

OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

Written by

Joseph J. Caruso

Final Draft: 4/29/24

Copyright (c) 2020 This screenplay may not be used or reproduced
for any purpose including educational purposes without the
Expressed written permission of the author.

Email: jjcwn@verizon.net

INT. MOLLY HENDERSON THERAPIST OFFICE. DAY.

Somewhere in Central New Jersey. JACK SOLOMON, 55, Black Hair, 6'1, is talking with his long time therapist, MOLLY WARREN, 72.

MOLLY

We have talked about this many times. Its the road Jack. Dues. Hotels. Being heckled and low or no pay.

JACK

I have been told I am funny so many times for all of the jobs I have had. I am sick of the IT field. Its time to give this a try.

MOLLY

You are also 55 years old.

JACK

Not much I can do about that now.

MOLLY

Starting out can be the worst. You have to get people into a comedy club and then, you perform and are far too often not paid.

JACK

I read the same books.

MOLLY

Its good thing you have money. You might be able to survive this at your age, only for that one reason.

JACK

Thank God. I cannot imagine being my age and having nothing to show for all that shit I went through to make a living for 30 years.

MOLLY

When do you start?

JACK

There is an open mike in Manhattan in 2 days. That is where I will begin. Whatever this turns out to be.

MOLLY
Good luck Jack.

JACK
Thank you.

**INT. STEVE'S COMEDY HALL COMEDY CLUB IN NEW YORK CITY -
NIGHT.**

10 PM. Typical Saturday Night.

Jack enters the club, and goes to the back room. Sitting is the owner of the club, an out of shape, bald, cigar smoking man named FRANK HOUSTON, 67.

FRANK
Hi. Jack?

JACK
Yes. Jack. Nice to meet you.

Jack offers his hand to Frank.

FRANK
I am a Germaphobe. Lets just bump hands.

Jack and Frank bump fists.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You are a first. How old are you again?

JACK
I just turned 55.

FRANK
This is your first time trying comedy?

JACK
I figured I am retired now. Why not. If not now, when? I have been doing this for 3 months now, about 15 times or so.

FRANK
Never is another choice. There is nothing easy about this shit.

JACK
I know.

FRANK

You know?

JACK

Yes. I have read about this. The Kevin Hart book. Amy Schumer.

FRANK

So you know about the ticket selling or giving away garbage you have to do?

JACK

Yes.

FRANK

Its 12 tickets. Whatever you can either sell or give away. Its 12. I would prefer you sell them. They are 20 dollars a shot.

JACK

I know.

FRANK

Or you do not get on. And when you do get on, its past midnight, there will be a few drunks left. OK?

JACK

Its the start I expected.

FRANK

You look younger than 55. 45 maybe? Are you sure you want to do this?

JACK

People have always thought I am funny.

FRANK

People have always thought I am bald and fat. There is no money in fat and bald. There should be.

It is one thing to be funny at work. In a New York Crowd. That is something else entirely.

JACK

That was funny.

FRANK

That was a little funny. What are you waiting for? Walk around the fucking block. You get 12 and you get a shot tonight. No guarantee you will get on.

JACK

OK.

FRANK

Good Luck.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

A few minutes later.

Jack is walking on the streets of New York stopping people, with comedy club tickets in his hand. Jack stops a couple walking briskly.

JACK

Hello. Can I interest you in some free tickets?

YOUNG COUPLE

Tickets for what?

JACK

A Comedy show.

YOUNG COUPLE

You mean that one? Steve's Comedy Hall?

The woman points to the comedy club across the street.

JACK

Yes, that one.

YOUNG COUPLE

No thanks. That place is a dive.

The couple walks away.

JACK

For the record. I think most of them are dives.

Jack continues walking up the street, trying to give away comedy show tickets.

A young man, JACKSON, 32 passes by Jack.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey man. Interested in a free show?

JACKSON
Free?

JACK
Yes Free!

JACKSON
OK. If its free.

Jack hands the young man the ticket.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Are you in the show?

JACK
Yes, but only if I can give away or
sell enough tickets.

JACKSON
How old are you anyway?

JACK
Just turned 55.

JACKSON
A little old for this?

JACK
Way too old, but I am retired.

JACKSON
Good luck man.

Jackson walks away, and Jack looks back at Jackson as he
walks down the street.

JACK
Hope to see you there!

JACKSON
Don't put money on that.

Jack smiles and turns down another street, looking for more
customers.

Jack sees a group of people walking down the street.

JACK
Hey guys. Want free comedy club
tickets?

GROUP
Sure why not.

JACK
How many?

GROUP
We got 9 here. Are you in the show?

JACK
I will be if I give away enough
tickets.

GROUP
How many you need?

JACK
Twelve.

GROUP
You got nine more. Good luck.

JACK
See you there?

GROUP
For sure.

INT. STEVES COMEDY HALL BACK OFFICE.

Some two hours later.

Jack enters with receipts from the tickets he gave away.

FRANK
So you gave them all away?

JACK
Yes.

FRANK
Did you try and sell any.

JACK
I was told they were all giveaways.

FRANK
Who told you that?

JACK
The woman at the front desk.

FRANK

The woman at the front desk does not own this comedy club. I do.

JACK

Next time?

FRANK

Given that this is your first time here. How many you give away?

JACK

17.

FRANK

At 1:05 AM you get 10 minutes. However that is not guaranteed. The rule here is, if someone is on a role, which is fucking rare in this club, I allow them to go longer.

JACK

OK. Should I wait?

FRANK

By all means. Buy a beer for Christ sakes. Are you nervous?

JACK

Yes. Pretty nervous.

FRANK

Have two beers. A Vodka.

JACK

One beer is my limit.

FRANK

When I introduce you, I will mention you are also a cub scout. Want a Shirley Temple sir?

JACK

(laughs a little)
That is funny.

FRANK

If you think that is funny you are in trouble tonight.

JACK

I will wait in the bar.

Jack walks towards the bar.

FRANK
You do that. JACK! JACK!

JACK
Yes?

FRANK
You fuck up the set, there is no second shot.

JACK
OK. I heard that too.

FRANK
Front desk?

JACK
Ya.

INT. MAIN STAGE - NIGHT.

Frank, walks on stage.

FRANK
I see we have. What? 10 people? Are you all drunk?

CROWD
YA!!

FRANK
Good. These are the second and third stringers, so even if you are drunk. At least try and be a little polite? Imagine the nightmare of standing in front of you guys.

Some noises from the crowd.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Some of these guys are first timers. Let me bring up the first guy. Dave? Right out of college!

Frank looks backstage. DAVID YOUNG, 22, 5'7, brown hair is back stage, dressed in dirty jeans and a torn T-shirt.

You 21? 22? By the way, thanks for dressing nice for your first time. This guy is Dave Young. Just graduated from Rutgers and is trying this.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

Maybe his major was philosophy or something. That degree or a degree in English means you drive Uber.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen. Dave is 22 just out of college and this is his first time. Lets give him a warm welcome. DON'T BE RUDE! DAVE!!

David walks on stage. There is some smattering of applause in the audience.

DAVE

Hey. My name is Dave. Just graduated from college. I majored in Sociology by the way. So here I am, doing this.

(Pause)

Actually they recommend stand-up comedy after I received my Sociology degree.

Some in the audience laugh.

DAVE (CONT'D)

How about those Kardashians? Who knew that having a huge ass and a sex tape is the road to huge fame and wealth!

Nobody in the audience laughs.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Kim recently came out and said, "get off your fucking ass and work Nobody wants to work anymore". Who knew that having a huge ass was work.

Again, nobody laughs.

DAVE (CONT'D)

This is my first time guys!

CROWD

Sure seems that way!

DAVE

You think this is easy!

Frank comes to the stage. Whispers in Dave's ear.

FRANK

Do not yell at the audience. Either
decide to continue this or not.
This is probably not for you.

Dave just turns and leaves the stage.

FRANK (CONT'D)

How about that! How about a hand
for DAVE!! DAVE!!!

Almost nobody claps in the audience.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Tough crowd. Good news for the next
guy. Guys, we have another first
timer for this club. This guy is 55
years old, and he just retired from
the Information Technology field.
Please give this guy a break. Life
is short. Lets hear it for Jack
Solomon!!

Almost nobody claps. Jack walks past Frank and is handed the
microphone.

JACK

Hi.

CROWD

Hi.

JACK

I am Jack. Just retired from IT -
that is not pronounced like the
word IT - its I.T.

CROWD

We know!

JACK

Oh someone from IT?

Frank walks out to the stage and whispers in Jack's ear.

FRANK

You are not here to dialogue with
the fucking audience. Start with
your new material, that you told me
you have when you auditioned.

Jack looks at Frank and nods.

JACK

Enough stress, programming and development after over 30 years about 4 months ago. I always wanted to try this, so here I am trying to do the impossible.

CROWD

(Someone in the crowd)
You got that right!

Some of the crowd laugh.

JACK

I have a few work war stories. For instance, for 7 years I worked with a PARROT. Not someone who looked like a Parrot, someone who looked exactly like a Parrot. And yes, you are asking. There WAS bird seed involved.

People in the audience are starting to laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

For seven years I had to deal with an egomaniac who was an incompetent developer at a level I never thought was possible. It caused me great stress, but to make the big money had to suppress years of extreme anger. May 19th 2012, I am in an emergency room for extremely high blood sugar getting an I.V.

SOMEONE IN THE CROWD

When does the funny start?

Frank walks out again.

FRANK

(Whispers to Jack)
Try and not let the moron in the front get to Jack, but this is not going in a funny fucking direction. Medical history? Are you fucking kidding me?

Frank walks off stage.

JACK

Thanks for the help.

Jack rolls his eyes and a few in the audience laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

I am 55 now, never married and one of the reasons why I gave up the chase to find love is, you have to date. Who doesn't hate dating? The awkward moments. The dead silence. Trying to make conversation with someone who has no conversation skills.

Some laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

I hate everything about dating. Trying too hard to make conversation. I was once on a blind date years ago with someone woman, who did not say a word. She is now married to a sofa.

Some laughing.

JACK (CONT'D)

I also learned that I am incapable of carrying an entire conversation. I mean, what the hell is there to talk about most of the time anyway? Nothing easy about dating.

JACK (CONT'D)

I recently, on the advice of my doctor, went through the nightmare of trying to use Cologuard to send in a stool sample. An incredible disgusting nightmare. I could not believe it. Anybody ever do this? I could not go through with this.

A few people raise their hand.

JACK (CONT'D)

One of the worst experiences I have ever had. I watched a video about Cologuard and they showed the thousands of boxes delivered to some company warehouse, and then all the workers.

Do these people have Chemistry degrees? Five days a week? Opening box after box, and examining stool?

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

How bad is your Sunday night, when your job is dealing with and examining box after box of human waste starting Monday? Talk about a shit job.

Laughter in the audience.

What do they pay people for this job? Why would anybody want this job?

Then the humiliation of giving the box to UPS and then lie about it. This is my friends stool. Its not mine. Really. Its for a friend. What kind of a friend do you have when they want you to deliver their stool to Fed Ex?

Some more people laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

Ongoing problems with my mother. Have you guys had this problem? Mother never listens to what you are saying. She has her own agenda, so whatever you say, is just absorbed into some kind of mother vortex where no sound exists.

Some laughter

JACK (CONT'D)

As a great example. I could say to my mother when I was 15 years old. Mom, I have just been notified that I have won the Nobel Prize for Physics. I am the youngest ever recipient. I am traveling to Switzerland next Wednesday. After a pause, my mother says, "Nice Pants".

More people laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

Famous actor, Kevin Costner is the latest great example of a celebrity marriage failure. They were married for almost 25 years and he finds out when he is 68. Oh, she just wanted my money. Good to know. She wanted 248 thousand every month!

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

He got her down to 64 thousand and probably viewed it as a victory. God knows how anyone can raise 2 kids on 64K a month.

