

# RIDE

Written by

Jeremy Ungar

Exile Entertainment  
732 El Medio Ave. Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

**FADE IN:**

**INT. GARAGE - EVENING**

We're engulfed in darkness, then see a single light:

A circle of rotating white lines - an iPhone booting up.

We HEAR a garage door raising. Our eyes adjust to the Los Angeles evening light. The streets are a blur, the only thing we can make out is the phone, which rests at the center of the frame - mounted to a 2005 Prius' dashboard.

APP (O.S.)

*Let's get started. Drive safely.*

**CLOSE ON THE SCREEN**

The welcome screen of an APP. It reads: **RYDE**

And under it, a slogan:

***A stranger is just a friend U haven't met yet...***

The app finishes loading. An alert BEEPS:

APP (O.S.)

*Hello, James. You have one new  
RYDE request.*

JESSICA S. needs a RYDE!

Above the text is a selfie of a girl in her mid-twenties.

**BACK TO:**

The driver, JAMES (28, handsome and exhausted), sips a black iced coffee and stares at the picture.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Surprised no one's jumped on this.

**CLOSE ON THE SCREEN**

James swipes ACCEPT with his thumb.

APP (O.S.)

*RYDE accepted. Let's ride.*

**CUT TO:**

**TITLE CARD:**

**RIDE**

**CUT TO:**

**PRIUS POV**

We rest on the front bumper of the car as it ZOOMS down Sunset, heading into Los Feliz.

The lines on the road blur as we speed past MOHAWK BEND, THE LOST KNIGHT, SUNSET JUNCTION.

And the sky grows dark.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

The car pulls up to the corner of Franklin and Harvard.

James looks at the number on a tall brick apartment building.

He sits with the engine idling.

The car's clock ticks forward one minute.

He takes his phone from the cradle and looks at the girl's picture.

JAMES

...and moment of truth.

The door to the apartment building swings open and a figure wearing a long coat approaches the car. She's illuminated only by a smartphone.

He rolls down his window.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Jessica?

JESSICA

That's me.

JAMES

I'm your Ryde.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He unlocks the door. She climbs into the backseat. Her hair spills around her face as she hits the seat. James clearly finds her attractive.

JAMES  
(extending a hand)  
James.

She shakes his hand.

JESSICA  
Nice to meet you.

JAMES  
Would you like a water or some gum?

JESSICA  
Do they make you ask that?

JAMES  
Uh... they do.  
(Silence)  
But in your case, I mean it.

She laughs. It might be out of pity.

She takes out her phone. The sound of a text SENDING.

He puts the car into drive and pulls away from the building.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
So. Where to?

JESSICA  
I'm meeting some friends at a bar called Sassafrass. It's on Vine at Fountain.

JAMES  
I know it.

Silence.

JESSICA  
So, how long have you been driving for these guys?

JAMES  
Couple months. I needed something with a lot of flexibility, so this works really well.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JESSICA

Yeah, that's what I hear.

Silence.

JAMES

How long have you been riding with us?

JESSICA

About six months. I use it a lot. Between parking and wanting to have a couple of drinks...

JAMES

That's cool. I mean I'm not deeply passionate about it or anything, but it's nice to think that because of what I'm doing there are less drunk drivers out there. I mean, not that you'd be doing that or anything.

JESSICA

Everyone in LA drives drunk.

JAMES

Come on, not everyone.

JESSICA

Not regularly, but think about it. Name one person you know for a fact hasn't made a bad call at least once.

They drive on in silence.

APP

*In three hundred feet, make a left turn onto Sunset Boulevard.*

James hits the turn indicator.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Oh... Take Fountain.

James turns off the turn indicator.

JAMES

Mae West fan?

JESSICA

What do you mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMES

There's this great Mae West interview. I think on Johnny Carson or something. Whoever it was asked "What's the fastest way to get into Hollywood?" To which she replied-

JESSICA

"Take Fountain."

Jessica laughs. It's hard to tell if it's genuine or not.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I like that.

Silence.

JESSICA

I like your suit. Do you like moonlight as a limo driver or something?

JAMES

(Through a laugh)

I wish.

(Brief pause)

It was for this thing I had before this.

JESSICA

Wedding?

JAMES

Audition.

JESSICA

You're an actor.

JAMES

Unfortunately.

JESSICA

Can I ask the awful question?

JAMES

What do you mean?

JESSICA

"Oh, you're an actor! Would I have seen you in anything?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JAMES

(with a laugh)

If you had, I wouldn't be driving you to a bar.

JESSICA

Not true! I had a driver the other week who I kept thinking looked so familiar. Turns out he'd been on Dawson's Creek.

JAMES

James Van Der Beek?

JESSICA

(through laughter)

He was a tertiary character. But with six seasons, he'd been on a lot of TV.

JAMES

Well, hopefully my trajectory is going in the other direction.

JESSICA

I could never be an actor. When I was looking for my first job out here, I got turned down once and I was ready to slit my wrists.

JAMES

I just had to realize that getting turned down isn't failure. Not getting auditions is.

JESSICA

And do you get a lot?

JAMES

My agents have been getting better about sending me out.

At this, her demeanor changes visibly. Not in a superficial way, but there's a distinct shift in the car's power dynamic.

JESSICA

Oh, you're repped. Where are you?

JAMES

Abrams.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JESSICA

Wow.

JAMES

They're pretty good. For a while, I had a dry spell - like six months of nothing - but my agent sent me out on what I think was one final Hail Mary pass. I was like inches away from getting dropped. But I booked.

JESSICA

That's fucking awesome! What was it?

JAMES

Not a big deal. It was a guest spot. On *Agents of Shield*.

JESSICA

What are you talking about? That's a huge fucking deal.

JAMES

I was a henchman. I had two lines and took someone's gun.

JESSICA

Still.

JAMES

But I have been going out a lot more since then.

JESSICA

When was this?

JAMES

We shot a couple of weeks ago.

JESSICA

Well, you've gotta let me know when it airs. My roommate's a huge Marvel fan. She'll be so jealous when she finds out a guy who drove me was a villain on *Agents of Shield*.

JAMES

Just a henchman. Haven't graduated to villain yet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JESSICA  
(through a smile)  
Well, I believe in you.

He pulls the car over.

JAMES  
Here we are. Sassafrass.

JESSICA  
That was fast.

JAMES  
When in doubt, take Fountain.

JESSICA  
Hey, can I tip you or something?

JAMES  
We can't accept tips. The app  
takes care of everything.

JESSICA  
Well, I'll be sure to give you  
five stars.

JAMES  
Right back at you.

JESSICA  
Wait, the drivers rate the  
passengers?

JAMES  
Sure.

JESSICA  
What's my rating?

He glances at the phone.

JAMES  
I wouldn't worry about it.

JESSICA  
I'm not leaving this car until you  
tell me.

JAMES  
Three point five.

JESSICA  
Fucking seriously?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

JAMES

It doesn't mean anything.

JESSICA

How do I turn that shit around?

JAMES

Well, you're a five star passenger  
in my book.

JESSICA

Thanks for the ride, James.

She opens the door, then turns back.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Hey, listen. My friends and I are  
just grabbing a couple of drinks.  
Very low key. You should come in  
for a round.

An alert goes off on James' phone.

APP (O.S.)

*Hello, James. You have one new  
RYDE request.*

JAMES

I wish. I've gotta drive.

JESSICA

Suit yourself, but we'll be here  
for the next couple hours. If you  
pick up a big fare, swing by.

JAMES

I'd like that.

She flashes a smile and climbs out of the car,  
unintentionally slamming the door behind her.

He watches her walk into the bar.

A few guys smoking in front check her out as she passes.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Can I have your phone number? This  
is my phone number. Fucking idiot.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - LATER**

He drives down Sunset with the windows down. Listening to overly loud radio. The oldies station.

*Silhouettes* by the Rays.

JAMES

*"...Kisses I could almost taste  
blah-blah-blah..."*

Another alert goes off on his phone.

APP (O.S.)

*Hello, James. You have one new  
RYDE request.*

**CLOSE ON**

The phone's screen. We see a posed picture of a brooding, good looking guy. Underneath the photo is the text:

RYDE REQUEST FROM: BRUNO T.

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

*So, your parents went with  
Bruno...*

**BACK TO:**

James continues down the road. He glances at the phone. Underneath the name, we see five stars illuminated.

JAMES (CONT'D)

*At least people seem to like you.*

...then hits ACCEPT.

APP

*RYDE accepted. Let's ride.*

**CUT TO:****INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

The car pulls up in front of a Spanish-style apartment building in Hancock Park.

The front lawn is littered with articles of clothing. A WIRE-THIN MAN wearing a tight tee shirt and jeans stuffs the clothes into an oversized duffel bag while he smokes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

James looks at the guy. At the picture on his phone.

JAMES

You've gotta be fucking kidding  
me.

James waits. Hoping someone else will come out.

He rolls down the window.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Uh- hey-

BRUNO

(still stuffing  
things into his bag)  
What's up?

JAMES

Are you Bruno?

BRUNO steps towards the car. He takes a long drag on his cigarette. As he does, we see his face illuminated by the ember.

BRUNO

That's me.

He stands there for a second, then something clicks and he snaps into action. Moving forward and spouting a million words a minute.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Oh fuck. That's right, you're my  
Ryde. Of course. Sorry, man I  
didn't think you'd get here so  
soon. Look, shit got a little  
messy, I just have a couple quick  
things to handle, then I'll be  
right with you. Feel free to start  
the meter.

JAMES

That's not how it-

He runs back to his bag, stuffing in various articles of clothing.

JAMES (CONT'D)

-works.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUNO  
(shouting over his  
shoulder)  
I'll just be a minute, man!

Bruno runs across the lawn to grab a few tee shirts  
strewn on a bush.

JAMES  
(through the window)  
Do you need any help?

BRUNO  
What?!

JAMES  
Do you need any help with that?

Bruno comes to an abrupt halt.

BRUNO  
Oh, thanks, man.  
(resuming his  
frenetic activity)  
Don't worry about it, I'm good. Be  
done in a hot sec.

He stuffs a few final things into his duffel, then  
struggles to zip it closed.

He puts on a leather hoodie, picks up the bag and heads  
to the car.

BRUNO (CONT'D)  
Sorry that took so long, man.

He opens the door.

JAMES  
Woah, man. You can't smoke in my  
car.

