

TOX-SI-CITY
(PILOT)
"DIVA"

Written by

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TEASER

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

It is a small but popular nightclub. The floor is packed with fans in band shirts and rock groupie gear. They're all on their phones, messaging and taking photos.

The lights dim, and everyone becomes quiet.

ON STAGE: A slightly dirty red curtain rises. A rock band with the name "Stilted Illusion" painted on the drum kit stands.

SINGER (20s), a punk woman in leather, comes up to the mic.

Everyone holds up their phones.

BACKSTAGE: In the shadows, a hand holds up a phone. On the phone is the Band. The hand uses his fingers to zoom in on the Singer. The hand belongs to a SHADOWY FIGURE, who gives an eerie grin at the Band -almost Cheshire cat grin-like. A stalker?

ON STAGE: Singer keeps her eyes closed. She takes in the SILENCE and raises her arm in the air as she takes the mic with her other hand. She chop motions and the BAND PLAYS.

INSERT SONG.

The fans love the song. Love the band. They dance and sing with the lyrics.

BACKSTAGE: The stage lights light up the darkness a little. The Shadowy figure with the phone now shown belongs to XENO (mid-30s), a tall man with shaggy medium-length hair in a disheveled business casual.

ON XENO'S PHONE: the band continues to play. The number of likes and views rises.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

ON XENO'S PHONE: The same band. The numbers slow down, but views and likes are in the millions.

At a table, Xeno shows the Band his phone.

XENO

Great show, guys. A few more concerts, and we can move on from being the opening act to the main event.

The Band nods, WHOOPS, or pumps their fist with a "HELL YEAH!". They celebrate by drinking.

BRICE (O.S.)

Heyo!

Everyone turns to see BRICE (mid-30s), a man with tattoos resembling a rock band drummer, enter with multiple shooters.

BRICE (CONT'D)

Look who's got the goods. Best manager in the world. Am I right?

The Band grabs a shot and excitedly drinks it.

XENO

Slow down, guys. Remember you still have rehearsal tomorrow.

BRICE

Relax, Xe. Let the kids enjoy the win. It's not like I gave them some spice or something.

XENO

Haha. Hilarious, Brice.

He pulls Brice to the side and away from the band.

XENO (CONT'D)

But seriously, I told you and Wilder--

BRICE

--You don't want to be that kind of label. I know. I'm just yanking your chain. So chill.

Xeno runs his hand through his hair in frustration.

BRICE (CONT'D)

Xe, you really do need to cool it. You've been wound up so tightly lately. Too controlling. It's becoming a real drag. So take a page from mine- Hell, take one from your boy's, Wilder's, book, and chillax.

XENO
Wilder's, huh?

He scans around and sees...

Lots of people have a good time. In a booth, a couple kisses and snuggles up against each other close. Very romantic.

XENO (CONT'D)
Yeah, you're right.

BRICE
Of course, I'm right. Now go to the bar, get a glass of their highest proof, unwind, and enjoy the win like the rest of us.

XENO
Nah. I'm gonna head home and enjoy a different kind of win.
(takes out phone)
Take care of the band. No spice or any type of drug. Got it, Brice?

Brice nods, confused.

Xeno shouts "Bye" to the band and leaves.

INT. MANSION - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The door opens, and Xeno enters with a smile as he excitedly struggles to take off his shoes.

XENO
I'm home. Wilder? You up?

SILENCE. Xeno raises an eyebrow, puzzled. He puts his shoes on the rack-- he sees a pair of men's shoes next to a pair of high heels.

XENO (CONT'D)
What the...

It hits him. He drops his shoes and rushes down the darkly lit hallway.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

BANG! The door slams open, and the light from the doorway shines on the bed where two lumps lie.

The one lump rises as the cover slides off, revealing WILDER (mid-30s), a nicely built man with short blonde hair. Wilder glares at the door, jerks, then frowns.

WILDER

Shit.

Xeno stares, stunned.

XENO

What the... what the fuck, Wilder?
You said you wouldn't do this
anymore. You said--

WILDER

--Yeah, yeah. Don't get your
panties in a twist, Xe.

Wilder reaches over the side of the bed, grabs his pants, and takes out a cigarette pack and a lighter. He sits back and lights a cigarette nonchalantly as the covers move, revealing LYRA (20s), a drop-dead gorgeous girl.

XENO

Are you shitting me? With Lyra?

WILDER

What? I told you she had good
vocals. And, damn, did I not lie.

XENO

Fuck, Wilder. Can you take this
seriously for once in your goddamn
life--

WILDER

(stern and dangerous)
--Oh, shut the fuck up, Xeno.

Xeno balks in fear and surprise and shuts his mouth.

WILDER (CONT'D)

(smokes cigarette)

I texted you. I called you. No
answer. So I needed to let off some
steam. Shit happened, and it was a
blast. Would like to say I'm sorry,
but I'm not.