More in the audience laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

All of this is even though he had a prenup. As you can tell, with stories like this, I don't feel that bad about never getting married. Its great if it works out, but if it doesn't. You guys know the rest.

Nobody understands women, here comes the best ever example. Do any of you women understand why Kourtney Kardashian finds tattoo boy attractive?

One woman raises her hand.

JACK (CONT'D)

What? What exactly is attractive about this guy?

CROWD

Maybe he has a big penis?

JACK

Show of hands, how many people think this guy has a tattoo on his penis?

Everybody raises their hand. Several people laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

Well, now we are getting somewhere. Thanks for being a good audience.

Jack looks back stage at Frank.

JACK (CONT'D)

Looks like Frank is telling me that is my time for tonight. Thanks again guys.

Several applaud and some laugh. Jack walks off stage, waving his hand. Frank approaches Jack backstage.

FRANK

That was OK. OK for your first time here. You have earned another shot, but you need more fresh material. You cannot talk to the audience that many times.

JACK

OK. For next time I will have more.

FRANK

Much more.

Jack nods and starts to walk towards the exit. He is stopped by CHET GREEN, mid 50s, 5'7, heavy set. Gray hair.

CHET

Hey man. Good set.

JACK

Thanks.

CHET

Good joke about your mother. Mine too. Its like talking to a wall. I am a business agent for a band I am managing. They are called Future Adults. Ever hear of them?

JACK

Future Adults? No.

CHET

Not a problem, they are mostly touring in the mid-west. They need an opening comedy act. You interested?

JACK

Moving to the mid-west?

CHET

Yes, but only for the tour. Which will be for about 15 weeks. We all live on the road. Its not easy, but this is show business. There is no workaroud.

JACK

15 weeks? I was hoping to work here in Manhattan.

CHET

So what did you get paid for tonight?

JACK

Nothing.

CHET

It could take months or even over a year to actually get paid for a comedy set in New York or LA.

JACK

That long?

CHET

Or longer. This your first time?

JACK

No about 3 months now. Around 15 times.

CHET

As a novice, I think you have what it takes, but the money is very low and the dues are huge in this business. This could be your chance to get established much faster than doing the New York and Brooklyn clubs.

JACK

Really?

CHET

Yes. Being the front man for a solid up and coming band could be your ticket. How old are you?

JACK

55.

CHET

Hey, better late than never. One thing about the average person like you when they look at people in show business. They are on the outside looking in. All of us only see the end result of anyone who is famous and making big money. They do not realize how long and how hard the road is. Ever read Kevin Hart's book?

JACK

Yes I did, a number of years ago.
It was unbelievable what he went
through.

JACK (CONT'D)

I realize it, better than most. I
would never try something like this
with no money. Its just something
I had to give a shot. As far as
this job in the mid west. Can I
think about it?

CHET

Yes sure. Here is my card.

Chet hands Jack his business card.

JACK

I will call you soon.

CHET

Don't wait too long. If not you, I
will have to find someone else. The
band Future Adults is on YouTube.

JACK

I will call you in one day after I
check out the band.

CHET

OK. Look forward to working with
you. The lead singer is someone
named Mary Jackson. She is talented
and quite good looking.

JACK

I will check them out.

The two men shake hands.

INT. JACKS HOUSE - DAY.

Jack is looking at the YouTube video of the band Future
Adults. The lead singer is a beautiful brunette named Mary
Jackson. Jack dials Chet on his cell phone.

CHET

Hello?

JACK

This is Jack from last night?

CHET

Yes?

JACK

Sign me up.

CHET

Mary?

JACK

Yes. How did you know?

CHET

That is nothing new. She sings great too you know.

JACK

Yes. I noticed. Where the hell did you find her. From what I saw she should be a superstar right now.

CHET

I agree. Without her there is no group. She should have arrived, but as I already told you, that is not how things work in this business.

JACK

No. Unfortunately.

CHET

Right. Keep thinking that. There is no easy road. Not for singers, or especially stand-up comedians. Freddie Prinze from forever ago, is an exception. You know what happened to him? Sometimes great can be very bad. Ray Romano did not suffer on the road that long. David Letterman liked him. He is worth over 200 million now.

JACK

I heard.

CHET

Next Thursday, 2PM. I will pick you up at O'Hare Airport. Do not be late.

JACK

Will see you then.

CHET

OK.

JACK

Bye. Thanks again Chet.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY.

Jack is on a plane from Newark New Jersey to Chicago.

Jack is sitting next to an attractive woman, ALICE WREN, 54 years old. Jack is opening a bag of nuts and having trouble opening the bag.

JACK

I have no idea why I always have problems opening all containers. All of them. No matter what they are. It drives me insane.

ALICE

I think that is true of everybody.

JACK

Really?

ALICE

Yes really. My name is Alice, nice to meet you.

They shake hands. Jack gets the bag open, but not without spilling nuts over the both of them.

JACK

Sorry about that.

ALICE

No problem. I was fully expecting that little accident to happen.

JACK

Nice to meet you too. Relatives in Chicago?

ALICE

I am meeting my husband there. His father is not doing well.

JACK

Sorry to hear that.

ALICE

He is 100. A good life, at least I think so. Two kids, retired at 65 with some money.

JACK

At least there is that.

ALICE

You married?

JACK

No. I never found the right woman. I was close once, but it didn't work out. Never really got over it.

ALICE

Sorry.

JACK

Don't be. I am very good at rationalizing.

ALICE

How do you mean?

JACK

Well if the divorce rate were only 20%, rather than over 50%, then I would feel pretty bad.

ALICE

I see. Rather myopic of you to think this way?

JACK

How do you mean?

ALICE

What about all the good things that come with finding true love?

JACK

Did you find that?

ALICE

Oh yes, very much so.

JACK

What does your husband do?

ALICE

He is a contractor in the IT field.

JACK

Exactly what I used to do as of a few months ago, before I retired.

ALICE

What are the odds?

JACK

Pretty high actually. I assume your husband is American?

ALICE

Yes. You mean not Indian?

JACK

That is what I mean. I got sick of being a huge minority in my own country.

ALICE

Are you a negative guy?

JACK

No. A realist.

ALICE

So what do you plan to do in retirement?

JACK

Believe it or not. Stand-up comedy.

ALICE

You're kidding.

JACK

No. Just finished about 4 months of this. It went well enough that I got a gig in Chicago. Going there now.

ALICE

What courage you have. Stand-up. Wow!

JACK

I have made people laugh within this stress filled nightmare IT profession my whole career.

The problem was always, fear of public speaking. Or bombing on stage.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

I was terrified, and the owner of the club did not make it any easier. But I did it and it went well enough that I was offered a job by some guy in the audience.

ALICE

Your first shot?

JACK

No. It was about my 15th time. First time at this club.

ALICE

I hope it is not a scam or some criminal?

JACK

I am paranoid enough and skeptical enough to have thought of that one. The band the agent wants me to open for is on YouTube. I checked them out. They are very good.

ALICE

Well good for you Jack. I wish you the best of luck.

JACK

Thanks. What do you do now?

ALICE

I am a writer. Novels mostly.

JACK

Very impressive. That has to be very tough.

ALICE

Took me years to get an agent. Years more to sell anything. It is extremely hard. So much work with the potential of no payoff for a very long time, if ever.

JACK

How long have to been doing this?

ALICE

About 20 years. I was so sick of working for other people. I just had to try. You only live once.

JACK

I hear you. That is exactly why I am doing this.

ALICE

I hear you too.

JACK

Good luck to you.

ALICE

Thank you. Good luck to you as well.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY.

Jack sees his name on a big white sign as he leaves the plane. It is Chet Green.

CHET

Hey man. Right on time. Unlike so many.

Alice passes Jack in the terminal. He turns to say good bye.

JACK

Hey Alice. Great talking with you.

ALICE

You as well, Jack. Good luck!

Jack turns and looks at Chet.

JACK

Someone I met on the plane.

CHET

I figured. Are you ready for all of this?

JACK

I think so. Thanks for choosing me.

CHET

As mostly a beginner. I saw some real promise. Are you writing more sets?

JACK

I always am. On the plane, at home, in my head.

CHET

That's good. This is a rough hard business. Its only those that push forward and never give up are the ones that make it. One way or another.

JACK

What do you mean one way or another?

CHET

I mean. Some are lifers on the road, they are OK with that life. Some want to get into TV. Or a movie. Some write screenplays, teleplays. Which one are you?

JACK

I have no idea. I just started. I just had to try this.

CHET

In this profession. Two things. Luck and one day at a time.

JACK

Also true of life.

CHET

I have a car, I will take you to the hotel. The bar we will be playing tomorrow night is called, "Jenkins. Jenkins Bar and Grille".

Its right across the street. You cant miss it. The owner just started paying for acts. Trying to save his business. So far, not so good. We are the second band in there starting day after tomorrow.

JACK

I am looking forward to this.

CHET

Are you?

JACK

Yes. I said I was. What do you mean?

CHET

You are just starting. You do not know. What you do not know. Show business is nothing like most people think.

JACK

I will take things one day at a time.

CHET

See you in 2 days. We start at 8 PM. Be there at 7:30 for sound checks and other shit that might go wrong.

JACK

OK.

CHET

Good Luck.

JACK

Thanks

Chet takes a look back at Jack and exits.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT.

There is a knock on Jack's Hotel door. Jack answers.

Waiting is the entire band. MARY JACKSON, 43, the lead singer. DANIEL RICH 45, Lead guitar. GARY REEDS 39, Drummer. RICK SIMONS 37, Keyboards, JIM DAVIS, guitar.

Jack answers the door.

DANIEL

Hi. Jack?

JACK

Yes.

Jack immediately looks at Mary.

MARY

Hi.

JACK

Hi. So nice to meet you.

Jack and Mary shake hands.

JACK (CONT'D)

The YouTube video. That song you sang. You are so good. So talented.

Mary blushes.

MARY

Thank you.

DANIEL

Hey Jack.

JACK

Yes.

DANIEL

She is my girlfriend OK?

JACK

I was just complimenting your band. Don't get upset.

DANIEL

Sounded like you were complimenting her. Not us. We are a team. A complete unit. Is that OK?

JACK

Yes. Fine. No problems.

DANIEL

That being said. You're right. She is great.

They all walk into Jacks hotel room.

RICK

That she is.

DANIEL

We are here to create some ground rules. Talk about your act. Our act. All the ins and outs.

JACK

OK. Come in. You can sit over there.

Jack points to the window where there is a desk and some chairs. Jack sits at the desk and the other band members sit near the window.

GARY

What did Chet tell you about us?

JACK

You have been on tour around the Country. Then he told me about the YouTube video.

DANIEL

Anything else?

JACK

Not really.

DANIEL

You are the 3rd stand-up act we will be trying out. The other two were washouts. You have to have good stuff to warm up the audience.

JACK

I have good stuff.

DANIEL

Can you do something now?

JACK

What?

DANIEL

A few rifts.

JACK

In a room like this? Right now?

DANIEL

Yes.

JACK

I honestly do not know if I can do that. Chet already saw my act in front of a crowd in New York City. He took a cell phone video.

DANIEL

Yes. We saw it. It was just good not great.

JACK

The rest of my stuff will be great. I am writing all the time.

DANIEL

Yes but.

GARY

Dan. Can we table this for tomorrow night? He will feel better on a real stage.

DANIEL

How do you know?

MARY

Its obvious. Being funny like this in a hotel room? Come on. Give him a break.

DANIEL

Why are you protecting this guy?

MARY

I am not protecting this guy. Can we talk about other stuff now?

DANIEL

Tomorrow night, on stage. I want to see some more stuff.

JACK

OK. That is fair.

DANIEL

The business part. As the up front guy, to start, you get 10% of the total take, after the bar gets its take. For a while, that might not be too much money, but over time, hopefully we pick up some fans and if you do well, your percentage might go up. But no guarantees.

