

"GOLDEN BOY"

Black screen.

SUPER: "A true story."

FADE IN:

Boxes of plastic cups, bags of liquor bottle pourers, stacks of club flyers, and piles of champagne buckets litter an Uber-nightclub's janitor room, otherwise known as

THE GO-GO BOY DRESSING ROOM

SUPER: "Roxy - New York City - 1996"

The deep thud of the club's subwoofers reverberates intensely, vibrating everything in the room.

Metal casings and wire over the light fixtures above rattle to the muffled yet powerful beat.

JAKE (31), Caucasian with golden hair, All-American, very muscular, sits on a step-ladder. He wears a pair of very short shorts with a wild and colorful print.

Sits alone like a fighter before the fight.

Laces up his combat boots, pushes his thick white socks down to just the right height.

Reaches into his gym bag, retrieving a bottle of baby oil.

A mirror propped against the wall shows his reflection as he applies the oil to his clean-shaven, tanned chest. The mirror shakes and clatters with each beat. No wonder it's broken.

The higher-pitched melody from the dance floor escapes into the room briefly, prompting Jake to glance at the door.

The door closes behind a ROXY DANCER (25), Czechoslovakian, very muscular, black go-go shorts and combat boots. Glares at Jake.

Breaks his stare and walks briskly to the janitor sink in the corner of the room.

JAKE

What?

The dancer pulls his dick out and pees into the sink.

## ROXY DANCER

You were supposed to replace me  
like five minutes ago.

Jake throws the baby oil into his bag, pulls out a pair of earplugs, shoves them into his ears, and heads for the door.

He halts abruptly, turns back to his go-go bag, grabs a small bottle of Jack Daniels and swigs.

Finally ready, he exits.

## INT. ROXY DANCEFLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Deep dish house music permeates the entire club.

The epicenter, a huge dancefloor that doubles as a roller skating rink, easily holds 1,000 people.

Two bars flank either side of the packed dancefloor.

Four go-go boys work with red spotlights cascading down on them: two on subwoofers facing the dancefloor, and two on the front bar.

Correction: one on the front bar, and a red spotlight shining down on an obviously unoccupied slot.

The long, rectangular front bar encircles seven bartenders inside the "pit". Patrons jam all four sides.

Jake pushes his way through the crowd on one end and hops up onto the bar, landing strategically on a black "welcome" mat placed for sturdy footing.

He moves as best as he can on the confined space of the mat, more posing than dancing.

CUT TO:

## INT. ROXY DANCEFLOOR ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

A small corridor with tables forms a passageway from the box office and coat check to the main club.

JOHN BLAIR (50), club promoter, sits behind a long folding table and hands a clipboard to a CLIPBOARD GUY, one of several guys busily recruiting names for the mailing list.

## JOHN

You're signing up too many gold  
cards. Only sign up silver from  
now on.

CLIPBOARD GUY  
What if he's really hot?

JOHN  
Ask me first.

CUT TO:

INT. ROXY DANCEFLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Gerard (40s), a weasel of a man with a greasy comb-over, approaches Jake with a bill in his hand.

Jake kneels down to accept the tip.

JAKE  
Hi.

GERARD  
You're new here. What's your name?

JAKE  
Billy.

The man strokes Jake's thighs.

GERARD  
Is that your real name?

Jake smiles.

JAKE  
If you want it to be.

GERARD  
I'm Gerard. And that IS my real  
name. Welcome to the Roxy...  
(a knowing grin)  
...*Billy*.

Jake politely blocks the man's attempts to reach into his shorts.

GERARD  
(handing him the bill)  
I'll let you put that where you  
want it.

JAKE  
Thank you, Gerard.

Jake stands up, places the bill in his shorts without losing eye contact, smiles as Gerard walks away.

The moment the man turns his back, Jake pulls the bill back out and looks at it. Benjamin Franklin.

He bends over, shoves it down his sock, and begins dancing.

CUT TO:

INT. ROXY DANCEFLOOR ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

John checks paperwork in front of him. A clubgoer calls out to him amidst the crowd.

CLUBGOER  
Hi, John! Great party!

He glances up and nods with a very slight smile.

BETO (45), Venezuelan, John's assistant, approaches the table. Jake dances in the distant background.

BETO  
The owner wants to know why the line isn't moving faster.

JOHN  
What's it like?

BETO  
All the way to eleventh avenue.  
And we have a new go-go boy  
auditioning tonight.

Beto points towards the bar. John looks over. Sees Jake underneath the red spotlight.

JOHN  
What's with the shorts?

BETO  
He just moved here from Atlanta.

JOHN  
Oh.

They both watch Jake for a very brief moment.

JOHN  
Okay.

John returns to his paperwork.

BETO  
The line?

JOHN  
 Leave it. We're almost at  
 capacity.

CUT TO:

INT. ROXY DANCEFLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Jake, oblivious that the audition is over let alone had begun, gazes out at the crowd while doing his thing.

Weary of rocking back and forth and posing in one spot, he bravely ventures off the welcome mat, stepping over cups and forearms of patrons grabbing for drinks.

A hand slaps his calf.

He looks down and behind himself to see the bartender, HELEN SANCHEZ (35), Columbian with long jet black hair and a Brooklyn accent, shrugging her shoulders at him.

HELEN  
 What are you doing, you moron?!

JAKE  
 What?

HELEN  
 Stay outta my space, I'll stay  
 outta yours, got it?

JAKE  
 (retreating to mat)  
 Oh, yeah, right.

He bends down to offer a handshake, but she focuses attention on the next customer.

JAKE  
 Sorry, my first night -

HELEN  
 I'm busy!

JAKE  
 ...I'm Jake.

He retracts his hand, stands back up and begins dancing again. On the "welcome" mat, no less.

INT. ROXY DRESSING ROOM - LATER

Eight dancers count their tips for the night.

Jake sits on the same step-ladder and pulls his combat boots off. Pulls off a sock and dumps out bills.

Searches through the pile of bills, now on the floor, until he finds the hundred dollar bill that Gerard gave him.

Looks more closely at the bill. Gerard has scribbled his name and phone number with a black felt tip pen.

Straightens out the bill, puts it to the side, then puts the remaining bills into order for counting.

Beto walks in.

BETO  
Hey, Billy, right?

JAKE  
Jake, actually.

BETO  
You're on. We'll start you every other Saturday beginning next month.

Beto walks farther into the room.

BETO  
Get some different shorts. You know, solid colors, and not so bright. Take a look at what the other guys are wearing.

JAKE  
Okay.

Beto leaves.

Jake looks over at the other dancers, each and every one of them in black shorts.

His attention turns to his go-go bag. Opens the bag to reveal several pairs of brightly-colored shorts, all wild prints.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. ENGINEERING CONSULTING FIRM MEN'S ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "Atlanta - 8 years earlier"

Jake crouches on his knees next to the commode, hurling.

He washes his mouth out at the sink.

As he towels off his face, ED RUTLEDGE (50) enters.

ED  
Hey, you're Bill Black's son,  
aren't you?

JAKE  
Yes, hello.

ED  
Ed Rutledge. I've been working  
with your Dad for close to thirty  
years now.

Ed wears what must have been his first suit out of college.  
He sports a tie that only an engineer could love.

ED  
I heard today was your first day.  
How's it going?

JAKE  
Great.

INT. ENGINEERING FIRM DESIGN FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Endless rows of puke-green engineering design boards, angled  
just right, resemble a classroom for adults. Most are  
unoccupied.

Three lone designers work quietly without distraction,  
flanked by bare beige walls.

A fluorescent light bulb flickers and goes out. One designer  
takes brief notice, buries his head back into his design.

Mini-blinds flutter with the breeze from an open window.

In the distance, STANLEY (60) appears and walks down the  
aisle, accompanied by Jake. Wall-to-wall indoor/outdoor  
brown carpeting maintains the silence in the room.

Stanley leads Jake to the middle of the row, where a  
DESIGNER (40) sits. A handshake follows a brief  
introduction.

DESIGNER  
So, your first job out of school,  
huh? I remember when I was just  
starting out.

Jake stares at him.

STANLEY

I believe I was the guy who walked  
you around your first day, too.

He chuckles.

DESIGNER

Come to think of it, you were.

They share another chuckle.

Jake looks across the room to see the other two designers  
staring at him, awaiting their introductions.

INT. ENGINEERING FIRM BREAK ROOM - LATER

Bright white light floods the sterile room, a simple round  
table at the center.

The refrigerator hums. The compressor rumbles and comes to a  
stop. Silence.

A bright pink pastry box sits on the counter, slightly open.

The timer on the microwave blinks zeros.

A fly buzzes around, lands on the pink box. Crawls inside.

An ENGINEER enters the room, pulls a doughnut out of the box,  
leans against the counter and eats it.

He notices the blinking zeros on the microwave. Pokes his  
head around the corner.

ENGINEER

Hey, Pourphegeshe, your Lean  
Cuisine is ready.

INT. ENGINEERING FIRM DESIGN FLOOR - LATER

Jake sits on a stool behind his assigned drawing board,  
motionless. Comatose.

DIANE BAGLEY (30), Southern accent, gaudy blue eyeshadow and  
roots begging for attention, sways her chunky hourglass  
figure towards Jake as gracefully as she can in her tight  
business skirt and heels.

Panty hose swish together with each step.

DIANE

Hi. I'm Diane. I'm the  
switchboard operator. I run the  
switchboard.

JAKE

I'm Jake.

DIANE

Oh, I know. You're Bill Black's son.

JAKE

So I'm told.

DIANE

Oh, that's funny! Did you find your phone okay?

Jake looks over at a beige touch-tone phone with an intriguingly long cord. Looks back at Diane.

JAKE

Uh-huh.

DIANE

Oh, that's good. Well, your extension number is 3-2-4-3. It starts with a three because you're on the third floor. Here, let me write that down for you. I'll have it typed up for you so you can place it on your phone there. I have an assistant who can do that for me for you.

JAKE

Thank you.

DIANE

Oh, you're welcome. Have a nice day.

She leaves Jake to his solitude.

He stares blankly into space. Endless space. Nobody ever escapes this place.

INT. ENGINEERING CONSULTING FIRM MEN'S ROOM - DAY

The door flies open as Jake barrels through and barges into a stall. He hurls.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CORONET CLUB - NIGHT

SUPER: "Coronet Club - Atlanta - 1995"

Cheesy strip club.

A man's butt gyrates in front of MELODY PARIS (22), Caucasian, gorgeous with long blonde hair sprayed to perfection. The g-string belonging to the CORONET DANCER rests on her shoulder.

Her eyes silently lust after the package swinging before her.

Male and female dancers in various stages of undress scatter the club.

LILY WHITE, a frighteningly masculine drag queen hostess with heavy white pancake, whispers seductively into her wireless microphone as she saunters across the room.

LILY WHITE

That's right, ladies and gentlemen.  
Our dancers are working hard for  
you, so please remember to show  
your appreciation.

Jake sits next to Melody. He unashamedly looks at the dancer's impressive dick.

JAKE

(to dancer)  
Congratulations.

He offers a five to Melody.

MELODY

Don't be so cheap.

She searches her purse for a twenty and hands it to the dancer.

The dancer, acutely aware of the no-touching policy, positions his hands a few calculated inches away from either side of Melody's head. Simulates a face-fuck.

Jake observes poetically.

The music changes, queuing the dancer to move on. He puts his g-string back on.

CORONET DANCER

Thank you, my-lady.

He kisses Melody on the cheek and walks away.

MELODY

(to Jake)  
Fuck me now.