XENO

I was with the band--

WILDER

--Which is Brice's job. Not yours.
He's the manager. You're--

XENO

--A producer.

Xeno's hand tightens into a fist and angrily shakes it.

XENO (CONT'D)

I know that. But I just--

WILDER

--Ha! Yeah, right. Sometimes I
wonder, Xe.

Wilder blows smoke, then runs his hand through his hair in irritation.

WILDER (CONT'D)

You know what?... I'm too tired for
this shit. So let's talk this out
in the morning--

XENO (O.S.)

--Fuck... you.

Wilder raises an eyebrow and looks up to see...

Xeno stands in the doorway, head bowed and angry.

XENO (CONT'D)

I'm done.

(laughs)

I'm done with this... this
bullshit. I'm done. Goodbye,
Wilder. Was nice. But God, you are
a piece of shit.

Xeno storms out. Wilder watches, bored, and smokes.

LYRA (O.S.)

You sure you want him to leave?

Lyra sits up as Wilder hands her the cigarette. She takes it.

WILDER

Look at that. Sleeping Beauty has
finally decided to grace us with
her presence.

LYRA

Ha ha. Very funny.
(puffs)

(MORE)

LYRA (CONT'D)
But seriously, isn't he your
partner or something?

WILDER
Yeah. This is just a routine we
like to play.

LYRA
That's pretty sick.

WILDER
Yeah, but Xeno loves it. And
besides...

He takes back the cigarette and smokes with an evil grin.

WILDER (CONT'D)
He'll be back. He always comes
back.

INT. TRIXIE - NIGHT

A pink and purple lounge with an atmosphere that reads cozy
and suave.

Xeno, miserable and a little drunk, sits at the bar. He
stares at his phone.

ON PHONE: His thumb hovers over a picture of Wilder and him.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Hey, good looking.

A WOMAN, maybe a Drag Queen, their voice is high pitched, and
we only see the backside of their big curly hair/wig and
dress, approaches Xeno, who jerks then looks up, startled but
mostly spooked.

Beautiful and cherry lips smile in a mischievous and alluring
way.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
Want to have some fun?

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. TEMPTRESS RECORDS - WAITING AREA - DAY

Xeno slowly opens his eyes as he comes out of the memory. He looks much healthier and a little built. His hair is still medium-length but kempt. He's much better than when he was with Wilder.

SUPER: MONTHS LATER...

Xeno looks around as he sits in...

A luxurious open room with leather seating and the company's logo of a goddess with headphones singing behind the reception desk.

Xeno stares longingly at the logo.

JESSICA (O.S.)

Xe?

Xeno jumps a little, shakes his head, and looks perplexed over at JESSICA (40s), a Black woman in a high-end pantsuit.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Don't spin. We're here to make a deal and get out. Got it?

Xeno nods.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Good. Now, deep breath in...

Xeno does--

WILDER (O.S.)

--Xeno!

Xeno jerks and CHOKES on the air. He COUGHS, then sees a friendly Wilder walk in with open arms. He's the opposite of the jerk Wilder from the Teaser.

WILDER (CONT'D)

I'm so happy you're here. I missed you.

Xeno stares. His eyes widen in fear and shock. He and Jessica slowly stand as Wilder comes closer-- Jessica steps in front of Xeno.

JESSICA
Hello, Mister Wilder. My client and
I are ready to discuss--

WILDER
--Jess! Holy shit, it's been
forever. You look good.

JESSICA
Bitch, it's been five minutes since
I called you. Cut the crap, and
let's get this meeting over with.

WILDER
Sure. Sure. Buuut...

Wilder intertwines his fingers, then points them over and
behind him at his LAWYER.

WILDER (CONT'D)
My Lawyer here wants to refine some
last-minute details with you, Jess.

Xeno goes rigid as Jessica growls.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Which means... Xeno gets to wait
with me until you guys are done. I
mean...

Wilder gets a good look at Xeno. He likes what he sees.

WILDER (CONT'D)
It has been a very long time, after
all. Right, Xe?

JESSICA
You mother fucker--

XENO
--It's okay, Jess.

Jessica looks at Xeno in surprise.

JESSICA
You sure? You know what he's trying
to do, right?

XENO
Yes, which is why I have to go.
(awkwardly smiles)
I'm a big boy, Jess. I can handle
him.

Jessica doesn't buy it--

WILDER (O.S.)
--Hello?

Xeno and Jessica turn to glare at devil-may-care Wilder.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Are we doing this, or what?

JESSICA
I really, really do not like this.

Xeno smiles, takes a deep breath, and walks toward Wilder. Wilder smirks at Jessica, then leaves with Xeno.

Jessica flips Wilder off as Lawyer facepalms.

INT. WILDER'S OFFICE - DAY

A flashy and intimated music producer's office with records, band instruments, and awards on the wall.

The door opens as Wilder lets Xeno walk in first.

WILDER
Come on in, Xe. Can I get you a drink? You're still partial to the fruity ones, right?