GARY

Hopefully Chet gave you the run down about this business.

JACK

He said. There is nothing easy.

JIM

As a group, its been 8 years now. Some up times, some down. Some times when you think you have arrived. And then, no gigs.

JACK

I hope I can help you guys. I saw your video and I thought it was great. Who wrote that song?

DANIEL

Mary. Mary writes almost all our stuff and then we mix in some standards.

Mary blushes and smiles.

JACK

You are a very talented young woman Mary.

MARY

Thank you.

DANIEL

Mary is 43, not that young anymore unfortunately. Lots of gigs and bad hotel rooms.

Mary frowns at DANIEL and gives him a very bad look.

JACK

You look so much younger.

MARY

Thank you.

Daniel gives Jack a bad look.

DANIEL

Enough of the appreciation society. Also, as I said to you before she is with me. OK?

JACK

OK. I was not coming on to her. Just stating some facts.

DANIEL

Man. So was I.

Mary looks angrily at DANIEL.

MARY

Enough of this garbage, OK?

DANIEL

OK.

JACK

No harm done.

DANIEL

We travel mostly together. Nothing special. A Van. However Jack, if you want to follow in your own car.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

There is not enough room for you in the van. You are older anyway. What are you 60?

JACK

No just turned 55.

DANIEL

Probably better if you follow in your own car. We have 12 Gigs next month. This means a good deal of driving and drinking coffee to stay awake. Nothing easy about the road. Ask Mary. She has been at it for 17 years.

Jack looks at Mary.

JACK

17 years?

MARY

Yes. I was 26 when I quit my job and went on the road. I never thought it would be like this.

JACK

Much harder than you thought?

MARY

Much harder is not strong enough. I don't know how to put it all into words. 17 years and I wonder if.

JACK

Mary. You are a great singer. But. Life is unfair. We only hear about the few that make it look easy. But they only make it look easy. We never knew what they went through to get where they are.

Mary starts to lose her composure.

DANIEL

I think its time we move on. See you tomorrow @ 7:30 Jack.

Mary, Daniel and Gary leave. As the door closes. Mary looks back at Jack. Jack smiles back at Mary.

INT. JENKINS NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT.

7:30 PM. Everybody has arrived for early rehearsal, except Chet.

DANIEL

Where the hell is Chet? Did he call any of you? Mary?

MARY

No. No call. He could be stuck in traffic.

DANIEL

He is always stuck in traffic.

Chet rushes in, holding his coat.

CHET

Sorry guys. Stuck in traffic again! Nightmare around here.

DANIEL

We were on time.

CHET

You are also across the street! Time to get off my last nerve. OK?

DANIEL

Can we get started. Jack has agreed to show part of his act to the group.

CHET

I already vetted him in New York.

DANIEL

Our group would also like the chance to vet him. The last 2 were busts. Remember?

CHET

This your idea?

DANIEL

This is a group idea.

CHET

Really?

Chet looks at Mary.

CHET (CONT'D)

Really?

MARY

Yes really.

DANIEL

Oh if Mary says its OK?

CHET

Enough of this shit. Jack, whenever you are ready.

Chet sits down at a table, followed by Mary, Daniel, Gary and Rick.

DANIEL

Jack. Stand at the arrow spot on the stage. Its where you will be tonight.

JACK

OK.

DANIEL

Show us what you got man!

Daniel claps his hands.

Chet gives Daniel a bad look.

JACK

For the working world, with so many of us hating our jobs, the Kardashians are the fingernails on the chalk board. Kim made a remark about no women wanting to work anymore. Somehow she had the time to interview 100 million women.

Several laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

The world got pretty angry after hearing this stupid remark. A sex tape, a huge ass. Who would have guessed that this is a pathway to becoming a billionaire.

JACK (CONT'D)

OK. That is one of my additions.

CHET

I thought that was OK. For me it hits home.

MARY

I liked it. And I was also very angry when I heard this the first time. How dare she say something like that? I remember how my mother struggled, working two jobs. Look at our group. We have all struggled to make a living our whole lives.

GARY

I liked it. But it should be improved to be funnier.

DANIEL

I thought it was OK.

CHET

One thing Jack. Do not push an OK routine too much. If something is not working, move on, OK?

DANIEL

I will move to another routine if something is failing.

JACK

I am fascinated by the new chips in credit cards. You just wave the over a machine and you make a purchase.

Works a little too well for my taste. I am afraid that one day, I walk into a car dealership, pass by the cashier and find out a day later that I bought a Buick.

Several laugh.

CHET

That was good. Leave that in.

MARY

I thought that was cute.

Mary and Jack look at each other. Daniel notices this and is not amused.

DANIEL

Hey Jack. I already told you. She is my girlfriend. Is that clear to you?

JACK

I was just looking at her.

DANIEL

Well don't.

MARY

Daniel Can we talk in the back?

DANIEL

Sure.

Daniel and Mary walk go to the back room.

INT. BACK ROOM OF RESTAURANT - DAY.

MARY

What the hell are you doing?

DANIEL

Protecting my interest.

MARY

Am I a car or something? I am your girlfriend and you cannot be rude to other people because we are dating.

DANIEL

The way you too look at each other. Its getting on my nerves.

MARY

Lately everything is getting on your nerves. And that is getting on my nerves. He was just looking at me. I just looked back. What am I supposed to do, look away?

DANIEL

I can tell when two people are attracted to each other.

MARY

This kind of stupid jealousy is a real turn off. Stop it now, or we are done!

Mary walks out of the back room.

INT. MAIN ROOM RESTAURANT - DAY.

Mary walks quickly into the main room.

CHET
Everything OK?

MARY
Not the word I would use.

JACK
Is there something I can do?

MARY
No Jack, but thanks for asking.

Daniel returns from the back room.

CHET
So how long should Jack be on
before you guys.

DANIEL
I don't know, ask them. Whatever
they want.

Daniel walks to the back, and sits at the bar. Chet walks
over to him.

CHET
Hey man. Want to talk this out?

DANIEL
I think I am losing her man.

CHET
No. I don't think so. Jack is 55,
she is 43. He is too old for her.
You guys have been together for 3
years. Nothing is going on. Lets
not this screw up our tour. We have
8 dates in 3 weeks.

DANIEL
I hope you are right.

CHET
I am a people person. Always have
been. I know I am right.

DANIEL
Lets get ready for the show.

INT. RESTAURANT MAIN STAGE - NIGHT.

Three hours later. 11 PM.

The audience has arrived and its the start of the show. The owner of the restaurant REX STEVES, 60, blonde hair, 5'11 goes to the microphone on stage.

REX
Hello guys.

Applause from the crowd.

REX (CONT'D)
Thanks for coming out. This our second week with the music and comedy shows. So far, so good. Tonight will be a new comedian out of New York City. Jack Solomon as our warm up act. Then its the band you all came out for, Future Adults! Lets hear it for Jack!

Some applaud as Jack walks to the stage.

JACK
Hey guys.

Jack grabs the microphone and looks down to make sure he is standing on the right spot.

JACK (CONT'D)
Hello again. Just want to make sure I am standing in the right spot. Turns out this is being recorded for YouTube. Cant do anything anymore without someone recording you..

JACK (CONT (CONT'D)
So I am 55 years old, and about 4 months ago, I retired for good from the IT field. I got tired of the stress and rude people. Also being one of the last Americans left in the field, no thanks. So It tried out in an open mike and here I am somewhere in the Milwaukee area. How is everyone out there?

Some respond. One woman says fine.

JACK (CONT'D)

So I was in a Starbucks last week. Hard to throw a stone anywhere without hitting a Starbucks. So I used my credit card, it had one of those new chips. You just wave the card, and it executes the transaction, even waving the card from a distance now works. One day I will walk into a car dealership. Two days later days later I find out I bought a Buick.

Some laugh.

Someone in the crowd yells.

SOME MAN IN THE CROWD

Enough of this shit. Bring out the band. You suck!

JACK

Thanks for your support. Wow, my first heckler. Thanks! Are you drunk sir? God I hope so. You are in no condition to be sober.

SOME MAN IN THE CROWD

Who told you, you are funny anyway?

JACK

Who told you, you can drink? Security. Can we escort this fine gentleman out of here.

A large bald 300 pound bouncer comes over to the man in the crowd.

SECURITY GUARD

Sir. If you don't shut up, you will be escorted out of this club.

SOME MAN IN THE CROWD

Just bring out the band. Nobody wants to see this asshole.

They all watch as the security guard pushes the heckler out of the building.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT.

The security guard shoves the heckler out of the front door of the restaurant and onto the ground.

SECURITY GUARD

You are out of here! You are banned. If you try to come in again, I will have to arrested. Call an UBER, you are in no condition to drive.

SOME MAN IN THE CROWD

Fuck you fat boy.

SECURITY GUARD

You are the fat one on your ass. Now get out of here. Never come back, or else.

The security guard walks back into the restaurant.

INT. MAIN STAGE - NIGHT.

Jack continues his act.

JACK

Hey man. Thanks for taking care of that guy. Comedy is rhythm and timing, and never includes a drunk heckler. Where was I.

JACK (CONT'D)

Of all the Kardashian women, I find Kourtney by far the most attractive of all the women. She has a normal body, very good face. Have we all seen this Travis Barker guy she married? Would anybody be surprised to find out that he eats worms? A box of flies?

Why would anyone in this world want to have Tatoos covering every inch of their body? Even their scalp? Crazy. So why did she marry this guy?

Could it be that even though she is very attractive, she is insecure and wanted someone who could never cheat on her? As the saying goes.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

No accounting for taste. However,
this time around? You have to be
kidding.

Some laughter

JACK (CONT'D)

I have never been married. Thought
I found the right woman once, but
when that didn't work out. My
desire to keep looking faded. 50
percent divorce rate. Second
marriages 70%, 80% for 3rd. I can
live with dodging the bullet.

Some applause.

Jack walks backstage and passes Daniel who was watching his
act.

DANIEL

Hey man. That was very average.
Thanks.

JACK

I know I can count on you for
support! Thank you!

Jack passes Mary backstage.

MARY

I thought that was good Jack.

JACK

Thanks Mary.

Daniel gives Mary a bad look.

INT. RESTAURANT STAGE - NIGHT.

The Band Plays.

Jack looks at Mary performing as the lead singer. Mesmerized
by her looks and her talent.

Mary notices Jack looking at her in the audience. They
exchange smiles.

Jack is falling in love.

Daniel looks at the both of them. Not happy.

One hour later, the show ends.

Rex enters the stage to address the audience.

REX

That is our show guys! Tell your friends. In about 3 weeks, these guys will all be back. Be sure to tip your waitress. They work hard for a living. Thanks again!

Rex exits, waving at the audience.

INT. THE BAR - NIGHT.

15 minutes later.

Jack is sitting at the bar, as Mary, Daniel, Chet, Rick and Gary come out from the dressing room.

JACK

Great show guys. I am impressed. Mary you are such a great singer.

MARY

Thank you Jack. Appreciate the comments.

DANIEL

As far as your set. I hope you have better stuff. That was average.

CHET

It was OK. Jack does have other stuff. First time jitters.

DANIEL

How long you been doing this man?

JACK

About 3 months. 17 times on stage.

DANIEL

Three months? Chet, you thought this was enough?

CHET

He kicked ass in New York. He has the tools, just needs more experience. Nobody hits the ground running in this business. You know that.

DANIEL

To be honest getting pissed off at you constantly staring at Mary. Are you two in love or something?

JACK

I was just admiring her talent.

MARY

Enough of this garbage!

JACK

What would you have me do? When I am watching you guys perform, not look at Mary?

DANIEL

Yes. That is what I want.

MARY

This has gone on too far. We already talked about this? Are you insane or something?

DANIEL

When it comes to you. Yes I am.

