

THE BULLDOGS

by

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FADE IN

INT – HOTEL / MOVIE SCREEN (NIGHT)

Opening credits roll with a high school football game being shown from a screen projector. The film quality is poor. We are viewing an aged film and there is snow on the screen.

In the background we hear PLAY-BY-PLAY over a P.A. System. We learn that it is a championship game between Sierra High School and Colonial High School. It is suspenseful and we hear “KAUFMAN BACK TO PASS”, and “DRUMMOND UP THE MIDDLE”. Both are players for Sierra High.

The crowd at the game is on their feet from excitement. Just as opening credits end, Sierra High scores a dramatic touchdown. The scoreboard shows:

HOME	35
VISITOR	28

INT – HOTEL / BANQUET HALL

The camera pans back to reveal a room full of well-dressed people in their late forties. The movie screen is visible in the background and the people are CHEERING WILDLY in reaction to the touchdown.

SUPERIMPOSE: SIERRA HIGH SCHOOL 40th REUNION

ALUMNI (O.S.)
Yeah! Class of '68, all the way, baby.

The camera pans over to a table where two men and three women are sitting.

ANOTHER ALUM
You were the man, Mark. You and Abe,
you guys made it happen .

MARK KAUFMAN *is one of the men sitting at the table. He smiles back in answer. He fits the tall, dark, and handsome bill perfectly.*

MARK
Thanks, Herb.
(to Abe)
One heck of a good time, wasn't it?

Mark looks over at ABE DRUMMOND, a large black man with pleasant features. The man is seated across from him.

ABE

Wouldn't give it up for nothin'.

Walking furiously toward them is BOBBY SAVAGE, a man of slight build, an expressive face, and curly hair. He is carrying several drinks in his hands.

ABE

You just missed the touchdown, Bobby.

Bobby takes a seat next to his wife CAROL.

BOBBY

Excuse—em—wah, but someone's gotta run this thing. Besides, I was there, *remember?*

CAROL

Thanks, hun.

MARK

That's right. What was it you were doing again? Was it water boy or something?

Mark and Abe start to laugh.

BOBBY

Hardy-har-har. I don't remember you guys complaining when your mugs appeared in the local paper the next morning.

MARK

(feigns surprise)

Was that you who took that great picture?

Abe puts his hand on Mark's shoulder.

ABE

Got him started on a career path there.

Bobby takes a chair next to the guys.

BOBBY

Like I owe you fellas everything, right?

MARK

Let's see, how did that pose go again?

Mark rises from his seat to take the pose of a quarterback. Bobby laughs and Abe turns back around to face the screen.

ABE

Oh, hey, here comes Colonial on the last drive of the game.

MARK

All right, hold 'em, boys.

BOBBY

What? It's not like this is a mystery or something. We do *know* what's going to happen here people.

MARK / ABE / WIVES

(collectively)

Shhh!

BOBBY

Right.

Everyone turns their attention back to the movie screen as Bobby takes a moment to glare at the Sierra High alumni who are present. He appears introspective. A beat goes by and then his eyes find the screen too.

CUT TO:

EXT – SIERRA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL STADIUM (NIGHT)

A seventeen-year-old BOBBY is on the sidelines with the Sierra High football team.

BOBBY

Can you guys tear your eyes from the field for a minute? Photographer at work here.

MARK and ABE are sitting side-by-side on the bench. They throw an arm around each other and smile into the camera Bobby is pointing at them.

MARK

Why don't you let someone else take the picture? Get in here with us?

BOBBY

The people want pignose, Mark, not

paperboys.

Bobby takes the picture and the crowd suddenly ROARS. Mark and Abe rise from the bench.

ABE

Darn it! They're driving on us.

MARK

How much time is left?

ABE

Forty seconds.

All three of them turn their attention back to the field. They appear concerned.

BOBBY

Come on, guys. They'd have to drive seventy yards for the score. It ain't gonna happen.

EXT – FOOTBALL FIELD

The COLONIAL QUARTERBACK lines up under center.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

First and ten for Colonial.

The ball is hiked and the quarterback drops back and FLINGS the ball downfield.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Atkins is going for the bomb.

The ball is shooting across the skyline like a missile locked on target. Everyone is holding their breath. Seconds later the ball falls perfectly into the hands of a COLONIAL RECEIVER and he BURSTS downfield. A ROAR goes up in the crowd. Everyone rises to their feet.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Caught! McMurtrie has caught the ball and he's racing to the goal.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINES

Abe is staring in disbelief. Mark is shaking his head. Bobby is snapping pictures.

ABE

No–no–NO!!!

BACK TO FOOTBALL FIELD

The Colonial receiver is about to reach the end zone when he is SLAMMED down from behind by a Sierra defender.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINES

Mark pumps his fist in elation and high-fives several teammates.

MARK

Whoo-hoo! Yes–yes–yes! Ray took him down. Ray took him down.

INT – ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH

The ANNOUNCER, a man with graying hair is shaking his head.

ANNOUNCER

Oh, what a magnificent tackle by Raymond Pacheco.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINES

Mark and Abe are bouncing up and down in excitement. Bobby snaps a picture of RAY PACHECO as he comes slowly to his feet. The Colonial team races into a quick huddle.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

A game saving stop folks, but can Sierra hold on for the win? There's only seconds left.

BACK TO FOOTBALL FIELD

The Colonial team breaks quickly and takes position.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINES

Mark glares up at the clock again.

MARK

Fifteen seconds. Come on, guys.

BACK TO FOOTBALL FIELD

The Colonial quarterback is BARKING signals, watching Ray who is staring at him from across the line.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
First and goal. It's on the four yard line and
Atkins is under center.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINE

Bobby is whispering to himself.

BOBBY
Come on, Ray! It's yours, man. Do it—do it!

BACK TO FOOTBALL FIELD

The ball is hiked and the Colonial quarterback drops back. He looks left, he looks right, but there is no one open. Suddenly defenders are in his face, TEARING at his jersey. He manages a last second escape, rolls out and FIRES the ball into the hands of a Colonial receiver.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
TOUCHDOWN, Colonial!

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINE

The crowd SCREAMS. The expressions of Mark, Abe, and Bobby are identical. They are dejected.

ABE
Damn!

MARK
Shoot!

BACK TO FOOTBALL FIELD

The Colonial players are CELEBRATING as the Sierra team looks on in resignation.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Colonial has done it.

SIERRA DEFENDER
Oh man, it's all over. We're done.

Ray suddenly flies off the handle and CHARGES his teammate.

RAY
What? You little sack of...!!!

He turns and addresses all of the defenders.

RAY

Listen to me! If anyone here wants to give up, then march your miserable behind off this field before I kick it through the freakin' goal posts. Every guy is going to give his everything on this last play. *Comprende?*

The Sierra defenders exchange glances and nod in fear.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINE

Bobby is nodding from the sideline. A crooked smile plays on his face.

INT – ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH.

The announcer rises attentively from his chair to look carefully on the field.

ANNOUNCER

It looks like there's something going on with the Bulldog players. Oh, Colonial is calling for a timeout now.

(beat)

Only four seconds left, folks. What a game! The only question now is, does Colonial go for the extra point and a tie, or do they go for the two points and a win?

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINE

The SIERRA COACH rushes over. In his excitement he bumps into Bobby.

SIERRA COACH

Move it, Savage.

BOBBY

Sorry, coach.

The coach turns his attention to his defensive unit. Ray is ambling over to the sidelines.

SIERRA COACH

Hurry it up, Pacheco.

As Ray reaches the sidelines, he acknowledges Mark, Abe, and Bobby with a nod. The coach gets in his face.

SIERRA COACH

What's going on out there?

RAY

Nothing I can't handle, coach.

SIERRA COACH

Good.

The coach looks around nervously.

SIERRA COACH

You think they're going for the tie?

RAY

(shakes head)

They're going for it, I can feel it.

SIERRA COACH

(nods)

Yeah. Stop 'em then. Just...stop 'em.

Ray says nothing. Instead the defender scowls from beneath his helmet and returns to the field. The crowd HOOTS and HOLLERS as all the players take to the field again.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

I don't see a kicker. It looks like Colonial is going for the win. It's damn the torpedo's, folks.

BACK TO FOOTBALL FIELD

The Colonial quarterback breaks huddle and lines up under the center again. The crowd goes quiet. It's a tense moment.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINE

Bobby has his camera poised for a shot. Abe turns to his teammates, CLAPPING his hands together.

ABE

We gotta have faith. We gotta have faith.

BACK TO FOOTBALL FIELD

The ball is snapped and the Colonial quarterback spins and hands the ball off to a running back. Everything turns to slow motion as the offensive and defensive lines COLLIDE. It is a violent meeting of pushing, shoving, and drive blocking. From behind the line the running back is racing up. Suddenly he LEAPS into the air in an effort to find the end zone.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINE

Mark is grimacing and Abe is shaking his head lightly. The Sierra coach has a hand raised to his temple, and Bobby is about to snap a picture.

EXT – GOAL LINE

The Colonial running back is about to cross the goal line in mid-flight when Ray comes FLYING through the air from the other side of the line. The two go CRASHING into each other just as Bobby SNAPS a picture. Everything returns to real-time just as the running back falls backward into his own teammates.

INT – ANNOUNCER'S BOOTH

The announcer leaps to his feet.

ANNOUNCER

No–no! Colonial has been denied a victory.
And who is it, but Pacheco again.

BACK TO SIERRA SIDELINE

The game-ending horn sounds and the Sierra football players STORM the field in pride. The crowd is CHANTING Pa-che-co! Pa-che-co! Pa-che-co!

INT – HOTEL / BANQUET HALL

The crowd of graduates is CHEERING WILDLY and WHISTLING as the film ends. Bobby goes up to the podium and addresses the alumni.

BOBBY

Wow! How 'bout that? All those many years ago and it's still as electric as ever. I'll tell you what, why don't the members of the varsity team stand up.

ALUMNI #1 (O.S.)

Can't! They're all asleep!

BOBBY

(laughs)

Come on, fellas, let's see you.

One after another, members rise from their chairs. They are all smiles. Bobby starts to clap.

BOBBY

Incredible job that year, guys.

ALUMNI #2 (O.S.)

(yelling)

Let's remember Pacheco.

ALUMNI #3

(yelling)

The Veterans!

BOBBY

Yeah...I was about...

Bobby goes sullen as he glares out at the crowd. The HOOTS and HOLLERS die slowly. He finally forces a smile.

BOBBY

Nineteen sixty-eight, what can you say? I know it seems like yesterday somehow. I don't think any of us will argue just how special it was. I think all of us lost a little something of ourselves.

ALUMNI #1 (O.S.)

(yelling)

Still braggin' 'bout yer first kiss, huh, Bobby?

The crowd breaks into RAUCOUS LAUGHTER, including Bobby.

BOBBY

Funny! Very funny.

The laughter fades again. Bobby is serious again.

BOBBY

Maybe it was our innocence...the fact that

we lost a man named Kennedy and a man named King. Maybe it was the thought

BOBBY (cont'd)

that we wouldn't be walking the halls of Sierra anymore.

(points to screen)

Maybe it was that feeling of elation back there when we won the championship for the first time in our school's history.

Bobby struggles momentarily with the words.

BOBBY

But for me it was the friend I left behind. The friend I lost to the other big event in 1968. The Vietnam War.

A lone cough is heard from the crowd.

BOBBY

How 'bout...how 'bout we take a moment of silence to honor the memory of those who served, those who didn't make it back to us. Can we do that?

Bobby hangs his head.

EXT – FOOTBALL STADIUM (NIGHT)

Mark, Abe, Bobby, and Ray are walking off the field, shoulder to shoulder in elation. Mark has a football that he is tossing lightly in the air.

RAY

Yeah, baby! We did it.

BOBBY

Stuffed! You stuffed him, Ray, and I got it all right here.

A GENTLEMAN with thick-rimmed glasses comes running up.

GENTLEMAN

Excuse me.

MARK

Yeah?

GENTLEMAN

(indicates Bobby)

I saw him on the sidelines taking pictures.

BOBBY

I'm on the yearbook committee.

GENTLEMAN

Well I work for the Examiner...

(hands Bobby business card)

...and if the pictures are good I'd like to run them. What do you say?

BOBBY

Oh...I don't know.

ABE

Know? What's there to know? This is pub,
my friend.

Abe clownishly tugs on his shoulder pads like they're of the finest material. Bobby looks over at Mark who shrugs, then Ray, who nods once and smiles.

BOBBY

All right.

Bobby hands the camera to the reporter.

GENTLEMAN

Great! I'll have the negatives back to you
in the morning.

BOBBY

That's fine.

The man starts to walk hurriedly away when he looks over his shoulder.

GENTLEMAN

You guys did well out there.

ABE

Damn right we did.

(turns to guys)

Hey, maybe we'll make front page.

BOBBY

Now there's a scary thought.

ABE

I'll give you scary.

Abe gets Bobby in a headlock. Mark and Ray continue to walk on.

MARK

So how's that for cool, Ray? On the day of your birthday, we go out and win the championship.

RAY

(pumped up)

That's boss, man. Whoo!

MARK

Now we have two things to celebrate.

RAY

Soon as we get showered.

Abe and Bobby are still clowning around with each other.

ABE

(to Ray)

Speaking of birthdays, you gonna register now?

RAY

Not me.

Abe and Bobby cease their play.

BOBBY

What? You're gonna be a dodger, Ray?

RAY

(shakes head)

More like a Marine. It's a done deal, boys.

ABE

You B.S.-ing us? You saying you enlisted?

RAY

See something wrong with that? I'm fightin' for Uncle Sam now—the real thing—not some *rag-tag* football team.

BOBBY

Why? I mean it's one thing to have them... come calling, but to enlist...?

MARK

No, wait a minute, maybe Ray's right. At least then you have some kind of say, right?

ABE

Yeah! If it's the draft it's, 'Sit down and shut up!'. They could send you anywhere, make you do anything.

RAY

So you guys saying you gonna join me?

Mark and Abe exchange glances.

BOBBY

Who? All of us?

Mark and Abe get a sudden gleam in their eye.

MARK

Go long!

Ray smiles broadly as Abe breaks into a sprint. Mark flings him the ball. Just as he catches it, Ray HOWLS and SHOUTS out loud:

RAY

Yeah, whoo-hoo, Bulldogs all the way—
Bulldogs all the way!

Mark starts to chase after Abe, and then Ray follows suit. Bobby watches them a moment. He has a look of concern, then he too starts to give chase.

BOBBY

Yeah, Bulldogs all the way.

He catches up to his three friends as they continue to CHANT: BULLDOGS ALL THE WAY!

INT – HOTEL / BANQUET HALL

Bobby lifts his head and addresses the alumni solemnly.

BOBBY

God bless them, every one.

EXT – HOTEL PARKING LOT (LATER)

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are walking side by side. Their wives are a few paces behind, chatting amongst themselves. Bobby appears preoccupied.

MARK

I actually had a real good time. I almost felt like a kid in there again.

ABE

What? Instead of the old goat you are?

Mark laughs, but not Bobby.

ABE

(to Bobby)

Hey, Chuckles, why so serious?

BOBBY

Huh? Oh, I...I was just thinking.

ABE

'Bout what? The reunion was great.

BOBBY

Yeah, thanks. I was just...well I don't know. You guys ever wonder what he would be like today?

ABE

You mean Ray?

BOBBY

No, I'm talkin' Elvis here—of course Ray.

Abe nudges Bobby playfully and tries another headlock.

BOBBY

Hey – hey, watch the crop.

ABE

More like *crop-circle*.

The guys laugh again and Abe gives some thought to the question.

ABE

I still think about him some, yeah. Although truth be told, I almost feel guilty...

BOBBY

Why?

ABE

I have a hard time seeing his face, just not as clear anymore.

BOBBY

And you, Mark?

MARK

What? Do I still remember him clearly?

BOBBY

Do you still think about him?

MARK

Yeah...yeah, I do.

BOBBY

You remember the first time you guys met?

MARK

You mean when you leased my locker out to him and didn't bother to tell me.

ABE

(to Mark)

Ooh, you was mad. Here you both were, thinkin' the other is breakin' in.

BOBBY

And here I come along, and you two are there on the floor, fightin' like two crazed

dogs.

BOBBY (cont'd)

(to Abe)

And you, you're just standing there in some sort of vegetative state!

ABE

Well hey, I didn't know Ray from Adam. How did I know you made a new friend?

Bobby shrugs with a smile.

MARK

You guys remember the time the four of us hit the Hollywood hills and rolled empty trash cans down the street.

