

**x Unfollow** ME

PILOT

WRITTEN BY  
RICHARD KAHAN

OVER BLACK:

MAN (V.O.)  
How did it come to this?

Jaunty piano music explodes through the darkness as Fats Waller's "It's a Sin to Tell a Lie" begins:

FATS WALLER (SINGING)  
*Be sure it's true when you say  
I love you.  
It's a sin to tell a lie.*

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - VARIOUS - MAGIC HOUR

Morning glistens over the city of angels like a new-sprung turd.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - 101 FREEWAY - DAY

Commuters packed in for miles, jerking forward for a six inch victory.

MAN (V.O.)  
Life used to be...

INT. HOUSE - BABY'S CRIB - DAY

Looking straight up at a paper mobile as it twists and turns.

MAN (V.O.)  
Simpler...

A baby's feet enter FRAME, rocking back and forth. Each fold of new skin hangs in the light, catching the shadows.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Two young KIDS run and chase in SLOW MOTION, one dressed like a cop, the other like a robber.

MAN (V.O.)  
Easier...

Leaves whip up in the breeze, dancing around them.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

A massive stag munches away on a patch of grass as FLOWING WATER from a nearby stream drenches all in a tranquil hum.

MAN (V.O.)  
Just... better.

We start to PULL BACK on this heavenly tableau, the deer and the beauty surrounding it getting smaller and smaller until --  
The edges of an iPad appear, REVEALING we are actually...

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

...viewing the image from a screen.

MAN (V.O.)  
(suddenly nauseous)  
But this...

A finger reaches in, swiping the image away, replacing it with a YOUTUBE video of a drunken frat boy doing a keg stand before flexing his traps then puking directly into CAMERA.

PUSH IN as the "subscribe" button is pressed.

Another swipe: TWITTER -- Disney starlet passed out on the curb.

PUSH IN as the "like" button is pressed.

Swipe: INSTAGRAM -- "Influencer" giving a makeup tutorial.

Swipe: Stage parents coaching their poor kid to "floss" dance.

Swipe: Random cleavage.

PUSH IN as the "favorite" button is pressed.

Another swipe. Another "like." Another swipe. Another "retweet."  
Faster and faster until it all just mixes together into a giant downfall-of-humanity chutney.

MAN (V.O.)  
And this...

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Bills drop onto a desk, dozens become hundreds, HYPER SPEED, until it's overflowing -- every visible inch dripping with money owed... before finally MORPHING INTO:

INT. LAB - DAY

A big ol' RAT running full out on a plastic wheel, churning up bits of paper pellet bedding in its wake.

Just hauling ass.

MAN (V.O.)

I mean...

HARD CUT TO:

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

STAN MEYERSON, early 30s, stares back at us in the reflection of his bathroom mirror.

He's naked. Neither fully a man nor a child. In another world Stan would pass for semi attractive... a world where Stan has a stronger disposition. And better digestion.

STAN (V.O.)

(bile-filled disgust)

Jesus.

With that, Stan throws back his head and finishes gargling, then spits into the sink and promptly exits.

ON THE SINK -- as Stan's foamy mouthwash trickles down the drain and Fats continues to croon...

FATS WALLER (SINGING)

*'Cause it's a sin to tell a lie!*

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

Stan's face fills the FRAME, staring right down the barrel into CAMERA as he vomits words like a freight train:

STAN

You know what the median house price in LA is? \$603,905. And the median household income? \$55,809. Do the math. How do you get ahead? I'll spare ya the strain -- you don't. And now forget about the alt dream of growing old with a sweet cat collection in the same shitty rent controlled apartment for 50 years. Forget about that because of a word I just learned: "renoviction."

Stan waits for someone to ask. They don't.

STAN (CONT'D)

It's when they kick you out of your apartment to throw on a new coat of paint then rent it to another asshole for five times the price. All because some hipster coffee fusion joint opened around the corner. Yup. Put your dreams back in your pockets, people. Forget about the 2.5 kids. Forget about the cushy retirement. No more one job takes ya all the way to a gold watch and Boca Raton. Nope. Average amount of time Americans last in a job now? 4.6 years. Less than 5 years before we're forced out, or move on, trying to find something else that sucks slightly less while crawling the speedway to the big dream. But that's the thing -- it's no longer "the dream." The dream is survival. And for what? A couple retweets? A new follower? Some other piece of meaningless self-congratulatory jerk off at the end of a 70 hour work week?

REVEAL we are --

INT. OFFICE - BREAKROOM - DAY

Stan, now in barely passable office casual, is addressing coworkers in a tiny office breakroom. They stare blankly at him.

STAN

I mean... fuck.

LARRY, 50s, a timid and balding lifer, has been waiting awkwardly for Stan to finish, then reaches for the coffee cart behind him.

LARRY

Stan, can I just -- the chamomile...

Realizing his impassioned speech has fallen on deaf ears, Stan steps aside.

