. I'm good.

DELL

Have a seat. Are you sure you're not hungry? Have you eaten today?

JIMMY

I'm great, thank you.

DELL

Blake said you'd be coming by.

JIMMY

What for?

DELL

Come on, Jimmy. Put your guard down. You're gonna make me say it. If you need help with money, I wish you would just come to me. We're practically family.

JIMMY

I don't need help with money. I'm here because Blake gave me an ultimatum.

DELL

Look, I wouldn't want to be asking my girl's big bro for money if I was in your position, but hey, what good are we to one another if we don't help each other out. How much money did you need for your trip?

JIMMY

I would never ask to borrow money like that.

DELL

Money like what? Money is what? Come on, Jimmy. How much?

JIMMY

No.

DELL

Just tell me. We're not signing a contract here, we're just talking.

JIMMY

We had saved up three grand.

Dell makes an exploding gesture with his hands.

DELL

Poof. I could make that money appear out of nowhere. How long do you think it would take to pay back that much?

JIMMY

Two months.

Dell is thinking about this and is somewhat impressed.

DELL

What if I gave you six months to pay it back, interest free?

JIMMY

I mean, that would be awesome. Honestly, I feel like shit.

DELL

The offer doesn't end there. Six months, no interest, and I pay you three grand a month, flat.

JIMMY

Huh?

DELL

Look, I've never cared for your work. I didn't think it was viable. I think sometimes people have skill sets but struggle when they're young to find the right fit.

JIMMY

So, three thousand is from what?

DELL

Well, when you and Blake get back from the trip, I want you to come work for me. I know you might think you know nothing about cars, but from what I hear you know how to hustle and grind.

JIMMY

I appreciate the offer, but I gotta pass on that.

DELL

Just realize, you're not saying no to me. You're saying no to your family.

CU of Dell's family photo.

DELL (O.C.)

You need to lay a foundation for your family.

CU of the stuffed boar's head.

DELL (O.C.)

I'd hook you up with my family rate on a car.

CU of Dell's desk with the food sprawled out.

DELL (O.C.)

You'd get your own desk,

WIDE of Carl from the lobby sitting at his desk and an empty desk next to it.

DELL (O.C.)

You'd have ownership. You'd be your own man.

Jimmy is looking toward Dell but looks spaced out.

JIMMY

Wow, Dell! That's a pretty huge offer.

DELL

It's a meatball, down the middle of the plate. You're Barry Bonds, you know what to do.

Jimmy just nods his head.

JIMMY

You're right, I do.

CUT TO:

INT. IRISH PUB - AFTERNOON

Jimmy walks into this quaint pub that's only occupied by a few bar flies.

Jimmy gets a Guinness and changes some bills for quarters.

At the pool table, Jimmy looks at the clock. It's 2:30pm.

Jimmy sets his beer on a ledge and begins to play pool alone.

CU on Guinness. The glass disappears and another appears next to it filled.

Jimmy grabs the beer and checks the time. It's 3:02pm. The front door to the bar opens and in walks Slim Jim.

Slim Jim walks over and sets his cue stick box down.

SLIM JIM

Jimmy, what brings you here?

JIMMY

I need you to tell me about this thing in Vegas.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT - EVENING

Jimmy walks in the front door and almost trips over a pile of small objects gathered near the front door.

Blake walks from the bedroom holding a lamp.

JIMMY

What's all this?

BLAKE

I thought I'd give you a head start.

JIMMY

I'm not going anywhere.

BLAKE

Where have you been for the last three hours?

JIMMY

I went and saw your brother.

BLAKE

That covers a half hour.

JIMMY

I met up with Slim.

BLAKE

Just had to get your pool fix in.

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

The house is on fire, Jimmy will be right there with the hose, right after he gets done with this game.

JIMMY

Blake, I went to talk to him about how I can make things right. I'm tired of this too. I screwed up big time and when I was talking to your brother, he kept offering things I didn't want. He told me I could come work for him, sell his cars, sit in his desk and be my own man.

BLAKE

Please tell me what's wrong with my brother offering you a job.

JIMMY

I wouldn't be my own man. I'd be his. I can't live like that.

BLAKE

But you can live like this? Dodging bookies, hustling people, praying for a big dumb fish to swim by?

JIMMY

No. I can't live like that anymore.

Blake is silent. She's never heard Jimmy admit anything like this.

JIMMY

The truth of it is, your brother's offer may be the best option I have here in Raytown. But it's still not good enough.

BLAKE

Will anything ever be good enough?

JIMMY

Yes. But not until we get to the beach.

BLAKE

Don't fuck around with me.

JIMMY
I'm not. First thing in the
morning, let's get out of here.

BLAKE
How can we afford it?

JIMMY
We will. I've made an arrangement.

BLAKE
I'll go, but I'm going to be grumpy
as long as I feel like it.

JIMMY
I would expect nothing less.

Jimmy smiles and Blake glares back at him.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREE LINE - MORNING

The sun rises over the trees.

EXT. APARTMENT PARKING LOT - MORNING

Jimmy and Blake are double checking the pack job on the car.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - MORNING

They get in and buckle up. Jimmy notices a stack of cd's.

JIMMY
What are these?

BLAKE
They're mix cd's I made for the
trip. They're all themed. I told
you about this the other day.