The guys share another laugh.

BOBBY

Let's not forget the Sadie Hawkins dance when Ray came dressed like Zorro and staged an Alamo reenactment. Remember Mrs. Potter's face?

More laughter.

ABE

Oh, oh, I got one. What about the time...

FADE OUT

EXT – PARK BASEBALL DIAMOND (DAY)

A softball game is being played. From the back of the uniforms, we know it's Radke's Rangers against the Savage Bulldogs. Bobby is pitching for the Bulldogs with Mark at first base and Abe at third.

EXT – PARK BLEACHERS

The stands are full of people. In their midst is Bobby's wife Carol and their eighteen-year old daughter AMBER. In Amber's arms is their pet FOZZY, a black and white bulldog. Signs are in the background that read: MEN'S OVER FORTY SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS.

CAROL

Come on, Bobby.

AMBER

Strike him out, daddy.

EXT – PITCHER'S MOUND

Bobby is about to deliver a pitch. He stares across at the batter, RADKE, a large man with a thick mustache and beady eyes.

RANGER PLAYER (O.S.)

Out of the park, Radke. Send 'er sailing.

BOBBY

(whispers to self)

One more out. Just one more out.

Bobby winds up and launches the pitch over home plate. There is CONTACT and suddenly the softball is headed to deep center. BACK – BACK – BACK it goes.

EXT – OUTFIELD

The center fielder is racing over when he suddenly trips over his feet. The ball just misses going over the fence and bounces off the back wall.

EXT – FIRST BASE

Radke rounds first base.

BACK TO OUTFIELD

The center fielder picks up the ball and relays to third base.

EXT – SECOND BASE

Radke takes a stand-up double. There is a mischievous grin on his face.

BACK TO PITCHER'S MOUND

Bobby is angry.

BOBBY

Geez, Louise!

BACK TO PARK BLEACHERS

Carol is clapping supportively.

CAROL

That's all right, honey. The next one is yours.

BACK TO PITCHER'S MOUND

Mark and Abe stroll over to Bobby.

MARK

How's the arm?

BOBBY

It's all right, it's fine—really.

Mark looks worried.

ABE

Sure? Don't make us yank yer wrinkled old behind out now.

BOBBY

Hey, I'm player-manager here, if there's yanking to be done, *I'm* doing it.

ABE

All right, but one run and it's over.
(*grabs right biceps*)
Gotta fresh gun here.

BOBBY

Yeah, well don't play with guns, you'll hurt yourself.

MARK

(*to Bobby*)

Pressure's not getting to you?

BOBBY

What pressure?

MARK

Just nut it up then, one more out.

Bobby starts to take the mound.

BOBBY

(muttering)

Might as well be taking advice from Scooby
and Shaggy.

Bobby looks over his shoulder to find Mark glaring impatiently at him.

BOBBY

What? I'm nuttered up—just look at me.

Bobby breaks into a luminous smile – TEETH FLASHING. Mark waves him off and returns to first base. Abe returns to third base. Bobby takes a moment to look back at Radke. The man is scowling at him when he SPITS a wad of chewing tobacco from the side of his mouth. It splatters to the ground. Suddenly Bobby doesn't look so confident.

BACK TO PARK BLEACHERS

Amber stands up and CHEERS.

AMBER

Go, daddy.

EXT – HOMEPLATE

The next Ranger batter is awaiting the pitch. He's all business.

BACK TO PITCHER'S MOUND

Bobby delivers.

BACK TO HOMEPLATE

The Ranger batter CONNECTS. The ball is driven to shallow right field.

BACK TO SECOND BASE

Radke bolts for third base.

EXT – RIGHT FIELD

The outfielder catches the ball on a one-hop and fires it to the catcher.

EXT – THIRD BASE

Radke rounds third base just as the catcher takes a perfect throw. Radke is forced to make an abrupt halt, several paces off third base.

BACK TO HOMEPLATE

The catcher starts toward third base and fires the ball to Abe who is awaiting the throw.

BACK TO THIRD BASE LINE

Radke changes direction quickly, having been caught in a pickle. He bolts for home - HIS ONLY CHANCE!

BACK TO HOMEPLATE

The catcher is well off the plate but Bobby is there to cover it. He takes the throw from Abe with plenty of time.

BACK TO THIRD BASE LINE

Radke is barreling toward Bobby like a raging bull. His nostrils FLARE and a ROAR comes up from deep in his chest.

BACK TO HOMEPLATE

Bobby's mouth drops. He knows this is going to be bad. A second later Radke goes PLOWING into Bobby and the two men go TOPPLING to the floor.

BACK TO PARK BLEACHERS

The crowd rises to their feet with OOHS and AHS.

BACK TO HOMEPLATE

Bobby is lying flat on his back as the softball suddenly DRIBBLES out of his glove.

UMPIRE

Safe!

An elated Radke jumps to his feet and dusts himself off as his teammates swarm him.

RADKE

Yeah! You ain't catchin' me in no pickle,
Savage. Champions again!

BACK TO PARK BLEACHERS

The crowd for the Bulldogs is irate. They are on their feet in protest. Fozzy is BARKING.

AMBER

That was dirty!

CAROL

That's right, ump!

BACK TO HOMEPLATE

Mark and Abe run over to check on Bobby who is trying to sit up. His lower lip is bleeding.

MARK

You okay, buddy?

Bobby takes an offered hand and comes to his feet. He tastes the blood on his lip and wipes.

BOBBY

I'm bleeding?

Bobby wobbles over to Radke.

ABE

Bobby?

BOBBY

Hey Radke, was that really necessary?

Radke tears himself away from two of his teammates, one tall and the other slender, to address Bobby.

RADKE

Hey, back. This is men's ball and if you don't like it, Savage, maybe you should be on my daughter's team.

Radke and the Rangers start to laugh. Bobby edges up to the man in shock and anger.

BOBBY

You know, it just occurred to me...you're an idiot.

RADKE

What'd you say?

BOBBY

I think you heard me.

Both benches clear. Mark and Abe are there to hold Bobby back.

MARK

Let it go, Bobby. He ain't worth it.

BOBBY

I'm ready, let's go.

Radke shakes his head and begins to laugh as his Ranger teammates stand by his side.

RADKE

Yeah, he's some savage all right. *See ya',
MACHO MAN!*

Radke and the Rangers take leave.

BOBBY

It's *Bobby*, genius.

ABE

Forget him, Bobby. Besides it's a pun on words.

BOBBY

I know it's a pun.

ABE

(mimics a headlock)
Randy's a...wrestler.

BOBBY

Animal!

MARK

Come on, just forget it. They're park rangers for crying out loud. Probably too much time in the sun.

ABE

Yeah, we'll show 'em next year.

BOBBY

(mutters under his breath)

It's just more of the same.

MARK

What's that?

BOBBY

Nothing.

Amber comes running up to Bobby and throws her arms around him. Carol is right behind. Fozzy appears to be grinning, his tongue hanging over.

AMBER

That was brave, dad. That guy was a jerk.

CAROL

What was his problem? You okay, honey?

BOBBY

I'm okay.

AMBER

Just wait and see, he's gonna get his some day.

Bulldog team members are gathering their things and leaving.

BULLDOG PLAYER #1

We'll see you next season, Bobby.

BULLDOG PLAYER #2

Take it easy, guys.

BOBBY

Yeah, take care.

Amber looks suddenly excited. She throws her hands up and smiles broadly.

AMBER

So...it's time, daddy.

BOBBY

What? Look at her drive the stake through my heart.

Mark and Abe smile at his remark.

AMBER

Dad, you promised no more guilt trips.

Carol gives Bobby a scathing look.

BOBBY

I know—I know, we've been through this before. It's just not every day my only child

goes off to college on the other side of the planet.

AMBER

Even *you know* New York is not on the other side of the planet.

BOBBY

Might as well be.

AMBER

I love you.

Bobby frowns at Carol as Amber throws her arms around him again and hugs him tight.

MARK

We'll see you, darling. Write us and let us know how you're doing.

Amber hugs Mark and then Abe.

ABE

Wow, you're really going now.

AMBER

I'll miss you guys. You're like the uncles I never had.

Abe grins at Mark who levels a finger at him.

MARK

Cowardly lion.

ABE

(nods at Mark)

Tin-head.

Amber then turns to her father.

AMBER

Then that makes you—?

BOBBY

Ah-ah-ah, don't you even...

Carol nudges up to Bobby.

CAROL
You sure you're still up to the trip?
BOBBY
What? You mean this...
(*touches lip*)
...it'll take more than that to keep me down,
right guys?

Mark and Abe remain silent. He glares at them.

BOBBY
Right, guys?

MARK
Absolutely!

ABE
Definitely!

BOBBY
(*to Carol*)
There you go.

Carol nods and LAUGHS to herself.

INT – NIGHTSTAND (DAY)

A fancy alarm clock made to look like a camera goes off and a hand CLUBS IT a second later. MOANS follow.

INT – BEDSIDE

Bobby is attempting to crawl out of bed. He is in obvious pain. Asleep beside him is Carol.

BOBBY
Oh–oh–oh, dysfunctional back, dysfunction-
al back. Honey, how bout some help
here.

CAROL
Bobbyyyy. What about that spiel you gave
me yesterday?

BOBBY
Spiel? I'm talkin' spine here. Ooh, ooh.

Carol rolls away from him and buries her head in her pillow. Bobby attempts to roll on his side, but unceremoniously falls to the floor with a THUD.

Amber moves up and takes the luggage from his hands; puts them on the floor.

AMBER

Come on, dad, forget the jokes for one minute.

Bobby isn't sure how to respond. Amber looks down and then up again.

AMBER

Don't be mad, but mom told me that things have been...weird lately.

BOBBY

She said that? She told you?

AMBER

You okay?

BOBBY

(sighs)

Yeah. I'm sure it's just a passing thing. You know, like a cold or something.

AMBER

You want to talk about it?

Bobby starts to shake his head, then decides to shrug.

BOBBY

It's nothing, I know it's nothing.

AMBER

Then why don't you tell me?

Beat.

BOBBY

All right. If I had to put it to words, I'd say something feels like it's missing.

AMBER

Between you and mom you mean?

BOBBY

Oh no, no, no. I love your mother.

AMBER

Like how then? I don't understand.

BOBBY

I don't know. It's how I feel about myself mostly. Like I've never made a difference, never stood for something.

Amber appears even more confused.

BOBBY

You see it's...

(shakes head)

You know what? This is your time, young lady. I'm going to be fine.

AMBER

Well okay. And daddy, I just want to say thanks.

BOBBY

Thanks?

AMBER

I might be your adopted daughter, but you and mom, you always made me feel like I was the most important thing in the world. Thanks.

Bobby leans over and kisses her on the forehead.

INT – DORM ROOM

Bobby and Amber enter a dorm room. It is sparse except for a couple of university banners hanging on the walls. Elated at her newfound freedom, Amber races inside and LEAPS on her new bed. She SCREAMS in excitement as Bobby watches happily.

The bathroom door suddenly opens and a GIRL steps through. She has earphones on and her eyes are closed. She is so heavily preoccupied with SINGING and dancing to the music that she does not notice them. Bobby walks over to her and ends up startling her. She SCREAMS and clutches her chest.

GIRL

You scared me.

BOBBY

Hi! No, I'm sorry. You must be my
Daughter's roommate. I'm her father, Bobby,
Bobby Savage.

The girl doesn't think to remove the earphones and struggles to hear.

ROOMMATE

Farrah.

Amber is too impressed with her living quarters to bother with them.

BOBBY

Oh, just like the actress—Farrah Fawcett?

AMBER (O.S.)

Oh, dad, you have to check
this out.

FARRAH

(points to bathroom)
In there.

All of a sudden, two conversations are going on at once. Bobby's head is darting from Amber to Farrah.

AMBER (O.S.)

This whole thing is great!

BOBBY

(to Amber)

What?

(to Farrah)

What?

AMBER (O.S.)

I can't believe this.

FARRAH

The faucet.

BOBBY

I'm sorry, Farrah? What?

FARRAH

(nods)

The faucet, it's free now. Just in through
there.

Bobby just nods at Farrah and pretends to smile.

INT – HALLWAY

Bobby and Amber find themselves outside the dorm room.

BOBBY

Might want to keep an eye on that one.

Amber smiles and a tear streams down her face.

BOBBY

Sure you don't want me to hang around?

AMBER

(shakes head)

I need to know I can do this.

BOBBY

I know what you're saying, peaches.

Amber throws her arms around her father and hugs him tight. It's a difficult moment for Bobby too.

BOBBY

Hey, remember that secret handshake?

AMBER

You remember that? I was still in Girl Scouts.

BOBBY

(nods)

How about it, for old times sake?

Suddenly they're both in motion, a melee of twists and turns and hand slaps. When it ends they share a warm embrace.

BOBBY

Bye, honey.

EXT – NEW YORK STATE UNIVERSITY

Bobby is hailing a taxi. One pulls up and Bobby gets in. The CABBY is standoffish, a De Niro look-alike with an Army jacket and a black mole that appears to be painted on the left side of his face.

BOBBY

Madison Square Garden, please.

The cabby doesn't answer, just stares suspiciously from the rearview mirror and SCREECHES OFF. Bobby appears disconcerted.

BOBBY

You catch that, fella, Madison Square Garden?

CABBY

You talkin' to me?

BOBBY

Excuse me?

CABBY

I said, you talkin' to me?

Bobby looks this way and that, over his shoulder. The cabby busts out laughing.

CABBY

I'm just funnin' witcha, guy. See here, it's Taxi Appreciation Week.

The cabby points to a flyer on the window. It commemorates 101 years of taxi service in the state of New York.

BOBBY

Oh, I get it. And you—that's from the movie—

CABBY

Yeah, yeah, Taxi Driver—the De Niro character.

BOBBY

Right.

CABBY

Hey, it's not everyday we cabbies are recognized. It's kinda nice, you know what I mean? Our fifteen minutes of fame.

BOBBY

Yeah sure, why not? I mean if they can have a National Marshmallow Toasting Day, why not Taxi Day.

CABBY

So what brings you to the Big Apple?

BOBBY

The camera gives me away, huh? I'm a
photographer for a national sports magazine.

CABBY

No kiddin'! Where from?

BOBBY

Los Angeles.

CABBY

Tinseltown!

Bobby nods.

CABBY

Hey, uh, you know, I'm not one to brag, but
I used to do a little acting in high school.

BOBBY

Really? That's, uh, that's great.

CABBY

Yeah, always figured I just needed a lucky
break, what with my talent and all.

BOBBY

(disinterested)

I'm sure.

Bobby is gazing outside the window, lost in thought.

CABBY

Yeah, so, anyway, what's with the Garden?

BOBBY

Oh, the magazine is doing a piece on sports
landmarks throughout the country. Well
that...and my daughter just entered a
university here.

CABBY

Say, you have any agent friends?

BOBBY

I've got a few.

The cabby suddenly pulls over, SKIDDING to a stop. Bobby JERKS forward, practically whipped in the process. The driver takes on a serious expression, clears his throat and sits up straighter. His eyes go to the rearview mirror again – locked laser-like on Bobby.

CABBY

Yo, you talkin' to me?

BOBBY

WHAT?!!!

CABBY

I said...you talkin' to me?

Bobby is shocked – confused – and then it occurs to him...

BOBBY

Sports agents! I know sports agents, not casting agents.

Absorbed in his character, the cabby POINTS malevolently into rearview mirror.

CABBY

You talkin' to me? Then who the hell else are you talkin' to? You talkin' to me?

Bobby just stares back incredulously, his mouth AGAPE.

CABBY

Well I'm the only one here. Who do you think you're talkin' to? Huh?

EXT – NEW YORK STREET

Bobby can't exit the taxi fast enough. He pulls money from his pocket and practically throws it at the cabby.

BOBBY

Thanks, you just keep the change.

CABBY

But I have—!

Bobby SLAMS the door shut and SHAKES in revulsion.

EXT – MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

Bobby is shown taking a number of photographs of the Garden. Some are from atop an adjacent building, some are inside. He finally ends up outside the entrance, snapping pictures from his tripod when a STRANGER whose face is concealed walks directly in front of the .35 mm camera. The man is thumbing through a portfolio and fails to notice Bobby.

BOBBY

You mind? I'm trying to get a picture here.

STRANGER

Sorry.

(whistles)

Taxi!

A yellow cab pulls up and the man gets in. Bobby gets a funny look on his face and he thinks look over his shoulder at the man. At the same time the man turns and their eyes hold for a moment. It's as if some kind of recognition takes place, then the cab pulls away. Bobby edges over to the curb and watches the cab turn the corner.

