

CREATIVE PROCESS

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The soft STRUM of an ACOUSTIC GUITAR -

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

JEFF (mid-30s, always tired, unshaven) eyes slowly come to -

A HARDER STRUM-

Jeffs eyes roll open - he lifts his head still half asleep - looks down the bed -

At the foot of the bed - MAGNUS (50's, ageing rocker - Alice Cooper meets Jim Morrison with a dash of Liam Gallagher - sits tuning an acoustic - cigarette hangs from mouth.

Magnus - looks over to Jeff - lowers head looks down his sunglasses - smirks - speaks with a thick Midlands accent and a chipper tone:

MAGNUS
Morning sleepyhead.

Jeff GROANS sinks his head back into his pillow -

Magnus starts to play the guitar - does a BLUES RIFF -

MAGNUS (CONT'D)
(sings)
Oh Jeff. Don't let the day get away
from you!
(gets louder)
Oh Jeff, I said don't let the day
get-away-from-you.

Jeffs eyes ping open - he throws his head back as frustration sets in:

JEFF
Alright! Okay!

Jeff launches upwards - sits bolt upright:

JEFF (CONT'D)
I'm awake.

Jeff sits up - he rubs the sleep from his eyes - Slovenly turns to Magnus -

Magnus still strums along -

Behind them the TITLE: CREATIVE PROCESS.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Jeff - in pyjamas and a dressing gown, eats cereal - distant, deep in thought -

Across the table - Magnus sits he faces outwards - he smokes - turns head towards Jeff- exhales then:

MAGNUS

You know what I like for breakfast?

Jeff - chomps away, does his best to ignore Magnus.

Magnus ignorant - remaniscs:

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

Cocaine, Orange juice and Marmalade
on toast - mostly with the cocaine.

Jeff breaks from his cereal- spoon half raised to mouth - his attention turns to Magnus - left brow raises:

JEFF

Isn't that a bit too cliché?

Beat - Magnus digests this - he's offended, composes himself - leans in towards Jeff's direction:

MAGNUS

The fuck you just say to me?

Jeff backs down - eats his spoonful of cereal - shrugs then:

JEFF

Sorry.

Beat - Magnus sighs - shakes it off, relaxes:

MAGNUS

Fine.

(beat, then)

Look. I get it. You got shitty
feedback and you're apprehensive.

(sighs, then)

Comedy isn't for everyone and that
agent...

(sits back, swats hand)

Just one person. Move on. Write
about me.

(MORE)

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

(dismissive)

So she didn't like that character,
Paul...

From behind Jeff - PAUL (early 30's, over anxious, nerdy)
stands up - clutches head leans in to Jeffs ear - spirals:

PAUL

But she was right. I'm not funny. I-
I'm a mess.

Across the table - Magnus snorts a line off his index finger -
turns and SNAPS at Paul:

MAGNUS

Oi, back in the queue.

Paul eyes Magnus - he's scared of him - hands raised backs
away.

PAUL

Sorry.
(pats Jeff on the
shoulder)
Good luck.

MAGNUS

(to Jeff)
Just remember - keep me humble.
Alright?

Paul sinks out of view - behind Jeff.

Jeff exhales - a small chuckle.

On the breakfast table - His phone RINGS -

Caller ID: LINDA BARONATELLI.

Jeff freezes - eyes locked on phone.

Magnus clocks the phone - SNAPS:

MAGNUS (CONT'D)

Come on. What you waiting for?
Let's hope it's that tidy number.

JEFF

You can't say that.

MAGNUS

What? I didn't.
(nods over to Jeff)
You thought it...

Jeff answers the phone - flustered- attempts to sound-upbeat:

MAGNUS (CONT'D)
(chuckles)
Deviant.

JEFF
Hey! This is Jeff.

MAGNUS
(scoffs)
Look at this smooth player!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. RECEPTION - DAY

JESSICA (30s), bright and easy-going, works reception at a busy agency - phones ringing, people passing.

Into her headset, charming:

JESSICA
Well hello there, "this is Jeff".
It's Jessica calling from the Linda
Baronatelli Agency, I'm glad I
caught you.

Jeff BLUSHES - hands clasp around MASSAGES his shoulders -

It's Magnus - who leans in and whispers in his ear:

MAGNUS
(confident)
You got his amigo.

JEFF
(voice cracks)
Hey Jessica.

Magnus releases his grip - stamps away - over theatrical:

MAGNUS
Fuck me.

INT. RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

Jessica smiles - types at her computer.

JESSICA

I was wondering if you were free
for a chat with Linda? By the way I
personally loved Forager.