JIMMY
Was I drunk?

BLAKE
I don't remember, but probably.

ON THE HIGHWAY

Blake is reading a magazine when Jimmy reaches down and
picks up one of the cd's.

JIMMY
Let's check this out.

BLAKE

Please no.

JIMMY

You don't really want to listen to the radio, conversations keep falling short, what do we do?

BLAKE

Fine. Turn on the radio.

JIMMY

What do you want to listen to?

BLAKE

I don't. You do.

JIMMY

Let me have one of those cd's.

She hands him one.

JIMMY

It just says mixtape.

BLAKE

You're supposed to guess what all the songs have in common.

Jimmy puts the cd in.

"Born To Be Wild" by Steppenwolf is track one.

Speakers: Get your motors running, head out on the highway.

JIMMY

Okay. Okay. My first guess is that it's about cars, motors.

BLAKE

This is dumb. They're all easy. This cd's about road trips.

JIMMY

Oh, no! Don't play me like that. I'm trying to revive this.

EXT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

An aerial shot shows the car driving on the highway.

BLAKE (O.C.)

One of the cd's is about love, the others about magic.

JIMMY
Stop! Stop! I'm not listening.

CUT TO:

EXT. FITZ'S DINER - DAY

Jimmy and Blake pull into this "off the beaten path" diner and gas station.

INT. FITZ'S DINER - DAY

The red and white decor, vinyl cushions and peeling linoleum counter tops tell this diner hasn't changed much since it opened in the 60's.

BLAKE
How long have we been on the road?

JIMMY
About three hours.

BLAKE
Where are we staying tonight?

JIMMY
Country Inn and Suites

BLAKE
What town?

JIMMY
Bethany.

DELORES, the diner's resident grey-haired waitress, arrives at the couples table

DELORES
How are y'all doing?

JIMMY
We're doing great
(reads her nametag)
Delores. Glad to be here. Glad to be anywhere.

DELORES
That's the spirit.

BLAKE
Missouri? Like northern Missouri?

DELORES
I'll grab y'all some waters. Would
(MORE)

DELORES (CONT'D)

you like anything else? Pop?
Coffee?

JIMMY

Coffee, please.

BLAKE

No, thank you. Jimmy, why are we
headed north?

Jimmy puts down his menu and sighs.

JIMMY

Honey, we're gonna make a slight
detour on our way to the beach.

BLAKE

How is traveling north considered a
slight detour when we're supposed
to be driving south-east?

JIMMY

Eventually, we'll be heading west.

Delores arrives with the waters and coffee.

DELORES

Y'all have any questions?

JIMMY

I'll have the champ's breakfast.

BLAKE

I'm not hungry.

JIMMY

Come on, Babe. Just order
something.

BLAKE

I've lost my appetite.

JIMMY

She'll have a patty melt. Medium.

Delores takes the menus and heads out.

BLAKE

I've been kidnapped.

JIMMY

No, you haven't.

BLAKE

Where are we headed then?

JIMMY

L.A.

BLAKE

California?

JIMMY

With a stop in Vegas.

Blake is speechless.

JIMMY

And a stop or two between that.

BLAKE

A stop in Vegas and one or two in between? Jimmy, I had everything mapped out on our trip. They don't make beignets in Vegas.

JIMMY

I'm sure they do. Vegas has something for everyone.

BLAKE

A beignet in Vegas is not the same as one in New Orleans.

JIMMY

How do you know, you've never had one?

BLAKE

What's in Vegas for you?

JIMMY

A pool tournament. A big one, a real one.

BLAKE

What's in LA?

JIMMY

Just the beach, that's it. Nothing else. No pool. Nothing.

BLAKE

What are the one or two stops along the way?

JIMMY

I need to qualify for the tournament in Vegas. There are a couple of tournaments on the way to Vegas that if I win one or place in two will punch our ticket to the big show.

BLAKE

I've been take under false pretences. I've been kidnapped. I can argue this in court.

JIMMY

You wouldn't have come if I told you the truth.

BLAKE

Damn straight.

JIMMY

This is it. This is us. This is how we make it. It's a new leaf for me. This is all straight pool, taxable money, a regular schedule but still me.

BLAKE

I want to be so happy right now, but if you feel like it's so great, then why did you feel it necessary to trick me into going?

JIMMY

I can see it and I'm not afraid. I want you with me. Our lifestyle has been rocky to say the least. I'm not going to tell you it's ever going to look "normal" but it's going to be good. I know L.A.'s not Florida, just like beignets in Vegas are beignets but it's an ocean and I can deliver that.

BLAKE

I keep hearing "I'll deliver", yet, here I am in Fitz's Diner, starving and too angry to eat.

JIMMY

You need to eat, even if you're angry. I'll go sit in another booth if it means my child get some food.

BLAKE

I'll eat...for the child.

CUT TO:

INT. FITZ'S GAS STATION - DAY

Blake is looking through the candy isle for something but doesn't find it.

EXT. FITZ'S GAS STATION - DAY

Jimmy is filling up the gas when Blake walks out.

JIMMY

You didn't find anything?

BLAKE

Nope.

JIMMY

What were you looking so hard for?

BLAKE

Sour straws. No big deal though.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Jimmy gets in the car.

JIMMY

No big deal?

BLAKE

What?

JIMMY

What do you mean, no big deal?