INT. CORONET MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake and Melody stare into each other's eyes as they fuck in one of the stalls.

EXT. CORONET PARKING LOT - LATER

The couple leaves the club arm-in-arm.

Lily White comes running after them.

LILY WHITE

You simply cannot keep this man to yourself!

She offers a flyer to Jake.

INSERT - THE FLYER, which reads:

"Lily White hosts...  
AMATEUR NIGHT WEDNESDAYS!!"

BACK TO -

Jake snickers.

JAKE

Lily White?

LILY WHITE

In the flesh.

Her wide grin exposes faded yellow teeth in contrast to her white pancake. She's no spring chicken.

INT. MELODY'S APARTMENT - LATER

MELODY

What is the big deal?

JAKE

(incredulously)

We are not having this discussion!

MELODY

That's your problem. You're so uptight. Loosen up!

JAKE

Just so I understand, here. You want me to dance naked for a bunch of guys. Did I get that right?

MELODY  
It is a mixed club.

JAKE  
You saw the people in there. It was mostly men, and you know it!

MELODY  
And if it were nothing but women?

JAKE  
It's hosted by a DRAG QUEEN!

MELODY  
You see, this is what I'm talking about. No spontaneity. All stuffy, and...

JAKE  
What? Go on.

MELODY  
I'm worried.

JAKE  
Worried.

MELODY  
That we're getting into a rut. We're too comfortable. We're gonna get boring or something.

JAKE  
I just fucked you in a public men's room.

MELODY  
Exactly. And we need to keep doing things like that so we don't get bored with each other.

JAKE  
You're serious.

No response.

JAKE  
I can't do it.

INT. CORONET CLUB - WEEKS LATER

Lily White, mike in one hand and a cocktail in the other, guards the stairs leading to the main stage.

Jake stands beside her.

LILY WHITE  
Give it up ladies and gentlemen for  
our next contestant...

She drops the mike to her side and addresses Jake.

LILY WHITE  
What do you want to be called,  
sweetheart?

JAKE  
I don't know.

She rolls her eyes. Raises the mike to her mouth, tapping her fake nails against it as she scrutinizes Jake and summons her creative muse.

LILY WHITE  
(into mike)  
...Billy!

Jake knows he could have done better.

JAKE  
Billy? Really?

Jake grabs the drink out of her hand and gulps it down.

Stage fright sets in. He cannot move.

Lily White grabs his hand and leads him onto the stage.

Melody watches her deer in headlights, feeling his shame.

A crowd mainly of men stare back at Jake. A woman gets up to leave. Another woman laughs at him.

He wakes up, begins to move. Slowly at first, then gaining momentum.

Gains composure as the song progresses. In fact, he moves with a commanding presence.

Confidently strips down to his underwear.

Skirts to the side of the stage in front of Melody and drops the skivvies.

Melody giggles approvingly and claps her hands with encouragement.

Jake makes his way back to center for the whole club to see his glory.

JERK IN AUDIENCE  
(calmly speaking)  
Show your hole.

Jake stops moving in horror, suddenly conscious that he is naked.

JAKE  
What?

JERK IN AUDIENCE  
(now yelling)  
Show - us - your - HOLE.

Jake looks over at Melody, her mouth agape.

He turns around to see his reflection in the mirror behind the stage, his hands now covering his genitals.

Jake shuts his eyes tightly, lets out a deep breath and bends over...

EXT. JAKE'S CAR - LATER

Jake drives his 1968 gun-metal gray Ford Gran Torino away from the club, Melody still in shock.

JAKE  
...the most liberating experience I  
have ever had! Thank you, Melody,  
thank you very much! You have set  
me free!

She turns her head toward him.

MELODY  
You showed your butthole.

JAKE  
Yes. Yes, I did. I showed my  
butthole.

MELODY  
You showed your fucking butthole.  
You idiot. You fucking idiot.

JAKE  
Hey, you can't say I'm not  
spontaneous.

MELODY

How about stupid? Can I say that you're stupid? My stupid boyfriend showed his fucking butthole to a room full of fucking strangers!

JAKE

Would you prefer that they be friends?

Silence.

JAKE

You have got to be kidding me.

MELODY

No, you've got to be kidding me.

He pulls the car over.

JAKE

I did this for you.

MELODY

Right.

JAKE

You know what, I don't need this. I'm glad I did it.

MELODY

Some things are sacred. Some things you just don't fuck with.

JAKE

What? Are you saying my butthole is sacred? Is that why you won't put your finger up there?

MELODY

You're disgusting.

Melody gets out of the car, slams the door shut, and heads down the highway.

JAKE

Don't walk away, Melody! If you do, that's it!

Jake stands up next to the car, yelling after her.

JAKE

I mean it! This is the last time!

She's still walking.

JAKE

Did we just break up? Because if  
we did, I'm gonna let you keep  
walking. Did we? Did we just  
break up?

She stops and turns around, standing next to the highway.

JAKE

What are you going to do, walk  
home?

As if on cue, a cab approaches.

She hails the cab.

MELODY

(ducking into cab)  
I don't need this either, Jake.

He slumps back into the driver seat.

JAKE

We just broke up. Over my  
butthole. Unbelievable.

FADE TO BLACK.

Muffled thumping of house music base fades in.

INT. ROXY DRESSING ROOM - BACK TO 1996

The wild and colorful shorts jumble together inside Jake's go-go bag.

He grabs the bag, dumps its contents into a trash can.

His hand disappears into the trash can to retrieve the bottle of Jack Daniels, leaving all the loud-print shorts behind.

EXT. UNION SQUARE - 6 A.M.

Jake crosses the park with his go-go bag, trots across Park Avenue and heads north. The sun breaks.

As he passes the Galaxy Diner, a hand bangs on the window from inside.

He stops and turns around to see Helen rising from the booth next to the window. Watches her walk through the diner to the front door.

HELEN

Hey. Sorry about tonight. You know how it is. You're trying to make money. People are screaming at you. It can get intense.

JAKE

Forgotten.

INT. GALAXY DINER - MOMENTS LATER

Helen and Jake sit across from each other in the booth.

JAKE

How long have you been at the Roxy?

HELEN

Too long. It's not my primary focus. I design lingerie.

JAKE

Yeah?

HELEN

Helen Sanchez Intimates. My own little boutique label. One day, at least. For now, Liz Claiborne. And you?

JAKE

Until two weeks ago, I was in Atlanta working for my father for eight years. Engineering consulting. I never got it. I finally cracked. The same city all my life. The same people. I'm allergic to polyester.

Jake becomes aware that somebody outside is observing them.

JAKE

Do you know that guy?

Helen looks out the window.

HELEN

Nope. So you just moved up here, just like that?

JAKE

I know. No plan yet, really. What am I doing here? I must be insane.  
(looks closer at voyeur)

(MORE)

JAKE (cont'd)  
Wait a second. That's the guy from  
the club tonight.

Jake grabs his wallet out of his back pocket, looks through it and comes up with the hundred dollar bill. Reads the name scribbled on it.

JAKE  
Gerard.

EXT. GALAXY DINER - CONTINUOUS

Gerard knows he has been spotted. Walks briskly away.

INT. GALAXY DINER - CONTINUOUS

HELEN  
You are officially a Go-Go God.

JAKE  
I'm not really one for labels.

HELEN  
You'll get used to it.

INT. PALLADIUM DANCEFLOOR - DAY

A hunky dancer poses atop a platform below the huge disco ball. A photographer circles the platform, snapping away.

PHOTOGRAPHER  
That's great. Okay, now look up at  
the ball. Put your hand out like  
this. From this angle, it'll look  
like you're holding the ball.

Behind the photo shoot, a group of dancers practice a choreographed number on the main stage. Low house music from a boom box.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - CONTINUOUS

FREDDIE (28), Latin, flamboyantly gay, sits with legs crossed next to the boom box, observing his choreography.

Jake is one of a dozen dancers, paired up, moving in very slow motion, passing mirrored shields and chrome balls back and forth. A few dancers wear skimpy all-white gladiator outfits. The others wear street clothes.

Freddie pauses the boom box.

FREDDIE

Okay, guys. Keep it masculine.  
And this is supposed to be somewhat  
erotic, you know. But not obscene!  
This is the Palladium, not the  
Gaiety.

He turns to the photo shoot.

INT. PALLADIUM DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

FREDDIE (V.O.)

Julian, get over here.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Okay, we got it.

He rewinds and removes the film from the camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER

(labelling film)

Julian?

JULIAN

Or Frank, if you want my real name.

Julian jumps off the platform and joins the others on stage.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - CONTINUOUS

FREDDIE

Junior has cast each of you guys  
for a reason, not the least of  
which you are masculine. Okay?

ARENA DANCER #1

We've been *cast*?

FREDDIE

So, I don't care if you are  
straight or gay, you need to be  
*straight-acting*. That means  
holding your shield like *this*...

Freddie grabs a mirrored shield from one of the dancers and,  
against his nature, impressively holds it in a masculine  
manner.

Predictably changes the hold to his own liking.

FREDDIE

...not Like *this*.

INT. PALLADIUM BAR - CONTINUOUS

Across the huge dancefloor, opposite the stage, the Palladium general manager, SABRINA (30), living Barbie Doll with long blonde hair, leans over the bar. Watches the scene on stage with amusement.

A handsome male BARTENDER marries liquor bottles behind the bar.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - CONTINUOUS

FREDDIE

If you haven't had your picture taken for the website, go see the photographer. Oh, and who hasn't been fitted yet for his costume?

The legendary dj himself, JUNIOR VASQUEZ (50s), music producer in collaboration with Madonna amongst others, approaches the stage from the dancefloor.

JUNIOR

Freddie.

Freddie turns his back on the group to see his employer.

JUNIOR

I'm testing the sound system now. Are they ready to do a full run-through?

FREDDIE

Sure.

Junior leaves.

FREDDIE

Crap.  
(beat)  
Places.

As the dancers move to position one...

ARENA DANCER #3

This is bullshit.

ARENA DANCER #2

I'm a dick dancer. I didn't sign up for this.

ARENA DANCER #1

We've been *cast!*

JAKE

I don't think we're in Kansas  
anymore.

Freddie sneaks up to join the conversation.

FREDDIE

Don't think he won't be watching  
from the dj booth.

This comment does nothing to impress.

FREDDIE

Only six of you will be going with  
him to Japan.

That changes everything. An air of competition fills the  
room.

Freddie struts away in conquest as the intro to Junior's  
original mix of *The Beatles'* "Come Together" blasts at full  
volume from the immaculately crisp, powerful sound system.

The twelve go-go boys turned into choreographed dancers work  
through the routine, Jake and Julian paired together.

The music is loud, but Jake attempts a conversation anyway.

JAKE

So, I hear you're the next Mark  
Wahlberg.

He passes a chrome ball very slowly over to Julian, who  
remains silent.

JAKE

I was told you model for Calvin  
Klein.

Julian gives a "whatever" look. Passes the ball back.

JAKE

Do you know him?

JULIAN

He's been coming to the clubs for  
years. Everybody knows Calvin.

JAKE

No, Mark. Wahlberg. Do you know  
Mark Wahlberg?

Julian gives a "what planet are you from" look.

JULIAN  
Just pass me the fuckin' ball.

The backs of the dancers provide the foreground to the expansive dancefloor in front of the stage. Out of the darkness across the floor steps Sabrina, briskly walking towards the stage.