Xeno ignores him, heads straight for one of the armchairs in front of the desk, and sits. Waiting.

Wilder frowns, then playfully shrugs and sits behind the desk.

XENO
Thank you for seeing me--

WILDER
(tenderly smiles)
--It's always good to see, Xe.

XENO
(not amused)
Mister Wilder. If you looked at my business proposal. I'm sure you will agree that this is a good--

WILDER
--But why, Xe, I thought we were partners.

XENO

We were. But now, I'm done. You can have it all. Hell, take your love nest too.

WILDER

(lightly chuckles)

Well, it is in my name.

Xeno deadpans. Really?

WILDER (CONT'D)

Hey, you said you were busy. And the realtor wanted the papers signed, and you never did. Soooo.

XENO

Yeah. You're right.

Wilder grins. He's winning.

XENO (CONT'D)

But... this is not about that.

WILDER

(jerks, then saddens)

Right... that night.

XENO

No...

Wilder looks up at Xeno, hopeful.

XENO (CONT'D)

It's that night... and all those other five fucking nights. And that's starting from when we were in college. And, and, and why I forgave you for all those fucking times I just don't--

--He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. He calms down and becomes more professional.

XENO (CONT'D)

But... it's not just that. I want to spread my wings, Wilder. I want to take on more challenging projects. But to do that, I want, no, need to end this relationship. Not just with you but with Temptress Records.

WILDER

Sooooo, let me get this straight. Temptress Records, the company we founded together, and the talent you and I found, signed, and are trusted with... aren't enough of a challenge.

XENO

No!-- I mean, no, they are. I still want to work with them-- I mean, not by taking them away from you or anything. Shit. What I mean is... What I'm trying to say is--

WILDER

--Xe. It's okay.

Xeno pauses, confused.

WILDER (CONT'D)

I get it. I hear ya. It's like you said. I'm was... am a piece of shit.

Xeno stiffens at the sincerity of Wilder's voice.

WILDER (CONT'D)

That night... and all those other nights...

Wilder looks up at Xeno with the most heartbroken face.

WILDER (CONT'D)

I thought I could do whatever I wanted... No consequences... You'd come back to me... to Temptress Records with open arms... But... these last couple of months without you... The quiet. The loneliness. Have made me realize...

Xeno stares, dumbfounded at...

Wilder looks up with the most heartbroken face.

WILDER (CONT'D)

I was wrong. I'm sorry, Xe. For everything.

Xeno's eyes widen, stupefied. He blushes and looks down in fear. His eyes dart back and forth, then he closes them and tenses in distress.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Xe, please... Forgive me--

--DING!

Xeno opens his eyes.

Wilder tilts his head in confusion. He watches Xeno, head still bowed, take something out of his pocket.

Xeno looks down at his phone. He smiles, distress gone.

Wilder stares in confusion, then rears back as he sees...

Xeno looks up at Wilder with determination and full of confidence.

XENO
No. I'm not falling for that again.
I'm done. I want out.
(stern & eyes narrow)
Now.

Wilder looks at Xeno, bewildered. He switches back to his suave and stubborn playboy self.

WILDER
Wow. This is new. I kinda like it--

--It hits Wilder as he smirks.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Oh. Xe, did you... meet someone?

Xeno stiffens a little.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Ah. So that's it. No wonder you want to leave.

Xeno acts strong, even under Wilder's cruel, pleasure-seeking gaze.

WILDER (CONT'D)
But it doesn't really matter.
(slyly smiles)
Here's the thing, Xe. I'm not letting you out. My Lawyer introduced me to this little thing called the golden handcuff agreement. Heard of it?

XENO

Yes. But since we're going strong,
I'm safe from it.

Wilder swivels in his chair with a LONG HUM, then interlocks
his fingers and points at Xeno.

WILDER

Not really.

XENO

Wilder? What did you do?

WILDER

Many things. Those months you
decided to ghost me, well... I had
a lot of free time. A lot of
decisions to make. And... you were
nowhere to be found. So. As they
say, Karma's a real bitch. Hehe.

Xeno gapes. Shit.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. TEMPTRESS RECORDS - WILDER'S OFFICE

Wilder puts his feet on the desk and leans comfortably back in his chair as Xeno stares, distraught.

WILDER

Chill, Xe. It's not so bad. All you have to do is make us some money and maybe, just maybe, I'll let you out. How does that sound?

Xeno stands. Furiously, he opens his mouth-- then pauses. Then, he grits his teeth. He takes a deep breath, calms down, and heads toward the door.

WILDER (CONT'D)

Awe. Love you too, Xe!

Xeno pauses, hand on the doorknob. Behind him, Wilder smirks. He's winning again-- KNOCK. KNOCK. Xeno and Wilder jerk.

BRICE (O.S.)

Yo, boss. We got a problem. Again.

Xeno shakes his head, opens the door, and leaves, passing Brice.

BRICE (CONT'D)

Hey, Xe. Long time no see...