Jimmy peels out of the Fitz's parking lot.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Static shot of Jimmy and Blake speeding by.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Blake is bracing herself because of Jimmy's driving.

JIMMY

Sour straws is a big deal.

BLAKE

Not to get a ticket over. Or die.

JIMMY

Your body is craving Sour Straws. Do you know how amazing your body is? There is probably some secret ingredient in them that the baby needs.

BLAKE

Ok. Please slow down.

JIMMY

Only because we're coming up on a gas station. Get ready to get out.

EXT. PHILLIP'S 66 - DAY

Jimmy comes to a screeching halt when he parks the car. He runs around to Blake's side of the car and opens it.

BLAKE

Why do you need me?

JIMMY

I need you to spot it.

He runs inside while she just walks.

INT. PHILLIP'S 66 - DAY

Jimmy is scanning the candy isle frantically. Blake walks in and casually looks.

JIMMY

(holds up a generic brand)

Is this it?

BLAKE

It'll do.

Jimmy puts the candy back on the shelf. The two of them leave.

CUT TO:

INT. FAST STOP CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

Jimmy is frantic again while Blake is just glancing.

JIMMY
(loudly)
Do you have Sour Straws? We need
Sour Straws.

The Gas Station Attendant just shakes her head and shrugs her shoulders.

Jimmy holds up Twizzlers and Sour Patch Kids to the clerk behind the counter.

JIMMY
It would be like if these two
candies had a baby.
(looks to Blake)
Right?

Blake smiles and nods her head yes.

The Gas Station Attendant just shakes her head and shrugs her shoulders.

CUT TO:

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Jimmy parks really fast at a Sunaco convenience store.

Blake starts to unbuckle before--

JIMMY
You sit this one out.

Jimmy runs into the convenience store. Blake watches through the large store window as Jimmy weaves through the aisles repeatedly. Blake giggles.

Jimmy finds it. He holds the candy up to the window. Blake shakes her head yes. He grabs two handfuls of them and walks up to the counter.

CUT TO:

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Blake pulls on a Sour Straw with her teeth.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Jimmy and Blake drive by a Bethany, MO exit sign.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL VENDING MACHINES - EVENING

CU on an ice bucket being filled with ice.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

CU of ice bucket being filled with water.

Jimmy lays down on the bed next to Blake but they're not touching. He places his bruised hand in the ice bucket.

BLAKE

What do you want to watch?

JIMMY

I want you to find the chickiest of chick flicks.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Blake gets up during the movie.

BLAKE

Do you want anything?

She notices he's fallen asleep, so, she takes his hand out of the ice bucket and dries it off.

Blake gets into bed and rests her head on Jimmy's shoulder.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Jimmy opens the blinds and the sunlight pours in. Jimmy has a huge plate full of continental breakfast items.

JIMMY

Wakey, wakey, bacon and eggs.

BLAKE

You mean eggs and bakey.

JIMMY

I've never been good with poetry.

Jimmy lays the plate of food on the bed next to Blake.

JIMMY

Now, I don't want to see a crumb on this plate when I get back.

BLAKE

Get back?

JIMMY

With this wrist, I gotta go practice.

Blake is picking through the food.

BLAKE

You have to practice because of a bum wrist. How many nights have I heard about your one-handed shots?

JIMMY

That's just flashy. I did that to rile the other guy up. That stuff doesn't belong in tournaments.

BLAKE

I thought this was still a vacation. Surely, I'm not expected to sit in a hotel room by myself everyday.

JIMMY

You can go swimming.

BLAKE

I look too cute in my bathing suit to go swimming without my man.

JIMMY

You're three months pregnant.

BLAKE

Some might mistake it for a little fluff and that might not bother them.

JIMMY

What do you want me to do, Babe? If I win tonight, we can go straight to Vegas.

BLAKE

I'd rather you slow down and we enjoy the trip, instead of you stressing out every night about how

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

serious you need to be.

JIMMY

Ok. You wanna go swimming? Let's go.

BLAKE

For real? You're going to spend the day with me?

JIMMY

Of course. This is why we're here.

Jimmy falls forward onto the bed. When he makes contact with the bed, HARD CUT TO

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

SPLASH

Jimmy swims under the water and surfaces as Blake is setting her things down on a pool chair.

She sits down and gets her book out.

JIMMY

We did not come out here so you could read a book.

BLAKE

Sure we did. This falls under poolside activities.

JIMMY

That is a secondary activity at best. You need to get wet.

Jimmy starts splashing her. Just enough to touch her feet.

BLAKE

Don't splash me.

JIMMY

Wow, you sound like a mom already. No splashing.

Blake tries again to read but Jimmy splashes her feet. When she puts her book down to tell Jimmy to stop, she can't see him.

POV from underneath the water. Blake dives in and attacks Jimmy.

Jimmy emerges with Blake on his back. She reaches around and

twists his nipples.

BLAKE

Take it back. I'm gonna be a cool mom.

JIMMY

Ouch! The coolest.

BLAKE

Don't patronize me.

Blake places both hands on Jimmy's head and dunks him under the water. She meets him underwater, where he kisses her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

CU of a piece of Fruit Loop cereal on Blake's neck. Jimmy kisses it off.

Tight shots of them laying still with one another, gently caressing.

