

SKETCH RETROSPECT

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. CHICAGO - MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART - DAY

A banner reads "SKETCH RETROSPECT" over the entrance.

A line of hyped-up Gothic HIPSTERS (18-30) snake from the door as an alt-style PODCASTER (30s) broadcasts.

The Hipsters wear eye patches and googly-eye glasses. They HOWL like wolves.

PODCASTER

It's rowdy and electric! Renegade
Art Podcast is here as we sponsor
the first ever "Sketch Retrospect."

A button-up couple of ART SNOBS (30s) sneer nearby.

ART SNOB 1

You're exploiting trash. He's not
an artist, but a fraud. A hack.

ART SNOB 2

He's a murderer. You're promoting
Gacy's clowns.

Hipster 1 and Hipster 2 get in the Snob's faces.

HIPSTER 1

Fuck'n pretentious snobs.

HIPSTER 2

Go masturbate to Rembrandt.

The Podcaster grins as the face-to-face confrontation grows more angry.

ART SNOB 1

Crass commercialization. Money for
murder.

The Art Snob 2 points to the podcaster.

ART SNOB 2

Your crappy podcast should be about
true crime, not art.

Hipster 1 gets in their face.

HIPSTER 1

Awooo!

Art Snob 1 shoves Hipster 1 who pushes back.

A physical fight erupts as Hipster 2 punches Art Snob 2.

The Podcaster steps away from the melee.

PODCASTER

Renegade Art in action. Come to the Museum of Contemporary Art and see for yourself. See and immerse yourself in the controversy of the "Sketch Retrospect."

Punches are thrown between the hip and the snob.

EXT. PLANTATION HOME - NIGHT

IRIS MYER (17) pounds on the door of a decaying manor as a storm rains down. Her soaked blond hair clings to her ivory face and her revealing dress sticks to her attractive body.

THUNDER BOOMS (O.S.)

CHYRON: The Early Years.

IRIS

Where's Wolf?! Where's my baby?!

She steps back while wiping the wetness from her face. She peers at the second story window which is open.

Lightening reveals an ominous silhouette of a burly old man.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Where the fuck is he, dad? You better not hurt him, you sick bastard!

A lump of sheep skin falls from above thumping on the brick porch. The undistinguishable lump bounces at her feet.

Iris SCREAMS as her eyes fill with terror.

The lump of sheep skin suddenly moves and a baby CRIES.

Iris unfolds the sheep skin away revealing WOLF "SKETCH" MYER, a delightful mulatto baby with coal-black hair.

INT. PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL - DAY

DOCTORS and NURSES are stunned in silence peering into a pediatric bassinet.

BABY CRIES (O.S.)

Iris barges in.

IRIS
Where's my baby?

She shoves past the Nurses and peers into the bassinet. Her eyes widen in terror.

IRIS (CONT'D)
What's wrong with him? His eyes?

She cries and cuddles the crying baby against her breast.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I'm here. I'll take care of you.

She sobs and rocks her baby as the Doctors and Nurses are filled with worry.

DOCTOR
Ms. Meyer, we'd like to perform an MRI.

Iris looks down at her crying baby.

IRIS
His eyes?

THE EYES OF THE CRYING BABY FIGHT EACH OTHER IN SEPERATE DIRECTIONS.

Iris covers the left eye and her baby stops crying. The right eye meets her teary eyes.

IRIS (CONT'D)
There, there. Momma's here for you.

EXT. CAIRO ILLINOIS - PARK - NIGHT

Sketch Myer (13) pedals his rattling bike as the moonlight shines on the convergence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. He carries a fishing rod and dangling catfish on a stringer.

CHYRON: The Cairo Years.

Sketch stops at a barbecue pit. He's now a slight delightful urchin wearing an eye patch over his left eye.

He collects leftover unused charcoal briquettes in a bag and stuffs them in a backpack.

EXT. CAIRO CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Sketch rides his bike along the decaying and desolate streets of the crumbling ivy covered buildings and vacant homes.

EXT. CAIRO PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

Sketch drops his bike and fish and dashes into the library.

MOMENTS LATER

He escapes out stuffing books in his backpack and straddles his bike.

EXT. MUD RIVER TAVERN - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Sketch pedals his bike down an alley to a remote tavern.

Sketch taps on the back door with his catfish dangling on the stringer.

A grimy BARTENDER opens the door and Sketch offers him the fish. The Bartender smirks while taking the dangling fish and motions him in.

INT. TAVERN - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

As the Bartender leaves, Sketch steals a ream of paper and snags pens and pencils from a holder. He stuffs them in his backpack as the Bartender enters with pill bottles and the empty stringer.

BARTENDER

Remember to tell your mom we need a deposit before we can refill her prescriptions. Your catfish ain't cuttin' it.

Sketch nods his head as he snatches the pill bottles and the empty stringer.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

We don't want any trouble, do we One-Eye?

He nods and splits.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - NIGHT

Sketch rides past monster oaks with moss like hair hanging down. A worn sign reads, "Magic Hands - Palm Readings and Massages."

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

He pedals his bike up to an aged mobile home resting on a charred plantation home foundation.

Sketch knocks on the front door and waits. He turns to a parked pickup truck a hundred feet away.

REX CRAWFORD (13), a worried white kid stares at him from inside the truck.

Sketch's mother, Iris (29) yanks open the door while wearing a revealing negligee.

IRIS

Bout time. I need some relaxation
after this one.

Sketch hands her the pill bottles.

SKETCH

You need to make a deposit.

IRIS

Yeah, yeah...

She rattles the pills.

IRIS (CONT'D)

...give me an hour.

She closes the door.

Sketch leaves while walking his bike near the truck with his fishing pole.

He waves at Rex as he goes by. Rex follows him with his gaze.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

A giant oak hangs over the river with a sturdy treehouse set within the thick muscled limbs.

FROGS CROAK (O.S.)

Sketch drops his bike. He heaves his backpack upon the treehouse landing and climbs up a ladder.

SKETCH
Hey, Froggy. No fishing tonight.

He disappears into the treehouse.

INT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

A kerosine lit lamp reveals a messy teen hideaway of an unrolled sleeping bag and crumpled clothes.

However this is Sketch's artist retreat with crude, yet realistic drawings of decaying buildings and oddball residents tacked to the wall. Riverboats and tugs powering barges are interspersed.

After closer inspection, there are explicit nudes of his mother having sex with numerous men. Some include tarot card reading and pot smoking. These sketches and paintings are dark and brutalist compared to the others.

A "Making Paint" book is open next to a bowl where Sketch scrapes briquettes with a pocket knife. He continues by using the knife handle in pulverizing the smaller chunks to the consistency of gunpowder.

He stirs in vegetable oil to make black paint. He brushes it on the stolen copy paper.

Sketch untacks a drawing and kneels down to brush black paint. He paints black figures hanging from the oak tree limbs which support his treehouse.

AN HOUR LATER

Sketch waves and blow dries his painting.

PICKUP LEAVES THE DRIVEWAY (O.S.)

Sketch scampers down the ladder with his painting.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Sketch knocks at the door while holding his painting.

SKETCH
Mom! Mom!

STEPS AND CUPBOARD BANGING (O.S.)

IRIS (O.S.)
Hold on hon'. Just changing the
sheets.

Sketch is antsy while listening at the door.

SKETCH
I want to show you something.
C'mon.

The door opens with Iris embarrassingly covering her neck with her hand.

IRIS
I bet you're hungry. How bout a Hot
Pocket?

He shrugs noticing red choking marks around her neck.

SKETCH
Did he do that?

She enters the small kitchen and takes out a Hot Pocket from the freezer.

IRIS
Can't keep the caveman from coming
out.

SKETCH
He didn't like his future? His
reading?

IRIS
You can say that.

She pops the Hot Pocket into a microwave as Sketch sits at a dinky table toying with his painting.

SKETCH
There was a boy in his truck. He
seemed worried when I waved at him.

IRIS
They're city folk. Afraid of the
shadows beyond their street lamps.
My cards tell me his father isn't a
friendly man. However, he helps pay
for groceries.

SKETCH
Make your deposit. My catfish
wasn't enough.

The microwave timer DINGS. Iris salutes him like a general.

IRIS
Yes, sir.

She juggles the Hot Pocket in her hands and flips it to a paper plate. She lays the plate in front of him.

IRIS (CONT'D)
How's school today? No fights, no bullies?

He shakes his head as he cools the Hot Pocket with a blow.

SKETCH
They're afraid of me.

IRIS
You didn't take off your eye patch again?

He shakes his head and bites into the Hot Pocket.

SKETCH
I read how to make paint.

IRIS
Did you use your library card this time?

He freezes.

IRIS (CONT'D)
You can't go around swiping books.
If I go up into that oak, how many books will I find?

He shrugs.

IRIS (CONT'D)
You have to take them back when your done. It's called lending not stealing. What were you going to show me?

Sketch lays his hanging tree painting on the table.

SKETCH
I used charcoal from the park.

Iris stares at it for a moment as Sketch points to a dark figure hanging from a limb.

SKETCH (CONT'D)

That's Froggy.

IRIS

I could kill my father's ghost if
he ever reappeared.

SKETCH

Why? He built my studio.

IRIS

Your treehouse. In Cairo's hanging
tree. Racist bastard's sly humor.

SKETCH

Why is it funny?

She studies it.

IRIS

I didn't laugh. It's really nice
work. You have a talent that your
mother never had. Or ever will.

SKETCH

Maybe my dad.

She glances sideways.

IRIS

Dunno. Maybe.

She hands the sketch back to him.

IRIS (CONT'D)

Don't take it to school. Keep it
hidden in your "studio" with your
other art work please.

He nods while taking another bite of the Hot Pocket.

EXT. CAIRO MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Sketch locks his bike to the rack and walks with his backpack
toward the entrance.

Black and white STUDENTS (12-14) are self-segregated in their
colored groups with only a few commingling.

They all give Sketch a wide berth as he walks to the
entrance. He's oblivious since this is commonplace.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Sketch sits at a desk situated in the front row corner a distance from the other Students (12-14). The TEACHER points to the ink board which asks, "Which states were Union and Confederate?"

Sketch is preoccupied drawing a squirrel from outside a window.

A few students raise their hands.

STUDENT 1
Illinois, blue.

TEACHER
Correct. In the Union. How bout our border states? Kentucky?

He points to Student 2.

STUDENT 2
Confederate.

STUDENT 3
Missouri, Confederate.

TEACHER
And Arkansas too. Now can someone tell me why Cairo was important during the Civil War.

Sketch raises his hand to the teacher.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
Wolf?

An unidentified student HOWLS like a wolf.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
Class? I've told you before about unwanted outbursts. Do you know the answer, Wolf?

SKETCH
It's where the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers meet.

TEACHER
And, why was that important? Why did General Ulysses S. Grant, our eighteenth president, fortify and protect our city?

SKETCH

The army who controls the river,
controls the supplies. My
grandfather taught me that.

TEACHER

Your grandfather was a smart man.

SKETCH

He hated Grant. He forced his
grandfather to set his slaves free.

The Teacher is taken back by the candid comment.

TEACHER

Well, yes. Being in proximity to
the border between North and South,
there were some folk who
sympathized, still believed in
slavery.

SKETCH

He was part of the Klan.

TEACHER

We'll learn the Reconstruction
later which is a sad part of
America's history. Our local
history.

SKETCH

My grandfather built my treehouse
in the hanging tree. William
"Froggy" James was hung there with
other black men.

The Students are bewildered of Sketch.

TEACHER

How bout some science? Can someone
explain how ice is made?

Sketch goes back to his squirrel drawing at the class's
dismay.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - ART CLASSROOM - DAY

SCHOOL BELL RINGS AND STUDENTS CLAMOR OUT (O.S.)

The classroom is unoccupied as Sketch enters and turns out
the lights. He opens his backpack and goes shoplifting for
art supplies. He adds brushes and paint into his backpack.

He doesn't notice that WENDY (13), a female student in a skirt has entered.

WENDY
Are you stealing?

Sketch spins to her.

WENDY (CONT'D)
I'm going to tell Miss Fischer.

SKETCH
Don't tell her. Wendy, I'll put them back.

He takes the stolen paint out of his backpack.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
See.

WENDY
Why are you stealing?

SKETCH
My mom says art supplies are too expensive. How bout I draw a picture of you?

WENDY
Me?

He nods.

SKETCH
C'mon. Nobody needs to know. I'm quick.

WENDY
I dunno.

SKETCH
Stay right there.

Sketch snaps up a pencil and a graphic pad. He sketches her.

WENDY
Do you need me to pose?

She poses with a hand on her hip with her lips protruding.

SKETCH
Stay right there.

WENDY

My brother's girlfriend sends him
pics wearing only her underwear.

Sketch studies her while still sketching. Wendy lifts up her skirt teasing views of her underwear.

WENDY (CONT'D)

I'll show you my underwear if you
show me yours.

Sketch keeps drawing.

SKETCH

I can't.

WENDY

Why?

SKETCH

I'm not wearing any.

WENDY

Really? You go commando? I don't
believe you. Show me.

SKETCH

I'll show you my butt.

Sketch lowers his pants and shows her his butt. Wendy giggles as he quickly covers himself.

SKETCH (CONT'D)

Told you. We're poor.

He goes back to sketching.

WENDY

Show me your thingie.

SKETCH

My dick?

She nods.

WENDY

I won't tell anyone. And I won't
tell Miss Fischer you stole art
stuff.

He thinks for a quick moment and slowly tugs his pants down. From behind he stands half naked. Wendy scrutinizes his penis.

Suddenly, her BROTHER (14) enters.

BROTHER
Wendy! I'm gonna be late...

He discovers Sketch with his pants down to his knees.

BROTHER (CONT'D)
What are you doing to my sister?

Sketch yanks up his pants as the Brother punches him.

Wendy scurries off as her Brother tackles Sketch and punches him. The Brother straddles Sketch and swings blows to his face.

Sketch's eye patch comes off and both eyes are seen. His wild eyes move independently of each other like a chameleon.

The Brother jumps to his feet.

BROTHER (CONT'D)
Freak.

Sketch stabs the Brother in the stomach with the pencil.

HURRIED FOOTSTEPS (O.S.)

TEACHER (O.S.)
Stop this!