JEFF

(flustered)

Oh.. That's great. I'm glad it
could be of interest to.. Uh.. You.
And Yeah I can talk to Linda.

JESSICA

Great.

JEFF

Great. How about dinner some time?

JESSICA (V.O.)

She's on the line.

JEFF

Oh. Uh..

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

LINDA (50's, seen it, done it type, bold, blunt) sits at her
desk - feet up on table surrounded by stacks of screenplays -

She eats a sandwich- wipes her mouth, then:

LINDA

Hey Jeff. Loved the book.

(exclaims)

Duane, what a character, he had me
laughing, crying and loving him all
at once -

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jeff is buzzing -

DUANE (mid 20's, action hero type, shaved head, thick
glasses) appears up from behind Jeff - he is psyched -

DUANE

Get in there!

He takes a seat at the table - leans in fist bumps Jeff.

LINDA (V.O.)

But...

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Linda holds the manuscript in her hand - shes enthusiastic, but holds back - brow raised.

LINDA
The Anatoli character - I liked
everything BUT him. He seemed... A
little.. Uh...
(beat, then)
Vaudevillian, villain.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ANATOLI (50's, Dick Dastardly, meets Doctor Evil) sits
between Jeff and Magnus - he wears a hunting suit - twirls
the corner of his moustache with his fingers.

ANATOLI
(sneers)
She makes a point you know.

Jeff - stares at Anatoli - he knows she's right.

JEFF
(mumbles)
Shit.
(to Linda)
Yeah. You make a solid point. I'm
really sorry.

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Linda sits forward on her desk - her tone almost surprised:

LINDA
Hey. Don't be sorry, it's a great
manuscript. I can work with this-
(beat, then)
Just not this version. Reckon you
could get me a new draft by Friday?

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Jeff - taken back for words - leans back in chair - stunned.

Magnus, Anatoli and Duane all leaning in waiting:

MAGNUS
Well?

JEFF
Yeah. Uh. Sure. I- I could
definitely do that.

LINDA (V.O.)
Great. And uh- rain-check on that
dinner. Okay.

JEFF
Oh. Uh- Okay, but I meant-

The line goes to DEAD TONE:

JEFF (CONT'D)
(deflates)
Jessica.

Anatoli sits back in the chair - he claps hands together -
smirks at Magnus - teases:

ANATOLI
Looks like you're out Magnus!

Magnus sinks his head into his hands - anger, disappointment,
sad all rolled into one.

Jeff-turns to Magnus - full regret mode:

JEFF
Sorry Magnus.

MAGNUS
(cuts in)
Nope. It's alright.
(stands)
I get it.
(straightens jacket)
I know where I'm not wanted.

He places his guitar down carefully - leaves head down.

Jeff - shrugs turns to Anatoli and Duane.

JEFF
Least he didn't smash it.

Magnus- storms back in, full rage:

MAGNUS
Now who's cliché?..
(storms back out)
Prick.

Jeff - looks like a deer in headlights, turns back, then to the others.

CUT TO:

INT. HOME OFFICE - LATER

Jeff - dressed in Hoody and slacks - takes a seat at his desk - he takes in a deep breath - readies hands to type - looks at the screen:

JEFF
(mutters)
Okay - let's do this.

ON SCREEN: FORAGER - WRITTEN BY JEFF TREAGAR - the screen starts to scroll down through pages of filled out story.

Jeff sat forward scrolling - squints at screen - he stops -

Leans back -

ON SCREEN: a paragraph of written description: ANATOLI - tall, hunter-type, long twirling moustache, theatrical.

Jeff stares - hard thinking engaged.

Anatoli leans in over his shoulder - too close.

ANATOLI
Yes. Yes. You know what to do!

Jeff goes to write - THEN -

FROM UPSTAIRS: the sound of an electric guitar being plugged in.

Jeff - eyes open wide - it's gone.

JEFF
I.. Uh.. Uh.. I can't think.

Jeff sits back - hands cover his head -

Duane comes in from the right - looks at the screen then at Jeff - his tone, upbeat:

DUANE
Mate. You've got this. There's no pressure, you wrote the first draft in three nights.

Jeff- turns to Duane, his tone sullen:

JEFF

But it's been six months.

ANATOLI

(empathic)

And now you got Jim Morrison pining
upstairs, I know. But it's okay.
Take your time.

Jeff nods - assured, he turns back to the screen - Anatoli
and Duane leaning in over each shoulder -

Jeff goes back into concentration mode, he types - sits back -
deep breath - something's not right.

JEFF

Hmm.

