

written by

EXT. SUMMER OF 1997 - OAKWOOD PUB PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Four guys in their late 20's - early 30's are hanging out in a near empty parking lot. Exhausted, sweaty and have seen better days.

A man and a woman walk by and acknowledge the group.

WOMAN
Great show guys.

They smile, thank her and continue with their conversation.

The couple walks to their car.

JARED
Well, that was cool.

JARED (late 20s) is the vocalist of the Heavy Metal band - HALLOWED REALM. He seems to force the optimism with his comment, but is also sincere.

He is the least 'Metal' looking person in the band. His hair is short, no tattoos and even though he wears black, it's plain and casual.

The band nods in agreement.

TYLER flicks his cigarette and looks toward his car across the parking lot. He is the same age as Jared, but fits the stereotype of a Metal guitar player.

TYLER
Can someone give me a hand with my cab?

BILL
Yeah, I got you.

BILL is the drummer and the oldest member of the band, at 31. He looks like a Blue Collared type, but with an abundance of tattoos and piercings.

SHANE is the bass player, also the youngest of the band, barely out of college. Like Tyler, he also fits the 'Metal' look ,except he has black and red shoulder length dread locks.

SHANE
Anyone need to make a call before we leave?

BILL
I just wanna sleep, bro.

SHANE
I hear you. I'm seeing double.

The band nods in agreement.

BILL
Did we get paid?

Jared chuckles and pulls out a 20 dollar bill. The guys sarcastically cheer in excitement.

BILL (CONT'D)
Woo! Score!

They all laugh. Bill and Tyler walk to the van, leaving Jared and Shane.

SHANE
Another night in front of 15
people. What's that? Four shows in
a row?

JARED
Yeah, well what can you do?

SHANE
We used to get at least 300 people
at these places.

JARED
I know. Once our demo comes out,
all this will be worth it.

SHANE (SIGHS)
I hope you're right.

JARED
No one said this was an easy life.

SHANE
We should call-

JARED (INTERRUPTS COLDY)
No.

The brief tension is broken up by a drunk man walking up to them.

He is shirtless, with a beer belly. There's an awkward wet spot on the crotch area of his jeans. He is middle aged, and a complete mess.

DRUNK GUY
Hollowed Realm MOTHA FUCKAAA!!!!
WOOOOOO!!!!

JARED (AWKWARDLY TRYING NOT TO BE ANNOYED)
Thanks man. What's up?

DRUNK GUY
I saw you fuckers the last time you were here! BADASS!

SHANE
Thanks. Were you at the first-

DRUNK GUY
Gotta move on stage more, though!
No one likes to watch statues perform!

SHANE
Yeah, I gotcha-

DRUNK GUY
Take the criticism! I'm probably your only fan.
(laughs obnoxiously and walks away)

The drunk man begins to sing one of the band's songs out of key.

SHANE (SARCASTICALLY TO JARED)
Did you hear that? We're statues.
We gotta move around more.

JARED (LAUGHS)
Well, you know, 15 people really gets us amped.

SHANE (SARCASTIC)
Especially in a venue that holds 500 people. The energy was sick tonight!

INT: OAKWOOD PUB - AN HOUR BEFORE - FLASHBACK CONCERT SCENE

HALLOWED REALM is in the middle of their set. A near empty dance floor stands before them. Four people are in the bar at the rear end of the room, their backs turned to the band.

The remaining concert goers are scattered along the floor - all fifteen of them....

The drunk guy is running around the middle of the floor, starting his own 'Circle Pit'. Raising his arms up and down like he's one of the tag team wrestlers - The Bushwhackers.

People watch in amusement as he yells at the rest of the crowd to join him.

No one does.

DRUNK GUY
Fuckin' pussies!!

The band is trying to get into it. They thrash around the best they could, but the energy is forced. They are exhausted and defeated.

JARED (TO THE CROWD)
You guys having a good time?!?!

A single 'WOO!' and a few claps follow. Tyler snorts and Jared forces a smirk, nodding his head in approval.

EXT. OAKWOOD PUB PARKING LOT - NIGHT

SHANE and JARED laugh uncomfortably as they talk about the show.

JARED
Oh man, that was rough. HA!

SHANE
I honestly think I heard myself
fart on stage.
(both laugh)

There is an awkward silence. The two are momentarily in deep thought.

JARED
Alright, you ready to get out of
here, Shane?

SHANE
Yeah, I'll drive tonight.

They both head toward the van.

The parking lot is empty other than the van. The venue's lights are off and everyone left for the evening.