The Brother clutches his wound as blood seeps in his shirt. Sketch drops the pencil and covers his left eye.

SUPER: A ROUGH SKETCH OF WENDY HIKING HER SKIRT HAS BLOOD DROPS SPLATTERED ON IT.

INT. JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER - WAITING AREA - DAY

Iris bangs on a candy machine as a candy bar drops. She snaps it up as a CHILD PSYCHOTHERAPIST greets her.

IRIS
Where's Sketch? Where's my boy?

PSYCHOTHERAPIST
Ms. Myer.

IRIS
Iris. Where the fuck is he?

PSYCHOTHERAPIST
Wolf is in good hands.

IRIS

Sketch. My father named him Wolf as in a wolf in sheep's clothing. My father was a prick. Go on.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

They are just completing the paperwork for Sketch. To allow him to leave.

IRIS

You are releasing him?

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Yes. Please, can we sit?

MOMENTS LATER

Iris and the Psychotherapist share a table.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST (CONT'D)

The little girl admitted to asking Wolf, Sketch to pull down his pants. The parents are not pressing assault charges with the brother. The only thing they require from the school is to not allow Sketch back in.

IRIS

Expelled? No school?

The Therapist nods.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Permanently.

IRIS

There's only one middle school in this sad-sack of a city.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

We can work with you on home schooling. However, I must know has he ever seen a specialist? For you know...

IRIS

His eyes? Strabismus. Crazy eyes. He calls them that, not me.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

How and when did that condition come about?

IRIS

As a baby. My racist fucked-up father tossed him out of a second story window. After he found out his only grandson was mulatto and his slutty daughter slept with a black man. He had a white supremacist reputation to uphold in Cairo. Also, it was enhanced by his Alzheimers. May he rot in hell.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Back to my question.

IRIS

Yes, he has seen Pediatric Ophthalmologists and Neuro-Ophthalmologists. He can't be fixed. It's not just his eyes, it's his mind.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

When was the last time he saw...

IRIS

Thousands of dollars ago. A fuckin' waste of money.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

Times change. Medical advancements are happening every week.

IRIS

Are you gonna pay the bills, doc?

The Therapist sighs deeply.

IRIS (CONT'D)

I know you got to do this. It's your job. You see him for what an hour, but I'm raising him. He's my son. We have learned to control it. Adapted.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST

By covering his left eye.

IRIS

His eyes are his window into this messed up world. His left eye sees madness and violence. His right eye sees kindness and security.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST
Has he hurt others?

Iris covers up a scar on her arm.

IRIS
It's part of raising a boy. Being a mother, there's scarring. Sketch is an artist. A creative X-Man. His sketches and paintings are amazing. It's his "flow" as you define it in your text books.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST
Art is his coping therapy.

IRIS
Since he found a Crayon. It's his superpower. I want my boy back. Get him.

The Therapist side-eyes and rises from the table.

INT./EXT. IRIS'S CAR/CAIRO STREET - DAY

Iris drives as Sketch searches inside his backpack in the passenger seat. He wears his eye patch.

SKETCH
They were nice to me. Too many questions though. Nosey.

He pulls out three Highlights Magazines.

IRIS
Did the doctor give you those?

SKETCH
He lent them to me.

He thumbs and reads one.

IRIS
You stole them.

SKETCH
They're cheesy. I'll take them back.

IRIS
No you won't.

SKETCH

OK. What is a "Goofus?"

She peeks over as she drives.

IRIS

Oh my God. They still have those "Goofus and Gallant" comics. Goofus is the rude one. He is selfish. Doesn't play by the rules like you ripping them off. You're a Goofus.

SKETCH

What is "Gallant?"

IRIS

He follows the rules. Polite. Doesn't steal or show little girl's their privates.

SKETCH

I'm Gallant.

IRIS

I always found him boring. Goody-good, two shoes.

SKETCH

Two shoes?

Iris playfully messes up his hair and hands him the candy bar.

IRIS

Here.

SKETCH

Were you a Goofus and stole it?

IRIS

Smart-ass.

She smiles at him.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Sketch reads a Highlights in a lawn chair by a small fire pit as Iris exits with a plastic cup of milk and a paper plate with a sandwich on it.

She hands it to him.

IRIS
Don't feed the whole thing to
Bandit.

Sketch glances around as a raccoon waddles out of the woods toward them.

Iris sits in her own lawn chair and lights a joint. She searches her phone.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I think I need a website. Become a
techie tarot reader.

SKETCH
I'm sure AI can read them.

IRIS
Bet AI doesn't give the massages I
do.

She raises her hands and wiggles her finger.

IRIS (CONT'D)
AI doesn't have magic fingers.

Sketch feeds the raccoon with bite size sandwich bits.

SKETCH
I'm out of art supplies.

IRIS
Already? You just got kicked out of
school a week ago.

SKETCH
Been busy.

IRIS
Maybe we can plan a robbery of
Hobby Lobby.

Sketch focuses his eye on her.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Joke, hon'.

A modest government car rolls down the gravel road toward them.

IRIS (CONT'D)
I don't have any appointments.
Could be a drive by. How do I look?

She rises and straightens her clothes as the car parks nearby. She snuffs out her joint on the concrete floor.

STEVEN (40s) exits the car in his conservative khaki pants and polo.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Can I help you with a reading or
massage?

He removes a file box from his backseat and carries it toward them.

STEVEN
Ms. Myer. And this must be Wolf.

IRIS
Sketch. He goes by Sketch.

Steven nods while observing Sketch feeding the raccoon.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Who are you?

STEVEN
Umm. I'm a Social Worker. I work
for the Illinois State Board of
Education.

IRIS
Hey, Sketch, why don't you lead
Bandit back to the woods and go
fishing with Froggy.

Sketch snatches his fishing pole and leaves with Bandit trailing.

STEVEN
Is that safe?

IRIS
Who's his mother? Me or you? Gonna
tell me what I should teach my kid
now?

STEVEN
Actually, that's part of my job.
Mind if I sit.

She nods to Sketch's chair and he sits.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
We need to discuss the
homeschooling requirements.

He hands over a typed three page document.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
My job is to make sure you
understand what the Department of
Education requires for the home
schooling of Sketch.

She reads along as he begins.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
The required subjects are...

15 MINUTES LATER

Steven shows Iris some text books from the box.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
These will help you plan and
schedule the curriculum that's
right for Sketch. We want him to be
a well rounded student leading to
an intelligent young man.

IRIS
Maybe he shouldn't have been
booted. All those kids that bullied
and teased him through elementary
never got punished. They never gave
a damn. My tax dollars aren't going
to my son.

STEVEN
Sadly, that is water under the
bridge at this moment, Ms. Meyer.

Iris looks at him with contempt.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
What subject is he good at? Enjoy?

IRIS
Art. Likes to draw and paint.

STEVEN
Fine Arts. We have books for that
and he can use this tablet.

Steven hands her a tablet from the box.

IRIS
Is this free?

He nods.

STEVEN
Your tax dollars at work.

IRIS
Internet?

STEVEN
Of course.

She nods.

IRIS
Sure you don't want a reading?

STEVEN
I plan my future, Ms. Meyer.

IRIS
Massage?

STEVEN
Um. I'm gay.

IRIS
Gotcha. I have a blindfold, deep
voice and strong hands.

STEVEN
I limbered up before I came here.
I'm good.

Steven rises from the chair and scruffs up the soot stained
concrete foundation with his shoe.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
This is the old plantation site.

IRIS
What's left of it.

STEVEN
How are you related?

IRIS
Sketch and I are the last known
Meyers. Thank God.

STEVEN
Lot of Cairo history was made here.

IRIS
Yep, you're standing on the charred
remains. Gravestone cement.
(MORE)

IRIS (CONT'D)
My father died in the fire right
where you're standing.

He steps away from the spot.

STEVEN
There are many rumors on how it
started.

She escorts him to his car.

IRIS
I can tell you one of those rumors
is true.

He cocks his head to her as she winks.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Iris tidies up the kitchen as Sketch reads his tablet.

SKETCH
Van Go-Gha didn't go to school.

IRIS
Van Gogh. The "G" is silent.

SKETCH
He didn't go to art school.

Iris spins her finger around the side of her head.

IRIS
He was nuts. Chopped off his ears.

SKETCH
One ear.

Iris takes the tablet from him.

IRIS
I told you an hour ago, I need my
new prescriptions. I have an
appointment for a reading. Go!

Sketch unwillingly rises to the door.

EXT. TAVERN - DAY

Sketch pedals his bike to the back of the tavern wearing his backpack.

He drops his bike and knocks on the backdoor.

INT. TAVERN - OFFICE - DAY

Sketch waits as the Bartender hands him a small foil packet in exchange for wadded up cash.

SKETCH

This ain't the usual pills.

BARTENDER

Your mother is experimenting.

He nods and spins to the door.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Aren't you forgetting something,
One-Eye?

He turns back as the Bartender hands him a ream of copy paper.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

I'll put it on her tab.

Sketch stuffs it in his backpack with the drugs.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DUSK

Sketch rides his bike past the pickup truck which is owned by the returning violent customer as before.

He drops the bike and listens at the door.

LAUGHING (O.S.)

He sets the foil packet behind a flower pot and leaves.

He spins and discovers Rex waiting inside the pickup. Rex stares at him as before.

This time they both wave at each other.

Sketch waves for him to follow as he goes into the woods.

Rex silently opens the pickup door, exits and quietly closes the door.

WOODS

Rex follows Sketch to the hanging tree.

REX
What a cool treehouse.

SKETCH
My grandfather had it made for me.

REX
The tree is huge.

SKETCH
It's a hanging tree.

REX
What's a hanging tree?

SKETCH
White folks hung black folks here.
Froggy hangs...

Sketch points to a thick limb.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
Right there.

REX
Can I see inside?

Sketch climbs up the ladder as Rex follows.

INT. TREEHOUSE - DUSK

Sketch collects the drawings strewn on the floor as Rex enters.

REX
This is so cool. Wish I had one.

SKETCH
You have no trees in St Louis?

REX
If we had a tree like this my dad
still wouldn't build one. For me.

Rex studies the sketches and paintings on the walls.

REX (CONT'D)
Did you draw and paint all these?

SKETCH
Yup.

Rex's vision goes directly to a nude drawing of a couple having sex.

REX
Dang, that's nasty.

SKETCH
It's my mom.

Rex peers closer to the sketch.

REX
That's your mom? You saw this?

Sketch nods.

SKETCH
She doesn't know. I have a secret hiding place where I can see them.

REX
Aren't you scared of her finding this?

SKETCH
She never comes up here. It's my private place. My studio.

Sketch grabs a pencil and paper from his backpack.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
Can I draw you?

REX
Me?

Sketch nods while drawing on the paper.

REX (CONT'D)
Do I pose or something?

SKETCH
All's good.

REX
Can I move?

SKETCH
My mom says my mind is like a Kodak camera.

REX
What's a Kodak?

Sketch shrugs.

REX (CONT'D)
Do you have an eye under there?

Sketch raises two fingers.

REX (CONT'D)
Both. Why wear a patch?

SKETCH
To keep from crazy eyes. If I take
off my patch my eyes don't work
together. Like a lizard.

REX
Can I see?

SKETCH
Real quick. I get dizzy.

Sketch lifts his eye patch revealing two eyes going in
separate directions.

REX
Oh, wow. Freaky.

Sketch quickly covers his left eye with the patch.

REX (CONT'D)
Why cover your left eye? What if
you only cover your right?

SKETCH
It's dangerous. I'm not allowed.
Goofus takes over and hurts people.

Sketch goes back to drawing.

REX
You hurt people?

Sketch nods.

REX (CONT'D)
My dad hurts my mom. One time I
heard them arguing in the basement.
They were so loud. I went down to
try and stop them. When I got there
my dad hit her with a detergent
bottle across the face. When I
tried to get between them he
grabbed my arm and twisted it.

Rex shows Sketch his shoulder.

REX (CONT'D)
He broke my shoulder. I had to wear
a cast for weeks.

SKETCH
Why do they fight?

REX
He just doesn't like the things we
do. He doesn't like me coming on
this business trip, but my mom
thinks he's cheating on her. He
makes me lie to her. Says if I say
anything he'd hurt me more. Is that
your dad in the drawing?

SKETCH
Naw, my dad is black. Mom said he
moved on. Left us. Hey, it's dark
now. Do you want to see my hiding
place? We can see them having sex.

REX
I've only seen sex on the internet.

Sketch hands Rex the drawing he just made.

REX (CONT'D)
That's so cool. It's really me, but
I look sad.

SKETCH
More like worried.

Sketch grabs a monocular and splits as Rex follows.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Sketch and Rex are on their knees at the base wall. Sketch
slides a base panel revealing a dark crawl space.

SKETCH
(whispering)
Don't be scared. Follow me, but be
quiet.

They crawl into the darkness below the home.

INT. MOBILE HOME - CRAWL SPACE - NIGHT

Sketch lies on his back facing the bottom of the home.

SEXUAL MOANS AND BED THUMPS (O.S.)

Rex lays on his back beside Sketch.

SKECH

Shhh...

He extracts a wine cork top out of a hole in the mobile home floor. A circular beam of light shines from Iris's bedroom on their faces.

Sketch opens the telescoping monocular and raises it into the hole.

A MIRROR ON THE CEILING REFLECTS IRIS AND REX'S FATHER, JESS (40s) HAVING ROUGH SEX ON THE BED. Jess is boorish and a strong brute from working construction.

Sketch hands the monocular to Rex who peeks through.

Rex quickly takes it from his eye.

REX

(whispers)

Yuck! This is sick. It's your mom.
My dad.

Rex reluctantly goes back to watching.

REX (CONT'D)

(whispers)

He's choking her. We need to stop him.

MOANING AND BED THUMPS GROW LOUDER (O.S.)

JESS (O.S.)

Nasty bitch! I'm gonna give you what you wanted. Aww...fuck. Take it, bitch! Aww...FUCK!

THE THUMPING HALTS AND MOANS GIVE WAY TO GASPS OF EXHAUSTION (O.S.)

SKECH

I gotta do something.

Sketch grabs his eye patch as Rex holds him back.

REX
He stopped. She's O.K.

Rex takes out the monocular.