INT. PALLADIUM DJ BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Junior watches the action below. Taps his finger inquisitively on his control panel as he watches Sabrina approach the stage and argue with Freddie. He hears nothing but the sound-track at low volume inside his sound-proof booth.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Freddie and Sabrina argue, inaudible from the sound-track. The boys continue to turn it out, and that is a big stretch of the phrase.

INT. PALLADIUM BAR - CONTINUOUS

The bartender chuckles at the unfolding drama.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The argument continues. Suddenly, the music stops, and both of their voices can be heard in an intertwining yelling match.

JUNIOR (O.S.)  
(over the speaker)  
What's the problem.

Junior has turned on his microphone. Sabrina faces the booth.

SABRINA  
I was told there wasn't going to be a sound check until six tonight. I'm working here.

JUNIOR (O.S.)  
(over the speaker)  
Sorry, Sabrina. I got a little anxious.

SABRINA  
Okay. That's okay.  
(exhales in triumph)  
Thank you, Mr. Vasquez.

She begins her trek back to the bar.

INT. PALLADIUM DJ BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Junior pushes the microphone button, leans into mike.

JUNIOR

Junior.

He leans away.

SABRINA (O.S.)

(over the booth speaker)

Junior. Thank you, Junior.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - CONTINUOUS

JULIAN

Go, girl.

JAKE

Who is that?

JULIAN

That is Sabrina, the GM.

Sabrina walks half-way across the dancefloor, then turns back to the stage.

SABRINA

(to Freddie, nicely)

And just for the record, there will be lots of women on opening night. Straight women.

She continues towards bar as the bartender laughs in the darkness.

FREDDIE

Not if Darryl does his job right.

JAKE

Who's Darryl?

JULIAN

The doorman.

JAKE

And who is she again?

JULIAN

The GM.

JAKE

I thought that was a truck.

JULIAN

The general manager. Jesus Christ.

INSERT - A FLYER, which reads:

"JUNIOR VASQUEZ gives you...

ARENA

The Gay Man's Pleasure Dome

GRAND OPENING

May 4, 1996

11 pm til ???

Palladium NYC"

On the flyer is Julian's picture, taken at the rehearsal, holding the crystal dance ball.

CUT TO:

INT. PALLADIUM DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

Masses of people move in rhythm on a dark, smoke-filled dancefloor pulsing with green lasers.

Bodies huddle together so tightly that they seem to mesh into one living organism. Deafening deep dish is its heartbeat.

Lights disappear as the song finally fades out and gives way to the organism's breathing.

The opening DJ has completed his set, and this is the changing of the guards.

The crowd mumbles amongst itself in the darkness, anticipating, knowing that the break in music signals a change in energy.

Silence. Darkness. Silence still. Then...

A low rumble becomes audible as one lone purple spotlight hits the center of the floor.

The rumble gets louder as the spotlight breaks into six smaller purple spotlights that begin to whirl in a tight circle.

The rumble is now discernible as jet engines beginning to whizz.

As the volume increases louder, the crowd begins to yell.

The six purple spotlights whirl faster, the circle expands wider and then sweeps upward to the six sub-woofers encasing the dancefloor.

The jet engines reach full throttle.

The crowd reaches a frenzy as the purple spotlights sweep higher to reveal six go-go boys, Junior's dancers, one on top of each sub-woofer, each with his own purple spotlight.

As the jet engines give way to *Sandy B's "You Make The World Go Round,"* the dancers transition from posing to dancing.

The organism on the floor takes its cue and swings back to life.

It is 4 AM. Junior is now at the turntables. Let *Arena* begin.

EXT. PALLADIUM DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Throngs of people behind police barricades vie for the attention of the man on the red carpet controlling the velvet rope.

DARRYL ELMORE (35), handsome, lead doorman, black suit and overcoat with black fedora, has his back to the crowd.

In contrast to his ruggedness, Darryl gazes into a compact mirror and applies powder to his face.

In the reflection of his compact, he eyes a MUSCLEBOY waiting patiently to one side of the crowd.

He snaps around quickly and nods for a bouncer to let the muscleboy past the barricade.

The muscleboy walks up to Darryl, who unclasps the velvet rope for access to the carpet.

DARRYL

Good morning, afternoon, and/or evening.

MUSCLEBOY

Good morning.

GUY IN CROWD (O.S.)

Hey, Rex, over here!

REX, the muscleboy, looks over to see a guy in the crowd, flanked by girls, waving at him.

REX  
Could you let my friend over there  
in?

DARRYL  
(referring to the females)  
He has baggage. Sorry. Here, have  
a drink on me.

Darryl fishes a stack of tickets out of his pocket and passes one to Rex, who looks at his friend and shrugs.

REX  
(to friend)  
Lose the skirts.

INT. PALLADIUM BAR - LATER

The main bar is packed. Bartenders flying in action.

Sabrina, flanked by two bouncers, hands a blue money bag to the bartender.

SABRINA  
(yelling above music)  
I need your drop!

Bartender grabs the money bag, then hands her his tip bag.

BARTENDER  
I need singles!

She grabs the tip bag, dumps its contents onto the bar, and counts. Bouncers keep the crowd away.

INT. PALLADIUM GO-GO BOY DRESSING ROOM - LATER

Within the bowels of the club, a door gives way to a modest bare room. A sofa, a few chairs, a large mirror, a bucket of water and Gatorade on ice, and a dance rotation schedule on the wall.

Even though the dancefloor is two levels above, a deep thud is audible.

Jake and five other go-go boys kill time. One "beefs-up" with the aid of *Hustler* magazine. Another does a line of coke. Another eats plain chicken breast with rice. Two sit on the floor chatting.

Jake makes small talk with MARC BERKLEY (45), promoter of Arena who uses the room as his sanctuary while taking the opportunity to be close to the dancers.

MARC

I have a house on Fire Island.  
We're going there after the party  
if you'd like to come.

JAKE

Party, what party?

MARC

The party. Tonight. This.

JAKE

Oh. Who's we?

Marc sets his security radio onto the table, takes a small bottle out of his pocket, unscrews the dropper cap, and measures a dose of the liquid into a plastic cup.

MARC

Darryl and Fernando and whoever  
else.

Marc grabs a Gatorade and adds it to the cup. Holds the cup out to Jake.

MARC

Would you like some?

JAKE

What is it?

MARC

GHB.

JAKE

I'm good. Who's Fernando?

MARC

My assistant. He takes over the  
door when Darryl goes on break.

Knock at the door. Marc downs the Gatorade mixture and cracks the door open to peek.

MARC

Speak of the devil.

FERNANDO (early 30s), Portuguese, security radio in hand, walks through the door.

FERNANDO

Is the air conditioning broken or  
something? It's way too fucking  
hot up there.

MARC  
 Fernando, tell Billy here how much  
 fun we have on Fire Island.

JAKE  
 My real name is Jake.

The two shake hands.

FERNANDO  
 Fernando. Hi.

Marc grabs his radio.

MARC  
 (into radio)  
 Lonnie, this is Marc Berkley, over.

FERNANDO  
 The beach is beautiful. You should  
 go with us.

Fernando takes a small vial out of his pocket, dumps a bump  
 of white powder onto his palm, and snorts it.

LONNIE (V.O.)  
 (over radio)  
 Yeah, go, Marc.

MARC  
 (into radio)  
 Check the thermostat for the main  
 floor. It's raining sweat up  
 there.

Fernando offers his vial to Jake.

FERNANDO  
 How rude of me. Would you like a  
 bump?

JAKE  
 Thank you.

Jake offers his palm. Fernando dumps a bump, which Jake  
 promptly snorts. His face winces from the burn.

JAKE  
 That was not coke.

FERNANDO  
 K.

Jake is clueless.

FERNANDO  
Ketamine. Cat tranquilizer.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - LATER

Kristine W., alone on stage, performs live to Junior's re-mix of her current hit "Land of the Living."

Her personal back-up dancers join the show. Professionals, the real deal.

INT. PALLADIUM GO-GO BOY DRESSING ROOM - LATER

Marc is passed out on the sofa. Jake sits in a chair. Fernando sits on the sofa armrest. Nobody else is there.

FERNANDO  
How do you feel?

JAKE  
A little loopy.

FERNANDO  
You're fine. You'll go up the next set. Switch with Raul.

Fernando goes to the schedule on the wall and marks the change.

Sabrina's voice comes in over Marc's radio on the table.

SABRINA (V.O.)  
This is Sabrina for Marc Berkley, over.

Fernando and Jake exchange glances at each other then look at the passed-out promoter.

SABRINA (V.O.)  
Marc? Are you there?

Fernando grabs his own radio.

INTERCUT RADIO CONVERSATION -

FERNANDO  
Yeah, Sabrina, this is Fernando.

SABRINA  
The owner's in the building and wants to talk to Marc. What's his location?

FERNANDO  
He's with me right now.

SABRINA  
Tell him to meet us in my office.

FERNANDO  
Can it wait?

Long pause. Silence but for the deep thud of the beat.

SABRINA  
(knowingly)  
Is he sober?

FERNANDO  
No.

Long pause.

SABRINA  
Get in here.

FERNANDO  
Will do.

BACK TO DRESSING ROOM

Fernando heads for the door, pointing at the bolt.

FERNANDO  
Lock the door from the inside.  
Don't open it for anyone but me.

He leaves. Jake stares at the unconscious man on the sofa, trying to digest everything.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - LATER

A white hot spotlight shines down on KEVIN AVIANCE, indiscernible age, a very tall, black, bald-headed drag diva hostess.

Make-up galore brings eyes and mouth to larger-than-life. Blinding white teeth fill a wide smile.

A large plastic butterfly, her hat, tilts to one side of her head and forward. Thanks to super-glue, it's not going anywhere.

Rhinestones affixed with glue adorn one temple.

Glitter complements the entire ensemble, six-inch heels to a shiny silver skin-tight jumpsuit. She is not tucking.

She lip-syncs perfectly to *Deborah Cox's "Who Do You Love,"* performance art at its finest.

Pretends to knock on a door that is not there, in perfect sync with the sounds of knocks coming over the speakers.

CUT TO:

INT. PALLADIUM GO-GO BOY DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jake sits alone with Marc, who is still passed out.

CUT TO:

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - LATER

Most of the straight crowd has left by now. Muscleboys, drag queens, club kids, and night crawlers yell their approval.

CROWD

(ad lib)

Work, bitch!! Go, Kevin!! Who do  
YOU love?! W-O-R-K!

Kevin feeds off the energy, revelling in the drama of it all.

CUT TO:

INT. PALLADIUM GO-GO BOY DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marc hasn't moved.

Somebody tries to open the door. Knocks on it. Bangs on it.

JULIAN (V.O.)

(from outside the door)

What the fuck?

Loud banging.

Jake freezes in panic.

More loud banging finally awakens Marc. He stirs slowly at first, then jumps to consciousness.

MARC

Just a minute.

Marc looks at his watch. Looks at Jake. Runs his hands through his hair.

Pulls a vial of coke out of his pocket and snorts a bump to wake up.

More banging and catcalls from outside.

MARC

Hold on!

Yanks a water out of the bucket and downs most of it. Grabs his radio and unbolts the door. Never says a word to Jake, who hasn't moved.

MARC

(into radio while exiting)  
Marc Berkley for Fernando, over.

Six dancers, led by Julian, file into the room.

JULIAN

(to Jake)  
He was blowing you. You let him  
blow you, didn't you?

INT. SABRINA'S OFFICE - LATER

Sabrina sits behind a small desk, head buried in comp tickets, calculator, pen and paper.

A safe is bolted to the floor in one corner. On the wall beside her hangs a time card file. The time clock sits on her desk.

