

GRANT ME THE INSANITY

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"Pilot"

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INT. PASADENA REHAB CENTER - DAY

SHANNON HANSON (mid-20s, alcoholic, iron fist in a velvet glove) exits the rehab with a suitcase, strolling with **MARY** (40s, rehab nurse). Shannon walks/limps with 'drop foot'.

MARY

I'm happy you're not choosing
isolation, Shannon.

SHANNON

Thanks for talking me out of it.

MARY

Being around other people, your
people, our people, is the best
decision to get back on your feet.

SHANNON

How long did you stay in a sober
house?

MARY

286 days.

SHANNON

Ugh. Mary. 286? How'd you do it?

MARY

My first tour I stayed 2, and found
myself right back here...

(motions to rehab)

For another tour in the junkie
barn. Do you want that?

SHANNON

No. One tour's enough. I want
normal. I want boring.

MARY

Boring beats behind bars.

SHANNON

And *bars*. Or dead.

MARY

Yeah, dead is no good.

They subtle chuckle.

MARY (CONT'D)

Come here...

They hug.

SHANNON

Thank you.

MARY

Stay alive, Shan honey.

Shannon gets in her Uber.

MARY (CONT'D)

And become a sober, boring
librarian!

As the Uber pulls away...

SHANNON

Accountant!

MARY

Housewife!

Shannon thumbs-downs that suggestion... off their smiles --

STONEY (PRE-LAP)

Shit - if dog shit got me high I'd
follow dogs around all day...

EST./EXT - CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON, CORCORAN - DAY

A big, ugly California state prison. Satan's slopjar.

STONEY (O.S.)

But the main reason I'm in here?
Action. Action, action, action.

INT. CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON - THE QUAD - SAME

JOHN "STONEY" MONAHAN (late 20s, mixed race, hard, handsome, addict, inmate, tattoos) speaks to 20 TEENAGE BOYS on a "Scared Straight" tour.

STONEY

You wanna punish a punk? Separate
him from his family. Separate him
from himself. Cage him up with his
own kind. With his own mind.

The Teens stare scared.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Sex, drugs and rock and no-soul?
Sure. At 10 years old. My parents
didn't care.

(MORE)

STONEY (CONT'D)
 Dad was a drifting dick I called
 "Who?", and Ma was a barfly they
 called "happy-ending hour."

A HIGH TEEN chuckles. This field trip looks fun for him.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 I ain't doing that to my kid.
 Haven't see him in too long but I
 gotta get straight first.

A SKINNY BOY sleeps and SNORES.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 None of us here were born on third.
 Or second. Batters box maybe.

HIGH TEEN
 More like the dugout.

Teens chuckle. Stoney smirks in agreement.

STONEY
 In the dugout... I was born and
 bred on violence. Violence, chaos
 and mayhem. My first love mayhem.
Mayhem made him.

Some Teens stare confused, some could care less.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 I was only a little bit bent til I
 turned crooked. I'd rob, cheat,
 beat and steal to get what I wanted
 when I wanted. See this rock...?

He holds up his sizable, battered FIST.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 It's why my name's Stoney.

He quickly STEPS to the HIGH TEEN to punch him in the face!
 But stops as High Teen flinches and falls off his chair.
 Teens laugh as Stoney helps him up.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 Cool out, prag. I ain't gonna fuck
 you. Today. You ain't scary enough
 to fuck. You ain't no action. You
 couldn't scare a kitten with a
 heart condition, sweetie.

A GAY TEEN smirks, eyes a HANDSOME TEEN next to him.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Like you I was the coolest,
toughest, meanest mug to shit
between two shoes. Harder than an
anvil nail.

A Buck-toothed Teen looks away disinterested.

STONEY (CONT'D)

I was bad, mad and dangerous to
know. And look where it got me. I'm
a caged animal. But animals shit in
private. I shit in front of my
cellie. I'm not even sub-human, I'm
sub-animal.

Teens reactions - some are here, some are there/distant.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Side-bar - who has older sisters,
cousins, babysitters? Hands up!

A few hands go up.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Come on, get em up! I seen nothin'
but man-ass the last many fuckin'
months!

Some more go up.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Over 21..?

Some hands go down, some remain up.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Write down their Instagrams and let
'em know this incarcerated mofo is
now a reincarnated halo, and is
ready to romance when I'm released
next week cause I'm *wookin' pa nub!*

Stoney hands out pens & paper scraps to remaining hands up.

STONEY (CONT'D)

After years in here I'm ready to
turn the first female I see inside
ou--I'm ready to take a nice girl
out. For dinner. And a Pixar movie.

The Teens stare confused. So back to bad-ass --

STONEY (CONT'D)
 I have three destinations if I keep
 this up: jails, institutions and
 death. I'm two for three so far.

A Teen smirks. Stoney hard-eyes him.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 Jail is no joke, boys. Today - you
 free to be walkin' outta here.
 Tomorrow - you dumb to be walkin'
 in.

He stares the Teens down.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 Hope that helps. Now get the fuck
 outta here and go help your
 mothers.
 (beat)
 And protect 'em from your fathers.

More staring.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 GO!! GET THE FUCK OUTTA MY FACE!!

The Teens scatter in fear.

HIGH TEEN
 (running out)
 Free Britney! (ALT: Free Ye!)

Stoney smiles.

STONEY
 (sotto, feels good)
 Givin' back. Could be my calling.

Then calls out to the Teens --

STONEY (CONT'D)
 And just say NO!!

PRE-LAP SFX: A SUCKING/BUBBLING/SMOKING SOUND

INT. CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON - STONEY'S CELL - LATER

Stoney gets high smoking a pooky.

BOXER (PRE-LAP)
 Yo, get Stoney in here!

Stoney coughs it up - SHIT!

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

Stoney!

Stoney finishes the hit, hides it and splits his cell.

INT. CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON - BOXER'S CELL - CORCORAN - DAY

Stoney enters the cell of **BOXER O'TOOLE** (40s), who files his long fingernails into sharp points - like claws.

STONEY

What's up, Boxer.

BOXER

Sit down.

Stoney sits.

BOXER (CONT'D)

You down with Peckerwood, homes?

STONEY

For life, bro.

They exchange their Peckerwood gang hand shake.

BOXER

And you down with *Hielo*?

STONEY

My boy. *Ice* forever. Rest in peace.

They both sign the cross.

BOXER

You was with him that day - wildin' out doin' that hood-rat shit while boofin' on *that* shit.

Stoney looks down, both knowing *that* shit is drugs.

QUICK FLASHBACK --

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

Stoney and **HIELO** (mid-20s, Latino) smoke meth in an alley.

Now high, they run into the street yelling, leaping over trashcans, banging on the windows of a stopped bus. Crazy shit you do on meth.

Stoney sees a COP CAR and flees. Hielo runs into the street and SSCCRREECCCHHH - BLAM!

He's hit by a car and launched 40 feet down the street!

Stoney is nowhere in sight.

BACK TO PRESENT --

BOXER

Not that I blame *blame* you. He was a grown man. He's on him.

STONEY

I know. But...

Guilt.

BOXER

Yep. *But...* You know you owe.

Stoney hangs his head in shame - knowing he owes.

BOXER (CONT'D)

(moving on)

When you out?

STONEY

A week.

BOXER

Sober living, right?

STONEY

Court ordered. Not sure where though.

BOXER

You're going here...

Boxer hands him a piece of paper. Stoney stares at it.

BOXER (CONT'D)

It's all set up.

STONEY

What's this about, bro?

BOXER

That drunk motherfucker driver who got away with killing my little brother - your best friend.

STONEY
They get out?

BOXER
Never went.

STONEY
Shit, Box, fuckin' bullshit. You gonna reach out and long-arm em?

BOXER
Baby steps, niño. Need you to get clean and settled in there first. Then I'll decide and deliver the name on this...

He hands Stoney a CELLPHONE.

STONEY
(re: address on paper)
Cool. But why here?

BOXER
I need you to do something for me. Us. Our family.

STONEY
Name it.

BOXER
You taken life.

Stoney sighs.

STONEY
Not no more.

BOXER
Then un-retire on that sick fuckin' pedo.

Boxer hands him a SHANK.

