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~~A writer's mind is a wild place to be.~~
Some stories need a full rewrite.

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FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Tall pines, lush moss, and tangled brush are coated in a golden bloom. A milky mist from the morning dew coats the forest floor as the sun caresses its way under the canopy.

TWO TEENS -- MARCO (18) and VERONICA (17) laugh while holding hands, running through the trees, and giving each other the look of- "*this will never end.*" It's pure, untainted, love.

Veronica TACKLES Marco onto a mat of soft, spongy grass. They roll around, snickering, neither one letting go of the other.

Marco positions himself above her and gets lost in her deep, brown and amber eyes. She looks up into his endless blues.

MARCO

You think you'll still wanna be
with me after college?

Veronica grins, she lifts her head off the ground, her lips nearly kissing Marco's.

VERONICA

I love you with all my heart.
You're my rock, my sweet baby boy.
And I wouldn't want to... I... I
wouldn't want to-

Veronica looks past Marco and directly into the CAMERA.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Can we cut? I'm really not feeling
this line. -- Excuse me!

Veronica PUSHES Marco off. Marco gives the FILM CREW a shrug.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)

That's a cut!

EXT. FILM SET - DAY

The ACTRESS playing Veronica is actually- BRITTNEY (21). She storms past the camera department, a SCRIPT SUPERVISOR, and the DIRECTOR- who're watching the playback on VIDEO VILLAGE.

Brittney clomps her way to CRAFT SERVICES. She digs through a pile of WELCH'S FRUIT SNACKS and pulls out a handful.

She lights a CIGARETTE and grabs a cup of cold coffee.

She walks off to a secluded area under a rock and sits.

She rips open the gummies and takes a deep drag of her cig.

Brittney digs into her back pocket and pulls out a SMALL PACKET of papers- the script's SIDES. She reviews the lines and quietly talks to herself, replaying her lines over.

Back at Video Village, the Director looks at his FIRST AD, KRISTEN (40's), a tall woman with confidence and grit.

DIRECTOR

Anyone have eyes on Brittney? We're losing daylight.

KRISTEN radios on a walkie-

KRISTEN

Reeve, you have eyes on Brittney?

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Fire-watching the exposed grip and lighting gear, just an earshot away from the set is- REEVE CASTIN (30). He types away on a BUSTED MACBOOK, finessing descriptors in a SCRIPT.

Reeve resembles a hand-me-down version of a young Robert Downey Jr. and Johnny Depp; only Reeve's not a shining beacon of success, nor does he have movie star looks, or style.

He hears the radio call for Brittney. Reeve answers back-

REEVE

Copy, eyes. Reeve flying in.

Reeve closes his laptop and makes haste towards the woods.

Sprinting, leaping, and zooming past all the other departments is- Reeve. He shoots through the set and scans the area. He notices a thin PLUME of cigarette smoke.

He approaches.

EXT. WOODS FILM SET - DAY

Reeve gently peeks his head around the rock, trying to not disturb Brittney, who's more frazzled than before.

REEVE

Hey, Brittney, um, just wanted to come by and see if you needed anything so we can get to rolling?

Brittney snarks at Reeve. She tosses her sides at him.

BRITTNEY
Yeah. Fix this fucking line and
I'll go back. (Beat) So redundant.

Reeve reviews the script. He shakes his head.

REEVE
Not really my department. Say, why
don't we go have a talk with Manny?

Brittney rolls her eyes and turns away. After a moment Reeve gives in. He looks over her packeted sides.

He reads the lines, COLD, with no inflection- perfectly flat.

REEVE (CONT'D)
You're my rock. My sweet baby boy.

BRITTNEY
RIGHT!? The fuck is that about?

Reeve looks from the script and down at Brittney. He grins.

REEVE
So, the subtext here is he wants
security. He needs assurance,
because your character seems, well,
she's a bit promiscuous. Right?

BRITTNEY
Well, duh. Aren't all teens?

REEVE
Right. So, instead of saying
"you're my rock" or whatever. Just
say, in a cute, playful way, "I
don't know..." Then kiss him.

Brittney looks up at Reeve, she's awestruck.

REEVE (CONT'D)
Yeah. I think that'll play better.
I don't know. What do you think?

BRITTNEY
Who'd you say you were again?

REEVE
I'm Reeve.

BRITTNEY
No, like, who are you on this set?

REEVE

Oh, I'm just an eager PA, ready to
lend a hand for whatever, wherever.
(Beat) You ready to rock and roll?