STAN

Oh, sure. Sorry, Lar.

The room immediately empties, save for Stan and a lanky coworker, MARVIN FINK, early 30s, classic tech support looks but with a dry, acerbic delivery that juxtaposes his pleated pants.

MARVIN

So, Coles Notes version: You're getting kicked out of your apartment and like 99% of the planet you're too poor to buy a house so you look for validation elsewhere.

STAN

Coles Notes?

MARVIN

(genuinely annoyed)  
Come on, man, you know it's like CliffsNotes --

STAN

I always forget you're Canadian.

MARVIN

I know, I look just like the rest of you yet I'm different. It's spooky.  
(then)

Hey, here's a thought: how 'bout you find a shittier apartment in a shittier neighborhood like a normal person. What about Simi Valley? I hear it's not just for porn anymore.

STAN

This is bigger than my shitty apartment, it's like, what's the end game anymore? What the hell are we all doing? Like, big picture --

MARVIN

Okay, easy partner, too much thinkie thinkie for this guy on a Friday.

STAN

Ever Google "Mr. Rogers' Net Worth?"

Marvin looks at Stan with true disgust and bewilderment.

MARVIN

No. Never. Why would I ever do that?

Marvin grabs an apple and exits --

INT. OFFICE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

-- Stan falls in step next to Marvin.

MARVIN  
Why would anyone ever Google that?

STAN  
20 mil.

MARVIN  
(in between apple bites)  
Wow, that's generational cardigans.

STAN  
See, from a young age we've been sold  
the dream but it's all a giant lie.

MARVIN  
So end game for you is some creepy  
puppets and a little neighborhood to  
live out all your pet-er-ass desires?

That stops Stan dead in his tracks.

STAN  
Fred McFeely Rogers was a national  
treasure. And definitely not a  
pedophile.

They press on, weaving through a maze of cubicles.

MARVIN  
Dude, normally I love your neurotic  
diatribes, I do, they make me feel  
better about my own unspeakable  
existence, but you have up and lost  
me on this one. What's the thread?  
Housing? Social media? Where ya  
headed?

STAN  
I just -- I can't do this anymore,  
you know? All of it, the whole  
fucking... "thing."

MARVIN  
We talkin' hose and tailpipe? Can I  
get your Spotify login first?

Stan and Marvin stop in front of a glass conference room  
where a bunch of coworkers, including Larry, gather around a  
table facing a large dry erase board. They both take in the  
room like it's a brutal melange of auto wreckage.

STAN  
(eyes fixed on the meeting)  
It's my birthday on Monday.

MARVIN  
I shall endeavor to bring donuts.

STAN  
I'll be 32.

Again, Stan waits for a reaction that doesn't come.

STAN (CONT'D)  
32? Douglas Kenney?

MARVIN  
Did I have too many edibles this morning, or not enough?

STAN  
Douglas Kenney? Founder of National Lampoon magazine. Went on to co-write both Animal House and Caddyshack. Then randomly fell off a cliff and died while vacationing in Hawaii. And how old was he? 32.

MARVIN  
Wow... um... 27! Joplin. Hendrix. Cobain. Everyone knows 27's the number to beat. Only you would pass that milestone and then search out some other random age to torture yourself with.

STAN  
At least Douglas Kenney did something with his short life.

MARVIN  
Okay, look man, I can see you're truly dealing with something today and I feel like I should make myself more emotionally available -- so, here's my pitch: you, me, the mickey of shitty vodka in my desk, and Amelie on bluray? What say you?

Stan breathes it out. Hard.

STAN  
That sounds lovely, and romantic, and I say yes.

They start to peel away, until:

HARRY (O.S.)  
Oh Stan?

Instant stoppage at the sound of HARRY DEMOUNT, 50s, upper management, with a voice that sits firmly between nails on a chalkboard and serial killer drone.

Stan slowly turns back, fighting the look of dread spewing out of his pores.

HARRY (CONT'D)

We could reeeeeaaally use an extra set of eyes in the quarterly report meeting.

STAN

Wow... I'd love to, Mr. Demount, but the thing is, remember there was that memo you asked about? Yeah... and I'm right in the middle of that doozie, so --

HARRY

Always more hours in a day for memos. Come on in, it'll be good to have ya.

Harry disappears back into the conference room.

STAN

(to Marvin)

When I grow up, I'm gonna be Larry, aren't I?

They both catch a glimpse of Larry through the vertical blinds, sitting at the conference table chugging his chamomile tea like his life depends on it. And it does.

MARVIN

At least it's the bullet ya see.

As Marvin turns to leave:

STAN

I have this recurring dream. More like a fantasy I guess, where I'm diagnosed with cancer or some other horrible terminal disease and I just go into one of these meetings and I just tell everyone to eat a fat bag of dicks and then I just quit.

Marvin approaches, placing a comforting hand on Stan's shoulder.

MARVIN

(deadpan)

Why wait for cancer?