Brice stares, confused, in the direction Xeno took off in. He turns to Wilder, who playfully shrugs.

INT. XENO'S OFFICE - DAY

The door opens as Xeno steps in. He turns on the light to see...

A producer's office with some awards and photos on the wall. It's warm and inviting, the complete opposite of Wilder's office.

Xeno steps further in and tiredly SIGHS. He heads towards the desk, then pauses as he looks at the photos:

- Newspaper clipping about Xeno and Wilder being the best in the music industry and the rise of Temptress Records.

- And Xeno and Wilder with many different singers and bands and their rise to fame.

Xeno smiles, then sits behind his desk-- He spots a framed photo on his desk.

ON PHOTO: It's a happy Xeno is in the arms of Wilder.

Xeno reaches toward the framed photo. His fingers stop with them, barely touching where Wilder is. He put the framed photo face down on the desk.

Xeno places his head in his hands. Hiding himself. His hands clinches his hair in anger. His one hand forms a fist, then slams down on the desk-- DING! Xeno's fist stops right above the desk.

Xeno takes out his phone and smiles. He taps and places his phone on the desk. Then, he leans back and closes his eyes as he relaxes and listens.

INT. ECLIPSE RADIO - STUDIO - DAY

The bottom portion of an elegant MALE RADIO HOST's face with piercings and a rose tattoo on his neck comes to the mic. It's dark, but his goth attire is clearly visible.

MALE RADIO HOST
(velvet and alluring)
Hello, my dear, lovely listeners.
How are you on this fine,
auspicious day?

INT. TEMPTRESS RECORDS - XENO'S OFFICE - DAY

Xeno sits back, eyes still closed and listens. The gothic voice calms him as he continues to be entranced by it.

MALE RADIO HOST (V.O.)
I, for one, know how trying today
can be. But we should not let
anything or anyone distress us.

Xeno places his hand on his chest, over his heart. He clutches his shirt with every BIG word.

MALE RADIO HOST (V.O.)
For this world can be full of
insanity. Depravity.
(darker tone)
Toxicity.
(normal)
(MORE)

MALE RADIO HOST (V.O.) (CONT'D)
That's why I'm going to play this
charming little ballad for you to
hear... to listen.

Xeno silently nods.

MALE RADIO HOST
Here they are, Rhapsody of the
Broken Heart. Relish it, my dear
listeners.
(haunting)
For you deserve it.

Xeno listens. SILENCE. Then... HEAVY METAL MUSIC PLAYS. It
calms Xeno and makes him smile, almost loopy. Like he's
high... or cracked. BANG! Xeno jerks and sits upward, then
hurries to TURN OFF the music. He looks towards...

In the doorway, Jessica stands angrily.

JESSICA
I hate them. I hate them all.
That's it. Plan B. We're burning
this place down to the ground.
Leave no witnesses.

XENO
I'd rather not have to bail us out
of jail.

JESSICA
I like to see them try.

Jessica sits in one of the chairs before the desk and points
to herself.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Love being a Lawyer.

XENO
(chuckles)
It didn't go so well on your end,
too, I see.

JESSICA
He was just as big of a pain in the
ass as his employer. Ugh. You got
any booze in here?

XENO
At the moment... I wish.

JESSICA

Shit. Love you like the brother I wish I had, buuutttt...

XENO

Yeah. I know, Jess. Thanks for being here. For putting up with this. With me--

JESSICA

--Hey, hey. None of that. What are best friends for if not to put up with each other's shit.

XENO

Yeah.

Xeno and Jessica tenderly smile at each other.

WILDER (O.S.)

Awe, that's so sweet.

Jessica frowns as Xeno jerks. They look towards the doorway to see Wilder.

JESSICA

Fire. Big one. I know people. Trust me. I can get it done.

XENO

It's okay, Jess. I'll handle it.
(to Wilder)
What do you want, Wilder?

WILDER

No need to get your panties in a twist, Xe. I've got this little itty bitty problem, and I need you to handle it.

JESSICA

Why, Xe? Last time I checked, you were the big, important music producer.

WILDER

Hey, look at that. You get why I can't do it, Jess.

Jessica looks ready to kill. Xeno frowns, annoyed

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

It's with Enzo.

Xeno blinks, dumbfounded.

WILDER (CONT'D)
(shrugs & tenderly smiles)
Your choice. I just thought I make
it easier for you to get back into
the swing of things by helping out
an old friend.

JESSICA
Oh, bullshit--

XENO
--I'll do it.

Jessica looks at Xeno, surprised.

XENO (CONT'D)
It's Enzo.

JESSICA
Fine. But if this is a trick.
Remember, I know people.

Wilder puts his hands to say "I got it", then waves goodbye
and leaves.

WILDER
Don't fuck this up, Xe. We're all
counting on this.

Xeno nods, then stands up with a smile.

INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY

A state-of-the-art sound studio designed with soundproof
walls and a high ceiling to ensure optimal acoustics for
creating music videos. In the middle is a stage platform with
a green screen. Cameras and sound equipment are all around
it.

Xeno enters and looks around in amazement.

BRICE (O.S.)
Fucking finally.

Xeno jumps as Brice approaches him on his phone.

BRICE (CONT'D)
Wilder, what took you so long--

--Brice looks up and pauses, shocked. YELLING comes from
Brice's phone.

BRICE (CONT'D)
Shit. Sorry, Xe. Things are tight
right now, and I have to deal with--
(Re: phone)
I'm coming! Shit, don't do anything
stupid until I get there. You hear
me? Shit.

Xeno, stunned, watches Brice leave in a hurry.

ENZO (O.S.)
Xe?

Xen jumps again and turns to see ENZO (late 30s), a dark-haired man with a goatee transition lens, approach him.

ENZO (CONT'D)
Holy shit, man! It really is you.
Where you've been?

XENO
Good to see you too, Enzo. Sorry,
I've been trying to work through
some things.

ENZO
Ah. Wilder. Say no more. Not
surprised. Hate him, but the dick
pays my bills.

XENO
Nah, it's okay. So. I'm here.
What's the problem?

ENZO
Uuuuuuhhhhhhhh.

LYRA (O.S.)
Yo, Enzo!

Xeno and Enzo go rigid. They both turn to see Lyra, in a pop star outfit, come towards them.

LYRA (CONT'D)
We filming this shit or what?

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. TEMPTRESS RECORDS - WILDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Wilder lounges in his chair, bored, as he plays a video game on his computer. Next to him, his phone is on speaker.

WILDER

Look here. You want my song; you gotta pay the due. You think kids care about some crappy scene.

BIGWIG (V.O.)

Excuse me?

WILDER

You heard me. How many viewers did you get for the last film?

SILENCE.

WILDER (CONT'D)

Exactly. How many times did people watch that one scene with my song?

SILENCE.

WILDER (CONT'D)

(smirks and raises voice)

How many times did--

BIGWIG (V.O.)

--A shit ton.

WILDER

Exactly. Worked in the eighties. Works today. So pay up.

The phone BUZZES. Wilder looks down at it. He silently makes an "Oh shit" face.

BIGWIG (V.O.)

Who's that?

WILDER

Uh, another client. Wants the song, too.

(smirks)

Hear it's a romcom.

The phone BUZZES again.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Yeah, they're making a comeback.

The phone BUZZES again.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Like a little bitch.

INT. FILM STUDIO - DAY

Xeno angrily listens to the DIAL TONE from his phone. Next to him, Enzo sits in his director's chair and waits by playing games on his phone. Xeno GRUMBLES in frustration and hangs up.

ENZO
Dick.

XENO
Tell me about it.

Xeno runs his hands through his hair as he takes a long breath. He calms down.

XENO (CONT'D)
It's fine. We'll just be professional and do the video.
Easy.

Enzo stops playing on his phone, leans back, and gives Xeno a look that reads: "You serious?".

XENO (CONT'D)
What?

ENZO
You've been gone far too long, my friend.
(to everyone)
Alright, people. Let's take it from the top!

Enzo puts his phone away as everyone gets to their places.

On the stage platform, Lyra closes her eyes and lowers her head. MUSIC PLAYS.

INSERT MUSIC.

Lyra opens her eyes and dances.

Lights flash. Smoke fills the floor. Dancers come on and dance with Lyra as BASS REVERBERATES.

Xeno smiles. Next to him, Enzo counts down with his fingers. He hits zero--

--Lyra stops, annoyed. Music STOPS.

Xeno watches, confused. Enzo remains neutral.

ENZO (CONT'D)
What is it now, Lyra?

LYRA
(points to dancer)
He's off again.

Enzo leans over a little towards his ASSISTANT.

ENZO
Was he off?

ASSISTANT
Nope.

Enzo tiredly SIGHS but plays nice.

ENZO
Let's take it from the top. Again.

MUSIC STARTS. Lyra starts well. Then... She messes up again.

XENO
Really?

ENZO
Oh, just you wait. It gets better.

LYRA
Xeno! I can't work like this. I thought you were a professional.

XENO
Just... just try it again. Please.

Lyra rolls her eyes, but she does. MUSIC STARTS. She and the dancers are doing well. Her heel breaks, and she falls down.

LYRA
Are you shitting me?! What the hell?

XENO
Why don't we take five? Get Lyra better... everything.

ENZO
You heard the man! Better
everything!

Xeno gives a "really" face.

ENZO (CONT'D)
Sorry, man. Long day. Not you.

Xeno and Enzo glare at Lyra, who walks off towards the dressing room. They both continue to scowl. Xeno tiredly sighs and rakes his hand through his hair in distress.

ENZO (CONT'D)
You can take five, too, Xe. You
look like you need it.

XENO
Time is money, as they say.

ENZO
Yeah, but it's not my money.