BRUNO  
Fuck. Of course, so sorry about  
that, brother. Mind if I finish  
this guy? You can start the meter,  
I don't give a shit.

He takes a long drag of his cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Sorry to make you wait. This is a New York pack, so the cigs are really fucking expensive. I know you're thinking I could just get the same fucking cigs here for half the goddamn price but... I don't know what to tell you, I'm a sentimental guy.

He takes another drag.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

You want one?

JAMES

I'm good, man.

BRUNO

Well, come out for a sec. I've got half a cig left. Let's get to know each other.

Reluctantly, James kills the engine, gets out of the car...

**EXT. HANCOCK PARK APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS**

...and closes the door. He stands tall.

BRUNO

Damn. Looking sharp, bro. That a uniform or something?

JAMES

Something like that.

Bruno leans against the side of the Prius.

BRUNO

You've got the meter running, right?

JAMES

That's not really how it works.

BRUNO

Fuck it, I'll throw some extra cash your way. Make it worth your while.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

We're not allowed to accept tips.

BRUNO

I won't tell if you don't.

Silence.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Aren't you gonna offer me a water... or some gum?

JAMES

What?

BRUNO

That's what you guys normally do, isn't it?

JAMES

Uh... Yeah.  
(brief silence)  
Would you like a water?

BRUNO

I'm good for right now, maybe later.

James looks at the duffle bag.

JAMES

You want me to throw that in the trunk for you?

Viscerally, Bruno snaps the bag away.

BRUNO

No, no, no, no, no. I've got it.

Silence.

JAMES

So, where are we going tonight?

BRUNO

Straight to business. I can respect that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He throws the cigarette down on the grass, stomping it out with a leg twist that almost looks like a James Brown move, then opens the passenger seat door and jumps into the car.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

They head towards the bottom of Bruno's street.

JAMES

LAX? Burbank?

(a slight pause)

Don't tell me we're going to Long Beach.

BRUNO

What the fuck are you talking about, man?

JAMES

Airports. Your bag-

BRUNO

Oh, gotcha! No, no, no... Messy breakup. I'm actually not sure where to go right now. I just needed to get out of there.

JAMES

I'm sorry to hear that, man. Breakups are awful.

BRUNO

Yeah. Yeah, my brother, they really are.

They reach an intersection.

JAMES

Alright, Bruno, where are we headed?

BRUNO

Your name's James, right? I mean, that's what it said on the thing.

JAMES

Yeah, that's right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

Ask me again.

JAMES

Ask what again?

BRUNO

"Where to, Bruno?"

JAMES

Uh... alright. Where to?

BRUNO

Home, James. And don't spare the horses!

This gives Bruno a good laugh. James is stoic.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Sorry, man, I couldn't resist. Bet you get that a lot.

JAMES

To be honest, you're the first to make the connection.

BRUNO

Well, that's what my specialty. Making connections.

APP (O.S.)

*Please enter a destination.*

BRUNO

Listen, brother, would it be okay to have you just drive for a second? I kinda need to get my head straight.

JAMES

Look, Bruno-

BRUNO

Just a second. I promise.

James lets out a small sigh and signals to make a right towards La Brea.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I could go for some of that gum if you've got any.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

What?

BRUNO

The gum you mentioned earlier.

James takes a pack from the cup holder between them. He hands it to Bruno, who eagerly snatches it, popping two pieces into his mouth. Chewing vigorously.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

That's better.

They drive on. SILENCE. The SMACKING of Bruno's gum.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Listen, I don't want to put you out, but would you mind taking me a couple different places? Long trip for you and I'll throw some cash your way on top.

JAMES

Look man, I'm really sorry about this, but I don't have a long ride in me tonight. And like I said, we can't accept tips.

BRUNOS

And like I said, I won't tell if you don't.

JAMES

That's nice of you and everything, man... but I have somewhere that I have to be in like an hour so...

BRUNO

An hour?! Oh man, you wouldn't have been able to make LAX to save your life. Look, brother, couple hours, I'll throw in a hundred bucks on top of the fare. Sound good?

Silence. Bruno pulls out a massive *Comme des Garçons* wallet and produces a crisp hundred.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

What, do you need a minute to think about it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMES

Yeah... sure, man. That'll work.

Bruno claps his hands together and hands over the hundred.

BRUNO

Alright. Let's get fucking rolling! First, I'm feeling majorly down so I'm gonna need a massive pickmeup. Do you know this place called EREHWON? It's nowhere backwards.

JAMES

I'm not sure-

BRUNO

It's a market by the Grove, Beverly and Stanley. South side.

JAMES

Alright.

BRUNO

They do this fucking coffee there. It's fucking amazing. It was started by this guy who has this website and he was-

JAMES

You want coffee right now?

BRUNO

Yeah, man. Only way to go is up. You got any paper for this gum?

JAMES

Uh, sure.

James fumbles for a piece of paper. He finds a receipt.

BRUNO

Thanks.

Bruno spits his saliva-covered gum into the receipt, then gingerly places it in a cup holder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Anyway, this coffee was started by this guy with this website, and he was hiking through the Himalayas, and he was at the point of exhaustion, and these monks gave him this tea, and guess what they put in the tea?

(silence)

Yak butter! Fucking butter from fucking yaks. So he got back to the States and tried all kinds of shit to replicate this - the tea totally revitalized him on the mountain. He'd been exhausted, just totally spent, and after drinking this fucking yak tea, he felt like he could hike for miles. So he tried time and again to replicate it and after months of failure, guess what the key was?

JAMES

What was it?

BRUNO

Grass. It had to be grass fed butter. The stuff is ambrosia, bro. Dude made millions or some shit.

Silence.

JAMES

That's cool.

BRUNO

You want one? I'll get you one!

JAMES

No, man, I don't really drink coffee this late-

BRUNO

Why? It make you feel weird? You know why? Toxins! Most coffee is full of toxins from the mold that grows on the beans. You know a huge number of people are allergic to mold and have no idea? But this coffee is lab tested. They take out all the mold toxins.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

James makes a left, and pulls the car over at the corner.

JAMES

We're here.

BRUNO

Cool. Let me finish. Where was I? They take out the toxins... AND THEN they brew it as a pour over, which they combine it with the grass-fed butter and this special fortified coconut oil... in a fucking vitamix! The vitamix element is key - by the way - don't let people take you for a ride with second-rate blenders. If done properly, I defy any fucking Intelligentsia barista to make a creamier or better latte than the one I am about to buy you.

(a beat)

You down?

(silence)

Dude, you down?

JAMES

Sure, man... I'm down.

Overwhelmed with excitement, in a frenzy, Bruno bounds out of the car and into the market.

BRUNO

Be right back, my brother.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

James drives east on Third with Bruno riding shotgun.

Simultaneously, they sip coffees in silence.

JAMES

This is seriously yak butter?

BRUNO

You like it?

JAMES

I actually do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

FUCK YEAH! Wait till you see how  
it makes you FEEL, my man!

JAMES

Where we headed, Bruno?

BRUNO

I want to see if I can crash with  
a buddy. Wilshire and Westlake.

\*  
\*

JAMES

I'm gonna be honest with you, I  
have no idea where that is.

BRUNO

Shouldn't you know this city like  
the back of your hand?

JAMES

I can maps it.

BRUNO

I'm fucking with you! East on  
Wilshire, just past MacArthur  
Park. I'll be your Sherpa.

JAMES

MacArthur Park? Isn't that kinda  
sketchy?

BRUNO

What can I say? I hang out with  
some sketchy people!

This sends Bruno into a fit of laughter that James can't  
quite figure out.

As the laughter subsides, the pair are left in silence.  
They sip their coffees.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

So what's your story, man? I  
mean... what do you do?

(a pause)

Shit, I hate that question. It's  
like the only way we can get to  
know each other anymore is by  
asking about career aspirations.  
But in your case I am curious:  
what do you do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

I, uh- drive for Ryde.

BRUNO

No. That's what you're doing. No one wants to do that.

JAMES

Uh... thanks?

BRUNO

Don't pretend you're offended. Truths don't offend. Now are you gonna sit there and lie to me, or are you gonna tell me who you are?

Silence.

JAMES

I'm an... actor.

A brief silence. Then Bruno explodes with LAUGHTER.

BRUNO

Fuck, that's so LA man. Of course! You're an actor. Jesus that's awful.

(he looks at James' face)

Oh, no-no-no- don't take it like that! I'm sure you're amazing. It's just... this fucking world, man. We take artists, and we make them drive our cars.

(a beat)

Of the stage or screen?

(silence)

You've just told me you want to perform for a living, don't clam up now.

JAMES

I went to school for theater, but I'm out here auditioning for TV. Commercials. Whatever.

BRUNO

Bet you'd like to do movies though, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMES

I'd like to do whatever I can  
book. I'm not picky. I just want  
to do the thing I came here to do.

BRUNO

You're a THESPIAN. Master  
Thespian. You got any monologues  
you could reel off?

JAMES

Come on, man.

BRUNO

Seriously. I'm not fucking with  
you. I legitimately love theatre.  
And there's never anything good  
here. You know Shakespeare?

JAMES

I might've heard of him.

BRUNO

Do a monologue.

JAMES

(through laughter)  
No.

BRUNO

Dude, do a monologue.

JAMES

I am not gonna just reel off a  
Shakespearian monologue right now.

BRUNO

I get it. You're not my monkey.  
Totally respect that.  
(silence)  
Fifty bucks.

JAMES

What?

BRUNO

I will pay you an extra fifty  
dollars to do a monologue. From  
Shakespeare.  
(silence)  
A hundred. Let's see whose monkey  
you are.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JAMES

Don't fuck with me, man.

BRUNO

Dead serious. A hundred bucks.  
Think of it as a favor to me.  
*Richard III*. That's my favorite.

JAMES

I don't know *Richard III*.  
(long silence)  
I know *Richard II*.

BRUNO

Now we're fucking talking! Let's  
hear that shit!

James takes a sip of his coffee. He puts it back in the cup holder. He takes a deep breath. Lets it out.

JAMES

*Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs;  
Make dust our paper and with rainy eyes  
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth,  
Let's choose executors and talk of wills:  
And yet not so, for what can we bequeath  
Save our deposed bodies to the ground?*

James hits the turn indicator, and changes lanes.

JAMES (CONT'D)

*Our lands, our lives and all are Bolingbroke's,  
And nothing can we call our own but death  
And that small model of the barren earth  
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.*

He checks the rear view mirror, swallows hard, continues:

JAMES (CONT'D)

*For God's sake, let us sit upon the ground  
And tell sad stories of the death of kings;*

Bruno listen's raptly. He wipes something away from underneath his eye.