Jeff turns -

Behind him sat on the sofa - Anatoli - now in a steam punk
suit, coiffed hairstyle and a monocle - holds a small dog his
demeanour now more, condescending:

ANATOLI

Bit on the nose don't you think?

Duane - arms folded leant against Jeffs desk shakes his head,
then:

DUANE

Bit too Bond villain now.

Jeff - horrified turns from Anatoli to Duane - then back to
the screen -

Face plants desk and GROANS:

KNOCK - from the FRONT DOOR-

Jeff - slowly raises head - the room now empty.

SECOND KNOCK.

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff answers the door -

JEFF

(puzzled)

Dad?

On the other side - NEIL (Jeff's dad, 70's, chipper, retired)

NEIL
I thought I would pop in for a
cuppa?

JEFF
I'm kind of in -

Neil pushes past Jeff- cuts him off:

NEIL
You've got milk right?

JEFF
Yeah.

Jeff closes the door - sinks into himself -follows Neil.

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Jeff and Neil sit opposite each other, coffee in hand.

Quiet beat - Neil sips.

Jeff watches - Duane and Anatoli looming behind him, eager.

DUANE
You reckon he's going after this?

ANATOLI
No. He'll tell us about television
last night -

An alarmed look hits Anatoli -

NEIL
Oh I watched this documentary on
Napoleon last night, rather
informative.

Anatoli - now dressed like Napoleon shrugs and looks himself
up and down:

ANATOLI
Qu'est-ce que fucking c'est?

Jeff takes a sip from his coffee - does best to ignore Duane
and Anatoli - his tone almost teeters on impatient:

JEFF

I didn't see it. I was starting to plan out that musical book. The one about the rocker.

NEIL

(enthused)

Oh yeah. And how's it going?

Behing Neil - sprawled out across the kitchen side - Magnus - in full loud open shirt and leather pants attire, he tilts his glasses - looks down them - cocky:

MAGNUS

Yeah poppet. How's that going for you?

JEFF

It's - uh- coming along.

(sips coffee, then)

But I got to do a rewrite on Forager. Got a literary agent wants a copy by the end of the week.

NEIL

(gets up)

Why didn't you say so? I'll get myself off then.

DUANE

(giggles)

He's getting himself off.

Anatoli - SLAPS Duane round the back of his head:

ANATOLI

Le plutard - ce le papa, non respect non?

Jeff stands -

JEFF

Lovely to see you dad.

Neil putting on jacket - edges to the door:

NEIL

I did enjoy reading that one when you sent it through.

JEFF

(surprised)

You did? You read it?

Neil and Jeff walk to the front door:

NEIL
Course I did. I read all your work.
You're a real creative guy Jeff.

Neil hugs Jeff:

NEIL (CONT'D)
But sometimes you just need a kick
up the arse.
(beat then)
Love you son.

JEFF
Love you too dad.

EXT. JEFF'S HOUSE - PORCH/DRIVEWAY - DAY

He walks out the door and off up the drive, stops and turns back.

NEIL
But. Personally, I Would have put a
female protagonist in there, short
hair, cigarette smoking, tough as
nails
(beat, shrugs then)
But that's just me.

Neil walks off away.

On the porch - MELISSA (30's, matches Neils description)
leans against the wall, smoking.

She clocks Jeff.

MELISSA
He has a point you know.

She stubs the cigarette - pushes past him into the house.

Jeff stands there - a half-smile, close to cracking.

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - HALLWAY/ OFFICE

Jeff closes the door - rests his head against it.

A beat.

He heads down the hallway - voices and guitar rising ahead.

ANATOLI (V.O.)
And just who the fuck are you?

MELISSA (V.O.)
I'm a new potential protagonist, go
by Melissa and you are -

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Melissa looks Anatoli up and down - almost bemused.

MELISSA
Some kind of some flamboyant,
elitist?

ANATOLI (V.O.)
Woah. Woah. Woah. Back the fuck up!
This is just a brain fart.

Jeff stands in the doorway he watches as chaos unfolds -

Anatoli Melissa, Duane and Magnus - who strums random notes
at his guitar argue in the kitchen.

DUANE
(impressed)
I think she's a tight addition.

ANATOLI
Shut the fuck up loverboy! The
agent said I was the character this
is about ME!

MELISSA
(almost disgusted)
Who says I'd end up with him?

Magnus stops strumming - looks up at Melissa.

MAGNUS
About ninety-five percent of these
types of books.

Jeff can't take any more - SNAPS:

JEFF
Okay - Everyone shut the fuck up!
Enough is enough.

Jeff turns away from the kitchen walks down the hall past the
front door as -

A LEAFLET slides through.

Jeff pulls it out - checks it over.