And Marvin's out, leaving a depleted Stan as he turns toward the glass encasement of terror...

INT. OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The meeting's well underway. Harry babbles on while underlining and circling a set of graphs and charts on the dry erase board with what must be the world's squeakiest marker. Each loud STROKE gutting the very soul of the room itself.

HARRY

As you can see heeere.

SQUEAK!

MOVE DOWN the long table, past a group of COWORKERS -- each one visibly shuddering with every marker stroke.

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

Third quarter projections failed to recognize the push towards unification amongst our partners. With the increases seen heeere --

SQUEAK!

Shudder.

FIND Stan at the end of the table, eyes closed in a 70/30 pain/meditation combo.

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

And with future revenues expected to climb toooo --

SQUEAK!

Shudder.

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

We should find ourselves well within the tolerated...

Stan opens his eyes and Harry's voice begins to disappear into the ether, replaced with soft, almost ANGELIC MUZAK.

STAN'S POV -- The graphs and charts on the board fill the FRAME, undulating delicately in time, back and forth, colors lightly shifting from one muted tone to another. It's surreal, reminiscent of the floating mobile in the opening -- sad and beautiful all at the same time.

SQUEEEEEEEEEAAAAAK!

The dreamstate is broken and the images instantly snap back to their generic reality as the dry erase marker circles a large pie chart in a long, slow assault on eardrums everywhere.

BACK ON STAN -- as the impossibly long squeak plays out.

HARRY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(voice fighting the squeak)  
What we need to establish heeere --

STAN  
CANCER!

Harry stops dead in mid sentence.

All eyes in the room are now locked on Stan.

HARRY  
Sorry?

Stan is up on his feet now, not sure what else to do.

STAN  
I have... I mean -- I quit.

HARRY  
Oh... well, I am genuinely sad to hear that, Stan. Human resources can get the paperwork --

STAN  
Nope. Not doing that, with the forms and the -- I just... I quit. So...

Stan starts to gather his belongings then grabs the almost full glass of water sitting in front of him and finishes it in one long gulp as the room waits in silence.

STAN (CONT'D)  
So, yeah, you can all just...

And he immediately loses his nerve:

STAN (CONT'D)  
I mean, thank you for everything and all the best to you and your families.

Basically the opposite of "eat a fat bag of dicks."

Stan does an awkward half bow/nod/wave thingy, then exits.

INT./EXT. - PARKING LOT - STAN'S CAR - DAY

Stan gets into his car, throws his bag down on the passenger seat and grabs onto the steering wheel, firmly, with both hands.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - 405 FREEWAY - DAY

Nary a fellow commuter in sight as Stan's car pushes 80, straddling two lanes with abandon. Because he can.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The apartment is sparse, but little hints point to the former presence of a female; a framed print matches the small ornamental vase sitting in front of it, a rug with 70s inspired pill, and a few colorful books crammed strategically between mason jars teeming with beach glass.

WIDE as Stan plops down on a thrift store couch, sending dust particles into the heavy air. A beat as the fullness of what happened earlier sinks in. A small half smile creeps up.

Then he takes out his cell phone, snaps a quick selfie:

CLOSE ON THE SCREEN -- Stan's posed smile edge-to-edge via INSTAGRAM, as he writes: "Gainfully unemployed."

And we HOLD on the image as it MORPHS into:

INT. THE A-FRAME GASTROPUB - NIGHT

Stan's face frozen in the same manufactured grin.

REVEAL he's now sitting at a small table opposite STACY WILMONT, late 20s, confident, with the kind of smile you could take for granted. Then miss terribly.

They're in the center of a bustling hipster mecca, surrounded by pretty people and local synth pop.

STAN

And the new pad, that's good?

STACY

It's comin' together.

STAN

Well that location, I mean, yeah, that's hard to top. And smart, 'cause it's already a hot neighborhood, so no "renoviction."

STACY

What?

STAN

Thank you -- I'd never heard of it either. But apparently it's a thing.

(off her look)

Oh, means I'm getting kicked outta my apartment.

STACY

Jeez, Stan --

STAN (CONT'D)

No, no, it's a good thing. It was time to change it up. Mutual decision, really...

That one hangs there for an awkward beat.

STAN (CONT'D)

You look great, by the by.

STACY

Oh, thanks.

Stacy nods, goes for a casual scan of the room. Stan does the same... then he tries to rally the troops.

STAN

So... yeah, like I said on the phone, I have some pretty big news.

He waits for her to ask. She doesn't.

STAN (CONT'D)

I quit my job.

STACY

Yeah, saw your whole "unemployed" post.

STAN

Yup, just like the cancer fantasy I always talked about. Middle of a big quarterly report meeting and I just -- I just fuckin' did it.

STACY

That's --

STAN (CONT'D)

Huge, I know. And like waaaaay overdue. And it's just like, it feels so good, you know? And like the first step --

STACY

Towards?