Employees enter and exit, clocking out.

PALLADIUM EMPLOYEE #1

Good night.

A small window behind Sabrina indicates broad daylight. She counts tickets, replies without looking up.

SABRINA

Good night.

INT. PALLADIUM DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The crowd is thin, parted to form a make-shift runway.

A drag queen walks the runway to Junior's original mix "Walk For Me." Several people await their turn to walk.

INT. SABRINA'S OFFICE - LATER

Sabrina still calculates as an employee exits.

SABRINA  
(to employee, without  
looking)  
Paychecks Thursday.

Jake walks in and searches the time cards.

JAKE  
I don't see my time card.

Without looking up to see him, Sabrina opens her desk drawer and searches.

SABRINA  
What's your name?

JAKE  
I don't know anymore.

This stops Sabrina. She looks up. Sees him, shyly likes what she sees.

JAKE  
I mean, do you want the real one,  
or the dance one?

SABRINA  
Let's go with the one you want  
printed on your paycheck.

JAKE  
Jake. Jake Black.

She studies him, then realizes that she has become distracted by his presence.

Pulls his time card out of her drawer and hands it to him.

SABRINA  
I pulled it to make sure we met.

JAKE  
You know me.

SABRINA  
I know everything that happens  
here.

JAKE  
And by that you mean...

SABRINA  
Marc.

JAKE

And you are the gifted one with the power to stop Junior's turntables.

SABRINA

(laughing)

Only in rehearsal. Obviously.

JAKE

How long does he go?

SABRINA

Until he wants to stop. Three or four. Or five.

JAKE

PM.

SABRINA

PM.

Jake notices a note paper-clipped to his time card.

JAKE

What's this?

SABRINA

Some guy gave that to a bartender for you. I think he said his name was Gerard.

Jake reads the note.

JAKE

Fuck.

SABRINA

What does it say?

JAKE

You looked great tonight.

SABRINA

Well, you did.

They're both embarrassed that she said it.

SABRINA

I'm sorry. I -

JAKE

No, it's okay. I mean, thanks.

SABRINA

You seem like a nice guy. Don't let all of this get to you.

JAKE

All of this?

SABRINA

The club scene. The lifestyle. The drugs. The status.

JAKE

Status...

SABRINA

Junior's already chosen you as the model for the New Year's Eve flyer.

JAKE

I'll probably pass on that.

SABRINA

No, you should do it. It's good money. And you'll enjoy it. Really.

JAKE

If you think I should do it, then I will. Hey, do you want to get something to eat?

SABRINA

I've got a long way to go here. But thanks.

JAKE

Another time, then.

EXT. GALAXY DINER - LATER

Through the window sits Jake at the familiar booth he once occupied with Helen.

INT. GALAXY DINER - CONTINUOUS

Jake eats his breakfast. Overhears conversation from another table.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

I'm telling you, that is one of Junior's dancers.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

I think you're right.

Jake glances over. Sees the girl sitting with three guys.

GUY AT TABLE

Yep, that's him.

The girl waves at him.

The waitress comes to Jake's booth before he can wave back.

WAITRESS

Can I get you anything else?

JAKE

Actually, yeah, I'll take another order to go.

WAITRESS

Just like the first one.

JAKE

Yeah, thanks.

WAITRESS

Coming right up.

The waitress leaves. Jake picks up his orange juice, sips, turns back to the other table.

The girl studies him. He toasts her with his OJ.

INT. SABRINA'S OFFICE - LATER

Sabrina still works at her desk.

A knock on her open door. She glances up.

SABRINA

Hi, Marty.

Marty, a huge muscle-bound African American bouncer stands in the doorway holding a Styrofoam food container.

MARTY

Jake asked me to give this to you.

He hands over the container. She glances inside.

MARTY

I ate the bagel. Hope you don't mind.

Sabrina laughs. Leans back in her chair and thinks about Jake.

INT. HELEN'S LOFT - DAY

A small corner loft with lots of sunlight, all-white walls and floors and fixtures and furniture.

Helen takes pictures of Julian wearing silk boxers which she designed.

HELEN

You're a champ for doing this.  
I'll take you out to dinner or something.

JULIAN

Okay. I'll take it.

HELEN

When Jake told me about you and how close you came to the Calvin Klein campaign, needless to say I am very excited that you agreed to help me out.

JULIAN

You never know what could happen.

She peruses a few choices of underwear spread out on the sofa. Picks one and holds it up.

HELEN

Here, let's take some with this.

JULIAN

Okay. Uhm...

Awkwardness ensues when they both realize the simplicity of the change.

HELEN

Yeah, let's see, I should probably change the film here, in my camera. There's a bathroom...

She turns away to change the roll of film.

He drops the boxers, full-frontal.

HELEN

(stealing a glimpse)  
...down the hallway.

JULIAN

No worries.

## MONTAGE - JAKE EVOLVES INTO AN UNDERGROUND SENSATION

-- Jake dances in black shorts on top of a light box.

-- Dances with a long, large, supposedly harmless yellow snake wrapped around his body.

-- In green combat pants, an imaginary line down the center of his face and torso, one side painted in camouflage, the other side simple green glitter. It's FLEET WEEK in Manhattan.

-- FASHION WEEK. Black satin shorts, black satin gloves reaching to his elbows, and a 12-inch vinyl record propped to the side of his head like a hat.

-- Jake and Sabrina leave the Palladium on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. Arm-in-arm, struggling with their sunglasses.

-- MIAMI. A Cirque du Soleil outfit. Pastel see-through balloon pants and a plaster mask that looks like a freaky bird with a long beak.

-- LOS ANGELES. Sabrina paints words onto Jake's body, aka Laugh-In, with fluorescent paint.

-- NYC PRIDE. Jake is one of eight dancers on the Arena float making its way down Fifth Avenue in the heart of Chelsea. In butterfly costume with large wings and glittering blue styrofoam balls floating above his head via springs attached to a headband, his antennae.

-- NEW ORLEANS. Jake is suspended upside down from a cable in the middle of a crowded dancefloor, holding glow-sticks in both hands. The cable spins as he releases the glow-sticks, dispersing them into the crowd.

## EXT. PALLADIUM - DAY

A large poster mounted on the outside of the Palladium announces the New Year's Eve extravaganza: Saints and Sinners. The picture is of Jake dressed as an angel, and again in red with hedonistic wings as a devil.

## INT. PALLADIUM DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Sabrina holds onto Jake with all her might, head resting on his shoulders, lost in the magic of Junior's remix to *Faith Hill's* "Breathe."

Confetti and glitter come floating down from the ceiling to complete the magic.

The two kiss tenderly, passionately.

INT. GALAXY DINER - LATER

Jake and Sabrina, sunglasses on, sit opposite Helen and Julian in their familiar booth.

HELEN

(to Jake)

Why'd you order anything if you're not eating?

JAKE

Oh, you know.

HELEN

Yeah, I do know. Let me see your eyes.

JAKE

Pass.

Sabrina giggles. Helen reaches over the table and yanks Jake's sunglasses off.

JULIAN

Better watch those pills. It totally depletes your serotonin. Suici-

JAKE

-icide Tuesday. Yeah, I know.

Jake takes the sunglasses and puts them back on.

SABRINA

Come on, you guys, it's a beautiful day. Don't ruin it.

HELEN

So, here's the slides from Julian's photo shoot.

Helen produces a manila envelope.

SABRINA

(on a child-like high)

Oh, goody!

She grabs the envelope from Helen. Takes her sunglasses off, pulls out the first sheet, holds it up to the light.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hi.

The three look over to see Gerard standing at the table, holding a small box with a bow on it.

JULIAN  
Hi, Gerard.

GERARD  
I hope I'm not interrupting. I wanted to give you this, Billy.

Gerard offers the present. Jake is slow to accept.

GERARD  
I was hoping you could wear it the next time you dance at Splash.

Jake opens the box, pulls out a fluorescent green g-string.

JAKE  
Green isn't really my color, Gerard.

Sabrina's attention turns from the slides.

SABRINA  
What he meant to say was thank you.

GERARD  
I can get you a different color.

JAKE  
No, no, that's not necessary. Thank you, Gerard.

GERARD  
Well, I'll see you around.

Gerard leaves. Sabrina giggles.

JULIAN  
Stud.

JAKE  
Would you excuse us?

HELEN  
But we were enjoying your company so much. Really.

SABRINA  
Those were awesome. You looked very handsome, Julian.

She stuffs the sheet of slides back into the envelope, but Jake intercepts.

JAKE

Oh, yeah?

Holds the sheet up, but never removes his sunglasses.

JAKE

I don't see anything.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Sabrina and Jake embrace in the middle of the tiny studio apartment, kissing, his hands all over her back.

They get into it, focused on the kiss. His hands move up and down her back. Then to her neck, her head, to her back again.

He cannot stop himself. One hand moves to the front.

Sabrina shudders. Against her own instinct and desire, she turns away.

He's at a loss. This isn't the first time she's stopped him.

INSERT, HANDHELD VIDEO CAMERA FOOTAGE -

Sabrina, at the wheel of her white Jeep with zebra-print seat covers, laughs genuinely at the camera.

Snow is visible outside the window as she drives through the streets of Queens.

JAKE (O.S.)

Slow down, girl! There may be ice on the road!

SABRINA

Oh, please. I grew up in Ypsilanti. Go, Michigan!

JAKE (O.S.)

It's Go, Blue.

SABRINA

Shut up.

JAKE (O.S.)

You know Auburn kicked your ass in the Sugar Bowl in 1983.

SABRINA

Whatever.

JAKE (O.S.)

Okay, tell the folks at home what we're doing.

SABRINA

We are on our way to Central Park to go ice skating.

JAKE (O.S.)

Because...

SABRINA (O.S.)

I don't know. Because why?

JAKE (O.S.)

Look around.

Camera pans to the view of the road.

JAKE (O.S.)

Because it's the first snow fall...

The Jeep clips a car's side mirror.

JAKE (O.S.)

You just hit that car!

SABRINA (O.S.)

I did not. Oh, yeah. That's right. Because...

Camera pans back to Sabrina.

SABRINA

...it's The first snowfall in New York this year.

JAKE (O.S.)

You are crazy.

BACK TO -

INT. SABRINA'S JEEP - CONTINUOUS

Jake holds the video camera as Sabrina drives.

JAKE

You hit that car!

SABRINA

Shut up!

JAKE  
No! You really hit that car!

SABRINA  
It was just the side mirror.

JAKE  
You crazy nut!

They both laugh.

JAKE  
Why do you have to live in Queens,  
anyway?

SABRINA  
Shut up!

EXT. CENTRAL PARK ICE SKATING RINK - LATER

Sabrina and Jake ice skate. They have a good time, laughing, more like the best of friends than anything else.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Shiny gold skin-tight stretch pants lay on the bed. The window next to the bed is open, and two wine glasses rest on the sill.

A hissing noise can be heard. It stops, then a brief rattling noise, after which the hissing resumes.

A woman's hand appears from the side of the window, grabs the closest wine glass, then disappears. The other wine glass remains as foreground to the buildings across the street.

EXT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jake crouches on the fire escape, spray painting his combat boots glitter gold.

SABRINA  
What are you doing this for again?

JAKE  
The Black and Blue Festival in  
Montreal.

SABRINA  
It's not very black or blue.

He stops spraying.

JAKE  
Good point. Okay, the Hearts Ball  
in Chicago, then.

SABRINA  
Hello! Hearts? Red.

She sips her wine. He shakes the paint can and resumes spray-painting the boots.