A dark figure stands in the distance, next to a dumpster beside the venue.

Though we do not see its face, it's clear its attention is aimed at Jared and Shane.

The figure gives off an uneasy, malevolent presence yet stands still.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE VAN - NIGHT

The van doors open. Bill hangs his exhausted head out.

TYLER

You two done jerking eachother off,
yet? Let's go, already!

JARED (TO SHANE)

Looks like you have your passenger
for the night. (laughs)

TYLER

Fuck that! I'm too tired for this.

A half-asleep BILL groans in the background.

BILL

Will you BOTH shut the fuck up and
get in the van.

Everyone laughs.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

The band is miles down the road from the venue. They are in a rural area with dense woods and fog. Street lights are seldom and seem to only come every few miles.

Shane squints through the fog and the darkness, trying to follow the road.

Jared is sitting beside him. Bill is asleep, but Tyler is awake, reading a magazine.

SHANE

I used to love that this venue was
in the boonies, but I can't see
shit.

JARED

You sure you don't want me to
drive?

SHANE

No, I got this. Why aren't you sleeping, anyway?

JARED

I'm wired, dude. I really don't mind driving if you're tired.

SHANE

I'm good, man. Wide awake, no worries.

There is momentary, awkward silence in the van.

SHANE (CONT'D)

You think we can get by for another 8 months?

Jared sighs and shakes his head.

JARED

Don't. Not now.

SHANE

We've been making pennies. We thought we could do this ourselves, but -

TYLER

We're not calling him.

Jared reaches back and fists bumps Tyler.

JARED

Fuckin' right we're not.

SHANE

We need money, Ty. You been paying your mortgage?

Another awkward silence.

TYLER

No dollar amount is worth THAT.

JARED

You saw what he did, Shane. You really want that on your conscience?

SHANE

We saw what we saw, but the cat's out of the bag. Not like we can unsee it.

Jared and Tyler look at each other in disapproval.

SHANE (CONT'D)
He was at the show, by the way.

JARED
What? Tonight? Where?

Shane nods and smirks.

SHANE
He was in the parking lot. Waved to
me, but I kept walking.

Tyler and Jared sigh in frustration.

JARED
This fuckin' guy wont quit.

SHANE
Not like he's asking us to kill
innocent people, Jare'.

TYLER
He SAYS they're not innocent. How
the hell would we know?

JARED
We're not fucking killing ANYONE.
Okay? We're not!

Bill wakes up.

BILL
He said he can blind the
authorities.

Jared and Tyler sigh in frustration.

JARED
Christ! You, too?

BILL
I mean, he's got a point. I'm about
to be homeless. My child support is
behind and I'm about to go to jail
if I can't pay.

TYLER
That's your problem!

BILL

Is it just mine, though? What are you going to do if I'm in jail or have to work full time? Replace me?

The two don't answer.

SHANE

I have no home to go back to. I didn't want to be a bummer on this tour, but I lost everything. I know you two are tapped as well.

BILL

Letting your pride get in the way.

Tyler glares at Bill.

TYLER

Pride?

SHANE

Like I asked before, you been paying your mortgage?

Tyler doesn't answer. Just shakes his head.

BILL

We need to call him.

TYLER

This isn't the way to do it, Bill. What if they ARE innocent? What if he has us go after children, for fuck sake?

SHANE

They aren't innocent. He specifically said no children involved. We all saw and heard the same thing.

JARED

Exactly! We all saw it! Why do you want us to take part in that?

BILL

No consequences. The cops won't be after us and we will be set for life.

TYLER

No consequences? How about a guilty conscience?

BILL

You saw what these people are. Are you really gonna feel guilty for getting rid of the most vile shit stains on this planet, while playing a sold out stadium?

SHANE

He's right...

TYLER

We need to be successful on our own terms. Not like THIS. We're talented. It's not like we suck.

SHANE

Yeah, well how far is our so called talent really getting us?

A figure stands on the side of the road, not far ahead. He holds his thumb out. A hitchhiker.

Jared squints to see who it is and then his eyes widen.

JARED

No way...

TYLER

Holy shit! Is that him?

As they get closer, a smiling middle aged man in a black trench coat, waves them down.

SHANE

It sure is.

They roll down the passenger side window. The man HOWARD (50s) greets them. Smiling wide as he approaches.

HOWARD (ANIMATED)

Hell of a show tonight, gentleman!

The band isn't amused and doesn't respond.

HOWARD (CONT'D)

Something tells me you're ready to talk business?

Bill slides the door van open.

BILL

Get in.