BLAKE

We used to be able to slow down like this. What happened to us?

JIMMY

What do you mean? We still hang out at night.

BLAKE

We see each other at night. In the morning and evenings, it's like we live in different worlds.

JIMMY

Did you ever think I might be a vampire?

Jimmy sinks his teeth into Blake's hip.

BLAKE

We've been together how many years and you still think jokes get me going?

Jimmy switches from biting her hip to kissing on her hips.

BLAKE

Do you think we'll ever have a normal schedule?

JIMMY

Yeah, we just have to find you a night job.

BLAKE

I'm serious. Do you have a plan for us, our family, to see you more?

JIMMY

Honestly, I'm home like half the day.

Blake pulls Jimmy's hair and tilts his head up to see her.

BLAKE

You know you can be somewhere but not really be present? How present are you when you're home?

JIMMY

I do have a plan. I want this to work out better than it has. You're right, it used to be that we couldn't go thirty minutes without seeing each other. I don't know where that went. I love this here. I'm glad I stayed.

Blake runs her fingers through Jimmy's hair.

JIMMY

All this talking though is making me hungry.

Jimmy pulls the sheets over the two of them.

CUT TO:

Blake is reading her book in bed, while Jimmy sleeps with his head in her lap. She caresses his back with her free hand.

Blake looks at the clock. It's 4:15pm.

BLAKE

Honey, you need to get up if you're going to go play tonight.

Blake tries to jostle Jimmy awake.

BLAKE
 Jimmy, it's time for you to go to
 work.

Jimmy wakes up and quietly heads to the

BATHROOM SINK

He washes his face, dries it and then tries to manipulate
 his wrist but it still hurts him.

Jimmy stares at himself in the mirror. He closes his eye and
 stands still for a minute. Eventually, all the peripheral
 noises fade out, until he opens his eyes again.

On his way out, Jimmy kisses Blake and grabs his pool cue.

BLAKE
 You're amazing. You're going to
 play amazing. Don't stay too late.

JIMMY
 Are you gonna be here?

BLAKE
 Waiting

JIMMY
 I'll be right back.

Jimmy winks at her and walks out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. REGGIE'S BILLIARD HALL - EVENING

An establishing shot of this broken-in brick building that
 houses the town's pool tournament.

INT. REGGIE'S BILLIARD HALL - EVENING

There are no open tables to practice in, so, Jimmy goes and
 stands near one of the tables to wait for an opening.

One of the people playing at the pool table, an
 exceptionally large man, 40's, with a big bushy mustache.
 This is VIN.

VIN
 What brings you here tonight?

JIMMY
 The tournament.

VIN
You watching a friend?

JIMMY
(holds up cue bag)
No, I'm playing.

VIN
Not if you don't have a drink.
Strict rules around here. No
sitting on the table ledges and
keep your glass full. The name's
Vin.

They shake hands.

JIMMY
Jimmy. You're serious about the
drinks.

VIN
It's how we pay dues. Here, warm
up. Let me grab you a beer.

Jimmy builds his cue, but has a hard time twisting the
sticks together because of his wrist.

The tournament begins. Every other competitor is taller than
Jimmy by six inches.

Jimmy's first game is against a man sporting a big burly red
beard. This is RED. They go to shake hands and Jimmy
awkwardly uses his left hand.

Lining up to shoot off the rails, even this simple shot is
difficult for Jimmy. Jimmy is given the play to break.

Jimmy lines up and smashes the cue in a beautiful break, but
is in pain because of it.

CUT TO:

Jimmy has a combo shot to set up the eight ball. He lines it
up but keeps trying to re-grip because of his wrist.

Jimmy misses the shot.

CU Red makes a chalk mark under his name.

Jimmy sinks a ball in, and another but when he needs to put
a little backspin on the ball to make a shot, he can't and
he scratches.

CU Red makes another chalk mark under his name.

Jimmy racks the next game and watches Red break. Nothing goes in, so, Jimmy takes over.

He switches to left handed grip and makes a couple balls in. He doesn't have a shot, so, he plays a safety.

Red takes over. He doesn't have a shot either, so, he plays a safety as well. The two play trade two more safety shots each.

Finally, Jimmy sees an out, but it's a masse shot. He lifts his sticks high in the air, but when he goes to strike, the pain from his wrist causes him to mis-hit and knock the eight-ball in early. Game over.

Jimmy walks over and makes a third mark under Red's name. He gives Red another weird left-handed handshake.

THE BAR

Jimmy sits at the bar and orders another beer. Jimmy grabs the cash from his pocket and quickly flicks through the bills. He has about \$200.

Vin stands next to Jimmy and orders another beer.

VIN

How'd you do, rook?

JIMMY

Lost in three straight.

VIN

Against Red?

JIMMY

Yeah.

VIN

Well, you're young yet. You play much?

JIMMY

Yeah. Everyday.

VIN

There you go. If that wasn't your answer I was going to say you weren't giving yourself a fair shot.

JIMMY
Is there much side action on
tournament nights?

VIN
You stick around after the
tournament and there'll be plenty
of action. We get kind of rowdy
though.

JIMMY
I'll be there.

Jimmy looks up at the clock. It's 6:30pm.

CUT TO:

The clock say 9:15pm.

Finally, the tournament pool has dwindled and a table opens
up.