BRITTNEY

Yeah. Thanks Reeve, the PA.

Reeve lends his hand to help her up off the ground. He radios-

REEVE

Brittney flying in.

Brittney and Reeve rush to set. Brittney heads straight for Video Village and talks to the Director. She whispers in his ear and gestures at the sides. The Director ushers Kristen.

The three have an *intimate conversation*.

Brittney looks back and points at Reeve. The Director and Kristen all shoot Reeve a look. Reeve fires finger guns back.

DIRECTOR

Okay, camera's up. We'll pick it up
with them on the ground.

Brittney heads towards the mossy glen and lays down. Marco crawls on top of her. A FIRST AC runs in with an OPEN SLATE.

FIRST AC

Forty eight, bravo, take nineteen.

He CLACKS the slate right next to Brittney. She winces.

Reeve goes back to fire-watching. He opens his laptop and starts plugging away on his script. He condenses three line descriptors down to two, shortening windows- no hanging chads.

Off in the distance- footsteps. They grow louder, stronger. Reeve keeps his eyes on the prize-- his working script.

As Reeve types away he's slowly getting PULLED into ANOTHER WORLD. The grip truck behind him *BENDS* in *FRACTALS*, an ORCHESTRAL HUM swells and builds in the air. It rises, THEN-

A HAND closes his laptop. Reeve's dropped back in reality and annoyed. He looks up to see Kristen, the First AD.

She looms over Reeve with the demeanor of a rugged sailor.

KRISTEN

Got a minute?

Reeve forces a smile, setting his laptop aside.

REEVE
For you Kristen, sure.

Kristen moves away and signals for Reeve to follow.

EXT. CREW PARKING - DAY

Carving their way between beaten cars is Kristen and Reeve. She stops, removes her earpiece, and faces Reeve.

KRISTEN
Look, I don't know who you think you are, but going directly to talent, is a big no no.

REEVE
You asked me to find her?

KRISTEN
I didn't ask you to console her, or change the script. Manny's sacrificed a lot writing this and getting the production together. He doesn't need some PA telling him how to run it. You copy?

Reeve doesn't know how to take this. He sighs.

REEVE
Yeah, well, maybe if the script was better he wouldn't be needing me to wrangle an actress off a cliff.

KRISTEN
That's the thing, he doesn't need you. At all.

REEVE
Sick. (Beat) So I'm not getting paid? Oh that's right, this was all just an opportunity for *exposure*.

KRISTEN
(laughing)
Not for you.

Reeve "*gets it.*" He bites back as he leaves-

REEVE
The only reason I took this gig, was to get my work in front of him.

KRISTEN

I can assure you, he'll never read it. -- Word of advice, stay in your lane. Don't go pushing your scripts on a set, ever.

Reeve walks off. He grabs his few belongings, stuffs his laptop away, and puts on his headphones- "PLEASURE X NEWJACK X CIVILIZATION" by JUSTICE fills his headspace.

Reeve slinks through the set, he watches the scene unfold in passing. He notices Brittney mouth the words- "*I don't know*" - proceeded with a kiss to Marco. Reeve scoffs.

He tries to fight back tears, but his eyes are PURE BLACK, pitted with empty iris's that BLEED INK. The dark tears paint tar-colored strips down his face.

Reeve starts SPRINTING through the woods, as far away as he can get from the shit-show set that's unfolding.

HEADPHONES (O.S.)

"Use imagination as a destination!
Use imagination as a destination!"

The music builds, and Reeve's descends deeper into the unknown wooded glen. The tree-line *DISTORTS*, *WARPING* with *RIPPLES* and *TERRAFORMING* the forest landscape into a-

-OPENING CREDITS SEQUENCE-

EXT. BEACH - DUSK

A war-torn beach. Fragments of metal BEAMS, ARTILLARY, and TRENCHES, tunnel the beach. It's Normandy on the East-coast.

EXPLOSIONS ERUPT-- scattering sand, debris, DISMEMBERED BODY PARTS, shrapnel, and amphibious military vehicles everywhere.

Armed with nothing but his pen and notebook; Reeve charges the battle scathed beach in a WWI MASTER SERGEANT'S UNIFORM.

HEADPHONES (O.S.)

"Come closer, forever be! CLOSER!
CLOSER! FOR THERE TO BE- PLEASURE--"

A BATTALION of rag-tag war punks, his FRIENDS-- BENNY (29) SPENCER (31) and JESS (34) all follow him patriotically.