STAN

Yes. Well that's the thing, towards so much. Everything, really. I mean, I hate to say it, 'cause, wow, the clichés, but -- eeeeekkk, "the novel," my novel, sure, towards that. And towards the future. But the real future, you know? The dream, sure, but like the real dream. Like... simplicity....

(then)

Am I making any sense? You know how I get when I'm excited.

STACY

I remember.

STAN

Think I'm talkin' going back to the basics here. Getting off the wheel, stop chasing the cheese, you know? I mean, the cheese metaphorically speaking -- not like vegan or anything -- although who knows? Maybe. It's all wide open. A whole new start.

Stacy takes Stan in, silent judgement mixed with sadness.

STAN (CONT'D)

And that's uh -- sorry, did you want a drink?

STACY

I'm good.

STAN

You sure? I saw one where they were like lighting rosemary on fire or something...

(off her head shake)

Okay... So yeah, a whole new start, that's what we talked about, I mean you talked about when --

STACY

Stan, let's not --

STAN (CONT'D)

(covering)

Oh, no, no, Stac, I'm not like, you know, trying to -- whatever -- I'm just, this is good, you know? And it's all part of what you brought up, the whole "me being a manchild" thing.

STACY

I'm sorry, Stan, that wasn't --

STAN

No, no, it's cool, that's what I'm saying. You were right, I was being naïve, for like a really long time. I drank the Kool-Aid or whatever -- but it's not about blame, I just mean, I mean you were right, so... yeah, I am saying "thank you."

STACY

You're welcome. But like... what's your plan?

STAN

Well... not fully, 150% sure, yet. I mean, I need to get out of the city, for a bit, that's definitely "a thing" --

STACY

Okay, so unemployment and a vacation, that's, wow...

Stan tries to ignore the dig and press on.

STAN

No, that's not -- not like a vacation. I need to get outta Dodge for a while, and just unplug, or whatever --

STACY

Look, Stan, this is completely your call. I just, if I in any way helped with this --

I think you misunderstood what I was saying. Like, this is actually the opposite of what I was saying -- I was talking about hunkering down, and like, pressing on and moving up, you know, forward and up --

STAN (CONT'D)

Back to the basics, that's kinda the best way -- Back to nature, you know? Fuck concrete, and like, pavement and traffic, and -- Fuckin wifi and bluetooth, it's like, ahhhhhh, you know, everything's bluetooth, and Twitter, and Instagram, and Snapchat, and more fuckin' bluetooth -- and then there's Vine -- I mean, what even is that, right? Tiny videos, I guess --

STACY

STAN!

Stan stops abruptly, as do a few of the closer hipsters -- until they remember they don't give a shit.

STACY (CONT'D)  
(trying to stay calm)  
Look, you do you, absolutely. I just want you to be happy, Stan, I really do, but if you're doing this because you think we'll get back --

STAN  
No --

STACY  
Okay, good. So then what I meant before was not running away, or like, giving up, I meant... I don't know like... figuring out your shit, Stan.

Silence.

STACY (CONT'D)  
Sorry.

STAN  
No, it's -- yeah, that's what I'm doing here, Stac.

STACY  
Is it?

STAN  
I don't think you're hearing me. I'm thinking outside the box. Gonna unplug and stop chasing my tail --

Stacy can't contain it any longer:

STACY  
But that's what grown-ups do, Stan! They chase their tails. They work jobs they hate in order to exist, and to buy stuff --

STAN  
Buy stuff like a ring?

STACY  
I NEVER ASKED FOR THAT!

That lands like an anvil.

STACY (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry.

STAN  
Yeah, so am I.

Stan gets up and puts on his coat, swallowing it all down.

STACY  
(heartfelt concern)  
Stan?  
(as he turns back)  
You used to have these huge dreams.  
What happened to you?

STAN  
What happened to all of us?

And with that, Stan takes off, fighting his way through the trendy mustache blockade.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - NIGHT

Valley lights twinkle in the expanse.

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

North Hollywood neon abounds as Stan hauls two armloads of cardboard boxes out of an all night liquor store.

He's just about to get into his car when he notices a homeless woman passed out on the curb, an empty hat tipped over on the ground in front of her.

Stan sits the hat upright and fills it with the contents of his pockets before getting into his car and driving off.

INT. STAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a record needle slowly lowering into the groove.

Items start filling boxes, beginning with the left over female touches; the vase, the rug, but quickly turning into a full on packing session.

ON AN IPHONE SCREEN -- A series of pics:

Original Nintendo NES, clothes, cookware -- all in boxes that are starting to overtake the space.

An INSTAGRAM CAPTION TYPES IN: "I'm fucking off garage sale. Tomorrow. NoHo. Be there."

Then "repost" Twitter. Facebook. Etc. Etc. Etc.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - VARIOUS - MORNING

8 AM and already 85 degrees in the bowels of the San Fernando mountains as another Saturday of bargain hunting begins.

-- Florescent garage sale signs cling to lamp posts.