BOBBY

Ray Pacheco?

INT – HOTEL ROOM (NIGHT)

Bobby is sitting on his bed, talking from a telephone on the nightstand. He is dressed in pajamas.

BOBBY

So what, is that just the nuttiest thing?

CAROL (O.S.)

I'm sure you were just tired, hun.

BOBBY

Yeah, yeah, you're probably right. Hey, Amber's really excited to be here. You know, I almost think she made the right choice.

CAROL (O.S.)

I was hoping you'd see it that way. This whole thing, it means a lot to her.

Bobby nods to himself.

BOBBY

Yeah, well...what time did you pick up your mother from the hospital today?

CAROL (O.S.)

She came out of surgery at ten. She's excited too, grateful we agreed to put her up these two weeks.

BOBBY

Oh, did I mention there's a fourteen-day layover, something about the weather?

CAROL (O.S.)

Oh, really? Like *whether* you have to face your mother-in-law? That kind of whether?

BOBBY

No-no! It's...well certainly you've heard of frozen tundra?

CAROL (O.S.)

Uh, huh.

BOBBY

Pales by comparison, just pales.

CAROL (O.S.)

That so?

BOBBY

Yeah...and well these big, no more like huge, massive, gigantic even, trees, they just fell across the runway-*ways!* And now not a jumbo jet is stirring, not even a mouse.

CAROL (O.S.)

(sing-song)

See you tomorrow...

(forcefully)

...*whether* you like it or not!

EXT – NEW YORK CITY

It is night but the city is very much alive. We see rows and rows of buildings lit up like Christmas trees. Vehicles are moving up and down the streets like columns of marching ants. Horns blare in the far off distance.

INT – HOTEL ROOM BED (LATER THAT NIGHT)

Bobby suddenly sits BOLT UPRIGHT after being asleep. His eyes are WIDE as saucers.

INT – HOTEL HALLWAY

A BELLHOP walks up to Bobby's door and knocks gently. Bobby opens the door a moment later and steps into the hallway. The bellhop hands Bobby a bedpan with an extremely confused look on his face.

BELLHOP

This what you wanted, sir?

Bobby takes it.

BOBBY

Perfect—it's perfect.

Bobby hands the bellhop a tip.

BELLHOP

Thank you, sir.

The bellhop's eyes go from Bobby to the bedpan, and then Bobby again.

BOBBY

What? Like you're never too lazy to get up in the middle of the night?

The bellhop rushes off in embarrassment.

INT – HOTEL ROOM BATHROOM

Several bottles of chemicals are seen on a bathroom countertop. Hanging overhead from the mirror is a single red bulb, and on the other side of the countertop rests the bedpan with film developing solution. Bobby soaks the film in the solution using some special tongs. After a moment he removes the film and places it gently on a plastic dinner plate. He looks at it carefully as an image starts to come into focus. His mouth suddenly drops.

INT – AIRLINER (DAY)

From his seat, Bobby appears heavy in thought. A woman's voice comes over the intercom.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (O.S.)

Everyone please fasten your seat belts. We are ready for departure. Thank you.

EXT – ARMED FORCES RECRUITING OFFICE (DAY)

An eighteen-year old Ray is standing in front of a building with the words, “Recruitment Office” outside the door. Bobby suddenly comes out of the office with a blank look on his face. Ray turns to him.

RAY

What happened?

Bobby says nothing. Instead he CRUMPLES up a piece of paper in his hands and TOSSES it into a nearby wastepaper basket. A tear appears on his face as he stalks away. Ray looks from Bobby to the wastepaper basket. He thinks to remove the paper from the trash and examines it. It reads:

Robert Anthony Savage—Age 18—Classified 4F—Asthmatic condition

Ray swears lightly and tosses the paper back into the wastepaper basket.

INT – AIRLINER (DAY)

Bobby is staring out the window as a FLIGHT ATTENDANT comes up to him.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Sir, would you like something to drink?

BOBBY

Huh? Uh, sure, ice tea’s fine.

EXT – AIRPORT TERMINAL (DAY)

Bobby is standing on the curb as a blue Lexus pulls up, it’s trunk unlatched. Bobby throws his suitcase in the trunk and quickly works his way to the passenger door where his MOTHER-IN-LAW, a portly woman, is sitting comfortably. Just as his hand reaches the door handle, the door lock SNAPS SHUT. The window ROLLS DOWN an instant later.

MOTHER-IN-LAW

You're in the back, big boy.

BOBBY

(fake smile)

It's awful good to see you, Jean.

MOTHER-IN-LAW

You know it.

EXT – FREEWAY

Bobby is in the backseat of the Lexus as Carol and his mother-in-law, JEAN sit in the front. Jean is gossiping to Carol about some old friends, unmindful of his presence. After a break in the conversation, Carol takes an upcoming off-ramp and turns to Bobby.

CAROL

Listen, hun, I hope you're not in a hurry to get home. Mom and I figured since we're so close to the Fox Hills Mall, we might as well get some early Christmas shopping in.

BOBBY

Christmas shopping? Carol, it's September.

Jean glares over her shoulder at him.

JEAN

And your point is...?

BOBBY

My point is...!

Bobby finds Carol watching him from the rearview mirror. She is shaking her head ever so slightly at him.

BOBBY

...never mind.

An agitated Bobby just stares out the window.

EXT – FOX HILLS MALL

Bobby is in the driver's seat of the Lexus now. Carol and Jean have just exited the car.

JEAN

Five-o-clock sharp, is that clear?

Bobby sticks his head out the window and shouts.

BOBBY

Crystal!

JEAN

What's that?

Before she can say anything more, Bobby PEELS OUT in traffic. He can see the two of them in his rearview mirror. Carol is blowing a kiss at him as her mother is flailing her hands in the air like a monkey.

BOBBY

You know if I capture the right angle, I just might be able to pass her off as the missing link.

Bobby pulls out his cell phone. He dials a number and puts the phone to his ear.

BOBBY

Abe, good you're there.

(beat)

It was great, the trip was great, Amber's great. Now listen, I need to show you something important. Can I come into the station for a few minutes?

(beat)

Good, now do me a favor. Have Mark meet us there too, say in forty-five minutes.

(beat)

Trust me, he'll want to be there.

(beat)

All right, I'll see you. Okay, bye.

Bobby places the cell phone on the seat next to him and reaches into his shirt pocket. A second later he pulls out a picture. It's the stranger standing outside the Garden. He examines it. Although the angle is imperfect, the man's facial features are clear enough.

EXT – FIRE STATION (DAY)

The blue Lexus pulls into the parking lot and parks next to a dirt covered jeep with an emblem on the door that reads:

MARK KAUFMAN
General Contractor

INT – FIRE STATION

Mark and Abe are talking in the kitchen when Bobby enters. Mark has on a tank top and jean shorts. A tool belt is around his waist and he looks like he's been at work. Abe has on dark

blue pants and a T-shirt that says Fire Captain on it. They fail to notice him as he enters the room.

MARK

He didn't give you any idea what he—

ABE

Whoa, here he is.

The two men turn to their friend.

BOBBY

(anxiously)

Hey guys, you are not going to believe this.
Both of you sit down.

MARK

What's this about? Everything all right
with Amber?

ABE

You mean his mother-in-law. He's probably
gonna make us draw lots, see who can take
her in.

Mark and Abe take a seat at the table. Bobby takes a stool at the bar, but too nervous, he stands up again.

BOBBY

Okay, I can't sit down.

(looks at hands)

Look at me, I think I'm shaking.

MARK

What is it?

BOBBY

Yeah, okay. I was in New York and I...I
was taking pictures of the Garden, it was
uneventful for the most part, and then this
guy walks up and just stands in front of my
camera.

Mark and Abe are nodding.

BOBBY

Well at first I told the guy to move—and he did. He hailed a taxi and got in. But something wasn't right in my head...

Mark looks down and smiles slightly. Abe smirks.

BOBBY

...I look back at the guy, right. And for a brief second our eyes are locked...

(two-finger gesture with his hand)

It's...it's bizarre.

ABE

Why? You found yourself attracted to him?

BOBBY

Shut up.

MARK

What was bizarre about it?

BOBBY

I think the guy was Ray.

ABE

Ray? Ray who?

MARK

Wha—?

BOBBY

(nods)

RAY!

MARK

Well that's impossible.

(to Abe)

Will you—!

Abe goes up to Bobby and places a hand on his forehead.

ABE

Now just relax.

Bobby pushes his hand away.

BOBBY
I'm being totally serious here.

All three men exchange glances.

MARK
Whoa, back up. You're saying you saw Ray,
as in alive-and-well Ray?

BOBBY
Alive and well—two arms, two legs,
eyeballs in sockets—the whole enchilada.

ABE
Where? How?

MARK
How would you even know what he looks
like?

ABE
Was he still eighteen?

Bobby looks at Abe in disbelief. Abe starts to BUST UP, and then Mark.

BOBBY
Okay, you guys want to joke, then joke, but
tell me, how do you explain this?

*Bobby pulls out the picture and SLAMS it on the kitchen table. Mark and Abe look it over.
Mark squints. Abe tilts his head this way and that.*

MARK
Who's this?

BOBBY
It's Ray.

ABE
It's blurry.

BOBBY
Ray.

Mark and Abe glare at one another.

BOBBY
All right, maybe the picture doesn't do him
justice, but trust me, I saw him closely—
from up close!

MARK

Look, we're not doubting you saw someone who—

BOBBY

It was Ray.

ABE

Think about it, Bobby, it—

BOBBY

...was Ray.

MARK

What about the notion that everyone has a double somewhere?

BOBBY

This isn't a movie. It's not some chewing gum commercial.

ABE

It could be your eyes, they could be playing tricks on you.

BOBBY

You may recall I've a trained eye, years of camera work, remember?

Mark and Abe appear stymied.

ABE

It's like Mark said, how would you know what he looks like now?

BOBBY

I know.

MARK

Come on, Bobby, this is craziness, even for you. I've gotta get back to the work site.

Bobby throws up his hands and looks over at Abe. Suddenly a FIRE ALARM goes off. Abe is in MOTION.

FIREMAN (O.S.)

Cap'n?

ABE

(yells)

I'm right behind you.

(to Bobby)

We'll finish this later.

INT – BOBBY'S BEDROOM (NIGHT)

Bobby is BANGING AWAY on a computer keyboard. Fozzy is lying down, staring up at him with big brown eyes. The television set is on in the background. It's a news channel and they're talking about new threats made in New York City. Carol is hanging up the phone, looking at the picture of the stranger.

CAROL

Nothing. According to this company, there is no Raymond Pacheco matching the birth date you gave me.

Bobby stares at the computer screen a second, then slumps back in his chair after it beeps at him.

BOBBY

Darn. I'm finding nothing on the Net either.

CAROL

Did you find any Pacheco's?

BOBBY

Only a couple hundred.

Carol frowns and walks out of the room. Fozzy follows after her.

CAROL

Yeah!

INT – BOBBY'S BUSINESS OFFICE (DAY)

A large office with a grand view of Los Angeles. Bobby is conferring with his manager MAX, on the shots he took in New York. The Garden stills are hanging on the wall.

MAX

I think they look great.

BOBBY

I don't know, something's missing. There's no...character in them.

Max turns to Bobby with a puzzled expression.

MAX

You seem a little flustered lately. Is everything okay, Bobby?

Bobby frowns.

BOBBY

It's fine. I'm fine.

Max nods after a moment.

MAX

Well, do what you have to do. Just remember, I want to run the piece in two weeks time.

BOBBY

Got it!

MAX

I'll see you at the three-o'clock.

BOBBY

That today?

MAX

It's Friday, right?

Max starts to walk away.

BOBBY

You mind if I have Denise attend? There's something I want to do.

MAX

Works for me.

BOBBY

Thanks, Max.

Max exits the room as Bobby's assistant DENISE walks in. She is holding a CD in her hand.

DENISE

Here you go. Everyone says this is the best on the market, every directory in the U.S. is supposed to be on it.

BOBBY

Wonderful. Say Denise, can you make the staff meeting today?

DENISE

Sure. What time?

BOBBY

Three.

DENISE

Not a problem.

BOBBY

Remind me to put you up for a bonus this Christmas.

DENISE

Been on your calendar for three months, Bobby.

Denise leaves the room and Bobby goes over to his computer and inserts the CD. The phone BEEPS and the secretaries voice comes over the intercom.

SECRETARY

Mr. Savage, I have Carol on two.

BOBBY

Thank you, Laura.

Bobby pushes the speakerphone button.

BOBBY

Hi, honey.

CAROL (O.S.)

Just thought you'd like to know your

daughter is making wedding plans.

BOBBY

Come again?

CAROL (O.S.)

She just called to say hi, the world is a wonderful place, and that she is falling in love with her young, good looking chemistry professor.

BOBBY

Maybe it's not too late for a full scholarship then. How much does he like her?

CAROL (O.S.)

Bobby Savage!

INT – BOBBY'S HOUSE / KITCHEN

Carol has the telephone to her ear while Jean is fixing herself a sandwich packed with every conceivable lunchmeat. Fozzy watches her intently, hoping a chance morsel will fall into his clutches.

JEAN

Is he complaining about me?

CAROL

Of course not, mom.

JEAN

He better not be complaining about me.

BOBBY (O.S.)

What's Cruella saying there? She's probably helping herself to a sandwich right?

(yells)

Hey, Cruella, can you hear me?

Jean is glaring right at Carol, who blushes and turns in the other direction.

CAROL

(whispers)

Bobby, shut uppp!

BOBBY (O.S.)

Standing over you, bearing fangs right?

Bobby curls two fingers over his mouth like fangs. Carol is holding in her laughter.

CAROL

How would you feel about Santa Barbara this weekend, maybe take in a movie or two, maybe a little *dancing* in the moonlight!

BACK TO BOBBY'S BUSINESS OFFICE

A look of consternation comes over Bobby.

BOBBY

This—this weekend? Yeah, you know what, I didn't exactly plan for this, but I'm going to have to return to New York. It's the photos, they're just not...right.

CAROL (O.S.)

Bobby, does it have to be this weekend?

BOBBY

I'm sorry, cookie. Besides, we can't just leave your mother there to fend for herself, can we?

BACK TO BOBBY'S HOUSE / KITCHEN

Carol looks disappointed.

CAROL

Since when...
(*remembers mother behind her*)
...never mind. You owe me big.

BOBBY (O.S.)

Agreed.

CAROL

A second photo shoot? Since when have you ever needed a second shoot?

BOBBY (O.S.)

What, hun? Besides, I can check up on Prince Charming while I'm there.

CAROL
Just get home early today please.

Jean drops a glass accidentally. It falls to the floor and BREAKS.

BACK TO BOBBY'S BUSINESS OFFICE

Both Bobby and Carol hang up. Bobby frowns, then pushes a button on his phone.

BOBBY
Laura, I need a plane ticket to New York.

EXT – CEMETERY ROAD (DAY)

The blue Lexus pulls up to a curb. Bobby glances around and then shuts the engine off.

EXT – CEMETERY

Bobby strolls up to a gravesite. We see the grave marker. It reads:

Raymond A. Pacheco
(b. 12/10/50 d. 9/27/69)

Bobby starts to flash back again.

EXT – STREET (DAY)

A teenaged Bobby is driving his father's car when he comes to a stop at an intersection. On the opposite corner is Sierra High School and the large sign that is situated at one end of the football stadium. Bobby looks up at the sign to read the words:

SIERRA HIGH HONORS THE MEMORY
OF ITS OWN RAYMOND PACHECO
– FOREVER A BULLDOG

Bobby's jaw drops. The signal light turns green and the car horn of the vehicle behind him starts to BLARE. Bobby shakes his head in disbelief as tears start to well.

EXT – BOBBY'S NEIGHBORHOOD (DAY)

A PAPERBOY is peddling his bicycle, TOSSING newspapers here and there.

INT – BOBBY'S KITCHEN

Bobby is sipping on a cup of coffee and reading the newspaper. He is dressed in a T-shirt, shorts, and slippers. Fozzy is there too, just lying down. The doorbell RINGS and both of them look up.

BOBBY

Well don't just lie there, go get it.

Fozzy lowers his head and whimpers.

BOBBY

Why I—? Remember that when I'm through
with my next T-bone steak.

(out loud)

Hun, there's someone at the door.

There is no response. The doorbell RINGS again.

BOBBY

Carol?

Bobby gets up and goes to the door. Fozzy follows.

BOBBY

(to Fozzy)

You weasel, you.