STONEY
But I'm outta here in--

BOXER
It's arranged, puta. Ain't nobody gonna dime you out, so don't sweat it.

Stoney examines the shank.

STONEY
I don't know, man--

BOXER
Don't know what? Don't know if you
have the heart for it? You can't
have heart without blood, son.

Stoney stares at the shank.

BOXER (CONT'D)
Plus I know your pain with these
sick fucks. You were just a kid, it
ain't yo fault.

Stoney steams at the traumatic memory.

STONEY
I can't--

As Stoney hands the shank back Boxer slaps it back at him.

BOXER
Can't what, boofer?! Yeah, I know
you been glassin' lately.

STONEY
I just wanna get outta here and
live like a normie, man--

BOXER
"Normie?!" Normies don't get high
in prison! You ain't a normie, you
a stormie, Stoney. My stormie. With
a responsibility to march and make
my amends, muthafucker!

Boxer flicks a bag of METH at him.

BOXER (CONT'D)
Get spiral if you rusty.

Stoney slumps.

BOXER (CONT'D)
(steely)
I said: Are you down with
Peckerwood, homes? And Hielo?

STONEY
Of course, Box, but I've been in
this shithole--

BOXER

Long enough to know the rules. Mine
that miserable memory and learn it
to him.

Off Stoney - getting the message.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

INMATES exercise, etc. Stoney strolls inconspicuously.

Stoney sees a **CREEPY MAN**, and grips the shank...

STONEY

(sotto)

Fuckin' pedo.

As he glides up to the back of the MAN --

TODD (PRE-LAP)

God...

We SMASH CUT TO --

EXT/EST - WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA - DAY

Sunset Blvd. - beaten and beautiful.

OVER ALL THIS WE HEAR the continued prayer --

TODD (O.S.)

Grant me the serenity, to accept
the things I cannot change...

EXT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Just a normal looking house off a Sunset Blvd side street.

TODD (O.S.)

The courage to change the things
that I can...

INT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

TODD SOKOLOWSKI (35, comedian handsome and vulnerable,
recovering addict and current sober house resident) sits on
one of 2 twin beds praying/reciting the Serenity Prayer...

TODD
And the wisdom to know the
difference. A--

GIRL (O.S.)
Fuck you, motherfuckers!!

Todd opens his eyes and exhales.

TODD
--men.

GIRL (O.S.)
I know what you did! I know who you
are! And I know where the fuck you
fucking cunts live!!

Todd exits his room and walks down the HALL as the SCREAMING
grows with **OTHERS** involved, trying to calm the crazy girl.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Todd enters the kitchen to our crazy girl **SHELBY** (30, short
hair, tattoos, recovering heroine addict and current sober
house resident) who has multiple PEOPLE cornered with a large
kitchen knife and blood-shot devil eyes.

TODD
Shelby!

She turns just as a **BIG RAT** gallops at Todd, who dodges it --

TODD (CONT'D)
Dammit, Seabiscuit!
(to Shelby)
What's going on?

She turns back to her hostages.

SHELBY
Who do you think you are?! I am!!

TODD
DeShay? What's going on?

DeSHAY WARD (50, black, cool & big hearted, former
crack/cocaine addict and current house manager) is rattled.

DESHAY
She relapsed, man!

TODD
On what?

FRANCISCO

Does it matter?! Her brain! Spun is spun, bro!

Shelby jabs at **FRANCISCO** (30s, East LA born & bred, has a PhD, recovering oxy/pills addict and current sober house resident) who dodges.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)

Dios!

TODD

Shelby...

SHELBY

What? *Toooddd...*

TODD

Just cool out. Give me the knife.

Deadly beat. Then Shelby softens and uncurls from her demon stance with a smile.

SHELBY

Ok, Todd. Here. Here's the knife.

She extends it blade-first.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Come and get it.

COURTNEY

Don't do it, Todd, it's a trap!

This is **COURTNEY** (20, sexy, bite-size - like her brain-size, recovering sex addict and current sober house resident).

LAILA

(Italian accent)

No shit, Courtney.

This is **LAILA** (late 20s, Italian, fiery, model, recovering alcoholic and current sober house resident).

COURTNEY

Eat dick, you dego bitch.

LAILA

So you can watch, whore?

COURTNEY

Fuck you.

LAILA
 Fuck yourself, hooker. Literal
 hooker.

COURTNEY
 I'm not a hooker! I fuck for free!
 You're the bag-whore who takes her
 clothes off for money!

LAILA
 It's art!

COURTNEY
 (flicks tongue between 2
 fingers)
 So's finger painting!

TODD
 Guys!

FRANCISCO
 She's fucked up, Todd.

LAILA
 No shit, Francisco.

FRANCISCO
 Fuck you, puta!

LAILA
 Fuck you, pinto!

LAILA (CONT'D)
 (Italian)
 Your mother is a slut and
 your dad is a ghost, you
 bastard spic. Go hop back
 over the fence and fuck your
 gang friends, you stupid,
 lazy cholo--

FRANCISCO
 (Spanish)
 Your pussy smells like low
 tide, but I'm still gonna
 split you in two later and
 make you wish you never met
 my cock even though you can't
 get enough of it, you dirty
 dego bag-whore--

TODD
 GUYS!!

Now Shelby is confused. And so are we because Laila &
 Francisco fight in languages neither understands.

And to add to the confusion "**DANOSAUR**" (DAN, 65 going on
 prehistoric, wet-brained, senile, recovering alcoholic and
 former sober house resident who now lives in the back house)
 strolls in thru the back door oblivious to the chaos, and
mumble-singing to himself --

DANOSAUR

*When the clock strikes 3 I'ma gonna
pee like a flea in the... pond--*

DESHAY

Dan! Watch out!

No reaction. And out the front door he goes jabbering on.

COURTNEY

He still doesn't live here anymore,
right?

LAILA

Not for over a year.

TODD

What happened here? DeShay...?

DESHAY

She wasn't home by curfew, so I
locked the door. We have rules.

SHELBY

Fuck your rules!

DESHAY

Shelby, it's ok to relapse. It's
happened to all of us.

TODD

We'll get you help, and you'll just
reboot. Like I did.

LAILA

How would she know, Todd? You've
never shared your recovery story.

TODD

I'm not ready, I told you.

FRANCISCO

Cause you're full of shit.

TODD

Forget about me! Shelby. Come on,
how can we help you?...

SHELBY

Wake up and die right, cunts!!

She points the knife at HER torso samurai-style and THRUSTS!

SMASH CUT TO
TITLE CARD:

GRANT ME THE INSANITY

BACK TO SCENE --

Francisco DIVES in just in time and grabs the knife!

But he grabs it by the blade slashing his hand!

But it wasn't her chest, as Todd & DeShay jump in to assist and wrestle her to the ground as she SCREAMS & thrashes!

INT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - LATER

A sedated Shelby is wheeled out on a stretcher by **PARAMEDICS** as our Gang watches with sadness.

They all touch/squeeze her as she rolls out.

LAILA

We'll get you back on track, baby.
A new sober life.

SHELBY

(sedated pfft)
Sober. Like tryin' to lose my
virginity again. But not having the
money for it.

Francisco chokes a laugh. Laila swats him.

SHELBY (CONT'D)

(mumble as she recites)
*Keep coming back.. It works if you
work it.*

DESHAY

Lord. Mental health is a helluva
drug.

After the ambulance splits, DeShay bows his head/closes his eyes and holds out his hands to the Gang --

DESHAY (CONT'D)

Let's pray...

Our Gang grimace as DeShay head-bows and shuts his eyes.

DESHAY (CONT'D)
 Who created the rivers and cleaned
 out our livers...?

Laila does the sign of the cross...

LAILA
 Body of Christ. No homo.

As they all ignore DeShay and disperse --

FRANCISCO
 I gotta get to work.

LAILA
 Me too. I'll drop you at the
 emergency room first.

FRANCISCO
 I'm fine.

LAILA
 No, you're not!

FRANCISCO
 Yes I am!

LAILA
 (Italian)
 The paramedics said you needed
 stitches!

FRANCISCO
 (Spanish)
 Don't tell me how I'm feeling!

They square off again and YELL in their first languages.