-- Overstuffed vans cruise past wares strewn out onto lawns.

-- Pickers rifle through bins, looking for that van Gogh.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

A half-assed cardboard sign reads "IS MY JUNK YOUR TREASURE? PAY TO FIND OUT."

A bleary-eyed Stan sits in a fold out lawn chair, manning the makeshift store he's set up on the apartment's concrete driveway. He chugs from a mini mart venti, looking comfortably uncomfortable in a tank top and cut-off jean shorts.

Most potential customers peel away quickly, but a young SKATER KID, barely 17, approaches with one of the mason jars.

SKATER KID

How much?

STAN

I mean, easy fiver, but for you?  
You got a good face, let's call it  
\$1.50.

SKATER KID

(lazy deadpan)

It's just like, a pickle jar...

STAN

Oh I hear that, brother. That's  
what I used to think, but go on  
Etsy, Pintrest -- you'll see. Mason  
jars are the future.

SKATER KID

Yeah...

And with that he puts the jar down and pushes off on his board.

STAN

We got bargains galore. Tell your  
buddies!

MARVIN (O.S.)

Wow.

Marvin sidles up as the Skater Kid disappears.

STAN

Yeah wow. It's a good thing everything's fucked 'cause these millennials man, they don't deserve attainable goals.

(re: the mason jar)

\$1.50 and a little creativity and you're rippin' bong hits like a boss, but kids these days -- they need everything spelled out.

Marvin turns in the direction of the Skater, raising a fist in mock solidarity as he calls out with zero gusto.

MARVIN

And stay off my lawn.

Marvin turns back, taking in Stan's attire.

MARVIN (CONT'D)

It's a good look, man. Says "I got no shame, and..." Well, that's what it says.

(then)

So... what's your plan?

Quickly becoming Stan's least favorite question.

STAN

You wanna get froyo?

MARVIN

Of course I wanna get froyo. But can you afford to close up shop?

Stan gets up from the lawn chair, makes it over to his sign and turns it around.

Just then a pick up truck, cab full of furniture, rolls in. A FATHER, 30s, MOTHER, 30s, Mexican, start looking through Stan's goods, as their DAUGHTER, 5, holds on to her mother's pants, clutching a stuffed bear.

The Father notices Stan's turned sign.

FATHER

Oh, sorry, sorry.

He starts to corral his family back to the truck.

STAN

No, no, it's okay. Please.

MOTHER

Thank you.

They continue shopping, looking over Stan's bed and night stands. The little girl starts walking closer in search of toys. Her eyes lock on to Stan's iPad, part of his makeshift cash register. Stan clocks her just as the parents approach.

FATHER

How much you want for the bed set?

STAN

Uh, \$10?

MOTHER

For all three?

STAN

We'll even help ya load it up.

FATHER

Thank you.

The Father reaches into his pocket, hands Stan a few bills.

Stan grabs his lock box and the iPad as they all make their way towards the furniture.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Stan, Marvin, and the Father finish loading the bed set into the back, as the Mother secures it all with rope.

The little Girl just watches, eyes glued to Stan's iPad.

FATHER

Thank you. Good luck with the sale.

The mother lifts her daughter into the truck, starts buckling her in, but Stan stops them.

STAN

You know what, this goes with the bed set.

He hands the Girl his iPad.

MOTHER

No, no --

STAN

No, please --

FATHER  
No, that's very nice --

STAN  
Please -- I don't need it. And I  
want her to have it.

The little Girl reluctantly takes the iPad.

STAN (CONT'D)  
There's a password to get in. It's  
2290. Can you remember that?

She nods.

STAN (CONT'D)  
Good. There's some fun games on  
there too. Old school Atari stuff.

Wide-eyed silence.

STAN (CONT'D)  
But no Facebook or Twitter. Deal?

She just stares at Stan for a beat, then:

GIRL  
(beaming)  
Gracias.

STAN  
De nada.

And with that, the Father fires up the truck and they pull away.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - FROYO TRUCK - DAY

Stan and Marvin sit on the curb next to a froyo truck, eating  
in silence as cars whiz by.

It's a bizarrely beautiful Los Angeles moment in time.

MARVIN  
(re: the froyo)  
All the satisfaction, half the guilt.

STAN  
Any talk about me at the office? Or  
like, anyone even notice I left?

MARVIN

Not so much. But don't take it personally -- those people, their brains have been rewired to reject anything that interrupts the mundane.

More silent froyo enjoyment.

MARVIN (CONT'D)

All right, I'll bite: quitting your job, selling all your shit, then what? Moving back in with your folks?

STAN

No. Hell no.

(beat)

Can I tell you what I'm thinking? No judgement?

MARVIN

You know I can't make that promise.