Bobby opens the door to find Mark and Abe standing outside, looking like a pair of Cheshire Cats.

MARK

Hey!

ABE

Bobby.

BOBBY

What are you guys doing here?

They step inside without invitation.

MARK

Hurry up, get dressed.

BOBBY

What's going on?

MARK

Tickets to the Dodger game, that's what.

BOBBY

You mean now?

ABE

Right now. Go get you some shoes and let's go. Tell him, Foz.

Fozzy sits on his haunches and appears to grin as his tongue lolls.

BOBBY

Have you guys heard of picking up the telephone and calling first?

ABE

You got something bigger going on?

BOBBY

Yes.

(shakes head)

No.

ABE

What? Is it yes or no?

BOBBY

I—I just have a few things on my mind and I need to prepare for a business trip.

Mark and Abe exchange glances.

BOBBY

So look guys, let's say we make it for another time, okay?

MARK

Hold on a second.

(beat)

These things on your mind, are they about Ray?

Bobby looks at him a moment, then crosses the living room to some tennis shoes on the floor.

BOBBY

What are you guys doing here?

Bobby reaches down and picks up the shoes. Mark is fidgety.

MARK

Look Bobby, the other day, I didn't mean to put you off the way I did.

BOBBY

That's all right, it's forgotten.

Bobby sits on the sofa and starts to put the shoes on.

ABE

You find anything on that stranger yet?

BOBBY

What makes you think I'm looking?

Mark and Abe get a look.

ABE

I don't know. Maybe oh...a lifetime of friendship?

MARK

Look, maybe we can help.

Bobby stops what he's doing.

BOBBY

You're mocking me, right? You're mocking?

Mark lifts his eyebrows and shakes his head.

MARK

The directories for New York City, you checked them yet?

Bobby nods apprehensively and laces his shoes.

ABE

The Internet?

Bobby nods again.

MARK

Last known residence?

Bobby finishes with his shoes and rises to his feet.

BOBBY

His old house, his family you mean? I wonder if they're still there?

ABE

Think again. I answered this fire call, say a year ago. Turns out it was just a block from where the Pacheco family lived. Nothin' but condo's now.

BOBBY

Yeah, but they have to be out there somewhere.

ABE

Hey, if we got us a P.I., I bet we could find 'em. Mark, you still have that friend don't you?

MARK

Oh, I don't know about that.

BOBBY

Wait, it's a great idea.

ABE

And he does owe you a couple favors.

MARK

No. I want to, but I can't. I just can't.

BOBBY

I see. You're not really on board with this, are you?

MARK

Bobby, come on. What are we really looking for here? I think...I think you should just let this go.

BOBBY

Let it go, right. Let it go. Let me tell you something. I was never big man on campus or some veteran of war like you guys. I was

BOBBY (cont'd)

never some sports star or Casanova. What I was mostly was an average guy—a John Doe. But you know what? Lo and behold I've somehow managed all right for myself; for my family. I even have a pretty good job by most standards. You know why? By being strong here...

(points to head)

...by believing in myself...by believing I was capable of more.

Bobby starts to PACE; agitated and animated.

BOBBY

Look, maybe I don't have the toughs to go man-on-man in some football game, or – or some war, or even with some goon on a baseball diamond, but I do have the toughs to stick to something when I believe in it, and nobody—*but nobody*—is gonna tell me otherwise.

The guys are silenced by Bobby's tirade.

ABE

Goodness, Bobby, what's this about?

Bobby puts his hand to his forehead.

BOBBY

I don't know.

MARK

Surely you're not regretting—?

BOBBY

I'm going to say one more thing and then I'll shut up. When we grew up together, both you and Abe, you would look out for me. I was always the smallest, the skinniest, I had

asthma, so if there was a kid giving me a hard time, you guys were there to stand in the way. But it didn't stop there. If there was a pick-up game on the basketball court, you guys fed me the ball and did the grunt work,

BOBBY (cont'd)

things like that. But then Ray came along and he was different. If I wanted to get my hands dirty...

(chuckles)

...he was only too happy to shove me to the floor. If I wanted to play in the paint, he helped me do it. If I wanted to try out for football...he stood beside me.

MARK

Football?

Bobby nods.

ABE

You never told us that.

BOBBY

Senior year. All you guys were on the team, and uh...you see we'd always done everything together. I just wanted to remain a part of that.

Abe puts his head down.

MARK

So what happened?

BOBBY

Coach Robinson said I was too small. I'll bet he had a good laugh.

(hangs head)

Anyway, Ray heard about it and confronted the coach. Honestly, I think he could have changed the old fart's mind, but...

ABE

But?

BOBBY

...but I said no, it was ridiculous for me to think...I mean, I would have been cut in half the first time someone tried to tackle me.

MARK

You would have managed.

BOBBY

Doesn't matter now.

(beat)

Hey, I'll catch up with you guys another time. Thanks for the offer.

Bobby walks out the front door without another word. A second later Carol comes down the stairway and into the room.

CAROL

Well...I'm sorry guys. When I called you, I didn't mean for this to happen.

MARK

No, it's on me! I can't keep my mouth shut?

ABE

Hold up now, let's take the positive. The man, he did open up some.

MARK

Yeah.

CAROL

Yeah.

Beat.

CAROL

Should I be worried?

MARK

When's his flight?

CAROL

Tomorrow!

Mark and Abe exchange glances.

INT – AIRPORT (DAY)

Bobby is standing around, waiting for his flight. He checks his wristwatch when someone approaches.

MARK (O.S.)

Hey.

Bobby turns to find Mark and Abe beside him. There is mild surprise on Bobby's face.

BOBBY

Guys? What are you doin' here?

Mark appears hesitant and Abe is grinning.

MARK

I just thought I'd tell you, this P.I. friend of mine, he's going to see what he can find on the Pacheco's.

Bobby says nothing for a moment.

BOBBY

Thanks.

MARK

I mean, he may find nothing but—!

BOBBY

Thanks.

MARK

Sure.

Bobby notices his friends have luggage with them.

BOBBY

(*indicating*)

What's this...?

Mark glances down at his bags.

MARK

These?

(*to Abe*)

Do they call these travel bags, or is luggage

the proper term still?

ABE

I'd go with travel bags myself.

MARK

Doesn't sound too girly?

ABE

Nah!

MARK

(to Bobby)

Travel bags.

Abe leans over and shows Bobby a ticket.

ABE

Say, you know where we can find this
Flight 306?

EXT – LAX AIRPORT

A scene of the airport is shown.

INT – AIRLINER

Bobby and Mark are seated side by side. Mark looks like he has something on his mind.

MARK

I'm sorry I didn't get how much this whole
thing bothered you.

BOBBY

I'm just glad you guys are here.

Suddenly there is SNORING. The two of them look over at the third seat. Abe is hunched over, deep in slumber. A couple seated in the row in front shift a little and bob their heads in annoyance. Abe begins to JABBER now, most of it inaudible, and then we hear him say with a grand smile:

ABE

Not so tight, I say! Here, watch me now,
proby. You gotta treat 'er like she's
somethin' special. Here now, watch me slide

on down—nice and smooth like. See! Ain't that better?

This time the couple in front, full-on turn and look back at them. Abe has on a wide smile and his arms out in front like they're encircling something. Bobby grins in embarrassment.

BOBBY

Sorry—not what you think—he's a firefighter. It's a fire-pole exercise he's describ—

(to Mark)

Mark, some help here please?

MARK

What? You got issues with pole dancing, that's on you.

The couple turn back around quickly. Bobby is gawking open-mouthed at Mark when he deftly shoves an elbow into Abe's ribs and awakens him.

ABE

Huh? Wha—?

INT – NEW YORK AIRPORT TERMINAL

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are walking purposefully through the airport terminal with their luggage in hand. Abe is stretching.

ABE

Hoo-boy, was I tired.

MARK

All right then, do we have a plan or are we making it up as we go along?

BOBBY

I thought I'd start with the cab company.

Abe is looking around in awe.

ABE

I think I'm going to like New York. So, which cab company is it?

BOBBY

Well...?

MARK

Well?

BOBBY

...I know it was yellow.

The guys walk through the exit doors and emerge outside. A sea of yellow taxi cabs await them. There is a look of genuine despair on their faces.

MARK

Yellow?

EXT – OUTSIDE AIRPORT

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are walking outside the airport terminal, glaring at the numerous taxi cabs.

MARK

Think!

BOBBY

All right, I've got it. There was some kind of bug showing on the trunk.

MARK

Okay, that's something. Wait a minute, that sounds like an extermination company.

BOBBY

It wasn't no extermination company.

Abe continues to marvel at the sights.

ABE

I ever tell you guys it's been a dream of mine, visiting New York?

Mark and Bobby ignore his remark.

BOBBY

I seem to remember the last two characters on the license plate – “5H” or “5E” maybe?

MARK

Okay, let's keep walking till we find a cab

with a bug on it. We'll check into the plate afterward.

Abe is lost in complete wonder of the city.

ABE

Aren't you guys caught up by any of this?

BOBBY

(to Abe)

Hey, don't go get yourself lost. This is a really big city.

BOBBY (cont'd)

(to Mark)

What's with him?

ABE

(singing)

Start spreading the news...I'm leaving today....

Mark and Bobby turn their heads to stare incredulously at Abe.

ABE

(singing)

I want to be a part of it...New York, New York...

People start to turn their head to look at Abe, who is starting to SING louder. He starts to raise his arms for effect. Mark and Bobby are glancing about in embarrassment.

NEW YORKER

That's it, fella, belt it out!

Some of the people begin to CLAP. Mark and Bobby finally decide to throw caution to the wind and join in, their VOICES HARMONIZING. They suddenly lock arms and begin to march down the street like something out of a vaudeville act.

MONTAGE:

The "NEW YORK, NEW YORK" SONG continues through the montage. The guys are walking past cabs, examining them. We see them on opposite sides of the street searching. We see Bobby asking other cabbies. We see Mark and Abe asking people on the street. And finally we see Bobby throwing his hands in the air in utter futility. The sea of cabs has swelled.

INT – HOTEL ROOM (NIGHT)

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are all unpacking their luggage in a hotel room. The television is on in the background.

MARK

Bobby, we *could* get another room.

BOBBY

What for? You guys take the bed, I'll take the floor.

MARK

You sure?

ABE

Aw, crud, where're my boxers? Don't tell me...!

BOBBY

Pretty sure!

Mark looks over at the TV set.

MARK

Hey—hey, wait! Put it louder.

All of them look over at the TV. Bobby has the remote; he increases the volume.

ANCHORMAN

This latest episode of destruction brings to five, the number of incidents the Peoples Insurgency Class Liberation has perpetrated. The organization, or PICL, as it's being referred to of late, is an environmental activist group. Prior to the latest swath of destruction at the Knox Lumber Yard in New York, PICL had made its presence known only on the West Coast.

The news station cuts to a scene where a cabby is standing in front of his cab. The camera gives a full shot and a beetle is momentarily discernable on the back of the vehicle.

BOBBY

(*points*)

The cab! That's the one!

MARK

Shhh!

The camera pans in and out of the area, cutting from this shot and that, but not the cab. The guys look on anxiously for another glimpse.

ANCHORMAN

It is thought the recent announcement that the Scarlet Snapback Butterfly is now believed to be extinct, has drawn the ire of the group. The rare and quite beautiful butterfly, which is indigenous to the state of New York, has not been seen in over ten years. The butterfly is so named because of its attraction to the color red and an enzyme it excretes that causes a stinging sensation to the skin.

BOBBY

Come on—come on, show it—show it.

Finally the cabby and car are shown too far in the distance.

ANCHORMAN

Although sketchy, details surrounding the three suspects vary. One is described as slender, one tall, and the other muscular. They are also characterized by white ski-masks with the word PICL Power across the front. Law enforcement officials also warn that the men should be considered armed and dangerous.

A close-up of the cab is flashed.

BOBBY

There!

ABE

Bridget Bardou! It think it read Bridget Bardou!

MARK

Bridg—? Bombardier, you knucklehead!
It's a beetle.

Bobby goes for his coat and slips it on.

BOBBY

Come on, let's go.

MARK

Whoa there, Magnum.

BOBBY

What?

MARK

We've just spent four hours sifting through a million taxi cabs, another eight hours of travel time, and then two...

(displays two fingers)

...count them two, hours of waiting at the terminal. I don't know about you, but I'm about ready to rest now, maybe put a little food in my stomach.

ABE

(nods)

Cab company ain't going nowhere tonight, Bobby.

With a frown on his face, Bobby removes his jacket.

INT – HOTEL ROOM (NIGHT)

Abe is messing with his food as Mark is stuffing his face. Bobby is a few feet away from them, heavy into a phone conversation.

ABE

What is this? Chicken catch-a-what?

MARK

(mumbles)

Tori! Now *just* eat it.

BOBBY

That's right, I'm certain it was your cab company.

Beat.

ABE

Yo, Bobby, your food, it's gettin' cold.

Beat.

BOBBY

I told you, I don't know for sure, but I think it was either a "5H" or a "5E".

(beat)

That's right, just last Sunday. It was maybe two-thirty in the afternoon.

(beat)

What? Well if you can't help, why didn't you stop me before I rambled on for ten minutes?

(beat)

Just let me have your name.

(beat)

(extra sweet)

Thank you, Angelo. *Now how 'bout you give the details of our nice little chat to someone there WHO MATTERS!* I'll be there tomorrow!

Bobby SLAMS the telephone down and turns to his comrades. They are looking at him like he's lost his mind.

BOBBY

What?

(glances at the food)

Emm! Cacciatore.

EXT – NEW YORK CITY (DAY)

The hustle and bustle of New York City is epitomized.

INT – BOMBARDIER CAB COMPANY OFFICES (DAY)

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are addressing a company EMPLOYEE who is behind a counter. Bobby has his camera around his neck.

BOBBY

Look, I called last night and talked to some

Angelo guy, and now I've spent ten minutes talkin' to you. Isn't there something that can be done? Ain't it like the cop shows, you run a partial plate or something?

The employee ponders carefully, scratching his chin.

BOMBARDIER EMPLOYEE

Hmm, just hang on, buddy. Let me call dispatch over.

The employee goes over and chats with one of the DISPATCHERS sitting next to the radio. They talk for a minute before they go over to a computer and push some buttons. Finally the dispatcher walks over. He could be a double for Danny DeVito.

DISPATCHER

I hear yuz got a problem. Whaddaya want me ta do about it?

BOBBY

Well, uh, just kinda' hopin' —

DISPATCHER

Look, pal, I ain't bustin' my tail for no Joe Shmoe off the street. Why would I do that?

BOBBY

Please, I'm desperate. We're three-thousand miles from home searching for a boyhood friend we believed dead for over thirty years. The kicker is I know I saw him in. He's alive, you understand? Look...please I...I don't know where else to go or what else to do. Please!

The dispatcher grimaces, sighs, fidgets.

DISPATCHER

All right, listen. I *can* tell ya there wasn't a credit card entry at the time. The guy musta' paid cash okay.

Bobby is deflated.

BOBBY

Figures.

ABE

We tried.

DISPATCHER

Wait a minute. I have the name of the cab driver. Maybe he remembers the guy.

BOBBY

Good. That's great! That's something!

DISPATCHER

His name is Jimbo.

BOBBY

He's here now?

The dispatcher frowns and shakes his head.

DISPATCHER

He's scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Show up later. I'll show you where to find him.

BOBBY

I love you.

Bobby reaches across the counter to offer a hug, but the man is quick to pull out a BILLY-CLUB from behind the counter.

DISPATCHER

Hey-hey, pal, mind yerself!

Bobby pulls back.

BOBBY

Oh, sorry.

EXT – NEW YORK STATE UNIVERSITY (LATER THAT DAY)

We see an aerial shot of the university. A second shot is of the girl's dormitory. People are coming in and out of the building.

INT – ELEVATOR BANK

The guys have just exited the elevator on Amber's dorm room floor.

ABE

We're just gonna pop in? You don't think we should call first?

BOBBY

Oh sure, this from the king of pop-ins.

The guys reach the door and Bobby knocks.

INT – DORM ROOM

Amber goes to the door and opens it. No one is there.

AMBER

(softly)

Hello?

Suddenly she is blinded by a CAMERA FLASH and three heads pop out from the other side of the door.

MARK / ABE / BOBBY

Surprise!

AMBER

Daddy?

Bobby and the guys rush in as Amber tries to clear her eyes.

BOBBY

(to Amber)

So where is he?

(to the guys)

Check under the bed; behind the doors!