THE LEAFLET: "JESUS HAS RISEN."

Beat.

Jeff bites his lip - rolls his eyes as he crumples it. He turns -

In front of him - JESUS (mid 30's, but modern, in a black suit and sunglasses) shrugs.

JESUS
Hey. Just saying how about twist
villain?

JEFF
Hello. No.

Jeff storms past Jesus - past the others in the kitchen and out the back door - it SLAMS behind him.

JESUS
(stunned)
Wow.

CUT TO:

EXT. JEFF'S HOUSE - BACK GARDEN

Jeff slumps onto a wooden bench - pulls a pack of cigarettes from his pocket -

Puts a cigarette to his mouth - lights it.

He takes in the first pull - holds it. His eyes shift left -

Next to him - JEFF #2 (more confident) sighs:

JEFF #2
You know what the problem is?

Jeff - all ears.

JEFF #2 (CONT'D)
You need to reset. Plain and
simple.

JEFF
I do?

JEFF #2

Yeah.

(taps head)

Think about it. What's your
creative process?

Jeff thinks - his brow raises - an idea hits.

INT. JEFF'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jeff sits with popcorn and remote - CLICKS.

A movie starts.

JEFF

Oh my god this is my favourite
movie.

Jeff #2 - in the armchair nods with a smirk.

JEFF #2

I know. I kinda am you. We all are.

JEFF

You make a good point.

Jeff watches the film - EXPLOSION come from the T.V.

JEFF #2

So. She didn't like the villain?
That's alright. You have the idea
there already, you just ain't put
the stew together yet.

Jeff #2 turns to the T.V - his eyes widen:

JEFF #2 (CONT'D)

Oh my God this bit. So funny! I
always thought it's pretty crazy
how many rock stars played villains
in the nineties. But fuck did it
work... Most of the time.

From the T.V - the sounds of slot machines clicking into
place - JACKPOT - as Jeffs eyes widen - the idea hits.

Jeff #2 smirks - nods to Jeff.

JEFF #2 (CONT'D)

Yeah...Oh And ask Jessica out.
Don't puss out on me with this.

They turn back to the movie - Jeff - refreshed.

FADE TO:

INT. LINDA'S OFFICE - DAY

Linda sifts through the manuscript - sobs uncontrollably -

Across the desk - Jeff - eagerly awaiting feedback - fumbles with his tie.

Linda closes the final page - puts down the manuscript - grabs a tissue - wipes her eyes then:

LINDA

Jeff. This is truly something else.
I love it.

JEFF

You do?

LINDA

Are you kidding me? Changing
Anatoli from aristocrat to ageing
Rocker with an immortality complex.
What a move!

Behind Jeff -

Anatoli sits in the corner of the room - dressed like Magnus,
looks down his glasses and nods.

ANATOLI

You're damn straight it is.

LINDA

This I can work with.

JEFF

(elated)
That- That's amazing.

Jeff stands- over eagerly shakes Linda's hand.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Linda pulls back - curious

LINDA

Where do you come up with these
characters?

JEFF

Oh. You know...

(taps temple)

One big stew pot. I love to cook.

INT. RECEPTION - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff walks out of Linda's office - full of confidence and buzzing -

Anatoli following him behind.

ANATOLI

So we're making a follow up right?

Jeff looks off -

Magnus - now dressed like Nicolas Cage in "gone in 60 seconds" sits on a photo copier - he's not amused.

MAGNUS

Fuck you Jeff.

Jeff- stumbles- bumps into Jessica - knocks the paperwork out of her hand.

JEFF

Oh. Shit. I'm sorry.

They both scramble to pick it up.

JESSICA

Hey, it's okay.

Beat. Jessica stares into Jeffs eyes - smiles wide.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Congratulations Jeff.

JEFF

Ah hey. Yeah. Thank you. I still can't believe it myself.

JESSICA

I bet. So. Guessing that dinner is off?

JEFF

Uh- What no? How about tonight?

Beat. Jessica kisses him on the cheek.

JESSICA
I like the sound of that.

Jessica takes her papers and walks away -

Magnus approaches Jeff puts his hands around his shoulders -
they watch her walk away.

MAGNUS
Nice. Just like I taught you.

JEFF
Stay humble. A good friend told me
that.

Jeff smiles and starts to walk away - as he walks down the
long hallway Magnus follows.

MAGNUS
Alright. That was smooth, perhaps
I'll let you off.

They start to walk together - they pass Anatoli, Melissa,
Duane and Paul who clap and cheer him on.

Magnus wraps his arms around Jeff.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)
So. Obviously I think I should be
more a gentleman crook now? What do
you think?

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END.