TODD
 I'm hitting a meeting.

COURTNEY
 I'm hitting therapy.

They all head to their rooms - DOORS SLAM. DeShay, lonely,
 stands there and says to himself - because no one else will --

DESHAY
 Don't compare your insides to other
 peoples' outsides, DeShay.

DeShay's phone RINGS and he answers it.

DESHAY (CONT'D)

Good morning, Father Thomas, how are you?... Yes, everything is fine now, I have it all under control... Ok, I'll be right in.

Off his stressed face.

EXT. "SERENITY NOW" MAIN HOUSE & OFFICE - LATER

A big, but deteriorating house in the Hollywood Hills.

Alcoholic and addict **PATIENTS** mill about on the big front porch - reading, smoking cigarettes and meditating.

Some look dirty and miserable kicking their drug, and some look happy, healthy and clean after kicking their drug.

FATHER THOMAS (O.S.)

It's becoming absurd, DeShay.

INT. "SERENITY NOW" MAIN OFFICE - DAY

DeShay sits with **FATHER THOMAS McCARTHY** (60s, sarcastic hard ass, runs Serenity Now, LLC).

DESHAY

I know, but this was out of my control--

FATHER THOMAS

How? What do you do all day over there? Besides sit around skinning your squirrel?

DESHAY

(huh?)
Squirre--

FATHER THOMAS

You're in charge of the welfare of the house and those recovering there.

DESHAY

I may be in charge, but I'm not in control, Father. Just like addiction--

FATHER THOMAS

Oh Christ, DeShay - don't fucking Big Book me on herding a handful of alley cats. Do your job.

DESHAY

I'm trying. And to my credit, we haven't removed anyone from the house in 6 months--

FATHER THOMAS

But how many times have the police or fire department been called in those 6 months?

DESHAY

All false alarms.

FATHER THOMAS

Or cover ups.

DeShay exhales.

FATHER THOMAS (CONT'D)

Here's the deal - Serenity isn't doing great financially. We're getting by as a whole, but we have to fill the two open beds in there to keep your house afloat.

DESHAY

I'll reach out to my network--

FATHER THOMAS

Don't bother, my network beat you to it, so you're getting two *new booties* this week.

DESHAY

Oh, thank--

FATHER THOMAS

But if we have to remove anyone else due to relapse or misconduct, we will have to shut the house down.

DESHAY

And I'll be homeless. Again.

FATHER THOMAS

(annoyed/dickish)

Oh, man up, DeShay. Or at least lady down a bit.

(MORE)

FATHER THOMAS (CONT'D)
 We'll find you something.
 (facetiously quoting the
 Big Book)
Have faith and He will guide you.

DeShay's expression has doubts about this.

DESHAY
 I'm still in recovery too, Father.

FATHER THOMAS
 I know.

DESHAY
 My purpose now is service. I've
 proven that I got what it takes to
 step on the Devil's head and help
 others.

FATHER THOMAS
 And they are grateful for your
 service, but remember - nothing
 changes if nothing ever changes.

Father Thomas pulls a bottle of Jameson Irish Whiskey from
 his desk drawer and pours some in a gold Sacrament goblet.

FATHER THOMAS (CONT'D)
 In the end it will be ok. And if it
 isn't...

He drinks.

FATHER THOMAS (CONT'D)
 It isn't the end.

DESHAY
 (challenging, re: his
 booze)
 You know the mind is a terrible
 thing to waste.

FATHER THOMAS
 And a beautiful thing to baste.
 (he toasts)
God's peed.

He downs it.

FATHER THOMAS (CONT'D)
 Now get back there and make sure
 Serenity Now doesn't turn into
 Santa Muerte.

Off DeShay's: shit.

EXT. "SERENITY NOW" MAIN HOUSE & OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

DeShay hurries out in a huff and gets on his phone with an aggressive street tone we haven't heard.

DESHAY

Yo, *Luciusfer*, it's DeShay... Yeah, the DeShay, homie - whatchu think, youngin'?!... Yeah, I know it's been a minute! Now listen the fuck up..!

PRE-LAP SFX: SNORT.. SNORT.. SNIFF-SNIFF

EXT. CHURCH - LATER

DESHAY (PRE-LAP)

Each of us is two selves! And the great challenge of life is to try to keep that higher self in command!

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

DeShay preaches wide-eyed and sweaty with uber-enthusiasm.

He speed-paces back and forth as he mighty-mouths his sermon with white powdery mucus snailing down his nostril.

DESHAY

I'm a man of God! And I'm an addict! My lower self! But I wasn't just addicted to drugs and alcohol! I was addicted to apathy, excuses and lies! I was sick and tired of being sick and tired! So I made a decision! A decision to set aside my vanity, my ego, my lower self, and seek help.

REVEAL his congregation is 3 people spread out: an OLD BLACK LADY, an OLD WHITE MAN, and a PASSED OUT BUM.

DESHAY (CONT'D)

Seek acceptance in who I was. A junkie! A beggar! A bum! It was no humble decision, people.

DeShay whips out a handkerchief to blow his runny nose.

But then tucks it away, turns his back to his congregation and, one nostril at a time, quickly snorts up the white snot.

INT. OLD CHURCH - BASEMENT CLASSROOM FOR AA MEETING - SAME

ANNOYING AA GUY speaks. The 30 **ALCOHOLICS & ADDICTS** listen, sweat and fan themselves in the hot, muggy church basement.

ANNOYING AA GUY

I still miss it. I'll always miss
it...

A passed out **HOMELESS MAN** falls off his chair. Only a few eye the distraction.

FX: DING DING goes the sound of a phone alarm/timer that the **MEETING TIMER** monitors, which he holds up for **ANNOYING AA GUY** to see, signifying his 2 minutes of "sharing time" is up.

He ignores it, too engrossed with himself and his share.

ANNOYING AA GUY (CONT'D)

I needed something, ya know?
Something more than me. Powder,
booze, pussy and more. I'm the kind
of partier that goes out for a
quiet pint on Wednesday and wakes
up in Singapore on Tuesday with a
mustache and no thumbs.

DING DING again. Todd throws his head back in annoyance.

Up front, the **MEETING SECRETARY** (who runs the meeting) eyes the Meeting Timer and Annoying AA Guy impatiently.

ANNOYING AA GUY (CONT'D)

But it didn't matter, as long as I
could find some more, ya know?
Maybe even a little gun play as
foreplay, ya know?

Todd makes eyes with Meeting Timer and gestures: *What the fuck?!* Meeting Timer mimics back: *What can I do?!*

ANNOYING AA GUY (CONT'D)

But now I'm here - in this seat.
This is my more now! Just gotta get
up to get here. Suit up, show up
and shut up, ya know.

TODD

Sure do!

ANNOYING AA GUY
 Thanks for letting me shar--
 Resentments! Forgot I got
 resentments.

Todd might explode.

 ANNOYING AA GUY (CONT'D)
 Big time. I work in the
 entertainment industry, and all I
 deal with are liars and
 bullshitters. Fake motherfuckers
 in their mechanical suits and
 medicated smiles just lying to my
 face! All day, everyday!

Beat as Annoying AA Guy steams. Done? Todd stink-eyes him.

 ANNOYING AA GUY (CONT'D)
 Thanks for letting me share.

Light claps. Then -- a **FAST TALKING TWEAKER** bursts into the
 room to YELL to everyone --

 FAST TALKING TWEAKER
 Hey hey! Sorry, sorry, I just wanna
 say that just 'cause I smoke
 crystal meth all night and jack off
 to internet porn doesn't mean I'm a
 pervert!
 (calm/composed)
 Thanks.

FAST TALKING TWEAKER splits. What the fuck? The Meeting
 Secretary doesn't miss a beat and resumes --

 MEETING SECRETARY
 Ok, so that's all the time we have
 for today...

Todd exhales in frustration.

 MEETING SECRETARY (CONT'D)
 Except for a one minute burning
 desire. Who has a burning desire to
 share?

Todd shoots his hand up.

 MEETING SECRETARY (CONT'D)
 And please, be respectful and pay
 attention to our Timer and keep
 your share to one minute.

Meeting Secretary looks around at the raised hands, sees Todd, then points at --

MEETING SECRETARY (CONT'D)

You in the red.