JAMES (CONT'D)

*How some have been deposed; some slain in war,  
Some haunted by the ghosts they have deposed;  
Some poison'd by their wives: some sleeping kill'd;  
All murder'd: for within the hollow crown  
That rounds the mortal temples of a king  
Keeps Death his court and there the antic sits,  
Scoffing his state and grinning at his pomp,  
(MORE)*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JAMES (CONT'D)

*Allowing him a breath, a little scene,  
To monarchize, be fear'd and kill with looks,  
Infusing him with self and vain conceit,  
As if this flesh which walls about our life,  
Were brass impregnable, and humour'd thus  
Comes at the last and with a little pin  
Bores through his castle wall, and farewell king!*

He hits the turn indicator again, changing lanes.

JAMES (CONT'D)

*Cover your heads and mock not flesh and blood  
With solemn reverence: throw away respect,  
Tradition, form and ceremonious duty,  
For you have but mistook me all this while:  
I live with bread like you, feel want,  
Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,  
How can you say to me, I am a king?*

Silence. Bruno breaks into raucous applause.

BRUNO

You are a king! You're the fucking  
king, man. You should be booking  
all over the place with that shit.  
Money well spent.

He reaches into his wallet. Hands James another hundred.

JAMES

Wow, man. I don't know what to  
say. You liked it?

BRUNO

I liked it? You're a fucking  
artist. That shit comes from the  
heart. It really does.

JAMES

It means a lot to hear you say  
that, man. It's one that's really  
close to me. I used it to audition  
for school and - this is gonna  
sound dumb - but when I think  
about what I really want out of  
life, I just- I just don't wanna  
die not having played Richard II.

BRUNO

Broadway?

JAMES

Any stage'll do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

BRUNO

I don't wanna be that asshole who says 'would I have seen you in anything?' But... would I have seen you in anything?

JAMES

Well, I uh- actually just shot a guest spot on Agents of Shield.

BRUNO

No fucking way! I bet you were a supervillan.

JAMES

(through laughter)  
Nah, just a henchman. I - uh - haven't graduated to villain yet.

BRUNO

We'll get you there, buddy.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

They arrive at Wilshire and Westlake.

Bruno is very quiet. He sips his coffee.

BRUNO

Turn up here.

James does so.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Halfway up the block, pull over on your left.

James pulls over. He puts on the flashers.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Flashers off. Just chill. Be out in two minutes. Kill the lights. Keep the engine running.

JAMES

Everything okay?

BRUNO

Totally. My buddy's just in a weird neighborhood. I get nervous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

So... Do you want me to drop you here?

BRUNO

No-no-no! I mean- maybe. I just need to see if I can crash with my buddy. If he's not here, I might need to roll somewhere else.

JAMES

Cool. Should I end the fare then? I mean, you can call another-

BRUNO

Look man, I don't even know if he's home. I don't wanna be chilling out here waiting to see if I can get another Ryde.

He takes out his wallet and pulls out a bill.

BRUNO

Here's another hundred.

James hesitates.

BRUNO

Take it, man. I trust you. If it's all good, I'll give you the go ahead, if not, we'll roll to my other buddy's.

JAMES

Uh-

BRUNO

Back in two minutes, brother. Promise.

He opens the door to the car, and delicately closes it, making as little sound as possible. Then stands tall and walks across the street.

Once Bruno's out of view, James locks the doors.

He looks around the neighborhood. It's dark. A block without streetlights. A figure - a homeless man - slowly pushes a shopping cart down the middle of the street.

James takes his phone out of the cradle and makes a swipe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He plugs a headset into the phone. It RINGS, RINGS, RINGS.

JAMES

Hello?

(muffled voice)

Hey, man. No, I'm good. It's all good. I know it's late for you... Yeah. It has been a while... I'm driving for Ryde. I wanted to ask you something.

Suddenly, a LOUD BANG. James looks out the window.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hold on a second, Jason.

A figure slowly passes his driver's side window. A HOMELESS MAN pushing a shopping cart. The cart rolls over a bump in the road, making a similar, but softer BANG.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Sorry about that. I'm here. Just when you were driving... Did anyone ever like ask you out?

(muffled response)

Yeah, like a girl, man. She was beautiful. We really hit it off.

(muffled response)

I wouldn't bring it up, but I guess I'm still thinking about her.

Bruno BOLTS across the street, he has a small bag tucked under one arm.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Shit, Jay, I gotta go. Nah, forget it. Talk soon. Love you, too.

Bruno goes to open the door. It's locked.

BRUNO

Come on, come on!

James unlocks the doors. Bruno dives into the car.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Let's get the fuck out of Dodge.

James goes to put his phone in the cradle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Do that from the road, please.  
We've gotta make moves.

JAMES

Sure. Sure thing.

He puts the car into drive and pulls away.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

They drive west on Wilshire, past MacArthur Park.

BRUNO

The park's beautiful this time of  
night. Filled with homeless  
addicts, but beautiful  
nonetheless.

JAMES

Where we headed?

BRUNO

Keep going west. I'll figure it  
out.

They stop at a red light. James looks at Bruno.

JAMES

You've got something on your  
shirt, man.

BRUNO

(glancing down)  
Oh. Damn it. I used to get these  
terrible nosebleeds as a kid. Cold  
weather brings them back.

JAMES

You need a tissue?

The light turns green. Bruno rubs his nose.

BRUNO

I'm all good.

JAMES

Did you hear something weird back  
there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

This neighborhood is nothing but weird noises. I grew up out here.

JAMES

MacArthur Park?

BRUNO

Nah. LA native, though. There are fewer and fewer of us. We're a dying breed. Like unicorns or some shit. I went to high school here. I was even in a gang.

JAMES

You're kidding.

BRUNO

Not what you're thinking. It was a rich kids' gang. Our parents bought us Brazilian Jiu Jitsu lessons which we used to defend ourselves... from kids who owed us money.

JAMES

You dealt weed?

BRUNO

(through laughter)  
I'm not proud of it, man. It all seems ridiculous now. Guess what we called ourselves?

JAMES

I have no idea.

BRUNO

The Jits Crew.  
(belly laugh)  
Our parents bought us Jiu Jitsu lessons so we called ourselves The Jits Crew.

JAMES

(laughing with him)  
Remind me not to piss you off.

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Listen, man. I want to apologize for earlier. Making you miss your thing.

JAMES

What thing?

BRUNO

Thing. The thing you had to do an hour after you picked me up.

JAMES

Oh, funny. I'd forgotten all about it.

BRUNO

Well, sincerely, thanks for missing it for me, whatever it was.

(silence)

What was it?

JAMES

It's not important.

Bruno leans forward.

BRUNO

Oh shit! That means it definitely was important. What was it?

JAMES

Just this girl...

BRUNO

FUCK ME! No three words in the contemporary English language are more telling, more loaded, more epic in scope than: "Just this girl..." Fucking take that, William Shakespeare.

JAMES

It really wasn't a big deal.

BRUNO

You give me the details. I'll tell you if it was a big deal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMES

Before I picked you up, I took my first fare of the night and it was this girl. And I brace myself for the usual attempt-to-turn-an-awkward-conversation-into-witty-banter. But this is different.

BRUNO

Did you fuck her?

JAMES

What?

BRUNO

It's a joke. Apparently not a very good one.

JAMES

No, I get it. But anyway, I'd never had this happen before, but we kinda clicked. I really liked talking and at the end of the ride she invited me to meet up with her and her friends for drinks.

BRUNO

Fuck, man! That's the dream! Cabbie gets invited out by hot passenger. What the fuck are you doing here with me? Why didn't you go right then?

JAMES

Well, I needed to make some cash and I got this parking ticket.

BRUNO

Tell me you got her number.

JAMES

She was gone before I could.

BRUNO

Bullshit! You hesitated.

JAMES

I didn't.

BRUNO

Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JAMES

Where next?

BRUNO

To the bar!

JAMES

What do you mean?

BRUNO

The bar! The bar where the girl  
said she's gonna be. Where was it?

JAMES

We don't need to.

BRUNO

You caught feelings. We're fucking  
going.

JAMES

I think it was just a passing-

Bruno leans forward with murderous intensity.

BRUNO

Listen, you fucking coward, I am  
not gonna be the force in your  
night that stopped you from  
meeting up with this girl. Who  
knows? Maybe you'll kiss her  
tonight. Maybe you'll fuck her  
tonight. Maybe you'll knock her up  
and nine months from now you'll  
get married to appease her family  
and I'll be the best fucking man  
at your fucking wedding!

JAMES

Uh... can I take a pass on that one?

BRUNO

Now you've hurt my feelings. But  
more importantly you're gonna hurt  
that girl's feelings. She's  
counting on you.

JAMES

She couldn't have thought-

BRUNO

Are you kidding? Think of the  
world we live in!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

No girl asks a guy somewhere she doesn't want him to be. That's just not how it's done. Right now she's in there. Sitting. Talking to her friends. Faking a laugh here and there. 'Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha.' But periodically, she's glancing at the door. All the time, in the back of her mind, she's waiting for someone to walk through.

JAMES

Come on.

BRUNO

That someone is you, my dude. That someone is you.

JAMES

She was at Sassafrass. But-

BRUNO

Alright!

JAMES

But I don't even know if they'll be there anymore.

BRUNO

Just give her a call.

JAMES

I don't have her number.

BRUNO

Yes, you do.

JAMES

What?

BRUNO

In the app. Pretend she forgot something.

JAMES

You're kidding.

BRUNO

Dead fucking serious man. She won't know. She'll think they're someone else's... sunglasses or whateverthefuck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JAMES

Bruno, that's really crossing a line.

BRUNO

You're god damned right it is.

James picks up the phone.

CUT TO:

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

The Prius pulls up in front of the bar. It idles.

BRUNO

Here's the plan: I'll stay with the car. You run in. Walk directly up to her. No hesitation. Give a polite hello to her friends, but then ignore them. And then, very directly, ask her if she wants to come with you and your buddy (me) to a hot tub in Malibu.

JAMES

She'll never go for that.

BRUNO

Tell her... that sometimes if we follow our impulses incredible things can happen.

JAMES

I'm a complete stranger.

Bruno picks up the phone. He points to the RYDE slogan:

BRUNO

*"A stranger is just a friend you haven't met yet."*

JAMES

We're going to a hot tub in Malibu?