SKETCH
We better go.

JESS LOUDLY FARTS (O.S.)

Sketch and Rex look at each other and can't hold back their LAUGHTER.

INT. MOBILE HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jess rises from the bed.

JESS
What is that?!

CHILDREN GIGGLE AND LAUGH (O.S.)

Iris can barely speak holding her throat.

IRIS
They're kids. Just kids playing.

JESS
They're under here.

Jess discovers the hole and then looks at the mirrored ceiling.

CRAWLING AND KNOCKS (O.S.)

JESS (CONT'D)
We were being watched.

He yanks a curtain from the window and finds Sketch and Rex running away to the woods.

JESS (CONT'D)
My fuckin' son and that one-eyed freak of yours.

He urgently dresses.

JESS (CONT'D)
Fuck'n kids. I'll teach them.

IRIS
You better not touch my child.

JESS
Expected from a fuck'n son of a
whore.

He clamors out with a door bang.

IRIS (O.S.)
I'm gonna call the police.

The door slams shut.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

Sketch and Rex dash to the ladder.

JESS (O.S.)
Rex! Where the fuck are you?

REX
My dad is going to kill me.

SKETCH
I'll say I talked you into it.
Blame me.

They climb into the treehouse.

JESS (O.S.)
I told you not to leave the truck.
Come out now and I won't punish
you.

Jess rushes out among the woods to the hanging tree and stops discovering the treehouse.

INT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

Sketch and Rex peek out of a space between wood planks.

REX
(whispers)
I need to go down.

SKETCH
(whispers)
He's gonna hurt you.

REX
(whispers)
I don't feel it anymore. I go to
another place. My private place.

JESS (O.S.)
Get down from your doll house.

REX
OK. I'm coming down.

Rex rises to the ladder.

JESS (O.S.)
Bring your one-eyed boyfriend too.

Rex climbs down with only his head showing toward Sketch.

REX
Stay here.

Rex disappears out of sight.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

Rex steps away from the ladder toward Jess.

JESS
Where's your boyfriend?

SKETCH (O.S.)
Don't hurt him. I'm coming down.

Sketch climbs down the ladder.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
I made him.

Sketch stands before them both.

JESS
Lil pervs, like to watch. Watch
this!

Jess backhands Rex in the face and Rex topples to the ground.

Sketch angrily steps toward Jess.

JESS (CONT'D)
C'mon, mulatto freak.

IRIS (O.S.)
Sketch!

DISTANT POLICE SIRENS (O.S.)

JESS

Your mom fucked a nigger to make
you.

Rex lays on the ground watching his father move in striking
distance to Sketch.

REX

Dad, it was me. He didn't do
anything.

Jess smacks Sketch across the face which drops him to his
knees. The hit slid the eye patch to cover his right eye
instead of the left.

SIRENS MOVE CLOSER (O.S.)

Sketch rises to his feet and glares like a demon into Jess.

JESS

You have both eyes.

Sketch draws out his pocket knife from his pants. The blade
glistens.

Like a savage, he lunges the knife into Jess's gut. Pain is
reflected in Jess's eyes as Sketch keeps thrusting the knife
into his mid section.

Jess topples to the ground. Iris races out from the trees
watching her possessed son pounce on Jess still thrusting the
knife deeper into the chest. She halts in horror.

Blood splatters on Sketch's face.

Rex turns his head from the savagery.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Police and paramedic lights strobe the woods.

Iris looks forlornly at Sketch in the back seat of a police
car. His patch is back covering his left eye. He cries and
screams in a muffled voice toward her.

SKETCH

MOM! MOM! DON'T DO THIS! DON'T DO
THIS TO ME!

Iris turns her teared eyes away.

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Sketch has his head lowered as he sits at a table next to a court appointed ATTORNEY. His eye patch is over his left eye.

A DETECTIVE motions to a POLICEMAN to snip off Sketch's zip-tie handcuffs.

Sketch lifts his hands to the table.

DETECTIVE

Sketch, I'd like to ask you some questions.

SKETCH

Where's my mom?

ATTORNEY

She asked me to be here for you.

Sketch's fingers twitch.

DETECTIVE

Sketch?

ATTORNEY

What sedatives is he on?

Sketch slowly scratches an apparent itch on the side of his face.

ATTORNEY (CONT'D)

I need a list. Get me a list, detective.

Suddenly Sketch scratches violently at his right eye and under the patch into his left. His nails dig deep into his eyes as the Policeman and Detective reach for his arms.

INT. CELL - DAY

Sketch sits alone in a cell. A t-shirt is tied as a blindfold over both of his eyes. Two years have passed since his incarceration and he is now fifteen with puberty pimples.

CHYRON: ART SCHOOL YEARS

DOOR UNLOCKS (O.S.)

Sketch rises and opens the door like he can see.

WARDEN (V.O.)
Thanks for coming in. I understand
your caseload is a bit busy...

BERNIE (V.O.)
The carnival prep has consumed much
of my time.

WARDEN (V.O.)
Thank you for volunteering to
coordinate that. However until we
get fully staffed...

INT. DETENTION CORRIDOR - DAY

Sketch walks down the middle counting his steps. JUVENILE
INMATES give him a wide berth.

WARDEN (V.O.)
...I need you to take on another
inmate, patient. Wolf Meyer.

BERNIE (V.O.)
The blind boy?

Sketch enters the dining hall.

INT. DETENTION DINING HALL - DAY

Sketch gathers a tray from the start of the cafeteria line.
He is behind other TEEN INMATES.

LOGAN ROBINSON (17), inserts himself in front of Sketch and
snatches a tray. More adult than teen, Logan is an hardened,
black athlete with a soul-crushing scowl. He glares at
Sketch.

The fearful Teens retreat conceding their place in line for
the alpha male.

WARDEN (V.O.)
He's not blind. He chooses not to
see. He's been here for two years
and no progress.

BERNIE (V.O.)
Why the blindfold?

WARDEN (V.O.)
We were afraid he would harm
himself and poke his eyes out. The
blindfold is an agreed upon
substitute. Here is his file.

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

The WARDEN (50s) hands BERNIE WRIGHT (50s) a file at his desk. The Warden is a Southern boss-hog in an ill fitting suit. Bernie is a throwback to the hippie era in her tie dye dress and love beads.

WARDEN

Though Sketch is not a problem.
He's pretty much a ghost.

BERNIE

He chooses not to see. That's a
problem.

WARDEN

He has a unique and rare medical
visual and neurological condition.
A form of strabismus.

Bernie reads the file.

BERNIE

He bludgeoned a grown man at
thirteen.

WARDEN

His left eye triggers a
neurological violent reaction to
what it perceives as harmful. Fight
or flight. It always leads to a
fight.

BERNIE

He wore a patch over his eye and he
was able to simulate. Why not pop
it out? Snip, snip.

WARDEN

If it was me...Surgeons believe it
would be harmful causing
significant damage to his brain. We
have three years to help him before
he is either released or
transferred to an adult
institution.

BERNIE

His mother only came once.

WARDEN

She's an addict. That's why I
believe you can help him.

BERNIE

Addict? I may be a bit counter culture, however...

WARDEN

Not your drugs, Bernie. A mother figure. Peace, love, and understanding type.

Bernie nods her head while reading the file.

INT. WRIGHT HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - DAY

Bernie enters carrying files as a TEEN barges past her with a baggie.

TEEN

Excuse me, Ma'am.

The Teen bounds out the front door as Bernie shakes her head.

BERNIE

Fuckn', George!

GEORGE WRIGHT (50s) enters with a goofy dance flapping some twenty dollar bills.

GEORGE

How bout some gourmet Panda Express tonight? I'm paying.

He pecks her cheek with a kiss.

BERNIE

You're dealin'. Worse to the neighbor kids. You can't do that.

GEORGE

Don't point your nasty, crooked finger at me, hon'.

BERNIE

We are a paycheck away from losing the house already.

GEORGE

Don't be a worrywart?

BERNIE

Did you know "Worrywart" was a character that appeared in Dell Comics in nineteen-twenty?

(MORE)

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Wart meant a nuisance. A person who
annoys another.

She points at him.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
You! You if you keep selling shit
from inside our house.

GEORGE
By the way, Mrs. Hypocrite, your
gummies were delivered. Let's call
it a draw and get orange chicken.

He waves a twenty.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Extra chicken rolls?

She hands him her car keys with a sly smile.

BERNIE
I got bombarded with another case.

GEORGE
Well, you just relax. I have some
leaves drying in the oven. Should
be ready for smoke.

BERNIE
Lord knows dinner is not in the
oven. I knew you would make a
terrible house husband.

George heads out the door as she walks past bushes of pot
plants and a painter's easel.

INT. WRIGHT HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Empty Panda Express containers litter the table where George
and Bernie sit. George smokes a bong while Bernie reads a
file.

BERNIE
This kid killed a man at thirteen.
Knifed him over twenty times.

GEORGE
Must have gotten some bad shit.

BERNIE
How can I get him to see again?

GEORGE
Without killing.

BERNIE
His mom was an addict and
prostitute. Also says she was a
psychic reading tarot cards.

GEORGE
And here you thought my current
line of work is sketchy.

Bernie stares at him.

BERNIE
That's his nickname. Sketch.

George smiles wide and points to his head.

GEORGE
Maybe I should try a tarot reading
gig.

BERNIE
You sure can't make it as a
prostitute. We can't afford your
boner pills.

Bernie smirks back.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch sits blindfolded on a bench facing the basketball
court where Logan and INMATES (15-17) play.

Bernie sits a few feet from him.

BERNIE
Hi, Wolf. Watching the game?

SKETCH
You smell like my mom.

BERNIE
She wore Estee Lauder?

SKETCH
Pot.

Bernie glances at him.

BERNIE

Ah, well I'm your new Social Worker. My name is Bernie.

A loose basketball bounces toward Bernie, Sketch quickly grabs it before it hits her.

Logan runs over and Sketch tosses the ball into his arms. Logan stares a moment at Sketch.

LOGAN

Thanks.

Logan returns to his game as Sketch sits back down.

SKETCH

You can call me Sketch.

BERNIE

Why Sketch?

He shrugs.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

You draw?

SKETCH

It's my flow.

BERNIE

Why did you stop?

SKETCH

I wasn't allowed sharp objects.

Bernie nods in thought.

BERNIE

I draw too. I'm going to draw caricatures at the carnival tomorrow. Do you know what they are?

SKETCH

Cartoons.

BERNIE

Like comics which exaggerate one's physical appearance. They're quite humorous.

SKETCH

Do you know Goofus and Gallant?

BERNIE
Highlighters Magazine.

SKETCH
Hate it.

BELL RINGS (O.S.)

Sketch leaves Bernie.

INT. CELL - MORNING

Door clanks open and a sketch pad and pencils drop to the floor. A one-eyed patch is added to the top.

Door clanks closed.

Sketch rises from his bed with his blindfold on.

He measuredly walks toward the door.

INT. DETENTION CORRIDOR - DAY

Bernie dressed as a clown walks with her cartoonish shoes.

Inmates cat call and whistle at her.

BERNIE
Alright kids, the carnival is at noon.

Bernie gets to Sketch's open cell door and takes notice of blood on the floor where she left the art tools.

She yells down the corridor.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
What happened to Sketch?!

There is no answer as she shuffles out as a clown.

INT. DETENTION MEDICAL OFFICE - DAY

Bernie busts in the room where a DOCTOR evaluates an Inmate.

BERNIE
Have you seen Sketch? I mean Wolf.
Wolf Meyer. There's blood...

The Doctor shakes his head.

BERNICE

He must have gotten hurt.

INMATE

He's in the yard. He can see now,
but with only one eye. Wears a
patch. Weird mo-fo.

Bernie grins as a demented clown.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch is in his same spot as before, however he is watching the BASKETBALL PLAYERS with his right eye and drawing at the same time.

The blindfold he once wore around his eyes is now a blood stained bandage tied around his foot.

Logan, bare chested, chases a basketball by him. Logan and him make eye-contact.

LOGAN

What you lookin' at?

Sketch keeps his one eye on him.

Logan shakes his head and runs back on court, but glances back at Sketch drawing.

INT. DETENTION DINING HALL - DAY

There's a small carnival set up for the YOUNGER INMATES (13-15) where GUARDS play midway amusements.

Bernie, the clown, draws caricatures at her easel of waiting Inmates. She's exhausted as she rips a sketch out and offers it to an Inmate. The Inmate laughs and shares it with others.

She sketches the next Inmate and notices someone is watching over her shoulder. She spins in her seat and discovers it is Sketch. His eye peeled to her drawing.

BERNIE

Glad to see you can see again.

SKETCH

Thank you.

BERNIE

There was blood in your cell.

He lifts his bandaged foot.

SKETCH
I stepped on a pencil.

She goes back to drawing.

BERNIE
My bad.

SKETCH
You're good.

He studies every stroke she makes.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Under a faint light Sketch draws on his pad.

INMATE SNORING AND SOBS (O.S.)

Sketch is entranced in his flow.

INT. CELL - DAY

Bernie enters the cell to find Sketch gone. She searches for the drawing pad under his mattress as Sketch appears. He holds his sketch pad close.

Surprised with guilt she straightens up.

BERNIE
I was checking on you.

SKETCH
I had class.

BERNIE
How was it?

SKETCH
Algebra is crap.

She heads to the door.

BERNIE
Algebra is derived from the Arabic word al-jabr. Meaning "the reunion of broken parts" or "restoration."

Sketch shrugs.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Speaking of restoration, how is the drawing coming along?

Sketch shrugs unsure.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
I'm happy to see you can see me now.

SKETCH
I don't know what to say to that.

He flips the pad onto his bed. Bernie motions to the pad with her hand.

BERNIE
Am I allowed to see?

SKETCH
I'm the inmate. Not much of a choice.

BERNIE
You do have a choice with me. Having a person view your artwork can be intimidating. Took me years before I had the courage to share my work. To be judged by the professors and my peers. After all, art is subjective.

Bernie measuredly walks over and opens up the pad. Her eyes scrutinize his drawings as she flips the pages to the last one. She giggles.

SKETCH
It's funny?

Bernie shows him his caricature drawing of her as a clown at the easel with an inmate posing for her.

BERNIE
Yes, Sketch, this is funny. You captured the exaggeration perfectly.