Xeno goes rigid at the word: "MY money".

XENO
(sotto)
Shit.

Enzo notes Xeno's unsettledness. He opens his mouth-- Xeno hurries to the exit. Enzo gives a "what the" stare.

Not far away, hidden behind the door to the dressing room, Lyra watches with a smirk. She takes out and types on her phone.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Xeno enters and leans against the wall. He tries to control his breathing as his hand forms a fist.

XENO
Shit.

Xeno BANGS his hand on the wall.

XENO (CONT'D)
Fuck!

CLATTER! Xeno looks down to see his phone on the floor. He quickly picks it up and sees...

ON PHONE: the radio app is still opened with the name "ARTEMIS" in black and red gothic lettering.

Xeno lightly smiles. He takes out his earbuds and puts them in, then pushes PLAY.

MALE RADIO HOST (V.O.)
Well, hello again, my dear lovely
listeners. Did you miss me?

Xeno leans with his back against the wall and listens.

INT. ECLIPSE RADIO - STUDIO - DAY

Male Radio Host has his fingers interlaced as he leans into the mic with a playful grin.

MALE RADIO HOST
Don't worry. There will be an
abundance of euphoric music to
come.

INT. MUSIC STUDIO - HALLWAY - DAY

Xeno puts a hand to his ear and pushes the earbud in as he listens in delight.

MALE RADIO HOST (V.O.)
I can hear you begging me for more.
But you must be patient. For
waiting can be just as rewarding.

KINKY RINGTONE GOES OFF. Xeno jumps. He quickly looks at his phone as the radio app SHUTS OFF. He softly smiles and answers.

XENO
Hey, Angel.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Hey, baby. I'm thinking Italian.

XENO
Italian?

ANGEL (V.O.)
For dinner. Or Asian.
(gasps)
Ooh. There's that new Thai place.
Very hot and spicy.

Xeno laughs.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Someone's in a good mood.

XENO
Only because I get to hear your
voice.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Awe, aren't you sweet. So, should I
make the resy?

Xeno smiles, then opens his mouth--

LYRA (O.S.)
--Oh my fucking God! Really?! Did
you just do that in front of me?

Xeno frowns and lets out a shaky SIGH.

XENO
Angel... I'm sorry.

ANGEL (V.O.)
Hey, hey. None of that. Don't spin,
Xe. You're better than that.

XENO
Yeah... Hey, Angel... You know...

ANGEL (V.O.)
Yeah, I know. But tell me anyway.

XENO
Angel, I lo--

LYRA (O.S.)
--Yo, Xe!

Xeno goes rigid. He turns to see...

Lyra, agitated, in the doorway.

LYRA (CONT'D)
We doing this shit, or what? Some
of us have better things to do with
our time.

Xeno frowns as he watches Lyra leave.

XENO
Sorry, Angel. I'll call you later.

He hangs up and heads towards...

INT. FILM STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Xeno approaches Enzo, who sits in his director's chair.

ENZO
Sorry, dude. She slipped by me.

XENO
Don't worry about it, En. Let's get through this just once.

ENZO
You heard the man. Just once, Lyra.
Can you do that?

On the stage platform, Lyra gives the middle finger.

Enzo leans over to his Assistant.

ENZO (CONT'D)
Can I say the certain word?

XENO & ASSISTANT
No.

Enzo scowls.

MUSIC STARTS. Lyra gets into it and does great. It looks to be a successful shoot-- BOOM! SCRATCH on a RECORD. Everything halts. Lyra GROWLS and CURSES.

XENO
Now what?

ANGEL (O.S.)
Hi, honey!

Xeno jerks, then everyone looks to see...

In the doorway, ANGEL (28), a bratty blond-haired boy in a short pink skirt with black leggings underneath and a white tank top, enters. It's the Drag Queen from the Teaser!

ANGEL (CONT'D)
(sings)
I'm here!

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. MUSIC STUDIO - DAY

Everyone stares, dumbfounded, as Angel enters.

XENO
Angel?

ANGEL
Xe!

Angel runs over and glomps Xeno.

XENO
What are you doing here?

ANGEL
I didn't like how you sounded. Was around the corner and... well, here I am.

XENO
Angel... I--

ENZO (O.S.)
--Holy shit, Angie. Is that you?

Angel and Xeno look at a stunned Enzo.

ANGEL
Enzo! I didn't know this was gonna be your picture. You should've called me.

ENZO
Wanted to, but heard you were less flexible these days.

ANGEL
Not for you, babe.

XENO
You two know each other?

Lyra stares at the scene, stupefied but mostly angry.

ENZO (O.S.)
Oh course. Angie and I go way back. Need a dancer or an acrobatic performer, call Angel.

ANGEL (O.S.)
Awe, you're so sweet.

LYRA
Uh, hello? My music video. Can you
have this little get-together some
other time?

Angel scowls, upset that he was interrupted. He looks up and
down at Lyra, smirks, then approaches her.