The (male) Meeting Secretary selects a **HOT GIRL IN RED**. Todd stands in frustration and humps out in a huff.

INT. CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON, CORCORAN - DAY

A **CORRECTIONAL OFFICER** slides paperwork to Stoney.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

Sign here for your debit card.

STONEY

How much is on it?

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

\$200.

Stoney signs and slides it back.

EXT. CALIFORNIA DESERT - LATER

A Greyhound bus drives through the desert.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - CONTINUOUS

Stoney stares out the window at the dead desert. A **DIRT BAG TWEAKER** sits next to him and scratches his face furiously.

DIRT BAG TWEAKER

Hey man, you holdin'?

His eyes locked in on the desert, Stoney shakes his head No.

INT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - NIGHT

Our Gang sits around watching TV. The mood is silent & sour, but whatever they're watching has their attention.

COURTNEY

(re: tv show)

Fuck the rose, give me the thorn.

Todd enters and hands out COMEDY SHOW FLYERS --

TODD

Guys, here are the passes to my show tomorrow night.

LAILA

(smiles at flyer)

Your big break is coming, Todd, I can feel it.

TODD

Thank you, Laila. At this point I'll settle for a big bend. I go on at 8--

FRANCISCO

Sshhhh! Come on, man!

COURTNEY

Todd! It's the most dramatic rose ceremony in history!

Todd turns to the TV and quickly sits, captivated.

TODD

Ooh. I love other peoples' pain.

DeShay enters.

DESHAY

Ya'll, we got some house biz, so listen up.

They don't. So DeShay turns off the TV.

ALL

Yo!/Hey!/What the fuck!

DESHAY

I said we got some house biz.

FRANCISCO

Can't it wait til after "The Bachelorette?"

DESHAY

Spoiler alert: she fornicates with 25 sinning closet homosexuals. Now-- since Shelby's departure we have an open bed, so my orders were to bring in two new house mates.

LAILA

Two? Why two?

TODD

Yeah, why two?

DESHAY

One to fill Shelby's absence and
one to fill the extra bed in Todd's
room.

TODD

DeShay, what the fuck?

DESHAY

Don't 'what the fuck' me, Todd.
You've been lucky enough to be
living in a single for over a year.

TODD

Because I pay for it!

DESHAY

Don't worry, we'll make
adjustments.

TODD

How?

DESHAY

By putting another body in that
bed.

TODD

Come on, DeShay!

DESHAY

Hey, I'm just doing my job, and
unfortunately I don't own this
house - as you all know The
Serenity Center does--

FX: BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG!

LAILA

What the hell?

DESHAY

That must be them.

COURTNEY

Please be a guy-- please be a guy--
please be a guy.

TODD

Wait, don't we get to discuss this?

DESHAY

We just did.

DeShay opens the door to **STONEY** (fresh from prison, tattoo'd, long Dickies shorts, white wife-beater).

DESHAY (CONT'D)
You must be John Monahan...

DeShay extends his hand...

STONEY
(Tada!)
In the flashlight.

But Stoney walks right thru it, CLAPS HIS HANDS --

STONEY (CONT'D)
Alright! Let's turn this mug into a
murder!

and heads to a room -- Todd's room.

STONEY (CONT'D)
Cocaine and cigarettes! Who's got
em?!

And slams the door.

LAILA
What the fuck was that?

COURTNEY
(ecstatic)
Let's find out.

She hops up, heads to the room and knocks. Stoney opens it.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
(extends hand)
Hi. I'm Courtney.

STONEY
Wanna bust slops?

COURTNEY
Yeah!

Courtney opens wide and leans in to kiss (*bust slops*) Stoney.

TODD
No! Courtney!

Todd leaps up and intervenes.

STONEY
What the fuck you doing, bro?

TODD
Bro? I'm Todd.

STONEY
Hey, Toad.

TODD
Todd.

STONEY
Toad.

TODD
Todd.

STONEY
Toad.

This is a weird tete a tete. Francisco intervenes.

FRANCISCO
Hey, man. Welcome to "Serenity
Now."
(extends hand)
I'm Francisco.

STONEY
(ignores his hand)
Nice to meet you, Francesca.

FRANCISCO
(chuckles)
It's Francisco.

STONEY
It's Francesca.

FRANCISCO
Francisco.

STONEY
Francesca.

Steps up.

FRANCISCO
Francisco.

Steps up.

STONEY
Francesca.

Now it's even weirder.

STONEY (CONT'D)
You wanna play fuck-fuck, bro?

Francisco clenches a fist.

FRANCISCO
If this is what you're bringing
into our house then you may wanna
grab your shit and pound ground.
Bro.

DeShay steps in.

DESHAY
Fellas fellas--

FX: POLITE KNOCK

DESHAY (CONT'D)
Lord.

DeShay opens the door to **SHANNON HANSON** (mid-20s).

SHANNON
Hi, I'm Shannon Hanson.

Extends her hand. DeShay shakes it sincerely.

DESHAY
Hi, Shannon. I'm DeShay Ward, so
nice to meet you. Please, come in.

She gingerly limp-walks in with her bags. DeShay notices her
struggle and grabs her bags.

SHANNON
Thank you.

DeShay motions to her feet --

DESHAY
Neuropathy?

She nods yes.

**NOTE: "Neuropathy" is numbness and pain in the feet, and
sometimes hands, caused by alcohol abuse.**

DESHAY (CONT'D)
Alcohol your D.O.C.?

She nods, embarrassed.

DESHAY (CONT'D)
How long's it been acting up?

SHANNON
Couple months.

DESHAY
You taking B1 and folic acid?

SHANNON
Doesn't work.

DESHAY
Abstinence works. And time.

SHANNON
What kind of time?

DESHAY
Took a year to feel my heal.

SHANNON
A yearrrrr?

DESHAY
Don't worry, Shannon - it'll come
back. Just gotta get outta this rut
and resurrect that strut.

She understands but isn't happy about it or herself.

All 3 GUYS notice her. And the 2 girls notice too. And then
notice the guys noticing.

Stoney elbows thru Todd & Francisco and beelines for Shannon.

FRANCISCO
(to Todd)
Fuckin' dick, right?

TODD
Classic case: High ego, low self-
esteem.

FRANCISCO
He's gonna catch a fade if he's not
careful.

TODD
If you red out and touch him you'll
be homeless, Cisco.

FRANCISCO
Again.

Todd takes in Shannon - crushing on her.

STONEY
Hi, I'm Stoney.

SHANNON
Hi, I'm Shannon.

They shake.

STONEY
Shannon. Like the river.

SHANNON
River?

STONEY
In Ireland. The River Shannon. Have you ever seen it?

SHANNON
Um, no.

STONEY
You should. The Shannon is beautiful.

They lock eyes as she blushes.

SHANNON
Is she..?

More eye lock.. then --

STONEY
A little dirty though.

SHANNON
(laughs)
I bet.

He laughs. Off their budding connection --

INT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - DEN - LATER

DeShay sits down with just Stoney & Shannon.

DESHAY
Some house rules: no drugs or alcohol in the house obviously, as well as any use of them outside the house.

(MORE)

DESHAY (CONT'D)

We have random UA tests, and if you come up dirty you have to leave. Got it?

They nod yes.

DESHAY (CONT'D)

And Stoney, as you're aware, probation requires you to test once a week for your year-long stay here.

STONEY

Gods peed. Me and my dick can't wait to get to know you better, DeShay.

DESHAY

I'm sure. And you gotta see a counselor or shrink or someone too, right?

STONEY

Say my parole, yeah.

DESHAY

Ok. Let's get to the gritty...

DeShay opens a notebook to jot in.

DESHAY (CONT'D)

Shannon, your D.O.C. is alcohol..?

SHANNON

Yes.

DESHAY

Love it. And you, Stoney?

STONEY

Doesn't matter. I'm a dumpster.

DESHAY

Right on. You don't discriminate.

STONEY

I'm very progressive.

DESHAY

Twenty-second Century Man - I hear ya, brotha. AA, CA, MA, NA, GA, SAA, CMA, fuck-an-A man, if it has an "A" on it I'm in it.