She thumbs through the pages again and shows him one of Logan dunking a basketball with every muscle bulging.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
These are stunning. Realistic with so much emotion. Movement. Follow me.

She beelines it to the door.

INT. DETENTION ART ROOM - DAY

Bernie enters with Sketch following. The room is dusty and there is art supplies piled up like it has been long forgotten.

BERNIE

This used to be my art class.
Ancient tools before modern pixels.

Sketch noses around and into the boxes. His one eye is glowing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Budget cuts forced us to close the class. Only the basics, like your Algebra and English, will be taught. Humanities became an after thought. In college my first passion was painting.

SKETCH

Why leave your passion?

BERNIE

Life's twists and turns and a professor, Professor Sandoval critiqued my work and said it was "crafty." Not art but craft. Like cluing popsicle sticks.

SKETCH

One word?

Bernie looks inward.

BERNIE

That's all it took to destroy the hopes of an impressionistic and fragile student.

SKETCH

Your professor was a prick.

Sketch snaps up a brush and paint.

BERNIE

Hold on there Van Gogh. Let me do some persuading first. I need to show it can make a difference in your, your education here.

SKETCH
I'll do anything.

Bernice studies him as he scrounges about.

BERNIE
Can you draw with both eyes?

SKETCH
Never. My mind and sight go
bonkers. Like my eyes are fighting
for control. Throwing punches.

BERNIE
Can you draw with the left eye
only? Tried it.

He stops and studies her.

SKETCH
Too dangerous.

BERNIE
To you?

SKETCH
Other people.

BERNIE
But will it harm yourself?

He shakes his head.

SKETCH
Never has. My other one does.

BERNIE
The cell is a perfect solitary
location to try. Drawing with only
the left eye when no one can enter.
Something to think about. Let's
visit the librarian.

Sketch's fingers caress the easel frame.

INT. DETENTION LIBRARY - DAY

Bernie leads Sketch to the inmate librarian, RAPHAEL (17) at
the check out counter.

BERNIE
This is Raphael. Raphael this is
Sketch.

RAPHAEL

The blind who can now see. You know my name in Hebrew which means "God heals." He healed you.

BERNIE

Well, sorta. Anyway can you show him where he can find books on the creative arts. Or websites he can access online.

RAPHAEL

Sure I can do that. You like art?

Sketch nods as Bernie's cell phone beeps.

BERNIE

I need to go. Take care of Sketch for me.

Bernie splits as Logan enters. He beelines it right to the counter. Raphael becomes jittery as he lifts a pile of books from under the counter.

RAPHAEL

Hey, Logan. Just got the loaners in.

Sketch reads the titles like "Cutting Black Hair" and "Black Hairstyles."

Logan glances at Sketch with a death glare and snaps up the pile and leaves.

SKETCH

A barber?

RAPHAEL

Studying. Not sure if he'd ever be allowed scissors. He's a murderer, you know?

Sketch watches Logan leave.

SKETCH

So am I.

Raphael smiles thinking he is joking, but Sketch meets his eyes. Raphael's smile fades to concern.

INT. CELL - MORNING

A GUARD unlocks and allows Bernie in.

Sketch is asleep on his bunk with the patch covering his right eye. An easel reveals a drawing similar to the clown sketch.

However, this drawing has the boy with a devilish grin holding a pencil as a weapon with Bernie, the clown, bludgeoned. Blood splattered on the caricature.

Bernie studies it.

GUARD
Should I wake him?

The Guard is about to shake him up, but Bernie stops him.

BERNIE
No, no let me.

Bernie slyly moves the patch covering the right to the left eye. She steps back as Sketch's right eye opens up and he stares at the artwork that his left eye created.

INT. WRIGHT HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bernie tapes both sketches next to each other on the wall. George sits at the table eating dinner as Bernie joins him.

Both study the drawings.

BERNIE
His left eye killed me.

George chuckles.

GEORGE
It's funny.

BERNIE
Funny? He's dangerous.

GEORGE
He's talented. When you put them together you have a humorous contrast.

Bernie points to the drawings.

BERNIE
That's it. "Goofus and Gallant." He drew a caricature as an exaggeration of the comic he despises.

GEORGE

He can sell this as a dark, edgy comic.

BERNIE

Take acts of compassion...

GEORGE

...into an assassin. "Compassion to Assassin."

BERNIE

An incarcerated teen murderer can't sell this. He'll never get released when he ages out.

GEORGE

We can. Under a pseudonym. We conceal his identity. Plus, plus. He gets a cut...

BERNIE

And give him focus by using both eyes.

Bernie scrutinizes the artwork closer.

INT. CELL - DAY

Sketch draws at an easel as Logan stands menacingly at the open cell door.

LOGAN

Miss Wright says you drew me.

Sketch nervously drops his pencil.

LOGAN (CONT'D)

She's my worker too. Where is it?
Show me.

Sketch timidly extracts a drawing from a folder under a pile of art books. He reluctantly hands it to him.

He stares at the drawing of him shirtless dunking a ball. He is contemplative which makes Sketch antsy.

SKETCH

It's yours. Burn it if you want.

Logan meets his nervous eye.

LOGAN

I didn't expect this from the blind kid.

SKETCH

Keep it if you really like it.

LOGAN

I learned that you never give away yourself or your talent for free. I can pay you for it. Buy something at the commissary.

Sketch touches his unruly hair.

SKETCH

Cut my hair?

Logan glares at him.

LOGAN

Fuck you.

SKETCH

I'm serious. Why not?

LOGAN

You ain't fuckin' with me?

Sketch shakes his head.

LOGAN (CONT'D)

That is a nappy critter on your head, but they won't allow me to have scissors.

SKETCH

I'll talk to Miss Wright. Maybe the barber will let you use his chair.

Logan steps toward the door with his drawing.

LOGAN

That barber doesn't know shit about cutting black hair.

SKETCH

I trust you.

Logan meets Sketch's one eye.

INT. DETENTION ART ROOM - DAY

Bernie leads Sketch into a corner of the room where a small studio is concocted.

BERNIE

I believe you have a talent. A talent that can help you age out from here and not go to an adult prison.

Sketch moves about the easel and chair.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

And, maybe, make you some money.

SKETCH

What do you want me to do?

BERNIE

My husband, George, a lazy stoner AI fatality...whom I do love, thinks your two caricatures you drew of me...

SKETCH

The clown.

Bernie nods.

BERNIE

Yes. He thought they were funny. We both believe you can combine them into a comic. An exaggeration, a much darker Goofus and Gallant.

Sketch scratches his head sitting before the easel.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Have Gallant do something with empathy and compassion in one panel...

SKETCH

Goody-good two shoes.

BERNIE

Yes, and the other panel have Goofus do something wildly inappropriate like, um murder.

SKETCH

Have my right eye be Gallant and allow my left be Goofus?

BERNIE

A way to bring both eyes together in one sight. George thought of a title "Compassion to Assassin." We would help you market it to some edgy horror websites and magazines. Of course we will need to come up with a fictitious name for you.

SKETCH

A pseudonym?

BERNIE

Yes.

Sketch is quiet running the idea through his head as his finger draws on blank sketch paper.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

What do you think?

SKETCH

Basket used one in school when he drew cartoons.

Bernie cocks her head confused until she realizes his mispronunciation.

BERNIE

Ah, it's pronounced Basquiat.

SKETCH

Basquiat used SAMO meaning "same old shit" as a pseudonym. I can relate to it here.

BERNIE

Interested?

SKETCH

If Basquiat drew cartoons, I can.

BERNIE

Leonardo da Vinci was a caricature artist too before the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper.

Bernie grins and checks her watch.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

I have an appointment. We can brainstorm ideas later.

Sketch rises.

SKETCH
Can Logan cut my hair?

Bernie stops in her tracks.

INT. CELL - DAY

Bernie enters the cell and peeks around an easel and finds a new illustration.

IN THE COMPASSION PANEL TWO BOY SCOUTS HOLD UP ROPE KNOTS GIVING THE HAND PLEDGE GESTURE OF TWO FINGERS TO THEIR ADULT SCOUT LEADER.

IN THE ASSASSIN PANEL THE ADULT SCOUT LEADER HANGS FROM A TREE LIMB BY A ROPE KNOT AND THE TWO BOY SCOUTS GIVE HIM THE ONE FINGER SALUTE.

Bernie covers her mouth in horror, giggles and takes it off the easel.

INT. DETENTION BARBER SHOP - DAY

Sketch sits in the barber chair as Logan reviews a book of black hairstyles.

The BARBER occupies himself in a waiting chair reading the paper and observing the student.

BARBER
Aren't you forgetting something?

Logan glances around confused.

BARBER (CONT'D)
The barber cape.

LOGAN
Oh, yeah.

BARBER
No one wants to leave itchy.

Logan grabs the cape and stops in front of Sketch.

BARBER (CONT'D)
He's not superman. The cape goes over his chest and ties in back.

LOGAN
I knew that.

Logan drapes it over Sketch with a smile and ties it in back.

BARBER
Do you know what style he wants?

SKETCH
I dunno.

BARBER
Start your education with a crew cut.

Logan flips on the HUMMING HAIR CLIPPER.

BARBER (CONT'D)
Always relax your customer with some light hearted conversation.

Barber goes back to reading his paper.

Logan starts trimming Sketch's hair.

LOGAN
What did you do to get in here?

SKETCH
I murdered someone.

The Barber peeks over the paper at them.

LOGAN
I did too.

SKETCH
I have a freaky mental problem. My left eye is overly protective and aggressive. The guy was abusive to his son and my mom.

Logan relaxes while cutting hair.

LOGAN
I'm schizophrenic, but I'm on my meds now.

SKETCH
My mom is a prostitute and psychic.

The Barber peeks over the page again.

LOGAN
Really, I'm one too. Not a psychic. I wouldn't be here, would I?

SKETCH
Prostitute?

LOGAN
A trick tried to rip me off and I
was off the meds. I pushed the dude
and he slipped on the wet bathroom
floor. Thump. The klutz hit his
head on the tub.

Logan trims all around Sketch's head.

SKETCH
You do dudes?

LOGAN
Don't dare pass that along.

He waves the clippers in his face.

LOGAN (CONT'D)
I might have to kill ya.

SKETCH
Sometime my mom would do married
couples. She taught me to read
Tarot cards.

LOGAN
You can read my future?

SKETCH
We can try. Does your mother come
to visit you?

LOGAN
No. None of my broke-ass family.
They're bible-thumpers and live
down South. You?

The Barber covers his face with the paper.

SKETCH
She came once. She couldn't look at
me without crying. I think she was
on her meds. Never came back. I'm
sure I hurt her.

Logan spins the chair facing the mirror.

LOGAN
What do you think?

Sketch studies the novice uneven cut.

SKETCH

Hmmm...looks good to me.

BARBER

Let me assist you both.

The Barber rises and spins the chair with Sketch inside.

MONTAGE BEGINS:

A MISSISSIPPI BLUES SONG BEGINS.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Sketch draws an illustration.

INT. WRIGHT HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bernie digs through mail as George reviews Sketch's illustration. Without her watching George signs the sketch as "Bernie W."

George scans the sketch to his computer as Bernie opens an envelope showing him a check.

Bernie lights a joint while waving the check.

INT. DETENTION BARBER SHOP - DAY

Logan is tutored by the Barber while cutting Sketch's hair.

INT. DETENTION ART ROOM - DAY

Sketch wearing a new improved haircut paints at an easel as Bernie tutors him on mixing colors.

INT. DETENTION BARBER SHOP - DAY

Logan cuts the hair of an Inmate while Sketch draws them. The Barber reads a paper not paying attention to Logan.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch draws Inmates working out while lifting weights. He wears an afro mohawk.

INT. T-SHIRT SHOP - DAY

George holds up a t-shirt with the "Compassion to Assassin" illustration for Bernie to review. She is surprised to see her name forged as the illustrator.

He cocks his head with a sly grin and she shakes her head.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Sketch flips the eye patch from the left eye to the right. "Goofus" takes over and draws like a madman.

INT. DETENTION BARBER SHOP - DAY

Logan completes Sketch's tight new haircut. Logan admires Sketch in the mirror while wiping his neck and face with a wash cloth. Sketch's one eye meets Logan's eyes. Logan caresses Sketch's cheek.

INT. WRIGHT HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bernie reads her laptop and slaps George awake.

She shows him the monitor of the comic website and scrolls down hundreds of comments.

George puts his two hands together forming a heart shape.

BLUES SONG ENDS.

END MONTAGE:

INT. CELL - DAY

Logan enters with his sweaty bare chest and shorts.

LOGAN
I whooped their asses.

An Inmate is posing for Sketch at his easel.

INMATE
Hey, Logan.

LOGAN
Hey.

INMATE
Can I get a haircut?

LOGAN

Sure. Tomorrow I'll pencil you in.

SKETCH

I think I got it. Thanks.

INMATE

No problem.

SKETCH

I'll run it by you when I'm done.

INMATE

Cool.

The Inmate fist pumps them both and leaves the two alone.

Logan sits on the bed close to Sketch.

LOGAN

Here.

Logan coyly grins as he gives him a THC gummy. Logan chews another one down.

Sketch studies the gummy.

SKETCH

Where you get it?

LOGAN

I can't tell ya or I have to kill ya.

Sketch chews on his.

SKETCH

Pablo Picasso took opium.

LOGAN

Cool.

SKETCH

Do you even know who he is?

LOGAN

A drug dealer.

SKETCH

Let me show you.

Sketch grabs for a book, but Logan yanks him onto the bed with him.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
C'mon.

Logan caresses Sketch's hair.

LOGAN
Who did that fire, dope haircut?
It's sexy.

Sketch cocks his head to him. Logan touches Sketch's lips.

SKETCH
What are you doing?

LOGAN
I'm getting high.

Logan leans in and kisses Sketch's lips.

SKETCH
I haven't had sex.

LOGAN
With a dude?

SKETCH
Neither. I watched my mom having
sex many times.

LOGAN
Twisted. Did you rub one out?

SKETCH
I dunno, sometimes. I made a peep
hole to watch. She didn't know.

LOGAN
I like perverts.

Logan touches Sketch's crotch and takes Sketch's hand to his own crotch.