MARY

For the last time, nothing is going on!

JACK

She is right DANIEL We are co-workers. Nothing more.

DANIEL

You are barely in this group man. I think you should leave.

RICK

That is a group decision. Not yours to make.

DANIEL

Should we take a vote.

RICK

You will lose. He deserves a chance. He has potential.

CHET

Lets all just cool down. Problems like this happen in groups all the time. We have to drive about 200 miles by tomorrow night. Pentwater Michigan? Lets just go there. OK?

Daniel walks out of the restaurant.

RICK

I honestly do not know what to do about this?

MARY

I do not. This is not working out for me anymore.

CHET

You better make that clear to him. We have 8 GIGS this month. We have to be able to function as a group.

JACK

Maybe I should just leave. I don't want to be responsible for a breakup like this.

MARY

Its not your fault. This is his problem. Don't take the blame for an insane jealous man.

Jack looks at Mary.

JACK

Can you guys let Mary and I talk for a while? There are some things I want to talk to her about. In private.

The guys all leave for the parking lot.

Mary and Jack walk into an adjacent room.

JACK (CONT'D)

Regardless of your problems with Daniel It looks like you have had them for a while. I have to be honest. I am very attracted to you. You are not only my type, but I think you are a very talented singer.

MARY

I feel attracted to you too. But, under the complicated circumstances.

JACK

I know.

MARY

You don't know the whole story. I am 43, on the road for 17 long years. Living in flop houses, buses, vans, disgusting motels, the middle of nowhere. Hoping that somehow in some way. I would finally be discovered! Make a record!

Something good would happen! 17 long years JACK! I am sick of it!

It should have happened by now! For God sakes! This is my life. And it is going down the drain!

JACK

The problem with the world. Is that we all see the lucky few who for reasons deserved or just pure luck, make it. Some make it very big.

We never see the thousands who try and never seem to get where they want to be. Show business is at best extremely precarious. It is gambling with your whole life. If you win, it can be the greatest life.

Someone like Whitney Houston. Even when you win, there is a whole series of new problems that you never thought could happen.

MARY

This is all I ever wanted to do. I tried being normal, in an office. Having a boss. I hated it!

JACK

So did I. There is nothing good about having a boss. Your financial and professional future is in someone else's hands. Even as a contractor, a temporary worker like I was. It can be really tough most of the time.

Considering your true love is performing, and you are great at singing. You have to do this. You don't have a choice.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

It makes no sense to be so unhappy the whole ride. Trying so hard, for 17 years. My God. I admire your courage.

MARY

You really think so?

JACK

You are great in every way. I am a now a big fan of yours. And I am not saying that just to get on your good side.

MARY

Its been so long. It should have happened by now!

JACK

I wish life was more fair. But it isn't. Had you not tried this, good or bad. You would have never forgiven yourself.

Mary and Jack look into each others eyes and kiss.

JACK (CONT'D)

Hang in there Mary. Your day is coming.

MARY

Promise?

JACK

You know I cannot promise.

MARY

So what do we do now?

JACK

I saw this coming within seconds of first meeting you. I have no clue what happens next with Daniel.

MARY

Day by day?

JACK

All we have.

Mary embraces Jack again and they hug a long time.

EXT. GROUP VAN ON A HIGHWAY - DAY.

Mary, Daniel, Rex, Rick, and Gary is driving the van.

JIM
How many miles man?

GARY
About 150 more. About 3 more hours.
This is Pentwater Michigan. Never
heard of it.

JIM
Man what a life.

DANIEL
Its the road guys. Its the life we
chose years ago. Good with the bad.
Would you rather be in an office
all day, with a fat creep for a
boss?

GARY
Its called a normal life that
almost killed my parents. Not for
me man.

DANIEL
Me either. Mary?

MARY
I have been doing this since I was
26. I sure hope that life is not
for me. But this has been too long
and too hard sometimes.

DANIEL
A bit more enthusiasm?

MARY
That's all I have. Sorry. I have to
sleep now.

Mary falls asleep in her seat. Daniel gives her another bad
look.

JIM
How long now?

GARY
You just asked me 10 minutes ago.
Its still about 3 hours - unless we
are grabbed up by a space ship.

JIM
Keep us all updated.

GARY
Will do. And that includes the
possible spaceship abduction.

Gary rolls his eyes.

INT. DINER NORTH OF CHICAGO - DAY.

Jack is sitting at the Diner Bar. Drinking coffee. A woman sits next to him. DIANE BAKER, 60, 5'2, blonde. Diane sits next to Jack at the bar.

DIANE
Hi.

JACK
Hello. How are you?

DIANE
Fine. I am Diane Baker, what brings
you to the middle of nowhere.

JACK
I am the opening act of a band.
Just started. My name is Jack by
the way.

DIANE
Really? How old are you?

JACK
How old do I look? I just turned
55. Recently retired from over 30
years in the IT field.

DIANE
IT field?

JACK
Information Technology.

DIANE
Yes. I have heard of that.
Computers?

JACK
Yes. Software, Hardware, stress.
Some bad people along the way.
(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Which is why I retired, with hopefully enough money. What about you?

DIANE

I am a talent agent.

JACK

Really? Wow. For what kind of talent?

DIANE

Singers mostly. Sometimes a comedian. But mostly singers. You sing?

JACK

God no. I am the stand-up, hopefully funny opening act. I do not sing.

DIANE

Know any singers?

JACK

That is an amazing question. I know a great one, she is the opening singer for the band I am with. Mary Jackson.

DIANE

Lead singer for Future Adults?

JACK

Yes! You know her?

DIANE

I was her agent years ago. She drinks Jack. Heavily. She was and still is a great singer. But she has a big drinking problem.

This is common with women like her who tour the country and try to make it. When it doesn't work out. Some never give up. Some drop out. Some drink to cope with years of constant disappointment. It can be rough.

JACK

I cant believe it. I think I am in love with her.

DIANE

She has a boyfriend. Some jerk named Derrick.

JACK

Daniel. And he is an jerk for sure. A jealous jerk.

DIANE

Daniel is an x-con. Armed robbery. Beat a former girlfriend up.

JACK

What are the odds of me running into you. What have I got myself into? I cannot believe this. He is an x-con, how the hell did he get into our group?

DIANE

You seem really upset.

JACK

I am. As I said, I think I am in love with Mary.

DIANE

And like too many men. You think you can rescue her? Fix her? Right?

JACK

Exactly. How worried should I be about Daniel?

DIANE

Very. Would not be surprised if he has an unregistered or stolen gun. Watch your back.

You may want to consider walking away from this. This is not worth getting killed. Is Mary aware of your feelings?

JACK

Yes. She is.

DIANE

Does Daniel know?

JACK

He suspects and its getting awkward.

DIANE

Is Chet Green still managing them?

JACK

Yes.

DIANE

I would go to Chet. Tell him all of this. Decide what to do. Mary has been drinking for years. Trying to rescue her is very noble and good man of you. But is not how real life and addiction works.

On the road Mary is probably not attending AA meetings. She does not have the money for any other treatment. Life on the road, can be hard. Life on the road for almost 20 years? That is very hard.

You have heard this 100 times. She has to admit she has a problem, and then she has to want to help herself. There is only so much you can do.

Jack is close to losing his composure.

JACK

I know that I love her.

I can only imagine what her life has been like for so long. God knows I admire any actor or singer who is on the road, with almost no money for so long.

DIANE

If I were you, mainly because of Daniel I would drive away tonight. Do you have a next gig?

JACK

Yes. Tomorrow night.

DIANE

Where?

JACK

Pentwater.

DIANE

Oh. I know that club. Its a dive.

JACK

I heard. Most of them seem to be dives. Even the ones in Brooklyn and New York City.

DIANE

Talk to Chet. Figure this out. I know you can do it.

Diane looks at her watch.

DIANE (CONT'D)

I have to run now.

Diane extends her hand. Jack shakes it.

Diane hands Jack her card.

DIANE (CONT'D)

If you need me. Call my cell phone. I will be happy to help in any way I can. It's been years since I have seen Mary, but I think about her every single day. She is definitely talented.

JACK

You have already been a huge help. What are the odds of me running into you?

DIANE

Coincidences like this happen to me all my life.

Jack gets up to leave and starts to walk out of the diner with Diane. Diane looks at Jack.

DIANE (CONT'D)

What are you going to do?

JACK

I am not the kind of person, to walk away from this now. I am staying. I may never find love like this ever again.

DIANE

Good Luck Jack.

JACK

You too.

Diane and Jack get into their cars and drive away.

Jack looks into the rear view mirror.

EXT. BROKEN DOWN HOTEL - DAY.

Jack parks in the parking lot and goes to the front office.

Inside the front office, is JACK DAVIS, 41, standing behind the front desk.

JACK
Do you have the group, Future
Adults staying here?

JAKE
Yes. They checked in, about an hour
ago.

JACK
What rooms?

JAKE
See that van over there, they are
in the room in front.

JACK
Thanks.

As Jack walks close to one of the rooms he hears the sounds of arguing. It is Mary and Daniel, having a loud fight.

MARY
I wish you would just leave me
alone. I have had enough of your
jealous accusations!

DANIEL
So you feel nothing for this guy?

MARY
I already told you. What do you
want me to say for Christ Sakes?

DANIEL
It doesn't matter does it? I can
see it all in your face.

MARY
My face is all about being tired
and disgusted at this long horrible
depressing life I have chosen. No
money, living in places like this.
I deserve better than this!

DANIEL

We all do. Life is fucking tough. Show business is tougher. If you win, you might win big, but when you don't make it. You have to want it more than the bad times and misery.

MARY

I think its time to give this up.

Jack knocks on the door. Daniel answers.

DANIEL

Jack, why are you here? You were supposed to meet us at the bar.

JACK

Chet told me you were staying here.

DANIEL

Well you are not in the Van Jack. You have your own transportation.

JACK

I could not help hearing what Mary said. I just want to say, don't give up Mary. You are a talented singer.

DANIEL

How the hell do you know?

JACK

I have an ear. I appreciate what is great.

MARY

Either I would have made it, or the band would have by now. Its 17 years of my life down the drain.

JACK

Look at it as entertaining people first. Something great maybe happening second. This is not the time to give up.

DANIEL

You mean that now that you have a place to work in comedy?

JACK

I am retired. Don't need the money.
I just want to help you guys.

DANIEL

You mean Mary.

JACK

I mean. All of you. Really.

MARY

Thank you Jack. Can you leave us?
We have a great deal to discuss,
OK?

JACK

OK. I will leave. I will just
drive up to Pentwater.

DANIEL

You do that.

MARY

See you tomorrow.

Jack leaves the room and Daniel closes the door behind him.

Daniel, very angry. Daniel and Mary start to argue.

DANIEL

I want that fucking guy out of this
band. Tonight! I am calling Chet.

MARY

No.

DANIEL

What do you mean no?

MARY

What I said. Besides this is
something we all vote on. You
cannot fire anyone, before we vote.

DANIEL

This time, I am getting rid of this
guy! No vote!

MARY

I said no. I am the lead singer.
The ONLY singer! NO! He stays.

DANIEL

So you do love this guy?

MARY

If that is what you believe? What you want to hear? OK. I love this guy.

DANIEL

All this time. It finally comes out.

MARY

You should leave the group.

DANIEL

What?

MARY

Stop acting like you didn't hear me. GET OUT of this group! We can get another guitar player anywhere.

DANIEL

Fuck this. I am calling Chet. We are finished bitch.

MARY

Finally you got something right!

Daniel, slaps Mary in the face hard. Mary falls back against the wall and holds her face. Daniel attacks her.

MARY (CONT'D)

Get off of me!!

Jack barges back into the hotel room and a big violent fight begins between Jack and Daniel.

JACK

You fucking scum. Care to try fighting a man for a change!