PRACTICE TABLE

Jimmy racks a set of balls.

A man with a button-up shirt with all types of fish printed
on it walks up to the table.

FISH SHIRT
You looking for some action?

JIMMY
Just practising right now.

FISH SHIRT
Practising on a tournament night?

JIMMY
Better late then never.

Fish Shirt walks away. Jimmy lines up the break but still
can't grip it well.

After trying a couple different grips, Jimmy tucks his
bruised hand in between the buttons on his shirt and
switches to a one-handed grip.

With this one-handed grip, Jimmy starts to feel comfortable
again. After a couple near makes, Jimmy re-chalks, surveys
his options and runs the table.

CU the clock now read 11:15pm.

The mixed noises of disappointment and cheering as the final game ends.

Jimmy walks into crowd of people and finds Vin.

JIMMY

Are you ready?

VIN

You're eager aren't you? What are you drinking?

JIMMY

Nothing right now.

VIN

I explained the rules once to you. You need to have a drink or else everyone will either think you're uptight or a prude. Neither are welcome here.

JIMMY

The tables set. I'll be over with our drinks in a moment.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

Vin and some others are standing by. Jimmy carries two beers in one hand.

Vin takes his out of Jimmy's hand.

VIN

This won't do.

Vin runs off and promptly returns with two shots.

VIN

That's better.

JIMMY

How'd you do tonight?

VIN

I got fifth. I lost to some asshole. That bothers me more than anything.

The two raise their glasses.

VIN
Here's hoping your win streak
continues.

They shoot the liquor and line up to shoot the rails.

JIMMY
Twenty a game?

VIN
Tap out?

Jimmy tucks his right hand in his shirt and counts down from three before both players shoot.

Series of shots

1. Jimmy making shots one-handed.
2. Vin and Jimmy drinking shots.
3. Jimmy making shots one-handed.
4. Jimmy collecting money.
5. Jimmy shooting against Fish Shirt.
6. Vin is Jimmy's cornerman now. Brings him a beer and another shot.
7. Jimmy winning against Fish Shirt.
8. Jimmy collecting money.
9. Jimmy drinking with Vin.
10. Rematch with Red.
11. Jimmy drinks and then knocks more balls in one-handed.

As Jimmy is collecting from Red, he looks at some players who were watching. Nobody wants to play Jimmy.

VIN
Step right up, you cowards. They're
just cowards, Jimmy.

JIMMY
Let's go. You and me.

VIN
Absolutely. Not. Going to happen.

CUT TO:

THE BAR

CU of the clock. It's 2:30 a.m.

Jimmy throws some money on the bar to pay for his tab.

The bartender puts a couple shots on the bar for him and Vin.

BARTENDER

It's after last call, you're not allowed to drink these. Thanks, guys. Have a great night.

Jimmy looks slightly confused.

Vin lifts the shot in the air. So does Jimmy.

VIN

May the rest of your trip be as fortunate as tonight and may you never go 0-3 again for the sake of everyone's wallet in a fifty-foot radius.

The two of them take their shots.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

It's dark in the hotel room. Loud noises next door wake Blake up and she sits straight up in bed.

Blake tries to peek out the window discreetly but she doesn't have a good angle.

Blake picks up the phone and press "#2".

BLAKE

(quietly)

Yes, this 114. I think someone might be trying to break into the room right next to mine.

CUT TO:

Blake trying to look through the window again. When someone from the hotel arrives Blake backs away from the window. She can hear muffled conversation.

There are noises at her door that startle her.

The door opens up and it's Jimmy and the hotel manager.

HOTEL MGR
Just a little room mixup. Sorry,
miss.

JIMMY
Yeah. Sorry, miss.

BLAKE
Thank you for your help.

The manager leaves the room and Jimmy tries to get into bed.

BLAKE
Get washed up first. You smell like
beer can full of ash.

Jimmy doesn't move.

JIMMY
I'm going to predict that you're
gonna have to drive the first leg
tomorrow. I don't think I'll fit to
drive.

BLAKE
Do we have to leave first thing in
the morning?

JIMMY
The next tournament is tomorrow. We
gotta leave by ten to make it.

BLAKE
You ass. If you're going to be too
hungover to drive, how'd you get
back here then?

JIMMY
(pauses before answering)
Magic.

Blake spritzes perfume on Jimmy.

JIMMY
Hey, stop that shit!

BLAKE
Go take a shower then.

Jimmy gets up.

JIMMY

I have to now.

Blake smooths the comforter and gets back in bed.

BLAKE

I can tell you had fun. Did you win?

JIMMY

I won money.

Jimmy walks around the corner to the bathroom sink.

BLAKE

So, you placed?

JIMMY

Nope. Got knocked out in the first round.

BLAKE

And I was sitting here alone all night because?

JIMMY

Because I had to make money.

BLAKE

(to herself)

It's all better now.

Jimmy, topless, leans around the corner.

JIMMY

We're good for the next week at least. You understand right?

BLAKE

A phone call helps. Communication helps.

JIMMY

I just made the call. We needed cash and I needed to practice more. I can't call every time something doesn't go according to plan at work. I get in a mindset and have to figure out how to come out on top.

(goes back around the corner, out of site)

For us.

BLAKE
 (quietly)
 It's all for us. Ok.