AMBER

What? Mom told you?

BOBBY

It's sick how she plays us, isn't it?

The guys scope out the room.

AMBER

Unbelievable! *Please* tell me you guys didn't come all the way to New York to check on me? Please tell me my dad and his *cronies* have a life?

ABE

All's clear.

AMBER

Hello? Guys?

MARK

Clear here.

BOBBY

(to Amber)

Okay, young lady, you're off the—!

The bathroom door suddenly comes open and Farrah steps out.

FARRAH

Oh hi, Mr. Savage.

Bobby casts a baleful glare at Mark and then turns his attention to Farrah.

BOBBY

Fellas this is Farrah—Farrah, Mark and Abe.

ABE

Like Farrah Fawcett?

FARRAH

Who?

There is a KNOCK on the door. Everyone comes alive.

MARK

The door?

ABE

Could be him.

AMBER

Daddy, so help me if...

BOBBY

What? *It's him?*

Amber says nothing. Everyone is suddenly stock-still. Mark and Abe's eyes shift expectantly to Bobby.

MARK

(low)

Boss?

BOBBY

Standard operating procedure.

AMBER

No!

Mark and Abe set into motion but Amber rushes to the door first. There is another KNOCK.

AMBER

I'll kill, I mean it!

Farrah pushes her way past them and opens the door. NATHAN, a well-groomed gentleman in his mid-twenties is standing there. He is sporting a goatee.

FARRAH

Hello!

NATHAN

Hi.

FARRAH

See you later, Amber. Good luck.

Farrah takes off down the hall, DANCING to the music in her head. A red-faced Amber steps into the hallway and decides to take Nathan's hand.

AMBER

Ready? Let's go!

Nathan notices Mark, Abe, and Bobby but is practically being DRAGGED away by Amber.

BOBBY

Not to worry, hun, I'll have dinner waiting upon your return.

Nathan stops in confusion.

NATHAN

Excuse me? What's—?

Amber throws her head back and then gives her father a SCATHING GLARE.

AMBER

Nathan, I have someone...

AMBER (cont'd)

(swallows)

...actually a couple someone's, I want you to meet.

Nathan nods in respect.

AMBER

My father, Bobby Savage—Nathan.

The young man is taken aback, but adjusts well.

NATHAN

Father? Hello, sir.

Bobby is slow to acknowledge. He looks over to see Amber casting daggers his way.

BOBBY

(devious grin)

Nathan.

AMBER

And my father's best friends in the world,
Mark and Abe.

NATHAN

Pleased to meet you both.

MARK / ABE

Hello!

AMBER

Before you think anything, my father is paying me a surprise visit from Los Angeles, aren't you dad?

BOBBY

Oh, right—right.

(turns to Mark and Abe)

Guys, you gotta stop coming over to visit me here. At least wait a month till I'm settled.

AMBER

Oh, you lie! DADDY!!!

Amber STOMPS her foot and looks over her shoulder at Nathan who is laughing quietly. She turns back to her father.

AMBER

What's really going on here?

NATHAN

I don't know, I think it's pretty obvious?

Everyone glances uncertainly at Nathan, who edges up to Amber and looks deeply into her eyes.

NATHAN

If I had a daughter even half as beautiful as you, I would keep her close too.

AMBER

That's so sweet!

Mark can only grin as Bobby looks over at him in disgust.

BOBBY

Actually no, we're here on some... business.

AMBER

Huh?

NATHAN

Well, Amber and I were planning on taking in some of the sights. Would all of you care to come along?

ABE

Hey, that would be fun.

BOBBY

No! We really have to be going.

NATHAN

Right. Well it was great meeting you, Mr. Savage...

(nods)

...Mark. Abe.

MARK
Same here.

ABE
Likewise.

NATHAN
I hope it won't be the last time.

Bobby SNAPS a quick picture of Amber standing next to Nathan. The two young adults are temporarily blinded by the flash. Bobby smiles his devilish grin again.

EXT – NEW YORK STREET (JUST AFTER)
The guys are strutting down a street. Bobby is in the lead, but Mark and Abe are right behind.

ABE
Now I ask you, why couldn't we have gone with them?

MARK
Seems like a pretty nice guy.

BOBBY
He's her *college professor*. Shouldn't there be a *law* or something?

Mark frowns.

MARK
And he's all of what, five years her senior?

ABE
The girl can take care of herself. What are you afraid of?

BOBBY
How about this! Say she really falls in love and decides to stay in New York? Then what?

ABE
I'm not listening to this, come on.
(flagging down gesture)
Taxi!

BOBBY
Where are we going?

ABE

We've got a couple hours till this Jimbo guy shows up right?

A taxi pulls up to the curb. Abe looks over at Bobby, then Mark.

MARK

The house that Ruth built?

ABE

(smiles)

Yeah.

EXT – NEW YORK CITY (NIGHT)

A Staten Island ferry chugs toward the Statue of Liberty in the New York Harbor. The scene cuts to the Brooklyn Bridge, where a backdrop of towering, glittering structures stretches high into the heavens. The city has a life all its own.

EXT – BOMBARDIER CAB COMPANY / GUEST PARKING LOT

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are riding in an Atlas cab. All three of them have on Yankee baseball caps and shirts. The vehicle pulls up to a building and the female cabby looks up. She is a dead-ringer for Queen Latifah. The name outside the building reads: BOMBARDIER CAB COMPANY.

FEMALE CABBY

Bombardier Cab Company? Come on, guys!

BOBBY

Yeah, sorry 'bout that.

A passing Bombardier taxi pulls to a slow stop beside them. The BOMBARDIER CABBY extends his head outside the window. He is the splitting image of Tony Danza.

BOMBARDIER CABBY

Hey, get your miserable, sorry lookin' cab off my lot before I let the zoo know where they can find their missing warthog!

FEMALE CABBY

Hey, shut up! I go where I'm told you mutt-ugly, jalopy-drivin', cockatoo-headed, hissing coachroach.

The Bombardier taxi SCREECHES off as the guys exit the cab.

ABE

Competitive market.

FEMALE CABBY

Aw, just a territorial thing. It don't mean nothin'.

INT – BOMBARDIER CAB COMPANY OFFICES

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are at the counter again. The DISPATCHER comes over to them and leans in close.

DISPATCHER

Take the stairway down two flights. It leads straight into the garage. He should be getting ready now.

BOBBY

Is it the same cab?

The dispatcher nods. Bobby turns to find Mark and Abe racing ahead. He starts to join them when he stops and turns back to the dispatcher.

BOBBY

I never got your name?

DISPATCHER

Angelo!

Bobby has a look of surprise on his face.

ABE (O.S.)

Bobby, you coming?

INT – BOMBARDIER CAB GARAGE

The guys are in a large garage. They approach a CABBY setting up as other cabs sift in and out. The man has a perpetual look of flabbergast on his face. He is wearing a denim jacket and his hair is radically disheveled. He could be Christopher Lloyd's twin.

BOBBY

Jimbo?

The cabby looks over at them like a PELICAN ON FISH, then back at his car.

JIMBO

'Bout time. It's been making a funny sound, WEE-THUWUMP-THUWUMP-THUWUMP, SHAKA-TOO, SHAKA-TOO-WEEEEEE. Any ideas?

BOBBY

Excuse me? We're just here to ask you a few questions.

JIMBO

Thought you were dressed funny.

The cabby looks the men up and down BUG-EYED, noting their Yankee shirts and the camera round Bobby's neck.

JIMBO

Just figured it mighta' been a strike or somethin'. Though the camera is outta' place for a strike. Now whaddaya want again?

BOBBY

We'd like to ask a few questions.

JIMBO

So where's yer badge? I don't see no stinkin' badge? Get it? No stinkin' badge? Say...I didn't know it was an illegal act. No one ever told me.

BOBBY

Listen, we're not law enforcement. We're just citizens.

JIMBO

Well in that case, I'm not on the clock yet. Up to the curb and whistle while you wait. No wait—that's work. Anyway...

Bobby exchanges glances with Mark and Abe before turning back to Jimbo.

BOBBY

Wait, you don't understand. Angelo let us in.

JIMBO

Angelo?

ABE

(whispers to Bobby)

That was Angelo? The one you hollered at?

JIMBO

What? Who? You yelled at Angelo?

Bobby grins back weakly.

BOBBY

Yell? Yell is such a strong word really.

Jimbo looks flustered. He scratches his head and PACES in front of Bobby a few times. Suddenly a sweeping smile comes over him and he and slaps Bobby on the shoulder.

JIMBO

A man after my own heart. Keep 'em honest, I say. The ole' knucklehead probably had it coming.

Jimbo offers his hand.

JIMBO

Hi. My name is Jimbo.

BOBBY

(humoring)

Bobby. This is Mark and Abe.

JIMBO

Well what can I do for you, gents?

BOBBY

Okay, so...it's like this. My friends and I...well you see, we think you maybe gave a ride to an old friend of ours, say a week ago. We're...

Bobby pulls a couple photographs from his pocket.

BOBBY

...hoping, praying actually, that you'll remember something to help us find him.

It's real important to us.

JIMBO

All righty, let's have a look see!

Bobby hands them over as the guys exchange a look of hope.

ABE

Go ahead, you—you look at them as long as you need.

MARK

Yeah, you may need to angle them some.

BOBBY

(indicating)

This here is Ray...

The cabby glances up at Bobby in confusion, then twists and turns the photos this way and that.

BOBBY

...our friend when he was in high school.
And this...

Bobby is turning his head this way and that, trying to move with the pictures.

BOBBY

...is Ray as I saw him this last Sunday.

Jimbo gives the pictures one more cursory look, RAISES an eyebrow to Bobby, then bursts into WILD LAUGHTER. The guys look embarrassed.

JIMBO

This is a reality TV show, right? Which one—which one? Come on, where's the camera?

Jimbo leans in close to Bobby and speaks into the lens of his camera, his eyes as LARGE and BULGING as that of a T-Rex.

JIMBO

Hey, ma! It's me, it's Jimbo.

EXT – NEW YORK STREET (NIGHT)

Mark, Abe, and an angry Bobby have just exited the cab company. Bobby throws the two photographs in a wastebasket.

BOBBY

(yells)

I hate New York!

A PASSERBY in an Army jacket stops and turns to Bobby. He looks exactly like Robert De Niro.

PASSERBYER

Hey pal, you talkin' to me?

Bobby stops to look at the man incredulously, shakes his head and then continues to walk. Abe pulls the pictures from the wastebasket.

MARK

(to Bobby)

You maybe should keep it down, Bobbo.

BOBBY

What was I...? I'm crazy! I have to be to go on some crazed wild goose chase on the other side of the country. And then to involve you two. I'm just...sorry dammit!

Abe grabs Bobby by the elbow.

ABE

Stop for a minute.

They come to a halt.

ABE

How sorry do we look to you?

Bobby looks from Abe to Mark and back again. They appear indifferent.

BOBBY

I don't get it? You don't.

ABE

Exactly! Now if we're meant to find this guy, we'll find him. And if we're not... we're not!

Beat. Bobby hangs his head a moment and then smiles up at them.

BOBBY

Where would I be without you guys?

Something suddenly draws Mark's attention.

MARK

I don't think it would be there.

Abe and Bobby look over to see Madison Square Garden across the street from them. There is a marquee out front with the words:

**WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION
CHALLENGE NIGHT**

Abe grins, HOWLS, and takes up a sudden CHANT.

ABE

Bulldogs...Bulldogs...Bulldogs.

Mark joins in and together they start to gravitate toward the structure, crossing the street amidst traffic.

BOBBY

Whoa now! Hey, wait a minute.

INT – MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (JUST AFTER)

The guys are seated ringside and stuffing their faces with snacks and soda. It's very NOISY and the crowd is ANIMATED.

ABE

I love this. I'm telling you, *I love this.*

MARK

I could get used to this.

BOBBY

Don't you guys think you're taking this a little too seriously? I mean you're grown men and these guys...they're not even athletes.

ABE

A cynic in every crowd.

INT – RING

A MAN in a black tuxedo is about to talk into a dangling microphone.

ANNOUNCER

New York City, are you ready TO TUMBLE!

The crowd starts to SCREAM and ROAR.

ANNOUNCER

Let's hear it for "MACHO MAN" RANDY SAVAGE!

A large, menacing man with glistening muscles steps into the arena. The crowd SCREAMS LOUDER.

BACK TO RINGSIDE SEATS

Abe nudges bobby.

ABE

Hear that? Your long lost brother up there.

BOBBY

Very funny. Why am I sitting here? Can someone please tell me?

ABE

Just sit back and relax. By the end of the night, you're gonna be a believer.

MARK

We'll probably find him camped in front of the television set next weekend.

BOBBY

I'd rather watch the hair on my mother-in-law's head come up. Or is that down? You seen her upper lip lately?

RANDY SAVAGE (O.S.)

You pitiful people out there make me *sick*.

BACK TO RING

RANDY SAVAGE is PRANCING around the ring. The CROWD BOOS.

RANDY SAVAGE

I'll tell you something. You folks are lucky
I'm contractually bound to issue a challenge,
'cause if I had my way, I wouldn't give you
the sweat off my back.

More hoots and hollering.

RANDY SAVAGE

Now then, I need some fresh meat from this
sorry audience.

Much of the crowd comes to their feet and attempts to flag his attention. The wrestler prances around the ring and SNEERS.

RANDY SAVAGE

Let's make it interesting. Let's bring up
some out-of-towners, say three of ya.

BACK TO RINGSIDE SEATS

Mark turns and yells at the guys.

MARK

That could be us! What do you say, he ain't
that big.

Abe nods, then looks at Bobby.

ABE

Watcha say, Bobby?

BOBBY

'Scuse me?

ABE

You said we didn't give you enough
chances growing up—well look at it—the
perfect opportunity.

BOBBY

You can't be serious?

MARK

(to Abe)

You know, you're right.

BOBBY

What?

MARK

(to Bobby)

He's got a point.

ABE

It's settled then.

Abe comes to his feet and JUMPS UP AND DOWN.

ABE

Right HERE! We'll do it.

Bobby FLIES to his feet.

BOBBY

Hey-hey-hey!

He starts to shake his head; starts to WAVE.

BOBBY

Oh no-no! No way.

He points at Abe, unwittingly bringing down attention.

BOBBY

Crazy man here! *Crazy man!*

BACK TO RING

Randy Savage turns and spots them.

RANDY SAVAGE

There! Those three scrubs in Yankee gear. I want them.

BACK TO RINGSIDE SEATS

Bobby looks up to see Randy Savage pointing at him. He peers left and right, this way and that.

BOBBY

Wha—? Who us?!!!

The crowd ROARS its approval.

BACK TO RING

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are in the ring. Bobby looks uneasy, but Mark and Abe are all smiles. As Randy Savage strolls over to them with a disinterested look, Abe clasps his hands together and raises them in the air like a world champion. His action draws cheers from the crowd.

RANDY SAVAGE

Where are you ladies from?

MARK

Los Angeles, and you're going to be sorry you said that, *dawg*.

ABE

That's right. We don't need to take no guff from a washed up wrestler like you.

RANDY SAVAGE

Washed up?

Bobby leans into Abe.

BOBBY

What are you *doing*?

Abe whispers back.

ABE

It's the way it works, just go along.

RANDY SAVAGE

Just give us yer names so I can get on with rippin' yer heads off.

Mark attempts to look menacing.

MARK

My name is Mark the Masher...

The crowd roars.

MARK
...this here is Abe the Animal...

More ROARS.

MARK
...and this, this is Bobby the Bruiser.

The crowd goes quiet in skepticism. Randy Savage edges up to Bobby before turning out to the crowd.

RANDY SAVAGE
Bruiser? He looks like he still plays dolls.
(to Bobby)
Hey, Bobby, where's yer mommy?

The crowd breaks out in WILD LAUGHTER.

ABE
It's funny you say that!

BOBBY
Abe?

ABE
Bobby here happens to be heavily involved
in the sports industry.

RANDY SAVAGE
(cringing)
Ooh!

BOBBY
Abe?

ABE
And what's more...

BOBBY
ABE!!!

ABE
...he was just saying how you guys are an
embarrassment to athletes.

RANDY SAVAGE
(*dead serious to Bobby*)

That so?

BOBBY
(*apologetic*)

Well, it's not an Olympic sport yet, you see,
but when it is—

Randy Savage suddenly TEARS off his tank top in one easy jerk. The crowd OOHS and AHS.

RANDY SAVAGE
Get 'em ready, I want 'em now!

Bobby looks like he's going to be sick.