The two men wrestle, fall over the bed. Jack, is bigger and stronger, lands some hard body shots and then some huge shots to Daniel's face. Knocking him unconscious.

Jack runs over to Mary who is holding her face and crying.

JACK (CONT'D)

Are you OK Mary? Are you OK baby?

MARY

I am OK. I think a tooth is loose.

JACK
He really hit your face. It looks like its swelling.

MARY
What a lowlife scum! Did you kill him?

JACK
No, but he is going to be out for a while. Lets get in my car, and just drive away. Whatever you and him were, is over. As far as the group. I will call Chet while we drive.
OK.

MARY
OK. Lets go.

Jack and Mary leave the hotel room, leaving Daniel laying on the floor.

INT. JACKS CAR - DAY.

Mary and Jack get in Jack's car and drive off.

JACK
I am calling Chet right now. This guy is dangerous. I heard he has a gun.

MARY
Who told you that?

JACK
I met a talent agent at a diner 50 miles back.

MARY
Diane Baker?

JACK
Yes. How did you know?

MARY
We have had dealings with her. She also tell you that I drink?

JACK
Yes she did.

MARY
Drink a lot?

JACK
Yes, kind of.

MARY
Well I do drink for the reasons most people drink. My life is shit. I need to escape this never ending life of never getting anywhere. Having a dream. Having no money. I am sick of it!

JACK
What about your health? What about your voice? Whitney Houston. Look what happened to her because of drugs and drinking.

MARY
The difference is, Whitney hit it big. I am on the road for 17 years and so far. Nothing. Sometimes I think if I stop doing this. I have nothing else. I might just fade away and die.

JACK
Whitney Houston died in 2012 at age 48, laying in a bathtub. Is that what you want? She was perfectly beautiful and talented.

So are you! And consider you just got rid of some horrible baggage, a few miles back.

Jack's cell phone rings, and it comes up on his car console. It is Chet calling.

CHET
Jack!

JACK
Yes. Chet. How are you?

CHET
I am great. Its all set up here at Happy's. Ready to go for you guys tonight.

JACK
Chet. I am in my car with Mary. Something has happened.

CHET

What? I don't need bad news.

JACK

Daniel attacked Mary in their motel room. He slapped her in the face.

CHET

Holy Shit.

JACK

At a minimum, Chet. We need a new guitar player.

MARY

I want him OUT of the group!

CHET

I agree. He has to go.

JACK

Mary and I are a couple now.

CHET

I saw that coming from about 100 miles. Daniel may have a gun.

JACK

I met Diane Baker at a diner about miles back. She told me the same thing.

CHET

So I will call up Daniel and fire him. But unfortunately, we will have to watch our backs. This guy is dangerous.

JACK

Why the hell did you let someone like this in the band in the first place?

CHET

The obvious answer is. I did not know!

JACK

He must have a criminal record.

CHET

I checked. Nothing came up years ago when we were touring LA. When I found out he had a gun, he was in the band for years. Mary are you OK?

MARY

I have a swollen face and a loose tooth.

CHET

There is a small hospital in this town. You might want to visit when you get here.

JACK

We will do that.

MARY

No we will not do that! It is not that bad. I do not need to go to a hospital and get a huge bill because I have no medical insurance!

CHET

Where is Daniel?

JACK

Probably still unconscious in the motel room.

CHET

You knocked him out?

JACK

Yes. Knocked him on his ass. Beat the living shit out of him. He had it coming.

CHET

Could he be dead?

JACK

No, he was breathing when I left.

CHET

I will try and call him. I will get a new guitar player for tonight. I know a guy locally.

JACK

OK.

Jack hangs up his cell phone.

INT. MOTEL ROOM. DAY

Daniel is laying on the floor holding his face.

Daniel's cell phone rings. He picks it up.

DANIEL

Hello?

CHET

Dan. Its Chet.

DANIEL

That asshole scumbag Jack is out of the group tonight.

CHET

I just spoke with Jack, he told me you hit Mary. You are out. Do not bother to come to the bar tonight.

DANIEL

Fuck you. You are out of the group too.

CHET

Daniel, we have a contract. I am the one who makes the final personnel decisions in this group! You hit someone the group! You are OUT!

DANIEL

Something in the contract about hitting?

CHET

Yes. Of course. Its on page 5. The violence clause. Just tell me where you want me to send your last check, so we can settle up.

DANIEL

I never liked you, you fucking scum.

CHET

Never liked you either. But the important thing is that Mary is OK and you are gone. Get some professional help man. You have big time anger issues!

DANIEL

I am hanging around with assholes like you all day. No wonder.

CHET

I am calling the police. Stay away from me and the group. I will have you arrested.

DANIEL

You threatening me?

CHET

I will have you ARRESTED and in jail if you come near any of us. Good luck to you. I will send you the final check.

Chet hangs up the phone. Daniel throws his cell phone against the wall.

EXT. JACKS CAR - DAY.

Jack is driving down a highway with Mary.

MARY

About my drinking. It is not that bad.

JACK

What does not that bad mean? How much?

MARY

I need vodka at night when I can't sleep. Some wine with dinner. That is it.

JACK

I did the vodka thing when I was working. In the IT field, the stress at times was unbelievably bad. So were some of the people.

I often found it hard to sleep. I drank late at night to sleep. No sleep is very bad for your immune system and ultimately your health.

MARY

There. You drink some. No big deal.

JACK

Why did Diane say.

MARY (CONT'D)

She is a lying bitch! That is why!

JACK

OK. No need to get so angry. I am on your side! Remember?

MARY

Sometimes I need to drink. This life on the road has been so hard for too long!.

JACK

I have been there. God forbid when it ever starts hurting your health, you have to either cut back or stop.

MARY

I know. I have mostly stopped.

JACK

That is good to hear Mary. I believe you.

MARY

Really. I have really mostly stopped.

JACK

I believe you.

MARY

Do you really?

JACK

Why don't you believe that I really believe you? This is getting a little crazy.

MARY

You made a face.

JACK

I made a face?

MARY

Yes.

JACK

How? When?

MARY

It was like you did not believe me face.

JACK

I do believe you. We have not known each other long enough, for you to know my faces. I have only one face. I do believe you. Whatever problems we may have in the future, we will work through them. OK?

MARY

Daniel is dangerous. Are you worried?

JACK

OK. Now I will make a real face.

Jack makes a face that makes Mary laugh.

Yes I am worried. He has a gun. What kind of a gun? We are all on alert, starting tonight.

MARY

Maybe we should skip tonight's show.

JACK

We will talk to Chet and make a group decision before the show.

MARY

I agree.

JACK

Here is yet another face. I am falling in love with you. Believe that. I sure hope I have a face for falling in love with you Mary.

MARY

I am falling in love with you too.

JACK

Is that you're falling in love with Jack face?

MARY

Yes I think it is.

Mary rests her head on Jack's shoulder.

MARY (CONT'D)

I think you are the first good thing to happen to me. In so many years.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I don't know how long its been. I don't think. I have ever been in love before.

JACK

I feel the same about you.

Mary and Jack hug and kiss.

EXT. HAPPY'S BAR - DAY.

Jack drives into the parking lot of the bar.

Mary and Jack arrive.

Rick and Gary are in the lobby waiting.

JACK

Is Chet here yet?

RICK

No.

JACK

Something has happened. We need a meeting. Daniel is out of the group.

GARY

What?

They all walk into Happy's bar. Jack quickly finds a private room.

JACK

Daniel hit Mary. You can see her face is still red and swollen.

GARY

Are you OK Mary? That is one hell of a welt.

RICK

What happened?

JACK

They had a huge argument and breakup. I was there in time to prevent something worse than a vicious slap. I got into a fight with Daniel and knocked him on his ass.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Chet called him and fired him from the group. Now we need a new guitar player.

RICK

We have 3 hours before the show. How will he be ready by then?

JACK

That I do not know. There is more going on. Supposedly Daniel is dangerous, an x-con and has a gun.

GARY

Man. What a great day this is! Chet! His job is to vet people for this band. What the hell is going on?

JACK

He said he checked. There were no records of Daniel's previous history in crime when he was hired. At least that is what he told me.

GARY

What crime?

JACK

Armed robbery.

Chet walks into the back room.

CHET

Hey guys. I called Daniel He is no longer in the band. Not happy about it. But we are better off. He is a hot head and a potential danger.

GARY

You are supposed to check people out!

CHET

As I told Jack. I checked. He had no record when he was first hired.

GARY

I find that hard to believe.

CHET

What do you want me to say? I called the local police. We were in LA at the time.

GARY

You fucked up? Put us all in danger.

CHET

If that is what you want to hear man. OK. I fucked up.

GARY

He committed armed robbery?

MARY

He was the driver. For a group that robbed a bank.

RICK

How long have you known?

MARY

He told me 6 months ago.

CHET

You should have told me. I am the manager of this group!

JACK

Mary, why didn't you tell me this?

MARY

It was a secret between us. Before I knew what I now know. I really thought he had changed.

CHET

How dangerous is he?

MARY

You can see what he did to my face.

JACK

He could just have easily punched you. We heard he has a gun. Diane Baker told me.

Mary looks at Chet.

MARY

Are we in trouble?

CHET

We have to prepare for the worst. Watch our backs. I notified the police about this guy. What happened tonight.

MARY

Do you have a new guitar player?

CHET

Yes. He is coming in about an hour.

GARY

How the hell did you find this guy?

CHET

Its what I do.

GARY

Does this fucking guy have a criminal record?

CHET

I have worked with him before. He is clean.

MARY

We will have about 2 hours to get him ready.

CHET

We have done this before. We can pull this off.

MARY

Who is this guy?

CHET

He is good enough. Believe me.

JACK

You sure he is clean? I mean spending time in jail wise?

CHET

Enough of the jokes. Lets get to work.

INT. MAIN ROOM HAPPY'S BAR - NIGHT.

Later.

The owner of the club PAUL JACOBS, 50, gray hair, 5'11, walks into the back room.

PAUL
Hi. Nice to meet everyone.

Paul walks up to everyone and shakes their hand. He hugs Mary, who is uncomfortable.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Sorry. I am a hugger. I own this club, we just started to have bands and comedians a year ago. Its great to have you here. I have heard good things.

CHET
We have heard good things about the club. We will be having a new guitar player tonight. This is Steve.

STEVE RYAN, 31 shakes Paul's hand.

DOUG
Nice to meet you.

PAUL
What happened to the other guy?

CHET
He had another commitment and just left the group.

PAUL
Are you guys all ready? When did the other guy leave?

CHET
About 2 days ago. We are all ready to go. We ironed some things out a few hours ago. It will be a great show.

PAUL
We have a policy here that if you guys either don't show up or are rude or bad, we hold the right to either not pay or pay a smaller percentage.

CHET
I am fully aware of the rule. I have read the contract.
(MORE)

CHET (CONT'D)

As I said, we are professionals and ready to go.

PAUL

OK. I look forward to the show tonight.

INT. STAGE HAPPY'S - NIGHT.

Two hours later. Happy's bar main stage.

Paul walks On stage.

PAUL

Hello everyone. How was traffic? Yes I know, we are mostly in the middle of nowhere. We have a special treat tonight. The first appearance of the band, the Future Adults here at Happy's. We also have a stand up comedian to open up the night first. His name is Jack Solomon!

Paul looks backstage.

PAUL (CONT'D)

A retired guy after many years in the Information Technology field. Give a hand to Jack!

Several in the crowd of 40 people applaud as Jack enters the stage.

JACK

Hello, how is everybody. As Paul said, this is a remote location. I think its the most remote location I have ever been in. I am from New Jersey?

One person claps.

JACK (CONT'D)

Oh great. One person, how are you sir?

Nobody answers.

JACK (CONT'D)

I will take that as good.

Some laughing in the crowd.

JACK (CONT'D)

As Paul said, I retired from the Information Technology field about a year ago. I am adjusting to being retired. Lets try stand-up comedy. So far, I have no idea what I am doing.