JIMMY (O.C.)
 Speaking of coming out on top. How
 about we get together after my
 shower? I'll take care of you.

BLAKE
 Sorry, it's after business hours.

Blake turns the bedside lamp off.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Blake is dragging the bags out of the room.

BLAKE
 Hey, get out of bed. We have to go.
 Jimmy shrugs a little but ignores Blake.

BLAKE
 You can sleep in the car. We have
 to leave if we're going to make it.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - MORNING

Jimmy gets in the passenger side and immediately curls over
 and falls asleep.

Blake finishes packing the car and gets in.

BLAKE
 Jimmy, I don't know where I'm
 going.

JIMMY
 It's super easy. 350 south for 3
 hours. Then 55 West.

BLAKE
 350 South for three hours.

JIMMY
 Got it?

BLAKE
 Got it.

Jimmy curls back over. Blake pulls out of the parking lot.

Jimmy turns to Blake again.

JIMMY

Was I an ass last night?

BLAKE

Yes. You were.

JIMMY

I'm sorry. I appreciate what you're doing. I didn't plan on getting drunk last night.

BLAKE

I mean, I want you to plan on things. For you and for us. I don't want us to be victims of our circumstances all the time. It's a tiring hand to play.

JIMMY

You're right.

BLAKE

You're hungover. I'll stop preaching.

Jimmy smiles.

JIMMY

For what it's worth, I had a great time with you yesterday.

BLAKE

It was wonderful.

JIMMY

I don't remember everything about last night, but I do remember you encouraging me when I left. I didn't think I was going to do well last night but I kept remembering how confident in me you were.

Jimmy turns back over to fall asleep.

JIMMY

I did really well last night. Thank you.

Blake reaches over and starts scratching Jimmy's back.

BLAKE
350 South for 3 hours.

EXT. HIGHWAY ON-RAMP - MORNING

Blake turns onto 350 South.

EXT. BEAUTIFUL SCENERY - MORNING

Blake drives by wide open terraced land and lush wheat fields that flicker in the sunlight.

BLAKE
Jimmy, take a look at these fields
real quick.

Jimmy doesn't stir. Blake drinks from her coffee cup and continues to look forward.

CUT TO:

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Blake is starting to look tired. She tries to find a radio station but nothing clicks. She tries to grab one of her cd's but they are far over on the passenger floor board. She reaches for them and swerves the car a little bit.

Jimmy wakes up.

BLAKE
Oh, good. I mean, sorry. Would you
grab me a cd?

Jimmy hands her the cd. First track is "Steppenwolf" again. She's into it because she needs to be pumped up.

JIMMY
Would you turn it down? A little?
Thanks.

The hushed sounds of "Born to be Wild" whisper through the speakers.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY EXIT SIGNS - DAY

The far right sign indicates an "exit only" for a "55 West" business highway.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Blake is confused. She looks at the clock. It says 12:30.

BLAKE

Jimmy, I take 55 West right?

The exit is coming up.

BLAKE

Jimmy.

No response. She has to make a quick decision, so, she takes the exit. Jimmy stirs awake.

JIMMY

Did you say something?

BLAKE

55 west, right?

JIMMY

55 west.

Blake is relieved. Jimmy goes back to sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. BLAKE'S CAR

Jimmy wakes up to see Blake leaning forward while driving so she can hear the talk radio.

JIMMY

The dragon awakes from his slumber.
What are you doing?

BLAKE

I was trying to listen to the
radio, which is difficult to do
when your beau is getting his
beauty sleep.

JIMMY

How long was I out?

BLAKE

A little over three hours.

JIMMY

So, we're on 55?

BLAKE

Yep.

JIMMY

Great. We should have a little time
to grab a bite to eat when we get

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

to Franklin.

Jimmy sees a second coffee in the cup holders.

JIMMY

Is that coffee for me?

BLAKE

Yes. You don't know how difficult it was for me not to drink that.

JIMMY

Well, you're my hero.

They drive by a destination sign. There's no mention of Franklin on it.

JIMMY

How long have we been on 55?

BLAKE

About 20-30 minutes.

They drive past an exit sign and Jimmy sees that they're on 55 West business.

JIMMY

Oh, shit! Blake take this exit. Fuck. No. Just pull into one of these turnarounds.

BLAKE

The cop ones?

JIMMY

Just do it. Don't think about it.

EXT. HIGHWAY TURNAROUND - DAY

Blake pulls the car into a median. She and Jimmy get out and trade seats.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

BLAKE

Why what's up?

JIMMY

We're on the wrong fucking highway.

BLAKE

It says 55 West on it.

JIMMY

Blake, it's 55 West, but it's a business highway. It's different from the interstate.

Jimmy starts to accelerate to very high speeds.

JIMMY

I'm not mad at you, but, how do you not know that?

BLAKE

The word "but" right there means forget what I just said.

JIMMY

I understand people make mistakes.

BLAKE

Then why would you ask me how I don't know something? That is such a condescending and unfair question. You know that thing you're not aware of, or nobody's ever taught you, how come you've never been aware of it?

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

LOW ANGLE STATIC shows the car zooming by.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY ON-RAMP - DAY

Jimmy turns back onto 350 South.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Jimmy sighs in relief.

JIMMY

I think we're going to be alright.

BLAKE

You mean, you're going to be able to make it to YOUR thing. That's what makes everything alright in your eyes.