BOBBY
Oh, boy.

MARK
Relax, it's part of the act.

Beautiful RINGSIDE GIRLS appear from nowhere, each holding a pair of shorts and a tank top. Randy Savage starts to pace the ring like a CAGED TIGER as the girls go up to the guys.

BLONDE RINGSIDE GIRL
Okay guys, my friends and I have some
outfits for you. Just remove your clothes and
we promise to keep 'em safe and warm for
you. Any objections?

The guys shake their heads in unison like BOBBLE-HEAD DOLLS. From nowhere, a curtain descends from above, creating a screened changing area. The crowd begins to cheer wildly and laugh as the girls hand them the clothes. They hold up the yellow tank tops and we see that they say: 'Kick Me!' on the backside.

BLONDE RINGSIDE GIRL
Go ahead and change inside.

BOBBY
Mind taking my camera?

BLONDE RINGSIDE GIRL
Not at all.

Bobby hands the woman his camera. The three of them slip behind the curtains and begin to change, their heads visible, but nothing else.

RANDY SAVAGE (O.S.)

Hurry it up, get 'em ready.

The crowd is still whistling and laughing. The three men are stripped down to their undergarments when Bobby becomes alarmed with Abe.

BOBBY

Hey, that...! Those are my boxers!

ABE

Don't be stingy. Now relax, you'll get 'em back.

BOBBY

You know what, that's right. I will, I want 'em back.

The three men barely have their shorts on when the curtain lifts and Randy Savage STALKS over to inspect them.

RANDY SAVAGE

Better. But I don't know, they're still lookin' like girls to me.

The crowd begins to HECKLE Randy Savage, begging for a fight. He plays up the suspense like a master.

RANDY SAVAGE

I'll tell you what. A man of my fine up-bringing, well I just can't hit a girl.

As he says the word "girl" he is staring at Bobby.

RANDY SAVAGE

So here's what I'm gonna do. I'm going to level the playing field. I'm gonna have *these* girls wrestle *my* girls.

The crowd is really CHEERING now, they can barely contain themselves. There is a look of relief on Bobby's face and Abe nudges him.

ABE

See, everything works out in this business.

BOBBY

Okay, I can do this. I got the redhead.

Bobby winks at the blond who assisted him. She smiles back and sends a return WINK. Bobby is gaining confidence by the second; he begins to SHADOW BOX for the crowd.

RANDY SAVAGE (O.S.)

Ladies!

WHISTLES go up in the crowd, calls of “Babe” and “Mama”. Then the ringside girls start to exit the ring, one by one.

BOBBY

Hey, where—?

Just then three very tough looking, STEROID-PUMPED GIRLS enter the ring from the other side. The PANIC has returned to Bobby’s face.

BOBBY

Guys? What’s this?

Abe is starting to look sick too.

ABE

Okay! This is okay. Just follow our...lead.

MARK

Why don’t you go first, Abe.

ABE

NO! I mean, no...shouldn’t you? You’re taller.

Randy Savage exits the ring, but remains just outside the ropes.

RANDY SAVAGE

Aw, what’s the matter, you pansies lose your stomach for a fight?

One of the females suddenly lets out a WAR CRY like Xena, charges and DROP KICKS Mark where he stands. The fight is on. PANDEMONIUM ERUPTS between the guys and their female counterparts. Humorous FLIPS ensue, DROP KICKS, HEADLOCKS, and an assortment of MOVES. Finally the guys gain the upper-hand thanks to a move by Bobby. When it looks like all is won, one of the women comes from out of nowhere and lays Bobby out with a FOREARM to the jaw. Everything goes DARK. And then:

INT – TRAINER’S ROOM

ABE (O.S.)

Bobby? You in there?

Bobby is laid out on an examination table. He comes slowly to, only to find Mark and Abe standing over him.

BOBBY

Huh? Wha—?

He sits up on one elbow and looks around.

MARK

Easy now.

BOBBY

What? What happened?

(puts hand to head)

Ooh, my head.

ABE

Well...one of the girls...she used an illegal forearm shiver on you.

BOBBY

Forearm shiver?

Bobby makes his way to the edge of the table.

BOBBY

What happened to, “Everything works out in this business?”

Abe looks down dejected.

ABE

Yeah, well...

MARK

(to Bobby)

You doing okay?

Bobby extends his hand out to Abe.

BOBBY

Here, give me a hand.

Abe offers his hand. Bobby takes it and drives a KNUCKLE hard into it.

ABE

Ow! What is that for?

BOBBY

Oh, I don't know. Maybe I just want to make sure I'm not in some kind of *COMA* or something!!!

ABE

That's pinch yourself then...

BOBBY

Is that how it goes? Come here, come here.

ABE

Like heck I'm comin' *near* you again.

Mark laughs lightly.

MARK

(to Bobby)

Your clothes, they're on the stand next to you; tylenol too.

Bobby steps down from the table and yanks his Yankee shirt from the stand; his camera too.

BOBBY

Don't think I'm forgetting you.

MARK

I'm saying nothing—nothing.

INT – HALLWAY (JUST AFTER)

Mark, Abe, and Bobby step outside the room. Bobby is dressed again.

MARK

We should probably mention we're leaving.

Twenty feet away a GARDEN EMPLOYEE is conversing with another man.

ABE
Hey, uh, we're takin' off now.

The Garden employee looks over and nods.

GARDEN EMPLOYEE
You okay fella?

Bobby nods and the three of them start down the hallway. There are pictures of employee's and notable athletes dotting the walls on either side of them.

MARK
You think they have enough pictures?

ABE
Hey, check out Patrick Ewing.

Bobby spots something on the wall. He suddenly stops and takes a step back. His eyes go OPEN WIDE.

BOBBY
I don't believe this!

ABE
What? Is it Stephon Marbury? Who?

Abe takes a close look at the man in the picture. His eyes widen too, for it's the stranger in Bobby's photo. Below the picture it reads: SAL BENAVIDEZ, DIRECTOR OF SECURITY. Mark ambles over.

MARK
Well?

Mark leans in and reads the name too.

MARK
Sal Benavidez? Who's...? Wait a minute...

Mark's eyes DART to Bobby.

INT – LOBBY

Mark, Abe, and Bobby are getting information from a Garden employee. He points down a hallway.

GARDEN EMPLOYEE #2
Mr. Benavidez? Sure, you can find him
first door to the right.

INT – OFFICE

Bobby is followed by Mark and Abe. He goes up to a door and knocks. The door opens a moment later and a SECURITY OFFICER steps out.

SECURITY OFFICER
Can I help you?

BOBBY
I hope so. We're looking for...?

Bobby turns to Mark and Abe.

BOBBY
What was it? Sal – Sal Bena—

SECURITY OFFICER
Benavidez?

BOBBY
That's it.

SECURITY OFFICER
He just left. You can probably catch him
if you hurry.

MARK
Which way?

SECURITY OFFICER
Elevator bank just around the corner.

The guys are OFF. They turn a corner and enter the lobby with the elevator bank. There are a great many people around.

ABE
Anything?

Mark and Bobby shake their heads. An elevator bell sounds and they turn in time to see an open elevator. They exchange knowing glances and rush the doors, but it's too late. The DOORS CLOSE, but not before they catch a glimpse of the stranger inside, and he them.

BOBBY

Damn it!

Bobby POUNDS on the doors. Abe looks over his shoulder and finds the doors leading to the stairway.

ABE

This way!

INT – MAIN LOBBY

The guys exit some doors to step into the main lobby. Many people are starting to leave.

BOBBY

You see him?

ABE

(shakes head)

Nothing.

INT – OFFICE (JUST AFTER)

Mark, Abe, and Bobby have returned to the office. Bobby is handing the security officer a piece of paper.

BOBBY

This is the number we can be reached at tonight or tomorrow. It's of the utmost importance that we speak with him as *soon* as possible.

ABE

(rubbing back of hand)

Yeah, call it national security. If Savage here don't get his way, he's likely to erupt in premeditated violence...

Bobby and Mark dismiss Abe's joking remark with a smile, as does the security guard. They start to make their way out as the officer's smile wanes; he looks suddenly concerned.

EXT – NEW YORK CITY

A shot of the city under cover of darkness.

INT – HOTEL ROOM (NIGHT)

Mark and Abe are lying back in the bed, staring up at the ceiling. Bobby is doing the same but from his position on the floor. The lights are off in the room.

MARK

Maybe it was just a split second, but...I'd swear he didn't recognize us.

BOBBY

Well maybe he doesn't remember what we look like.

ABE

Why not, you did?

MARK

And what about the name – Benavidez?

Bobby suddenly turns over with his back to the guys.

BOBBY

I'm tired, I'm going to sleep.

MARK (O.S.)

Night!

ABE (O.S.)

Night!

All is quiet at first. Then Bobby stirs. A moment later he fidgets. He shifts again. Finally he sits BOLT-UPRIGHT and turns on a light.

BOBBY

Okay, I gotta read something.

MARK

What's the matter?

BOBBY

Nothing. It's just when I can't sleep, I gotta read. You guys have anything?

MARK (O.S.)

Nothing!

ABE (O.S.)

Nope!

BOBBY

Great!

ABE

Try the drawer.

Bobby pulls open the drawer to find a Gideon Bible inside. He pulls it out reluctantly, as though seeing one for the first time.

BOBBY

A Bible?

ABE

It don't bite. Go on—read!

BOBBY

Just like that?

ABE

That's right. It's the good book. Maybe it'll speak to you.

BOBBY

(to Abe)

Speak to me?

(examining Bible)

Speak to me?

Bobby resumes his place on the floor and draws open the book. He squints.

BOBBY

Then...he went away and hanged himself.

ABE

All right—another page—try another page.

Mark is stifling a laugh. Bobby has a pained look on his face, but flips open another page.

BOBBY

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God...to those who are...

Suddenly the telephone RINGS!

BOBBY

...called according to His purpose.

Mark and Abe come to a sitting position. All three just stare at the phone. It RINGS again.

MARK

That did not just happen...

ABE

Isn't that somethin'?

The phone RINGS a third time. Bobby JUMPS to his feet and GRABS it as he gives Mark and Abe a baleful glare.

BOBBY

Hello?!!!

(beat)

Yes, I'm him—he—er, me!

(beat)

Wait a second, let me get something...

Bobby gestures for pen and paper. Mark hands both to him.

BOBBY

New York State, yes, I know it.

(beat)

Got it.

(beat)

Hello? Wait? Did he say anything about recognizing—?

(beat)

Hello? Hello?

(to Mark and Abe)

We must have got disconnected.

Bobby hangs up the phone in confusion.

ABE

What'd he say?

BOBBY

That this Mr. Benavidez, he wants to see us tomorrow.

EXT – NEW YORK CITY (DAWN)

Scores of people dot the Rockefeller Center like ants on a log—people too busy with life to bother with the majestic beauty all around. The scene cuts to Central Park and we witness another throng of able-bodied and industrious New Yorkers.

EXT – NEW YORK STATE UNIVERSITY

The guys are entering the football stadium. Bobby has his camera in a case around his shoulder; he looks nervous and is wearing a red shirt. They take a seat on a row of bleachers. There is no sign of the stranger, only a YOUNG MAN and a WOMAN running the track together, a GROUNDSKEEPER tending to the track, and a MAN placing new sod on the field.

MARK

Here?

BOBBY

It's what the guy said.

ABE

Amber's college of all places. Why?

BOBBY

I'm starting to get a funny feeling.

MARK

I think I see someone.

(points)

There—in one of those golf-mobile thingies.

The guys come to their feet. In the distance a golf cart is approaching with a lone PERSON in it.

BOBBY

It's him.

The guys wait patiently. When the cart is within a hundred feet it stops and then TOTAL CHAOS BREAKS LOOSE. The stranger pulls something from his pant leg and ducks behind the cart. The people on the field suddenly pulls pistols from nowhere and train them on the guys. A voice comes over the stadium P.A. System.

VOICE (O.S.)

This is the NYPD, each of you drop to the
GROUND!

The guys glance up to see a PANEL OPEN in the booth. Two high-powered rifles are also trained on them.

BOBBY

Someone please tell me what's happening
here?

MARK

Right now *let's just drop.*

The guys fall to the floor in a HEAP. The officers quickly CONVERGE on them and check for weapons. One officer takes Bobby's camera case and checks it. The last one to step out is the stranger – Sal Benavidez. Bobby finds himself staring at the man from his prone position. He can't take his eyes from him.

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

They're clean, Benavidez.

SAL

Any identification?

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

Go ahead, get up.

Mark, Abe, and Bobby come to their feet.

BOBBY

Is it okay—that I reach for my wallet?

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

Do it slowly.

Bobby pulls out his wallet and hands it to Sal in confusion. The man notices Bobby staring at him.

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

Back in place.

As Sal takes a long moment to examine the wallet, Bobby can no longer contain himself. He takes a small step forward.

BOBBY

You're Ray, I know it.

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

I said *back!*

The officer pushes Bobby.

SAL

(to officer)

Wait a second.

(to Bobby)

What did you say?

BOBBY

I'm sorry, I—I forgot my place.

SAL

No, that name? What did you call me?

BOBBY

Ray. I called you Ray.

The officers exchange glances. Bobby looks at Mark and Abe, then back at Sal who is stone-faced.

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

How 'bout I run them into the station?

Sal doesn't appear to hear the man.

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

Sir?

SAL

No, that's it. I have the situation under control—head back!

UNDERCOVER OFFICER

Sure.

(to other officers)

You heard the man—headquarters!

The guys exchange a genuine look of surprise. As the officers depart, Sal looks at Bobby's driver's license carefully.

SAL

This may sound...

(looks off)

...this may sound strange, but how is it you think you know me?

BOBBY

You don't remember?

Bobby steps forward and looks into Sal's eyes.

ABE

MARK

Bobby, maybe it just ain't...

(shakes head)
Bobby?

BOBBY

In '68, the day before you left for the service, you had me accompany you to a tattoo parlor. You had them put a bulldog on your right arm.

Bobby indicates the area using his arm. Mark and Abe exchange glances. Sal looks at his right arm and starts to LIFT the sleeve.

EXT – CAMPUS COFFEE SHOP (DAY)

We see a close-up of a BULLDOG and then the sleeve comes down. The guys and Sal are sitting at a table outside a cafe. A few of the tables are occupied with students and a television is on in the background.

BOBBY

Post-traumatic Stress Syndrome?

Sal nods.

MARK

How long were you a captive in Nam?

SAL

Without an identity, they didn't know. Probably four or five years.

ABE

And your memory...
(snaps fingers)
...just like that?

Sal hangs his head.

SAL

I experience things—thoughts—but they're all too vague to make sense of.

BOBBY

This is like something out of a movie. It's beyond movie even.

SAL

Any ties to my past, dog tags, everything

was long stripped away when they found me. Doctors detected heavy traces of narcotics in my system. They said it might be partly responsible for the memory loss, but it was likely the trauma I suffered as a prisoner of war. And so after I was found, I came stateside. I became Sal Benavidez. I settled in New York, and it's here I've been ever since.

MARK

Well rest assured, as soon as I get word on any family or relatives, I'll pass it on.

SAL

(apprehensively)

Yeah.

The guys don't seem to notice.

ABE

All because of Bobby here.

(to Bobby)

You didn't give up, guy.

Bobby winks at Abe.

MARK

So why all the troops and the guns?

SAL

You guys haven't heard of the activist threats to the city?

ABE

(to Mark and Bobby)

There was that news flash.

In the background the television program is being interrupted by a SPECIAL REPORT. Their eyes go to the screen.

SAL

(to cashier)

Hey, pal, can you turn that up?

The cashier raises the volume. The news coverage depicts several police officers rushing about in the background.

ANCHORMAN

Although police officers were unable to apprehend the three men just minutes ago, a vigilant cab driver managed to wrestle the duffel bag from them. Police will not say if explosives were found in the bag. I understand we have the cab driver at the scene. Let's go live to him. Sharon, are you there?

The coverage cuts to a redheaded reporter. She is standing beside the De Niro look-alike Bobby met earlier.

REPORTER SHARON

I'm here, Al.

(to cabby)

Go ahead, sir, tell us what you discovered.

CABBY #1

Am I really on television?

REPORTER SHARON

Yes you are, go ahead, sir.

The driver takes on a serious expression, clears his throat and straightens. His eyes go LASER-LIKE to the reporter.

CABBY #1

You talkin' to me?

REPORTER SHARON

Pardon?

The cabby turns and looks directly into the camera.

CABBY #1

I said, 'You talkin' to me?'