MOMENTS LATER

The easel is in front of the bed hiding the two teen's nude bodies. Only entwined feet are seen.

LOGAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Damn....

SKETCH (O.S.)
That's how my mom did it.

LOGAN (O.S.)
Obviously you need hands-on
training. Let me educate you.

MATTRESS RUSTLES (O.S.)

SKETCH (O.S.)
Awww. Fuck.

LOGAN (O.S.)
Like it?

SKETCH (O.S.)
Love it.

LOGAN (O.S.)
Dudes really love when I do this.

SLURPING (O.S.)

SKETCH (O.S.)
Awww. Shit. Do it again.

The sketch of the Inmate is on the easel.

INT. DETENTION ART ROOM - DAY

Sketch is mixing colors of paint on a palette beside an easel.

Bernie enters.

BERNIE
Expanding your palette I see.

Sketch shrugs.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
George has come up with a list of
ideas for the comic. One of a
pediatrician examining a child in
one panel and the assassin panel is
of the child using a syringe to
kill him, or her. I'm sure your
left eye can figure it out.

SKETCH
Like a twisted Norman Rockwell.

Bernie nods her approval.

BERNIE

I'm proud of you. You're acquiring
so much knowledge.

SKETCH

Can I see my comic?

Bernie cocks her head.

BERNIE

It's online on a site that inmates
have no access to. However, it's
doing great and the money will
allow you more, finer brushes and
canvasses.

Sketch goes back to the palette disappointed.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

I'll take a screenshot for you with
comments on it.

SKETCH

People comment on them?

BERNIE

Yes, great comments. It's popular.

Sketch nods quietly disappointed. Bernie studies him.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

How about an exhibit?

SKETCH

Showing my art?

Bernie waves her arms around the walls.

BERNIE

Here. We can have an exhibit of
your work here. A prison exhibit
for all the inmates to see your
creativity. I'll talk to the
Warden.

SKETCH

Really? I'll run it by Logan.

BERNIE

Logan? Why do you need his
approval? I see. You two are tight.

SKETCH

I like him. He gets me.

BERNIE
Is it more?

Sketch nods.

SKETCH
We have sex.

Bernie nods.

BERNIE
I see. I'd keep that on the down low if I were you. Be very, very discreet. Be safe. I'll provide you condoms.

Bernie steps back.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Don't get too attached to Logan. Interpersonal relationships form quickly when people are confined, alone twenty-four hours a day. It satisfies a need for interaction. I'm sure you share and bonded from the many same experiences. Sorry to say, relationships usually last as long as the sentence.

SKETCH
What about love?

BERNIE
Are you in love?

SKETCH
I care for him.

BERNIE
You're young. He will soon have a hearing before his eighteenth birthday. I've been trying to help him. Been coaching him for the hearing, but he is a volatile teen who has experienced trauma. He may be released or be moved to an adult facility. Either way he won't be here long.

SKETCH
He's learning to be a barber. He wants to open his own shop. I may get out when I turn eighteen.

(MORE)

SKETCH (CONT'D)
Both of us will be out and we can
be together then.

BERNIE
Sketch, be careful with your heart.
I've seen it before with many young
men. It's hard to control your
feelings. Mostly in here.

SKETCH
Like you say in therapy, maybe
holding back feelings can be more
damaging.

Bernie ponders his insight with a nod.

INT. CELL - DAY

Sketch is on the bed scanning his drawings and jotting down notes on a pad as Logan enters.

Logan has a swollen lip which is partly cut.

LOGAN
Whatcha doin'?

Logan spits a bit of blood on the floor.

Sketch shakes his head and goes back to skimming his drawings.

LOGAN (CONT'D)
Fuckin' Rambo tried to fuck with me
again. Racist muthah fuckuh.

Logan sits beside him.

SKETCH
Don't get blood on them.

LOGAN
Aren't you gonna ask who won?

SKETCH
Does it matter?

Logan shrugs while touching Sketch's new haircut.

LOGAN
Fighting is like sex.

Sketch smirks.

LOGAN (CONT'D)
Like your art ain't your
masturbation.

SKETCH
Survival.

Logan nods.

LOGAN
Survival sounds right. So, what's
up?

SKETCH
I'm going to exhibit my work. I
need to pick which best conveys my
theme.

LOGAN
What's your theme?

SKETCH
"Portraits of Malefactors"

LOGAN
Male-factors?

SKETCH
You. Me. The inmates. Those who
committed crimes.

Logan lifts up a batch of discarded drawings of Guards and the Warden.

LOGAN
What about these?

SKETCH
Malefactors only.

LOGAN
Shit. Guards, social workers, the
fuckin' Warden all commit crimes.
They just don't get caught. Fuck.
His fat ass gets steak while we get
slop.

Sketch considers the drawing.

LOGAN (CONT'D)
I'm horny. The fight gave me a
chubber.

Logan kisses him with his swollen lip.

INT. DETENTION CORRIDOR - DAY

The Warden with two GUARDS walk with Bernie.

BERNIE

Sketch is an amazing artist as you will see. He has a keen eye and a mind like a screenshot in time which is valuable for portraiture. A style all his own. Creativity flows through him like bursts of electricity.

Bernie and the GUARDS follow the Warden into the art room.

INT. DETENTION ART ROOM - DAY

The Warden enters and discovers the room is transformed into a gallery. Sketch's inmate artwork circles the room. A sign on an easel introduces "Portraits in Malefactors."

Bernie escorts the Warden as the Guards stay at the door.

BERNIE

Interesting title. It reflects the current situation these teens find themselves. Through the eye of one of their own. Their turmoil while growing and learning to better themselves to enter back into society.

Bernie escorts the Warden starting the viewing with a sketch of Logan playing basketball in only his shorts.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

And some recreation along the way.

Sketch and Logan enter as the Guards hold them back.

The Warden stands before a sketch.

TWO YOUNG TEENS WITH ARMS AROUND EACH OTHER.

He glances over to Sketch and Logan.

He walks further to another drawing.

A FIGHT BETWEEN INMATES IN THE YARD.

He passes numerous others depicting inmates in the library studying on computers or noses in books.

He brakes at one.

A BOY SHOWERING IN A FOG. HIS GENITALIA BARELY REVEALED. A GUARD WATCHES OVER HIM.

WARDEN

Bernie, did you choose these
yourself? Edit them?

Bernie stands beside him staring at the sketch.

BERNIE

I let him edit his own artwork. It
is what he sees, feel.

WARDEN

It's homoerotic. Can't you see it?

BERNIE

It's reality. It happens in this
environment.

WARDEN

Not here. Not pedophilia.

BERNIE

Sketch is only a teen.

WARDEN

I want you to go through and...

He stops in mid-sentence as he views one.

ONE OF HIS GUARDS PICKING HIS NOSE.

Lastly, he finds one of himself.

THE WARDEN SHOVELS STEAK INTO HIS MOUTH. HE IS A GROTESQUE
GLUTTON EATING ALONE AWAY FROM THE INMATE'S TABLES.

He rips down the drawing.

LOGAN

What the fuck are you doing?

A Guard jumps in front of Logan with hands gripping a stun
gun.

SKETCH

Sir, I can rearrange them.

LOGAN

Hell, you will.

GUARD

You'll keep your mouth shut or I will keep it shut.

WARDEN

Bernie, this is bullshit. I knew you would do some hippie shit.

He rips up the sketch of himself.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Take them back to their cells.

The Warden wrenches more artwork off the walls.

BERNIE

Sir, please don't.

Sketch and Logan seethe. Sketch is about to flip his eye patch over to the violent side.

The Warden confronts both of the inmates and rips one of the drawings in their faces.

WARDEN

Crap! This ain't art.

Bernie sees Sketch reach for his eye patch.

BERNIE

Sketch, don't.

However, Logan stops Sketch by grabbing his hand.

LOGAN

Allow me.

Logan is too quick for the Guards as he punches the Warden in the face and undercuts into his soft belly. The Warden collapses on his knees gasping for breath.

The Guards immediately taser Logan and Sketch. Both fall to the ground in painful seizures.

Bernie tries to help the Warden up, but he brushes her aside.

WARDEN

Confine them both.

He flails his arms about.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Take this shit down.

He stands over Logan and reaches down for a baggy which came out of Logan's clothes.

He picks up a BAG OF GUMMIES.

Behind him, Bernie holds her mouth shut.

INT. DETENTION CORRIDOR - DAY

Guards take out the easel, drawing tools, books, and art from Sketch's cell.

The Warden, nursing a black eye, watches with glee as Sketch stands with a vacant stare.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch stands alone and watches as Logan is led in handcuffs to a secured bus.

The bus leaves the facility.

INT. DETENTION CORRIDOR - DAY

Sketch tries the handle of the art classroom which is locked.

EXT. DETENTION OFFICE - DAY

Bernie is escorted out by Guards. She carries a large box of belongings and an art portfolio.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Sketch curls up in a ball in bed. The cell is empty of any belongings.

He closes his teary eye and takes off his eye patch. Both eyes are closed.

He opens both eyes and SCREAMS. Like a possessed madman he thrusts his body to the floor. He slams his head on the cement floor.

INT. DETENTION CORRIDOR - DAY

SKETCH SCREAMS IN PAIN (O.S.)

Guards sprint down the corridor to Sketch's cell.

INT. DETENTION MEDICAL WARD - DAY

CLOUDED BLUE SKY.

Sketch opens his right eye to the sky. However, the sky is a bad mural painted on the ceiling. He has bandages around his head with numerous bruises peppering his body.

MR. STEVENS (O.S.)

Sketch, I'm Mr. Stevens, your new social worker. I'm replacing Bernie.

Sketch focuses on the studious yet friendly MR. STEVENS (50s). Sketch goes back looking at the mural.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)

You did quite a number on yourself.

SKETCH

Where's Bernie?

MR. STEVENS

She's left the facility. But I'm here to help you now.

SKETCH

It's not realistic.

MR. STEVENS

What's not?

SKETCH

The clouds. They need shadow and highlights. Toning. Depth.

Mr. Stevens follows his gaze to the ceiling.

INT. DETENTION LIBRARY - DAY

Raphael piles art books on a desk where Sketch sits at a computer. He wears a buzz cut.

SKETCH

Hey, Raphael. Is there a way to access a comic website?

RAPHAEL

Like anime-porn?

SKETCH

No just a comic website to read the comments.

RAPHAEL
I can try on mine and print them
out for you.

Sketch opens a book on cubism as Raphael leaves.

MONTHS PASS

Raphael piles more books on the desk as Sketch reads copied comments from a website. Sketch's hair has grown into a large afro.

RAPHAEL (CONT'D)
Did you hear? The Warden is
transferring.

Sketch glances at him from the comments.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch lays on his back on the grass with his hands pretending to paint the sky. He watches the cloud's shadow pass along the bright blue sky backdrop.

MR. STEVENS (O.S.)
Sketch.

Mr. Steven's shadow comes over him.

SKETCH
Yes, sir.

MR. STEVENS
You only have six months before
your hearing and your eighteenth
birthday. I want to help in your
release.

SKETCH
How's that? I've done everything
required of me.

MR. STEVENS
Extra curriculum. See that dingy
gray wall over there.

Sketch leans over to take a gander.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)
I've spoken to the new director and
he has given the green light for a
mural be painted.

Sketch sits up and faces the blank canvass.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)
We want you to paint it.

Sketch focuses upon it.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)
We will need to approve your
drawing first and review your work
as you go. It has to be positive.
Something to enlighten inmates
toward their future. Forward
thinking.

Sketch meets his eyes.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)
The accomplishment would be a boost
upon your release. Other inmates
can help. Are you ready to
undertake such a challenge?

Sketch smiles wide for the first time in months.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Sketch draws on a pad, but quickly wads up the paper and tosses it to the floor. The floor is textured with balls of crumpled paper mistakes.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch sits crosslegged analyzing the wall on a cloudy day. The blank sketch pad sets on his lap.

The clouds open up allowing rays of sun.

A bright reflection captures his eye. A mirror of a passing cop car shines in his eye.

A burst of lightening shoots down to his fingers as the pencil strikes the page in bold strokes.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Mirror paint sprays over the color gray.

Sketch sprays the paint from a scaffold.

Surrounding him, there are more than ten Inmates spraying more mirror paint.

LATER

Sketch and the Inmates stand in awe in front of their reflection on the fully painted mirror wall.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - NIGHT

A spotlight reveals Sketch painting a dark color over a section of the mirrored wall.

Lightening strikes in the distance with THUNDER following.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch and a couple of Inmates stand on a scaffold covered in blue and white paint. He shows them how to paint in broad circular strokes.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

Sketch mixes different shades of yellow on a palette. He adds gold glitter to the mix.

He holds it up to the light and the paint glistens.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - DAY

Sketch and the two Inmates paint the glistening yellow onto the mirrored wall.

EXT. DETENTION YARD - MORNING

The mural wall is covered with a parachute as the whole Detention POPULATION stand before it.

Sketch stands next to Mr. Stevens and the NEW WARDEN (40s).

The New Warden motions to Guards on the roof to drop the parachute.

The parachute floats down revealing the mural.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT THERE IS A COLORFUL ABSTRACTION OF WEATHER PATTERNS UPON THE MIRROR BACKDROP.

SHADES OF DARK PURPLE AND BLACK DEPICT A RAIN STORM WHICH SWIRLS WITH WHITE CLOUDS OVER SHADES OF BLUE SKY. THE BLUE SKY MORPHS INTO SUN RAYS WHICH GLOW IN ABSTRACT STREAKS.

A quiet reverence comes over the crowd.

CLAPS grow as Guards and Inmates alike CLAP.

NEW WARDEN

It's profound, a spiritual abstraction. You have the ability to choose where to see yourself. Life IS what you make it.

Mr. Stevens hands Sketch a brush and a pale of paint.

MR. STEVENS

Great work. It's missing one thing.

Sketch cocks his head.

MR. STEVENS (CONT'D)

Your signature.

MOMENTS LATER

Sketch steps back from the mural holding the dripping brush.

"SKETCH" IS SIGNED IN A CORNER.

The New Warden pats him proudly on the back with the other Inmates.

INT. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY - LAW LIBRARY - DAY

REX TOWER (20) thumbs through a law book while standing down an aisle. He's grown since the murder of his father in his preppy fashionable clothes which highlight his athletic physique.