BRUNO

You're goddamn right! Now get in there and bring back a beautiful woman.

James looks at a street sign.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

It's a tow away zone.

BRUNO

Leave the keys with me.

JAMES

What do you think I'm crazy?

BRUNO

Dude, the app has my card number, I couldn't pull anything if I wanted to. It'd charge me for a car. Besides, you trust me, right?

A silence. James opens the door.

JAMES

Want me to see if she has like a hot friend or something?

BRUNO

Absolutely not. This night is about you.

James gets out of the car, closing the door behind him, we follow...

**EXT. FRONT OF THE BAR - CONTINUOUS**

...as he makes his way through a small crowd in front of the bar. He shows his ID to the bouncer, is waved inside...

**INT. A BAR IN HOLLYWOOD - CONTINUOUS**

...and walks through the entrance. He pushes through throngs of people.

There's no sign of Jessica, but it'd be hard to find anyone.

James walks to the bar and leans in. It's slammed with drinkers desperately trying to place their order.

BARTENDER

What can I get you, brother?

RANDOM DUDE (O.S.)

The fuck, man? I've been waiting for like fifteen minutes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

Oh no, I'm just looking for-

JESSICA (O.S.)

You came!

From behind, a hand lands on James' shoulder. Jessica, a little sloppy, spins him around.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

I really didn't think you were gonna make it.

JAMES

It's been a super-bizarre night.

JESSICA

Let's get you a drink.

JAMES

I'm actually still working.

JESSICA

Then why'd you come?

James looks down for a second.

JAMES

I really liked talking to you.

JESSICA

I liked talking to you, too.

JAMES

I mean, I think it's random as fuck for me to have come back to find you, and the last thing I want to do is be one of those smarmy Ryde drivers who manages to get a girl's phone number, then-

JESSICA

I don't think you're smarmy.

JAMES

Well, I make a good first impression.

JESSICA

Are we gonna have a drink or what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

To be totally honest, I did kinda have an agenda in coming back.

JESSICA

If you have an exciting investment opportunity, I think I'll pass.

JAMES

(channeling Bruno)

I know this is super random, but sometimes, if we follow our impulses, incredible things can happen.

JESSICA

I know exactly what you mean.

JAMES

I made a buddy tonight and he invited me to this hot tub in Malibu. And I want you to come.

JESSICA

A buddy?

JAMES

His girlfriend left him and he's kinda piecing things back together. But he seems chill.

JESSICA

I mean the whole situation doesn't sound un-shady, but as long as you think he's chill...

JAMES

You're in?!

JESSICA

Come on. You seem like a nice guy, but I don't know you.

JAMES

The app tracks where we are at all times. Text your friends that I'm with you.

JESSICA

You're serious.

JAMES

Completely.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LUCY (O.S.)

Jess, aren't you gonna introduce  
us to your new friend?

A drunk girl in her mid-twenties stumbles to the bar.

JESSICA

You okay, Lucy?

LUCY

He's handsome.

JAMES

Uh- Thank you?

LUCY

Shut up. You know you're hot.

JESSICA

Lucy-

LUCY

Are we gonna have another round or  
what?

JESSICA

I think you're good for now, Luce.

Lucy leans into the bar. She looks up and down for the  
bartender.

LUCY

Helloooo...

JESSICA

I'm sorry-

LUCY

Don't apologize, Jess. Your friend  
doesn't mind. Do you?

JAMES

If anything I'm jealous of you.

LUCY

(through a laugh)  
Charming to boot. What'd you open  
with?

JAMES

What do you mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

LUCY

Jess hates talking to strangers.  
How'd you swing it?

JESSICA

Well, We had met before.

LUCY

You're shitting me. Are you the  
guy from that drink and draw  
thing?

JESSICA

No, he's not, Luce.

JAMES

Drink and draw?

JESSICA

Actually, James was my Ryde to the  
bar tonight.

LUCY

Your ride?

JAMES

It's really more of a side gig.

LUCY

You're fucking with me, right?

JAMES

Scout's honor.

LUCY

You invited your driver into the  
bar? Where were you all this time?

JAMES

Actually, I came back.

LUCY

Okay, that's just creepy.

JESSICA

Lucy!

JAMES

No, that's what I said.

JESSICA

Actually, you said smarmy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

LUCY

You're not smarmy. But you are a little creepy.

JAMES

Ah, come on!

LUCY

I don't make the rules, you followed a girl into the bar where you dropped her off!

JESSICA

I invited him.

LUCY

It's just unprofessional.

JAMES

Maybe I should let you guys have your night. Jess, I'd like to-

JESSICA

No. I'm really sorry James, my friend's had too much to drink and she's not normally like this.

RANDOM DUDE

Yo. I'm so sorry, I like never do this, but could I get you a drink?

LUCY

Well, I like never do this, but sure.

JESSICA

I'm really sorry.

JAMES

It's all good, I can relate. If you want the truth, I'm a total lightweight.

Jessica lets out a laugh.

JAMES (CONT'D)

It's literally embarrassing.

JESSICA

Well, I hope you don't get that sloppy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JAMES

We'll see how the night goes.

JESSICA

Where did you say that hot tub was again?

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - SIMULTANEOUS**

Bruno sits in the car, in front of the bar. He glances at the door that James just walked through. Then looks to the dash.

Bruno hits the ignition and the Prius just barely purrs to life. He hits the gas and starts driving.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - MOMENTS LATER**

Bruno pulls the car into an alleyway. He jumps out of the drivers seat, and opens the back passengers side door.

He reaches onto the side of the door and flips a switch. Then slams the door, walks around the car and does the same thing.

He tries the handle. Then jumps into the driver's seat.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - MOMENTS LATER**

Bruno pulls towards the front of the bar.

**THROUGH THE PASSENGER WINDOW:**

We can see a frantic James and a slightly intoxicated Jessica pacing on the sidewalk.

Bruno rolls down the window as he approaches.

BRUNO

Dude, where's your car?

JAMES

Not fucking cool, Bruno!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JESSICA

Is this the guy?

JAMES

I can't believe you pulled that  
shit, man!

Bruno leans across the passengers seat and opens the  
door.

BRUNO

Cops were gonna tow you, brother.  
I had to make a call.

JESSICA

Is this your friend?

JAMES

(a whisper)  
That's fucking bullshit.

BRUNO

Dude. Look over there.

Across the street we see a car getting towed. Its bumper  
bends as the truck lifts it up.

JAMES

Fuck me.

BRUNO

A 'thank you' would be nice.

JESSICA

Hey.  
(James turns to her)  
Is this the guy you were telling  
me about?

JAMES

Yeah. Yeah, this is him.  
(a beat)  
Are you sure you still wanna come?

CUT TO:

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

Bruno drives down Sunset at a speed that James isn't  
entirely comfortable with. Jessica sits in the backseat,  
oblivious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

R. Kelly's *Ignition (Remix)* plays on the radio.

JESSICA

Oh my god, this song is amazing.

BRUNO

It's a mix. James still burns mix CDs.

JAMES

(embarrassed)

Well, my phone doesn't connect-

JESSICA

That's fucking adorable.

BRUNO

So for those of us without an app, what is your name, my dear?

JESSICA

Jess.

(a beat)

What's yours?

BRUNO

Bruno.

JESSICA

(through drunk  
laughter)

Your parents went with Bruno?!

BRUNO

It's a sweet name!

JAMES

I'm sorry man, but that's exactly what I thought.

Jessica looks at Bruno. He has a cigarette behind one ear.

JESSICA

Hey, Bruno. I never do this, but I would totally have one of those right now.

BRUNO

Oh my god! You're one of those self-hating smokers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUNO

You want a cig? Go for it. Just don't apologize for it.

He takes it from his ear, and places it in his mouth.

BRUNO

These are New York cigs, so they basically cost their weight in gold-

JAMES

Bruno-

BRUNO

Now I know you're thinking I could just buy-

JAMES

Bruno-

BRUNO

Yes, James?

JAMES

You can't smoke in my car.

BRUNO

Oh, come on. It's for Jess.

JESSICA

You know, I don't even need-

Bruno flicks his lighter, it ignites...

BRUNO

Don't worry about it.

...he holds the flame to the cigarette making a bright, glowing ember.

BRUNO

We'll crack a window.

The window rolls down and Bruno hits a turn indicator.

BRUNO

The end of Fountain. Betty Davis served us well.

JESSICA

Oh my god.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMES

Uh, Bruno, I got you on this one:  
it's Mae West who said Take  
Fountain.

BRUNO

Bullshit.

JAMES

I swear. That is a Mae West quote.

JESSICA

James told me the whole story  
earlier. To tell you the truth I  
kinda thought he was a weirdo-

JAMES

Oh really? So weird that you  
invited me into the bar?

JESSICA

What? I'm a weirdo too.

BRUNO

Yeah, we're all beautiful weirdos,  
but it's Bette Fucking Davis. I'd  
bet you anything.

JAMES

I don't wanna bet.

BRUNO

Look it up.

JESSICA

If it'll get you boys to shut up.

BRUNO

Scouts honor.

We hear typing on the phone.

JAMES

Moment of truth.

BRUNO

We got baited breath here, Jess.

JESSICA

Hold on. It's loading.

The screen flashes brighter, illuminating her face in the  
rear view mirror

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JESSICA

Sorry, James.

JAMES

You're fucking kidding me.

JESSICA

"Legend has it that when the famous Bette Davis was being interviewed on a talk show, she was asked what advice she has for actors trying to make it in Hollywood. Her response: 'Take Fountain.'" according to [takefountainblog.wordpress.com](http://takefountainblog.wordpress.com)

JAMES

Your source is some dude's wordpress? I demand a recount.

BRUNO

(through laughter)  
You're lucky we didn't bet.

Bruno puts a hand on the radio, turning it to FM. It's the beginning of a song. The *Four Seasons*.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

FUCK YES!  
(singing along)  
...*Oh what a night!*

JESSICA

You've actually got a nice voice.

BRUNO

Everyone should know how to sing. I think it's the way all of us - as human beings - were meant to express ourselves. I mean, without a voice, what do you got?

JESSICA

I'm a singer.

BRUNO

I could tell right away.

JAMES

I'd really appreciate it if you slowed down, Bruno.

He swerves the car to the side of the road.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BRUNO (CONT'D)

You guys should dance!

JAMES

What?