JAKE  
Well, thanks for bringing it up  
now. I'm almost done.

He finishes spray-painting.

JAKE  
(satisfied)  
There.

Admires his work.

Abandons his crouching position to grab his wine glass off the sill. Kisses her, then sits next to her.

JAKE  
(raising his glass)  
To us.

They clink glasses and drink.

He leans over and kisses her again. The kiss intensifies.

He takes her wine glass away, sets both glasses on the sill.

JAKE  
Come here.

He takes her hands into his and guides her to sit on his lap.

They kiss again, passionately. He becomes aggressive, moves his hand to her breast.

She jumps up, leaving him high and dry.

SABRINA  
I'm sorry.

He is more confused than frustrated. She has never allowed him to touch her breasts.

SABRINA  
I can't. You've been so patient.  
I'm not ready for this.  
(MORE)

SABRINA (cont'd)

There's more to it. It's complicated. I need to tell you some things, but I don't know how. I need you to understand.

JAKE

This can wait. As long as it takes. Besides, you have gold spray paint in you hair.

SABRINA

What? Oh, no. Where?

JAKE

It's not bad. It's -

SABRINA

I need to get it out. Now!

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - LATER

Jake sits with his wine, listening to the shower.

Walks to the open window, leans out to enjoy the view. Glances over to where he had been spray-painting.

Clearly visible on the metal-slatted landing of the fire escape are two boot prints outlined in glitter gold.

The running water from the shower stops. He listens to the silence.

Cocks his head towards the bathroom.

JAKE

(shouting)

Did it come out?

No answer.

JAKE

(crossing to bathroom)

Sabrina?

No answer. He knocks.

JAKE

Sabrina, did it come out?

No answer.

JAKE

(opening door)

Sabrina?

INT. JAKE'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sabrina faces the mirror. Jake looks into the same mirror and sees the reflection of her face. Her bare back and wet hair block the reflection of her breasts from his view.

He pauses with one hand on the doorknob, taking in her pure and innocent beauty.

Sabrina gazes at her own reflection, almost in a trance.

JAKE

Sabrina.

She does not move. With her back to Jake, she breaks her gaze to make eye contact with him through the reflection.

The connection lingers, and Jake senses that something is wrong.

JAKE

It didn't come out. We can get some turpentine.

Sabrina turns to face him.

JAKE

It won't damage your hair -

The sight of her bare breasts silences him.

Her right breast is withered and lumpy, covered with a hard greenish-black paste. Her left breast is normal.

She awaits his response.

JAKE

What's going on?

SABRINA

I had breast cancer.

JAKE

What?

SABRINA

I cured it holistically.

JAKE

Why didn't you ever tell me? Why is it like that?

SABRINA

The cancer ate away some of the tissue.

JAKE

Are you going to be okay?

SABRINA

Yes. I'm cancer-free now. I have been for a few months. I'll eventually have reconstructive surgery, but right now I have to continue therapy.

JAKE

Chemotherapy.

SABRINA

No. Homeopathic remedies. I put a salve on the breast to soak up and expel the toxins. It hardens and then I peel it off after a few weeks.

JAKE

I thought you had gangrene or something. So that's a salve -

Jake takes his hand off the doorknob to touch the breast. Sabrina tenses up.

SABRINA

Please...

He stops his hand just before he touches her.

JAKE

Does it hurt?

SABRINA

A little.

JAKE

But you're cancer-free.

SABRINA

Yes.

JAKE

So why does it hurt?

SABRINA

The pain is caused by all the impurities leaving my body. It means it's working.

JAKE

Really...

SABRINA

It's difficult to explain.

JAKE

You have a doctor, right? You're not just doing this yourself.

This question reveals her vulnerability. She crosses her forearms in front of her breasts.

SABRINA

Could you hand me my shirt, please?

Jake looks around, spies the shirt and hands it to her.

JAKE

So, who's your doctor?

SABRINA

Dr. Wiedershine. In Woodstock. He's a leader in alternative medicine.

She puts her shirt on. He sits on the edge of the bathtub.

JAKE

Alternative medicine, I never knew exactly what that meant.

SABRINA

It approaches disease with the idea that... oh gosh, here we go.

She sits on the floor.

SABRINA

This is a difficult concept to grasp for most people. Traditional options weren't for me. I believe that the cancer entered my body for a reason, to help me concentrate on the things that weren't right in my life.

JAKE

You're right. I'm not following.

SABRINA

You've heard how the whole is greater than the sum of its parts?

JAKE

Yeah.

SABRINA

That can be applied to the human body. A disturbance on any level... mental, spiritual, physical, even social, will radiate to all other levels.

JAKE

A mind, body, and soul connection. I get it.

SABRINA

Right.

JAKE

Okay, so you think you got cancer because of some other disturbance in your life?

SABRINA

Yeah, maybe, well, yes. So I'm focusing on my emotional and spiritual health as well as my physical health. There's alot of shit that went down with my father.

JAKE

You never told me that.

SABRINA

He's a member of the John Birch Society, if that tells you anything.

JAKE

No.

SABRINA

It's a right-wing organization which spawned an extremist group called the Minutemen Militia. When I was growing up, I wasn't allowed to watch TV or listen to the radio. All kinds of things. Mind-fucking things. Anyway, we hadn't talked for years.

(MORE)

SABRINA (cont'd)

I got in touch with him to try to work things out and have some kind of a relationship.

JAKE

You think your father caused you to have cancer.

SABRINA

I think the cancer entered my body so that I would recognize that I had work to do in that area of my life.

JAKE

Wow.

SABRINA

Yeah.

JAKE

This is really brave of you. You're an incredibly strong person. And you're sure it worked. You're sure the cancer is gone.

SABRINA

Yeah.

JAKE

That's all that matters. This...  
(motioning to her breast)  
...that doesn't matter.

She isn't sure. He kneels beside her.

JAKE

Listen to me. It doesn't matter. It doesn't change the way I feel about you.

He kisses her. Sits beside her and takes her in his arms.

SABRINA

Thank you.

INT. CROBAR DANCEFLOOR - NIGHT

SUPER: "Crobar - Chicago"

Jake wears an outfit designed by H. R. Giger. A chainmail skirt, a heavy silver codpiece, chainmail draped over one shoulder and arm, a heavy silver phantom mask hiding half of his face, and heavy silver and black leather boots. Silver glitter covers his bare chest.

He stands atop a large black box in the middle of the dancefloor, which is over capacity with a sea of bobbing shirtless men.

The club is dark but for flashlights held on him from various sources in the room.

He lip-syncs to a club mix version of The Smiths' "How Soon Is Now".

He has evolved into a performance artist. His presence captivates the crowd. Most are familiar with the performance art of a drag queen, but the sight of a muscleguy pulling it off provides an amazing new concept embraced by the short attention span of the demanding circuit.

Two black cloth ribbons unfurl from the rafters of the ceiling to the dancefloor behind him.

A Cirque Du Soleil performer repels down one of the cloth ribbons and then begins to spin behind him.

As the spin slows, the gymnast grabs the other cloth ribbon. Performs a series of calculated moves involving both ribbons designed to entertain the crowd.

The atmosphere of the club reaches a climax as the song ends, and the music transitions to another song.

Jake hops off the box, worms his way through the crowd and disappears behind a black curtain beside the dancefloor.

INT. CROBAR BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Behind the black curtain is a makeshift green room for the performers, complete with waters on ice and a massage table.

The energy from the crowd on the other side of the curtain is tangible.

Relaxing before their turn to appear are RUBIO & KIDD (20s), identical twin brothers who represent the next generation of go-go. The brothers are dressed in bizarre futuristic Mongolian King outfits with phallic symbols for beards. Stilts rest to the side.

Sabrina stands behind the black curtain. Peeks through one end, spying the action.

Jake comes barreling through.

Sabrina embraces him.

SABRINA

Baby, that was incredible.

He shrugs her off and grabs a water.

The PROMOTER for the evening appears from the other side of the black curtain.

He gives a "what the fuck" gesture.

PROMOTER

I pay you for one song. Is that what you think? Huh?

JAKE

Nobody told me that some guy was gonna come from outta nowhere and start spinning out of control behind me.

PROMOTER

Is that why you left? No way. No fucking way. What the fuck is that?

JAKE

The song was over. I was a distraction. I thought I was supposed to leave.

PROMOTER

Bullshit.

SABRINA

I'm going back to the hotel.

JAKE

No, wait. I'll go with you.

PROMOTER

You're not done yet. You owe me two more sets.

JAKE

I don't like surprises.

PROMOTER

Here.

Rob clamors for a vial in his pocket, offers up a bump for Jake.

Jake looks over at Sabrina, who curiously watches for the outcome.

He positions one nostril above the tiny spoon, places a finger on the other nostril, and inhales the powder.

PROMOTER

Go back on within the hour.

Rob turns to leave. Jake grabs his arm.

JAKE

Sabrina.

Rob prepares another bump and offers it to Sabrina.

SABRINA

What is it?

PROMOTER

Your basic jet fuel.

SABRINA

Is that crystal? That better not be crystal.

(to Jake)

I'll see you at the hotel.

Sabrina leaves. Jake pulls Rob's extended arm over to himself and snorts the bump.

PROMOTER

Are we good?

JAKE

Yeah. We're good.

PROMOTER

Good.

(to twins)

Rubio, you guys are on.

The twin brothers climb onto a table and secure themselves into their stilts. They walk out onto the scene on the other side of the black curtain.

The promoter exits as the Cirque Du Soleil performer enters along with his TRAINER.

TRAINER

Here, lie down.

The trainer motions towards the massage table, and the performer lies down on it.

The trainer begins massage and stretch therapy on the performer.

Jake sits down and watches in silence.

INT. CROBAR DANCEFLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Rubio and Kidd entertain the crowd on their stilts, providing visuals known around the globe for pushing the envelope one step further.

INT. CHICAGO OMNI HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Sabrina lays in the bed.

Jake enters as quietly as possible. Crosses towards the bathroom.

Sabrina sits upright.

SABRINA

I'm up.

JAKE

Hey.

SABRINA

How long have you been doing that stuff?

Jake walks over and sits on the bed.

SABRINA

I've seen what it does to people. I won't be with you if you do it again.

JAKE

Okay.

SABRINA

Promise me.

JAKE

I promise.

SABRINA

It's just that I care about you, and -

He silences her with a kiss. Caresses her face.

SABRINA  
I care about you.

JAKE  
I know.

They make love.

INT. CHICAGO OMNI HOTEL BATHROOM - LATER

Jake enters. Takes a piss. Looks over at a cosmetic container resting on the sink.

Picks up the container and reads the label.

INT. CHICAGO OMNI HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Sabrina stirs from her sleep. Sees that the bathroom light is on.

INT. CHICAGO OMNI HOTEL BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake opens the container, dips two fingers into the greenish-black salve within. Smells the goo on his fingers.

SABRINA (O.S.)  
Baby, hurry up...

INT. CHICAGO OMNI HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

SABRINA  
...I have to pee.

Sabrina waits patiently next to the door.

JAKE (O.S.)  
Okay, one second.

More like about ten seconds.

SABRINA  
Hurry!

The toilet flushes.

Jake appears from the bathroom. He has the green-black paste smeared all over his right pec.

JAKE  
I don't see what the big deal is.

SABRINA  
I love you.

JAKE

I've come to realize that I've  
loved you for a very long time now.  
Just the way you are.

INT. CHICAGO OMNI HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

A brunch cart clatters down the hallway, pushed by the room service attendant.