A chubby costumed "Grabber" in a scary devil mask stalks from behind.

CHYRON: NOIR-EXPRESSIONISM PERIOD

He gooses Rex in the ass, but Rex does not flinch. DARBY CRAIG (18) slides his mask over his forehead. He's a happy go-lucky preppy slob.

DARBY

Oh, I forgot. As I've been told, you like when a guy fingers your ass.

REX

I told you before, I don't have time for this. I need to study for a contract drafting quiz.

DARBY

Fuck, c'mon. "Sign at the fuckin' line and we'll steal twenty percent." Bing, bang, boom.

Darby takes the mask off.

DARBY (CONT'D)

I'll let you wear the "Grabber" mask. You can grab some hot demons with it.

Darby hugs him tight scrunching Rex's butt which makes Rex crack a smile.

DARBY (CONT'D)

We can play some grab ass. No one will know.

Rex playfully pushes him away.

DARBY (CONT'D)

The Horror-Con is at the convention center downtown. It'll be fun. Allison is coming.

Rex smirks and lowers his guard.

DARBY (CONT'D)

I see a crack. I'm almost there. You are becoming weak minded. The book is becoming heavy. Put it back on the shelf.

REX

Al-right.

Darby smiles wide dropping the mask over his face.

DARBY

Anyway, you get along better with my girlfriend than I do. I may dump her.

Rex slides the book back on the shelf.

EXT. DETENTION FACILITY - DAY

A fortified security door unlatches. Sketch (18) exits and walks freely outside. A cheap birthday crown adorns his prison buzzcut.

He carries a box of presents with an artist satchel over his shoulder.

He stops and allows the warm sunshine to strike his face. A shimmering of light shines on his face from the mirrored mural.

CAR HONKS (O.S.)

INT./EXT. BMW/ST LOUIS STREET - DAY

In a sporty convertible Rex drives with ALLISON (20s) in the passenger seat. She's charmingly bookish and handsome in her steam punk costume.

DARBY

Why does my girlfriend get to sit
in the front row while...

Darby holds up a bag of dirty laundry in the passenger seat.

DARBY (CONT'D)

I sit with your cum-stained socks.

REX

I need to drop them off at my
parents.

ALLISON

Your mom still washes your clothes?

REX

She digs it. And it pisses off my
right-wing stepfather.

Darby pops a gummy in his mouth.

DARBY

We're low on our alcohol and gummy
supply. Ask for your monthly
allowance early.

The car pulls into a circular driveway of a plantation mansion.

ALLISON

Holy shit.

REX
It's obnoxious.

DARBY
Master Rex! Master Rex, free me.
I'm but a humble servant.

The car stops and Rex bounds out with the laundry bag.

INT. MANSION - KITCHEN - DAY

PEGGY TOWER (40s) mixes drinks in a churning blender. She's bronzed from a full morning on the links.

PETER TOWER (50s) polishes his golf clubs at the table. He's tanned and in dad-bod shape from walking many eighteen holes.

Rex enters and welcomes his mother with a kiss on the cheek.

He drops his laundry and sits across from his stepfather as the blender stops.

REX
How's game?

PETER
Your mother was soaring with her eagles. We trounced the Richfields.

PEG
We're celebrating.

She pours three margarita glasses and hands them out.

She is about to grab the laundry bag.

PETER
Sit. Rex is a grown man.

REX
Yeah, mom. I got it.

She sits and they sip the drinks.

REX (CONT'D)
I can't stay long. I have to study.
Anyway Darby is waiting in the car.

PEG
I hate that man-pig. He reminds of that Bluto character in that raunchy movie.

PETER

"Animal House." Your mother tells
me you may be hired as an intern?

REX

I applied as a contract law intern
for a sports agency. It would start
after the semester.

PETER

Work for free? No pay? C'mon?

REX

Not yet, but I'm sure it will lead
to...

He brushes his fingers to his thumb as making cash.

PEG

Well, I'm proud of your initiative.

Peter rises with his clubs.

PETER

I'd keep applying if I were you.
Sheesh. Work for free? Next you'll
be telling us you are volunteering
for the lib ACLU or joining the
Peace Corps.

He leaves with his clubs and cocktail.

PEG

He believes in you.

Rex nods as a CAR HONKS (O.S.).

PEG (CONT'D)

Hate that boy. You get going.
I'll take care of the clothes. Your
stepfather will be fine.

His mother grabs his laundry bag.

PEG (CONT'D)

(whispers)

I must tell you something.

Rex sits back down as his mother glances around making sure
they are alone.

PEG (CONT'D)

I got a call.

REX

Yeah?

PEG

VINE called.

REX

Vine?

PEG

Victims Notification Systems. Wolf Myer aged out and was released yesterday.

Rex's eyes widen triggered by the name.

PEG (CONT'D)

You have nothing to worry about since you took your stepfather's last name.

Rex stares faraway as another CAR HONK shakes him back.

INT./EXT. BERNICE'S CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY

Sketch spoons a Dairy Queen Blizzard in the passenger seat as George drives.

GEORGE

Bernice apologizes for not picking you up. She's under the weather with the flu.

SKETCH

I'm happy to get a ride, thanks.

Sketch eats another spoonful.

SKETCH (CONT'D)

My mom and I loved these. We'd always take the bus to DQ and then eat them at the old fort overlooking the rivers.

GEORGE

You got quite a few gifts. You made many friends in there.

SKETCH

Feels out of sorts. Here I'm celebrating my eighteenth with the only friends I know and I will never see them again.

George pats his knee.

GEORGE
You always have Bernie and myself.

Sketch nods eating more ice cream.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Have you had time to work on any panels?

SKETCH
A few. Lefty has been extra. I'm nervous heading back home.

GEORGE
Understandable. Bernie and I got you a gift.

Sketch glances over as George sneaks out a birthday card from his seat. He hands it to him.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Happy birthday, Sketch.

Sketch tears open the envelope and opens the card.

TEN HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS FALL TO HIS LAP.

SKETCH
Wha, what's this?

He collects and counts the bills.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
Ten! A thousand dollars?

GEORGE
You've struck a chord with people. They love, adore "Compassion to Assassin." Mostly rapid horror fans. I moved it from Etsy to our own website. You, we have your own website.

SKETCH
I don't even own a computer.

GEORGE
Now you can buy your own. I'll run the site. All you have to do is the artwork.

Sketch counts the money again.

SKETCH

My mom will be proud. Coming back
from prison with cash. She'll
wonder where I stole it.

George reluctantly nods his head.

INT. HORROR-CON - CONVENTION HALL - DAY

The floor is filled with rows upon rows of booths selling
CONVENTIONEERS a myriad of horror merchandise.

Darby yanks Allison down a row.

DARBY

There's Art the Clown from the
Terrifier films.

They leave Rex to walk among ZOMBIES.

Rex checks out a booth that sells pickled babies in jars.

He studies it as a GOBLIN couple pass by.

GOBLIN 1

It's the illustrator of the comic
"Compassion to Assassin."

Rex follows them to a busy booth where Bernie is signing
autographs and posing for photos with CUSTOMERS.

She collects cash and scans credit cards as Rex and the
GOBLINS come near.

GOBLIN 2

That's Bernie Wright. She looks
like my grandmother.

GOBLIN 1

With a hatchet.

Rex goes past the line of Customers and scans the table of
merchandise. Sketch's comics are transferred onto shirts,
cups, and framed posters.

Rex browses the comics and stops at the one of the two Boy
Scouts and the adult Scout Master. He studies it closer.

BERNIE (O.S.)

That's one of my early, twisted
favorites I drew.

Bernie hands it over to him.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
I can sign it for an extra twenty.

Rex pulls out his wallet and gives her a credit card.

REX
You made these?

Bernie nods.

BERNIE
I'm the artist. Here is my
biography with my website.

She hands him a flyer with her picture and typed biography.

He reads it.

REX
You worked at a youth prison.

BERNIE
As a therapist, caseworker.

Rex nods and studies the framed comic he bought.

MINUTES LATER

Rex sits at a bench studying the comic as Darby and Allison discover him.

DARBY
You bought something?

Rex shows them the framed comic.

ALLISON
"Compassion to Assassin" comic.
Love it. It's like Goofus and
Gallant meets Charles Addams.

Darby grins with pride.

DARBY
Your mind is so sexy that I could
just fondle it.

Darby grabs her ass.

INT./EXT. BERNICE'S CAR/REMOTE HIGHWAY - DAY

George drives as Sketch views a train trestle which
introduces "Cairo."

SKETCH

She hates Cairo.

They drive past dilapidated and rundown brick factories and apartment buildings. Some are covered by overgrown ivy with trees puncturing out of roofs.

GEORGE

I suppose it is hard to leave the past. For better or worse.

SKETCH

It appears for the worse. Nature is creeping back in. Maybe we can make enough to move to St Louis.

GEORGE

Maybe.

Sketch stares out the passenger window at the ghost town with his lone right eye.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Sketch, I must warn you that your mother isn't in a healthy condition.

SKETCH

Sick?

GEORGE

You can say that.

SKETCH

Pharmaceuticals.

GEORGE

Bernie believes that is why she never visited you. And guilt.

SKETCH

The past has always been her prison. I think I can help her now.

George turns on the gravel road toward the mobile home.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

George's car pulls up to the front and Sketch exits.

The weeds have rooted up the cement foundation and surround the area like a short forest. His old bicycle lies in the weeds with five years of rust on it.

GEORGE
Needs some TLC.

About two hundred feet away is another sadly aged mobile home.

SKETCH
She got another mobile home.

GEORGE
She rents it out to supplement her lack of what you say...

SKETCH
Appointments.

Sketch steps to the front door and knocks.

GEORGE
Her car isn't here.

SKETCH
She knew I was coming home?

CANDY (O.S.)
Beware. She's a witch.

Sketch and George turn toward the mobile next door. CANDY JACKSON (6), a charming black girl in braids sits on the steps playing with a yo-yo.

SKETCH
What?

From inside the neighbor's mobile her sister JACKIE JACKSON (17) is shadowed.

JACKIE
Candy, get in here now. Right now!

Candy stomps in with a door slam.

INT. MOBILE HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Second hand furniture occupies the depressed room. Sketch and George read a Dollar Store "Happy Birthday" banner over a stained sofa.

On a coffee table is a store bought birthday cake with candles. Balloons and streamers are strewn about haphazardly.

George forces a smile.

GEORGE
She must have forgot something.

Sketch discovers a card next to the cake.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Welcome home. Bernie and I have
another gift for you. With your
mother's consent and blessing we
added a new addition.

Sketch cocks his head.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Iris (34) shuffles like a drug-induced zombie down the deserted ransacked corridor of lockers. Her once attractive features have declined with age and drug use.

IRIS
Sketch! Sketch! Where's my boy?

She trips over a ripped off locker door on the floor.

She falls to the ground hitting her head. She uncontrollably sobs.

A cut-up rubber band is tied around her upper arm. Heroin injection needle marks with surrounding discolored bruising are found.

Her watery, red eyes are glassy.

IRIS (CONT'D)
What did you do to my baby?

She slumps against a locker.

IRIS (CONT'D)
He's mine. What did I do to my
baby?

Her eyes surrender to lifelessness.

EXT. ARTIST SHED - DAY

Sketch and George stand before a large outdoor shed.

SKETCH
A shed?

GEORGE
Open the door.

Sketch reaches for the door handle.

INT. ARTIST SHED - DAY

The door opens and Sketch delightfully discovers a new graphic design table.

SKETCH
Fuck'n too much.

He sits at the table where new graphic pens and writing utensils lay. Paint supplies are mixed in with a can of turpentine.

GEORGE
Bernie said you'd love it.

He picks up a cell phone and waves it at George.

SKETCH
Cell phone too?

GEORGE
All yours. Cost is nothing at all
being on our network.

SKETCH
Never had a use for one before.
Thank you.

Sketch gives him a warm hug.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
Give Bernie a hug for me. I don't
think I would have survived without
her help.

GEORGE
You don't give yourself enough
credit. You found a way to take a
negative and flip it into a
positive. Not only is your life
manageable, you are able to thrive
under your condition.

SKETCH
My mom must have been blown away.

George reluctantly nods.

INT. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY - DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Rex studies at a desk, but he keeps being drawn to the comic left on his bed.

SKETCH (V.O.)
Can I sketch you?

Rex searches through a lockbox in his desk containing his birth certificate, high school diploma, photographs, and a folded paper.

He unfolds the drawing of himself that Sketch did before he killed his father.

He sets Sketch's drawing next to the boy scout comic. One of the Boy Scout's face matches the one in his drawing.

INT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Sketch sits on the couch waiting for his mother's return. He sketches the cake, droopy balloons, and the sealed birthday card.

INT. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY - DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Rex rustles in his bed.

SKETCH (V.O.)
It was my idea.

JESS (V.O.)
Lil pervs, like to watch. Watch
this!

His eyes pop open as Darby snores nearby in his bed.

INT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Sketch sleeps on the couch in his clothes with the drawing nearby.

DOOR KNOCK (O.S.)

Sketch wakes up startled and jumps to the door anticipating his mother. He opens the door to a POLICEMAN.

POLICEMAN
Hello. Sorry to bother you so late,
but do you know Iris Myer?

SKETCH
She's my mother.

POLICEMAN
I'm sorry to notify you. Your
mother was found dead.

Sketch stands unexpressive and numb to his words.

INT. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY - DORM ROOM - MORNING

Rex stuffs clothes in a duffle bag as Darby wipes the night
from his eyes from bed.

DARBY
Going for a run?

REX
Taking a drive down to Cairo.

DARBY
Want to go to Blueberry Hill later?

REX
Not sure when I'll get back.

Rex grabs a jacket and splits with his duffle bag.

EXT. HANGING TREE - MORNING

Sketch draws the rotted remains of his treehouse.

CANDY (O.S.)
My mom says that treehouse is
dangerous.

He glances behind and finds Candy with her backpack ready for
school.

SKETCH
I suppose it is now.

CANDY
Why do you have only one eye? Are
you a flying monkey? Friend of the
witch.

JACKIE (O.S.)
Let's go! I'll be late for work.

CANDY
I'm coming!