The broadcast cuts quickly to the anchorman. Bobby shakes his head in disgust.

BOBBY

Same-o lame-o.

(to Sal)

So does the city have any leads?

SAL

Only three suspicious looking characters.

Sal looks at each of them.

ABE

I for one am glad you guys don't have a shoot first, ask questions later policy.

MARK

I second that.

BOBBY

What about the school? Why did you choose here of all places?

Sal takes in a breath of air and glances around proudly.

SAL

It's an open area—visible. But also because I'm familiar with it.

ABE

Attended it, did you?

SAL

(smiles)

No, not exactly.

Sal glances at his wristwatch.

SAL

Here, you guys have a few minutes?

The guys exchange questioning glances.

EXT – THE SCIENCE & INDUSTRY BUILDING (JUST AFTER)

The guys gaze up at a four-story structure they are approaching. Painted in large black letters outside of the building are the words: SCIENCE & INDUSTRY. In the background students are preparing for class or CHATTING with friends. A JANITOR passes from view.

MARK

Science and Industry?

INT – BUILDING CORRIDOR

The guys and Sal come up to a classroom. A couple students are milling about the hallway, socializing before class begins.

BOBBY

So what is it you want to show us?

Sal turns to Bobby.

SAL

Not what—who?

Bobby stops in his tracks.

BOBBY

Listen, there's not going to be anymore people jumping out from behind doors or something?

SAL

(chuckles)

Just wait here for me.

As Sal enters the classroom, Abe turns to Mark and Bobby.

ABE

Hey, maybe he knows someone who goes here too. Wouldn't that be *something*? Amber and this person—in the same school?

Bobby suddenly gets a glazed look on his face.

BOBBY

Whoa—whoa—whoa! This is the science building.

ABE

Yeah, Mark said that already.

BOBBY

What's the name of this class?

MARK

Chemistry. I saw it on the other door.

Sal suddenly steps into the hallway with someone right behind him.

SAL

Guys, I'd like to introduce you to my son,
Professor Nathan Benavidez.

There is a great look of surprise on the guy's faces. It's Amber's Nathan! Abe WHISPERS to Mark.

ABE

It possible we in a Twilight Zone episode
and don't know it?

Mark quiets him with a stern look.

NATHAN

Mr. Savage? Wow, it's good to see you
again.

(nods)

Abe, Mark. This is a surprise.

AMBER (O.S.)

Daddy?

Everyone turns to see Amber approaching, including a bewildered looking Sal.

SAL

Daddy? We all know each other here?

Before anyone can say anything more, Sal's cell begins to CHIRP. He slips it from the holster. In the background is the faint sound of a helicopter.

SAL

Hang on.

Sal flips open the phone and puts it to his ear.

SAL

Benavidez here.

(beat)

What?

Suddenly a wave of SIRENS are heard and then some GUNFIRE. SCREAMING sounds in the distance.

BOBBY

What was that?

SAL
(to caller)

I just heard it.

(beat)

Right, as soon as I have something.

Sal reholsters his phone.

NATHAN

What's going on?

SAL

Officers came across the suspects at
Broadway and La Guardia.

NATHAN

That's not a block from here.

BOBBY

You don't think they're on campus?

SAL

I'm sure of it.

(to Nathan)

Keep everyone inside and lock the doors.
I'll get word to you as soon as it's safe.

(to the guys)

We'll talk...later.

BOBBY

Yeah, of course.

Sal starts to race off.

BOBBY

Ray, er, Sal, sure we can't do anything?

SAL

Just remain here.

Sal disappears down a flight of stairs. Amber takes Bobby's arm.

AMBER

Daddy, is everything going to be okay?

BOBBY

Fine. Everything will be fine, peaches.

Nathan starts to herd the startled students.

NATHAN

All right everyone, let's not panic. Out of the hallway and into the room please.

BOBBY

(to Mark and Abe)

Whatcha guys think?

They exchange glances.

MARK

(indicates room)

We really should be joining them.

ABE

(unconvinced)

Yeah, that's what he said.

Something unsaid passes between them. Bobby turns to Amber.

BOBBY

Listen honey, stay put and listen to Nathan.

AMBER

Daddy? Where are—?

Mark and Abe are already in motion. Bobby nudges her toward Nathan and addresses him.

BOBBY

Take care of my little girl.

NATHAN

(nods)

I won't leave her side.

AMBER

Be careful!

Bobby nods as another couple SHOTS are heard; they're louder. The helicopter sounds like it's directly overhead. Mark, Abe, and Bobby disappear down the stairway, and the last few students rush into the classroom as Nathan shuts the door.

INT – STAIRWAY

The guys are racing down the same flight of stairs as Sal. Frightened students are racing past them in the opposite direction.

MARK

A man with a gun come down here?

MALE STUDENT

(nods)

He just sent us up.

The student continues to run upstairs. Another wave of students approach.

FEMALE STUDENT

There's guys with guns down there, go back!

ABE

We'll—we'll be all right. Find a room upstairs and hide out—hurry!

(to guys)

Oh, boy! What are we getting ourselves into?

As the guys pass the second floor they find the stairwell empty.

BOBBY

No more kids? That's gotta mean something.

ABE

Hey, maybe those bad guys just kept a runnin' when they saw Ray?

Bobby creeps down the last few stairs and peers around the corner as quietly as possible. Suddenly he's looking down the barrel of a SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL. Bobby's eyes go open WIDE and then...

SAL (O.S.)

Son of a...!!!

Sal steps into the open and lowers his gun. Bobby takes a breath.

SAL

Dammit, didn't I tell you guys to stay put?

ABE

Well, we, uh—!

SAL

SAVE IT! I could have blasted you guys!

The guys are stunned by Sal's outburst. They're not sure what to say.

BOBBY

Ray, come on—

SAL

Sal! It's Sal!

The air is thick with tension. Beat.

MARK

Sal...look we're sorry. But what we're trying to say is...well, we haven't exactly remained friends all these years by listening. Sometimes...sometimes we've had to go with our gut...

BOBBY

Like now...

Abe looks over at Mark and Bobby in understanding. Sal reflects a second, then...

SAL

You guys just gonna stand there?

The guys step down to the first floor relieved.

SAL

All right, we've got to act fast.

BOBBY

Right. What do you want us to do?

ABE

Least we have surprise on our side.

SAL

Yes, we do.

Sal pulls a small pistol from his pant leg.

SAL

Someone want to take this?

Mark takes the gun and checks it. Sal then pulls out his cell phone and punches a couple buttons. Sirens are audible from outside, as well as police dogs.

SAL

It's Benavidez, put me through.

(beat)

SAL (cont'd)

It's me, and damn if I'm not smack in the middle of this.

(beat)

I only saw one of them. He was running down the hall in the opposite direction a moment ago.

(beat)

Don't! The entrance is rigged.

(beat)

No, I'd say it's radio-controlled by the looks of it. One of them must have the detonator.

(beat)

Right. Hold on.

Sal begins to jog ahead. He waves the guys to follow.

SAL

I need to check the rear doors.

The guys follow Sal down one hall and then another. When they get to the back doors they see another explosive device set up there.

SAL

Dammit!

Sal puts the cell phone back to his ear.

SAL

It's rigged too.

(beat)

I understand, I'll do what I can for now.

(beat)

Got it. And don't worry 'bout me...

Sal looks over at Mark, Abe, and Bobby.

SAL

I found a couple friends along the way.

The guys smile in return.

INT – STAIRWELL

The guys are quietly making their way up the stairs.

SAL

(whispers)

We'll work our way up floor by floor.

The guys nod.

SAL

If anything breaks out, I want you guys to hit the ground.

Sal directs his attention to the second floor as it comes into view. It appears empty and all of the classroom doors are closed. The guys step onto the floor and come up to the first door. Sal carefully tries the doorknob and retreats a few steps.

SAL

(whispers)

I'll enter. Mark, stand ready. Abe and Bobby, behind the wall.

The guys move into position. Sal nods in readiness. It's TENSE. Sal shows one finger—two—then three and BURSTS into the room. The guys are right behind. Inside they find a room full of terrified students. Some start to scream.

SAL

Shhh! Quiet!

Sal flashes a badge and the crowd goes hush.

INSTRUCTOR

Thank God! What's going on outside?

SAL

Three armed men are holed up inside the building somewhere.

Sal looks out at the full class of students.

SAL

There's so many.

(to instructor)

Do you know if the rest of the rooms are like this?

INSTRUCTOR

This is it for the second floor. We ushered them in here the moment we heard gunfire outside.

ABE

We gotta get 'em out. This could be bad. Real bad.

Sal nods and scans the room quickly.

SAL

(to instructor)

Evacuation plans, what are they?

INSTRUCTOR

A chain ladder, it fits over the windowsill and drops to the ground.

SAL

Where is it?

INSTRUCTOR

The custodial closet, just outside the room.

Sal looks for Abe, who's already headed for the door with Bobby in tow.

ABE

We got it.

Mark comes up to Sal and speaks in a low tone.

MARK

Got a second?

INT – CUSTODIAL CLOSET

Abe and Bobby are rummaging through an overcrowded closet, pushing aside boxes, cleaning products, and a fishing pole.

ABE
Here it is. Give me a hand.

Bobby removes the camera from around his neck and sets it down.

INT – 2ND FLOOR CLASSROOM

Mark has Sal's attention.

MARK
I'm not going to kid you and call this brilliant, but let me go downstairs... see if I can do something.

SAL
You have experience with explosives?

MARK
Not these kind, but I'm a contractor by trade. I can at least examine the wiring.

Sal is hesitant.

MARK
Look, get the bomb squad on the other end, leave the phone with me, then go find these punks. With a little luck we can be at a New York pizzeria this evening—all four of us.

Sal laughs briefly, then pulls out his cell phone and hands it to Mark.

SAL
It's programmed, just hit redial. When you get them on the line, listen carefully.

MARK
Trust me, you don't have to ask.

Sal then pulls out a pocketknife and HANDS it to Mark.

SAL
Here. Could help.

Mark takes it and places it in a pocket.

SAL

Last thing. Tell them we're about to send students down, so the sooner they can open up communications with these characters, the more distracted they'll be. Bobby and I will try and find more to send down. Once I can establish their whereabouts, I'll send word.

Mark nods and looks down at the gun in his hand.

MARK

And this?

SAL

Just...hang on to it.

Mark gives him a look and then SCRAMBLES out of the room. Abe and Bobby enter the room with the chain ladder in their arms a moment later.

BOBBY

Mark?

Sal, Abe, and Bobby work their way to the window. Abe pulls it open and Sal extends his head outside. A small army of patrol cars and law enforcement personnel are in position throughout the grounds. Sal displays his badge and a silent communication takes place. He then gazes up at the higher floors and sees nothing.

SAL

Okay, set it in place.

Bobby sets the hooks over the windowsill and Abe releases the ladder. It falls to the ground below.

SAL

Everyone line up, single file. Quickly!

The students do as they are told with Abe lending assistance. Sal then turns to Bobby with a doubtful look. Bobby reads it.

BOBBY

What? I'm not going anywhere with my daughter upstairs.

Sal nods back.

SAL

Let's do it then.

INT – STAIRWELL TO 3RD FLOOR

Sal and Bobby are making their way up the stairs to the next floor. Sal peers around the corner to see that it is empty. In the background we can hear the authorities coming over a P.A. System now. Sal turns to Bobby who is right behind him.

SAL

Sure you're up for some knee-scraping?

BOBBY

Why not, I have the knocking down.

SAL

Here we go then.

Sal advances as Bobby realizes something.

BOBBY

(mutters)

My camera?

Bobby starts to head back down the stairs as Sal continues to creep toward the first door. From the sign on the entrance, he realizes it is the Men's Room. He puts an ear to the door and hears nothing. He continues past it when the door CREAKS open.

SAL

Bobby?

The large figure of a ski-masked activist is suddenly LOOMING behind him and pointing a FIREARM. Just then Bobby emerges from the stairwell. His eyes go wide.

BOBBY

Ray! BEHIND YOU...!!!

The activist WHEELS on Bobby, who practically DIVES down the stairs to escape. Sal LAUNCHES himself on the man, his weight sending them both SLAMMING into the restroom. The assailant loses his gun in the process.

INT – RESTROOM

The two men are STRUGGLING, fighting for control of Sal's gun. Sal is game, but the activist is too big; too powerful. He begins to SLAM Sal against the stalls, TEARING them from their

foundation. Sal gets a BLOW in here and there, but they do little more than annoy. Finally, the activist GRASPS Sal around the throat with his right hand and PINS him against the wall. With his left hand still on Sal's right hand, he manages to level the gun toward Sal's temple.

BOBBY (O.S.)

Hey, PICL head!

The activist peers over his shoulder to become blinded by a series of powerful camera FLASHES. He instinctively brings his hand up to shield his eyes. A second later he recalls Sal. Too late! Sal delivers a PUNCH flush on the man's jaw.

The activist hits the floor hard, losing his grip on the gun. It goes SKITTERING a few feet away. In that instant, Sal and his assailant glance at the gun, then DASH for it. The activist gets there first. He brings the gun around and is about to FIRE, when – WHAP! A toilet seat is slammed against his head—CROWNING HIM! The heavy wooden lid protrudes up from the force of impact. The dazed activist gets a glazed look in his eye, and SLUMPS slowly to the floor unconscious.

BOBBY

(sighs)

There! Top that, why don't you!

Bobby slumps to the ground too. As a disbelieving Sal looks incredulously at Bobby, the still flashing camera, and the toilet seat dangling over the activist's head—a humorous sight—he breaks into laughter. Bobby begins to chime in too and together they share a moment of HEARTY LAUGHTER.

BOBBY

Hey, sorry about calling you Ray again. It just kinda' came out.

SAL

Don't worry about...?

Sal suddenly puts a hand to his head and shakes it ever so slightly.

BOBBY

What is it?

SAL

My God, I think I have it back—my memory. I remember things. You...Mark and Abe...the winning football season...the pact we made afterward.

Sal gets a look of recognition.

SAL
Even the Recruitment Office...

Beat. Bobby hangs his head.

BOBBY
Congratulations, you've got your memory
back?

Sal reads the hurt on Bobby's face. He goes over and sits next to him till they are side-by-side.

SAL
Memory or no memory, I think I've known
enough about myself to know I was
probably a bad ass when I was younger;
probably thinking I was going to set the
world on fire and win it all by myself—Mr.
Marine!

(staring off)

I entered the Marines because I thought it
was the right of passage to my becoming a
man. And for that belief...for that belief I
went through some pretty heavy stuff,
Bobby. Real heavy.

Bobby can see Sal's conviction.

SAL
You know what I've since realized? It
never took a uniform to make me a man.
It never took a championship trophy
either. You're a man when you raise a
beautiful daughter...or a son. You're a man
when you're being a faithful husband to
your wife and a good provider. You're a
man when you're a person of integrity and
character. *Comprende?*

A look of tranquility comes over Bobby and he smiles back crookedly.

SAL
Thank you for not giving up on me, Bobby.
Even here...now.

BOBBY

(shrugs)

Maybe I see a cheesy newspaper deal in the works with rights to exclusive shots. Might make me a rich man—this whole thing.

Bobby points to his camera. Sal chuckles before going serious again. He comes to his feet.

SAL

Maybe, but I feel rich already.

Bobby comes to his feet. They stare at one another a moment before Bobby nods.

BOBBY

Welcome back...Ray.

The guys give each other an awkward hug with lots of PATTING and TAPPING, then release suddenly, each turning away from the other and wiping something from their eyes.

BOBBY

(clears throat)

We'd better...

SAL

Yeah...yeah...

Sal leans over the activist and begins to rummage through pockets.

BOBBY

Detonator?

Sal finally shakes his head and places a handcuff on the man's right wrist.

SAL

No.

BOBBY

Will you look at these guy's. If local law enforcement doesn't get 'em, Mr. Blackwell will.

*On the front of the white ski-mask it reads: **PICL Power**, and on the back it reads: **Save the** with a see-through sleeve that enables the wearer to place a photo inside. In this instance it is the photo of the Scarlet Snapback Butterfly.*

SAL

Who?

BOBBY

No one. So, what next?

SAL

Help me drag this guy.

Together they drag the activist up to the metal leg of a stall. Sal fastens the other end of the handcuff to it when he notes a pair of sneakers beneath and behind the door. He gently motions the fact to Bobby, who looks underneath and nods. Sal then raises his gun and trains it on the door.

SAL

You in the stall—out slowly! Now!!!