Stoney smile-nods. He likes DeShay.

NOTE: *D.O.C.* = *Drug of Choice*, *CA* = *Cocaine Anonymous*, *MA* = *Marijuana Anonymous*, *NA* = *Narcotics Anonymous*, *SAA* = *Sex Addicts Anonymous*, *CMA* = *Crystal Meth Anonymous*, etc.

Stoney side-eyes Shannon's shiny legs.

ON OUR GANG: as they eavesdrop/spy from the kitchen.

FRANCISCO
Damn, the new girl is fine.

Laila stomps his foot.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
Ow.

LAILA
(hissing whisper)
Keep your voice down.

COURTNEY
(eyes on Stoney)
Fine for sure.

Todd stares at Shannon.

LAILA
What do you think of her, Todd?

TODD
I don't know. She seems nice.

LAILA
Nice? Not *fine*?

TODD
(bumbling, covering)
No, she is. I mean, she's hot. But
not like Hollywood asshole hot.
Cute.

Courtney & Laila exchange eyes and smirk at Todd's bullshit.

COURTNEY
You play it right - maybe you can
get *pearl earrings* out of her.

Todd head-tilts in confusion, touches his earlobes, eyes Shannon's shiny thighs and slowly moves them up to her... *Ooohhhh*... Now he gets it... and hopes he gets it.

Courtney & Laila snicker.

BACK ON DeShay'S CONVERSATION WITH STONEY & SHANNON:

DESHAY

Are either of you employed?

SHANNON

I work at a restaurant-- used to. I have to see if I can get it back. Along with my feet.

DESHAY

Good. And you, Stoney..?

STONEY

Not yet, but I plan to.

DESHAY

And what do you plan to do?

STONEY

Get a job. Preferably one where I can wear my own clothes.

DESHAY

No "Hooters" uniform. Fair enough. For now. You have a week and I want updates.

STONEY

Fair enough.

DESHAY

You know what a sober job is?

STONEY

A job I do blotto?

DESHAY

Funny. It's a job meant to humble you, as well as ease you back into the working world. Nothing too stressful. Or glamorous.

STONEY

Ditch digging. Got it.

DESHAY

Here's a list of good places to start.

DeShay hands him a piece of paper. Stoney reads and grimaces.

STONEY

Can I work with kids?

DESHAY

Sure. If it's a paying job and you're a good influence.

Stoney nods.

DESHAY (CONT'D)

This is another step towards a new beginning. What is the past has passed.

SHANNON

My grandma used to say: "Fuck yesterday, today can have it back tomorrow."

DeShay and Stoney take a beat to figure this out. Nothing. Then:

STONEY

Was your grandma a sailor?

They all chuckle.

DESHAY

Wise maxim, as long as you don't forget what got you here yesterday.
(points at his brain)
Play the tape. So you don't replay the pain.

They nod in understanding.

DESHAY (CONT'D)

Any questions?

They shake no.

DESHAY (CONT'D)

Let me show you around.

They stand --

DESHAY (CONT'D)

Oh, last-last thing - although I discourage it, there's no rule against dating your house mates. However, you are never allowed in each other's rooms. Or anyone else's for that matter. Alright-- let go, let God.

They follow DeShay, but Stoney gestures for Shannon to walk before him like a gentleman... and a perv, to eye her ass.

INT. COURTNEY'S ROOM - LATER

Shannon enters with her stuff as Courtney lies on the bed tapping away on her phone.

SHANNON
Hi, I'm Shannon.

Courtney doesn't look up from her phone.

COURTNEY
Hey. Courtney.

SHANNON
Guess this is my bed.

She plops her bag on the empty bed.

COURTNEY
Nope. This one is.

Her bare feet rest on pillows - Shannon's pillows. As she gets up she manages to rub her sweaty bare feet on them.

SHANNON
Thanks.

INT. TODD'S ROOM - SAME

Stoney unpacks as Todd reads.

STONEY
So, should we work out a morning bathroom schedule? I can take 6 to 11.

TODD
Uhh--

STONEY
(points at shoes)
Nice shoes. Where'd you get em?
Europe?

It's unclear if Stoney's complement and question are sincere. Or if the bathroom schedule is serious.

TODD
Uhh, no--

STONEY
What size are they?

TODD
 (Why?)
 11.

Stoney nods noncommittal.

TODD (CONT'D)
 What size are you?

STONEY
 Extra balls.

Todd pffts.

TODD
 So, Stoney - what's your D.O.C.?

STONEY
 None of your B.I.Z.

Todd: Oookaay. He tried. Then digs back into his book.

STONEY (CONT'D)
 You gay?

STONEY (CONT'D)
 Huh?

STONEY (CONT'D)
 Are you gay? A gump? A "rent boy?"
 Do you give or take the pound to
 brown town? Twerk to Britney
 Spears? Skip when you walk..?

TODD
 No. I'm straight.

STONEY
 Straight as an eight?

TODD
 Yeah-- Huh? No, that means--

STONEY
 I don't care if you are, Toad. I'm
 not. I'm gay as a Chick-fil-A, so
 we won't be fucking each other.

TODD
 Yeeaah.

STONEY
 Unless you want to? You know.. for
 fun..? You sleep dick down?

Todd doesn't know what to think, so he gets up and leaves.
Stoney plops down on his bed and kicks his shoes off.

STONEY (CONT'D)
Works every time.

Stoney pulls an old PORN MAG and FLESHLIGHT out of his bag.

INT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - MORNING

Our Gang, sans Shannon, sit around the kitchen table with BIG BOOKS (AA/NA books). Laila wraps up her share --

LAILA
... and after I finished rehab in Italy, I pulled a 'geographic' and moved to LA to be in here to start a sober life. Many people can say that I can't drink and do drugs. But none of them can say that I didn't drink and do drugs. Or that I didn't choke for coke.

Our Gang laughs - Courtney the loudest.

LAILA (CONT'D)
Now, thanks to the program and this house, everything is better. Not just fine... Better.

All share a reflective beat. Todd crosses --

FRANCISCO
Todd, come share.

LAILA
Yeah, it's about time you shared your story.

TODD
Can't. Late.

FRANCISCO
Again.

Todd splits.

FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
Why won't he share how he got here?

DESHAY
When he's ready.

COURTNEY
Maybe he's private.

FRANCISCO
Or hiding something.

LAILA
He's fine.

COURTNEY
I've always walked around like everything was fine, because that's how I was raised by my parents - pretending. But deep down in my bra, where no one could tell, my unmatched fillet was sliding off. And I can't stop feeling like that.

LAILA
I hear you. I can't stop feeling like I'm gonna be the old lady with 20 cats and a teacup pig on a leash.

Courtney chuckles in connection, and expands on the sad-sharing & self-loathing with a deep breath and --

COURTNEY
I started smoking pot at 11. Drinking at 13. Fucking at 12. Then I started dating boys. But my real first love: HEROIN. Which I discovered thru Him - *Her* thru Him. Somehow I managed to stay in school, trying to get clean-- on my own, because Him was in prison--

Stoney enters in only his boxers, his body covered in tattoos. Courtney clams up upon seeing Stoney and ogles.

DESHAY
Hey, Stoney. A little morning meditation to kick off your day?

As Stoney pours coffee he replies with a long, loud FART.

FRANCISCO
Yo man! Group here! How bout some 20 for 20 courtesy!

STONEY
Chupa mi pinga, tapatio.

LAILA
 (plugs nose)
 Does that mean you're already
 comfortable around us?

STONEY
 My ass is.

DESHAY
 You sure you don't wanna join us?
 Maybe after you... clean up..?

STONEY
 I had enough spiritual circle jerks
 in the cooler.

Stoney splits with his coffee.

COURTNEY
 (to Francisco)
 "20 for 20 courtesy?"

Nostrils squeezed, Francisco answers with a NASAL-Y VOICE --

FRANCISCO
 Group etiquette - split 20 feet for
 20 seconds if you're gonna doo-doo
 yourself.

EXT. COSTCO - DAY

Stoney, with DeShay's job list in hand, approaches the super store. He exhales and heads in.

INT. COSTCO - CONTINUOUS

Stoney enters and it's a mad house of Americans. Kids scream. Moms yell. Dads slit their wrists. Checkout line is 20 deep.