Jackie appears through the woods in her work coveralls which covers her attractive feminine features.

JACKIE
There you are.

Jackie stops.

CANDY
I'm talking to the one-eyed flying monkey.

JACKIE
Go to the car.

CANDY
I asked him if the witch is dead?

JACKIE
Candy, please go to the car.

Candy stomps away.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry about my sister. Her mouth can be like a volcano. Always erupting and spewing muck.

SKETCH
Yes, she passed away last night.

JACKIE
Huh? I just saw her a day ago. She was looking forward to her son...

She realizes he is her son.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Oh man, I'm so sorry. We are renting the mobile from Iris. Are you Wolf? Her son?

Sketch nods.

SKETCH
You can call me Sketch.

Jackie nervously backtracks.

JACKIE
I need to get her to school and I'm late for work. I'm sorry about the Wizard of Oz, wicked witch, monkey thing.

(MORE)

JACKIE (CONT'D)

I made up that story to keep Candy
afraid of pestering your mother.
Can't believe...

SKETCH

I understand. My mother had some
unsavory friends.

JACKIE

If you need anything, please...

SKETCH

Thanks.

Jackie retreats back in the woods as Sketch goes back to
drawing.

INT./EXT. REX'S CAR/CAIRO ROAD - DAY

Rex drives his car under the train trestle that declares he
is entering "Cairo".

INT. DOMINIC'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT - DAY

Bernie and George are out of their price range while drinking
wine in a classy setting.

An AGENT (early 30s) schmoozes them by pouring more wine into
Bernie's glass.

BERNIE

I'm unsure. It's a giant leap for
us.

AGENT

Every artist, no matter how
insulated or, should I say,
protective, maintain an ambition
for a wider audience. You know
Cartoon Network does just that.

George pries his gleeful eyes into Bernie. Bernie's phone
rings.

BERNIE

I, we need to discuss it. Run it
past our lawyer.

She reads the caller's number and meets George's eyes and
mouths, "Sketch".

AGENT

We would love to produce and take "Compassion to Assassin" to the next level. The animated series would add another edgy companion piece to our Adult Swim content. The duality of the characters are like Jekyll and Hyde for a new millennium.

Bernie's cell phone "BEEPS" of an incoming message. She turns off the phone.

BERNIE

Sorry. Uh, uh will I have any creative control?

AGENT

Rest assured. It'll all be in the contract.

Bernie nods and contemplates it by gulping down wine.

GEORGE

Bernie, this is everything you wanted. Strived for.

BERNIE

Alright.

AGENT

Yes?

GEORGE

She's saying "Yes" to the dress.

Agent laughs.

AGENT

It'll be a wedding you'll never regret.

He slides her a thumb drive.

AGENT (CONT'D)

Here's the contract.

The Agent and George smile wide as Bernie nods pensively as she checks her phone.

EXT. CAIRO - RIVERVIEW MOTEL - DAY

Rex stands outside of his motel room facing the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers confluence. His leg bounces slightly from a nervous twitch.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

A YOUNG REX (14) sits on a couch his leg bouncing nervously. A CHAPLAIN listens a few feet away.

CHAPLAIN
Did the therapist give you
medication?

Young Rex nods and holds his knee down from bouncing.

YOUNG REX
To calm me.

The Chaplain nods.

CHAPLAIN
How long have you seen the
therapist?

YOUNG REX
A year since...

CHAPLAIN
The incident. And do you still see
this Sketch boy in your dreams?
Nightmares?

YOUNG REX
Sometimes.

CHAPLAIN
Is he scary to you?

YOUNG REX
No, he's kind. Not evil like a
horror movie.

CHAPLAIN
He had an ailment. A sickness that
he had no control over. You have no
control over for what he did. Do
you feel guilt?

YOUNG REX

I put it in his head. I did. I told him how my father hurt me, hurt my mother. He saw my dad hit me. My dad hit him. He wasn't afraid to help me.

CHAPLAIN

You felt he was protecting you?

Young Rex nods.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

Last time we met you said you forgave him.

Young Rex eyes wet.

YOUNG REX

I do.

Young Rex looks at the Chaplain.

YOUNG REX (CONT'D)

I can't forgive my dad. Isn't God supposed to heal people? Help them?

Young Rex awaits the Chaplain's response.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. RIVER VIEW MOTEL - DAY

Rex still stares out onto the river horizon. His leg twitching. He catches himself and holds his leg still.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DUSK

Sketch draws on a pad at a lit fire pit as Jackie's car pulls next to her mobile.

Jackie and Candy exit with bags of food from a fast food. Jackie is grimy in her work clothes.

Sketch shyly waves at them and Candy waves back.

Before Jackie can say anything Candy skips over to the fire pit.

CANDY

Are you hungry? I'll share my nuggets.

Jackie follows.

JACKIE

Again, I always tell her to close
her mouth...

CANDY

Before the skeeters buzz out. Ha,
ha.

SKETCH

I made you something.

Sketch hands her the drawing he was working on. It is of
Candy playing with her yo-yo.

CANDY

It's me! Mom, it's me.

Jackie looks at it and then to Sketch.

JACKIE

You drew this?

Sketch nods.

SKETCH

It's my flow. I'm not great at
communicating and I find drawing,
painting gives me a voice.

Jackie pulls up lawn chairs for her and Candy.

JACKIE

It's a warm welcome.

CANDY

Can we eat here?

Jackie looks to Sketch for an answer.

SKETCH

I'd like that.

LATER

Jackie and Sketch sit by the fire as Candy plays nearby.

JACKIE

I was going to SLU in St. Louis
majoring in Education when our
mother was arrested on drug
charges.

SKETCH

Do they still deal out of the Mud
River Tavern?

JACKIE

Always. That's where she got her
shit. She got a five year sentence.
I couldn't care for Candy being
away at school, so I came back to
mournful Cairo.

She catches her bad choice in words.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Sorry, "mournful" was an ignorant
choice of words. My mouth has it's
own skeeters.

SKETCH

True. Cairo is mournful.

JACKIE

Found a cheap place for us both.
Got a job at the recycling center.
We're making due I suppose. Iris
mentioned you a few times. Said you
were living with your dad.

Sketch slowly shakes his head.

SKETCH

I was put away.

JACKIE

Away? Hospital?

SKETCH

I never knew my father. I was
incarcerated since I was thirteen.
"Forensic Treatment Center for
Juveniles."

JACKIE

For what?

SKETCH

I murdered one of my mother's
clients.

Jackie freezes in her seat.

JACKIE

I suppose you had your reasons.

SKETCH

He was an abusive fuck and my other half took over. But I was guilty. It was still me.

Jackie watchfully rises from her chair.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Sketch draws an illustration and studies it. He moves his eye patch over his right eye allowing his left to take over.

MOMENTS LATER

The pencil is left on the paper unattended.

RUSTY BIKE RATTLES AWAY (O.S.)

EXT. MUD RIVER TAVERN - NIGHT

There are only two cars in the parking lot as Sketch rides his creaky bike to the back entrance as he did five years before. He holds a can of turpentine and drops his bike.

INT. MUD RIVER TAVERN - NIGHT

The Bartender wears a holstered gun while watching a Cardinal baseball game on the TV. The DRUG DEALER exchanges a baggie of pills for cash from a USER.

DRUG DEALER

Take your medicine as described and get the fuck out.

The User splits out the front door.

BACK DOOR KNOCKS (O.S.)

DRUG DEALER (CONT'D)

Expecting any deliveries?

DOOR KNOCKS (O.S.)

BARTENDER

Not this late.

The Dealer motions his head to the rear.

DRUG DEALER

Check it out.

The Bartender unholsters his gun and heads back.

INT. MUD RIVER TAVERN - BACKROOM - NIGHT

The Bartender walks to the door.

BARTENDER
What ya want?

SKETCH (O.S.)
It's Sketch. My mom sent me.

The Bartender is puzzled as he opens the door.

BARTENDER
Sketch? Iris's kid?

The Bartender lets him in.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Damn, you've grown, One-Eye. They
finally let your ass out.

Sketch grips the can out of the Bartender's sight.

SKETCH
My mom said she didn't get the
proper amount of pills.

BARTENDER
Your mom bought heroin not pills.

DRUG DEALER (O.S.)
Who is it?

The Bartender turns his head toward the front away from
Sketch.

BARTENDER
You remember One-Eye. Iris sent
him.

DRUG DEALER (O.S.)
Iris is dead.

Sketch slams the can into the back of the Bartender's head.
He follows quickly with more blows to his head as the
Bartender collapses to the floor.

Sketch follows him down still pulverizing him dead with the
can.

INT. MUD RIVER TAVERN - NIGHT

The Dealer rises from the bar facing the rear.

DRUG DEALER
Bring him here.

There is some commotion in the backroom and Sketch enters the bar.

His face and clothes are covered in blood. Blood drips from his left eye as he focuses on the Dealer.

Sketch aims the Bartender's pistol at the Dealer.

DRUG DEALER (CONT'D)
Hey, hey kid. She did it to
herself.

The Dealer slowly reaches for a beer bottle for defense as Sketch stalks toward him.

SKECH
With a push from you.

Sketch shoots the Dealer once and moves closer with each additional shot until he shoots the dead dealer in the eye.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER BANK - NIGHT

Sketch fills the empty can of turpentine with muddy river water. He slings it into the river and it quickly sinks. In the background of the city, the bar is in flames.

MATCH CUT:

EXT. MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

A fire rages in the pit.

Sketch slowly strips off his bloody clothes as the fire rages. He tosses in his shirt and followed by his pants and socks.

Sketch watches the fire burn any evidence.

Jackie opens her door to see the flames illuminate Sketch stripped to his underwear.

INT./EXT. JACKIE'S CAR/MOBILE HOME - MORNING

Jackie yells out the driver's side window.

JACKIE
C'mon, Candy.

Jackie glances over at Sketch's mobile home as Candy runs out of their mobile.

Candy jumps in the passenger seat and flips on the radio.

CANDY
I had to pee.

The radio comes on to local news.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
Late last night, two dead bodies...

Candy is about to change the station.

JACKIE
Hold on.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)
...were discovered in the charred
remains of the Mud River Tavern.
The police haven't ruled out
suspicious activity.

Jackie studies the smoldering fire pit as she puts the car in drive.

EXT. CAIRO - RIVERVIEW MOTEL - DAY

Rex steps out of his room as a MAID walks by.

MAID
Good morning.

REX
Morning.

Rex glances at her go by.

REX (CONT'D)
Excuse me. Do you know of a
psychic, tarot card reader? Down a
gravel road. In the woods near the
river.

MAID
I'm not sure. I'm new here.

REX
Alright, thanks.

Rex notices a car parked outside of the motel office. He recognizes Bernie exiting the car as George follows out of the passenger side.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Sketch exits while drying his hair from a shower. He notices the sealed birthday card.

He rips the envelope and opens the card as folded paper falls to his feet. It appears to be a letter.

INT. WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY - DORM ROOM - DAY

Darby is jerking off watching porn in his underwear as Peg barges in with a clothes basket.

WOMAN CRIES OUT REACHING ORGASM (O.S.)

Darby quickly gathers himself and clicks at the keyboard.

PEG
Turn that smut off.

Darby clicks off the computer.

DARBY
Mrs. Tower?

PEG
I've been trying to reach my son.
He forgot his clean clothes.

Darby awkwardly yanks on a t-shirt and shorts.

DARBY
Rex left yesterday.

PEG
And he hasn't been back? Don't you look out for each other?

DARBY
He said he may be back soon.

PEG
And miss classes?

DARBY
He went to, like Egypt or
something.

Peg picks up the drawing of Rex that Sketch made years ago.

DARBY (CONT'D)
Dude is obsessed by the comic he
bought.

Darby points to the framed comic. Peg studies it.

PEG
Who drew this?

DARBY
Some lady at HorrorCon.

PEG
My son is in both of them. Egypt?

Darby shrugs as Peg takes on a sudden look of fright.

PEG (CONT'D)
He went to Cairo.

DARBY
I was close.

PEG
Cairo Illinois, you pervert.

Peg dashes out leaving Darby confused and speechless.

EXT. CAIRO CITY STREETS - DAY

Sketch pedals his creaky bike by the burnt remains of the Mud River Bar.

He rides his bike up to "Crains Funeral Home."

EXT. CRAINS FUNERAL HOME - HALF HOUR LATER

Sketch exits with a box containing his mother's ashes. A hooded BIKE THIEF (12) climbs on the bike.

SKETCH
Hey.

The young Thief spins to him with a worried expression.

BIKE THIEF
I, I, thought they were throwing it
out.

Sketch sees his young self in the Thief.

SKETCH
Go ahead. Steal it. Go on and get
out of here. It's all yours.

The Thief pedals away on the creaky bike.

Sketch pulls out his cell phone and calls.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
Hi, some kid stole my bike. Can you
pick me up at the funeral home?

Sketch sits on the curb with the ash box on his lap. He
studies the dilapidated vacant buildings across the street. A
TAGGER spray paints on an outside wall.

EXT. CAIRO - RIVERVIEW MOTEL - DAY

Bernie leaves her room followed by George.

GEORGE
You aren't going to tell him.

BERNIE
Sooner or later he'll find out.

GEORGE
Can we wait till later until we,
you know, plan it out?

BERNIE
Bye, George.

She gets into her car as George watches her drive off.

Rex's car trails.

EXT. CRAINS FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Bernie's car pulls up to the curb as Sketch rises to his
feet. Bernie runs out and gives him a giant hug.

Rex's car is parked yards back off the side of the road.

INT./EXT. BERNIE'S CAR/CAIRO STREETS - DAY

Bernie drives Sketch with the box of ashes on his lap.

SKETCH

She was found at my old elementary school.

BERNIE

Were children present?

SKETCH

The school closed years ago. Vacant like most of the buildings here.

He views the vacant buildings as they drive by.

BERNIE

I'm sorry I couldn't pick you up from the detention center.

SKETCH

You got fired.

BERNIE

I quit.

SKETCH

You sold drugs.

BERNIE

I sold gummies that's all.

SKETCH

Logan gave me some. Her heroin overdose wasn't by mistake.

Bernie glances over at him.

SKETCH (CONT'D)

My birthday gift was her will. She wrote it the day before I was released.