There is no answer, only dead silence. Sal pulls back the slide on the pistol. Suddenly the door SQUEAKS open and a curious looking character POKES his head out and emerges slowly. He is wearing a bucket hat, with the brim low over his face, a large, loose-fitting tie-dye shirt, and very baggy jeans. Even a skateboard is slung under the youth's right arm. It's apparent he is a student. He steps out of the stall and looks over at the unconscious activist.

SKATEBOARDER

Whoa, check out the bad guy. Uh, that makes you good guys, right?

Sal and Bobby exchange glances. The skateboarder suddenly brightens.

SKATEBOARDER

Say, did I mention I know where you can find a detonator?

INT – HALLWAY

The skateboarder is FUMBLING with his feet, awkwardly trying to keep balance as he coasts to Nathan's classroom. He STUMBLES off the skateboard, tucks it clumsily under one arm and knocks on the closed door. The skateboarder is wearing shades this time. The door swings open and another masked activist is there to meet him.

ACTIVIST #2

What took so—?

The man looks puzzled.

ACTIVIST #2

Where is Ranger 1?

SKATEBOARDER/BOBBY
Ranger 1?

ACTIVIST #2
Where is he?

Bobby keeps his head lowered and shrugs.

SKATEBOARDER / BOBBY
How do I know, Mr. PICL dude. He
accidentally stepped on a cockroach and
started to freak out. Like, maybe he's afraid
he killed the last surviving member or
somethin'.

The activist shoves Bobby aside and enters the hallway.

ACTIVIST #2
Idiot?!!

SKATEBOARDER / BOBBY
Gosh, can't say anything...

Two additional skateboarders glance to one another in bewilderment. Bobby makes a cursory glance around the packed classroom and notices a detonator atop a nearby desk.

ACTIVIST #2
Where is he?

SKATEBOARDER / BOBBY
Dude, I thought he was right behind me.

ACTIVIST #2
You look familiar to me.

SKATEBOARDER / BOBBY
Shuhhh, you just sent me to the John,
remember?

Whimpering is heard from down the hall. It draws the second man's attention.

ACTIVIST #2
Yeah, you know what, just stay where I can
see you.

Activist #2 starts to approach his friend, who appears to be clutching a dead beetle in his hand. The man is visibly distraught.

ACTIVIST #2

You gotta be kiddin' me.

Inside the classroom, one of the other skateboarders comes up to Bobby and peaks under his hat.

SKATEBOARDER #2

Brian, that you under there, dude?

SKATEBOARDER / BOBBY

G-git-git-git!!!

Bobby chases the young man away and peers outside the door. Activist #1 disappears inside the Men's Room. Activist #2 cautiously opens the door and is promptly YANKED inside. Bobby goes to action, GRABBING the detonator and WHIPPING off his hat and glasses.

BOBBY

Amber? Nathan?

The skateboarders look horrified.

SKATEBOARDER #2

Whoa, dude, you gone grandpa on us.

SKATEBOARDER #3

Knew it, Charles. Another victim of stress.

BOBBY

Has anybody seen—?

A sudden SCREAM is heard.

BOBBY

Amber?

Bobby rushes to the window.

ACTIVIST #3 (O.S.)

Remove that chain ladder now, or you're going to regret it. I mean it!!!!

Bobby looks up to see a gun waving around. He can also hear the whimpering of Amber. Sal advances.

BOBBY

He's got Amber. He's got my daughter. I shouldn't have left her.

NEGOTIATOR (O.S.)

Just don't get excited. We're removing the ladder now.

Sal sighs deeply and looks out at the throng of law enforcement personnel. Down below the chain ladder is removed and dropped to the floor. Abe is visible in the crowd, but not Mark.

FEMALE STUDENT #2

The girl he took, professor Nathan is with her. He wouldn't leave her side.

SAL

Thank you. All of you head down to the second floor and just wait. Help will arrive soon.

The students start to flock out of the room. Sal turns to a distraught Bobby.

SAL

How you holdin' up?

Bobby shrugs.

BOBBY

I can't lose her. She's my baby, Ray-Sal, I'm sorry.

Sal smiles tenderly.

SAL

And you're not. You're not going to lose her, so stop doubting yourself. Let's just focus on what's in front of us. Okay?

Bobby nods pensively.

SAL

It'll all work out in the end.

Bobby looks up at Sal. In the background, Activist #3 is rambling on about the plight of the Scarlet Snapback Butterfly and man's destructive nature.

SAL

Did you find the detonator?

BOBBY

It's safe in my pocket.

Sal looks up and takes a deep sigh.

SAL

Uno mas.

INT – STAIRWELL TO 4th FLOOR

Sal and Bobby round the corner and enter hallway. The activist continues to shout unreasonable demands from behind the closed door.

BOBBY

That voice? Where have I heard it before?

SAL

Shhh!

BOBBY

Sorry.

As they creep quietly toward the door, they pass up display frames of mounted insects. Sal doesn't seem to notice. As they reach the door, Sal carefully tries the doorknob. It's locked. He turns to Bobby, shakes his head, and retreats back to the stairway.

SAL

It's locked. I can't just burst inside knowing he has a gun and our children for hostages.

BOBBY

Well, what do we do then?

Sal looks exasperated. Bobby gets a look.

BOBBY

Hey, wait a minute.

Bobby rushes over to the wall-mounted frames.

SAL

What are you doing?

BOBBY

Here, this one! Help me take it down.

SAL

Bugs?

The two men retreat back to the stairway.

BOBBY

I have to run down to the 2nd floor. Do me a favor and remove the red butterfly here. I'll be right back.

Bobby races down the stairs.

SAL

Bobb—?

EXT – OUTSIDE SCIENCE BUILDING

Abe is standing behind a SWAT van with the negotiator, as the last activist continues to bark down at them.

ACTIVIST #3

Look at the tiger, man. It's endangered. Do you really want it to go the way of the Dodo? Huh?

NEGOTIATOR

(to self)

I don't know, I'm thinkin' we got a few Dodo's left.

ABE

Come on, Bobby, you can do this buddy. Just gotta have faith.

INT – STAIRWELL TO 4th FLOOR

Bobby has a fishing pole in hand, with a line and hook ready.

SAL

Unbelievable! You pull this off, and I'll swear off cussing.

BOBBY

Deal. There a way to access the roof from here?

SAL

Should be right up the stairs.

BOBBY

Okay, give me a few minutes. This guy should pee his pants when he sees his butterfly floating outside the window.

Sal hands Bobby a jar with the butterfly in it.

SAL

I'm in as soon as I hear somethin'.

BOBBY

Good luck, Sal.

SAL

Vaya con dios, amigo.

EXT – ROOF

Bobby climbs onto the roof and peers over the edge. A moment of height sickness overtakes him, but he steadies himself. He finally positions himself over the activist's window. A fire escape is just a few off from him. Composing himself he looks up to the heavens.

BOBBY

Hey, big guy. I've never been a prayin' kinda man—and I uh—I'm not even sure how to go about it really. But listen—I uh—I was thinking that I could really, really use you right now. I need your help. Not just for me, but for my daughter. Please.

Bobby then takes a deep breath and removes the lid from the jar. Ever so gently he removes the fragile butterfly and begins to attach it to the fishing hook.

BOBBY

Yick! Sorry fella.

Suddenly a wing breaks off and Bobby is in MOTION, trying to grab at it as it floats away—SWIPING at air mostly.

BOBBY

No-no-no-no!

The wing seems to take a life of its own as it flits and flutters this way and that, descending right for the head of the activist. A humorous, but pained expression comes over Bobby. Just as the wing is about to float past the activist, it comes to a rest atop his head instead. The man looks up curiously and Bobby is forced to DUCK BACK. A moment of silence goes by, and then the man resumes his tirade.

Bobby breathes a sigh of relief.

BOBBY

That was way too close, Bobby. One more chance...

Bobby positions the rod over the roofline and begins to allow some slack in the line. The dead insect wobbles from the lop-sided weight of a missing wing. A worried looking Bobby jerks the line every few inches to create a bobbing effect. The activist looks over in amazement.

ACTIVIST #3

I don't believe it...

That moment a real Scarlet Snapback Butterfly flutters up. Bobby does a double-take and looks on incredulously. The insect then darts up to Bobby, lands on his nose and releases its enzymes!!!

BOBBY

Owww!!! Whoa—whoa—whoaaa!

Bobby loses his balance, trips over the pole, and FALLS onto the fire escape. The activist looks up as Bobby HANGS precariously to the railing.

INT – 4TH FLOOR HALLWAY

Sal puts an ear to the door but hears nothing.

INT – 4TH FLOOR ROOM WINDOW

Amber pokes her head out the window.

AMBER

Daddy?!!!

BOBBY

It's okay, peaches, everything—everything
is under control.

The activist RIPS his mask off for a better look.

ACTIVIST #3

SAVAGE?!!!

BOBBY

RADKE?!!!

Radke turns back to Amber.

RADKE

I know you. I seen you in the stands. You're
his kid! Well now you get to see your daddy
off...

(to Bobby)

Say your goodbyes, Savage!!!

*The assailant FIRES off several rounds from his handgun. They hit Bobby directly in the
torso. Amber SCREAMS. Bobby FALLS.*

AMBER

No!!!

*Amber KICKS Radke between the legs. A bound Nathan jumps to his feet and DRIVES a
shoulder into the man. Sal BUSTS through the door with gun drawn.*

EXT – 4TH FLOOR ROOM WINDOW

Amber runs up to the window, peers down, and GASPS...

AMBER

Daddy?

EXT – GROUND OUTSIDE SCIENCE BUILDING

*Bobby is coming to. Things are fuzzy and obscure. Floating above him is a vague outline of a
man. He is surrounded in mist and standing at a gate.*

BOBBY

Saint Peter, that you?

The image resembles Abe. Bobby smiles deliriously.

BOBBY

Say, you look just like my friend Abe.

ABE

Bobby? You're not dead, guy. They were paint balls. You were shot with paint balls.

BOBBY

Huh?

Bobby raises himself to an elbow and realizes his fall was broken by a large air mattress. He looks at his chest to find green paint splattered on his shirt. Then he looks up to find Abe on a gated man-lift, directing some of the rescue efforts.

BOBBY

I'm not dead?

NEGOTIATOR

Incredible fall, fella. Say, you have the detonator? We need to disable the explosives.

BOBBY

Yah, sure.

Bobby reaches into a pocket to pull out shards of plastic. A weak smile plays on his face.

BOBBY

Uh, oh. I might have crushed it?

NEGOTIATOR

EVERYONE DOWN, it's gonna blow!!!

Everyone JUMPS to the floor. A myriad of FIREWORKS start to go off – colorful fountains, oozing snakes, and spinning, fizzing, and vibrating ones. Finally a series a small KA-BOOMS sound and all is calm. People lift their heads and look round. One last delayed POP goes off.

EXT – ARREST SCENE OUTSIDE SCIENCE BUILDING

Mark, Abe, and Bobby walk up to Radke and his cohorts. They are handcuffed and unmasked. Bobby lifts one of the masks from the floor to read the embroidered word PICL.

BOBBY

Hey, Radke, tell me something.

(pointing to mask)

Does this mean I caught you in a pickle after all?

The guys laugh it up. Radke turns to his accomplices and KICKS them.

RADKE

Didn't I tell you it was a stupid name?!!!

Sal joins them, putting his arms around Abe and Bobby's shoulders.

SAL

Gotta admit, we weren't too bad for a bunch of mangy ole' Bulldogs, huh?

Mark looks over to see Amber and Nathan embracing.

MARK

And I have a feeling the bulldog tradition may yet endure.

They look over to witness Amber and Nathan kissing. A sudden horde of reporters rushes over to SWARM Sal. They pepper him with questions and jostle him.

SAL

Son of a...!!!

The reporters recoil in fear. Sal glances over to see Bobby wagging a finger at him.

BOBBY

Remember...

Sal gives Bobby a look of "Yeah-yeah-yeah," and turns back to the reporters.

SAL

Bye-gosh, bye-golly, guys, take it easy.

Besides...Bobby here is the real hero.

Bobby's eyes go WIDE as saucers. The crews redirect their attention at him, sticking microphones of every shape and size in his face. He's lambasted with questions about being a full-fledged hero and his reason for being in New York City.

BOBBY

Whoa—whoa—whoa. Hero? Look, I'm no hero.

Bobby appears overwhelmed. He puts his hands up to quiet them but still they rage with questions. Finally, he places two fingers between his lips and WHISTLES loud as he can. Silence. He gathers his thoughts.

BOBBY

You know this...whole thing, this trip to New York, it started as an attempt to find a dear friend of ours.

BOBBY (cont'd)

(looks over at Sal)

Somewhere along the line though, it became a little more than that; a sort of discovery if you will. Now you folks want to call us heroes, that's up to you. What I am really is your average every day guy...and you know what? I'm perfectly okay with that...and you should be too—all right with who you are. Hero?

(contemplative)

I think we all have a little bit of hero in us and a purpose for being here. I'm reminded of something I read just last night. It said something like, '...all things work together for good when we understand God has a will for our lives.' I think that says it all really.

EXT – NEW YORK CITY STREET (DAY)

Several choppers fly overhead. The media is out in force. People everywhere. Horns are BLARING. Ticker tape is falling and everyone is smiles and waves.

EXT – NEW YORK STREET CORNER

The redheaded field reporter Sharon is standing in front of the procession.

REPORTER SHARON

It's a splendid day in New York history. As you can see the festivities are underway to celebrate and honor four most unlikely heroes.

Her words fade and the parade comes into full view with Mark, Abe, Bobby, and Sal as the honorees. Their wives are also present, and Amber is beside Nathan.

An elderly man and woman FIGHT their way through the crowd to where Sal's vehicle is passing. Suddenly we hear SCREAMING and SHOUTS of "MIJO!" Sal looks in their direction and recognition comes over his face.

SAL

Ama? Papa? Stop the car! Stop the car!

Sal rushes out to meet them and the three of them EMBRACE like there's no tomorrow. More members of the Pacheco family appear—all overcome with emotion.

MAMA

Aye dios! Mi hijo!!!

The gang are all smiles. Bobby nods once to Mark and shakes his hand vigorously.

BOBBY

That reminds me.

Bobby looks into one of the cameras and shouts.

BOBBY

Hi, Jean! We miss you. Wishin' you were here.

CUT TO:

INT – BOBBY'S LIVING ROOM

A slab of baloney is thrown at the television set. It SMACKS the screen and sticks. From a hole in the meat, Bobby's face is visible. He frowns and points at the camera.

BOBBY

You talkin' to me?

Fozzy ventures up to the screen and stands on his hind legs, gazing at the image of his master. He then looks over his shoulder and appears to SMILE, tongue and all.

EXT – JAIL FACILITY / COURTYARD (DAY)

Radke appears to be pouting, hands in pockets, quietly strolling the grounds amidst a sea of thugs, crooks, criminals and gang-bangers. Something CATCHES his eye. He looks up to see a Scarlet Snapback Butterfly fluttering in the yard.

RADKE

Hey–hey, the Scarlet!!! It's back, people!

He is beside himself with elation and CHASES recklessly after it. In so doing he KNOCKS over a table where a card game is taking place. The cards go FLYING in all directions.

RADKE

Sorry.

He keeps the butterfly in sight and unceremoniously STEPS on the fingers of an inmate tossing dice. We hear BONES CRACKING.

RADKE

Careful, I almost tripped over you.

The injured man cradles his hand to his body and lets out a silent scream. Radke continues on his path of destruction, BUMPING into somebody and KNOCKING over his drink.

RADKE

‘Scuse me.

The goliath of a man looks down to see the drink spilled all over his chest. Still Radke continues, this time leaping for the insect. Just out of reach, Radke braces himself against someone and leaps again and again. Unfortunately, he has GRABBED a pair of shorts worn by a man doing pull-ups on a bar. The man’s trousers are at his ankles, thanks to Radke. The face of the violated inmate contorts into a fit of rage and embarrassment.

RADKE

Whoops. Sorry, fella.

End of the line. Radke comes up to a dead end in the yard and the butterfly simply floats off.

RADKE

Son of a gun!!!

Suddenly, Radke gets a look on his face and looks over his shoulder. There standing before him is an army of very angry looking inmates. They begin to ROLL UP their sleeves, CRACK their knuckles, and ADVANCE...

THE END

As closing credits are shown, we see the following snapshots of the cast as seen through Bobby’s .35 mm camera: the guys at Yankee Stadium, action shots of the wrestling match, the first activist caught by surprise, Bobby changing into the skateboarder’s clothes, Bobby lying on the rescue mattress, etc., all played to the song “New York, New York”.