JIMMY

What are you talking about?
Everything I do, pool, whatever, is
for us.

BLAKE

It's for you, it always has been
for you.

JIMMY

Are you serious right now? How can
you say that?

BLAKE

Whenever it's pool time, it's like
nothing else can get in its way.

JIMMY

I would call that focused. You see
a lawyer, or car dealer or someone
else act that way and nobody thinks
twice.

BLAKE

It's always pool time. In the
morning, you're recovering because
you had a late night, or in the
afternoon you're always getting
ready to go out. Pool gets the best
you. When do I get that? I can't
even make a mistake while I'm
driving your hungover ass to the
next pool tournament.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Jimmy takes the 55 West exit.

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

JIMMY

I think it's unfair to say you
don't get my best. Pool just
happens to be my job.

BLAKE

That's fine and you can use that
excuse all you want, but the truth
is you don't do pool for us, you do
it for you. When you do bad, you
project your insecurities onto me.
Every mistake I make is amplified.

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

If you do well, you come home and want to fuck all night because you feel like a badass, like a real man. It's your ego that's at stake not my well-being. I don't care what you do for work, but when we're together your work should have nothing to do with how WE are doing.

The "low gas" light comes on in the dash.

JIMMY

Shit!

BLAKE

How far away are we?

JIMMY

20-30 minutes.

BLAKE

We might make it.

JIMMY

We're going to be late even if we don't stop. Shit! If we run out of gas, we are for sure screwed.

Jimmy sees a sign that says the next exit has a gas station.

Jimmy takes the exit and follows the arrows to the right to find the gas station.

JUMP CUT They're still driving.

JIMMY

Where the fuck is this thing? It said go to the right, right?

BLAKE

Right.

Jimmy spots it and slows down to pull in.

JIMMY

No fucking way! You've got to be kidding me!

EXT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - DAY

Jimmy and Blake turn around in the parking lot and head back toward the highway.

CUT TO:

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Blake rests her head against the window. Neither of them are saying anything to one another.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY ON-RAMP - DAY

Jimmy gets back on 55 West.

CUT TO:

INT. BLAKE'S CAR - DAY

Blake still has her head against the window.

JIMMY

Do you feel jipped?

Blake sits up and thinks about it.

JIMMY

Do you feel I was ever deceptive about what my lifestyle was like?

BLAKE

No. Not anymore. There was a time when I was upset at you. I felt like you didn't care about me.

JIMMY

What about now?

BLAKE

I know you love me and I know you love yourself, but you don't love us. When there's an us there needs to be compromise and nothing cuts into pool.

Jimmy is quiet as he stares forward. Franklin, a small town, is now within eyesight.

BLAKE

Do you want to know the thing that scares me the most?

JIMMY

What's that?

BLAKE

It's that you're so good at hustling that you've hustled yourself into thinking that your life is about anyone else but you.

JIMMY

I didn't know you were capable of being that harsh.

BLAKE

There's a lot you don't know about me.

The car begins to sputter.

JIMMY

Oh, no! No, no, no.

Downtown Franklin is a mile away.

The car sputters harder and coasts to a stop.

JIMMY

We're going to have to walk.

EXT. BLAKE'S CAR

Jimmy gets out and fishes out his cue stick bag. Blake opens her door and slips her shoes on.

JIMMY

We have to go, Babe.

BLAKE

I am putting my shoes on.

Blake closes her door and meets Jimmy in the

BREAKDOWN LANE

JIMMY

We have to start jogging. They might not let me enter.

They both start to jogging. Jimmy's pace is much quicker.

JIMMY

Let's go, Honey. Just push it for like half a mile and then you can rest the whole night.

BLAKE
I'm sorry. I'm new to this
pregnancy thing.

Jimmy's lead opens up again and then he stops so Blake can catch up.

BLAKE
Why don't you just go ahead? You
won't make it waiting on me.

JIMMY
You mean that?

BLAKE
Yes. I don't want you waiting on
me.

Jimmy gives her the keys and kisses her on the cheek.

JIMMY
I've been an ass for a long time. I
don't want you to feel like I don't
care about us. We'll work on this,
ok?

Blake nods her head and smirks.

JIMMY
The hall is called Lancer's. It's
right off of Main St. You'll be
able to see me run into it. Ok?

BLAKE
Ok.

JIMMY
What's wrong?

BLAKE
Nothing. Just go!

Jimmy nods his head and turns and runs. Blake slows her walk to a stand still and watches as Jimmy gets further away.

INT. LANCER'S - AFTERNOON

Lancer's is dim inside. It has stained glass mosaic windows that make it seem later in the day.

Jimmy walks over to

THE BAR

The bartender is tall, jovial and wears a bow tie.

JIMMY

Is there still time to enter into
the tournament?

BARTENDER

If you're ready to go right now,
we'll throw you on table three.
It's round robin in the first
round. You and two others. Can I
get you a drink?

JIMMY

No. I'm okay.

CUT TO:

JIMMY'S TABLE

The other players are already there warming up. One is a stout blonde woman, BERTHA, and the other a preppy young man, POLO.

Jimmy shakes both of their hands and assembles his cue. He looks over at the front door, waiting.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANCER'S - AFTERNOON

Blake looks worn out as she walks toward the entrance. She stops twenty feet short and stares at the door.