STAN

I wanna go off into the woods and just -- live, you know? Get away from everything we're told is important and necessary to purchase, or to like, use to measure our self worth, and just... connect with what's real. Me and Nature. Bear Grylls style.

Marvin nods, processing that.

MARVIN

Right. Except you're not Bear Grylls, you're a Jew from SoCal. We're not a hardy people, Stan. All that trekking across the desert? That was a really long time ago.

STAN

I just need to unplug. Think for myself. Get away from social media --

MARVIN

Okay, then take a social media hiatus, man. Lots of people do that. You know what lots of people don't do? Sell all their shit and move into the woods. That's not even Kerouac cool. Even he had a cabin.

STAN

I'm gonna have a cabin. Or like a lean-to or something.

MARVIN

"Like a lean-to or something."

(then)

Okay. Have a look at this.

Marvin digs into his pocket and pulls out his iPhone, does a quick search then holds it up for Stan to see. JUNGLE SOUNDS ring out, followed by the quirky odd cadence meets rich German accent that is WERNER HERZOG:

WERNER HERZOG (FROM IPHONE)

Of course we are challenging nature itself, and it hits back. It just hits back, that's all, and that's grandiose about it, and we have to accept that it is much stronger than we are. Kinski always says it's full of erotic elements. I don't see it so much erotic, I see it more full of obscenity. Nature here is vile and base. I wouldn't see anything erotical here, I would see fornication and asphyxiation and choking and fighting for survival and growing and just... rotting away --

Stan finally reaches out, stops the video.

STAN

That's plenty of that.

MARVIN

Herzog knows what nature can do to a man.

(then)

Look, I get that work sucks. And losing your apartment sucks. And what happened with you and Stacy? That really sucks. The modern world's fucked. A dream dies every 1.5 seconds. But we keep stewing in it. Why? In the hope that one day it might suck a tiny bit less.

Beat, as Stan takes in the entirety of Marvin's message.

STAN

I can't. Not anymore.

With that Stan gets up, grabs Marvin's empty froyo cup and his own and tosses them into a trash can.

MARVIN

Feel like I'm watching my little Billy camp in the backyard for the first time. So when it starts to rain, or you get scared and piss your pants, come on in and I'll make you some hot cocoa.

Marvin joins Stan, throwing an arm around him as they start the walk back to his apartment.

MARVIN (CONT'D)

Get this out of your system, then when you come back to civilization in -- let's put the odds at 47 hours -- you can crash on my couch.

STAN

Thanks, man. But don't wait up.

As Stan and Marvin disappear down broken valley streets --

INT. THE SUPPLY SERGEANT - DAY

A small local Army surplus store packed wall-to-wall with all your army/navy needs.

Stan pushes an empty shopping cart down one of the cramped aisles, stopping to peruse a backpack survival kit.

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

You lookin' to upgrade your kit?

Stan turns to see an EMPLOYEE, 40s, with a high and tight and vast knowledge of first-person shooter games.

STAN

Nope, just -- looking for your basic survival stuff?

EMPLOYEE

You in trouble?

STAN

What?

EMPLOYEE

You lookin' for trouble?

STAN

(awkward laugh)  
No. Thanks...

EMPLOYEE  
 (stone cold)  
 There's nothing funny about survival.  
 It's survival.

STAN  
 Right...  
 (beat, then)  
 Okay. I'm gonna get some water  
 cleaning stuff and a hatchet and  
 call it a day.

That seems to hit the Employee hard. And personal.

EMPLOYEE  
 Wow. At least get some astronaut  
 food, guy.

STAN  
 Why?

EMPLOYEE  
 Because it all tastes like cotton  
 candy. It's delicious.

STAN  
 I think I'm good.

That elicits a knowing smile.

EMPLOYEE  
 No you're not. But enjoy your death.

And he's off to find someone worthy of his expertise.

A silenced Stan grabs a few blankets and a couple packs of  
 astronaut food. Then checks for a rear exit...

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT - CURB - DAY

Stan hauls boxes of his belongings that didn't sell to the  
 curb, like a good Angeleno.

EXT. STAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

IPHONE POV as the front door closes, then turns towards the  
 street. SNAP! Freeze frame on the buildings's "FOR RENT" sign  
 -- where Stan's scrawled "GONE FISHING" over it in sharpie.

As the pic's uploaded to Twitter...

EXT. LOS ANGELES - I-5 FREEWAY - DAY

Brake lights as far as the eye can see.

INT./EXT. STAN'S CAR - I-5 FREEWAY - DAY

In the center of the gridlock, Stan throws his car into park, cranks up the tunes on his radio and walks out into traffic.

IPHONE POV as we ZOOM past all the cars, all the chaos, to a far off mountain range, twinkling like the yellow brick road.

SNAP! Facebook upload.

INT./EXT. STAN'S CAR - DAY

Stan's car veers off the main drag, disappearing into the majestic Angeles National Forest.