INT. CHICAGO OMNI HOTEL SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Jake, half-awake in the bed, barely responds to the knock on the door.

Sabrina, curled up on one end of the sofa, whispers into her cell phone, audible but not understandable.

More knocks at the door.

Jake lifts his head. Glances at Sabrina, who motions for him to get it.

He rises, naked. Clamors for the hotel robe, then opens the door.

ROOM SERVICE ATTENDANT

Good day.

JAKE

Good morning. Come on in.

The attendant wheels the cart in. Jake looks around for his wallet. Spies it on the end table next to Sabrina.

As he approaches her, the conversation becomes discernible.

SABRINA

My back is hurting more.

He grabs the wallet, pulls out a few bills, puts the wallet back down. Stands there.

SABRINA

Sometimes I have difficulty  
walking.

She realizes that Jake is listening. Takes the cell phone away from her ear.

SABRINA

Baby...

She looks over at the room service cart. He kisses her cheek.

JAKE  
Good morning.

Crosses to tip the attendant.

JAKE  
Thank you.

ROOM SERVICE ATTENDANT  
(exiting)  
Thank you, sir.

He closes the door, peeks inside a metal cover over one of the brunch plates. Grabs a piece of toast and takes a bite. Walks to the kitchenette.

SABRINA  
I don't have any negative thoughts in my head. I'm happy. Everything is going great.

Out of Sabrina's sight, Jake listens to the conversation.

SABRINA  
The right lymph node is swollen again... I don't know, I haven't taken my temperature... Okay...

Jake slowly chews his toast.

SABRINA  
That's a big step, is it really necessary?... I know, but my job and everything, how would I... I have to think about this... Okay... Bye.

Closes her cell phone. Tears up.

Jake appears from the kitchenette. Sensing his presence, she half-way looks over her shoulder, then looks away. Knows he heard the conversation.

SABRINA  
I ordered breakfast.

JAKE  
Who was that?

SABRINA

Can we talk about this after we eat?

JAKE

Was that Dr. Wiedersshine?

She'd get up to pour some orange juice, but she knows how much it would hurt.

JAKE

Back pain, lymph nodes. What was that all about?

SABRINA

He thinks the cancer may have come back.

JAKE

Why does he think that?

SABRINA

He can feel the energy that my body has absorbed.

JAKE

Over the phone?

SABRINA

I know it doesn't make sense to you, but -

JAKE

No fucking way. This is not right. You need to go to a real doctor now.

SABRINA

He is a real doctor!

JAKE

I knew there was something weird about this whole thing. Let me guess. He charges you for the phone calls. Am I right? Sabrina, how much have you paid him? How much? You have to let me take you to a hospital!

SABRINA

He wants me to move to Woodstock. He can treat me properly there.

JAKE

What about us?

SABRINA

It's temporary. A few months,  
until the cancer is gone again.  
I'm not asking you to go with me.  
My mother would go.

JAKE

You're not thinking clearly. Let's  
talk about this.

SABRINA

I don't want to talk about it. I  
have to remain positive.

This pushes Jake over the edge. He rams the brunch cart into  
the wall.

JAKE

This isn't about energy, or  
thinking positively! This is about  
cancer! It's about your life!

She shuts down.

JAKE

One minute the cancer's gone, the  
next minute, it's back? He feels  
something over the phone? What the  
fuck? What the fuck is that, huh?  
And then, suddenly, you're moving  
to Woodstock. So this guy can snap  
his fingers and make it go away  
again. Good luck with that.

SABRINA

Jake...

JAKE

I'm sorry. But that's how I feel.

SABRINA

You don't understand.

JAKE

You're right. I don't understand.  
So explain it to me. Explain to me  
how a woman of your intelligence  
and common sense can choose this  
thought process. How you can allow  
people to dictate how you live your  
life -

SABRINA

I don't want to be cut open! My uncle had cancer and he died. He chose to have the surgery, and he died because of it. The infected blood wasn't contained, and the cancer spread, and he died.

JAKE

That wouldn't happen to you.

SABRINA

You can't tell me that! You don't know!

He has nothing left. Looks at the mess on the floor. Picks up a fork and places it on the cart. Musters up one more attempt.

JAKE

Look at your breast. I honestly don't believe that you are now, or ever were, free of cancer.

She remains still.

JAKE

We have a plane to catch.

INT. MILLENIUM TIMES SQUARE HOTEL BALLROOM - EVENING

A long runway juts out from the center of the main stage. Typical fashion show set-up. Photographers click away from the end of the runway as models walk up and down to high-energy music. Seating is full.

Models wear Helen's lingerie designs.

INT. MILLENIUM BALLROOM BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Helen primps a model before she takes the runway.

Julian observes from the side.

JULIAN

She looks great. Don't mess with it.

HELEN

Let me do my job!

She stands back and judges her model.

HELEN

You're right. She looks great.  
(to model)  
You can go, thank you.  
(to Julian)  
I'm sorry. Nerves.

JULIAN

It's going well.

HELEN

It is, isn't it?

JULIAN

I'm proud of you.

He kisses her.

HELEN

End the show for me.

JULIAN

I don't think any of the bustiers  
would fit me.

HELEN

I'm serious. I don't like the  
finale. Walk out there in your  
boxers. It's a great way to  
introduce the men's line. Please.

JULIAN

What? You couldn't have asked me  
earlier?

HELEN

The idea just came to me. And  
you'd say no if you had time to  
think about it anyway.

JULIAN

I'm not wearing the boxers.

Helen pulls at his jeans to see what he is wearing.

HELEN

Even better.

JULIAN

I'm gonna need a cocktail.

INT. MILLENIUM TIMES SQUARE HOTEL BALLROOM - LATER

Jake sits a few rows back, enjoying the show.

Photographers click away every now and then.

Julian appears in chocolate silk briefs designed by Helen, and the photographers get busy. Flashing strobes increase noticeably.

The crowd mutters amongst itself.

The show concludes with Helen appearing from backstage and walking down the runway with the line-up of models. As they collect at the end of the runway, the audience claps.

Helen acknowledges her models, clapping for them.

Julian takes his place next to Helen and kisses her on the cheek.

INT. MILLENIUM BALLROOM BACKSTAGE - LATER

Press, models, friends gather for the after-party. Open bar, finger food, background music from a dj.

Racks of lingerie remain from the show.

Helen and Julian drink champagne and mingle. Jake approaches.

JAKE  
Congratulations.

HELEN  
Thank you. It's a start.

He kisses Helen. Shakes Julian's hand.

JAKE  
And to you, too, buddy! You looked great up there.

JULIAN  
This is Helen's night.

HELEN  
I'm glad you came. Have you heard from her?

JAKE  
No. Neither has her mother. She has successfully isolated herself from anyone who doesn't agree with her.

JULIAN  
How are you holding up?

JAKE

You know, I'm doing okay. I have faith.

HELEN

She'll eventually call.

JAKE

Yeah.

A waiter walks by with a tray of champagne flutes. Jake grabs one.

JAKE

But, like Julian said, this is your night. I propose a toast. To the success of your line.

Glasses clink. Jake and Helen sip, but Julian raises his glass again.

JULIAN

To the mother of my child.

Helen enjoys Jake's surprise.

HELEN

We're having a baby.

Jake man-hugs Julian.

JAKE

You dog!

INT. GALAXY DINER - NIGHT

Gerard eats alone. Writes in a journal.

Scans the diner looking for Jake.

Scribbles another entry.

Pulls a silver flask out of his coat pocket and pours into his OJ.

GERARD (V.O.)

"Loneliness settles in  
As I silently sit and spin.  
Endless hopes of a nup  
With one Sunny Side Up.  
When to you it's no longer a sin.

(MORE)

GERARD (V.O.) (cont'd)

"Two days and eight weeks gone by  
 Since last danced on my pedestal  
 high.  
 And I stared at his ass  
 Through my rocks and gin glass.  
 Not so much as a when, where, or  
 why.

"Next I see him I'll hand him my  
 verse,  
 Knowing not if for better or worse.  
 Would my God strike me down  
 If instead all should frown  
 'Til I shove it right back in my  
 purse?

"For due him I witnessed more joy  
 Than a nymph and her vibrating toy.  
 It should be no surprise.  
 His deep ocean-blue eyes.  
 Golden hair, golden skin, GOLDEN  
 BOY."

Gerard silently sips his gin and juice, undetected.

EXT. WOODSTOCK HOUSE - DAY

A modest five-room wooden home with a screened-in porch rests within the rolling hills of lush green grass wet from the morning dew. Sabrina's jeep occupies the gravel driveway.

INT. WOODSTOCK PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Three tiers of plastic incubator trays crowd the tiny porch. Within each tray are tiny green plants, herbs, in various stages of growth.

Sabrina hovers over one tray, delicately removing the leaves from one plant.

She places the leaves into a colander and slides the tray back into the incubator casing.

INT. WOODSTOCK KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Sabrina wears a flannel nightgown, her long hair framing her natural beauty.

She stands at the sink, meticulously washing the leaves in the colander.

A fraction of a movement results in a piercing pain. She turns the faucet lever to stop the running water. Lets the colander fall into the sink.

INT. WOODSTOCK BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She sits on the side of her bed, an IV tower next to her.

Sterilizes her arm with an alcohol swipe, finds a vein, and inserts the needle. Secures the line with tape, and watches the fluid enter her body.

Gingerly lies down on the bed.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. WOODSTOCK PORCH - LATER

A tiny hand raps on the flimsy wooden frame of the screen door.

DAPHNE (40s), a meager Indonesian woman, all of 4'11" who looks much younger than her age, peers through the screen.

DAPHNE  
Hello? Sabrina? It's Daphne.

Not waiting for a response, she lets herself in. She carries a black satchel.

INT. WOODSTOCK DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Daphne considers the room.

SABRINA (O.S.)  
Back here, Daphne.

INT. WOODSTOCK BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The black satchel rests at the foot of the bed, crowding Sabrina as she lays. The cover is open, revealing dozens of cassette tapes.

Daphne removes a stack of the tapes.

DAPHNE  
You have a cassette player, right?

SABRINA  
It's in that drawer over there.  
Could you get it?

Daphne places the stack of tapes on a shelf, and slides past the bed towards the indicated drawer.

DAPHNE

The first series costs two hundred dollars. Do you need me to get your checkbook as well?

SABRINA

I told Dr. Wiedershine I wasn't able to pay for these today.

DAPHNE

Oh, that's right. I remember. He said you could work more days in the office next week.

Daphne finds the tape player and sets it out.

SABRINA

I don't know if I'm going to make it in that fast. Unless these tapes work over the weekend.

DAPHNE

This is a good thing, Sabrina. The pain of your childhood is working its way out of your back. You're releasing all of the negative feelings that you've held onto for so long. Once your mind has cleared itself of the toxic memories, the pain will be gone. You'll see. You're getting close!

She rubs Sabrina's feet through the blanket.

DAPHNE

I went through this same process a few years ago. I don't know what I would have done without Dr. Wiedershine. And yes, the tapes work fast.

SABRINA

I have to use the bathroom. Could you help me up?

Sabrina attempts briefly, then falls back.

SABRINA

No. I guess I have to use the bedpan today.

INT. WOODSTOCK HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Daphne stands beside the bedroom door.

DAPHNE

I'm right here if you need me.

She curiously glances down the hallway. Takes two steps towards the den.

INT. WOODSTOCK DEN - CONTINUOUS

Daphne leans against the frame of the doorway, studying the room.

INT. WOODSTOCK BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daphne enters from the adjacent bathroom with the empty bedpan.