Recently, I walked into a CVS and I was reminded of something I already kind of knew, but never understood. Those people in the Pharmacy department wearing the white coats and filling those bottles with tiny pills? This job takes six years of college. Six years of Chemistry. Six. I am not kidding.

First why would anyone want to take 6 years of college and advanced Chemistry to hang out in a CVS? Your whole life is holding tweezers and loading pills into tiny bottles? Why is the skill of pill loading with tweezers requiring 6 years of Chemistry?

Four years is all that most of the world can stand of college, much less afford? Six years? Why?

Some of the crowd laugh.

How much do they pay for this job? 150 thousand a year? How many pill loadings is worth 30 years of a job that bad. I don't know about you people, but when I go to any CVS or Walgreens, I can't wait to get the hell out of there. Let me find the mouthwash and floss and run for my life. These people spend 30 years hanging out in these stores with tweezers!

However the white coats make sense to me with a job this mindlessly boring.

Some in the audience laugh.

JACK (CONT'D)

This is 5 days a week. Who could do this job for 30 days? 30 years?

More laughter.

JACK (CONT'D)

According to statistics anywhere from 75-85% of all people hate their jobs. I am using hate here. I have always heard. Find out what you love and then figure out how to get paid for it. Easier said than done. For me this is sleeping, but as far as I know, cant make money while asleep. Too bad, because I would be great at that.

Some laughs

Like Paul said, I am the opening act tonight. So let me introduce the band, who is touring the country right now, mostly the Midwest. They are known as the Future Adults and the lead singer is Mary Jackson. Lets hear it for them!

The audience applauds for the group. Jack watches in the back mesmerized by Mary's outstanding talent. The new guitar player does a good job filling in.

INT. HAPPY'S MAIN ROOM - NIGHT.

Jack, Chet, Mary, Gary, Dave and the new band member Steve are talking.

CHET

Steve. Very good job tonight. You picked it up very well.

MARY

I agree. That was very good for 2 hours practice. Thank you.

STEVE

No problem. I have been in this situation before. What happened to the previous guy?

CHET

At this point. This is not something we will ever discuss. We will let you know more down the road. All you need to know now is that he is no longer in the group.

STEVE

OK.

Mary walks over to Jack and whispers in his ear.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM HAPPY'S - NIGHT.

Mary and Jack are in a private conference room, hugging.

MARY

Did I look OK during my performance?

JACK

You looked as great as you always look. I am a fan.

MARY

That entire time. I thought I was going to be shot.

JACK

Shot?

MARY

Shot.

JACK

Its that bad with Daniel? Is he really this dangerous?

MARY

Yes. Daniel is crazy. I thought he was going to rush into the room and shoot me. It felt so read. Like I was going to die any minute.

JACK

Why they hell were you with this guy? You deserve the best man in the world. I mean, look at you. You risked your life for a lowlife like this?

MARY

It was the road. Being so depressed all the time.

JACK

Were you drinking with this guy?

MARY

Yes.

JACK

A lot?

MARY

Yes.

JACK

So you were more drinking buddies then? I would have been extremely understanding, if you told me this about 2 days ago. So your drinking with Daniel was bad?

MARY

Sorry I lied. I did not want to tell you the truth.

JACK

I understand. Under these circumstances. I am on your side.

MARY

I drank heavily. With Daniel. Its the only reason why I was with him. To get high or drunk. Escape from the day by day depressing road and so many bad days.

JACK

Are you trying to push me away?

MARY

No! I want you to know the whole truth. No secrets between us.

JACK

OK. I appreciate that. I respect what you are saying.

JACK (CONT'D)

Why do you think he is violent enough to attack us with a gun?

MARY

Some of the things he said. His time in prison, for 3 years. Standing there singing tonight. I was thinking about quitting all of this. This thing with Daniel. I think its the push I needed to finally leave this life. For good.

JACK

Quitting? Now?

MARY
Yes. Quitting.

JACK
You can't quit now.

MARY
Why the hell not?

JACK
You could be so close!

MARY
I am tired of this. Tired of maybe being so close and ignored! Never getting even one lucky break after so long! So many years of hard dues. No payoff. And now thinking I am going to be shot!

JACK
I understand it has been hard.

MARY
Do you? You have been doing this a few months. You have no idea what this life is. So many of us never make it. No matter how many years. So many of us never get that one lucky break.

JACK
I don't know what to say to you. Just because a person deserves that lucky break in life. It does not mean that they will get it. The point is. Never give up. Keep trying. You are good enough to never stop trying.

Jack walks up to Mary and holds his hands on the sides of her face.

You are very beautiful and very talented. Yes, I do not know what this life is like. Think of it this way. Singing and entertaining like you do. Is this better than sitting in a cubicle, so very unhappy? Or doing what you love?

MARY

It was. Probably for my first 10 years. Now, I am tired and depressed.

JACK

As an employee my career was a disaster for the first 9 years. I could not even get a normal job. Then I went independent and things turned around. It was very hard for way too many years.

MARY

None of that. Is relatable to my sick situation Jack.

JACK

If you leave. There is no way I will continue with this insane second career.

MARY

Please. Don't put that on me. Just go back to New York and start over.

JACK

Just give it a few more months?

MARY

What about Daniel?

JACK

Lets talk to Chet.

MARY

One more month. But that is all.

JACK

One more.

Jack and Mary hug.

Chet walks into the room.

CHET

Am I missing something?

JACK

Chet. Mary is worried about Daniel.

CHET

We all are. If he was going to try anything sick, I thought this would be the night.

MARY

I thought I was going to be shot.

CHET

Shot? Are you kidding me? I had no sense that he is a killer.

MARY

He just might kill me. Some of the stories he told me about prison. He is dangerous. I am scared.

CHET

Jesus Christ. I would love to throw this lowlife in jail, but we have no reason to arrest him. There is no crime to report. Other than slapping you in the face.

JACK

So we wait around for him to go insane one night?

CHET

I am going to do two things. I will call the police and then contact a private investigator to follow Daniel. We cannot perform when our lead singer is worried about getting shot.

I will get reports on where Daniel is and what he is doing at all times. That is all we have.

Jack looks at Mary.

JACK

That sounds good enough.

CHET

I will pay for everything. Don't worry.

MARY

OK. I agree with this. Don't wait. Start tonight. Right now.

CHET

I already called the PI. This will start tomorrow.

MARY

Its hard to believe how fast this all went south.

CHET

Worry about performing. Not some insane creep.

MARY

Chet. I think I have learned how to perform.

CHET

You know what I mean. Do not let someone who is mentally ill ruin your career.

MARY

What career!

Mary walks out of the room. Chet looks at Jack.

CHET

So what is with her? What did she mean?

JACK

She is at the crossroads. She is tired of no money and the road and never getting her break.

CHET

She knew that going in. Very few make it.

JACK

She is probably also sick of hearing that so many times. She may leave the group Chet. I tried to change her mind. She agreed to one more month.

CHET

Jesus Christ. She leaves. The group is history.

JACK

She leaves and I leave too. I don't want to be in this group without her.

CHET

You guys are an item?

JACK

I am in love with her. She might be in love with me. I am not sure.

CHET

So that was the reason for the blowup with Daniel.

JACK

Yes it was. Part of the reason. The other reason is he hit her.

CHET

Quite the soap opera we have going here. If you leave, you going back to New York?

JACK

There or LA. Don't really care. I can't go back to the IT field.

CHET

You have some promise, but that doesn't mean shit in this business. Its months years of hitting the road, hoping for a miracle lucky break.

Most never get their big shot. Your upside is that you have money, you are retired, you do not have to do this Jack.

JACK

She is so damned talented and beautiful. She deserves better than this life.

CHET

If you want the reason for Mary not making it. The number one reason has been her drinking. She has had a few off nights. That is all it takes to screw up a singing career.

JACK

Have not seen that yet.

CHET

Jack. You may just be the one to save her life and career.

(MORE)

CHET (CONT'D)

She has talent. Do not let her give up this business. She can sing and on her best night. She can be great. She has paid too many dues and has no other real options to give up now. Not after 17 fucking years!

JACK

I will do my best.

CHET

I am going to call the PI again. I will keep you both informed.

Chet leaves the room.

EXT. GUN SHOP - DAY.

Daniel steps out of his car and heads into a gun shop.

INT. GUN SHOP - DAY.

MAN AT COUNTER

How can I help you.

DANIEL

I am looking for any pistol that shoots 15 bullets every 3 seconds.

MAN AT COUNTER

We have those. They are costly. Why not just a normal hand gun?

DANIEL

Not what I want man.

The man at the counter pulls out a tray of 7 different pistols.

MAN AT COUNTER

These are all the repeaters we sell right now.

DANIEL

How much.

MAN AT COUNTER

Well the cheapest is 900 dollars. The rest are over 1000. 1100, 1300, 1400, 1500, 1699.

DANIEL

I will take the 900. Not made of money.

MAN AT COUNTER

Few of us are sir.

DANIEL

How many bullets does this shoot?

MAN AT COUNTER

Is this for birds?

DANIEL

How did you know?

MAN AT COUNTER

Its the main reason why people buy a gun like this. This one shoots 8 every three seconds.

DANIEL

Good enough. I will take it.

MAN AT COUNTER

You have to fill out a form and wait about 2 months sir.

DANIEL

Two months? I have a trip scheduled for next week. Come on guy. Have a heart.

MAN AT COUNTER

This is the state law. Nothing I can do.

Daniel pulls out his wallet. And gives the man 100 dollars.

DANIEL

Will this do the trick?

MAN AT COUNTER

Where are you going bird hunting?

DANIEL

Down the road. About 100 miles from here with friends.

I don't know sir.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Here is another 50. OK now?

MAN AT COUNTER
Just don't tell anyone I did this.
This is state law.

DANIEL
Money talks!

MAN AT COUNTER
It always does.

The man hands Daniel the gun case and a box of bullets. That will be 1007 dollars including the box of bullets and tax.

DANIEL
OK. Here is my credit card.

MAN AT COUNTER
OK thanks man. Good hunting.

DANIEL
What?

MAN AT COUNTER
Good hunting. You know. The birds?

DANIEL
Yes. Right. The birds.

Daniel exits the gun shop.

EXT. GUN SHOP PARKING LOT - DAY.

In the parking lot is private detective. JOSEPH CARSON. 65. Gray hair. He takes pictures of Daniel as he exits the gun shop.

Joseph makes a call on his cell phone.

Chet is in a local parking lot eating a hamburger.

JOSEPH
Chet?

CHET
Hello Joe?

JOSEPH
Our target just walked out of a gun shop with a case that is definitely for a gun. It could be a fast shooting pistol. I am not sure.

CHET

What about having to wait weeks for him to be checked out?

JOSEPH

He must have paid the guy off.

CHET

You going to report the gun shop owner?

JOSEPH

No. I am here to tail a guy and report to you. That guy in there is some poor slob who needs money.

CHET

And so, myself and this entire group is now in danger.

JOSEPH

I am continuing to tail him.

CHET

You going to call the police?

JOSEPH

Right after we hang up. They have to know what is going on with this guy.

CHET

I will tell the others. Jesus Christ.

JOSEPH

You have a crazy one there. I will do my best.

CHET

Thanks for your work. I mailed the check.

JOSEPH

Thanks. I will keep you posted.

Chet hangs up his cell phone.

CHET

I think we are in trouble.

INT. CHET IN HIS CAR - DAY.

Chet drives off from the parking lot to the highway.

He calls Jack on his cell phone.

CHET

Jack.

JACK

Yes.

CHET

I consider you the new leader of this group, along with me.

JACK

I am so new.

CHET

You are the oldest. You have the most common sense and experience.

JACK

OK. Thank you for considering me.

CHET

We are in trouble. All of us.

JACK

What do you mean?