BRUNO

Ask her to dance, James. Right here. Right now.

They both hesitate.

BRUNO

Oh come on. It's not like you'll look back on this day and regret dancing in the median of Sunset on your first date.

JESSICA

Oh, is this a date, James?

James blushes slightly.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You gonna ask me to dance or what?

He lets out a breath, opens his door...

**EXT. CENTER MEDIAN SUNSET BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS**

...and climbs out of the car. He opens Jessica's backseat door and takes her by the hand.

JAMES

May I have this dance?

She smiles.

JESSICA

You most certainly may.

PEG swells and they begin dancing. To Bruno's surprise, James is good. He spins Jessica, then dips her.

Bruno gets out of the car, applauding. He takes a long drag on his cig, letting it out through a genuine smile.

Jess is a little drunk and stumbles in the dance, but every time she falters, James catches her in a dip or a twirl. And she smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Peg begins to fade. They end the dance with Jess spinning into James' arms. They look into each other's eyes through a loaded silence.

BRUNO

If this were a movie, the sprinklers would turn on just as the music ended.

(slight pause)

And then you guys would kiss in the fake LA rain.

JESSICA

They turned off the sprinklers. Cause of the drought.

She heads back towards the car.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

You guys want a drink or something?

BRUNO

Love where your head's at. I know a great place right around here.

They pile into the car and Bruno drives away.

And the sprinklers come on, showering the median in a much needed dose of water.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

Bruno pulls over in front of a liquor store on west Sunset.

He kills the radio.

BRUNO

Alright, bottle's on me, but I also need to get some cash. Would you go in for me, James?

JAMES

I'd prefer if you did it.

Bruno looks in the rear view mirror, at Jessica.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

Why, don't trust me with your lady?

JESSICA

Oh, am I your lady now, James?

JAMES

I'm working on it.

She laughs.

Bruno reaches into the bag at his feet and produces a MASSIVE gun.

BRUNO

Just show them this. They'll give you whatever you want. Johnny Blue and 500 dollars, please.

JAMES

What the fuck, man? Put that thing away!

BRUNO

And if you don't, your new friend in the back's night is gonna take a slight turn for the worse.

JAMES

The fuck are you talking about?

BRUNO

Did you ever see what a .44 magnum could do to a woman's face? I mean it'd fucking destroy it; just blow it right apart. That's what I can do to her face. Now, did you ever see what it could do to a woman's pussy? Now, that you should see. That you should see what a .44 magnum is gonna do to a woman's pussy you should see.

Horrorified silence.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I'm fucking with you!

JESSICA

It's from *Taxi Driver*.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUNO

Thank you! You should've seen your faces.

JAMES

Bruno, tell me that isn't real.

BRUNO

Take a look.

He opens the chamber, which is fully loaded.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

If you don't want to come back to a car full of dead girl, I'd suggest you get a move on.

He offers the gun to James, who reluctantly takes it.

And points it back at Bruno.

JAMES

Get the fuck out of my car.

Bruno - lightning fast - TWISTS the gun around, nearly breaking James's hand off. He SLAMS James' head against the dash, then pulls him back. He pushes the gun, still in James hand, towards his own face.

BRUNO

Open your mouth.

James breathes heavily, he grits his teeth.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

James, if you do not open your mouth right now, I am going to shoot you, then shoot her with the gun still in your hand.

James opens his mouth. Bruno pushes the gun into it. The metal of the barrel GRINDS against his teeth.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

The next time you point a gun at someone, you'd better be very fucking sure you can follow through, because if you hesitate, somebody's gonna fucking die. And it's not gonna be fucking me.

Blood trickles from James' nose. His eyes grow wide.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

And Bruno releases his grip.

James is left quivering, still holding the gun in his own mouth.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I like Johnnie Walker Blue. And I like fifty dollar bills.

James opens the door to the car. Gun in hand. He slowly gets out of the car...

**EXT. FRONT OF LIQUOR STORE - CONTINUOUS**

...and closes the door behind him. Putting one foot in front of the other, he heads towards the liquor store.

He hides the gun under his jacket and, as he nears the door, lets it drop to his side... and cocks the hammer.

James inhales hard and...

**INT. LIQUOR STORE - CONTINUOUS**

...walks through the doorway, greeted by the mechanical, pseudo-friendly DING of the door chime.

James, produces the gun, not pointing it; holding it with his other hand up, as though surrendering.

There are only a few customers in the store, they SCREAM.

JAMES

Wait a second!

In an instant, the STORE CLERK has pulled a shotgun from under the counter. He points it at James.

STORE CLERK

Don't you fucking move!

JAMES

Wait! You got the wrong-

STORE CLERK

Fucking put down the fucking gun!

JAMES

I need you to call the police-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STORE CLERK  
I'll fucking kill you, man!

The clerk COCKS the shotgun, as we-

CUT TO:

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - FRONT OF LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT**

Bruno and Jessica sit in silence. \*

Jessica looks at the door handle... and goes for it. \*

She frantically tries to open her door. It's locked. She tries to pull the lock up. It's jammed - the child lock. \*

BRUNO (CONT'D)  
Let me clear the air: this is awkward. \*

Jessica swallows hard. We can almost see a tear forming under one eye. \*

BRUNO  
We're practically strangers sitting in a car, waiting for our mutual friend to get back, *but* I think everything's easier if there's something to watch. \*

Bruno steps on the brake. He shifts the car into reverse and the Prius begins to beep. The center console's screen lights up. \*

ON THE SCREEN: \*

We can see James, standing in the liquor store, his gun raised. He's obscured by a few "\$.99 BARGAIN" signs. \*

BACK TO: \*

BRUNO  
Wow! Gun out already. You a betting woman, Jess? What do you think he'll do next? \*

Jessica goes to speak but no sound comes out.

BRUNO (CONT'D)  
It's okay, Jess. Use your words.

CONTINUED:

JESSICA

How do I know you aren't doing  
this together? That this isn't  
some game the two of you play?

\*  
\*

A DEAFENING GUNSHOT from inside the Liquor Store.

BRUNO

Take a look at his face when he  
comes back... I think you'll know.

The passenger door opens and James jumps into the car  
with a blue box and a brown paper bag.

JAMES

Let's get the fuck out of here.

BRUNO

(he holds out a hand)  
Let me count the money first.

Silence.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I'm just fucking with you, James.  
I trust you. Where is your sense  
of humor tonight?

He casually grabs the gun from James's shaking hand, then  
puts the car into drive and pulls away from the liquor  
store.

**CUT TO:****INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

Bruno drives down Sunset past UCLA. He's going faster and  
faster.

JESSICA

What happened in there?

James is silent.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

James, none of this is your fault.  
But I need to know if you shot  
anyone.

They drive on in silence. Seconds feel like an eternity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Wow, am I the only one who feels  
like things got a little awkward  
just then?

They speed towards a red light. Bruno SLAMS on the  
breaks.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Alright, Chinese fire drill!

Bruno rips his door open...

**EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS**

...and jumps out of the car, pointing the gun at James  
and Jessica, who follow suit.

Bruno runs around the car.

BRUNO

Come on, Chinese fire drill. You  
can not have grown up in the  
continental United States and not  
know how to do this.

The pair run around the car with Bruno. He stops Jessica  
at the drivers seat.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Alright, Jess. Your turn to drive.

JESSICA

I'm drunk.

BRUNO

Do I look like an individual who  
gives a shit?

She gets into the driver's seat. Bruno dives into the  
front seat, Dukes of Hazzard style.

He sticks his head out at James, who stands at the rear  
passenger door. Shaking.

BRUNO

Stay or go, my brother. The choice  
is yours.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

**CLOSE ON JAMES**

Filled with rage. He sits in the backseat. Silent.

**CLOSE ON JESSICA**

She squints, focusing on the road, closing one eye.

**BACK TO:**

BRUNO

So is drinking and driving like a regular thing for you?

JESSICA

No.

BRUNO

But you have done it before.

JESSICA

Nothing happened, but I've made a couple bad calls, yeah.

BRUNO

A couple?! And here I was thinking I had low regard for human life.

The RUMBLE of the car drifting over the bumps in the center divider.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

How many drinks did you say you'd had?

JESSICA

Two. I had two drinks. And a shot.

BRUNO

Damn! Are we gonna have to hold an intervention up in this piece?

They come to a red light. Jessica stops the car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

**THROUGH THE WINDOW**

They're next to a POLICEMAN on a motorcycle.

**BACK TO:**

Bruno fixes his gaze on the cop.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Alright, Jess. Your time to shine.

(a pause)

Run it.

JESSICA

What?

BRUNO

Run the light.

JESSICA

You're not serious.

BRUNO

Do any of your experiences with me tonight support the idea that I'd be joking about a thing like this?

Jessica steps on the gas. The car speeds through.

A police SIREN behind them. The flash of red and blue.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Keep driving.

JESSICA

He's gonna catch up.

BRUNO

Not if you drive faster.

The policeman SHOUTS something indiscernible through the loudspeaker.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Whelp. You heard 'em. Better pull over.

JESSICA

What?

BRUNO

Pull the fuck over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She does. The policeman skids to a halt. Lights flashing.

**IN THE MIRROR**

The officer gets off his bike. One hand on his holster.

**BACK TO:**

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Here's the fun part: either you  
get us out of this... or I do.

He pulls the hammer back on his gun. And lowers it  
beneath the seat.

JAMES

Bruno, you son of a bitch-

JESSICA

It's okay. I got this.  
(she takes a deep  
breath)  
I got this.

She watches the policeman approach in the driver's side  
mirror. She checks herself in the rear view, adjusting  
her blouse.

The policeman taps on the window.

POLICE OFFICER

License and registration, please.

JESSICA

I am so sorry, officer.

POLICE OFFICER

License and registration, please,  
Miss.

JESSICA

Sure.

She fumbles in her purse.

POLICE OFFICER

What the hell were you thinking  
back there?

JESSICA

I'm sorry about this, and I know  
it's gonna sound crazy but I-  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(she lets out a  
laugh)

I thought you were trying to pull  
someone else over-

(she laughs again)

And that I was in the way.

Ridiculous, I know.

POLICE OFFICER

Have you been drinking tonight,  
Miss?

JESSICA

I had one drink a few hours ago.  
It's my friend's car.

(gesturing to Bruno)

His girlfriend just left him and  
the two of them ended up getting  
pretty sauced, so I agreed to  
drive him and his buddy home.

She finally finds her license and hands it to him.