EXT. ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST - DAY

Remnants of day light peek through the thick canopy as we TRACK DOWN a bumpy path flanked by endless rows of Redwood trees cutting into the sky like church steeples.

Switch to IPHONE POV -- SNAP! Then a caption is typed in: "Promised Land?" before the image is uploaded to Instagram.

EXT. ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST - CLEARING - DAY

Stan stands next to his car in a small clearing surrounded by nothing but miles of forest. He breathes it all in for a luxurious beat, then starts walking away, taking out his phone.

IPHONE POV -- About a hundred yards away, Stan's car looking tiny amongst the underbrush. SNAP! Then the caption: "Home?" before it's uploaded to Twitter.

EXT. ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST - CLEARING - NIGHT

Stan sits perched against the trunk of a giant Redwood. All is silent save for the crackle of a mildly successful fire, which he uses to heat up a can of beans.

Stan stares into the flames. Mesmerized.

A long beat of utterly pristine silence... Until:

FLAP!!! FLAP!!! FLAP!!!

A sudden assault of wings and noise and danger!

STAN  
WHAT THE SHIT?!

Stan ducks for cover, swatting wildly at the air.

When he finally sits up, he sees a large owl perched on a branch next to him -- wide eyes staring back with stoic curiosity.

Stan returns the stare. And as his heart stops pounding the two share a moment.

Then just as quickly the owl takes flight again, and Stan watches as it disappears into the night.

EXT. ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST - CLEARING - NIGHT

IPHONE POV -- Stan sits into FRAME, ducking under a few pieces of wood zip-tied together and leaning against his car to create a shelter. He pulls a metallic emergency blanket tight around his shoulders as he looks DIRECTLY INTO CAMERA:

STAN  
So... despite the naysayers, I'm  
still alive. Made a fire. Cracked  
open a good ol' can of baked beans.

Stan wrestles around in his pocket and pulls out a candle. He smashes it into the congealed beans, lights it off the fire, and holds his "cake" up for the CAMERA to see.

STAN (CONT'D)  
Happy birthday to me. And to you,  
Douglas Kenney.  
(cheers)  
To doing something by 32.

Stan blows out the candle, then digs a heaping spoonful of beans and swallows it down with a long contemplative beat.

STAN (CONT'D)  
This isn't a suicide note. Even if  
everyone I know thinks this is a  
suicide mission. It's the opposite.  
I wanna find life.  
(considering that)  
I wanna get away from everything we  
use as crutches to stop ourselves  
from thinking. To so desperately stop  
ourselves from feeling.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

STAN (CONT'D)

I've only been here a few hours, but that actually feels like a really long time when all you have to do is think. Realized a few things about myself: I've never had more than \$1000 in my bank account, never had a single morning commute to work where I wasn't already counting the hours until I was done, and I've had -- well, a few, but one ex in particular recently -- tell me that I need to grow the fuck up. She definitely used the word "manchild" more than once. Said I need to be an adult and start marching to everyone else's beat.

Finding his way as he warms his hands over the coals.

STAN (CONT'D)

Fun fact: that's what I have been doing. I've done the 9 to 5. Or, more like the 8 to 7, for a long ass time. I have filled every silence with my fancy smart phone like a good soldier. Twitter. Facebook, SnapChat. I've done 'em all. And whatever I'm supposed to be moving towards? It keeps getting further away. Or maybe it doesn't exist. I don't know anymore... but I do know that I am empty.

(then)

So this is me saying "No, I will not march to that. No, I will not be a part of your creepy algorithms. No, I will not continue to give you everything and get nothing in return. Just -- NO!"

Stan rises and picks up the phone. His face now fills the FRAME.

STAN (CONT'D)

If anyone sees this video, do me a favor: don't like it. Don't retweet it. Don't share it. Don't do anything with it. Just turn off your screens, go outside, and do literally anything else that makes you happy.

And with that, Stan tosses the phone on the ground. We're now ANGLE UP, as he stands over us.

Then his boot smashes down -- our POV now through cracked glass.

More stomping, again and again and again until our view finally goes BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - VARIOUS FREEWAYS - DAY

Orange sky over another morning on LA's clogged arteries.

CUT TO:

An iPhone -- Stan's video plays on YouTube.

STAN (ON THE SCREEN)

This isn't a suicide note. Even if everyone I know thinks this is a suicide mission.

CUT TO:

A desktop -- More of Stan's video, linked through Twitter.

STAN (ON THE SCREEN) (CONT'D)

No, I will not continue to give you everything and get nothing in return.

CUT TO:

INT. STACY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Stacy sits at her granite breakfast bar with an oversized coffee mug, staring daggers at her iPad.

STAN (O.S.)

...but one ex in particular recently -- tell me that I need to grow the fuck up. She definitely used the word "manchild" more than once.

And Stacy flips the cover, shutting off the video.

A few angry sips of coffee... then she can't help herself -- casually opens the iPad and starts watching the rest.