ANGEL
Well, well, well. If it isn't the
prima. What's the matter? Having
trouble with the steps?

LYRA
Oh please. I can dance circles
around ya, donna.

ANGEL
You wish you were a donna. Cause at
least I can get...
(SNAPS fingers)
...down.

LYRA
Wow. Sad.

ANGEL
Not as much as you are.

Xeno watches the verbal catfight with intrigue. The gears in
his head are turning.

LYRA
You wanna go, pinkie.

ENZO
Wait a minute, guys.--

--Xeno holds up his hand to SILENCE Enzo. Enzo looks at Xeno,
confused, but then rears back a little as he sees...

Xeno grins. He's exactly like how he was in the Teaser when
he filmed the band.

Angel stands tall and leans closer to Lyra with a mischievous
grin.

ANGEL
Always, prima.

Angel moves the side as Lyra does the same.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Keep up, girly.

LYRA
Same to you, pinkie.

Both nod their head towards...

SOUND MIXER AREA: The sound tech finds a warm-up song and
MUSIC STARTS.

Enzo sits up a little, worried and not sure this is a good
idea. Next to him, Xeno's composed and enjoying the show a
little too much.

DANCE OFF. INSERT SHORT WARM-UP SONG.

Angel and Lyra dance perfectly and in sync with the song,
pushing each other as the Dancers join in. The SONG ENDS with
a big finish.

Everyone, including Xeno, HOOP, HOLLER, and APPLAUD.

Enzo gently smiles and opens his mouth--

WILDER (O.S.)
--God damn. That was good.

Enzo frowns as Xeno jerks. They both look over to see--

Wilder leans against the doorway with a smug expression.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Hey, Lyra! Looks like you've got
some competition.

LYRA
Excuse me?

WILDER
You heard me, bitch.

Lyra growls, upset. Angel places his hands on his hips and
looks at Wilder with a confused "who's this guy?" agitated
expression and manner.

WILDER (CONT'D)
What's your name, pinkie?

XENO (O.S.)
Angel.

Wilder raises an eyebrow in confusion and looks at first
stern, then shy Xeno.

XENO (CONT'D)
His name is Angel.

Wilder looks, with his eyes, back and forth from Angel to Xeno. Then it clicks.

WILDER
Oh. Interesting.

Wilder heads towards the platform and gets a closer look at Angel.

WILDER (CONT'D)
So how about it, pinkie? We dress you up as Lyra and fix you in post. Everyone wins, and we all go home happy. Right, En?

ENZO
Right. Sure. But--

LYRA
--Excuse me? This is my video!

ANGEL
--Sure, sounds fun.

XENO
Are you serious?

WILDER
Why not? Lyra's not cutting it.

XENO
You shitting me? Did you not see her dance before?

WILDER
Then what do you suggest we do, mister big important producer?

Xeno ponders, then looks up to see all eyes are on him. He becomes nervous. Panic-stricken.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Come on, Xeno. Let's go. Time is money.

LYRA
Xeno!

ENZO
Xeno? You okay, man?

Xeno STRUGGLES with his words. He closes his eyes and frantically calculates-- THAWP! Angel lightly flicks Xeno's forehead.

ANGEL
Don't spin, Xe.

Xeno nods.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Close your eyes. Breathe. And think. What do you want to do?

Xeno does. He opens them, calmer. He grins as an idea comes to him.

XENO
Dance off.

ENZO
Uhhhh. Didn't we just do that?

XENO
With the song. Angel goes first. Then Lyra. We'll use the one from whoever does the best. No matter what. Okay?

WILDER
Sure, I'm down with that. Let's see what our little primas got.

Enzo scowls, then lets it go.

ENZO
Fine. You heard the man! Let's get Angel in gear! We shoot in ten!

Everyone gets to work.

LATER:

Angel, in an almost matching look to Lyra, stands on the stage platform and gets ready. MUSIC STARTS. He dances perfectly.

Xeno watches Angel dance in amazement on the sidelines near the wall.

WILDER (O.S.)
Nice going.

Xeno jumps, then looks next to him to see a nonchalant Wilder.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Lyra's been a pain in the ass for a while. And, yay, I know what you're thinking, but she brings in a shit ton of money. So.

Xeno scowls and ignores Wilder by going back to watching Angel perform.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Awe, don't be like that. We were such a great team before.

XENO
Team? Bullshit. You tried to replace your girlfriend with someone else.

WILDER
News flash, not my girlfriend.

Xeno rolls his eyes and huffs. Of course.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Aaand, we didn't. Did we?
Besides... tell me you didn't want to see her go.

XENO
Maybe... But that's what separates you from me. I don't let my personal feelings get in the way of my job.

WILDER
You sure about that, Xe?

Xeno raises an eyebrow, confused.

Wilder smirks. Likes that he has Xeno's attention and is getting under his skin.

Xeno frowns. Instead, he focuses his attention on...