POLICE OFFICER

I'll need to see the registration  
as well.

JESSICA

Sure thing, officer.

She reaches for the glove compartment.

POLICE OFFICER

Do I know you from somewhere?

JESSICA

Oh, no. You probably wouldn't.

He looks at her ID again.

POLICE OFFICER

Even your name's familiar.

JESSICA

(handing him the  
registration)

Here it is.

POLICE OFFICER

Would I have seen you in anything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JESSICA

I... was on a season of The Voice  
a couple years back.

POLICE OFFICER

Of course! My niece loved you. I  
can't believe I didn't recognize  
you right away.

JESSICA

I didn't even get very far.

POLICE OFFICER

We were pulling for you.

JESSICA

I'm so sorry about earlier, I'd  
been asleep when these guys called  
and I completely spaced out.

POLICE OFFICER

Make sure it doesn't happen again.

He hands back the license and registration.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

Get these guys home in one piece.

JESSICA

Good night, officer.

POLICE OFFICER

You too.

The officer starts to walk away.

Jessica rolls up her window. She watches him in the  
driver's side mirror.

JAMES

Fuck yeah, Jess.

BRUNO

That's the last time I  
underestimate you.

### **IN THE MIRROR**

The officer gets on his motorcycle, pulling away.

**BACK TO:**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

JESSICA

God damn, I'm good!

BRUNO

I had no idea we were in the midst  
of celebrity.

JESSICA

What are you talking about?

BRUNO

The Voice!

JESSICA

I made that up.

BRUNO

And here I was thinking you can't  
shit a shitter! You had me going.

(with genuine  
curiosity)

How'd you know it would get rid of  
him?

JESSICA

Motorcycle cops work on sets. It  
gave us common ground.

BRUNO

So you sing or was that a lie,  
too?

JESSICA

I sing.

BRUNO

Sing us something.

JESSICA

Hold on a sec. Gimme a shot.

JAMES

Are you insane?

JESSICA

I think I've earned one.

Bruno passes her the bottle. She takes a big swig.

JESSICA

Fucking amazing. Bruno?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

BRUNO

Yeah?

Jess glances forward.

**THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD**

In the darkness, we can see headlights of a bus cresting the top of the hill in front of them, about to come down sunset.

**BACK TO:**

JESSICA

Wanna take a body shot?

JAMES

What?

JESSICA

Don't even pretend you haven't been looking at me.

BRUNO

What are you talking about?

JESSICA

From the moment I met you, Every five minutes I see you glancing at my tits. It's so blatant that I literally saw you do it as you were considering murdering a police officer.

(a beat)

Take a bodyshot.

BRUNO

Only if James is chill with it.

**IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR**

She makes eye contact with James.

JESSICA

You stole his car, you made him rob a liquor store, and now you want him to be 'chill' with it?

There's something obscure, but undeniably in both of their faces:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

Rage.

**BACK TO:**

BRUNO

Not my style to go after another  
man's lady.

JESSICA

I'm not anybody's lady. Clearly.

JAMES

She can do what she wants.

JESSICA

You ready or what?

She uncorks the bottle. Tilts it to her cleavage.

**THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD**

The bus is stopped at the intersection in front of them.  
The light is red. The flashing pedestrian hand counts  
down: 'five, four, three...'

**IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR**

She again makes eye contact with James. Imploring him.

**BACK TO:**

Jess pours the liquor. Bruno leans in, his mouth wide...

As the pedestrian hand flashes 'one', Jess RIPS the door  
open...

**EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS**

She jumps out of the car, running in front of the bus.

**DEEP FOCUS:**

Bruno DIVES after her, but James grabs his arm.

**BACK TO:**

The Bus GRINDS to a halt in front of Jess. She looks  
back, the car is dark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, the car LIGHTS UP: Reveling the silhouette of Bruno, sitting triumphantly in the drivers seat, his gun pointed at James' cowering head.

Jess swallows hard. The bus doors open...

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - CONTINUOUS**

Bruno has James' arm twisted in an unnatural angle, jagged BONE protrudes through his jacket.

James' agonized face is pressed hard against the passenger window glass, the gun barrel DIGS into his temple.

BRUNO

You came back for her, I somehow  
doubt she shows you the same  
courtesy...

**DEEP FOCUS**

Jess is obscured by the bus. We HEAR the doors close. The breaks release. It pulls forward.

She's still there. Illuminated by the poetic amber of a street light that hasn't been changed to LED yet.

She slowly, deliberately, walks back towards the car.

**BACK TO:**

Bruno opens the door, releases James - who recoils into a ball, cradling his arm in agony - then slides back into the passenger's seat to make room for Jess.

BRUNO

Thought we lost you there.

JESSICA

I'm so sorry, James.

JAMES

(speaking is almost  
impossible)

The only thing you should  
apologize for is coming back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO (CONT'D)

(to Jessica)

I don't want to be an alarmist  
but, I'd suggest you get us to a  
drug store, before Captain America  
in the back bleeds out all over  
his microfiber interior.

Jessica slams her door shut, puts the car in drive and  
speeds off.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

There's a CVS a little ways down  
Sunset.

JESSICA

What are you gonna do? Give him an  
asprin?

BRUNO

Before you left us, you had  
promised to sing us something.

JESSICA

(squinting at the  
road)

I'm a little preoccupied at the  
moment.

BRUNO

Come on. James in the back is  
looking pretty glum. Cheer him up.

JESSICA

What do you want to hear?

BRUNO

You sing jazz?

JESSICA

I wasn't asking you.

JAMES

Your favorite.

BRUNO

What?

JAMES

(through his agony)  
I'd like to hear Jessica's  
favorite thing to sing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Palm trees and street lights whiz past.

JESSICA

*I'm through with love, I'll never fall again.  
Said adieu to love, don't ever call again.  
For I must have you or no one,  
And so I'm through with love.*

Her song is punctuated by the RUMBLE of their tires going over the indentations in Sunset's center divider.

She squints tighter, trying her best to focus on the lines of the road.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

*I've locked my heart, I'll keep my feelings there.  
I've stuck my heart with icy Frigidaire  
And I mean to fall for no one,  
Because I'm through with love.*

James lets out a muffled MOAN from the backseat.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

*Why did you lead me to think you could care?  
You didn't need me cause you had your share  
Of friends around you to hound you and swear  
With deep emotion, devotion to you.*

Jessica steps on the gas.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

*Goodbye to spring and all it meant to me  
It could never bring the things that used to be  
For I must have you or no one  
And so I'm through with love.*

Bruno applauds with zest.

BRUNO

Brava!  
(clapping)  
Bravissima!

James lets out another groan of pain.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Aren't you gonna applaud for her,  
James?

James is gripping his arm. Frozen.

JESSICA

Bruno, enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BRUNO

You, of all people, should know  
the importance of applause.

(he turns to James)

Come on. Ovate.

James takes a deep breath. He lets go of his arm.

Through the pain, he manages to put his hands together:

CLAP. CLAP. CLAP.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

The car pulls up in front of CVS.

BRUNO

We're going to need a few things:  
a ruler, gauze, tape, antiseptic,  
scissors... Oh and you might want  
to pick up some painkillers.

JESSICA

But-

BRUNO

What we're going to do is this.

Bruno takes her phone from her purse. He dials a number,  
hits send. Then answers his own phone.

BRUNO

Hello, Bruno? Bruno here. Oh, hi  
Bruno. Could I speak to Jess,  
please?

He hands her the phone.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Keep it on speaker.

Jessica unbuckles her seatbelt.

JESSICA

I don't have any cash.

BRUNO

Then it looks like you've got some  
shoplifting to do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jessica pauses at the door.

BRUNO (CONT'D)  
Well, hop to, he's certainly not  
getting any healthier.

She jumps out of the car...

**EXT. FRONT OF CVS - CONTINUOUS**

...we follow her heels, racing across the asphalt towards  
the glowing CVS in the darkness.

BRUNO (O.S.)  
Oh, and if you bring help, I'll  
kill him!

As she approaches the threshold of the store...

**INT. CVS - CONTINUOUS**

...the automatic doors slide open.

Her heels CLOMP on the linoleum tile.

CVS EMPLOYEE  
Welcome to CVS, can I help you  
find anything tonight?

She goes to mouth something. It looks like "I need--"

CVS EMPLOYEE (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry, what are you saying?

A pained COUGH comes through the phone's speaker.

JESSICA  
I'll be just fine, thank you.

Jessica scans the store, her gaze lands on an aisle of  
medical equipment.

She walks hurriedly towards it.

She glances towards the pharmacy. A TECHNICIAN eyes her.  
He's either suspicious or checking her out.

The Technician turns to the shelf behind him.

And she snaps into action.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She grabs all the supplies she can carry. She slips each item into a different pocket on her jacket, or down a different part of her dress: a roll of gauze, a roll of medical tape, a pair of fingernail scissors, and a sewing kit.

On her way to the door, she passes an AS-SEEN-ON-TV display. She looks up and down the rack, landing on a thin chef's KNIFE.

She glances to the exit. The EMPLOYEE who tried to help her is checking out an OLD LADY with too many coupons.

She rips the knife from its packaging, and slides it into the top of her stocking.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - SIMULTANEOUS**

Through the phone, Bruno hears the CRINKLE of packaging.

BRUNO

Jeez, you'd think I told her to shoplift the entire store.

The driver's side door is open and the keys are in the ignition. An incessant, annoying BEEPING.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

(looking at James)

She could've at least had the decency to close the door.

He gets out of the car, walks around to the driver's side...

**EXT. FRONT OF CVS - CONTINUOUS**

...and closes the door.

Through the window, we can see James hyperventilating, covered in sweat in the back seat.

Bruno opens the backseat passenger door next to James.

He places a hand on his sweat covered forehead.

BRUNO

What you did back there was very brave. Misguided, but brave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

James writhes in pain.

James bites into the seatbelt.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Look, I distinctly made a clean break. Took a chunk outta your arm, and for that I sincerely apologize, but you're gonna be okay.

JAMES

Why-

He closes his eyes tight.

BRUNO

You're okay.

JAMES

Why are you doing this?

BRUNO

(a surprisingly good  
Michael Caine  
impression)

*Some men just want to watch the world burn.*

(in his own voice)

That one's from the Dark Knight.

JAMES

(in agony)

I get the reference.

BRUNO

I want to help you, man. I mean, why does anyone do anything?

(he looks to the CVS  
entrance)

Jesus, what could be taking her so long?