SABRINA

Thank you, Daphne. I'm so embarrassed.

DAPHNE

Don't be. I have an idea. Let me move in with you. I could make a bedroom out of your den.

INT. WOODSTOCK DEN - NIGHT

On the floor against one wall are votive candles encircling a small statue of Allah. An incense burner and small finger-sized cymbals complete the temporary temple.

Daphne and two of her girlfriends lounge on the sofa with a bucket of popcorn while watching "ET: The Extra-Terrestrial" on DVD.

The phone in Sabrina's bedroom rings. Daphne jumps up to intervene.

INT. WOODSTOCK BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sabrina lays in the bed, earphones covering her ears as she listens to the tapes.

She overhears the ringing of the phone, slides the earphones off.

SABRINA

(calling out)

Daphne!

Daphne enters simultaneously.

DAPHNE

I got it.

Daphne picks up the receiver, holding the popcorn bowl in the other hand.

                  DAPHNE  
          Hello?... Yes, Mrs. Everts, this is  
          Daphne.

Sabrina motions for the phone. Daphne shakes her head no at Sabrina.

                  SABRINA  
          No, I should talk to her.

                  DAPHNE  
          Just one second.

She holds the receiver against her shoulder and addresses Sabrina.

                  DAPHNE  
          You know how well you're doing.  
          It's important to stay away from  
          any source of negative energy.

                  SABRINA  
          My mother is not a source of  
          negative energy.

                  DAPHNE  
          You may not feel as though she is,  
          but she's a reminder of that time  
          of your life. This is temporary,  
          Sabrina, until you get better. You  
          don't have far to go.

The voice on the other end of the line can be heard yelling.

                  DAPHNE  
          A little while longer and the pain  
          will go away forever. Just like  
          the cancer did.

                  SABRINA  
          Tell her I will call her in a few  
          days.

                  DAPHNE  
          (into phone)  
          Mrs. Everts, she said she'll call  
          you in a few days.

Mrs. Everts yells over the phone.

SABRINA

Promise.

DAPHNE

She promises. Bye.

Hangs up.

DAPHNE

You're doing the right thing.  
You'll see soon. Trust me. I love  
you, Sabrina.

SABRINA

I love you, too, Daphne.

DAPHNE

(offering bowl)  
Popcorn?

EXT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

A 2010 Ford Taurus makes its way down the Jersey turnpike.

Headlights illuminate the upcoming road sign.

ON THE SIGN -

"Woodstock 23 Miles"

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

Jake drives as Sabrina's mother, MARTHA (60), stares in front  
of her from the passenger seat.

JAKE

Sleep if you need to.

MARTHA

We're almost there.

These two have never met before. The silence is not awkward.

MARTHA

What am I going to say?

JAKE

She's your daughter. It'll come to  
you.

INT. WOODSTOCK DEN - LATER

Daphne sits in front of her miniature statue, worshipping  
Allah.

INT. WOODSTOCK BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sabrina sleeps in pain.

INT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

Jake and Martha stare straight ahead comfortably. Then...

MARTHA

That's it. That's her Jeep. Oh,  
my God, what happened to it?

EXT. RENTAL CAR - NIGHT

Headlights scan over Sabrina's white Jeep, its rear-end caved in from an accident.

INT. WOODSTOCK DEN - LATER

Daphne remains in front of her miniature statue, worshipping Allah.

A burst at the front door causes her to turn in that direction.

Martha and Jake appear in her sight.

MARTHA

You must be Daphne.

Jake marches past Martha and through the hallway.

INT. WOODSTOCK BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jake barges through the bedroom door.

Sabrina sleeps despite the earphones on her ears playing Dr. Wiedershine's tapes.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

The vital signs screen indicates a healthy pulse rate.

Martha and Jake sleep awkwardly in chairs beside a resting Sabrina.

Helen and Julian walk silently through the door.

Helen approaches Sabrina, touches her hand but is careful not to wake her.

Jake stirs.

JAKE

Hey.

HELEN

Hey.

He sits up.

She sits next to him. Comforts him with a hug.

JAKE

Let's go outside.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jake, Helen, and Julian stand just beyond Sabrina's room door.

JAKE

She's been bed-ridden for months. There are tumors all along her spine. That's why she can't walk without severe pain. They say that she will become paralyzed from the waist down.

HELEN

How did she let this happen?

JAKE

These people, the doctor she was seeing, and there's a roommate, it's like a cult. She's been brain-washed. They convinced her that she was cancer-free and that she couldn't walk because... because her negative feelings were leaving her body through her back, through her spine.

HELEN

No...

JAKE

She's been listening to their self-help tapes. They were having her administer her own IVs.

HELEN

Unbelievable.

JAKE

Her speech is slurred. The doctors here say it's because it's reached her brain. They're running tests.

HELEN

This is crazy. How is this possible?

JAKE

I don't know. I honestly don't know.

INT. HOSPITAL CAFETERIA - DAY

Jake and Martha face each other at a secluded table, each picking at a plate of food.

JAKE

How did you raise a child that was capable of getting into this situation? I don't understand the... I don't understand.

MARTHA

I love her. I love her more than I can explain. Everything I did for her I thought was best for her. But this is my fault, I know it. I tried to protect her. I shielded her from the things that I knew would hurt her. I realize now that it created a false sense of reality. She is so trusting. It's like her mind is a blank canvas for anyone to paint whatever beliefs they want. So child-like. The more I tried to talk to her, the more she shut me out.

JAKE

You and I know two different women in Sabrina. She worked and played in a very harsh environment. With me. I experienced it with her. When I first met her, she was the one who warned me about the nightclub scene, how it could eat you up. That doesn't sound so naive to me.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

A DOCTOR stands beside Sabrina's hospital bed. Martha, Jake, Helen, and Julian stand nearby.

DOCTOR

What you need to understand is that we do not have a cure for cancer. Do you understand that?

Sabrina slurs her words when she speaks.

SABRINA

Yes.

DOCTOR

And what we have found is that the cancer has spread from your breast to your spine, your liver, your kidneys, your lungs, and your brain. My experience with this situation is that we have... weeks... to three months.

SABRINA

I am ready to begin the treatments, the radiation, the chemotherapy...

DOCTOR

Ms. Everts, you understand that we cannot do anything further for you. You have progressed to the latter part of stage four, and there is nothing that we can do for you. Radiation and chemotherapy would only cause you to be very sick during the last weeks of your life. You have to think about your quality of life for your remaining days.

SABRINA

I am not going to die. I cannot have these negative thoughts. I wasn't given cancer to die from it. I was given cancer to become aware of other areas of my life which need to heal. With all due respect, I'm not dying. Please help me to fight this.

DOCTOR

What we would like to do is make you as comfortable as possible.

(MORE)

DOCTOR (cont'd)

We can shrink the tumors on your spine with radiation. That will enable you to walk, for the time being, and regain control of your bowels. This is a temporary solution. In the meantime, I need you and your family to think about what you would like to do next.

SABRINA

That's great! I know what I want to do next. I want to fight it. We'll do the radiation, and then we'll start the chemotherapy. And hormonal treatments. I'd like to know more about the hormonal treatments. I know there are options for that.

DOCTOR

Hormonal treatment is in its infancy, an experimental phase. The ideal candidate is a woman in the first or early second stage of the disease. I'm sorry, Sabrina, but... may I call you Sabrina? You are not a candidate for hormonal treatment.

SABRINA

Please help me to fight this. I have to explore all options. I have to try. I won't give up. Ever. I'm not dying. You'll see.

DOCTOR

I know how difficult this is. A conflict arises between medicine and spiritual beliefs. I am going to make you as comfortable as possible while you are in my care. But a frank discussion concerning what happens next must take place. And, by that, I mean deciding if you want to go home or to a hospice. Talk to your family, to your mother. Please do not make your decisions based on the anticipation of a miraculous event.

SABRINA

This is not a matter of a miracle. This is a matter of fact. I'm not dying!

DOCTOR  
We'll talk again another time.

SABRINA  
I am not dying. I'm not. Mom,  
tell him. Jake.

EXT. ANN ARBOR HOSPICE CARE HOME - DAY

Beside a pond, baby ducks struggle to keep up with their mother, quacking away.

SUPER: "Ann Arbor, Michigan"

The hospice in the background is a pleasant brick structure that looks more like a school than a health care facility.

INT. HOSPICE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A blue vinyl bag the size of a small purse hangs to the side and near the foot of a hospital bed, a tube running out of it.

The tube runs to an I/V tower and then to Sabrina's forearm. She sleeps.

Knock at the door.

HOSPICE AIDE #1 (O.S.)  
Hello.

Martha rests in the chair next to the bed. Jake sits on the small sofa against one wall.

MARTHA  
Come in.

Two HOSPICE AIDES enter. One carries a blue vinyl bag identical to the one hanging off the bed. The other holds a pen and a clipboard with charts.

HOSPICE AIDE #1  
Hello. How are you doing today?

MARTHA  
Well, we had a good night's sleep,  
and a big breakfast, and now she's  
taking a nap.

HOSPICE AIDE #1  
We will try not to wake her then.  
I am here to replace the morphine  
bag.

MARTHA

Okay. Thank you.

The aide unzips the bag hanging from the bed to reveal six tubes of morphine, all empty but one.

HOSPICE AIDE #1

(to Hospice Aide #2)

Replacing five vials, 100 milliliters each.

The second aide scribbles on the chart.

HOSPICE AIDE #2

Okay.

The first aide unzips the bag in her hands. Replaces the empty bedside vials with the full vials from the bag she holds.

Jake watches questioningly.

The process is complete.

HOSPICE AIDE #2

(to Hospice Aide #1)

Sign here.

The second aide holds the clipboard out. The first aide grabs the pen and signs.

HOSPICE AIDE #1

Okay, then. Have a good day.

MARTHA

Thank you.

Martha immediately reaches over to a command button on the bed within Sabrina's reach. Pushes the button, releasing a dose of morphine to Sabrina.

JAKE

Does she really need it while she's sleeping?

MARTHA

It's been more than fifteen minutes. She's allowed a shot every fifteen minutes. The button won't work anyway if we press it too soon.

Jake rises and crosses to the window.

Strategically placed outside the window is a bird feeder. No birds are feeding. It's an obvious sign of distraction for the patient.

Martha crosses for her purse lying in one corner of the room.

MARTHA

Hey, why don't you go get us something to eat? I know when Sabrina wakes up, she's not gonna want the stuff here. And if you're like me, a good ol' quarter pounder just might hit the spot.

She rummages through her purse and comes up with a few bills. Offers them to Jake.

JAKE

Okay. I don't really know my way around Ann Arbor. How the hell do I get there?

INT. MCDONALD'S - LATER

MCDONALD'S SERVER

Is this for here or to go?

JAKE

To go.

EXT. RENTAL CAR - LATER

Five large bags of McDonald's fast food occupy the passenger seat.

Jake drives. Views the landscape. Pulls the car to the side of the road. Gets out.

EXT. ANN ARBOR ROADSIDE - LATER

Jake stands beside the rental car. Looks out at the open fields as though trying to emblazon the picture onto his brain.

An eighteen-wheeler hauls ass past him, shaking the car.

INT. HOSPICE HALLWAY - LATER

Jake makes his way down the bright and cheerful hallway, holding the five large bags of food.

Outside of Sabrina's room, Martha consults with a LOCAL DOCTOR.

LOCAL DOCTOR

I thought she had accepted that she is dying.

MARTHA

She has. But she keeps waking up, and she wants to know why. Can't you give her more morphine?