STONEY
 Fuuuucckk yyoouuuu. Not my cellies,
 not my prison. / Worse than prison.

Stoney splits.

EXT. JIFFY LUBE - LATER

Stoney enters.

INT. JIFFY LUBE - LATER

Stoney fills out an application as a **MANAGER** interviews him.

MANAGER

You change your whip's oil?

STONEY

Nope.

MANAGER

Filters?

STONEY

Nope.

MANAGER

What do you know about cars?

STONEY

Four wheels and a couple bumpers.

MANAGER

Eh, you can learn.

STONEY

How hard can it be? If I can find a vein I can find a dip stick.

MANAGER

Got priors?

STONEY

(sotto)

And possible futures.

MANAGER

What's that--?

STONEY

(recovering)

Does it matter? The priors?

MANAGER

Only if they're felonies.

Stoney stops writing, drops the pen and splits.

EXT. JIFFY LUBE - CONTINUOUS

Stoney exits and exhales - stressing. He sees something across the street - a WEED DISPENSARY - and keeps eyeing it.

He shakes off the temptation and splits.

INT. STARBUCK - LATER

Stoney talks to the MANAGER aka **STARBUCKS BOY** (18, super skinny jeans and wool beanie in 90 degree heat). Starbucks Boy rushes around making concoctions.

STARBUCKS BOY
Can you make a caffe misto?

STONEY
No.

STARBUCKS BOY
How bout a latte macchiato?

STONEY
No.

STARBUCKS BOY
Espresso macchiato?

STONEY
No.

STARBUCKS BOY
Caramel macchiato?

STONEY
No.

STARBUCKS BOY
Mocha?

STONEY
No.

STARBUCKS BOY
Doppio?

STONEY
No.

Starbucks Boy's patience wanes --

STARBUCKS BOY
Iced coffee with milk?

STONEY
No.

STARBUCKS BOY
Iced coffee?

STONEY
No.

Starbucks Boy is fed up. But not fed up fucking with Stoney.

STARBUCKS BOY
How bout a vanilla sweet cream cold
brew?

STONEY
A what?

STARBUCKS BOY
Exactly. At this point I doubt you
can even make a shoe stink.

Stoney eyes Starbucks Boy's ridiculously tight skinny jeans --

STONEY
But I'm positive you can make a
camel toe.

STARBUCKS BOY
Sorry, sir, but I don't think
you're qualified to work here.

STONEY
"Sir?"

EXT. STARBUCKS - CONTINUOUS

Stoney exits and exhales - stressing harder.

STONER (O.S.)
This "diesel fiend" dope is the
bomb.

He turns to see 2 STONERS exit next door - a WEED DISPENSARY.

Off Stoney's harder temptation...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - STREET - LATER

Stoney walks and sees a HOLLYWOOD BOYS & GIRLS CLUB. He
crosses the street and enters.

INT. HOLLYWOOD BOYS & GIRLS CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Stoney enters as KIDS run around. CHANTEZ, Director of Administration, approaches him.

CHANTEZ
Hi. Are you picking up?

STONEY
Picking up...?

CHANTEZ
Your child..?

STONEY
Oh no. I'm looking for a job.

CHANTEZ
A job? Ok. Doing..?

STONEY
Doing... helping to keep these kids
out of prison.

CHANTEZ
Oh, ok. Cool. They'd appreciate
that. So you have experience..?

STONEY
Yep. I've been helping with the
Scared Straight program.

CHANTEZ
In prison?

STONEY
Well.. yeah.

CHANTEZ
So you're a felon?

STONEY
Yeah, but I'm not, like, a bad dude
or weirdo or whatever. I like kids
and wanna help them out. I'm Stoney
by the way - John. Monahan.

CHANTEZ
I'm Chantez Moore, Director of
Administration here.

They shake.

STONEY
Nice to meet you, Ms. Moore.

CHANTEZ
You too,.. Stoney..? John..?

STONEY
Friends call me Stoney.

CHANTEZ
Ok, John. Well, I appreciate you coming in but we're not allowed to hire people with pasts or priors... like yours.

STONEY
Seriously? But--

SECURITY SILO (O.S.)
All cool here, Ms. Chantez?

They turn to a large black man in a security uniform - SECURITY SILO.

STONEY
(taken aback by his size)
Jesus./Yo./Whoa.

CHANTEZ
All cool, Silo. Thanks.

But Silo stays, towering over Stoney.

CHANTEZ (CONT'D)
Thanks for coming in, Mr. Monahan.

Stoney turns to leave, dejected. But first up-downs Silo.

STONEY
Harder they fall.

Silo pffts.

EXT. WEST HOLLYWOOD - SANTA MONICA BLVD - LATER

Stoney mopes down the sidewalk, not looking so tough now.

He passes a **HOMELESS MAN** about Stoney's age at a bus stop bench who makes a pillow out of his shoes and lies down.

STONEY
(sotto)
A fine line.

Stoney then looks up to see Shannon limp-walk into a fancy restaurant. Beat, then he walks towards the restaurant.

EXT. FANCY RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Stoney approaches and looks in the window to see Shannon talking to a **RESTAURANT MANAGER** in a suit.

RESTAURANT MANAGER nods with a smile and shakes her hand. 2 **WAITRESSES** approach her and they excitedly hug.

Shannon waves bye with a big smile and approaches the exit. Stoney ducks down an alley, avoiding Shannon.

Coast is clear, so Stoney walks back to the restaurant and looks in the window - curious, thinking...

INT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT

In only his boxers, Stoney makes a sandwich. DeShay enters like a tornado - opening/closing the fridge, cupboards, just speeding around searching for something and nothing.

He grabs a glass and fills it with water and tries to drink it but it splashes around in his hand.

STONEY

Jesus, dude, you ok? You're shakin'
like a puppy shittin' a peach pit.

DESHAY

(preacher tone)

I got a lot on my plate, and
karma's in the kitchen cookin'!!

DeShay drops the glass in the sink, shattering it.

STONEY

Yo!

Courtney bursts in, rushes to DeShay and asks --

COURTNEY

Can I get a curfew extension?

DESHAY

Why?

COURTNEY

To fuck a guy in the car.

DESHAY
Who's car?

COURTNEY
His.

DeShay grabs her shoulder.

DESHAY
(preacher tone)
Let your heart guide you. It
whispers, so listen closely.

Courtney doesn't listen and rushes out.

Stoney eyes DeShay curiously. *What's wrong with him?*

STONEY
What the fuck was that?

DESHAY
Sex addiction.

STONEY
She's a sex addict?

DeShay speeds out. Stoney rushes to the window to see the car drive away as Courtney is left in the dust.

She huffs back in, pissed --

COURTNEY
Sapiosexual my asshole.

She stomps to her room. Stoney goes back to his sandwich. The BIG RAT from earlier runs up to Stoney, startling him --

STONEY
Ahh!!

COURTNEY (O.S.)
Beat it, Seabiscuit!

Stoney turns to Courtney who stands in only cotton panties and tight tank top. No bra. Whoa.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
That's our seventh roommate
"Seabiscuit."

We hear Seabiscuit galloping around the house.

STONEY
"Godzilla" would work too.

She stares him down.

COURTNEY
What are you making?

STONEY
A masterpiece.

COURTNEY
Make me one, Michaelangelo?

STONEY
You can have half, Frida.

He cuts it in half.

STONEY (CONT'D)
Come and get it.

She sidles up next to him as he hands her half. They bite.

COURTNEY
Damn.

IN THE BACKGROUND WE SEE: Laila open her bedroom door, peak her head out, then let Francisco sneak into her room.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
So, bad boy. What are you into?

STONEY
Fat tits, skinny arms. And anything mood and mind altering. You?

COURTNEY
(faux flattered)
You're into me?

He chuckles. She's a funny one.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
(slow/seductive)
I'm into skinny boarding..
Intersectional feminism.. UFC on
PCP.. and..

She runs her finger nail along his tatted bicep.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
Skin.

Stoney stares at her: We can't tell if it's sexy or scary.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. "SERENITY NOW" SOBER LIVING HOUSE - CLOSET

Stoney & Courtney fuck in the coat closet. Suddenly the door is ripped open revealing DeShay.