JAMES

(still gripping his  
arm)

You know what to do about this?

BRUNO

Scout's honor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

Forgive me if I don't take you at  
your word.

BRUNO

Dude, take a look at your arm.

James glances at it.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Unwrap that shit you've got around  
it and take a look.

Bruno helps him untangle the seat belt.

**CLOSE ON JAMES' ARM**

Bone pokes through his jacket at the elbow.

**BACK TO:**

BRUNO (CONT'D)

It looks bad, but it's a clean  
break. Give it a four to six  
weeks, you'll be chill.

JESSICA (O.S.)

Get away from him.

**THROUGH THE WINDOW**

Jessica runs toward the car.

**BACK TO:**

Bruno kneels next to James, who looks almost unconscious,  
an arm hanging out of the back seat. Even in the dark,  
Jess can see the blood.

BRUNO

Driver's seat. Your job's done.  
(he climbs into the  
back with James)  
I'm up now.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - DAY**

The doors SLAM closed. Bruno holds James like a child.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

You'll probably want to drink some of this.

James takes a massive swig of Johnnie Walker Blue.

JAMES

I hate you. That's the best fucking whiskey I've ever had.

BRUNO

Tastes better when it's free.

JESSICA

Where are we going?

BRUNO

I feel like we could all use a nice milkshake after this ordeal.

JESSICA

Nowhere's gonna be-

BRUNO

There's a Jack in the Box at the end of Sunset.

Jessica starts the engine.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

You ready, brother?

JAMES

Jessica.

JESSICA

Yeah?

JAMES

I have to tell you something.

BRUNO

Profession of undying love in three, two, one...

JAMES

I shot the clerk in the liquor store.

JESSICA

What?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JAMES

You shouldn't have come back for me. I shot that guy and I don't even feel regret. All I want to do is shoot someone else.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

JESSICA

Fuck you.

\*  
\*

BRUNO

Maybe you'll get your chance, but for the time being. Jess. Drive. James, open your mouth.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Bruno takes the ruler. He brings it to James mouth.

BRUNO

Open.

James hesitates.

BRUNO

You'll thank me later.

Bruno gently places the ruler in James' mouth.

Bruno grabs James hand like they're brothers. Holding his bicep steady, Bruno takes a deep breath, then PULLS-

James CRIES OUT in agony as we...

CUT TO:

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

The backseat window of the Toyota rolls down to reveal the menu of a fast food station.

JACK IN THE BOX EMPLOYEE

*(filtered)*

Welcome to Jack in the Box. My name is Shawn. Could I interest you in our late night stacked grilled cheeseburger munchie meal, tonight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

Well, I don't know, Shawn. Give me the rundown on the late night stacked grilled cheeseburger munchie meal.

JACK IN THE BOX EMPLOYEE

*(filtered)*

It's our signature Sourdough Jack with a grilled cheese on top. Served with two tacos, halves curly and regular fries and a twenty ounce drink. For \$6.10 before tax.

BRUNO

\$6.10 before tax? Sign me up, Shawn!

JACK IN THE BOX EMPLOYEE

*(filtered)*

What kind of drink would you like?

BRUNO

Let's do that with a Doctor Pepper.

JACK IN THE BOX EMPLOYEE

*(filtered)*

Will that be all tonight?

BRUNO

Fuck no! Oh sorry, Shawn. Excuse my language. You're not religious or anything, are you? Anyway, I'd also like a Jack's Spicy Chicken sandwich for my friend Jessica here.

JACK IN THE BOX EMPLOYEE

*(filtered)*

Would you like the meal or just the sandwich?

BRUNO

Let's just get her the sandwich. I think she's watching her figure.

JACK IN THE BOX EMPLOYEE

*(filtered)*

Will that be all tonight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUNO

You just asked that, and no. Let's get something for my friend, James. James, what're you in the mood for?

James is silent. His arm is held straight by the ruler and some professionally wrapped gauze. He is seething.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

And a chocolate shake for my friend James here.

CUT TO:

**EXT. JACK IN THE BOX PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

Bruno, James and Jessica sit in a row on the hood of the prius. Each one eats or sips their respective Jack in the Box order.

They're totally silent.

They look like three best friends who've had a long night on the town.

BRUNO

How's the Jack's Spicy Chicken, Jess? That was always my favorite in high school. We'd usually get high and come here late at night, and get Jack's Spicy Chickens with curly fries and a Doctor Pepper. That was the order. That was perfection.

Jessica chews in silent rage.

BRUNO

You still mad at your friend James?

JESSICA

I don't even know who you're talking about.

BRUNO

He's not a killer. A pussy? Yes. A killer? No dice.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

What the fuck are you talking about?

\*  
\*  
\*

BRUNO

We watched on here. A .45 Means a blast. Buckshot means a flare.

\*  
\*  
\*

JESSICA

Why would you lie about that?

\*  
\*

BRUNO

To make me think he's gonna kill me? Sorry, dude. You can't shit a shitter.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Silence.

\*

BRUNO

It's been a while, but these curly fries are fucking amazing. Nothing beats 'em. Eat your heart out, Mickey D's.

\*

(he takes another fry from the box)

Regular ones suck, though.

(he joylessly chews it)

How's the shake, Jamie?

James sips his shake in silence.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I didn't really give a fuck anyway.

(he stands)

Let's hit the road. James would you drive? Give Jessica and myself a chance to finish our food. You don't mind if we eat in your car, do you?

CUT TO:

**INT. 2005 TOYOTA PRIUS - NIGHT**

James drives up Sunset.

His arm wrapped in a thick layer of gauze.

JAMES

Where to, Bruno?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRUNO

Once around the park then home,  
James.

JAMES

You made that joke already.

BRUNO

That was actually the 1930s  
version. I gave you the 1890s one  
before. 'Spare the horses' refers  
to horses while- Fuck it, you get  
the picture. We're going to the  
top of Monument. Right off Sunset.  
All the way to the dead end.

JESSICA

What's there?

BRUNO

Hot tub. Obviously.

Silence follows. Bruno takes a sip of his Dr. Pepper. He  
pops a curly fry into his mouth.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I'm gonna be honest: I feel a  
little badly, because the two of  
you really shared some profound  
things with me tonight. Jess, I  
didn't get to say so, but that  
song was beautiful. And you missed  
it, but our driver over here  
delivered a riveting *Richard II*  
monologue earlier. So I just want  
to share a little something that's  
always meant a lot to me with the  
two of you. But I'm gonna need a  
little help here.

(he looks to Jessica)

Jess, would you give me a little  
backup just:

(he sings, conducting  
with the gun)

*Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum.*  
*Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum.*

JESSICA

*Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum.*

BRUNO

Beautiful, keep it going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JESSICA

*Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum, bum. Bum.*

BRUNO

Alright, James I imagine you're  
not much of a singer, but could  
you lay down a little beat on the  
wheel under that?

(beatboxing)

*Ba-ba-bum-ka. Ba-ba-bum-ka.*

James does nothing. He keeps driving.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

(cocking his gun)

*Ba-ba-bum-ka. Ba-ba-bum-ka.*

James lets out a sigh. He hits the steering wheel in rhythm with Jessica's continued singing.

Bruno takes a long pull of his Dr. Pepper, he holds the  
open bottle of Johnnie Walker Blue in his other hand.  
Blissfully double fisting.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Beautiful.

(an authentic smile  
flashes across his  
face)

Now usually I don't do this,  
but...

(he sings,  
beautifully)

*I'm not tryin' to be rude,  
But hey pretty girl I'm feelin' you  
The way you do the things you do  
Remind me of my Lexus coup  
That's why I'm all up in ya grill  
Tryina get you to a hotel  
You must be a football coach  
The way you got me playin' the field*  
(spoken)

Alright Jess this one's all you:

(sung)

*So baby gimme that:*

JESSICA &amp; BRUNO

*Toot, toot.*

BRUNO

Beautiful. James:

(sung)

*Lemme give you that:*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JAMES &amp; BRUNO

*Beep, beep.*

BRUNO

*You're a natural!**(sung)**Runnin' her hands through my 'fro  
Bouncin' on twenty-fours's  
While they say on the radio...**(spoken)**Come on, you fuckers, sing!*

ALL

*It's the remix to Ignition  
Hot and fresh out the kitchen  
Mama rollin' that body  
Got every man in here wishin'  
Sippin' on coke and rum  
I'm like so what I'm drunk  
It's the freakin' weekend baby  
I'm about to have me some fun*

BRUNO

*Bounce, bounce. Bounce, bounce.  
Bounce, bounce. Bounce.  
Bounce, Bounce. Bounce.**(he takes a very  
audible deep breath)**Now it's like murder she wrote  
Once I get you out them clothes  
Privacy is on the door  
Still they can hear you screamin' more  
Girl I'm feelin what you feelin'  
No more hopin' and wishin'  
I'm 'bout to take my key and  
Stick it in the ignition  
So baby gimme that:*

JESSICA

*Toot, toot.*

BRUNO

*Lemme give you that:*

JAMES

*Beep, beep.*

BRUNO

*Runnin' her hands through my 'fro  
Bouncin' on twenty-fours's  
While they say on the radio...*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ALL

*It's the remix to Ignition  
Hot and fresh out the kitchen  
Mama rollin' that body  
Got every man in here wishin'  
Sippin on coke and rum  
I'm like so what I'm drunk  
It's the freakin' weekend baby  
I'm about to have me some fun*

BRUNO

(with all his heart)

*Cristal poppin' in the stretch Navigator  
We got food everywhere  
As if the party was catered  
We got fellas to my left  
Honeys on my right  
We bring 'em both together  
We got drinkin' all night  
(Belting)  
Then after the show its the...*

ALL

*After party.*

James focuses on the darkened road as they ascend a hill. A cul-de-sac at the end is coming into view, illuminated by a single street light.

BRUNO

*And after the party its the...*

ALL

*Hotel lobby.*

James subtly accelerates, his eyes locked on the street light.

BRUNO

*And round about four you gotta...*

ALL

*Clear the lobby.*

James presses the gas, hard.

BRUNO

*Then take it to your room and-  
(shouting)  
FUCK!*

James SWERVES the car towards the street lamp.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

The car SLAMS into it, flipping up, then down again.

Bruno is THROWN forward.

He CRASHES through the glass, and lands in the darkness.

The airbags EXPLODE out, hitting James and Jess HARD.