INT. LANCER'S - AFTERNOON

JIMMY'S TABLE

Jimmy's still glancing at the door when Polo gets his attention.

POLO

You're up with Berth.

Jimmy sticks his right hand in his shirt, closes his eyes to collect himself and then shoots the rails with Bertha.

MONTAGE - Intercut between Jimmy and Blake

A) LANCER'S - Bertha leaves the table open for Jimmy and he capitalizes by sinking a couple shots.

B) Gas Station - Blake meets an old man with a pick up truck who helps her get back to her car with gas.

C) LANCER'S - Jimmy is playing Polo. When Jimmy lines up a tough shot, Polo starts chalking. Jimmy makes it and Polo puts his stick down.

D) Burger Stand - Blake is sitting alone at a table. Nearby her is a Mexican family eating dinner. A little boy, 4, keeps looking at her, making her smile. He eventually sits next to her and offers her some of his ice cream.

E) LANCER'S - Jimmy is starting to draw a crowd. He makes a tricky bank shot and people start clapping.

F) Hotel Pool - Blake gets into the pool, which is unoccupied. She's floating peacefully when a young romantic couple get into the pool. She turns her back to them.

G) LANCER'S - The bartender sends Jimmy a beer. He refuses it. It's his turn again. He puts away another player.

H) Hotel Room - Blake dripping wet, walks down the hallway barefoot. She opens the door to her dark room, enters and shuts us out.

END MONTAGE

INT. LANCER'S - NIGHT

Jimmy is holding a trophy. On either side of him are the second and third place winners. The bartender snaps a picture of them.

Jimmy shakes hands with as few people as he has to as he rushes to get out of there.

BARTENDER

Jimmy, you got a message. Colonial Suites, said the room is under Blake Miller.

JIMMY

How far away is that?

BARTENDER

Not. Two blocks east, about 6,7 blocks north.

JIMMY

Thanks.

BARTENDER

She told me not to bother you until
you were finished. That's a keeper.

JIMMY

You're telling me

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jimmy opens the door. Inside one of the beds looks like it's
been slept in. The door to the porch is open, curtain
flowing in the breeze.

Jimmy puts his sticks down and walks out onto

THE PORCH

He's still carrying his trophy.

Blake is sitting out there, wearing a hoodie, staring into
the sky.

JIMMY

Hey, Love.

BLAKE

Hey, how'd you do?

He holds his trophy up.

BLAKE

You won it all?

JIMMY

Yep.

BLAKE

So, you're all set for Vegas?

JIMMY

Yeah, we are.

Jimmy sits down, exhausted.

JIMMY

Looking for a shooting star?

BLAKE

Not counting on it.

There's silence between them as they both stare into the
sky.

JIMMY
Every minute you didn't walk into
the pool hall, I despised myself.

BLAKE
Not enough to leave.

JIMMY
I stayed because I want something
different for us. I don't want to
hustle anymore. You know, I made
enough money last night and tonight
that we could just skip Vegas.

BLAKE
You need to be in Vegas, Jimmy. You
earned it.

JIMMY
You're right. I hijacked your trip.

BLAKE
(big grin)
Our trip. You hijacked our trip.

JIMMY
Yes. Our trip.

Blake reaches out her hand. Jimmy reaches out and holds it.

BLAKE
I don't want you to think about
next month, next week, not even
tomorrow. We have right now. That's
it. Let's enjoy what we have.

Jimmy looks at her knowingly. Blake keeps her gaze on the
stars as they continue to hold hands.

CUT TO:

HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jimmy and Blake lay in bed together. Blake has her head on
his chest.

JIMMY
There were some shots that I just
concentrate better when I shoot one
(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

handed. I'm not trying to be arrogant.

BLAKE

I know you're not.

JIMMY

I'm ready for Vegas. Have a few days for my wrist to heal, time by the pool, reading or swimming or whatever and then to start a new chapter. To move in a positive direction.

BLAKE

Sounds amazing.

JIMMY

You know, I couldn't have gotten this far without you. I couldn't have done this without you.

Blake sits up and looks Jimmy in the eyes.

BLAKE

That's not true, Jimmy. You have everything you need to be here within yourself.

Silence between them.

JIMMY

I love you.

BLAKE

I love you, too.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Jimmy lays in bed alone. He wakes up slowly and checks out on the empty porch for Blake.

He walks to the bathroom and knocks on the door. He opens the door and finds nobody.

He opens the hotel room door and walks into the

HALLWAY

Next to their room is a luggage cart with his things from the car.

Jimmy jogs to the nearest exit.

EXT. PARKING LOT. - MORNING

CU on Jimmy's face as he looks around for Blake's car. His eyes eventually wander downward as he begins to take it all in.

FADE TO BLACK.

END.

VITA

Thomas Culton has lived in Kansas City, MO, for nearly fifteen years. He has long considered the city an overlooked gem in the Midwest and after meeting his wife, Jensie Louann Barnoskie, here in 2008 he was further convinced that the land was rich and worth settling down in. They have three children, two of which were born during grad school. The addition of his children further cemented in Thomas' mind that good things happen in Kansas City. Currently, Thomas works as a freelance videographer and video engineer. Soon, Thomas will transition to full-time filmmaking, but before then, he must finish this Vita.