BERNIE

It's not because of you. Don't think that. She was bad off when we visited her.

SKETCH

Bothers me that all she thought, believed she could provide me was stuff. Leftover shit. And all I wanted was her. My mom.

Sketch keeps watching the mournful cityscape pass by.

From the back window Rex's car is seen.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Bernie's car is parked and Sketch carries the ash box.

BERNIE

I have something for you.

Bernie opens the car trunk and lifts out a hefty art portfolio.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Before I left I took all your artwork that was confiscated.

Sketch stepped away to the fire pit.

HALF HOUR LATER

Bernie throws the moldy birthday cake in the trash bin with the streamers and wilting balloons.

Sketch draws on a pad by the pit.

SKETCH

You don't have to clean.

BERNIE

Yes, I do.

Bernie goes back inside.

INT. MOBILE HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Bernie changes the sheets on the bed. She notices a drawing under the bed.

She bends down and discovers Sketch's childhood drawings.

She pulls them out one by one and lays them on the mattress. From the ceiling mirror, she examines the drawings of river barges, empty buildings, nudes, and the hanging tree.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Sketch sits by the fire pit with his mother's ashes beside him. He is consumed in a sketch.

BERNIE
Are you going to be alright?

Sketch nods.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
George is back at the motel. How
bout we bring dinner by later?

Sketch nods again.

SKETCH
Thanks for the money. It paid for
the funeral expenses.

BERNIE
It's the least we could do.

She gives him a hug and glances at his drawing.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
Your mother?

SKETCH
Yes.

BERNIE
Call me if you need me before
dinner.

SKETCH
Will do.

Bernie walks toward her car.

INT./EXT. PEG'S CAR/HIGHWAY - DAY

Peg drives while on her speaker phone.

PEG
Rex's car broke down near Memphis.
I'll be back tomorrow. Don't be
silly. No, I'm not cheating on you.

In worry, she runs her hand through her hair.

EXT. HANGING TREE - DAY

Sketch lays on the ground looking into the branches and the
remnants of his treehouse.

Rex measuredly comes out from the woods unseen to Sketch.

From afar it appears Sketch is talking to somebody.

Rex quietly steps closer.

REX
How's Froggy?

Sketch rises quickly and faces Rex for a full minute.

Sketch's eye swells up in tears and he finally succumbs to his pent-up restrained emotions. He quivers uncontrollably.

Rex's eyes begin to tear as he grasps Sketch in a comforting strong embrace.

REX (CONT'D)
It's alright. It's OK.

Sketch sobs in his arms.

LATER

Rex and Sketch sit closely beside each other on the bank of the river.

SKETCH
I always wanted to tell you how sorry I was. What I did to you and your mother. I thought about you often. What happened to you.

REX
I think I'm better now. The past with my father still scars me. I've seen quite a few therapists and worked out the kinks so to speak.

SKETCH
Me too.

REX
You didn't, don't deserve what happened to you. Disappointment all around. Your mom, my father, doctors, and now this Bernie.

SKETCH
Bernie is alright.

REX
She and her husband are ripping you off. She's signing her name to your illustrations.

SKETCH

I know.

REX

I want to help you. Your name needs to be on those. You need the credit. You'll need the money. I can help with a contract.

Sketch cracks an awkward smile and touches Rex's face.

SKETCH

That worrisome boy is still there, but without the fear.

Rex grabs his hand and slowly brings it down beside his thigh. Instead of releasing it, he holds his hand tight.

REX

I think we are going to be alright.

Rex and Sketch gaze out upon the flowing river.

INT. RIVER VIEW MOTEL - ROOM - DAY

George is on the bed typing on his laptop with a lit joint in his mouth.

Bernie enters stretching from prior cleaning.

GEORGE

How's he doing?

BERNIE

What you'd expect when your mother kills herself.

GEORGE

I thought it was an overdose.

She goes into the bathroom.

BERNIE (O.S.)

She planned it.

INT. RIVER VIEW MOTEL - BATHROOM - DAY

Bernie washes her hands and face.

GEORGE (O.S.)

We got another reminder from the Network.

Bernie looks at her reflection in the mirror.

GEORGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
They need your electronic
signature.

BERNIE
(quietly)
I'm not signing it.

GEORGE (O.S.)
What was that?

George stands at the doorframe with his reflection seen
behind her. His joint still between his lips.

BERNIE
I'm not going to sign it.

GEORGE
Why not? You're allowing your
sympathy affect...

BERNIE
Shut up, George. It's Sketch's too.

GEORGE
This is our chance at retirement.
Never to work again. Sketch will
get his fair share. Think about it.

Bernie faces him.

BERNIE
I have. I'm not signing.

Bernie takes the joint from his mouth and tosses it in the
toilet water with a FIZZLE.

BERNIE (CONT'D)
This shit got me fired. Give it up
and get a fucking job.

She pushes him out of the way.

GEORGE
C'mon.

BERNIE
What has become of us? We were good
people once. We were compassionate
and caring. Now we are selfish and
greedy. We are terrible human
beings.

George glances in the toilet.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Rex sits on the couch admiring all of Sketch's artwork.
Sketch is drawing him from a chair.

KNOCK ON DOOR (O.S.)

JACKIE (O.S.)
Hello! Help me out here.

Sketch opens the door to Jackie who has six packs of beer and bags of sandwiches.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
I stole sandwiches from the boss's lounge.

SKETCH
Here.

He helps by relieving her of the beer as she drops the sandwich bags on the kitchen counter.

She takes notice of Rex on the couch.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
Jackie this is Rex. Rex, is my...

REX
Childhood friend.

Candy bangs in carrying a grocery bag.

CANDY
Can we eat now?

She finds Rex on the couch.

CANDY (CONT'D)
Who are you?

Jackie covers Candy's mouth.

JACKIE
I'm the neighbor. This is my lil sister, Candy. She's more...

Candy takes her hand away.

CANDY
Sour than sweet. Ha, ha.

Rex glances over to Sketch.

REX
I'm a childhood friend of Sketch.

CANDY
You went to prison too?

JACKIE
Out. Take the skeeters out.

Candy bounces out the door.

Jackie notices and admires the drawings and paintings.

JACKIE (CONT'D)
Holy crap. Did Sketch do these?

She flips through them.

REX
He's an amazing artist.

JACKIE
You lived in Cairo?

REX
No. My dad would take me here on
business trips.

JACKIE
You knew Iris?

REX
My dad would get his Tarot cards
read.

SKETCH
Keeping it real. His father had sex
with my mom.

Rex nods.

SKETCH (CONT'D)
It's why I went away.

Jackie looks at prison drawings.

REX
My father was physically and
verbally abusive to my mother and
me.

Jackie pretends to explode her head with her hands.

JACKIE

Ka-boom! Sketch killed your father.

REX

His left eye did it.

JACKIE

Say what?

BERNIE'S CAR DRIVES ON GRAVEL (O.S.)

SKETCH

You can explain better than I.

Sketch heads out.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Bernie carries bags of soda and snacks from her car as Sketch meets her.

BERNIE

There's pizza in the front seat.

Sketch opens the passenger door as Candy bounces up.

CANDY

Pizza!

There are four pizza boxes.

SKETCH

This is too much.

BERNIE

It's dinner. Your breakfast and lunch tomorrow.

SKETCH

Help me out here.

Sketch gives Candy a box.

SKETCH (CONT'D)

Where's George?

BERNIE

He's nursing a high temperature. It will take a few weeks to sleep it off.

Candy skips around Bernie heading to the mobile.

Sketch carries the other three pizza boxes.

INT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Candy bangs in with the pizza box.

JACKIE

So, it really is a medical condition? So if his left side like burned down a, a car for example. He wouldn't know?

Rex nods.

Bernie enters with a bag of groceries. She stops and stares at Jackie and Rex reviewing the artwork.

Sketch bangs in with three more pizza boxes.

Candy bounces up and down.

CANDY

We're gonna party.

JACKIE

It's a wake. Stop jumping. Out!

She bounces out.

CANDY

Party pooper.

All the four stare at each other.

Jackie thumbs through the artwork.

JACKIE

Your picture is here somewhere.

Bernie lays down the bag.

BERNIE

I was his caseworker while he was incarcerated.

REX

You're a fraud.

BERNIE

Who are you?

SKETCH

This is Rex.

BERNIE

Rex? The son of...

SKETCH

Yes, the same.

REX

You're ripping Sketch off. You sold me the "Compassion to Assassin" comic which I was one of the Boy Scouts.

Jackie spins her head to Sketch.

JACKIE

You drew that comic? It's morbid. Morbid in a good way.

REX

Sketch's signature wasn't on it.

SKETCH

Rex?

REX

Stand up for yourself.

BERNIE

Sketch, he's right. I admit. I admit guilt. I can only provide weak and insufficient excuses for my actions. I've been a shitty caseworker to you. A terrible friend. I allowed myself to be corrupted into thinking what was best for everybody. It wasn't what was best for you. Here I thought I was Gallant, but I was the Goofus all along. I'm gonna make amends. I'm going to add you as the illustrator. Cartoon Network wants to make it an animated series for their Adult Swim slot. It's yours. Always should have been yours.

Bernie exhales and collapses on the couch with the truth finally revealed.

BERNIE (CONT'D)

Fuck! Who ever said the "truth will set you free" is a fuckin' genius.

JACKIE

Jesus, John 8:32.

REX

I want to review the contract.
Sketch, run it past me first. I'll
run it past my professor too.

Sketch kneels to Bernie.

SKETCH

It's our comic, Bernie. I couldn't
make it without you. We shared it
right from the start. We will share
it still.

Candy pokes her head in.

CANDY

Can we get this party started?

They all laugh to break the serious mood.

SKETCH

Let's take this outside where we
can breathe.

They all rise.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

"SOMETHING'S GOT A HOLD ON ME" BY ETTA JAMES BEGINS.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Sketch, Bernie, Rex, Jackie, and Candy eat pizza and sub sandwiches with beer and soda around the lit fire pit. They sit on chairs of different styles partying.

- (A) Rex and Jackie share a laugh.
- (B) Bernie is animated telling a story which makes Sketch shake his head with a smirk of embarrassment.
- (C) Candy jumps up and down with excitement eating pizza.
- (D) Jackie pops open a beer and gives it to Rex.
- (E) Bernie draws a caricature of Candy and gives to her to show Jackie. Jackie points to herself that she wants one.
- (F) Sketch shuffles the Tarot Cards and reads them to Rex. He shows him a card and laughs.
- (G) Sketch feeds a Raccoon pizza crust as Candy peeks from behind his legs.

Song stops.

END MONTAGE:

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Sketch, Rex, Jackie, Bernie, and Candy toast marshmallows and eat S'mores over the fire.

TIRES TRAVEL OVER GRAVEL (O.S.)

A police cruiser drives in.

Jackie quickly glances over to Sketch.

The POLICEMAN exits and stares menacingly toward the group.

The all freeze their eyes on Sketch.

Suddenly the Policeman opens the rear door and Peg leaps out. She wears her expensive clothes and heels.

CANDY
Who's the rich white lady?

Rex relaxes and rises.

REX
It's my mom.

Peg stares at the nonthreatening group.

REX (CONT'D)
Beware. She's gonna be a bit bat-shit crazy, but I'll calm her down.

He squeezes Sketch's shoulder.

REX (CONT'D)
Don't worry. You did me and my mom both a favor.

Rex hightails it to her.

EXT. BUILDING WALL - DAY

A cracked wall of cement stands facing the river. Sketch paints closely to the wall with a brush. His coveralls are peppered in paint.

The Tagger watches from behind.

TAGGER
That's epic. Who is it?

CHYRON: THE DISCOVERY

Sketch steps back from his mural.

SKETCH
My mom.

A painting of his mom stares like a discoverer toward the river. Tarot cards swirl around her body like a tornado.

TAGGER
Who's the black dude?

Off to the side is a young black teen with a fishing pole sitting on a rock. He wears a dirty derby and overalls.

SKETCH
William "Froggy" James. My friend.

The Tagger studies the artwork closer.

TAGGER
You know Cairo is filled with a shitload of empty canvasses.

Sketch nods.

INT./EXT. WHITE CLASSIC MUSTANG/CAIRO STREET - DAY

LANA DEL REY steers down the main street on her speaker phone.

LANA
I'll be back in time for the festival. I just need to lay down a track at Muscle Shoals. You know how I like to drive.

Suddenly a group of RESIDENTS and TOURISTS admire and take photos of a mural on a dilapidated store front.

LANA (CONT'D)
I'll call you back later.

She parks at the side of the road.

EXT. STORE FRONT MURAL - DAY

Lana stands before a mural...

BERNIE, REX, PEG, JACKIE AND CANDY PARTY AROUND THE FIRE PIT FROM THE EARLIER SCENE. BETWEEN THEM, FACE UNSEEN, SKETCH DRAWS ON A PAD.

A Tourist snaps a photo of it as a Resident admires it with a handful of flyers.

TOURIST

Wow. Fucking wild. You said there are more around the city.

The Resident hands the Tourist a flyer.

RESIDENT

Here's a map to the others.

TOURIST

It's as if he has brought the residents back to life.

The Tourist stares at Lana for a second.

RESIDENT

The artist brought life back to Cairo alright. The past is the present as I like to say.

LANA

Who is the artist?

RESIDENT

Sketch.

Lana cocks her head.

RESIDENT (CONT'D)

That's his name.

LANA

Does Sketch live in Cairo?

RESIDENT

Yes, but I can't provide an address.

TOURIST

Holy shit, it's you. You're Lana Del Rey.

Suddenly, everybody turns to her with their cell phone cameras.

EXT. MOBILE HOME - DAY

Rex exits with two bottles of Mountain Dew. He sets them on a crate between two chairs by the fire pit. Sketch draws on a pad in one of the chairs.

Rex
Talked to Bernie. They have the
rough first episode completed.

SKETCH
Cool.

Sketch stops and takes a swig of soda.

TIRES ROLLING ON GRAVEL ROAD (O.S.)

REX
I hope it's not another fan.

A white Mustang pulls up and Lana Del Rey saunters up.

LANA
Howdy, I'm looking for Sketch.

Sketch admires her with his right eye.

SKETCH
Can I sketch you?

A smile captures his face.

FADE OUT:

THE END.