

# DIRT

BY MATTHEW CARNAHAN

"Fame is but a slow decay-  
Even this shall pass away."  
--Theodore Tilton

"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest,  
and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."  
--Book of Daniel

"Is demum miser est, cuius nobilitas miserias nobilitat."  
("Indeed, wretched is the man whose fame makes his  
misfortunes famous.")  
--Lucius Accius

"There is hardly anyone whose sexual life, if it were  
broadcast, would not fill the world at large with surprise  
and horror."  
--W. Somerset Maugham

"Death or glory,  
It's just another story."  
--The Clash

November 15, 2005

## DIRT

IN BLACK

The sound of a shovel into dirt.

FADE IN:

On the shovel, the hands grasping it. Reveal DON KONKEY, of indeterminate age, a schlub, digging a hole. Wears a "MILF HUNTER" T-shirt. Tubby, greasy hair, mouthbreather. Expressionless. His clothes are filthy, you can almost smell him.

He stops digging. Examines his work. It appears to be a grave. He lays down in the hole. Begins covering himself with dirt.

Don covers himself thoroughly. He is now buried.

CUT TO:

INT. STAPLES CENTER

A basketball game in progress. An insanely hot woman sits courtside, wearing a teensy-weensy wife beater and a little denim skirt. She smiles at PRINCE TYREESE, superstar point guard and multi-million dollar endorsement magnet. He's about to bang a three-pointer, but instead drives inside and SLAMS the ball, hangs from the net staring at the woman. She uncrosses her legs and parts them.

INT. STAPLES CENTER LOCKER ROOM

Prince Tyreese stands there naked, 6'8'' and tatted, his BOYS lounging around him.

He leans over and whispers something, dispatches one of them.

INT. STAPLES CENTER

Courtside, post game. Tyreese's homeboy talks to the hot chick in the bg...

While in the foreground, Tyreese poses for the cameras with his perfect, camera-ready FAMILY, beautiful WIFE and FOUR KIDS.

INT. STAPLES CENTER LOCKER ROOM

Tyreese, dressed, leaves the locker room.

As he walks out, the LOCKER ROOM ATTENDANT picks up his cellphone...

EXT. STAPLES CENTER

A HUMMER pulls up. Tyreese's ride.

INT. BLACK SUV

SUV GUY watches the Hummer pass, makes a call.

SUV GUY  
Houston, we have a booty call.

EXT. LUCY SPILLER'S OFFICE -- EARLY EVENING

LUCY SPILLER is looking into the mirror in her office, changing her clothes while talking on the phone. Behind her are blown-up tabloid covers, documenting the rise and (mostly) fall of the rich and infamous.

Lucy is Executive Editor of NOW Magazine (like PEOPLE), THE BOMB (like an even trashier ENQUIRER), and has a decent-sized media empire at her fingertips. She's good-looking, late 30s-early 40s, and has maximized her assets. She is in the process of putting on a Dries Van Noten suit, a fair amount of her Pilates-ripped body showing. She moves with the voracious, muscled efficiency of a tiger shark.

She smiles, looks like they got this guy.

LUCY  
Okay. Call me if anything changes.

CUT TO:

DON KONKEY'S POV

Back in his "grave." We see Prince Tyreese and the Hottie cavorting into frame. Devouring each other.

They stumble into the hot tub, and in a flash she is topless and riding the all-time high scorer...

Bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce...

She reaches the top of her bounce and we --

FREEZE FRAME

On the hot model/hooker, perched *in ecstasis*, one arm in the air like a bronc rider, her full lips wet and parted, caught for eternity at the height of sexual bliss.

DON'S POV

Tyreese and the Hooker, from the dirt and leaves. We hear his labored, rhythmic breathing, hear the whisper-quiet shutter of the camera as--

MUSIC COMES UP

The Out Crowd's "Son Of A Bitch (Plastic Ear Infection Mix)"

And now we see the scene before us --

UN-FREEZE

And FREEZE again, over and over, as he captures the scene before him; the rapturous, whimpering Hottie, the grim and determined Tyreese, unaware his fate is about to change forever.

A SERIES OF STILLLS

These include:

--Tyreese spansks her.

--She spansks him.

--He "chokes" her.

--She fastens on a strap-on, grins wickedly...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOVIE PREMIERE -- NIGHT

A crowd gathered around the red carpet. A caste system of (from lowest to highest) fans, paparazzi, "legit" press, and the be-jewelled actors and above-the-liners walking the carpet.

Working the press area with deep intensity is Lucy Spiller. We MOVE with her as she tells photographers and videographers what to get/do/look for...

LUCY  
 (to a videographer)  
 Just get anything unflattering.  
 Back-fat, asses, saddlebags, bra  
 straps, bellies...

She moves to a photographer.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
 Full body fashion shots only,  
 Damon.

She moves to an ON-CAMERA TABLOID REPORTER.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
 Ask Carlo about the thing with the  
 nanny...see if you can catch him  
 off guard, he'll be expecting  
 softballs.

She sees Don off to the side, trying to eat some chili-cheese  
 fries while standing up. Loaded down with all his gear.  
 Still filthy from his earlier assignment, still with the MILF  
 HUNTER t-shirt, but now with a deeply rumpled old sport coat  
 over it. Lucy looks annoyed.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
 Don.

DON  
 Hey, Lucy. Want some chili-fries?

LUCY  
 God, no.  
 (sotto)  
 Did you get Prince Tyreese?

DON  
 (regular voice)  
 Yes.

LUCY  
 (sotto)  
 You got everything?

DON  
 (regular voice)  
 I got them having sex for two  
 hours. And the coke. And he  
 choked her. And the strap-on.

Lucy puts up her hands to silence him.

LUCY  
 Don...not so loud.

DON  
 'Kay.

LUCY  
 And remember, this one's between  
 you and me. I don't want Alex to  
 see this footage until I figure out  
 how to break it.

DON  
 'Kay.

Don stares at her legs. He puts a handful of chili fries in  
 his mouth. Like he's watching a movie.

LUCY  
Don?

DON  
Yeah.

LUCY  
Get candid of Holt and Julia, all  
right?

DON  
'Kay.

INT. EXPEDITION LIMO -- NIGHT

JULIA MYERS, 27, superstarlet, queen of Young Hollywood, looks distractedly out the limo window as they creep along Hollywood Boulevard.

Her boyfriend, HOLT McLAREN, 33, a better-looking Sean Penn, vogues to the lighted make-up mirror, pulls at his carefully crafted spiky bedhead.

MICHELLE, their driver, turns around and regards the couple.

MICHELLE  
You ready?

HOLT  
Ask her, she's the star.

JULIA  
One sec.

She takes out a lip gloss, doesn't even look in the mirror, applies it in one move and hands it to Holt.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
You mind? I don't have any  
pockets.

And indeed she doesn't. The gown is one piece of sheer, clingy fabric.

She steps from the limo out on to the red carpet.

MUSIC: "Ride It On" by Mazzy Star...

SUPER SLO MO -- MOS

As her Jimmy Choo-clad feet touch down on the red carpet. Holt climbs out after her, having to slide across the seat to get there, so his exit is not nearly so graceful. We recognize his camera face from his vogue-ing in the mirror.

Posters and print ads from the movie everywhere; "Subliminal Velocity," all ice-blue with guns and futuristic wardrobe.

They face a SEA OF FLASHES. The "LEGIT" PRESS elbow the PAPARAZZI...they're all out in full force, screaming, waving, flashing, taping...we see but don't hear their hysterics. Spittle on the corners of mouths, grabbing at competitors, faces contorted in desperate pleas for a shot...

ON JULIA AND HOLT

SUPER-DUPER SLO-MO now, as they walk up the red carpet, holding hands. They are the essence of beauty, symmetry, love.

RETURN TO SPEED -- EAR-SHATTERING SOUND

As the PAPARAZZI scream...and behind them, the deafening Greek Chorus that is THE FANS, set up behind ropes that are set up behind ropes. They scream for one glance, one wave, knowing that their Gods will never make it over to them for an autograph.

The photogs and vid-hounds fire away at the couple. We MOVE BACK AND FORTH between the smooth red carpet POV of the stars and the rough, hand-held scrum that is the press pit.

VARIOUS PHOTOGRAPHER POVS

As the photos frame up and FREEZE. We watch them move from photos of Julia and Holt, to photos of Julia only, as Holt is framed further and further out, until he's not in the photos at all.

ONE PAPARAZZO

Can we get a fashion shot of Julia,  
please?

(A nice way of getting Holt out of the shot.)

Julia and Holt greet KIRA KLAY, Julia's best friend and fellow it-girl of the moment.

KIRA

(to Julia)  
Hey Sexy.

JULIA

Look who's talking.

They pose together for some photos, Kira doing her trademark wild-child-sticking-out-pierced-tongue thing while Julia goes for classic starlet.

Holt watches as Julia shimmers her way through an interview with "Access Hollywood".

Holt watches the feeding frenzy on Julia. He gets pushed closer and closer to the velvet ropes, bumping up against the sweaty paparazzi.

DON KONKEY

Stands there among the photographers.

He's not shooting Julia, but carefully regarding Holt. He sets aside his still camera and flips on his little lapel video.

LUCY  
Why aren't you shooting Julia and Johnny?