James squints and tries to breathe but can't. He SUCKS for air. Finally, GASPING, he gets a breath.

JAMES

We got you, you motherfucker!

He turns to Jess. A large SHARD of glass is sticking out of her forehead.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Oh, Jesus. Jess don't move, You're gonna be okay.

She looks to him.

JESSICA

Wha- what? What did-

He touches her neck, feeling her pulse.

He has no idea what he's doing.

### DEEP FOCUS

As James examines Jess' forehead, we can see movement in the bushes ahead of them.

**BACK TO:**

JAMES

It's alright. I don't think it's deep.

JESSICA

What's deep?

JAMES

Jess, I need you not to move.

He touches the piece of glass in her head.

The wound looks shallow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JESSICA

Okay, okay. But tell me what the fuck is going on!

**DEEP FOCUS**

Bruno rises from the bushes in front of them.

The right half of his face is covered in blood.

BRUNO

That. Was a really fucking bad decision, James.

Bruno pulls the .44 from his waistband.

**BACK TO:**

Without a second to lose, James RIPS the glass from Jess' forehead.

JESSICA

Ow fuck.

A little blood trickles out; the cut was superficial.

James whips the car in reverse. Zooms back.

BANG!

The rear window SHATTERS.

The car stalls, hitting bushes on the other side of the cul-de-sac.

Bruno stumbles towards them.

James grabs Jess and TEARS his door open...

**EXT. CUL DE SAC - NIGHT**

...he runs from the car, holding Jess under one shoulder.

**DEEP FOCUS**

Twenty five feet away, we can make out Bruno, who makes his way to the car, reaching through the broken window.

**BACK TO:**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jess trips as they step up the curb.

JAMES

I got you.

JESSICA

I'm okay.

She takes the lead, hurrying up a steep driveway, past a black Prius, towards a darkened house.

A MOTION activated light flickers on as they walk up the driveway.

JAMES

Shit.

JESSICA

Come on. Come on!

She runs to the threshold of the house. KNOCKS frantically at the door.

James RINGS the bell over and over.

JAMES

Hello? Hello! Help! We need help!

Everything's dark.

JESSICA

No one's home.

JAMES

We could break a window. Find their car keys.

We hear Bruno's labored FOOTSTEPS coming up the driveway.

Jessica grabs James by the hand and leads him down a slim corridor between the house and its fence...

**EXT. BACKYARD POOL - CONTINUOUS**

...they emerge into a large backyard.

Everything is dark. Moonlight gleams off a blue tarp that covers a an elegant POOL, sunk into the hillside.

Centered above the pool is a beautiful stone HOT TUB.

The motion activated LIGHT behind them flickers on.

**ON THE CORRIDOR:**

Light spills from crack between the house and fence.

Suddenly, it's filled by a SLIM SHADOW.

**BACK TO:**

JESSICA

The pool. Get in the pool!

She takes James by the hand, pulls the tarp aside, and they SLIP into the dark, deep end of the pool.

Jessica looks at James.

JAMES

(a whisper)

I am so sorry-

She KISSES him passionately.

The water dances around their lips.

JESSICA

Don't make a sound.

They tread water, noses just above the waterline. And Jess pulls the tarp over their heads.

We can barely make out their outlines in the darkness.

**IN THE WATER**

They grasp hands, looking into each other's eyes.

**BACK TO:**

The backyard is motionless. A few birds CHIRP in the night. The water RIPPLES softly.

Bruno stumbles out of the corridor. In one hand, he holds his GUN, in the other, his bottle of Johnnie Walker Blue.

He scans the backyard.

**BRUNO'S POV**

We follow his gaze across the pool, passing the spot where Jess and James hide, and landing on a thick cluster of bushes.

**IN THE WATER**

James' nose slips underwater. A few bubbles escape from his mouth. Jess squeezes his hand tightly.

**BACK TO:**

Bruno reaches into the bushes, pushing leaves aside to reveal a small grey box. He lifts a flap...

BRUNO (CONT'D)

Let there be...

...and turns a switch.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

...light.

**IN THE WATER**

The pool lights SNAP on. Jess and James look at each other, filled with a mix of confusion and terror.

Their shadows loom on the illuminated tarp above them.

Bubbles escape from James' mouth...

**BACK TO:**

...as the tarp is RIPPED aside.

Bruno stands at the edge of the pool. Smiling.

BRUNO

Told you we were going to a hot tub.

He calmly takes James' phone out of his pocket.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

You can end the ride now, James. This is our final destination.

James reaches up from the pool. He hits DROP OFF.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

I'll be sure to give you five stars in my review.

Shivering, James and Jess climb out of the pool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JAMES

What do you want from us?

Bruno twists a knob and the hot tub jets WHIR to life. He starts to take off his clothes.

BRUNO

To do just what you said: *For  
god's sake...*

He climbs into the hot tub. With the gun, he beckons them to join.

BRUNO

*...let us sit upon the ground...*

James and Jess climb in. Their sopping wet clothes flap under the jets.

BRUNO

*...And tell sad stories of the  
death of kings.*

Bruno lights a cigarette, taking a deep drag; he immediately takes a swig from the Johnnie Walker Blue.

Bruno swallows the whiskey, then lets the smoke out.

JAMES

Could I have a swig?

BRUNO

Love where your head's at.

He passes James the bottle.

BRUNO

You're gonna need it.

He opens the gun's chamber, bullets SPLASH into the hot tub. All but one.

JESSICA

What are you doing?

BRUNO

Something about desperate times  
calling for desperate measures?

JESSICA

I'm not desperate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUNO

Jessica, tonight you asked your  
cab driver out on a date.

**UNDERWATER**

The jets WHIP at Jessica's dress. She reaches to her  
stocking, and grabs the knife.

**BACK TO:**

JAMES

Belittle me all you want, Bruno.

BRUNO

I'm not belittling you. That's  
what you are! You drive people  
around, you give them adorable  
little bottles of water, and you  
do everything you can to ignore  
the nagging voice in the back of  
your head that says: "I just can't  
do this anymore." And until you  
acknowledge that, you'll never be  
anything else.

JAMES

That's what this is about. You're  
somehow helping us?

BRUNO

If we make it to sunrise, you will  
walk out of here different. Maybe  
you'll go for breakfast,  
incidentally, Patrick's Roadhouse  
does an excellent Huevos  
Rancheros. Maybe you'll fuck.  
Maybe you'll just share a kiss.  
But, whatever you do, you won't be  
the same.

Bruno SNAPS the revolver closed.

**UNDERWATER**

Jessica puts a hand on James' knee. She squeezes.

**BACK TO:**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BRUNO

You're an amazing actor, James.  
But no one will ever know it.  
That's why we're here. Because it  
kills me to see all that talent.  
All that passion. Given to a  
pussy. A guy who has no idea how  
to take what he wants.

He spins the revolver's cylinder.

**UNDERWATER**

Jessica tightens her grip on the knife.

**BACK TO:**

BRUNO

(to James)

Because you'd rather betray  
yourself than risk an  
uncomfortable moment.

Bruno points the gun at James.

JESSICA

I hate to break it to you,  
Bruno... but things are about to  
get pretty fucking uncomfortable.

She WHIPS the knife up and SLICES towards Bruno-

Who BLOCKS the knife, INCHES from his face.

His gun barely keeps the blade away from his EYE.

He TWISTS Jessica's hand, who in turn, RIPS away from  
him. Both weapons SPLASH into the pool.

Bruno DIVES for the gun.

JESSICA

We have to go!

She makes a run towards the fence.

James stands up, he looks to Bruno.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

**UNDERWATER**

Bruno wraps his fingers around the gun.

**BACK TO:**

Bruno surfaces, raising the gun. He rotates the cylinder.

**CLOSE ON THE GUN**

The bullet flips into the chamber.

**BACK TO:**

James looks from Bruno to Jessica, climbing over the fence; she's stuck on the top.

**THROUGH THE SIGHT**

Bruno focuses on Jessica. Lining up his shot.

**BACK TO:**

Jess is still stuck on the fence. She frantically pulls at her stockings.

And James runs.

**DOWN THE BARREL OF THE GUN**

Bruno has lined up his shot. Jessica is perfectly in his sights. His thumb pulls back the hammer and...

**BACK TO:**

SPLASH.

James DIVES into Bruno.

He grabs the gun, pushing it underwater. He's on the verge of overpowering Bruno...

JAMES

Jess, you have to go, now!

She doesn't move.

JAMES

I got this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Bruno HEADBUTTS James, who falls back; blood pouring from his nose.

He raises the gun at Jess.

JAMES

You're right. I have no idea how to take what I want. But there is one thing I know how to do.

James PULLS the gun into his own chest...

JAMES

Give.

JESSICA

James, no!

**CLOSE ON THE GUN**

...and pushes Bruno's finger down on the trigger.

**BACK TO:**

CLICK.

The hammer falls.

The gun doesn't go off.

JESSICA

Oh my god. Oh thank god.

Bruno looks at James. He doesn't blink.

JAMES

What the fuck?

BRUNO

(with a shrug)  
Gunpowder got wet.

JAMES

(barely able to breathe)  
Jesus fucking christ.

BRUNO

You would've died before you'd played Richard II.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

James looks to Jessica, then back to Bruno.

JAMES

It would've been worth it.

Silence.

James' phone BUZZES against the concrete.

APP (O.S.)

*Hello, James. You have one new  
RYDE request.*

BRUNO

Give it a couple days...

Bruno climbs out of the pool.

BRUNO

*...maybe, just maybe, you'll think  
back on this night...*

He puts on his clothes.

BRUNO (CONT'D)

*...and remember what it's like to  
be alive.*

The phone BUZZES against the concrete. Bruno picks it up.

#### **CLOSE ON THE PHONE**

We see a selfie of a seemingly attractive blonde girl.  
Under it, the text:

RYDE REQUEST FROM: MARIA B.

Bruno's thumb swipes ACCEPT.

APP

*RYDE accepted. Let's ride.*

#### **BACK TO:**

Bruno pockets the phone, and slides the gun into his  
waistband. He heads towards the corridor.

James jumps from the pool. He runs towards Jessica at the  
fence.

James' phone rings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BRUNO

Hello, is this Maria?

As Bruno disappears, the motion activated light flickers on, casting a massive SLIM SHADOW.

James reaches Jessica. They kiss through the wire.

BRUNO (O.S.)

Yes. This is James. I'm your Ryde.

And the sun begins to rise.

**FADE TO BLACK.**