INT. MARVIN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

More of Stan's video plays on a laptop through Instagram -- the final moments, where he stomps the screen to blackness.

REVEAL Marvin, still in his pjs, curled up on the couch in his studio apartment, laptop resting on his stomach.

MARVIN

Fight the good fight, broheim.

Then he closes the computer and unpauses the TV, filling the room with the whimsical accordion theme song to Amelie.

EXT. ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST - CLEARING - DAY

A thoroughly disheveled Stan rises from his forest floor slumber. He stretches out his spasming back then finds the open can of beans from last night and settles in for breakfast.

Then a RUSTLING sound pulls his attention to the nearby treeline. And there, bathed in morning light, is a baby deer pulling ever so gently at some fresh shoots of grass.

Stan quietly lowers his can and crawls over to get a closer look. The baby deer lifts its head, notices him, but keeps on munching.

Then another baby deer joins in, sharing in the feast.

And finally mama.

Stan instinctively digs around in his pocket for his phone, hoping to snap some pics... then remembers what he did.

So instead he just sinks deeper into the grass and watches the simple beauty of the deer family taking in sustenance.

Not through a screen, but through his own tear-filled eyes.

It's perfection.

VROOOOMMM!!! The idyllic moment is violently interrupted by the sounds of APPROACHING CARS.

The deer scatter, disappearing into the trees.

Stan looks around, utterly confused by the sudden intrusion. And there, on the same path that lead him to this promised land: a car pulls in.

Then another.

And another.

Over a dozen of them, filing in one by one, jockeying for position. Parallel parking amongst each other. Cramming the clearing with engines and metal and rubber and noise.

Stan starts running towards the cars, waving his arms as people begin exiting the newly-made parking lot.

STAN  
HEY! HEY! What are you doing?!

A mass of people spill out of the vehicles, all ages and sizes.

The murmur of the crowd falls silent, replaced with peace-dripping smiles as their eyes land on Stan.

STAN (CONT'D)

Hey! No, no -- wrong turn, this  
isn't fuckin' Burning Man...

But Stan's waving and yelling only serves to enlarge their smiles. One member of the group, a square-jawed lawyer type, JOSH, 30s, newly freed from the confines of a half Windsor, approaches with measured zeal.

JOSH

So sorry, we didn't mean to  
intrude, Stan.

That stops Stan in his tracks.

STAN

Uh... do I know you?

BETTY, 20s, a time capsule of a quintessential 1960s California blonde, with kind eyes and a predisposition to all things fringe, steps forward.

BETTY

We know you.

Another member speaks, ELI, 60s, glasses obscuring a round cherubic face that's also oddly ferret-like. And looks like it could definitely fix your transistor radio.

ELI

We saw your video.

STAN

Wait -- what video -- from yesterday?  
Didn't think that even uploaded.

ELI

Oh it uploaded.

JOSH

You've started a conversation,  
Stan.

Beat.

STAN

I did?

JOSH  
Yeah you did.

ELI  
You said what everyone was feeling.

JOSH  
But were too fuckin' asleep to say.

STAN  
Okay, look -- I appreciate  
that, but --

ELI  
It's gotten over 200,000  
views.

SCREECHING HALT.

STAN  
200... thousand?

Stan works hard to fight back the grin curling his lips.

BETTY  
All for you and your manifesto,  
Stan.

STAN  
(restrained hubris)  
I don't know if I'd call it a  
manifesto, per se --

JOSH  
But that's exactly what it is.

ELI  
A new way of living.

STAN  
That's not what I was --

BETTY  
And I don't think you need to grow  
up, Stan. She sounds like a dick.

Stan doesn't hate hearing that... But it's all too much, he  
starts pacing, trying to wrap his brain around this.

STAN  
Okay... How? How did you find me?

BETTY  
All those incredible pictures.

ELI  
Were also GPS pings.

JOSH

And this was the final one. Stan  
amongst the Redwoods.

ELI

So here we are.

STAN

Yeah, here you are... but why?

BETTY

(matter-of-fact)

We needed to be the first.

That pierces the oxygen-rich air, sending a chill down Stan's spine.

But before he can respond, the crowd disperses, fanning out amongst the makeshift campsite, taking it all in -- Stan's shelter, the big tree, his broken iPhone -- every inch, with child-like awe.

Stan just watches. Silent. Reeling.

Then, with one eye fixed on his new "guests," Stan inches closer to the group of cars. And that's when he sees it, each backseat, each trunk, overflowing with:

Plywood. Rope. Ladders. Chainsaws -- a plethora of material.

Some special little worker bees could build a shit ton of lean-tos...

STAN

Fuck me.

SMASH TO BLACK.

And the Beatles' "Act Naturally" blasts out:

RINGO STARR (SINGING)

*They're gonna put me in the movies.  
They're gonna make a big star out of me.  
We'll make a film about a man that's  
sad and lonely.  
And all I gotta do is act naturally.*

END OF PILOT