CHET

Daniel just bought a gun. My PI just called me.

JACK

That is not good news.

CHET

I am worried. We are still tailing this asshole and I have called the police.

JACK

What's next?

CHET

All future gigs are cancelled immediately. We are in hiding until this is resolved.

JACK

I agree.

CHET
Where are you?

JACK
In a cheap motel out of town with
Mary.

CHET
I would move as soon as you can. Go
somewhere quiet and off the main
highway, deep into a small town
somewhere.

JACK
OK. I will let Mary know.

CHET
When I get more info. I will call.

JACK
Thank you Chet.

CHET
No problem. I am on this. Don't
worry.

JACK
Don't worry? No chance.

CHET
I know. Bye.

JACK
Bye.

Chet and Jack both hang up.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY.

Mary is watching TV on the bed looking at Jack on the phone.

MARY
Is that Chet?

JACK
Yes.

MARY
Don't tell me, there are big
problems.

JACK
That asshole has a gun now.

MARY

I thought he had a gun before.

JACK

Maybe he does, but now its probably a better one.

MARY

Jesus Christ. If I get shot, it would be the perfect end to my shit life.

JACK

Don't talk like that. I happen to love you!

MARY

You do?

JACK

Yes. It is not obvious?

MARY

I was 25, almost 26. I wanted to be a singer my whole life. I started doing this. People thought I was good. Now I am 43. Never counted the number of shows, the number of bad hotels. You love me? Do you love me or the singer you see on stage? I drink Jack.

JACK

I want to protected you Mary. You are talented. You are an artist. Just because you are not at the Grammy Awards every year, does not mean that you are not a great singer!

MARY

It also does not mean that I can stop hanging out in hell holes like this one Jack.

JACK

Show business is not for the faint of heart. We had an agreement. One more month. Step one. Stop drinking. Its bad for your health baby. Please. For me.

MARY

I will try.

Jack gets in the bed with Mary and hugs her. Close to tears.

MARY (CONT'D)

What the hell are we going to do now?

JACK

Chet has cancelled all future gigs
We are in hiding for the next few days. The police know about Daniel. There is nothing else right now.

MARY

I am his first target. You are the second.

JACK

Chet thinks we should move to another motel off of the highway.

MARY

I have to sleep for a while. Lets do that later OK? I am always so very tired.

JACK

OK.

Jack hugs Mary.

Jack's cell phone rings. Jack answers the phone.

JACK (CONT'D)

Hello?

CHET

Jack its Chet. I have called a meeting. Get to the Plaza Hotel in downtown Milwaukee in 3 hours. Can you make it?

JACK

Yes. We are about 90 minutes away.

CHET

The police will be meeting all of us there. We need a strategy to deal with this Daniel problem.

JACK

Good progress.

CHET
I am worried. I will fill you in
when we get there. OK?

JACK
See you in 2 hours Chet.

CHET
See you then.

JACK
Bye.

JACK (CONT'D)
Mary. Chet wants a meeting with all
of us in two hours. We have to
drive to Milwaukee.

MARY
Meeting about what?

JACK
Chet invited the police. Its a
strategy session. Chet is taking no
chances.

MARY
That does make me feel. Only a
little better.

JACK
Lets get out of here.

Jack and Mary quickly pack and leave the Motel.

EXT. PLAZA HOTEL. DOWNTOWN MILWAUKEE - DAY.

Jack and Mary walk into the main lobby. They are greeted by
Chet and the entire band, waiting in the lobby.

CHET
Glad you made it.

JACK
Not a meeting anyone would want to
miss Chet.

CHET
I have a conference room reserved.
Its back here.

They all follow Chet down a long hallway, into a mid-sized
conference room.

CHET (CONT'D)
I got coffee and donuts for you
guys. Have a seat.

They all sit in a circular table. Chet stands in the middle.

CHET (CONT'D)
Unfortunately, the news on Daniel
is not good.

STEVE
Who the hell is Daniel?

JACK
Daniel is the guy you replaced. He
is also unstable and now has a gun.

MARY
He always had a gun. We think he
now has a new better gun.

CHET
Lets not speculate on what kind of
a gun he now has. I have the police
coming in a few minutes.

GARY
The police are coming?

CHET
Yes. I am not taking any chances
with this group. I am going to pay
for body guards from my take.

Two police officers walk into the conference room. Officer
JOHN MEYER, 35, and officer JAMES HARRISON, 39.

MEYER
Chet?

CHET
Yes. Nice to meet you. Thank you
for coming.

MEYER
I am Officer Meyer, this is officer
Harrison.

HARRISON
You know a PI by the name of Joseph
Crane?

CHET

Yes. He is the Private Investigator
I hired to track Daniel.

HARRISON

He was just found in parking lot,
shot 4 times.

CHET

Is he dead?

HARRISON

Yes. He was shot in the head twice
sir.

CHET

Do we assume it was Daniel?

MEYER

This is under investigation. We do
not speculate.

RICK

Jesus Christ. Shot 4 times?

MARY

I think we are all in trouble.
Especially me.

I vote we end the group. There is
no way I am ever going to sing
again. This is my wake up call I
needed to finally get the hell out
of this waste of life career in
show business.

CHET

We don't know if it was Daniel
Mary.

MARY

Are you kidding? Are you stupid? Of
course it was him and now he is
after me, Jack or God knows who
else.

Mary hugs Jack

MARY (CONT'D)

I have never been more terrified.

JACK

I know. I feel the same way baby.

GARY
Sure looks like you two are an
item.

CHET
Perfect time for jokes.

Chet looks at the two police officers.

CHET (CONT'D)
What do we do now?

HARRISON
In this case. Mary is right. Until
we either catch or kill this guy.
You have no choice. No more
performances.

JACK
Chet. I don't see any other
solution right now. We have to
change direction. This guy could
come out of nowhere, shooting all
of us.

CHET
We need a plan to disband. For all
we know he could be outside right
now.

MARY
Chet. Don't say something stupid
like that. I am terrified enough
already. He is crazy.

Gary looks at Mary.

GARY
What the hell did you see in that
jerk anyway?

JACK
Hey. Lets not pile on. Not now OK?

MARY
(To Gary)
Fuck you. Does that answer your
question?

GARY
Under the circumstances. I thought
it was a fair question.

JACK

Gary. Know when there is no chance
you can win OK?

MEYER

Our suggestion is that you guys
split up into 2 or 3 groups. Nobody
should be alone. Stay off the radar
until we can track this guy down.

Now that he probably killed a PI
who was a former cop. The entire
force is out looking for him. Chet
you will remain our main contact.

CHET

Gary you and Rick are with me. Mary
and Jack you can stay together.
Steve, you can join my group?

STEVE

For the record. You should have
told me what was going on before I
started. Had I known I might get
shot and killed, I would have
thought twice about joining this
group.

CHET

When I called you I had no way of
knowing that all this would happen.
Believe in the police. They are on
top of this.

STEVE

I am still pissed off.

CHET

Noted. We all have our cell phone
numbers. Lets stay in touch. Mary,
you and Jack head West and I will
head East.

CHET (CONT'D)

Take care of our lead singer Jack.

JACK

You know I will.

MARY

I want to let everybody know that
when this is over.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

The odds are I am walking away from this life for good.

RICK

Mary. Don't say that. We have been on the road for eight years together. What will you do?

MARY

Drive an UBER. I don't know or care. This has gone on long enough with no payoff.

CHET

Lets table all of this for a few days, and see what happens with Daniel and the police. OK Mary?

MARY

I promised Jack a month. That is as far as I go.

CHET

Lets go with one month.

Chet turns and shakes the hands with the two police officers.

CHET (CONT'D)

Guys, thanks for your help. I will be in touch. Let me know if you need anything or caught that crazy bastard.

MEYER

This guy never should have been on the streets in the first place. Much less in a band that travels around the country. We will keep you posted.

The two police officers turn to leave.

JIM

Like we have been saying day 1. How did he slip through the cracks?

CHET

I will not talk about the what if's with you again. I checked him out. The LA police probably did not check thoroughly enough. Its not my fault. Now we are in this situation.

Jim walks up to Chet.

JIM

If I am still alive after all of this, and one of us is hurt or killed. I am coming after you.

Jack pulls them apart.

JACK

For Christ sakes. Enough of this shit! What's done is done. We have to stay together. At each others throats is not going to work.

Chet confronts Jim.

CHET

Don't you ever threaten me again. For the 5th time. I already told you. I had him checked out. Nothing more I could have done.

MARY

What is next?

CHET

We all scatter like the cops told us. Keep in constant touch with the police and each other with our cell phones. Hopefully they will catch him. Soon.

CHET (CONT'D)

I have already cancelled all our shows for the next two weeks. If you guys need money. Let me know.

JIM

A better idea from the start would have been to never hire this creep in the first place.

CHET

You are never going to let it go?

JIM

Nope.

CHET

Good to know asshole.

JIM

No problem asshole.

Jack separates the two men as they are eye to eye.

JACK
Getting sick of this shit.

The two men separate.

JACK (CONT'D)
Chet. I am driving with Mary. You guys can break things up however you want.

CHET
I will call the PI. I will let you know how this is panning out.

Chet exits the nightclub.

JACK
Mary. Lets get out of here.

MARY
I am actually scared to walk in the parking lot.

JACK
We can run to the car. Its close.
OK?

MARY
OK.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT.

Daniel is in his car, 200 yards from the front of the bar.

Jack and Mary run out of the bar into Jack's car.

They drive off and Daniel follows them.

Some 30 minutes later.

MARY
Are you as terrified as I am? I keep seeing myself shot and falling.

JACK
Try not to think that way.

MARY
I can't stop.

JACK

We will relax with a good old movie and some wine when we get to the hotel.

MARY

What hotel?

JACK

One that is off the main road. Out of the way, somewhere deep in the city of Milwaukee.

MARY

How long have we been on this highway.

JACK

About 20 minutes?

MARY

Same headlights behind us. The whole way.

JACK

That probably means nothing.

MARY

Try and pull off the next exit. See if we are followed.

JACK

There is an exit up ahead.

Jack pulls off the highway. Onto a small road. Very dark.

JACK (CONT'D)

See. No lights behind us.

The car follows them. Mary sees the same lights again.

MARY

See. We are being followed!

JACK

Lets not panic! This could be nothing.

MARY

Or Daniel looking for his opportunity to kill me.

JACK

I will speed up. Lets see if those lights stay the same distance.

MARY

The car is the same distance and getting closer.

JACK

All we can do is drive faster. There is an unpaved road, lets take it.

MARY

Jack I am scared.

JACK

So am I. We will be OK. Call 911 on your cell phone.

MARY

We don't even know where we are.

JACK

Its off of exit 501 off of highway 22.

Mary calls the police.

MARY

Yes, this is Mary Jackson. I think we are being tailed by a killer! Jack, they say to pull over somewhere and hide.

JACK

You're kidding.

MARY

That is what he said!

JACK

Look over there, some kind of a barn.

Jack drives to an abandoned barn and parks.

Mary and Jack run from the car and into the barn.

INT. ABANDONED BARN - NIGHT.

The barn is abandoned, has a bed on the second floor loft and an disaster of a kitchen on the first floor. Jack and Mary walk the stairs to the loft and look out the window.

MARY

When we turned in here, I did not see a light behind us. There are no lights out there now.

JACK

Looks like we might have been wrong.

MARY

Maybe that person was not following us?

JACK

It sure looked like someone was.

Mary looks around the loft.

MARY

You know Jack. Its really nice in here.

Jack looks around the room.

JACK

For an abandoned building, it is rather nice.

Mary and Jack walk upstairs to the loft.

Mary smiles at Jack. They both look at the bed.

Mary and Jack make love passionately for hours.

INT. ABANDONED BARN. DAY.

Next Day.

Jack and Mary wake up the next morning. The sun is shining through the darkened dirty windows.