Reeve furiously scribbles on the pad of paper as bullets WHIZ past. Soldiers GO DOWN and drop all around them.

Reeve is blind to it all-- his focus bound to the pages.
 He trudges through BALLS OF FIRE and LANDMINES, unfazed.
 He JUMPS into an enemy trench, landing into-

INT. SPACESHIP - UNKNOWN TIME (IT'S SPACE)

-The CAPTAIN'S SEAT of his SPACESHIP. His black tears pull across his face as he travels at WARP SPEED. Instead of piloting his ship he's WRITING LONGHAND- pen and paper.

Reeve's in a SPACE CRUISER CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM as he commands over his star-fleet through nebulas stretched over a galaxy.

His ship's the ENTERPRISE meets the NEBUCHADNEZZAR. It's sleek with glossy white panelling, a Damascus-steel floor, and an Easter-colored hologram HUD interface.

HEADPHONES (O.S.)

"Use imagination as a destination!
 Long as you believe! YOUUUU!! FOR!"

He navigates PLANETS and ASTEROIDS with ease, zooming past undiscovered worlds and galaxies. Reeve pulls back and-

The fleeting stars HALT-- CRASHING him THROUGH OZONE LAYERS like a falling star.

He's a ball of fire that's PLUMMETTING to earth.

The wake of destruction that tails him are shattered dreams, prisms of memories, and a fuck-load of foreshadowing.

He makes a crash landing through the roof of a-

INT. GUNSLINGER'S SALOON - DAY

A dusty, dilapidated, and worn down WESTERN SALOON; fit for hookers, cheating poker players, drunkards, and gunslingers.

Reeve SMACKS onto the floor. His thick poncho and sombrero do a horrible job of blending him in when all eyes are on him.

Reeve gets up from the ground, dusts off his poncho, and scans the room. Crusty lips, sagged eyes, and weathered hands all reach for their holsters.

Everyone's on edge.

Reeve's palm hovers over the wood handle of his SIX-SHOOTER.

Reeve UNSNAPS his holster, and with that- A FULL BLOWN SHOOTOUT UNFOLDS. Reeve quick-fires-- popping off rounds from his hip by levering the hammer with his other palm.

Fountain-works of blood, clothes exploding, bottles spraying, and bar wood splintering ERUPT in a cacophony of awesomeness.

As quickly as it all started- it ends. The smoking barrel of Reeve's gun dances its way towards the bar.

He pours himself a drink, and slams it back. He hits his glass against the-

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

-Desk that's littered with manilla folders, reports, clues, and pictures of HOMICIDES. Reeve's gone full blown NOIR.

A laptop cursor blinks on an empty FINAL DRAFT DOCUMENT.

Noir Reeve looks around the room in a drunken stupor.

He opens his desk and retrieves a pack of double edged RAZOR BLADES. He opens them carefully and extracts one.

He runs his thumb across, testing the steel. Reeve presses it against his wrist, ready to slice it- deep and clean.

He hesitates.

Reeve places the blade down, shaking his head.

He rises from his chair and rushes over to a cabinet. Resting on a stand is a sleek KATANA. He removes it and unsheathes the three-foot sword. It GLISTENS in his hand.

REEVE (V.O.)

I've always pictured my life as a movie. I mean, who hasn't?

INT. REEVE'S APARTMENT - DAY

It's a TIGHT five-hundred square foot, and dusty, apartment. The living room and kitchen share the same space but are separated by a countertop island.

A thin hallway leads to a single bedroom, a moldy bathroom, and a crammed office. The morning sun cuts through the blinds that connect a sliding glass door to the balcony.

Tucked next to the balcony is- REEVE'S WRITING NOOK. Post-it notes of STORY BEATS hang on a stained wall. A bookshelf topples over with "WRITE YOUR SCREENPLAY" self-help novels.

Movie posters for "**The Big Lebowski**" - "**Hardcore Henry**" - "**Shaun of The Dead**" - "**Birdman**" - "**The Raid 2**" and "**Breakfast at Tiffany's**" surround his nook.

Reeve feverishly taps away on a weathered and beaten MACBOOK. A cup of BLACK COFFEE steams beside him. Reeve's every bit of an eager screenwriter- large square glasses are hardly aesthetic and his thick cozy cardigan's anything but cliché.

He scans the room for inspiration.

REEVE (V.O.)

I don't want to open with a voice-over. A voice-over's lazy fucking writing. And I'm not a lazy artist.

Hundreds of films stack on racks-- alphabetically. They line the walls, overload his bookshelves, and flood his TV stand.

He pours a heavy dollop of BAILEY'S into his coffee and SLURPS it back. He pours another cup of Baileys, straight. Reeve goes back to hammering away on his laptop.

REEVE (V.O.)

Show me the shit, don't fuckin' sit there telling me about it with some shitty on-the-nose inner monologue.

He talks with his hands while carrying out his thoughts. In the background is Reeve's GIRLFRIEND, AUBREE (30).

Aubree's the epitome of the "not trying to be athletic but athletic" type. She's upset and fighting back tears.

She grabs a few MOVING BOXES and shuffles towards the door.

She composes herself and asserts Reeve.

AUBREE

Reeve, I'm leaving.

Reeve continues writing. He doesn't acknowledge her.

REEVE

Mhmm.

AUBREE

Like, I'm leaving, leaving.

REEVE

Babe, I'm in the middle of writing.
So whatever it is can you-

AUBREE

-Goodbye Reeve.

Aubree grabs her belongings and makes for the exit. She places her key on the counter and SLAMS the door behind her.

Reeve looks up and notices how quiet his apartment is. He basks in the silence and gathers his thoughts.

REEVE

(To himself)

Finally.

He continues typing, delicately placing words on the page.

REEVE (V.O.)

Now when I make a movie, I want it to be an exaggerated version of life, which is something everyone can identify with.

Reeve looks up at his BEAT BOARD. There's a tag-note that says: WRITE UNIVERSALLY. He thumbs through a few GOLD-PINNED scripts, all RED-LINED and annotated with his handwriting.

REEVE (V.O.)

Life isn't one genre. It's not a comedy, or a romance, or a sci-fi, or an action. It's a bit of everything. I just need a character who can endure all of that, and keep getting up, again and again.

Reeve pauses and plays with his stubble. He licks his lips. He grabs the KATANA off his bookshelf.

He unsheathes it, glances at the blade, and feels the weight of the steel in his palms.

REEVE

But what defines a character? --
Action. Action defines character.
It's never about what they say, but
what they do. So, what do I do?
What should I do?

Reeve ponders for a moment, swinging the blade around. Then-

BAM!

Aubree BARGES in and CLOMPS her way through the apartment.

AUBREE
 Sorry. Don't want to disturb your
 writing.

Reeve scoffs and gives her a dissatisfied glare.

REEVE
 (annoyed and sarcastic)
 OHHHH NO! I'm sorry!

Aubree runs to the bedroom and snatches her purse.

REEVE (CONT'D)
 Aubree? (screeching) AUBREEEEEEE!

She frumps her way back and towers over Reeve.

AUBREE
 WHAT!

REEVE
 No WHAT. You what?!

Aubree studies Reeve- his one hand over the keyboard, the other holding the sword.

AUBREE
 I can't with you anymore.

REEVE
 Can't with me anymore, what?

AUBREE
 Nothing... Keep at it Reeve. I
 truly hope you sell a script soon.
 After all you can't pay the bills
 with exposure. Oh, too soon?

REEVE
 I would love that! Which is what
 I'm trying to do now. So, if you
 don't mind...

Reeve gestures to his laptop.

AUBREE
 Can't wait to hear what Reeve's
 "big message" is that he'll share
 with the world! If only I was so
 lucky!

Reeve takes this moment and gives his best elevator pitch.

REEVE

So this one's different.

As he talks he BRUTALLY performs HARA-KIRI.

He PLUNGES the blade into his heart and SLICES three strokes.

A TRIANGULAR CHUNK of flesh PLOPS against the cold faux-wood floorboards with a wet, meaty, CRIMSON SPLATTER of gore.

REEVE (CONT'D)

This one's gonna be more RAW. more
fucking *visceral*.

Reeve SINKS his BARE HAND into his chest and REMOVES his *BEATING HEART*. It PUMPS a heaping amount of blood out as it twitches with life between his fingers.

Aubree can't believe what she's seeing.

Reeve looks at his laptop. Then at Aubree. Then back at his

He SLAPS his PULSING HEART right on the laptop's keys.

The blank pages begin to WRITE themselves.

-He sinks into his chair and sighs. He's done.

On his laptop screen is the-

TITLE CARD: PAGE ONE

REEVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Sick.