Angel dances hypnotically and almost in slow motion.

WILDER (CONT'D)
He's cute. Never thought I see the day you top, Xe. Congrats. We should throw a party.

Xeno GROWLS.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Chill, Xe. I know you're a one-on-one guy.

Xeno flinches a little. Wilder notices, doesn't say anything, just smirks.

WILDER (CONT'D)
Anyway... Glad you stepped up to the challenge. Keep up the good work, and we'll be back on top in no time.

Wilder gets off the wall and heads towards the exit--

XENO
--I'm still leaving.

Wilder looks back and sees a determined but uneasy Xeno look at him.

WILDER
We'll see.

He waves his hand as he leaves.

WILDER (CONT'D)
See ya around, babe.

Xeno stares stupefied. He blinks a couple of times as he calculates, then looks at...

Angel happily dances.

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

INT. MUSIC STUDIO - HALLWAY - NIGHT

ON ANGEL'S PHONE: Angel dances to SONG.

Angel, back in his original outfit, leans against the wall as he watches himself on his phone.

XENO (O.S.)
You were amazing.

Angel looks up to see...

Xeno walks over and leans on the wall next to Angel.

ANGEL
I'm the best, babe. Never forget
that.

XENO
I won't. Shall we head out?

ANGEL
Yay.

EXT. STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Xeno and Angel exit the building. Xeno notices Enzo smoking not far from them. He waves.

Enzo glances at Xeno, ignores him, and continues to smoke.

Xeno tilts his head in question.

ANGEL
Go. I'll wait.

Xeno nods and walks towards Enzo.

XENO
Hey, En. Great work today.

Enzo frowns.

XENO (CONT'D)
Enzo?

ENZO
Xe. Listen, man. You've been gone
for way too long.

XENO
Yeah, but I'm back now.

ENZO
Yeah... Xeno, you're my boss. And
I'm saying this with the utmost
respect.

XENO
I thought we were friends, too.

ENZO
Exactly. Which is why I need you to-
(dead serious)
-back off.

XENO
What?

ENZO
You heard me. Thanks for the help
with Lyra today, but you literally
took over my scene, my crew, and my
job.

XENO
What do you mean? I thought I was
helping.

ENZO
Like I said, you've been gone for
way too long. I got used to my
freedom, and don't get me wrong, I
like that you're back, but at least
with Wilder, I could create. Well,
unlike today, that is. But then
again, you two always played games
with each other...

Xeno's taken aback by this.

ENZO (CONT'D)
Shit. I'm getting off-topic.
Anyway, yeah, I know it's you two's
money. Your company. The
producer... But please, next time,
let me direct. Earn my keep. Okay?

Xeno feels ashamed. He silently nods.

ENZO (CONT'D)
Good. Thanks, Xeno.

Enzo snuffs out his cigarette with his shoes and leaves.

ENZO (CONT'D)
Hope I see ya later.

Xeno watches Enzo go, stunned.

ANGEL (O.S.)
Xe! The car's here!

Xeno nods and heads towards a red Tiguan car parked along the curb. He gets in...

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Xeno climbs into the passenger seat and sits down.

ARTEMIS (O.S.)
How did it go?

Xeno looks next to him to see the Male Radio Host, ARTEMIS (38), a red-and-black-haired refined goth boy with glasses, in the driver's seat.

XENO
Hey, Artemis. It went...

Xeno pauses. Not sure what to say. Angel leans forward from the backseat.

ANGEL
I think it went great. See.

Angel holds up his phone as MUSIC PLAYS from the video.

ARTEMIS
Adorable.

Artemis notices Xeno's silence while he drives.

ARTEMIS (CONT'D)
What about you, Xe? How did your main objective go?

XENO
Rejected.

ARTEMIS
(under his breath)
Of course, he did. Still the same old bastard he's always been.

Xeno notices Artemis' eyes harden with hate and disdain.

XENO
Yeah. He is. And I still want to
leave. Leave... everyone.

ARTEMIS
With Wilder.

XENO
Yeah. Shit.

Xeno stares out the window. He sees a large poster with a
band. In the corner is the label Tempress Records.

ENZO (V.O.)
You've been gone for way too long,
Xe. Back off.

LYRA (V.O.)
Xeno! I thought you were a
professional.

BRICE (V.O.)
Too controlling?

WILDER (V.O.)
Which is Brice's job. Not yours.
He's the manager.

WILDER & ENZO & LYRA & BRICE (V.O.)
You're--

XENO
--The producer.

Artemis and Angel look at Xeno, confused.

XENO (CONT'D)
Shit.

ARTEMIS
Don't spin, darling.

ANGEL
Yeah. We're here for you, Xe. No
matter what.

XENO
Thanks, guys.

Xeno looks out the window again.

EXT. STREETS - CONTINUOUS

A billboard sign with Lyra and the Temptress Records logo on it.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Xeno smirks.

XENO
Yeah. Let's do this.

END OF TAG/EPISODE