Jake listens, holding the fast food bags.

LOCAL DOCTOR

Mrs. Everts, we can't do that. She is on the highest legal dose possible. If we give her more... we can't give her more.

MARTHA

Give her enough so that she doesn't wake up. That's what she wants. Because as long as she keeps waking up, she gets confused and thinks maybe she isn't dying after all. Maybe she's supposed to keep fighting.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPICE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

HOSPICE AIDE #2

This is a hospice, not a hospital. We don't treat anyone here. You're here for your comfort.

SABRINA

Yes, but, the other lady told me that if I was strong enough to walk to the nurse's station and back, then she would help me to get the treatment that I need.

HOSPICE AIDE #2

The nurse's station down the hallway?

SABRINA

Yes. She said if I could make it there and back, then I could transfer back to the hospital and start the chemotherapy and the radiation.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPICE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LOCAL DOCTOR

She is a fighter. But you have to let nature take its course. Just because she's accepted death doesn't mean it will happen right away. We don't know how long it will be.

A loud CRASH from within the room. All three rush in.

INT. HOSPICE ROOM - LATER

Sabrina is on the floor.

The aide tries in vain to help her up.

MARTHA

Sabrina!

The doctor yells down the hallway.

LOCAL DOCTOR

We need some help over here!

Jake tosses the bags.

JAKE

I've got her.

HOSPICE AIDE #2

Here -

JAKE

Get out of the way!

MARTHA

She's bleeding!

Sabrina scraped herself during the fall. A male aide runs inside and assists Jake. They manage to get her back into the bed.

The doctor inserts the IV. Martha strokes her forehead, near hysterics.

MARTHA

What is the matter with you people!  
You're supposed to be helping her!

HOSPICE AIDE #2

She wanted to see if she could walk to the nurse's station. She had me convinced... that -

LOCAL DOCTOR

Everything's okay, now. We'll tend to that scrape on her leg, and... Sabrina, are you okay?

The aides exit.

SABRINA

Yes. Could you hand me my cell phone? I need to make an appointment for a mammogram.

LOCAL DOCTOR

You don't need to make that call right now.

SABRINA

Do you have the number for the Sloan-Kettering Center in New York?

LOCAL DOCTOR

I can get that for you later.

The male aide re-enters, handing a plastic cup with pills to the doctor.

LOCAL DOCTOR

Here's your anxiety medication. I'm letting you take it a little early under the circumstances. Sabrina, I thought we'd gone through all of this. I thought you agreed that you were here specifically for your comfort.

Sabrina, spaced out and uncomfortable with her physical presence, fidgets.

Her fingers trace the raised cloth pattern on her blanket, then bunch up the fabric for twirling.

SABRINA

I have to try. Don't you see? I have to try.

The doctor sits on the bed, facing her.

LOCAL DOCTOR

I am not going to pretend to know how difficult this is. You're waiting. May I suggest that you live your life while you wait? Have one of the aides take you out by the pond in a wheelchair. Watch "Dancing With The Stars." One of our guests, a young girl down the hall, had her classmates over to celebrate her birthday. They had a party with cake, and they played games. Here's your medication when you're ready for it.

Sabrina takes the plastic cup.

JAKE

Can she take it with some food? I have McDonald's.

SABRINA

McDonald's!

LOCAL DOCTOR

(exiting)

Enjoy your time together. I'll see you again in a few days.

MARTHA

Somebody's hungry.

Jake picks the bags off the floor and places them on the coffee table in front of the sofa.

JAKE

I wasn't sure what everybody would want.

SABRINA

Chicken McNuggets!

JAKE

Okay. Okay, I got that.

SABRINA

With honey mustard sauce... and...  
and... sweet and sour sauce...  
and... BBQ.

JAKE

Did you have a good nap?

SABRINA

I did. Thank you. What can I do for you today?

JAKE

You can eat all of this food that I brought. That's one thing you can do for me.

Jake rummages through the food bags.

SABRINA

Okay. And what can I do for you today, Momma?

JAKE

Oh, fuck.

MARTHA

What is it?

JAKE

Fuck! I don't have any sweet and sour sauce.

He swats one of the food bags, sending it flying into the wall.

MARTHA

It's okay.

JAKE

No, it's not. It isn't okay. I don't have any. I'm sorry.

A small bird feeds at the bird feeder next to Sabrina's window.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPICE ROOM - DAY

A sheet cake from the local grocery store sits out, untouched. Three more cakes keep it company.

Sabrina sleeps.

Jake, Martha, Helen, and Julian silently wait for her to wake up.

Martha presses the morphine button.

MARTHA

I'm sorry, kids. You never know if she'll be awake or not.

JAKE

I told them -

HELEN

Jake told us.

They're waiting, just like the doctor said not to do.

And waiting.

JULIAN

We should check into the hotel.

EXT. ANN ARBOR HOSPICE CARE HOME - DAY

Jake sits on a bench near the duck pond.

INT. HOSPICE ROOM - NIGHT

Jake hovers over Sabrina's bedside, eye to eye with her.

JAKE

Do you know how much I love you?

SABRINA

Yes.

JAKE

Can I tell you anyway?

SABRINA

Yes.

JAKE

If you were to take the beautiful big blue sky and smush it all into one little cubicle, say the size of a sugar cube, that would be about a hundredth of a percent of how much I love you.

SABRINA

I love you, too!

JAKE

I know you do. I know you do, sweetheart. I know. I will see you on the other side, my precious. I love you.

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - NIGHT

The club night is at its peak of energy.

Rubio and Kidd begin their performance art.

A huge rubber ball 6 feet in diameter rests on the stage. We shall call it the ball of life. Ropes run from the ball to either side of the stage.

Rubio stage left holds the ropes. Kidd stage right.

Whitney Houston's "Your Love Is My Love" begins.

This performance is simple. With each crescendo, Rubio and Kidd work their ropes so that the ball of life bounces up and down, higher and higher, reflecting the ups and downs of the music, and of life.

At the height of the music, the ball of life bounces high into the air.

Appropriately, at the reprieves, the ball barely moves.

CUT TO:

Sabrina sleeps peacefully at the hospice.

CUT TO:

The bouncing ball of life.

CUT TO:

Helen, in the delivery room, gives birth.

CUT TO:

Sabrina sleeps peacefully. Her mother keeps vigil. Presses the morphine button.

CUT TO:

A series of shots -

- The ball of life bounces wildly
- Sabrina sleeps peacefully
- Helen gives birth
- The morphine button is pressed
- The ball of life barely moves

These scenes interchange continuously until...

INT. PALLADIUM MAIN STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The music fades out as the bouncing ball comes to its final rest, motionless on stage.

Junior at the turntables lets the record end without lifting the needle.

The scratch of the needle against recordless vinyl repeats itself.

The house lights go up.

Jake on the left end subwoofer takes a knee.

Julian at the right end subwoofer takes a knee.

And the scratching needle against vinyl repeats itself.

Rubio and Kidd take a knee.

The house follows suit. The former revellers, now in mourning, one by one take a knee until eventually a wave crosses the dancefloor.

Everyone is on one knee.

And the needle scratches.

INT. GALAXY DINER - DAY

Gerard whirls a bite of Salisbury steak into his mashed potatoes.

Shoves it into his mouth and notices Jake across the diner, watching him. Gives a less than confident wave with his fork-holding hand.

Jake picks up his plate of food and walks over.

JAKE  
May I join you?

GERARD  
Yes.

They eat in silence awkward for Gerard but comforting to Jake.

Finally...

JAKE

We don't really know each other.

GERARD

I know you.

JAKE

No. I'm not sure if I even know me. You don't know my name. You think it's Billy.

GERARD

I know it's not Billy. I know about your girlfriend. I'm sorry.

JAKE

What am I supposed to do next? I don't know what I'm supposed to... What does a go-go dancer do next?

GERARD

You've retired.

JAKE

Go-go boys don't retire, they just fall off the box.

Gerard carefully considers his next move.

Pulls out his book, now published, a hard-bound copy of "The Go-Go Boy Sonnets: Volume II." Offers it to Jake.

GERARD

I'm a writer. You're on page twenty-six.

JAKE

Holy fuck.  
(flipping to page, reads title)  
Golden boy.

Gerard gives Jake time to read the poem.

JAKE

Exactly how much joy does a nymph get from her vibrating toy?

GERARD

Interesting that you should single out that line.

JAKE

Yeah, why?

GERARD

Well, correct me if I'm wrong, but here you are trying to figure out the purpose of your life, and I believe that to be it.

JAKE

Playing with yourself.

GERARD

Read the whole line.

JAKE

(reading)

For due him I witnessed more joy -

GERARD

Stop. That's it. The purpose of your life is joy. And you gave me more joy than, well, you know.

JAKE

It's not that simple.

GERARD

Maybe it is. Don't you see? How you're a part of something greater than yourself? You were oblivious to this. You inspired me. I, in turn, inspire somebody, whomever. As soon as you take the focus off of yourself and put it onto others, you won't feel so lost.

JAKE

What can I do for you today. That's what Sabrina said every morning. In the hospice.

GERARD

And that gave her joy.

JAKE

It goes beyond joy. We all want to be a productive part of society.

GERARD

Follow your passion. I love to write. Whatever your passion, that's where your happiness and your impact on society will be greatest. Success, however you measure it, will follow naturally.

JAKE  
I wasn't really expecting all of  
this when I came over here.

GERARD  
Do you believe in the inherent  
goodness of man?

JAKE  
I think I just want to eat my  
lasagna now.

They eat for a while.

JAKE  
I do. But I still just want to eat  
my lasagna.

GERARD  
How is it?

JAKE  
It's good. How's yours?

GERARD  
It's good.

JAKE  
I could move back to Atlanta.

GERARD  
Oh, so that's your name. Scarlet  
O'Hara.

JAKE  
Yeah, that won't work.  
(long beat)  
It's Jake.

GERARD  
Huh. Who would've guessed.

House mix of John Lennon's "Imagine" begins.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - HOPE

-- Big, brown, innocent eyes of an infant stare at us. Our  
view slowly becomes larger until we can see the baby's entire  
face, then his entire body resting in a blanketed infant's  
seat.

-- A woman's arms pick the baby up.

-- Helen carries her newborn, LIAM, over to Julian, lying on the bed.

-- The family share in the joy of their existence.

-- Jake walks down the runway of Helen's show sporting a silk robe and boxers. Julian is the next model to walk.

-- Helen, holding Liam, spies from backstage.

-- Helen is on the cover of "Lingerie" magazine. She sits on a Harley wearing a lacy bra underneath a leather jacket. The subtitle: "Leather and Lace."

-- Julian is on a huge billboard in Times Square advertising Helen's design.

-- Jake holds little Liam while Helen snaps a picture of them.

-- Jake drives down the open highway in his 1968 gun-metal gray Ford Gran Torino. Our view becomes wider to eventually reveal the open terrain in its vastness.

SUPER: "Dr. Donn J. Wiedershine continues to treat cancer patients under his practice, Woodstock Natural Medicine. He proclaims to be a licensed medical doctor, although no documentation can be found to support this claim."

SUPER: "Martha Everts aggressively seeks restitution against Dr. Wiedershine in the wrongful death of her daughter, Sabrina."

SUPER: "Jake found his passion in health and fitness. He is a personal trainer and nutrition counselor in Los Angeles."

-- JAKE, the real and living person who is today well into his 40s, go-go dances while the CREDITS ROLL. As the song ends, he works it a little bit too much... and falls off the box.

JAKE (O.S.)  
I'm good.

FADE OUT.