MARY

Wake up sleepy head.

JACK

Sleepy head?

MARY
Have not heard that one before?

JACK
Not since the 70s on any number of
bad sitcoms.

Mary laughs.

Jack's cell phone rings. The caller id shows Chet is calling.

JACK (CONT'D)
Chet. Any news?

CHET
They caught him.

JACK
Wow. They caught Daniel. Where?

CHET
He was coming out of a bar not too
far from here and they picked him
up.

JACK
Man. That is great news. What a
relief!

Mary looks at Jack.

MARY
They caught Daniel?

JACK
Yes. Coming out of some bar near
where Chet is.

MARY
Oh my God. Thank God this is over!
Maybe we can sleep again. Go back
to work?

JACK
Sounds like you want to stay?

MARY
As long as we are together.

JACK
I feel the same way.

CHET

I hate to break up the romance. But I have the police at my front door.

JACK

OK. Thanks for the call. We could not be more relieved.

CHET

You and me both. Glad this is finally over.

JACK

Thanks Chet. Let us know what is next.

CHET

After I talk to the cops.

JACK

OK man.

CHET

OK, bye for now.

JACK

Bye.

Mary and Jack both stand up and hug.

JACK (CONT'D)

Finally. Some good news.

MARY

I am actually looking forward to getting back to work!

JACK

Mary. That is so good to hear. I am so happy for you. Happy for us. Do you want to get married?

MARY

You mean like now?

JACK

Now I mean. Some day soon?

MARY

Is this a proposal?

JACK

It is.

MARY
Shouldn't you be on your knee with
a ring?

JACK
Well. Due to my trick knee. Later
OK?

Mary laughs and they hug.

There is a noise outside the barn.

MARY
What is that?

JACK
Probably a deer.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY.

Chet lets the cops into his hotel room. The other band
members are with him.

OFFICER ALAN MILLER, 38 and LOU STANLEY, 44, enter the hotel
room.

OFFICE MILLER.
Chet Green?

CHET
Yes. I am Chet.

OFFICER MILLER.
We need you to come with us to
identify Daniel and place charges.

CHET
You got it.

OFFICE MILLER.
We picked up Daniel Richards about
2 hours ago. Coming out of a bar.
He did have a gun on him.

CHET
Daniel Rich.

OFFICER MILLER.
Richards.

CHET

No. His name is Daniel Rich. I made that very clear from the first time I called you guys.

OFFICER MILLER.

I am sure it is nothing. Lou. You have his picture on your cell phone.

OFFICER STANLEY

Here he is.

Officer Stanley shows Chet the picture.

CHET

Jesus Christ! That is not him! What the hell is going on! Who are you guys? How could you make a mistake like this!

OFFICER STANLEY

I have his name as Daniel Richards. Not Rich.

JIM

Chet! You have to call Jack and Mary!

Chet looks for his cell phone. Where the hell is it! Guys! Find my cell phone!. Don't you guys have Jack's number?

JIM (CONT'D)

No I don't have it.

STEVE

I don't have it either.

CHET

We are fucked! Someone find my cell phone!

Jim finds Chet's phone buried under clothing on the bed.

CHET (CONT'D)

Give me it. FUCK. The battery is dead! I don't believe this!

JIM

Don't panic man. For all we know Daniel is way out of town somewhere!

CHET

Rick. You have to have Jacks
number.

RICK

Yes I have it. I am dialing.

INT. ABANDONED BARN - DAY.

MARY

I am sure I heard something
downstairs.

JACK

Mary. They caught that nutcase. It
has to be a deer or something.

MARY

Can you check?

I will check.

Jack grabs a 2-by-four and heads slowly downstairs and looks
around.

JACK

Mary there is nothing down here.

MARY

It was definitely a noise.

JACK

It could be some rogue squirrel or
a stupid bird. Lets just get out of
here and get back with the band. We
have been here long enough anyway.
Who knows, maybe we can be arrested
for breaking and entering.

MARY

And making love.

JACK

Which I am sure is also against the
law in abandoned barns.

Jack's cell phone rings. Caller ID says Rick.

Mary grabs the cell phone.

MARY

Rick? Everything OK?

RICK
They caught the wrong guy! Daniel
is still out there!

MARY
WHAT?! Oh my God. How could this
happen?

JACK
Mary. What is wrong?

MARY
They caught the wrong guy!

JACK
What? How the fuck can that happen?

MARY
Daniel Richards. Not Daniel Rich.

JACK
OK. Lets just get in the car and
get the hell out of here.

MARY
He could be out there waiting for
us!

JACK
I will call 911 again.

MARY
Rick. Jack is calling 911.

Jack dials 911.

JACK
Yes. This is Jack Solomon. There
could be a person outside stalking
us.

OPERATOR
Where are you?

JACK
Mary. Where are we? I have no idea
where we are. Can you track the GPS
in my cell phone?

OPERATOR
Yes we can do that.

JACK
I will leave my cell phone on.

OPERATOR

Just stay put sir. The police are on their way.

JACK

OK. We are in an abandoned barn. On the second floor.

OPERATOR

OK sir. Just stay put. They are about 20 minutes out.

JACK

20 minutes? I hope we have 20 minutes.

Jack hangs up the phone.

MARY

20 minutes is probably too long. Maybe we should try and make a break for it.

JACK

That murderer might be out there when we run for the car.

MARY

Should we hide under the bed? Somewhere?

JACK

I am not going to hide. No way. I am a man and I will face this head on.

MARY

Jack he has a gun that probably fires 5 bullets a second.

JACK

Where could we hide anyway? Over there, the haystacks. Lets stay there for a while. If he comes upstairs we can see him.

MARY

OK.

Jack and Mary go to the back of the loft and sit behind several large square haystacks.

JACK

Its hard to believe, any of this is happening. So many years of being unhappy, never meeting the right woman. Then I meet you. And now. Hiding from a gunman. All I did was try to be a stand-up comedian.

MARY

No matter what happens. I am glad we found each other.

Jack and Mary embrace.

JACK

As insane as this sounds. This barn is so nice. I have had thoughts of renovating it and turning it into a nice house.

MARY

Jack. That is insane. Imagine the cost of that? In the middle of nowhere?

JACK

I might have been kidding, but look around, its nicely built. It even smells like wood inside. It would take some work. Not by me, I have no skills.

Mary kisses Jack and they hug.

There is another noise outside.

Jack and Mary look into the room from behind the haystacks.

JACK (CONT'D)

I think its finally time. We figure out what the hell is going on out there.

MARY

You can't just walk out there in the open. The police will be here in a few minutes. He has a gun, remember?

JACK

We hope they will be here, soon.

MARY

Jack. I can't lose you. Not now. I think with you. I am finally happy. I have never been happy. Never in my whole life. Don't go out there. Stay with me.

JACK

Another thing we have in common my love. True love? Happiness? What is that? Until now. I can honestly say. This is the first time in my life I am actually happy.

Mary and Jack embrace and hug passionately.

There is another noise in the back of the barn.

MARY

What the hell was that? It sounds like someone is here.

JACK

Lets stay back here. Its dark. We can't be seen.

Jack stands up.

JACK (CONT'D)

(LOUD)

WHOEVER YOU ARE. This is a private residence. Get the hell out of this barn!

A loud gunshot, hits the ceiling of the barn. Mary screams.

Another shot.

Jack crouches down and looks between two haystacks. He sees Daniel climbing the stairs of the loft.

JACK (CONT'D)

Mary. Did I ever tell you that I hate baseball?

MARY

Are you completely crazy? Baseball, now?

JACK

Its so boring. Its too long of a game. I am more of a football and basketball guy. Something you should know about me Mary.

Jack kisses Mary.

Baseball is a long boring game of catch.

MARY

What does that have to do with us being shot and killed?

JACK

Even though I hate Baseball. I have one hell of an arm.

Jack sees Daniel slowly climbing the stairs.

Jack grabs a rock. Stands up and throws it at Daniel, hitting in right in the shoulder hard. Knocking him down the stairs.

MARY

Oh my God! You got him. I can't believe it.

There is a loud THUD, as Daniel lands on the floor of the barn.

Jack and Mary stand up and look down the stairs.

MARY (CONT'D)

Jack, you might have killed him.

JACK

He was going to kill both of us.

Jack goes to the bottom of the stairs and feels Daniel's neck to check for a pulse.

JACK (CONT'D)

He is not dead. But might be brain damaged. We probably won't notice the difference. Mary get that rope. Lets tie this murdering creep up.

Police sirens arrive in the back yard.

Mary and Jack greet the police, with Daniel tied up and awake. Daniel is groggy and barely able to speak as he is arrested by the police. Officers GENE REYNOLDS, 50 and JEFF FICKAS, 52 rush into the barn.

REYNOLDS

Great job of tying this guy up. Thanks for catching him.

JACK
No problem.

REYNOLDS
He seems to be OK. However, years
of jail time in his future.

Reynolds stands Daniel up.

JACK
You can add murder and attempted
murder of two people to that long
list.

Daniel glares at Jack as he is led away.

DANIEL
This is not over asshole.

JACK
Sure it is. Mainly because I have
no plans to visit you in prison.
Asshole.

Mary laughs as Daniel is led out the door.

FICKAS
Nice barn.

JACK
Its not ours. We used it to hide
last night.

REYNOLDS
Looks like it all worked out.

Officer #1 looks at Mary

FICKAS
Aren't you Mary Jackson?

MARY
Yes I am.

FICKAS
My wife and I saw you about 2 weeks
ago. You were great.

Mary smiles.

MARY
Thank you officer.

JACK

Now that must make you feel on top
of the world.

MARY

It does. I think we can add some
time to that month I promised.

JACK

Really?

MARY

Yes. Really.

JACK

How much time?

MARY

Three months to start?

JACK

Now I am on top of the world.

Jack and Mary hug as the police leave the barn.

JACK (CONT'D)

I think its time to get back to the
real world don't you?

MARY

Lets never forget this place.

JACK

I never will.

Jack kisses Mary.

INT. HAPPY'S MAIN ROOM - NIGHT.

Some 2 weeks later. Jack is walking on stage.

JACK

Hello everybody. Thanks for coming.

Some in the crowd applaud.

JACK (CONT'D)

For me, tonight is a special night.
It has nothing to do with comedy,
or my life, or my career for over
30 years before trying this.
Tonight is about love. About asking
the love of my life to marry him.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Mary Jackson. And thank God she said yes.

Jack looks backstage at Mary, who is smiling broadly.

Several in the crowd applaud.

CROWD

Congratulations! Some cheers.

JACK

Thank you! I never expected this to happen. I am 55 and never really was able to find the right woman, until Mary came into my life under the most insane circumstances.

Without further delay. Here they are, the Future Adults. Featuring Mary Jackson!

As the Mary sings and the band plays, Jack walks over to Chet at the bar.

CHET

So is she going to hang in there?

JACK

She is now saying 6 months. 180 days.

CHET

That is all because of you man.

JACK

She is so good, all she needs is a break.

CHET

Remember Diane Baker?

JACK

Yes of course. How can I ever forget her?

CHET

She used to represent Mary years ago. A Hollywood producer called. They want her for a new movie. They need a great new undiscovered singer who can act.

JACK
Are you kidding?

CHET
I sure don't kid about miracle opportunities like this. Only the second time I have seen something like this in 20 years.

JACK
You tell her about this?

Chet looks at Jack, straight in the eye.

CHET
Jack. I want you to tell her. Right after they are done. Looks like that mighty ship.
(Chet pauses with emotion.)

Finally may have come in. I never met a more deserving talent.

JACK
17 years. She almost gave it all up.
(Long Pause.)
Thanks man.

Mary sees Chet and Jack shake hands and hug. She smiles a curious smile as she sings another great song. We slowly fade out. The screen darkens with only the sound of Mary's perfect voice remaining.

FADE OUT.

THE END