DESHAY
What the Jesus?!

COURTNEY
DeShay!? Eww!

DESHAY
"Eww" you, huzzy!

STONEY
It's not--

DESHAY
You're both outta here!

Stoney pants-ups and pleads --

STONEY
DeShay, I can't get kicked out,
man! Please!

As Courtney dresses, Stoney slams the closet door on her.

DESHAY
You messed up, homey.

STONEY
I know. First strike, but I been in
prison, D. All male prison. I
couldn't help it, she's a sex
addict! For real! I thought you
were fuckin' with me!

DESHAY
Told you the rules.

STONEY
Come on, DeShay. If I get booted
I'm right back to the cooler and
will never meet my kid.

DESHAY
Kid?

STONEY
I have a boy I haven't seen since
he was born. I'm here to straighten
out and do right for him. I mean
it, man. I gotta stay.

(MORE)

STONEY (CONT'D)
I gotta change and get good, and
this is my last hope.

DeShay thinks...

DESHAY
This is your first, second, third
and only strike, Stoney.

STONEY
Thank you, you got it, of course.
No more messin', I promise.

DESHAY
And keep this on the low, ain't
nobody to know, feel me?

Stoney nods.

DESHAY (CONT'D)
Miss Courtney?

COURTNEY (O.S.)
(from closet)
Yes..?

DESHAY
Same for you.

COURTNEY (O.S.)
Thank you, DeShay.
(then)
But can we finish?

Stoney slaps the door for her to shut up.

EXT. THE COMEDY STORE - NIGHT

MC (PRE-LAP)
Ok, our first comic comes to us all
the way from... somewhere. Please
welcome the hilarious Todd...
someone!

INT. THE COMEDY STORE - CONTINUOUS

APPLAUSE - biggest from Our Gang. 10 OTHER ATTENDEES could
care less. Todd hops on stage.

TODD
(calm & composed)
Alright. My name's Todd--

STONEY

TOAD!!

Todd stink-eyes Stoney, and recovers.

TODD

How's everyone doing tonight?

OUR GANG

Awesome! Fuck yeah! Great!

STONEY

Fuckin' terrible! Welcome to Hell!

TODD

Ookkaay. Good and bad, I guess. Speaking of a bad day, I had the worst day today. I mean, like, today can kiss my ass. No - today can eat my ass. No, no, today can lick my ass. Actually! Today can fuck my ass!!

Beat. Then a reflective smile.

TODD (CONT'D)

I used to really love days like today.

The CROWD LAUGHS! Todd smiles.

STONEY

No shit, blade!

Gang stink-eyes Stoney. Todd ignores him, points at Shannon --

TODD

I bet you still really love days like today.

Shannon laughs, embarrassed.

LATER IN HIS ACT -- as the Crowd laughs because he's killing.

TODD (CONT'D)

I was a terrible teen. My mom said to me once: "Todd, I don't want you to have children - I want you to have teenagers." She's a wise woman. She also told me that women don't fall in love with their eyes. They fall in love with their ears...

Todd leans down to Shannon and YELLS --

TODD (CONT'D)
HELLO! MY NAME IS TODD! WHAT IS
YOUR NAME?!

Crowd & Shannon laugh. Still killin'.

STONEY
TOAD!!

Stoney throws his feet up on the table - flashing Todd's shoes. Todd steams. And digs in --

TODD
(to crowd)
I actually know this troglodyte,
guys, and his outbursts aren't his
fault. They are nature's fault. He
is so under-evolved and dumb that
he thinks "Moby Dick" is an STD.

Crowd laughs.

TODD (CONT'D)
(sincere)
But look at that smile. Meth much?
Your teeth look like a handful of
trail mix throwing gang signs.

Stoney shrinks, grounds Todd's shoes as Shannon/Crowd laughs.

LATER --

TODD (CONT'D)
Alright, that's it, that's all I
got. Any questions?

Todd holds the mic out to the crowd.

STONEY
You suc--!

And immediately yanks the mic back to YELL back at him --

TODD
FUCK YOU!

The Crowd laughs, Stoney's embarrassed again. Todd hops down off stage and high-fives Shannon. Stoney stink-eyes.

INT. RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Shannon limps in and hangs up her purse, and as she tucks in her uniform she looks up. Surprise crosses her face.

SHANNON

Excuse me, sir, you look familiar.
How do I know you?

Stoney turns from vigorously washing dishes. He's dressed in a dishwasher uniform.

STONEY

Maybe you met me in your sleep?

SHANNON

That explains why you're smiling
like a jackass eating cactus.

He smiles.

STONEY

Unlucky for you I don't get my meat
where I get my bread.

She smiles.

SHANNON

What are you doing here?

STONEY

Kick starting my career. What are
you doing here?

SHANNON

I work here now. Again.

STONEY

No shit.

SHANNON

All shit. So, you're a...

STONEY

Yep. Jobs don't get more sobering
than this. DeShay said to find
something humble. And they already
have a sommelier, so...

He guns the hose into the sink with gusto. She laughs.

SHANNON

Well, cool. I'm glad you found
something.

STONEY

(you)
I did.

SHANNON

I'll be sure to bring you my dirtiest.

STONEY

As the River Shannon.

She stink-eye-smiles him, and as she walks away --

STONEY (CONT'D)

Hey, Shannon...

(she turns)

Wanna walk back to the house together later?

SHANNON

(smiles)

Sure.

(her eyes up-down him)

Nice uniform.

As she walks away Stoney sprays her with a squirt.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Ah!

Stoney smiles and eagerly dish-dogs. Is he happy? Then he eyes his uniform... and rips the sleeves off. Now he's happy.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD - WEHO - NIGHT

Stoney & Shannon walk.

SHANNON

... at least we don't have to do this job with masks on.

STONEY

Bet. I was tired of breathing in my own burps.

Shannon shoots a side-eye *Eww*.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Now I know how my butthole feels when I wear underwear.

EWV!! But she cracks up. Stoney chuckles.

STONEY (CONT'D)

How'd you get here? To this place in your life?

SHANNON

Slowly and then all of a sudden.

Stoney smirks in agreement.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

My crazy train was running out of track, so I needed it.

STONEY

How do you feel now?

SHANNON

Ah, ya know - strikes and gutters.

STONEY

Well, it's all in the past now.
Nothing we can do about it.

SHANNON

Nope. Life is the art of drawing
without an eraser.

Across the street Stoney sees a TEEN BOY walking past parked cars pulling the door handles to see if any are unlocked.

STONEY

I'll see you back at the house.

SHANNON

Oh. Ok.

He crosses the street and approaches the TEEN BOY. We realize that this is the HIGH TEEN from our Open who Stoney made flinch and fall off his chair.

High Teen (**TREMONT**, 16, black) doesn't see Stoney coming --

STONEY

Hey!--

Tremont looks up right as Stoney's fist is launching at his face, causing him to flinch and drop to the ground.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Made you flinch. Again. Remember me?

TREMONT

Ahhh shit. Father of the Year.

STONEY

What's your name, crook?

TREMONT

Tremont.

STONEY

Follow me, Tremont.

(shows fist)

Before I follow *through*.

Stoney helps him up off the ground.

INT. HOLLYWOOD BOYS & GIRLS CLUB - LATER

Stoney enters with Tremont. Security Silo approaches.

STONEY

Easy, skyscraper. I'm just dropping Tremont off.

CHANTEZ

(approaches)

Back again, Mr. Monahan.

STONEY

Stoney. And this is Tremont. He was out boosting.

TREMONT

Until he tried to punch me in the face.

STONEY

Thought he could use some direction.

CHANTEZ

Hey, Tremont. I'm Chantez Moore. Come on back. You hungry?

TREMONT

Always.

She guides him to the back.

STONEY

(pfft)

You're welcome.

Stoney turns to walk out...

CHANTEZ (O.S.)

Stoney?

He turns to her.

CHANTEZ (CONT'D)
I told you we don't hire felons.

STONEY
Ouch. Again. Picked that up.

As he walks off --

CHANTEZ
Boys like these look up to guys
like you.

STONEY
Guys like me?