DON  
I'm working on something else right now.

LUCY  
Well, all right....uh, Don?

DON  
Yes, Lucy?

LUCY  
I know you don't work exclusively for TCM, but people...associate you with us.

DON  
I know.

LUCY  
So maybe you could try to...clean up a little.

Don seems to take no offense.

DON  
'Kay. Excuse me.

He sidles up to Holt.

DON (CONT'D)  
Holt McLaren...

HOLT  
Yeah?

DON  
You were great in *Another Word For Love*.

HOLT  
Thanks.

DON  
I mean....really great. Like stop-  
the-presses great.

HOLT  
(slightly bitter)  
And somehow the presses kept going.

Holt looks at Don with equal measures distrust, disgust and hope. Maybe this schlub can do something for him. He doesn't see the hidden camera.

DON  
Haven't seen you in the trades  
lately.

HOLT  
Uh, yeah...took a little time off.

DON  
Yeah, you did like seven movies in  
a row that all bombed.

HOLT  
(smiles)  
Yeah, I did. You're right.

DON  
*Countdown, Blow Monkey, Pale  
Assassin, The Growling,  
Hospitality, 1313 Tellinghouse  
Lane...*

HOLT  
That's only six.

DON  
*Dead Even.* Uncredited cameo.

HOLT  
Wow. Creepy.

DON  
You're always good. In everything  
you do. Authentic.

HOLT  
(oddly flattered)  
Thanks.

DON  
Anything coming up?

HOLT  
Um...I'm like, in talks on a really cool movie. It's a great script. We'll see.

DON  
Sounds pretty vague.

HOLT  
Huh?

DON  
Sounds pretty unlikely. Like the movie probably won't happen.

HOLT  
Uh...anyway, take care.

Holt starts to move back toward Julia but the crowd surges forward with the arrival of JOHNNY COLE...female fans SCREAM and swoon, FLASHES go nuts.

Julia and Johnny's publicists slide the two stars together for photo ops. Johnny snakes his arm around Julia.

Holt stands in the shadows watching Johnny and Julia pose down in front of the press.

DON  
Hey.

Holt ignores Don. Don's used to it.

DON (CONT'D)  
Holt...

HOLT  
What?

DON  
They have great chemistry. He's not very good, but they're good together. They look hot together.

HOLT  
What?

DON  
There was a rumor he fucked her on the movie...

Holt squints, like he's not hearing this guy right.

HOLT  
What? What the fuck--

DON  
 --But I don't believe it. I could  
 find out. Definitely. If you  
 want to know...

HOLT  
 What are you--

Don holds a business card in his grubby hand, proffers it to Holt.

DON  
 And maybe you could give me --  
 y'know -- a little piece of gossip,  
 or a big one...and that way maybe I  
 could help you get your career out  
 of the toilet--

That's it. Holt turns and SWINGS at Don, just missing, as we go to--

HIDDEN CAM POV

And see the familiar tussle of a seemingly irrational movie star shoving at a paparazzo...

The chaotic camera work/Holt's angry red face/Julia turning to see Holt fighting/Julia in her gown trying to break it up/handlers pulling Julia out/The fans going crazy.

Lucy watches, smiling and shaking her head at Don. He's a freak, but he's a playmaker.

AND IN SLOW MOTION

Don's business card floating to the red carpet.

BACK TO SPEED

Lucy pulls Don up to his feet.

LUCY  
 Nice work, Don...great work.  
 I want to see that footage first.  
 We'll use it for Star Stalkers.  
 You let me have it exclusively?

DON  
 'Kay.

LUCY  
 Get outta here.

A few SECURITY GUYS are finally getting their asses moving, Don sees them and starts to beat his retreat from the melee.

## FOUR COPS ON HORSEBACK

Ride up. They seem to appear out of nowhere and Don is startled by them. A white horse, a red horse, a black horse and a pale horse.

Don makes his getaway, looking back as one of the horses rears back a little and we see deep into its--

## WILD EYES

Don glances over at the crowd of onlookers, disturbed.

## IN THE CROWD

About the third layer of people back in the crowd, a little taller than the rest...

## A SAD CAT MAN

Yeah, that's right. A SAD CAT MAN. Tall motherfucker, too, about 6'4", whiskers, cat nose and face, rumped suit. Sad. He looks at Don, deeply and...sadly.

## DON

Stares back at Sad Cat Man. Not so much surprised as embarrassed.

## SAD CAT MAN

Shakes his head, disappointed. And disappears.

**ACT ONE**

INT. HOLLYWOOD ATHLETIC CLUB

The "Subliminal Velocity" after-party. The Industry Types from the screening aggressively noshing on chicken *satay* and trying to get close to Julia and Johnny Cole. Pools of LIGHT surrounded by darkness.

Lucy Spiller glides through the crowd. She appears next to Johnny and Julia and a house photographer FLASHES. Lucy nails every photo op.

IN THE LIGHT

Johnny holds court, very serious...uses his hands a lot as he talks.

JOHNNY COLE

And I'm all, "I know Krav Maga,  
bitch!"

His story completed, Johnny looks around to make sure everyone has properly appreciated it.

Julia stands there with a glass of champagne, smiling politely...Holt glowers into his Rolling Rock.

JOHNNY COLE (CONT'D)

Hey, Holt, bummer about that a-hole  
paparazzi dude.

HOLT

Yeah.

JOHNNY COLE

So, you workin'?

HOLT

I'm like, developing a couple  
things.

JOHNNY COLE

Right. You were great in *Another  
Word For Love*. One a my all-times.

HOLT

Thanks.

JOHNNY COLE

I thought, damn, this guy's good.  
I thought I was gonna have to like,  
move aside.

Julia rolls her eyes at the insensitivity of this remark.

HOLT  
I'm gonna go sit down.

JOHNNY COLE  
(homeboy peace-out)  
Keep at it...you got mad skills,  
dawg!

Johnny Cole regards Holt as he walks away. He nods drunkenly, raises his beer bottle as if saluting a fallen comrade.

IN AND OUT OF THE LIGHT

Holt rummages through the food table and, as carefully as a jewel thief, slips food into his jacket pockets.

TIME CUT TO:

IN THE DARK

At a cocktail table, Lucy slides in beside Holt. Why would she waste her time with cold-as-ice Holt McLaren?

LUCY  
Hi, Lucy Spiller. NOW Magazine?

They shake hands.

HOLT  
Right, nice to meet you.

LUCY  
You too. Sorry about earlier.  
That photographer's a nutjob.

IN THE LIGHT

Julia listens to Johnny droning on.

IN THE DARK

Holt and Lucy lean in to hear one another.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
I would love to do a feature on you  
some time..."The Actor's Actor."

Holt gobbles up the attention, but remains self-deprecating.

HOLT  
"Actor's Actor?" Isn't that a nice  
way of saying "chronically  
unemployed?"

LUCY  
 We'll just have to find the right  
 thing to do together.

She smiles enigmatically.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
 Or the right reason.

Holt looks at her quizzically...

IN THE LIGHT

Julia squints into the dark, sees the back of Lucy walking away.

Johnny Cole drunkenly takes off his shirt. Flexes down.  
 Points to his nipple.

JOHNNY COLE  
 And she fucking pulled the nipple  
 ring out with her teeth! Look,  
 it's shredded, right? Like a  
 fuckin' snake tongue!

High fives and fist bumps all around.

IN THE DARK

Holt sits on the sidelines, several Rolling Rocks down,  
 glowering over at Johnny and Julia.

Holt slips his foot back and forth, feels something on the  
 bottom of his boot. He reaches down and peels off...

DON KONKEY'S BUSINESS CARD

He looks at it for a moment, puts it in his coat pocket.

IN THE LIGHT

Julia finally looks openly bored, rolling her eyes and  
 sticking out her tongue. She makes her way over to Holt,  
 saying thank you and fake-smiling to all her well-wishers.

IN THE DARK

She sits next to him. She looks over at Johnny Cole, who's  
 now busting full crazy martial arts moves.

JULIA  
 What an asshole.

HOLT  
 Gee, you think?

JULIA  
Easy there, Tyson.

HOLT  
I'm sorry I ruined your premiere.

JULIA  
Are you kidding? It took their  
minds off the movie, which sucks.

HOLT  
You were great, though.

JULIA  
You just love me.

Holt shrugs, resigned.

HOLT  
Yeah, I guess I do.

JULIA  
You can do better than that.

She takes his hand and guides it under her dress and between her legs.

HOLT  
Don't you think we've been in the  
news enough for one night?

JULIA  
You think anyone here sees anything  
but themselves? Besides, it's  
really dark in here...

HOLT  
It is. And wet.

JULIA  
Make me come.

They sit there for a moment. The MUSIC thumping, Holt concentrating, Julia fluttering, then closing her eyes...

An AGENT walks by.

AGENT  
Great performance!

Julia opens her eyes.

JULIA  
Thanks.

Julia and Holt both laugh. Beat, then Julia looks surprised...

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Oh, God...

She turns to Holt.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Oh, God...I'm coming.

INT. DON'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Pretty much the apartment you would expect from Don. Filthy. A giant cat condo fills a corner of the place, covered in shag carpet.

And piles of PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTS. Leaning against the wall, stacked in piles. They're blurry, beautiful, disturbing, exceptionally provocative. Somehow deeply spiritual and sensual. These are Don's other photos. On each photo, in his crazy scrawl, stories are written on the negatives, a world is created.

This is the work of an obsessive: He can't help but make it, and as such it fits at least one definition of real art; it's essential to the survival of the person making it.

Don holds his cat, TRISTAN, on his lap. Tristan is in bad shape, his small cat body wracked with cancer, hair thinned by chemo and radiation.

Tristan looks back at Don dolefully.

DON  
You're okay, Tristan...you're okay...you're okay, buddy....you're okay ...that's right, Tristan, that's my buddy...

He places a pill at the back of Tristan's throat, then closes the cat's mouth and massages his throat.

DON (CONT'D)  
You're okay, buddy...

INT. LUCY'S HOUSE -- MORNING

Lucy wakes up. There's a SNORT next to her. A long-haired ROCK GOD-looking dude is asleep next to her. They're both so naked. He is early 20s, look-of-the-moment beautiful.

LUCY  
Oh God ohgodohgodohgod...

She quietly disengages from the Rock God. He SNORTS again, making her jump. She reaches into the back of her drawer and pulls out a stun gun.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Hey!

Rock God SNORTS again, this time Lucy is undeterred.

LUCY (CONT'D)

HEY!!

He wakes up and sees her leveling the stun gun at him. He flips his long hair back reflexively.

ROCK GOD

Whoa...Sinead...what are you doing?

LUCY

Sinead?

ROCK GOD

You were so awesome...

LUCY

I don't know who the fuck you are or what the fuck you're doing in my bed, but you have sixty seconds to get the fuck out of my bed and out of my house.

ROCK GOD

Sinead...honey? It's Kai...from Velvet?

LUCY

I don't know what any of that is.

ROCK GOD/KAI

The club? Where we met?

LUCY

I have never seen you before. Just get out.

ROCK GOD/KAI

(as if this will clear  
everything up)

You took my pants off on the dance floor?

Lucy brandishes the stun gun.

LUCY

Twenty seconds.

ROCK GOD/KAI  
 You said you could help my  
 band...Student Driver?

She nails him with the stun gun.

ROCK GOD/KAI (CONT'D)  
 AAAAHHGGGH!

Drops him like a bag of hammers. He recovers and cowers from her. Gathers his clothes.

LUCY  
 Go.

He runs from the house.

Lucy breathes heavily, shaking with emotion.

INT. VETERINARY ONCOLOGIST OFFICE -- DAY

DR. LUSK, the veterinary oncologist, applies radiation to Tristan. The radiation gun makes a dull buzz every time Dr. Lusk fires it.

Don looks on, blank but anxious. Bzzzzzz goes the radiation gun.

DR. LUSK  
 Cats do much better with radiation  
 than humans.

Don nods. Beat.

DON  
 How do you know that?

Bzzzzzzzzzzzz...Dr. Lusk fires.

DR. LUSK  
 Well, for one thing they have fewer  
 pain sensors.

Don looks at Tristan...his hair is thin and sickly, ears flat back against his head.

Tristan turns his head and looks straight at Don.

TRISTAN  
 I feel that you could have caught  
 this cancer earlier, Don.

DON  
 I do too, buddy.

DR. LUSK

Excuse me?

EXT. THE IVY -- DAY

Ground Zero for unassigned paparazzi. Don stands off to the side of the other paparazzi, who schmooze and jockey for position, photographing B-Listers who actually want to be photographed.

Lucy leaves her car with the valet and starts to go in.

DON

Hey, Lucy.

She smiles perfunctorily and nods. Pam Anderson gets out of a car at the valet and the paparazzi swarm her.

Don ignores the activity on the ground. He's staring instead at the SKY:

DON'S POV

SFX: A mass of clouds swirling into a black vortex...SOUND of STATIC, of HORSES GALLOPING.,.

Don gapes at the sky, wind whips his hair. A few raindrops of blood fall on his face. He wipes his face and looks at the blood.

AT THE OUTDOOR TABLES

Lucy sits with her brother, LEO. He's in his 30s, bi, working the whole urban neo-Mr. Clean look; worked bod, shaved head, earrings in both ears, neck tat.

LEO

I don't understand...you blacked out and woke up with some stallion in your bed?

LUCY

Yeah. Naked. Both of us.

LEO

I gotta start tagging along.

LUCY

Don't be an asshole, Leo. I...screwed this guy or something, and I don't remember.

LEO

How many drinks did you have?

LUCY

You know me...drinking and bars don't really mix. I had one martini.

LEO

You don't remember anything?

LUCY

I guess I remember him sitting next to me...then nothing. Is there such a thing as blackout sex?

LEO

Nothing?

LUCY

Nothing. Until I woke up.

LEO

Sis. You got roofied.

LUCY

What?

LEO

Rocker boy roofied you.

It dawns on Lucy...of course.

LUCY

Son of a bitch. Sonofabitch!

OFF LUCY, we TRACK a few tables down, where Holt sits with his manager, CHERYL STEEN, short and cute with a huge rack and an even bigger crush on Holt.

CHERYL

Baby...baby...I'm so sorry.

HOLT

I mean...what the--

CHERYL

I know sweetie...they suck. They're idiots. If you could get a little press, or even like, do *Will & Grace* or something...

HOLT

I'm not doing fuckin' *Will & Grace*. What did Sydney Pollack say exactly?

CHERYL

I couldn't get him on the phone.  
JJ went on this whole rant about  
how you're not "bankable" or "hot"  
or whatever--

HOLT

Awright, awright...I get it.

Holt stares into his grilled vegetable salad. Looks up to see LUCY staring at him. She smiles and waves. He waves back.

ON LUCY AND LEO

LUCY

Oh Christ, here she comes.

LEO

Look at her, like she could eat us  
both.

An older woman, DOROTHY SPILLER, wild-eyed but very put-together, heads toward them, pissed off, a Belizean NURSE on her arm.

LUCY

Hi, mom.

DOROTHY

Batida tried to poison me this  
morning.

Batida, the nurse, rolls her eyes. These two loathe each other.

LEO

And yet, here you stand.

DOROTHY

Tried to give me a mango.  
(to Batida, furious)  
What's wrong with you?

BATIDA

What's wrong is you're still alive.

LUCY

I'm sure she didn't know about your  
allergy.

DOROTHY

My tongue puffs up like a blowfish.

LUCY  
Well, looks like you made it. Do  
you want your Cobb Salad?

DOROTHY  
Yes, I want my Cobb Salad...my mind  
is like an old sponge and even I  
know I always have the Cobb Salad.

Leo nods to a waiter...the Cobb Salad.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)  
Did you read Maureen Dowd this  
morning in the Times? Made a real  
case for Syria.

Leo glances at Lucy...here we go.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)  
Now there's a journalist.

Lucy grits her teeth.

LUCY  
Yeah, she's great.

DOROTHY  
She didn't squander her journalism  
degree.

LUCY  
(for the millionth time)  
Not like some people.

DOROTHY  
Well, as long as you're  
happy...maybe if you had a  
family...

LUCY  
Then I could pass this glorious  
mother/daughter legacy on to her.

DOROTHY  
Well...more likely you than Mr.  
Clean here...out homo-ing every  
night...

LEO  
I'm bi, mom--

DOROTHY  
Ahh!! Don't say it! God!

LUCY  
Hey, Dorothy. That's your son.

DOROTHY  
 Bi...what is that? Faggotry for  
 cowards.

LUCY  
 Hey mom, let's get back on what a  
 disappointment I am...I feel that  
 one's really got legs.

Leo looks at her with gratitude, but still says:

LEO  
 I can take care of myself, Lu.

LUCY  
 (smiling)  
 Actually, no, you can't.

They share a moment of conspiracy in the misery of their  
 mother.

The Cobb Salad is deposited in front of Dorothy.

DOROTHY  
 What's this? Where's my breakfast?

OVER THE IVY

The giant mass of clouds swirls. Don stares up at it while  
 the world moves around him.

INT. TRANSCOMMUNICATION MEDIA CONSOLIDATED

MOVING FAST...Lucy. She may be a mess off the clock, but  
 Lucy is back in tiger shark mode at the office. Some co-  
 workers see her and literally flee in the opposite direction.  
 Some hand her proofs. Some beg favors. Some simply suck up.

ALEXANDER BARROW falls into step next to Lucy. While he is  
 technically her boss and the publisher of the media group,  
 she's the one who runs the day to day and without whom the  
 thing wouldn't function.

Barrow wears an absurdly sharp bespoke suit, walks with an  
 actual swagger, and speaks with a thick Australian accent.

BARROW  
 Why'd you have guys on Prince  
 Tyreese?

LUCY  
 (superfuckincool)  
 He's the basketball player?

BARROW

Yes he's the goddamn basketball player. He's the highest paid spade in the world.

LUCY

We always have people on him. He's got a squeaky clean family man image and he's a total slimeball. That's what people want us to do.

Barrow looks at her blankly.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Produce slimeballs. We're either chronicling the meteoric rise of some dipshit as they crawl out of the slime or taking him off the top of the caviar pile and pitching him into the shit with the rest of us. That's what we do, Alex. And I do it better than anybody else. But I guess it's hard to know that when all you do is take advertisers out to *Lord of the Dance* and review our expense reports. I pad mine, by the way.

Barrow, somewhat used to her rants, plows ahead.

BARROW

Did you get anything on Tyreese?

LUCY

Why? You want an autographed ball?  
(shakes her head)  
Sonofabitch loses us every time.

BARROW

You realize that Transcommunication Media has a 30 percent interest in the team.

LUCY

Shame on you, Alex. As journalists we're not supposed to cave to corporate interests.

BARROW

Is that how you get through the night? Pretending to be a journalist?

LUCY

(caught, glibness gone for a second)

(MORE)

LUCY (CONT'D)

No.

(recovering)

How do you get through the night?

They round the corner in the art department, where Don stands at a light table. He uses a loop to make his selects.

Don quickly covers the Prince Tyreese photos he's working on and puts some shots from the premiere on top of them.

BARROW

Don Konkey! The last pap to shoot on film.

Don flinches, brought out of his reverie in the photos.

DON

Hi, Mr. Barrow.

He stares at Lucy. They share a moment of quiet conspiracy.

LUCY

Hi, Don.

DON

Hi.

Now Don looks down at his feet. Barrow plows ahead.

BARROW

Really great job on the Holt McLaren and Julia Myers of it all. Very nice. You're a terrific playmaker...keep it up.

Don doesn't answer. Just keeps working. Finally Barrow just starts off. He stops and turns back to Lucy.

BARROW (CONT'D)

You'll let me know if you turn up anything on Prince Tyreese.

LUCY

(cold)

You're always my first call, Alex.

Barrow exits.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Don?

Don stops his work and looks at Lucy. Looks away.

DON

Yes.

LUCY  
See if you can get any dirt on the  
lead singer of a band called  
Student Driver. His name is Kai...  
something.

DON  
'Kay.

INT. JULIA MEYER'S BIG HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE -- DAY

Holt sits in front of Julia's massive plasma screen watching TV.

HOLT  
Oh, crap...here it is...

JULIA  
Don't watch it. It'll just make  
you crazy.

ON TV

A ridiculous GRAPHIC spins into relief:

**STAR STALKERS!**

Followed by the coiffed and heavily made-up ANCHORS of the show, DEBBIE CALHOUN and MITCH SAVAGE. They do cheerful banter over a shot from Don's handcam of Holt taking a swing at camera.

FREEZE FRAME on the ugliest, most angry shot of Holt.

DEBBIE CALHOUN  
Can you say "anger management  
issues?"

MITCH SAVAGE  
Anger management issues!

DEBBIE CALHOUN  
Very good!

MITCH SAVAGE  
I'm Mitch Savage...

DEBBIE CALHOUN  
And I'm Debbie Calhoun...

MITCH SAVAGE  
And tonight we'll see how a little  
jealousy...

Now a shot of Julia and Johnny with their arms around each other posing for photos...then again the ugly shot of Holt swinging at Don...

DEBBIE CALHOUN  
Goes a lonnnnng way...

MITCH SAVAGE  
From deep in the "where-are-they-now" file...the tortured romance of America's Sweetheart Julia Myers and hot-head Holt McLaren...

MITCH AND DEBBIE  
On Star Stalkers!

DEBBIE CALHOUN  
Julia Myers and Johnny Cole are heating up the screen in the new thriller, *Subliminal Velocity*...

MITCH SAVAGE  
But Julia's unemployed real-life love interest, Holt McLaren put a damper on the movie's premiere last night when he started a fight with a journalist--

Julia turns off the TV.

JULIA  
Let's go to Kira's party and get really high.

EXT. TOMKAT THEATRE -- DUSK

KAI, the hair farmer who roofied Lucy, walks into the Tomkat. The marquis proclaims, "NOW PLAYING, SCHINDLER'S FIST"

CLICK CLICK CLICK

Pick up Don taking photos from his pap ride.

Don gets out and enters the theatre.

INT. TOMKAT THEATRE -- DUSK

He pays his money and walks through the turnstile.

ON THE SCREEN

A bunch of young naked men in a barracks. One of them is surreptitiously masturbating. His bunk mate sees what he's up to. And they're off...

IN THE THEATRE

It's very dark. By the light of the screen, we see Don watching the movie dispassionately.

Don produces a small NVDV (Night Vision Digital Video) camera and palms it. It's so dark we can't really see, so let's play the rest of the scene through NVDV.

He makes his way through the theatre. Huddled figures, some seated, some standing, engage in various sex acts. Don spots Kai...another guy is walking away from him through the aisle.

Don sits down near Kai.

DON  
Hey.

Kai doesn't say anything, just starts rubbing Don's cock through his trousers. Don panics.

DON (CONT'D)  
Ow!

KAI  
Sorry...you into it or not?

DON  
Uhhhhm...wanna go somewhere?

KAI  
Here's cool. C'mon, dude, I'll do you so good...

DON  
Um...wanna be with me and...my girlfriend?

KAI  
Sorry, dude...not into fish.

Don stands abruptly and walks away.

DON  
'Kay.

INT. DON'S CAR -- DUSK

Don shows the tape of Kai to Lucy. She watches in silence.

DON  
Is he a friend of yours?

LUCY  
No.

DON  
Is he famous?

LUCY

No, and he never will be.

EXT. KIRA KLAY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Hot valet parking girls sprint for cars. Beemers, rice rockets, vintage muscle cars, all manner of tight rides pull up. Beefy security guys chase away paparazzi.

INT. KIRA KLAY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

MUSIC plays throughout: Acid Mothers Temple's "Psych Drone."

Actors, directors, models...most of them on the upward trajectory of their careers, a few on the slippery slope down. The feeling is aggressively casual, every person aware that their every move is being studied and summarily judged, while acting as if they're just hanging out with their dear friends.

None more so than Kira Klay and Julia Myers, in the brief flower at the height of their celebrity. And they huddle at the center of the party feeling the envy wash over them. They laugh at each others' private jokes, clutch each other, kiss each other...each a narcissistic mirror for the other.

All around the party, a bazaar of drug and alcohol choices; it's a frat party with money. Coke over here, tabs of acid there, E, shrooms, weed, Jagermeister, Chardonnay, Jack Daniels, beer...

JULIA

Your skin...

KIRA

What?

JULIA

It's like...glowing! Are you getting laid?

Kira looks away.

KIRA

I wish.

JULIA

Hey, some guy gave me some E.

KIRA

E...how retro.

Kira just opens her mouth and puts out her tongue like she's receiving communion, hands in prayer position. Julia lays the pill on her tongue. They do their actress-y bi-curious schtick.

KIRA (CONT'D)  
Bless me father...

JULIA  
Watch it, I may try to bugger you.

Kira grabs a beer from a passing young actor dude, washes down the E.

TIME CUT:

INT. KITCHEN

Holt zones out looking into the fridge.

CLOSE ON HOLT

On his face with the glow from the fridge light on it. His mouth is slightly agape. He's wrecked.

OFFSCREEN

Other people try to get inside the fridge, but Holt is frozen there, looking in to the land of chilled bright bottles. We see Holt hearing the following exchange...one of those moments where you can hear perfectly people who think you can't hear them at all.

OFFSCREEN VOICE  
Hey, dude...it's just a fridge.

OFFSCREEN VOICE 2  
C'mon, I wanna get a beer.

OFFSCREEN VOICE  
He can't hear us. He's cashed.

OFFSCREEN VOICE 3  
Hey, it's Holt McLaren.

OFFSCREEN VOICE  
He was awesome in *Another Word For Love*.

We're still on Holt, no change in his expression.

OFFSCREEN VOICE 2  
What's he been doing since then, besides selling out?

OFFSCREEN VOICE 3  
He's been in fronta this fuckin' fridge!

They all laugh. Holt does not move.

## INT. KIRA'S DOWNSTAIRS BEDROOM

Holt staggers in, the California King bed is covered in coats. Beautiful coats from Barneys and Fred Segal. Coats of new money.

He looks at the coats with longing. Then he falls on to the bed, burrowing deep into the coats, until he disappears into a pile of shearling and vintage leather.

## INT. DON'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

From above, Don's bed.

A dirty Bed, Bath and Beyond comforter. Next to him, Tristan is curled, asleep.

Don's face is obscured by a copy of *Celebrity Skin*. He stops on a picture. One hand goes under the covers. The magazine lowers slightly, revealing Don's face, beginning to give over to some kind of flatlined ecstasy.

The dirty covers move rhythmically. We CRANE UP and away from the bed.

## INT. LUCY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Looking down on Lucy's bed now. Lucy is lying down, literally surrounded and almost buried in tabloid headlines and pictures...she has all the mock-ups in bed with her, working. The graphic, soulless Prince Tyreese pics next to pictures of pregnant stars, fat talk show hosts, Elvis pics...

She moves one aside and now she's looking right up at us. She looks small and lost in the sea of tabloids. She stares into CAMERA for an uncomfortable moment.

She puts both hands to her face, as if to hide.

## INT. KIRA'S DOWNSTAIRS BEDROOM

Kira and Julia enter the bedroom, both gakked on E.

KIRA  
You look hot.

Kira takes out a vial of coke and gives Julia a bump.

JULIA  
You look hot.

Now Kira takes a bump. She looks at Julia, for a second it looks like she's going to kiss her, but she bursts into tears.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
 What? What's wrong, sweetie?

Kira does another bump.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
 What? You can tell me, whatever it is.

KIRA  
 I'm fucking pregnant.

JULIA  
 Oh, baby...

She holds Kira. Kira loses it.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
 Who?

KIRA  
 That indie art-house loser Jeff Stagliano.

JULIA  
 Oh, crap...how--

KIRA  
 (unhinged, through her tears)  
 I met him when they were doing a retrospective of his films at the Egyptian...can you imagine a retrospective of that shit? I'm just so screwed, Julia...

JULIA  
 Well, you can always, y'know--

KIRA  
 Dude, I am so totally Catholic.

JULIA  
 Does he know?

KIRA  
 Nobody knows. Except you.

SFX -- A WHITE SCREEN

With an almost-invisible speck of DARK.

The speck GROWS in size until we descend far enough to realize we are CRANING DOWN, as if from heaven, toward the bedroom and its contents...descending, spiraling down an endless white chimney until we can see the outer periphery of the room, Kira and Julia hugging, the bed...

...And we PUSH IN closer on the bed, on the coats, until we can see a crack between the coats and see--

HOLT'S EYES

Wide, burning.

We PUSH IN until the eyes fill the screen.

We PUSH IN further, until one blazing orb fills the screen, and PUSH IN still further, until it is just his pupil and we

SMASH TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

**ACT TWO**

FADE IN:

INT. DON'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Don wakes up, gasps.

DON'S POV

Hovering over the bed, the Sad Cat Man.

Don quickly looks over next to him, Tristan is sleeping. He looks back and the Sad Cat Man is gone.

INT. DON'S BATHROOM -- DAY

A table lined with pill bottles. Dozens and dozens of them. Don looks through them. He talks on the phone.

DON

I...don't want to come in. I just need the Zeldox, the Risperdol, the Zyprexa and the Ariprozole. Why can't she just refill them over the phone? I don't...want to. I don't want to.

INT. KAI'S HOUSE -- DAY

Kai enters and sees Lucy sitting in his living room. He tries to act cool.

KAI

Oh, hey...Sinead.

LUCY

What did you do to me that night?

KAI

We...went home and...y'know...

Lucy is furious, shaking...She holds up Don's tape.

LUCY

The Tom Kat. You don't like girls, Kai. What did you do to me, you sonofabitch? You got about five seconds before I find a way to make you a news story and then bury you for the rest of your life.

KAI

Okay...okay...I know who you are. I know you're Lucy Spiller.

LUCY

So what?

KAI

So you're a starmaker. I wanna be a star. I thought if you thought we were fucking...you'd want to help me.

LUCY

You didn't actually want to--

KAI

I'm 22. Look at me. I quit modelling to focus on my band. I mean, no offense, but you're what...forty?

LUCY

(quietly)  
More or less.

KAI

You really think a 23 year-old model's gonna hit on you just for sex? People want you for who you are, for what you can do for them.

Lucy stands up.

LUCY

Stop talking before this tape finds its way into the public eye. It might find its way there anyway.

KAI

So you're definitely not gonna help us--

LUCY

Shut up, before I bury you.

She stands at the door.

LUCY (CONT'D)

And I listened to your demo. It sucks.

EXT. THE IVY -- DAY

Holt pulls up outside the Ivy, where Don sits in his blacked-out paparazzi-mobile with his camera rig. Holt's window opens just a crack.

HOLT

Follow me.

DON

'Kay.

Don pulls into traffic to follow Holt. Holt's car leaves a luminous rainbow trail behind it.

INT. DON'S CAR -- DAY

Don blinks rapidly, trying to banish the luminous trail. Now WHISPERING VOICES begin, voices we will come to know.

WHISPERING VOICE ONE

Don! Don! Don! Don! Don!

WHISPERING VOICE ONE laughs, a high and disturbing laugh.

WHISPERING VOICE TWO

You're a worm...no, you're  
a...paramecium!

WHISPERING VOICE THREE

Don? I love you, Donny. Don? I  
love you, Donny. Listen to me!

DON

No, no, no, no, nononononono.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS PARKING LOT ROOF -- DAY

The two cars are pulled up alongside one another, like they're making a drug deal. Holt looks pained and hung over. Don is looking a little panicky, trying to stay focused.

HOLT

...and no matter what, my name can  
never be used.

DON

Your name means nothing.

HOLT

Thanks.

DON

They wouldn't want to use your name  
for something like this.

HOLT

Well, they can't. No matter what.

DON

'Kay.

HOLT

(from some deep, terrible  
place)

(MORE)

HOLT (CONT'D)

And I want some cash and I  
want...some kind of good press. I  
want stories in your magazines. I  
want stories...that make it seem  
like I'm getting offers...

DON

I need to have some idea how big a  
story you have...

HOLT

Big.

DON

Whether we get it exclusively...

HOLT

You do.

DON

And I have to talk to Lucy. For  
all I know we already know all  
about it.

HOLT

You don't. Nobody does.

DON

They'll want more than just the one  
story.

HOLT

(cold)  
I've got as much as they can  
handle.

Holt starts to raise his window. Don appears to want to hang  
out.

DON

How's your big project?

Holt just keeps the window going until Don is staring at  
blacked-out glass.

DON (CONT'D)

I'll call you.

Holt speeds off.

INT. DR. SHAMBAN'S OFFICE -- DAY

DR. SHAMBAN, a pretty and impossibly young-looking  
psychopharmacologist, examines Don.

DR. SHAMBAN

And you haven't been seeing a therapist?

DON

Nope.

DR. SHAMBAN

I'm going to recommend very strongly once again that you see a therapist. You have the money, you have insurance. I have a list here.

DON

If I could just get the--

DR. SHAMBAN

You can't treat these drugs like a smorgasbord and just take the ones you feel like taking, Don.

DON

'Kay. Could I just get the Zeldox, the Risperdol, the Zyprexa and the Ariprozole?

DR. SHAMBAN

Don, you are one of the lucky people who have a form of schizophrenia that's manageable. Most people aren't so fortunate.

DON

I know.

DR. SHAMBAN

You have to respect the disease and respect its treatment.

DON

'Kay. I'll respect the disease. Could I get the Zeldox, the Risperdol, the Zyprexa and the Ariprozole?

Dr. Shamban shakes her head. Not getting anywhere.

DR. SHAMBAN

All right. But I want to see you in three weeks.

Off Don, eyes glued to her prescription pad.

INT. RITE AID PHARMACY -- DAY

Don walks to the pharmacy at the rear of the store. The VOICES are back.

WHISPERING VOICE ONE  
Don! Don! Don!

WHISPERING VOICE TWO  
Hey, cockass...hey!...Donny  
littledick!

DON  
Am not. I'm average.

WHISPERING VOICE TWO  
Hey, dickweed, I can read your  
thoughts. And I work for NASA. We  
have the satellite pointed at you.

IN THE PHARMACY LINE

Don stands there with his prescriptions. Different SHAPES move at the periphery of the scene, ducking into the aisles. Don is getting pretty twitchy, mumbling responses to the voices.

WHISPERING VOICE THREE  
I love you, Donny.

DON  
Please...just...go back.

Don looks up to see the back of the head of the guy in front of him. The back of the guy's head is morphing into the face of a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

WHISPERING VOICE THREE/BACK-OF-HEAD-  
WOMAN  
Kiss me, Donny. I love you so  
much, just kiss me.

DON  
No...not here.

WHISPERING VOICE THREE/BACK-OF-HEAD-  
WOMAN  
I'll scream.

DON  
No!

WHISPERING VOICE THREE/BACK-OF-HEAD-  
WOMAN  
I'll scream, Don. Kiss me.

Don closes his eyes and leans forward to kiss the face in the back of the guy's head...

Don stumbles. The guy has moved forward in line, the face is gone.

Don breathes in sharply. A SLITHERING, DEMONIC SHAPE slimes by and into one of the aisles. Don is wiggling out.

PHARMACIST'S HELPER  
Can I help you?

Don thrusts the scrips into her hands.

DON  
I need the Zeldox, the Risperdol,  
the Zyprexa and the Ariprozole.

PHARMACIST'S HELPER  
No problem. It'll be about forty-  
five minutes.

DON  
'Kay.

WHISPERING VOICE TWO  
She's been hired to poison you.

DON  
No!

PHARMACIST'S HELPER  
I'm sorry?

Don turns and runs out of the store.

EXT. RITE AID PARKING LOT -- DAY

Don is pressed up against the side of the building, breathing deeply, sweating.

INT. TRANSCOMMUNICATION MEDIA CONSOLIDATED, BARROW'S OFFICE --  
DAY

Lucy enters on her cell.

LUCY  
I'll call you back. Yeah.

BARROW  
You have something working with  
Holt McLaren?

LUCY  
I have more things working than you  
could possibly imagine.

BARROW

Whatever you're working, I want a piece of it.

LUCY

You're the boss. You have a piece of it, regardless. Just don't get confused and think that means you could wipe your ass without me. I'm placing this piece in The Bomb, it's too dirty for NOW magazine.

BARROW

I want credit if it goes somewhere and Corporate wants to know whose piece it is.

LUCY

Tell you what: Why don't you stop behaving as if I'm gonna lop off your manhood and let me do my job. I develop sources, find stories, get the biggest scoops in the world...and you take the advertisers to Benihana and grab credit for it all while going home with five times my salary. Sound good?

Barrow just looks at her.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Because if it doesn't, my sources could dry up or go to the Star.

BARROW

You want my job.

LUCY

I'd kill myself if I had your job. I like to get dirty.

BARROW

So I hear.

She goes to the door.

LUCY

I don't want your job, Alex. I want your salary.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS -- DAY

Don climbs out of his rig; today it's a black Mercedes SUV with dealer plates.

He appears to be somewhat back on his game, handling his equipment deftly. He shoulders his Canon and carries a Starbucks cup. He walks toward an estate wall.

Don leans against the estate wall and sips his coffee. A look of consternation crosses his face.

IN THE SHRUBS

Don pulls down his trousers and squats.

DON'S FACE

As he squeezes one out.

OFFSCREEN

The sound of an IDLING VEHICLE. Don holds his breath.

DON'S POV

Through the shrubs, a beat-up '58 Chevy pickup.

The driver is not visible. Just a hand on the steering wheel...well, a large paw.

The Sad Cat Man GUNS the old pickup and it drives off with its signature throaty purr.

DON

Pulls up his pants and walks over to the estate wall. Climbs it.

He hops down and begins scaling a eucalyptus tree with a view of the house below.

IN THE TREE

Don, perched like a schizophrenic Koala bear, struggles to get a shot lined up.

IN THE HOUSE

We've been here before. It's Kira Klay's house. She paces in and out of frame, back and forth, eyes puffy, in her sweats.

Suddenly, into frame walks JEFF STAGLIANO, an indie film actor/director a la Vince Gallo. Grungy.

JEFF STAGLIANO  
I think babies are beautiful.

KIRA  
Shut up.

JEFF STAGLIANO  
I'm cool with just bein' the baby  
daddy.

KIRA  
I'm not. I slept with you once.

JEFF STAGLIANO  
So? I sleep with a lot of people  
once.

KIRA  
That's my point, Jeff.

JEFF STAGLIANO  
Okay, so just say someone else is  
the baby daddy.

KIRA  
Please don't say it like that.

JEFF STAGLIANO  
Like what?

KIRA  
Like you're P Diddy or something.  
God! I cannot believe I ever threw  
you a bang. And I am trying to  
tell you that The Bomb already  
knows you're the father because  
that whore Julia Myers told them.

Jeff comes up behind her and rests both hands on her belly.

JEFF STAGLIANO  
Well, whatever's going on, you  
should take it easy and not get so  
tweaked.

She closes her eyes for a second, enjoying the touch.

DON'S CAMERA POV

FREEZE FRAME

On this tableau: Father with hands tenderly on mother's  
belly.

CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK

As Don nails the money shot.

IN THE HOUSE

Kira begins to emerge from her reverie.

KIRA  
You need to take your hands off me  
now, Jeff.

DON'S CAMERA POV

CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK

FREEZE FRAME as the image becomes the COVER of THE BOMB magazine, complete with all the tabloid graphics...

"SHE'S HAVING HIS BABY!!"

INT. JULIA'S BEDROOM

MUSIC: The La's, "Man I'm Only Human"

Julia is face down on the bed, sobbing. Holt sits next to her, rubbing her back.

JULIA  
(between sobs)  
She thinks I told The Bomb about  
it...she thinks I told them...they  
sent her publicist a fax saying  
they were gonna run it in the next  
issue. She said she'd never speak  
to me again. I would never...you  
know I would never...

CLOSE ON HOLT

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Kira has nobody...I'm so lucky I  
have you.

Music continues as--

EXT. HOLLYWOOD NEWS STAND -- DAY

Julia and Holt look through the news stand. Julia spots the magazine.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Here it is!

She pulls out the magazine. Holt looks at it with her. We catch a look at it; Holt and Julia at a premiere, Holt tutoring an inner-city youth, the usual drivel.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Baby, it's awesome! I can't  
believe they just did a nice little  
piece on you.  
(insinuating)  
Maybe they know something I don't.

Holt's eyes flash.

HOLT  
What would they know?

JULIA  
Maybe they know a certain sexy  
young leading man is about to get a  
big movie or something...

HOLT  
Yeah, stranger things have  
happened.

JULIA  
Hey, look at this!  
(reading)  
"Wagging tongues in the rumor-mill  
say that Holt has several big movie  
deals in the works."

HOLT  
Wish they'd let me know about them.

JULIA  
Doesn't matter. If they think  
you're hot, you'll be hot.

HOLT  
If you say so.

JULIA  
Babe...I am so proud of you.

She puts her arms around him. She squeezes him innocently.  
She starts to let go and he holds her tighter.

He looks out at the sea of magazines plastered with famous  
faces and hangs on to Julia with everything he has.

INT. LUCY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Lucy drinks from red wine from a big glass. DiStefano sings  
Boito's *Mefistofele* (Death of Faust) loudly on the stereo.

She looks at the Prince Tyreese photos. They are damning by  
any measure; graphic, weird, violent, drug-filled, even a  
series of the Prince getting banged with a strap-on.

She lines several of them up together. Clicks on her large  
computer monitor through several layouts she's roughed out.

They are typical tabloid headlines of the "CAUGHT!",  
"BUSTED!", and "FALLEN IDOL" variety. She takes a huge belt  
on the wine.

She picks up the phone, calls. INTERCUT Leo as necessary.

LEO  
Hello?

LUCY  
It's me. Why are you home picking  
up on the first ring?

LEO  
Because I'm a lonely bisexual man  
with a shaved head.

LUCY  
One thing a bisexual man should  
never have to be is lonely.

LEO  
What are you doing? Trolling the  
internet for someone to drug you  
and bang the crap out of you?

LUCY  
Funny...nothing...looking at  
pictures of Prince Tyreese.

LEO  
Naked?

LUCY  
Actually, yes.

LEO  
I'll be right over.

LUCY  
Right...like you'd ever leave your  
cave at night to see your sister.

LEO  
I didn't say I was coming to see  
you, I said I was coming to see my  
man the Prince.

LUCY  
Don't bother...it's depressing.

LEO  
You're a little drunk, aren't you?

LUCY  
I might be, yes.

LEO  
I'm glad I don't have your job.

LUCY  
I love my job.

LEO  
Oh yeah, I can tell. Do you think  
someday we'll have to pay for our  
sins?

LUCY  
What's that supposed to mean?

LEO  
Don't be so sensitive...it's just a  
question.

Lucy turns the pictures over. Shakes her head. Now from the  
stereo, the *basso profundo* of the Devil...

LUCY  
(sarcastic)  
Well, you've made my night.

LEO  
Yeah, this has been great. Think  
I'll go run a bath and slit my  
wrists.

LUCY  
Does this mean you won't be bugging  
me any more?

LEO  
Bye.

The wailing tenor of di Stefano is now joined by the voices  
of the *Mefistofele* chorus...Lucy finishes the wine.

INT. DON'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Don carries Tristan in his arms, cradling him like a newborn.

Don reaches his shag-carpeted living room and sets Tristan  
down on a cat bed. Goes to an old-fashioned portable Hi-Fi  
and turns it on. We hear the warm HISS of the old vacuum  
tubes coming to life.

He carefully slides an old phonograph record out of its  
sleeve and lays it on the turntable. Sets down the needle.

HAWAIIAN MUSIC, dreamy and nostalgic, especially with the  
static of the phonograph. Steel pedal guitar, far-away  
vocals, 'ukulele...

Don pets Tristan.

DON  
Hey Tristan, that's my buddy...you  
like that...that's my buddy.

TRISTAN  
It's all coming to an end, Don.

Don blinks, looking at Tristan. The sweet music continues.

DON  
What, buddy?

A LOUD RUMBLING, like an earthquake. Don looks up; a small but definite CRACK appears in the wall of the apartment. The record skips, then continues on. The overhead light fixture sways. SOUND of GALLOPING HORSES.

Don carries Tristan to the window and looks outside. People walking and driving, nothing out of the ordinary, except--

HUGE FLASHES OF LIGHT in the sky illuminating what appear to be ARCHANGELS, winged heroic figures...the light flickers and they're gone. The Hawaiian music continues as--

END OF ACT TWO

**ACT THREE**

INT. LUCY'S HOUSE, BEDROOM -- MORNING

Lucy opens her eyes. She's hung over. Sits up and gets out of bed.

She walks into the--

KITCHEN

And starts to make coffee.

PHONE RINGS...she lets the machine pick up.

DOROTHY (V.O.)  
Hello? Hello? Am I...oh...Lucy?

Lucy almost picks up, can't bear it.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)  
I just woke up and...is it just because I'm sick, or...is it all changing? Is the world more...closed in? I just want you to be happy. Your father and I...after the war...we were happy...I think...

The machine cuts her off with an abrupt "Thank you for your call."

Lucy looks down into the counter. Clicks the coffee machine on.

INT. SYDNEY POLLOCK'S OFFICE -- DAY

Holt sits in the outer office, trying to act cool.

SYDNEY POLLACK comes out of the office.

SYDNEY POLLACK  
Jeremy! Hey, c'mon in...

HOLT  
Hey. Um, it's Holt. Holt McLaren.

SYDNEY POLLACK  
Right! Of course. We've had so many people in and out of this part.

HOLT  
Yeah.

SYDNEY POLLACK  
Anyway, c'mon in...

INT. SYDNEY POLLACK'S BUNGALOW

Sydney Pollack and Holt sit there uncomfortably.

SYDNEY POLLACK  
Great piece the other day in NOW.  
You're all over the place.

HOLT  
Oh, thanks, yeah...

SYDNEY POLLACK  
Now, with all this stuff you have  
in the works, are you still  
available?

HOLT  
For what?

SYDNEY POLLACK  
*The Generic Effect*. Playing  
Carson. In my movie. I want to  
hire you.

HOLT  
Oh my God...thank you. Yes, I am  
absolutely available.

SYDNEY POLLACK  
Great. We're closing Clooney's  
deal and just had the offer  
accepted by Kira Klay.

A beat.

HOLT  
Oh...I know Kira. She's...a  
friend.

SYDNEY POLLACK  
See the way things work out?  
Fantastic. Anyway, I have a three  
o'clock. Congrats, Galt.

HOLT  
It's...thank you.

INT. LUCY'S OFFICE -- DAY

As she and Barrow look at the photos.

BARROW  
Are you kidding?

She just looks at him?

BARROW (CONT'D)  
You know what they're gonna say in corporate?

LUCY  
The strap-on looks painful?

Barrow slides the photos back across the desk at her.

BARROW  
You can't run these.

Lucy tries to contain her rage...

LUCY  
Do you know how hard I worked to get these photos? Do you have any idea what they'll do to circulation? You can't just--

BARROW  
I can't just what? You walk around here like you got my balls in a vise...but you know who calls the shots here, don't you?

LUCY  
(smiles)  
Yeah, the suits over in the corporate. Sure as hell ain't you.

BARROW  
Oh, yeah? Try this: Run these and get fired. Leak 'em and get sued.

Off Lucy--

INT. KIRA KLAY'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Kira sits on the floor of her big house, a copy of *The Bomb* with the damning cover next to her. And a mirror. And a couple empty bottles of Dom.

She leans down into the mirror and we see her in extreme red-eyed, glassed-out CLOSE-UP...

INT. CLUB VELVET, DANCE FLOOR -- LATE NIGHT

DANCE MUSIC is up and bumping, shirts are coming off, sweat pouring...

A group of HOLLYWOOD GROOVSTERS, Holt and Julia at their center, dance in a big circle, cutting loose...

Holt is finally letting go, enjoying a moment of success and celebration...

Julia dances with Holt, dirty-dogging him, giving him her booty. She turns around and pulls off his shirt, uses it to wrap around him and grind him in closer...

Feather in...MUSIC: Yoko Ono, "Listen The Snow Is Falling"

INT. KIRA KLAY'S HOUSE -- LATE NIGHT

The Yoko Ono track surging now...

Back on the floor. The mirror, the empty bottles, but no Kira.

TRACK through the darkened house, to a brightly lit bathroom, door ajar. White floor tile. Kira's perfect, pedicured feet.

EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD, OUTSIDE CLUB -- VERY LATE

The group stumbles out of the club.

Julia's cell phone rings.

JULIA  
Hello...what? What...slow down.  
Okay....okay, thanks.

She looks at Holt.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
It's Kira. She OD'd.

Holt stands there, Sunset swirling around him.

END OF ACT THREE

**ACT FOUR**

INT. SYDNEY POLLACK'S BUNGALOW -- DAY

A table read. All the actors are milling around, drinking coffee and checking each other out. P.A.s run around preparing a table with bagels that none of the actors eat.

Holt sits at his place at the table, just two away from the star of the movie. He mouths lines, looks at his already-dog-eared script, tries to calm his blown-out nerves. No sign of Clooney or Kira Klay.

Sydney Pollack enters the room gravely. Everybody quiets down.

SYDNEY POLLACK

Well, this is a crazy day. A movie I've been trying to get made for four years is cast, with a cast any director would die for. So today began as a high point for me. I even got new shoes.

He holds out a foot with a new shoe. Actors laugh nervously.

SYDNEY POLLACK (CONT'D)

I'm driving over here and on the way I get a call from Kira's manager, Amy Blenson...she tells me Kira's had a medical emergency. She's okay, but she's not only out of the movie, she's going to be taking time off from the business and really re-evaluating her place here. I thought, okay, as long as she's okay, there are a dozen actresses who can play the part. Not forty five seconds later, I get a call from Clooney. Can't imagine anyone but Kira in the part...says it's too delicate, like gossamer, it's gotta be her or he's out.

The whole picture begins to dawn on Holt. He opens his mouth wide, like a fish on the deck of a boat, impotently trying to get a breath.

SYDNEY POLLACK (CONT'D)

So...enjoy some coffee and a bagel. I hope it all changes in the next 48 hours...but I've been doing this long enough to know how these things tend to play out.

Some of the actors grab their bags and go, several just mill around.

Holt sits in his seat, going through his script. He looks at his careful notations, the highlighted lines...

His face sets into a mask of deep anger and resolve. He storms out, leaving his script behind.

EXT. THE ROAD -- DAY

Holt speeds through Hollywood in his old Carera.

INT. LUCY'S OFFICE -- DAY

Holt sits watching Lucy on her wireless headset walking around. Don sits at the other end of the couch.

LUCY  
(into headset)  
Right...well, you talk to legal,  
see what they have to say.

Holt stands up, tries to interject, but Lucy holds up her hand, she'll be done in a sec.

Now Holt is standing, not knowing what to do with himself.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
Anyway, I have to run...a friend  
just stopped by.

As she finishes up the call, Alexander Barrow enters.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
Love to Raj...bye.

Lucy turns her gaze on Holt and Don and Barrow.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
Now, what can I do for the  
exceptionally talented Holt  
McLaren? Besides receiving his  
undying gratitude for the beautiful  
profile in NOW Magazine?

Holt's a little thrown, but plows forward.

HOLT  
I'm not going to give you any more.  
Not about my friends or my enemies.  
Kira is in the hospital because I  
told you--

LUCY  
Kira's in the hospital because  
she's a drug addict. And she's  
going to be fine.

HOLT  
That's not the point. The point is  
that you people--

LUCY  
First of all, you're welcome for  
the nearly 800-word profile in NOW  
Magazine as well as the three other  
carefully crafted tidbits we've  
managed to pepper throughout our  
little media empire, which any  
publicist would sacrifice a left  
nut for. Secondly, you are now a  
source. And I feel that we can do  
great things together. You, me and  
Don here. Not that Don is an  
employee, actually a freelance  
contractor.

Don looks around.

DON  
I like this office.

HOLT  
I don't give a crap what he is, I'm  
not gonna help you guys out  
anymore.

LUCY  
Poor Julia.

HOLT  
Don't give me that--

LUCY  
When she finds out about your  
betrayal. Poor thing. I know she  
adores you.

Holt takes a deep breath, willing to lose it all.

HOLT  
You know what? She'll either  
understand or she won't. I don't  
care. You can tell her whatever  
you want. I love her and she loves  
me.

LUCY  
Brave.

HOLT  
Fuck you.

Barrow shakes his head.

LUCY  
Don, will you get the lights?

HOLT  
What are you doing?

Don goes over to the door and turns off the office lights.

LUCY  
You know what we love here at  
Transcommunication Media? Home  
movies. Nothing has the smack of  
the genuine like home-made porn.

Lucy puts a DVD in the deck. Blue-screen comes on, then a  
home-made video flickers to life.

THE VIDEO

A poorly-lit DV. Broken down and pixilated, but ultimately  
engaging.

JULIA MYERS sits on a messy bed.

JULIA  
I am so wasted.

OFFSCREEN VOICE  
(unintelligible)

JULIA  
What are you doing?

OFFSCREEN VOICE  
(unintelligible)

A body crosses frame, then again, then...

JOHNNY COLE

Sits on the bed next to Julia. Starts kissing her.

JULIA  
....don't Really want to do this...

JOHNNY COLE  
You know you do.

JULIA  
Can't even focus my eyes...

He kisses her, takes off her shirt. It all moves very  
quickly now.

We move from the video to Holt's face in the dim light.

RETURN TO VIDEO

Now Johnny Cole is behind Julia. He wraps her long hair in a knot around his hand and snaps her head back.

JOHNNY COLE  
You like that?

JULIA  
(faintly, high)  
Yes...

Lucy stops the tape. Walks over and turns up the lights.

LUCY  
That's enough.

Holt looks down at the floor.

DON  
Hoo-ee.

BARROW  
So, if that were to be released, it might not square too well with your gal's wholesome image on her TV show. And you come off like a little cuckold bitch. Bad all around.

Holt is shaking, quiet.

LUCY  
Or, you supplement your thin little guest-spot income with our generous story fees, and get great press along the way. And you and Julia ride off into the sunset. I honestly would rather not leak this.

Holt stands up and starts to walk out. Stops at the door.

HOLT  
(simply)  
I'm an actor. It's all I ever wanted to do.

LUCY  
(quietly)  
No, you wanted to be famous. There's a big difference. You can give your dirt to Don. Whenever. No rush. Just make sure it comes regularly.

Holt is gone.

Lucy sighs. She looks exhausted. Don still sits there, disassociated, whispering to himself.

LUCY (CONT'D)  
You can go, Don.

DON  
Huh?

LUCY  
Go. Both of you.

EXT. PARKING LOT, TRANSCOMMUNICATION MEDIA -- DAY

Don walks toward camera. We see--but Don doesn't--Holt charging into frame...

HOLT SMASHES DON

A roundhouse sucker punch to the ear. Don goes down hard onto the concrete. We pick up the RINGING and IMPAIRED HEARING of Holt's punch on DON'S POV...

DON  
Oh--

HOLT  
You piece'a shit! Scumbag!

Holt kicks him.

DON'S POV

Looking up at Holt. The sun backlighting Holt, causing an angelic silhouette.

DON  
It's okay...

Several FIGURES now; Holt, the Sad Cat Man, and other strangely powerful ANIMISTIC TOTEMIC FIGURES (think Miyazaki). They stand around in a circle, as if in some bizarre druidic meeting. SOUND of HORSES GALLOPING.

The Figures talk in a strange, almost-identifiable language, ancient and low. They seem to be conferring over Don's very soul.

DON (CONT'D)  
It's okay, buddy. It's okay,  
Tristan. That's my buddy.

Holt kicks him again.

HOLT  
Fucking nutball.

Holt stands over Don, ready to kick him again, then sees that he's completely out of it. A brief moment of regret, then he turns and walks away.

The Totem Figures begin to gather in an ever-tightening circle around Don, laying their hands on him. From one of the figures, GIANT WINGS EMERGE.

END DON POV

Just Holt now, walking across the parking lot, leaving Don curled up on the ground.

INT. CHUCKY CHEESE -- DAY

Wild, filled with SCREAMING KIDS, PRINCE TYREESE and his brood front and center. His wife, CHELLE, policing kids and pizza slices.

Prince and three of the kids are skeet bowling, laughing their asses off, cutting loose, the kids hyped up on sugar and games.

A MOTORCYCLE MESSENGER, helmet on, visor up, walks in and approaches Tyreese. Hands him an ENVELOPE before he has time to react.

Chelle, with the younger kids, notices her husband receiving the envelope.

Tyreese opens the envelope. Looks. Drops it. Quickly picks it up. We see a corner of one of the now-familiar photos. He quickly seals the envelope as Chelle calls over to him.

CHELLE  
What's that?

Tyreese, his cocky demeanor gone, just shakes his head, chokes out:

TYREESE  
Paperwork.

INT. JULIA'S HOUSE -- EARLY EVENING

MUSIC: Elliott Smith, "Waltz #2 (XO)"

Holt lays in the massive bed with its turbo thread count sheets, knuckles raw and bruised. He smokes a joint.

Julia enters. Boxer shorts and a wife beater. Her long hair down.

Holt takes another hit, can't really look at her.

Julia doesn't say anything. Just takes the joint and hits deeply off it.

They sit up next to each other in bed. Smoking the joint. Finally:

JULIA  
This from Surfer Sean?

HOLT  
Yeah.

JULIA  
You know I can't smoke this stuff.

HOLT  
Why?

JULIA  
It makes me too horny.

She straddles him on the bed. Takes the joint and puts it out. They start kissing. More and more intensely, violently. She moves on top of him...

Holt pushes Julia off of him and moves her to her stomach.

Now he is grinding on top of her. He pulls her boxer shorts off and is inside her almost instantly.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Yes...yes...ohmygodyes...

From behind her, Holt sees her long hair...

He takes her hair deliberately and wraps it in a knot around his hand. Snaps her head back. Just like Johnny Cole.

HOLT  
You like that?

Julia GASPS, with pleasure or pain or recognition.

JULIA  
Yes...

EXT. DON'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Don approaches his apartment. His face is bruised and he limps. Don opens his door.



HOLT

Hello?  
 Oh, hey Mr. Pollack...Sydney,  
 sorry...  
 Yeah...yeah...really?  
 That's great news...  
 No...I haven't booked anything  
 else...  
 Are you kidding? Of course I do.  
 I can't believe Angelina signed on  
 to do the part...  
 Okay, I'll be there. Thank you...  
 (beat)  
 Yeah, I heard about what happened  
 to Kira...  
 (beat)  
 What? When?  
 (beat)  
 Yeah. She was a really good  
 person...  
 (beat)  
 Right...at the memorial.

Holt keeps driving. Doesn't say anything. He pushes the car, redlining the RPMs before shifting up. Julia just looks at him, waiting.

HOLT (CONT'D)

Kira's dead. She had a brain bleed.

JULIA

Oh, God...

He double-clutches and blows into third. Now they're easily doing 95 through Hollywood traffic.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Holt, slow down.

HOLT

And the movie's back on. I still have the part.

Holt cranks up the STEREO. "I Want to Die" by Brian Jonestown Massacre. Holt smiles bitterly and floors it. The whole car shakes, maxing out.

JULIA

Holt, what are you doing?!

The engine SCREAMS. The car pulls around a line of cars, ripping past all of them...Julia is crying.

ON HOLT

A grim smile. FASTER.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
 Holt, please, please, I'm sorry...  
 oh God, oh God, oh God,  
 ohgodohgodohgod...

A JACKED-UP TRUCK

Doesn't see the low-slung Porsche and goes to make a left turn...

JULIA

Looks astonished as the big four-wheeler completely blocks their path...

HOLT

Sighs with some perverse form of relief...

THE PORSCHE

Grinds under the truck, sending up a bright, beautiful shower of sparks through the L.A. night.

The Porsche is smashed free of the truck and rolls once, twice, lands on its roof.

Long, ticking beat of SILENCE on the tableau, then:

STARTING RIGHT-SIDE UP

Or so it appears, Julia, eyes wide, surprised, gorgeous, blood pooling in each ear, and dripping up.

NOW ROTATING

From upside down to right-side up, Julia and Holt hang in their seatbelts. It is only when we arrive at both of them upside down that we reveal Holt, unharmed, awake, staring at Julia. She has been frozen in what appears to be death, but suddenly she COUGHS, breathes deep, vomits.

She looks at Holt in terror.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
 Sorry...

HOLT  
 It's okay. It's okay...

The car is smoking and ticking... Poof! A tiny fire ignites near the back of the car...Holt wrenches himself free and out through the window of the car...

## OUTSIDE THE PORSCHE

A crowd is gathering, but no emergency vehicles on scene...

Holt runs around and tries to open the door to get Julia out. The flames are rising on the Porsche...

Holt looks around, panicked...he sees--

## A CROWD OF ONLOOKERS

Several holding up cell phone cameras, one with a video camera.

Holt takes a rock and SMASHES the window. He takes off his shirt and lines the door frame with it, then proceeds to pry Julia loose from the car and drag her out. The FIRE creeps into the gas tank and IGNITES for real as now-shirtless Holt carries Julia away from the wreckage...

Julia is bleeding badly, sheet-white from shock.

SIRENS WAIL.

## INT. DON'S APARTMENT -- LATE NIGHT

Don sits holding Tristan, the only light coming from his television...the HAWAIIAN music plays on the old hi-fi.

## DON'S TV

A live feed of the local news, showing the outside of the now-familiar home of Kira Klay.

Another shot with the gruesome crash sight. An inserted RED CARPET SHOT from "Subliminal Velocity" of Holt and Julia with Kira.

Now the handi-cam footage of shirtless Holt carrying Julia from the crash site as the Porsche ignites in FLAMES behind him, with the headline: "REAL LIFE ACTION HERO." He does in fact look like a chiseled action hero...and you can bet Hollywood is thinking the same thing.

Don sits slack-jawed, staring at the television.

## KNOCKING

At the door again. Don clutches Tristan and rocks him.

## ON THE TV

MATCH CUT TV at--

INT. LUCY'S HOUSE -- VERY LATE NIGHT

HAWAIIAN MUSIC CONTINUES

Lucy looks at the tv...the footage of Holt carrying Julia from the wreckage...

Now a HEADSHOT of Kira Klay. "CELEBRITY SUICIDE?" Asks the super.

Lucy draws a sharp breath, something giving way a little. Pours herself a glass of Pinot. Drinks unsteadily.

Picks up the phone. Fully herself again:

LUCY

Hi, it's Lucy...yeah, I know what time it is...why, you wanna look for another job? Okay, tell acquisitions we need to lock up all the Holt McClaren footage...right, motion and still. We'll go up to eighty, higher if we have to...right. We can use some of the Don Konkey stills of Kira. Try to get someone into the house...with all the coroner's people and cops...Don'll do it...see if he can get something...uh huh...just do it. I'll be there in an hour.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

HAWAIIAN MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

JULIA

Intubated, unconscious, heavily bandaged...

HOLT

Sits there next to the bed, head in hands...

DON

Loading his cameras and packing up his photo gear...carefully places Tristan in a shoe box and takes him along...

PRINCE TYREESE

In his office at home. He looks at one of the photos, puts a match to it...

KIRA

Lying on the coroner's slab, alabaster, perfect and lifeless...

LUCY

In her walk-in closet. She stands there dressing, putting on another one of her signature sexy-but-efficient suits. She looks straight into CAMERA...we are the mirror, until she is suited up and turns abruptly and snaps the LIGHT OUT.

The HAWAIIAN MUSIC continues in BLACK.