CHANTEZ
Their dads aren't around, so guys
like you are next. Sometimes you
steer them wrong.

STONEY
I know.

CHANTEZ
They grow up only wanting to be
cool and hard.

STONEY
Cool and hard is no way to go thru
life, so...

CHANTEZ
So.

He waves as he walks off --

CHANTEZ (CONT'D)
So you can volunteer.

He turns.

CHANTEZ (CONT'D)
Between noon and three weekdays. As
long as you keep scaring them.

STONEY
Oh I'll keep scaring em.

Chantez smirks, as Stoney smirks back, and as he splits he
points at Silo --

STONEY (CONT'D)
You too.

Off Silo's pfft --

INT. DR. KAREN MOORE'S OFFICE - DAY

An anxious, uncomfortable Stoney sits across from **DR. KAREN MOORE**, 50s, black, a sweetened force of nature.

DR. KAREN

Ok. Stoney. So, you just did some time.

STONEY

Big time.

DR. KAREN

Why? Why were you in prison?

STONEY

This is America.

She smirks: true.

DR. KAREN

How was it?

STONEY

Fun for the whole family.

She smiles.

STONEY (CONT'D)

Like living in a litter box.

DR. KAREN

How much time did you do?

STONEY

5 years.

DR. KAREN

And how long have you been sober?

STONEY

5 years.

She takes him in for a beat.

DR. KAREN

That's great. Amazing.
Congratulations, Stoney.

(MORE)

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

Prison is not an easy place to be sober-- oh, just so we're clear, I forgot to mention that everything you share with me is confidential, and will not be shared with authorities like the police. Or your P.O.

Beat, then --

STONEY

1 month.

DR. KAREN

Sober?

He nervously nods.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

Not 5 years?

He nervously shakes his head.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

Why did you stop using 1 month ago?

STONEY

The Man wouldn't give me a locked in release date, but I had a rough idea. And as I got closer to it I knew I could test dirty once released if I didn't stop, so I padded it.

DR. KAREN

Because if you were sprung by surprise you'd go right back in.

STONEY

Which I can't even say would be so bad.

DR. KAREN

Why do you say that? You're free.

STONEY

Free without structure.

DR. KAREN

It'll be an adjustment. A challenge. But if something doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you.

Stoney balls his fists.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)
And one month of sobriety is still
amazing, Stoney. You should be
proud of yourself.

Stoney feigns appreciation. And interest in this sit-down.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)
So you kicked in the clink?

STONEY
Like a jackass shittin' a
porcupine.

She laughs.

INT. PRISON CELL - FLASHBACK

Stoney lies naked on his cell floor sweating, shaking and crying. Puke and diarrhea surround him.

BACK TO PRESENT:

DR. KAREN
And look at you now. Smiling like a
jackass eatin' cactus.

He smirks.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)
How do you sleep?

STONEY
I don't. I just lie there and
nightmare.

DR. KAREN
How are you adjusting since getting
out?

STONEY
Eh. Strikes and gutters.

DR. KAREN
Ups and downs. Like real life.

STONEY
Feels weird.

DR. KAREN

As it should. You just have to get comfortable with feeling uncomfortable.

STONEY

I like that. I should start speaking in motivational memes too.

She smiles.

STONEY (CONT'D)

And there's a chick.

DR. KAREN

How is that going?

STONEY

It's new. And it's been a mean minute since I've had to throw any rizz, so...

DR. KAREN

A challenge.

STONEY

Pfft.

DR. KAREN

Like riding a bike, let's say.

STONEY

Fair.

DR. KAREN

My advice is to put your sobriety first and the rest will follow. Maybe you'll both discover a new, improved Stoney and grow together?

Stoney shifts, uncomfortable.

STONEY

I can be kind of an asshole. Lying, dirtball kind of shit with chicks.

DR. KAREN

I'm an alcoholic and a drug addict too, Stoney. And I can tell you-- I haven't drank or used in a whole lotta years, and I couldn't tell you the last time I did.

(MORE)

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

But ask me the last time I was selfish or dishonest? And I can tell ya... today, all day.

He pretends to listen, but he's somewhere else.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

It's just part of who we are. But we can change. I did. But I had to do the work, and I had to act my way into thinking instead of thinking my way into acting. Follow me?

STONEY

Maybe. Yeah. No. I think.

DR. KAREN

Just know that I know where you're coming from.

He nods, but not comforted.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

It's just some shit you gotta dig yourself out of.

STONEY

Got a shovel?

She takes him in. He looks away nervously. Antsy. Wants out.

DR. KAREN

Shovel? You gonna need a backhoe, boy.

A chuckle escapes him.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

I want to see you once a week. Can you do that?

STONEY

Can if I don't have a choice.

DR. KAREN

Big decisions are easy when you have no other option.

Stoney looks this off.

DR. KAREN (CONT'D)

Good. Now get to a meeting.

INT. SERENITY NOW SOBER LIVING - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Our Gang harangues Todd as Francisco enters.

COURTNEY

Just tell us the full story this time! TOAD!

TODD

I told you already-- DeShay?! You joining us?!

DESHAY (O.S.)

I'm on the phone! Start without me!

LAILA

He's been on the phone all day.

INT. DESHAY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DeShay locks his door, lifts his mattress and pulls out a sandwich bag half-full of COCAINE. Cuts a line and SNORTS.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Back on our Gang bothering Todd --

LAILA

We want details, Todd.

TODD

I've told you what got me here.

ALL

Bullshit/No you haven't!/Only Cliffs Notes!

FRANCISCO

Why is your story such a secret?

Todd just shrugs: *sorry*. But why won't he share?

SHANNON

I haven't heard what got you here...

They make eyes. This motivates Todd to open up.

TODD

Ok... Well, since the opposite of addiction is--

STONEY (O.S.)
Connection.

Heads turn to find Stoney. He makes eyes with Shannon, and preps to steal Todd's thunder.

STONEY (CONT'D)
The opposite of addiction is connection, so I'll bite and share.

Todd fumes.

STONEY (CONT'D)
I was insecure growing up. Most fat kids are. Being shitty at sports comes with that territory. But my dad was cool with that. Because he wasn't around much. And if he was then I wasn't. Fucker was mean. He'd stumble in the front door and I'd split out the back door. Til he passed out or Ma called the pork for laying hands on us.

All eyes on him.

STONEY (CONT'D)
I don't want that for my boy. When I'm finally in a place to see him. And raise him. Shit, recognize him.

Gang is shocked.

STONEY (CONT'D)
Yeah, I got a kid I've barely met. Years ago. Shocking, right?
(he may cry)
I've tried to get sober before - lotsa times.

Beat as Stoney stares at his feet.

STONEY (CONT'D)
I thought I was only ever afraid of one thing in my life: drugs. But I'm actually only ever afraid of three: me, myself and I.

All stare: who is *this* guy, and where did he come from?

STONEY (CONT'D)
I don't want to be a good man. I want to be good at being a man.

TODD

So. What is your drug of choice,
Stoney?

STONEY

You mean my drug of no choice?

(beat)

More.

They all nod in understanding.

LAILA

One is too many and 1000 is never
enough.

COURTNEY

Sensations for all occasions.

FRANCISCO

Thank you for sharing... Joanie.

All laugh, except Stoney, who hard-eyes Francisco - is he
gonna attack? But Stoney finally smirks, dropping his guard.

Then strolling thru in just his tighty-whities --

DANOSAUR

Fight the power that be. I saw them
kill it on the moon in '52. You
were there, Bob. You remember.
Chicken salad, please. Hold the
chicken...

Danosaur approaches Shannon and extends his hand.

DANOSAUR (CONT'D)

Hola, linda. I'm Dan. You are very
foxy. I might be too old to stir
the gravy, but I can still lick the
spoon.

And off he goes out the back door mumbling to himself.

Gang laughs big. Even Stoney. As he locks eyes with Shannon.

INT. BOXER'S JAIL CELL - SAME

Boxer types a text and hits SEND...

INT. SERENITY NOW SOBER LIVING HOUSE - SAME

BUZZ. Stoney gets a text from Boxer. It reads: *Shannon Hanson*

Off Stoney's SHOCKED FACE, staring at Shannon, as we --

SMASH TO BLACK: