

The Wrestler

by
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DRAFT 10/14/07

FADE IN:

MUSIC: DEF LEPPARD - "ROCK ROCK (TILL YOU DROP)"

Over OPENING CREDITS, a montage of OLD WRESTLING-MAGAZINE PHOTOS. Action shots of RANDY "THE RAM" ROBINSON taking on a keffiyeh-wearing heel named THE AYATOLLAH before 20,000 screaming fans at Madison Square Garden.

The sounds of a SCREAMING, CHEERING CROWD overwhelm us. Over the images, RINGSIDE ANNOUNCERS boom commentary:

—"Oh, my! Ram hit with a *devastating* piledriver!"

—"I've never *seen* a guy get fired into a buckle that hard!"

—"The Ayatollah taking it to The Ram outside the ring!"

—"Ram absorbing *tremendous* punishment! How much more can he take?"

—"Wait a minute... Look at this... The Ram is *getting up!*"

—"He's coming back! I don't believe it!"

—"Suplex!"

—"Powerbomb!"

—"Randy The Ram Robinson giving absolutely everything he's got! This is the very *definition* of heart!"

—"Just *listen* to this crowd! The entire Garden, 20,000 people, are on their feet!"

—"Ram climbing to the top rope... The crowd going wild... They know what's coming..."

A PHOTO of Randy standing on the top rope, his bent arms pressed against the sides of his head like RAM'S HORNS.

—"Uh-oh, the horns are out... Here it comes..."

We FREEZE on a final image of Randy FLYING HIGH ABOVE THE CANVAS, horns out, poised to crash down on The Ayatollah.

—"Ram Jam! Lights out!!"

Over this, the sound of the crowd GOING CRAZY.

The Def Leppard song rings out as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. EAST WILMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Present day. Post-match. Randy, pushing 50, still with the same long, dyed-blond mane, sits on a bench in the boys locker room of a Wilmington, Delaware high school.

CHYRON: 20 YEARS LATER

He pulls off his purple spandex wrestling tights. Lime-green ram's horns run up the sides. They're the same kind of tights as in the '80s pics—and may well be the actual same pair.

Naked except for a jockstrap, Randy takes a breath. Achy, sweaty, saggy, exhausted. A battered warrior. Scars all over his body. Despite the rough shape he's in, it's clear he's just given it his all in the ring. He swigs down a few pills with a beer.

Promoter SCOTT BRUMBERG, a heavysset man in a Mets jersey with *BRUMBERG - 44* on the back, approaches.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

Great show, Ram. Ya turned it out.
(a little sad)
As always.

He hands Randy some cash. Randy counts it. It's not much.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (CONT'D)

Sorry. I was sure the gate'd be bigger.

Randy just shrugs resignedly.

EXT. EAST WILMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy, changed into his street clothes, limps out of the school, each step labored and painful. Waiting near the entrance are TWO FANS, both men in their 30s.

FAN #1

Yo, Ram. Think you could...?

Fan #1 holds out a SHARPIE and an old WRESTLING PROGRAM from the '80s. On the cover is a shot of Randy wrestling CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, a heel in a drill instructor get-up.

Randy takes the program, happy to oblige.

FAN #1 (CONT'D)

I was there.

Randy hands back the program. FAN #2 hands him a MINI-POSTER. The faded, mid-'80s poster features Randy, biceps bulging, crushing a head of broccoli between his fists. Across the top, it says "EAT YOUR VEGETABLES, PUNK!"

FAN #2
 (as Randy signs)
 My first match ever was you versus
 Davey Diamond at the Spectrum.
 (nostalgic)
 1985...

Randy smiles a little. He remembers, too. He hands back the poster. Fan #2 looks fondly at Randy, a part of his boyhood.

FAN #2 (CONT'D)
 (vaguely sad)
 You were awesome.

Randy nods, a bit uncomfortably. The two fans, muttering thanks, drift off into the Delaware night. Randy is left standing alone, still holding Fan #1's pen.

He walks over to a beat-up old CONVERSION VAN and climbs in. Turns on the engine. Music starts up on the stereo mid-song.

MUSIC: CINDERELLA - "DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU GOT (TIL IT'S GONE)"

INT. VAN - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy is driving. On the dashboard is an old ACTION FIGURE OF HIMSELF from his WWF days. On the stereo, a different song plays, later in the same album.

MUSIC: CINDERELLA - "FIRE AND ICE"

Randy pulls into the entrance gate of PARADISE OAKS TRAILER PARK.

EXT. PARADISE OAKS - RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy parks in front of his TRAILER. He gets out and heads toward it. A dismayed look comes over his face.

RANDY'S POV: The door is PADLOCKED.

He tugs on the lock. Tugs on the door. No dice.

He violently kicks the padlock in a moment of rage.

EXT. RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy resignedly climbs into the BACK OF HIS VAN.

INT. BACK OF VAN - LATER

Randy lies on a scrunched-up mattress on the floor, unable to sleep.

The van wall is decorated with a MINI-SHRINE Randy has built to himself. Old magazine and newspaper clippings, mini-posters, etc. A few changes of clothes lie in a messy heap in the corner.

He grabs a bottle of pills and pops a few, washing them down with a beer. He closes his eyes, trying to unwind.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK OF VAN - NEXT MORNING

Randy is asleep in his clothes from the night before. He's STIRRED AWAKE by the sound of kids YELLING and BANGING on the outside of van.

KID'S VOICE (O.S.)

Ram!

He slowly sits upright, massaging his pain-wracked knees. Every inch of him feels like shit.

ANOTHER KID'S VOICE (O.S.)

Raaam!

RANDY'S POV: Through the front windshield, TWO 8-YEAR-OLD KIDS, boosted by TWO OTHER KIDS, are peering in.

EXT. PARADISE OAKS - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy is playfully tussling with the four kids. He picks one of them up and "bodyslams" him.

RANDY

(announcer voice)

Oh, my... look out!

He picks up another one and fake-drops him on his head.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Suplex!

He slams a third one. The kids are squealing with delight.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Tombstone piledriver!

Randy sees a car drive up and park by the MANAGER'S OFFICE. He watches it with interest.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Catch you maniacs later...

The kids moan with disappointment as Randy heads off.

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Randy glares at Len, the trailer park's MANAGER.

RANDY
C'mon, Len. Don't be such a fuckin' ballbreaker.

LEN THE MANAGER
You'll get in when I get my rent.

RANDY
You know I'm good for it.

LEN THE MANAGER
Sure. You're good for it every time this happens.

Randy sigh-groans in frustration.

RANDY
Can I at least park in back?

Len looks at Randy. A wave of pity comes over him.

LEN THE MANAGER
Twenty bucks.

EXT. PARADISE OAKS - IN BACK - EVENING

Randy sits on a MILK CRATE by his parked van. On the ground in front of him is a BLENDER connected to an extension cord stretching to another TRAILER. He pours a protein-shake packet into the blender.

The trailer door opens. A WOMAN comes out. Lighting a cigarette, she looks up at the cloudless, starry sky.

RANDY
Thanks, Meg.

She gives Randy a small "You got it" wave.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOP-RITE SUPERMARKET - DAY

Randy enters a suburban Shop-Rite.

INT. SHOP-RITE - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy sticks his head in a door marked *MANAGER'S OFFICE*.

RANDY
Hey, Wayne.

INT. WAYNE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Sitting behind a desk is store manager WAYNE (40). He looks up at Randy, irked.

WAYNE
Do we not know how to knock?

Wayne casually clicks a porn site closed on his computer.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
Let's try that again.

Randy steps out and closes the door behind him. He knocks.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
Come in!

Randy enters.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
Oh, hi, Randy! What can I do for you?

Randy groans privately. He really hates Wayne.

RANDY
Do you have any extra shifts you could throw my way?

WAYNE
What's the matter, they raise the price of tights?

Randy is not amused. Wayne grabs a LOOSELEAF BINDER.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
Let's see what we got.

Wayne starts flipping through.

RANDY
Pretty much anything weekday...

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOP-RITE - REAR LOADING DOCK - DAY

Randy, working alongside some MEXICAN GUYS, lifts a STACK OF BOXES off the back of a BOAR'S HEAD DELIVERY TRUCK.

He carries the boxes through a RUBBER-STRIP CURTAIN, into a WALK-IN COOLER. He puts them down and heads back out again.

CUT TO:

INT. OGDEN'S GYM - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Randy stands with GREGG, a huge bodybuilder who's counting off some bills. Randy growls with displeasure at the small, liquid-filled GLASS BOTTLE in his hand.

ANGLE ON bottle: The label says *SUSTANON 250*. The rest of the label is in SPANISH.

GREGG
I'm tellin' ya, bro, it's identical to the German.

RANDY
I tried Mexican sus once. Gave me bitch tits.

GREGG
Years ago, right? Mexican's way better now.

RANDY
I don't want this.

GREGG
Bro, it's the *same*.

RANDY
I want my German.

GREGG
I don't have any.

RANDY
Yeah?

Randy steps in front of Gregg's locker and starts ROOTING AROUND.

GREGG
What are you doing?

Randy finds a bottle with GERMAN WRITING on it.

GREGG (CONT'D)
That's my own stash. That's my last one.

Randy puts the bottle of Mexican sustanon in the locker and walks off with the German.

RANDY
Danke schoen.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - TOILET STALL - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy, underwear pulled down, plunges a needle into his ass cheek.

INT. GYM FLOOR - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy is BENCHPRESSING. He grunts loudly as he squeezes out one more rep, his SPOTTER urging him on.

SPOTTER
Push it out—you got this!

INT. SUNSATIONS TANNING SALON - LATER

A strip-mall tanning salon. Randy breezes in, nodding hello to the FRONT-DESK WOMAN, who's on the phone.

RANDY
How ya doin', Glor?

FRONT-DESK WOMAN
(cupping phone)
Hey, babe. Four's open.

INT. SUNSATIONS TANNING SALON - SHORT TIME LATER

ANGLE ON an upright tanning pod. INSIDE THE POD, Randy is standing naked, baking under the UV lights.

INT. LOOKING GOOD HAIR & NAILS - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy sits in a chair as a KOREAN LADY wearing latex gloves BLEACHES HIS ROOTS. His hair is full of plastic clips.

RANDY

Don't leave it in too long. All those pieces broke off last time.

KOREAN LADY

Okay, okay, no problem.

CUT TO:

INT. VAN - DAY

MUSIC: GREAT WHITE - "ONCE BITTEN TWICE SHY"

Randy is driving along Route 21. "Once Bitten Twice Shy" is blasting on the stereo. One hand on the wheel, he bangs out the song's piano riff on the dash with the other.

He passes Cheetah's, a STRIP CLUB. He keeps an eye on it as he drives past.

The song fades out. He pops the tape out of the deck and tosses it on the passenger seat. On it is a messy pile of old cassettes. Skid Row. Mötley Crüe. AC/DC. Guns 'N' Roses. He sifts through the selection, one eye on the road.

INT. VAN - SHORT TIME LATER

MUSIC: AC/DC - "BACK IN BLACK"

Randy is still driving. AC/DC's "Back In Black" cranks loud. He pulls into the parking lot of a VFW HALL and parks.

INT. PASSAIC VFW HALL - CAFETERIA - SHORT TIME LATER

A makeshift locker room/staging area. Randy and 20 or so other WRESTLERS stand before the event's sleazy, tracksuit-clad promoter, NICK VOLPE.

NICK VOLPE

Listen up, only saying it once. Vic Storm, you're up first against D-Day. Second, Shawn McPride and Funkmaster Garry B. Slick. Third, Frankie Cirillo and Rob Dynamo versus J.T. Anvil and The Ultimate Freak. Fourth, Teddy Brewski and Lex Lethal. Intermission. Fifth, Samoan Savages versus the Disco Brothers. Sixth, the Irish Warrior and Vyper. Seventh, "Sandman" Steve Sambuca versus Hollywood. Last but not least, for the strap, Kid Loco versus Randy The Ram. Got it? Good.

Volpe walks off.

INT. CAFETERIA - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy sits alone a table toward the back. He takes a roll of athletic tape out of his supplies-filled WHEELIE TRAVEL BAG. He starts WRAPPING HIS KNEES AND ANKLES. He does it in a slow, methodical manner. It feels almost ritualistic.

INT. CAFETERIA - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy is hashing out the match with his opponent, a wiry Puerto Rican kid whose shiny vinyl pants identify him as KID LOCO (22).

RANDY

Right there, you post me. Hard. I show color.

Kid Loco nods, listening closely, deferential to the legend.

RANDY (CONT'D)

You post me again. Again.

(Kid Loco nods)

You're fuckin' *whalin'* on my ass.

LEX LETHAL (O.S.)

Ram.

Randy turns and sees fellow wrestler LEX LETHAL sticking his head into the cafeteria door.

LEX LETHAL (CONT'D)

There's some chick out here looking for you.

RANDY
Who?

LEX LETHAL
(shrugs)
Some chick.

RANDY
Ring rat?

LEX LETHAL
I don't think so.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE CAFETERIA - MOMENTS LATER

Randy emerges from the cafeteria. A look of PLEASED SURPRISE comes over his face.

RANDY
What's up, kiddo?

RANDY'S POV: Standing there in an otherwise empty hallway is a plain-ish YOUNG WOMAN (22). She looks at him with an unsmiling expression. This is STEPHANIE.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Long time no see.

Randy pulls her in for a hug. She doesn't really hug back. She steps back, breaking off the hug. A brief, awkward pause.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Whatcha doing here? Here to root on your old man?

She shakes her head no.

RANDY (CONT'D)
That's okay—as long as you're not rooting against me!

She is irked by his jokiness.

STEPHANIE
Is there someplace we can talk?

RANDY
I'm on in a sec.

STEPHANIE
It won't take much of your time.

RANDY
What's up?

STEPHANIE
I'm here because...

Stephanie gathers herself. This isn't easy for her.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
I came to make amends.

RANDY
Amends?

STEPHANIE
I'm supposed to talk to people I've hurt.

Randy is puzzled for a moment. Then, it clicks in.

RANDY
Ohh... 12-stepper.

STEPHANIE
(nods)
AA.

RANDY
Good for you. That's great.

STEPHANIE
Thank you. I'm sure you mean that.

RANDY
I do.

She smile-nods insincerely.

RANDY (CONT'D)
So's that it?

STEPHANIE
I need to apologize.

RANDY
For what?

STEPHANIE
For anything I've done or said over the years. All the anger at you.

RANDY
Okay...

STEPHANIE

Like the last time I saw you... I'm
sorry for what I said.

RANDY

(dismissive wave)
Don't worry about it.

Stephanie is irked by his lack of engagement. She looks at
him with suspicion.

STEPHANIE

Do you even know what I said?

RANDY

Sure.

STEPHANIE

What did I say?

RANDY

It was about your mom. And me.
(vague, flailing)
Like, how I was bad.

STEPHANIE

You have no idea.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Raa-am!

Randy turns and sees TWO MEATHEAD FANS down the hall, headed
his way.

MEATHEAD #1

Whassup, yo? Randy The Ram!

MEATHEAD #1 gives Randy an excited high-five.

MEATHEAD #2

We gonna see some action tonight?

RANDY

(sly grin)
Tonight's forecast calls for severe
butt-whoopin's with a 100 percent
chance of pain.

Psyched "Yeah!"s from the meatheads. Stephanie is pissed at
the interruption. And, even more, Randy's embrace of it.

MEATHEAD #1

Could we get a picture?

RANDY

No problemo.

The two meatheads flank Randy, their arms around his broad shoulders. Meathead #1 looks tentatively at Stephanie, holding up his DIGITAL CAMERA.

MEATHEAD #1

Think you could...?

She coldly takes it.

STEPHANIE

No problemo.

She looks into the camera. The meatheads stick their tongues out and throw up devil signs. Randy flexes theatrically, making his best "Aaargh!" wrestling face.

Stephanie snaps a shot. Meathead #1 takes back his camera. He and his buddy pat Randy heartily on the back.

MEATHEAD #1

Thanks a lot, yo. Kick some ass out there.

RANDY

You know it, broski!

The meatheads excitedly head off.

Randy turns his attention back to Stephanie, who's glaring at him with cold disgust.

RANDY (CONT'D)

What?

STEPHANIE

Same shit.

RANDY

They're fans.

STEPHANIE

Same old shit.

RANDY

I hafta. It's work.

STEPHANIE

I'm in the middle of saying something important and you drop it for the fucking wrestling.

RANDY

I didn't *ask* them to come over.

STEPHANIE

It's like I'm 10 all over again.

RANDY

Are we almost done with this?

STEPHANIE

This what?

RANDY

This ATTACK.

She looks at him calmly. Sadly.

STEPHANIE

Yeah. We're done.

She walks off.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. THE RING - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy SMASHING KID LOCO IN THE FACE with a flying drop-kick. Kid Loco falls to the canvas.

Randy struts around the ring, exhorting the crowd, soaking up their cheers.

Distracted, Randy doesn't notice Kid Loco peeling himself off the mat. Kid Loco sneaks up behind Randy and SMASHES HIM IN THE HEAD. Randy goes down.

Kid Loco lifts Randy up. They're both on their knees, chest-to-chest. Kid Loco steps to his feet, lifting Randy with him.

Kid Loco tightens around Randy's arms, arches his back, presses out his chest and... WHAM!! He and Randy fly with a LATERAL DROP. Randy's head hits the canvas hard as he slams down on his back.

As Randy writhes on the mat, Kid Loco HEADS FOR THE TURNBUCKLE.

RANDY'S POV: Kid Loco is untying the turnbuckle's padded cover.

Randy, clutching his back, discretely reaches into the waistband of his tights and pulls out a RAZOR BLADE. He tucks the blade between two fingers in his cupped palm.

Kid Loco heads back to Randy. He picks up him by the hair and drags him to the turnbuckle, throwing him HEAD-FIRST into the exposed metal post beneath.

Randy, clutching his smashed head, discretely runs the blade along his hairline. No one sees it happen.

BLOOD STREAMS DOWN Randy's forehead. The crowd's ELECTRIFIED.

Kid Loco slams Randy's head into the metal post again. Again. Randy slumps over the corner ropes. Kid Loco cockily struts around the ring.

KID LOCO

Look at this loser! How *pathetic*.

ANGLE ON Randy. The taunting stirs something in him. A look comes over him, like he's Bruce Banner about to become the Hulk.

Kid Loco saunters back over to Randy. He grabs his head for another post smash, but HE CAN'T. Randy's neck and arm muscles bulge. His neck veins pop like he's suddenly super-charged.

A look of FEAR comes over Kid Loco. He knows the tide is about to turn.

Randy reaches over his shoulder and grabs Kid Loco by the hair. He pulls him in close.

RANDY

(under breath)

Let's go home.

Randy juts his hips back and bends over, gaining the leverage he needs for a throw. Kid Loco shakes his head, begging no.

Randy straightens his legs, raises his lower back, and yanks down on Kid Loco's head. Kid Loco's feet fly off the canvas as his head gets BURIED INTO THE MAT. He gets stuck UPSIDE DOWN with his feet over the ropes.

Randy, holding onto the top rope with both hands, thrusts his knee into Kid Loco's stomach. Again. Again.

Kid Loco somehow manages to untangle himself from the ropes. He scurries away. Randy goes after him.

Randy hits Kid Loco with everything he's got. Dropkicks. Elbows. Bodyslams. He pours it on, unstoppable.

Randy drags Kid Loco into the middle of the ring. He looks out at the crowd.

RANDY'S POV: A trio of fans are chanting.

TRIO

Ram Jam! Ram Jam! Ram Jam!...

Randy cups his hand to his ear. The chant quickly spreads.

WHOLE CROWD (O.S.)

RAM JAM! RAM JAM! RAM JAM!...

Randy "mulls" it over. He looks at his laid-out foe. He looks at the corner. He heads for the corner.

Randy climbs to the top rope. He looks around at the crowd like he's still undecided.

RANDY'S POV: The fans are cheering, wild with anticipation.

Randy bends his arms, pressing them against the side of his head like ram's horns. (Just like in the photo in the opening montage.)

He LEAPS.

The leap is not terribly high or graceful. He crashes down onto Kid Loco horns-first. Kid Loco's whole body convulses.

The fans lose it. This is what they wanted. The Ram Jam. The money shot.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFETERIA - LATER

Randy, on a post-match high, sits on a cafeteria table enjoying a beer as a pseudo-MEDIC stitches up his hairline gash. Nick Volpe wanders over.

MEDIC

Ram, man, you popped that crowd.

Randy smiles contentedly. He sure did.

NICK VOLPE (O.S.)

Yo, Ram. Got a sec?

Nick Volpe comes over.

RANDY

For you, needledick? Always.

NICK VOLPE

Do you realize what's coming up?

Randy looks at him, unsure.

NICK VOLPE (CONT'D)
May 6th...

Randy racks his brains. He has no idea.

NICK VOLPE (CONT'D)
20th anniversary of you and
Ayatollah at the Garden.

RANDY
(amazed)
Holy shit...

NICK VOLPE
I know. Time fuckin' flies.

Randy sees an excited smile creep across Volpe's face.

RANDY
Whatcha thinkin'?

NICK VOLPE
Two words: *Re. Match.*

Randy is instantly intrigued.

NICK VOLPE (CONT'D)
I'm doing a big Fanfest thing down
in South Carolina that weekend. I
wanna main-event it with you two.

RANDY
Yeah?

NICK VOLPE
Ram-Ayatollah II. 20th anniversary.
Hundreds, *thousands* of screaming
fans watching you two make history
for the second time.

RANDY
Think Bob'd get back in there? He's
pretty retired.

NICK VOLPE
For *this*?
(cool, confident nod)
I bet he'd be willing to dust off
the old turban.

Randy's mouth is practically watering.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHEETAH'S - PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

A spring in his hobbled step, Randy gets out of the van and heads toward Cheetah's, the strip club he passed earlier. Manning the door is BIG CHRIS, a huge bouncer/doorman.

BIG CHRIS
Whassup, Ram? How ya been?

RANDY
Yo, Big Chris.

They chummily shake hands. Big Chris pulls Randy in tight.

BIG CHRIS
(into Randy's ear)
Hey, can you get me any more of that IGF-1?

RANDY
What do I look like, some fuckin' two-bit street dealer?

BIG CHRIS
C'mon, hook a brother up. You get the family discount.

RANDY
Swing by the mansion. Any day this week.

BIG CHRIS
You da man, Ram!

INT. CHEETAH'S - SHORT TIME LATER

MUSIC: BIRDMAN & LIL WAYNE - "STUNTIN' LIKE MY DADDY"

A crowded, not-very-glamorous Jersey strip club. Randy stands over by the bar. The female BARTENDER slides him a beer.

RANDY
Thanks, hon.

Randy takes a swig, looking around the club.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Cassidy around?

BARTENDER

I think she's VIP-in'.

Randy, nodding, takes his beer and heads over toward the STAGE. He settles in at an open table.

ON STAGE:

A YOUNG STRIPPER (22) works the pole, grinding lewdly to "Stuntin' Like My Daddy", a bass-heavy Dirty South rap song.

RANDY:

Randy, watching her, quickly grows bored. He finds the stripper, like the song, crude and soulless.

INT. CHEETAH'S - MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Randy is at the urinal. He flushes and heads over to the sink. He washes his hands, checking his look in the mirror. He primps a little.

INT. CHEETAH'S - MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Randy exits the bathroom and heads back toward the table. En route, he passes a curtained-off VIP ROOM.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Trust me, babe. You're gonna be happy.

Randy, hearing this, slows.

DUDE #1 (O.S.)

We said the other one.

DUDE #2 (O.S.)

The redhead. With the belly chain.

Randy peeks through the curtain. Inside, he sees CASSIDY (36), a sexy, tattooed, aging rocker chick in a white spandex dress. With her are six hair-gelled, goombah-wannabe BACHELOR-PARTY DUDES (early 20s). The BACHELOR is sitting in a chair in the middle.

CASSIDY

Sorry, guys, she's on break.

DUDE #1

Well, *I'm* sorry, but we don't want you.

DUDE #3

How old are you, anyway?

BACHELOR

You're, like, my mom's age.

Stifled laughter from his buddies.

OTHER SIDE OF CURTAIN:

Randy's anger builds as he watches.

VIP ROOM:

Cassidy, trying to salvage the gig, straddles the bachelor.

CASSIDY

There's nothing like experience.

(into his ear, seductive)

I've done things your little fiancée's never *dreamed* of...

DUDE #2

Yeah, like graduate in 1985.

This cracks his friends up. Randy BURSTS THROUGH THE CURTAIN.

RANDY

(to Dude #2)

Apologize to this lady.

Everyone is taken aback, including Cassidy.

DUDE #3

Who the hell are you?

RANDY

You speak to her with respect.

Cassidy wedges herself between Randy and Dude #2.

CASSIDY

I got this. It's okay.

RANDY

No, it's *not* okay. This is definitely not okay.

He turns to the bachelor.

RANDY (CONT'D)

I guarantee this woman's 50 times
hotter than whatever goombah skank
you're about to marry.

DUDE #4

(to Dude #1)

You hear what he just called Gina?!

DUDE #1

That's my fuckin' sister!

Dude #1 steps to Randy, chest puffed out. Randy whips around and GRABS THE CHAIR OUT FROM UNDER THE BACHELOR. He wields it menacingly at Dude #1, who backpedals, terrified.

Randy makes like he's going to hit the guy with the chair. Instead, he FLINGS IT AT THE WALL.

DUDE #2

Jesus!!

DUDE #1

What the FUCK!!

The entire bachelor party rushes for the curtain. Just like that, they're GONE.

Randy looks at Cassidy, expecting a hearty thank you. Instead he gets a PISSED-OFF SHOVE.

CASSIDY

Thanks a lot. That was 200 bucks
just walked out.

Randy is totally taken aback.

RANDY

I was just trying to help.

CASSIDY

Did I *ask* for help?

(beat)

Did I *need* help?

Randy looks down, silent and sheepish.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

Then don't fuckin' help.

RANDY

You're right. I'm sorry.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

Cassidy calms down a little.

CASSIDY
That's okay.

She looks at him with a warm smile.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
Good to see ya, man.

CUT TO:

INT. CHEETAH'S - SHORT TIME LATER

MUSIC: KHIA - "MY NECK, MY BACK"

Randy is getting a LAPDANCE from Cassidy. She plants her hands against the mirrored wall behind him, her body just inches from his face.

RANDY
We're talking one of *the* historic matches in history. 20,000 people. Another million and a half watching at home on pay-per-view.

She turns, giving him a nice view of her writhing behind. On the small of her back is an AC/DC TATTOO.

RANDY (CONT'D)
We were going back and forth, just *killin'* each other for a half hour. Any wrestling fan, they know all about it.

CASSIDY
Million and a half? Shit.

RANDY
Yeah, it was big. So a *rematch*...
(smiles, contemplating the prospect)
History all over again.

Cassidy turns around again. Randy looks her body up and down, savoring her curves as she dances just for him.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Goddamn you are smokin'.

Cassidy smiles a little. This makes her feel good.

"My Neck My Back" ENDS. Cassidy pulls back on her dress and casually sits down next to him. A new song comes on.

MUSIC: PITBULL - "UNA MANO LAVA LA OTRA"

They look toward the stage, where a PUERTO RICAN STRIPPER shakes her ass to the staccato, abrasive Latin rap song.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Who knows. I put on a good show...

Cassidy nods supportively, sincerely.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Could be the thing that gets me back on top.

CASSIDY

You never know who's in that crowd.

An ALARMED LOOK comes over Cassidy's face.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

Jesus.

Randy follows her eyes to his HAIRLINE.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

You're bleeding.

A small amount of BLOOD is trickling down from his stitches. He grabs a COCKTAIL NAPKIN and casually dabs it.

RANDY

Got cut tonight.

CASSIDY

You okay?

RANDY

Ah, it's nothing.

CASSIDY

(small chuckle)

And they say wrestling's fake.

Randy proudly holds out his arm.

RANDY

How's this for fake?

CASSIDY'S POV: A long-ish SCAR on Randy's bicep.

CASSIDY
What's that from?

RANDY
1986. Denver Coliseum. Billy Bob
Banjo hit me with his two-by-four.
Loose nail tore the bicep open.

CASSIDY
Ow. Fuck.

RANDY
I got even better.

He pulls down his shirt collar, revealing a nasty COLLARBONE
SCAR.

RANDY (CONT'D)
1988. Orlando Arena. Mr.
Magnificent tossed me out of the
ring. Landed on my shoulder,
clavicle snapped in half.

CASSIDY
Doesn't it hurt?

RANDY
(blissful)
Not when they're going crazy for
you...

Cassidy stands up and straddles him, gazing soulfully at the
scar.

CASSIDY
"He was pierced for our
transgressions, He was crushed for
our iniquities. The punishment that
brought us peace was upon Him, and
by His wounds we were healed."

Randy contemplates the quote. He likes it.

RANDY
What's that?

CASSIDY
It's from "Passion of the Christ".
(beat)
You never seen it?

Randy shrugs no.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
Dude, you gotta. It's *amazing*.

She sits down next to him again.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
It's, like, so inspiring. They throw everything at Him. Whips, arrows, rocks... Just beat the living fuck out of Him for the whole two hours. And He just *takes it*.

RANDY
Huh. I'll have to check it out.

Cassidy lightly traces a finger along Randy's bicep scar.

CASSIDY
The sacrificial Ram...

The Pitbull song ends. A new song begins.

MUSIC: MOTLEY CRUE - "GIRLS GIRLS GIRLS"

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
Ah, shit.

CLUB D.J. (O.S.)
And now, please welcome to the Cheetah's stage...

Cassidy stands up.

CLUB D.J. (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...the lovely Cassidy!

Randy reaches into a pocket and pulls out some bills.

RANDY
What do I owe?

CASSIDY
Just gimme for three.

Randy peels off three \$20s and hands them to her.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
You'll wait 'til I'm done?

Randy just smiles. She gives him a small peck on the cheek and heads off.

THE STAGE:

Cassidy BURSTS ONTO THE STAGE. She owns it with rock 'n' roll energy.

ON RANDY:

ANGLE ON Randy's face as he enjoys the dance.

CUT TO:

INT. VAN - DAY

Randy is driving over the Throgs Neck Bridge.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - SHORT TIME LATER

The van pulls up to a TWO-FAMILY HOUSE in working-class Queens. Out steps Lex Lethal (from the Passaic VFW show).

INT. VAN - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy heads down a highway entrance ramp, Lex Lethal riding shotgun.

LEX LETHAL
Thanks for the lift, bro.

RANDY
No prob. You're right on the way.

Randy merges into traffic on the Long Island Expressway.

RANDY (CONT'D)
So how big's this place?

LEX LETHAL
Nice. Two, two-fifty...
(beat)
You been there. The Ricky Whipsaw memorial benefit.

RANDY
(pleased)
That place?

LEX LETHAL
Should get a good gate. DiFusco says he's gotten like 20 calls last two days alone.

Randy chuckles cynically.

RANDY
God bless hardcore...

INT. DOLLAR TREE - SHORT TIME LATER

A Long Island strip-mall 99-CENT STORE. Randy and Lex browse an aisle. Randy is holding a TIN CAKE PAN. He bangs it against his forehead, testing it out. It makes a LOUD CLANG.

RANDY
Whatcha think?

Lex takes the pan, testing it against his own head.

LEX LETHAL
Cookie trays were better.

Lex spots something exciting on another shelf.

LEX LETHAL (CONT'D)
Hell, yeah.

He grabs a pack of STEEL-WOOL PADS. Randy nods in approval. Lex tosses them into the SHOPPING BASKET Randy is holding.

ANGLE ON basket. It's full of all sorts of "supplies": cookie trays, lightbulbs, thumbtacks, cheese graters, wire hangers, cutlery sets, pizza cutters, etc.

RANDY
Let's see if they got extension
cords.

They head off in search.

INT. NORTH BABYLON COMMUNITY CENTER - GYM - LATER

MUSIC: AC/DC - "IF YOU WANT BLOOD (YOU GOT IT)"

Randy stands BEHIND A CURTAIN as his entrance song plays. He sneaks a peek through it.

RANDY'S POV: A ROWDY CROWD of about 150 fills a COMMUNITY-CENTER GYM. The vibe of the crowd is a bit rougher than previous events. A banner on the wall reads *ECHW - EAST COAST HARDCORE WRESTLING*. Pressed against the outside of the ring are a FOLDING TABLE and a 12-FOOT METAL LADDER.

THE RING:

An ANNOUNCER stands with a microphone.

ANNOUNCER
Ladies and gentlemen...

BEHIND THE CURTAIN:

Randy stands quiet and peaceful, head lowered slightly.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
From Elizabeth, New Jersey,
weighing in at 218 pounds... The
former WWF superstar and wrestling
legend... The one, the only...
(beat)
Randy "The Ram" Robinnnnsonnnnn!

THE GYM:

Randy explodes into the gym, full of fire and showmanship.

He does a lap around the outside of the ring. His hand is raised high in the air, index finger and pinky curled into a set of RAM'S HORNS. Fans do the same.

Kids rush toward Randy, reaching out for HIGH FIVES. He obliges as many as he possibly can.

Fans hold out FOLDING CHAIRS in front of him. (Just like in the opening montage.) He "rams" each one with his forehead.

AC/DC
If you want blood, You got it!!
If you want blood, You got it!

He does a lap around the perimeter of the ring, enthusiastically head-butting chairs the whole way.

AC/DC (CONT'D)
*Blood on the streets, Blood on the
rocks/ Blood in the gutter, Every
last drop/ If you want blood, you
got it!!*

Randy climbs into the ring. He does a few neck rolls and knee bends, limbering up.

The song fades down. A new song rises...

MUSIC: CELTIC FROST - "DOMAIN OF DECAY"

Ugly, plodding **HARDCORE DEATH METAL**.

ANNOUNCER

And his opponent: From Hampton,
Virginia, weighing in at 295
pounds...

The boos begin to rain down.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Hellbilly Cannibaaaal!

Through the curtain, **HELLBILLY CANNIBAL** emerges. A huge, overalls-clad, mangy, wild-eyed masochist. Crumbs cling to his scraggly beard. He's dragging a heavy **CANVAS SACK**.

A **TEENAGER** in the crowd holds up a sign reading *HELLBILLY CANNIBAL SUCKS A FAT DICK*.

Hellbilly Cannibal climbs into the ring with his sack and a folding chair. He heads to the center of the ring, where Randy awaits.

They sit down on chairs facing each other. Under Hellbilly Cannibal's chair is his canvas sack. Under Randy's is his Dollar Tree plastic shopping bag.

Hellbilly Cannibal punches Randy. Randy punches Hellbilly Cannibal. They take turns punching each other, each shot a little harder than the last. It's like a violent game of "slaps".

After a stretch of this, Hellbilly Cannibal reaches into his sack and pulls out a can of **BUG SPRAY**. He **SPRAYS** it in Randy's face. Randy falls off his chair. He staggers around the ring clutching his face, howling in agony.

Hellbilly Cannibal smashes the blinded Randy over the head with his chair. Randy falls to his knees. Hellbilly Cannibal reaches into his sack and pulls out a **FLUORESCENT LIGHT TUBE**. Wielding it like a bat, he **SMACKS RANDY** in the face. The tube explodes with a pop.

Grabbing a folding chair, Hellbilly Cannibal charges toward Randy. He takes a flying leap, riding the chair like a boogie board. Just as he's about to crash down on Randy, Randy **ROLLS OUT OF THE WAY**. Hellbilly Cannibal's spine gets a violent jolt as the chair hits the mat.

Randy reaches into his Dollar Tree bag and pulls out an aluminum **COOKIE TRAY**. He smacks Hellbilly Cannibal in the face with it. The tray makes an awesomely loud **METALLIC CLANG**. Randy hits him a bunch more times.

Randy is starting to get winded. His heart beats faster.

He picks up Hellbilly Cannibal and flings him toward the ropes. Hellbilly Cannibal, bouncing off, ducks Randy's awaiting forearm. He bounces off the opposite ropes and crashes into Randy knee-first.

Hellbilly Cannibal grabs Randy by the hair and smashes his face into the corner post. He scoops him up and FLIPS HIM OVER THE TOP ROPE, out of the ring. Randy LANDS HARD on the concrete floor.

Hellbilly Cannibal hops out of the ring with the folding chair. He WHALES RANDY IN THE FACE with it. Randy stumbles backwards toward the metal barricade between the ring and the fans. Hellbilly Cannibal kicks him in the chest. Randy flips over the barricade, into the crowd. Fans scatter in an exhilarated panic.

Hellbilly Cannibal throws Randy into a row of empty chairs. Randy goes sprawling. Chairs fly everywhere.

Randy gets up. His heart is beating LOUD. FAST.

Randy, dazed, heads toward the SNACK-BAR AREA. Hellbilly Cannibal follows after him. Randy grabs a metal GARBAGE CAN and WHIPS AROUND WITH IT, smacking Hellbilly Cannibal square in the face. Hellbilly Cannibal goes down.

Randy shakes out the can's contents over Hellbilly Cannibal, showering him in trash. He shoves Hellbilly Cannibal's head into the can and falls on it, ass-first.

Randy grabs the ladder resting along the base of the ring. He POUNDS THE GARBAGE CAN with it, making an UNHOLY RACKET.

With the can still over his head, Hellbilly Cannibal rises to his feet. He HEADBUTTS RANDY with the can. Randy, stumbling around, gets headbutted again. Hellbilly Cannibal throws off the can and drags Randy back to the ring by his hair, carrying the ladder in his other hand.

Plopping Randy down on the mat, Hellbilly Cannibal sets up the ladder in the middle of the ring. He heads back out and grabs the folding table, setting it up by the ladder. He reaches into Randy's Dollar Tree bag and pulls out a BOX OF THUMB TACKS. He scatters the tacks all over the table.

Hellbilly Cannibal grabs Randy and pulls him up the ladder with him. They stand at the top, perched high above the table. Just as Hellbilly Cannibal is about to push off, Randy surprises him with a VICIOUS HEAD-BUTT. Hellbilly Cannibal is caught totally off guard. Randy headbutts him again. Randy grabs Hellbilly Cannibal and PUSHES OFF.

In mid-air, Randy does a 180 twist, causing Hellbilly Cannibal to CRASH THROUGH THE TABLE with Randy on top of him.

Hellbilly Cannibal rolls around the mat in a daze, his back bloodied and covered with tacks. He staggers to his feet. Randy hits him with a dropkick.

Randy's heartbeat is DEAFENING. All other sounds drop out.

Randy pulls Hellbilly Cannibal off the mat. As he gears up for another dropkick, his KNEES BUCKLE. A look comes over his face. He DROPS TO HIS KNEES, one hand on the mat.

Randy grabs his arm. He massages it. He FLOPS OVER, clutching his chest. He lies on his back gasping for breath, sucking at the air.

RANDY'S POV: The fans are unaware anything is wrong. They assume it's part of the act.

Hellbilly Cannibal sees a look of FEAR in Randy's eyes. He knows this is real. He looks out at the crowd.

HELLBILLY CANNIBAL

Is there a doctor?

Few fans look around. Most of them still think this is a gag.

Among those who sense it's real is JERRY DIFUSCO, the event's promoter. He climbs into the ring. Kneels over Randy.

JERRY DIFUSCO

Randy. You okay?

Randy is gasping. DiFusco turns to Hellbilly Cannibal.

JERRY DIFUSCO (CONT'D)

Call 911.

Lex Lethal and some of the other wrestlers climb into the ring. They huddle around Randy.

JERRY DIFUSCO (CONT'D)

Let's get him up.

With no small effort, they lift Randy. They carry him to the ropes. They slow, unsure how best to get him through.

LEX LETHAL

Put him down.

They lower him to the mat. Lex hops out of the ring and grabs Randy's ankles.

Several of the other guys hop out of the ring, supporting Randy's underside as they carefully, awkwardly pull him out.

By now, the crowd realizes this is real. They surge forward as DiFusco and the wrestlers carry Randy toward the exit.

JERRY DIFUSCO
Get back, get back, get back.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Randy is carried down a LONG HALLWAY, trailed by curious and concerned fans. Lex is closest to Randy's head.

LEX LETHAL
You're okay, buddy. Hang on.

They reach a door and enter. The wrestler holding Randy's feet shuts it behind them.

INT. LOCKER ROOM/STAGING AREA - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy lies on a table, his eyes rolling back in his head. Lex squeezes his hand, trying to keep him conscious.

LEX LETHAL
Stay with us, bro. Help's coming.

EMS WORKERS come rushing in.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SUFFOLK COUNTY HOSPITAL - POST-OP RECOVERY ROOM - NIGHT

Randy lies unconscious. There's a BREATHING TUBE in his mouth and ANOTHER TUBE going through his CHEST WALL. He's hooked up to a MECHANICAL VENTILATOR.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. POST-OP RECOVERY ROOM - NEXT DAY

Randy lies asleep. The breathing tube is out. The chest tube is still in.

His eyes slowly open. He looks around, disoriented. Woozy. Confused by all the wires on him, he starts PULLING THINGS OFF. Monitors BEEP. Nurses rush into the room, calming him down as they try to reattach the wires.

He faints.

INT. RANDY'S ROOM - NEXT DAY

Randy, transferred to a regular hospital room, is watching "All My Children" on the wall-mounted TV. The chest tube is out, in its place a large bandage.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(slight Indian accent)
Mr. Ramovic.

Randy looks up. DR. TARACHANDANI (40) enters the room.

RANDY
Call me Randy.

The doctor, nodding, looks down Randy's folder.

RANDY (CONT'D)
So how we lookin', doc?

DR. TARACHANDANI
A lot better than before the
bypass.

RANDY
Great. So I'm all good.

From the doctor's face, it's not quite that simple.

DR. TARACHANDANI
Your heart... You're going to have
to start taking much better care of
it.

RANDY
Like...

DR. TARACHANDANI
For starters, you must take your
medication every day.

RANDY
I could handle that.

DR. TARACHANDANI
No smoking.
(Randy nods)
And no cocaine.

RANDY
 (defensive, offended)
 I don't do coke.

DR. TARACHANDANI
 It's all over your blood work.

RANDY
 (sheepish, busted)
 Maybe once in a while.

DR. TARACHANDANI
 Well, it has to be never.

Randy gives him a reluctant nod.

DR. TARACHANDANI (CONT'D)
 As for exercise, it's still okay,
 as long as it's moderate.

RANDY
 So, like, wrestling...

DR. TARACHANDANI
 Not a good idea.

RANDY
 What if I do it moderate? I could
 hold back on certain moves. There's
 always ways to fake—

DR. TARACHANDANI
 Mr. Ramovic...

RANDY
 (edgy glare)
 Randy.

DR. TARACHANDANI
 Randy, a man with your heart should
 not be flying around a ring
 crashing into people.

Randy's nostrils flare.

RANDY
 With all due respect, Dr...
 (reads name tag,
 mispronouncing)
 ...*Trachanani*, I'd like a second
 opinion on that.

DR. TARACHANDANI
Of course. But I promise you, any
doctor I showed your file would say
the same thing.

Randy lets out a skeptical, sarcastic snort.

DR. TARACHANDANI (CONT'D)
You almost died. The next time, you
won't be so lucky.

RANDY
I want a second opinion.

DR. TARACHANDANI
Your heart's been through a lot.
Even before the heart attack, it
was significantly—

RANDY
I want a second opinion.
(beat)
I WANT A SECOND OPINION.

INT. SUFFOLK COUNTY HOSPITAL - ADMISSIONS DESK - MORNING

Randy is checking out of the hospital.

ADMISSIONS-DESK WOMAN
This is your copy.

The ADMISSIONS-DESK WOMAN hands him some paperwork. He folds
it up and stuffs it in a pocket.

ADMISSIONS-DESK WOMAN (CONT'D)
This was left for you.

She hands him a plain white ENVELOPE. Randy opens it. Inside
is a NOTE:

*YOU EARNED IT DUDE... YOUR A WARRIOR!
REST UP, FEEL BETTER.
—JERRY DIFUSCO
PS... IF YOUR UP BY THE 23RD, I GOT SOMETHING IN YONKERS*

Randy looks into the envelope again and pulls out \$300.

He looks at the money, chuckling ironically. It's his biggest
payday in years. He tucks it in a pocket.

ADMISSIONS-DESK WOMAN (CONT'D)
You have somebody picking you up?

RANDY

Yeah.

EXT. SUFFOLK COUNTY HOSPITAL - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy steps out of the hospital into the bright light of day. He squints, his eyes adjusting. He stands there looking around, a lost animal.

EXT. NORTH BABYLON COMMUNITY CENTER - PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

A CAB pulls up to Randy's van, still parked in the community center's lot. Randy steps out of the cab and limps to the van. He gets in.

INT. VAN - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy sits in the van in the otherwise empty lot, pondering his next move.

CUT TO:

INT. CVS PHARMACY - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy roams an aisle, killing time, idly browsing the selection of deodorants.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Robin Ramovic?

Randy looks up. He heads down the aisle, toward the voice. He comes to the...

PHARMACY COUNTER:

A female PHARMACIST stands holding a small pharmacy bag.

PHARMACIST

Robin Ramovic?

Randy heads toward her.

PHARMACIST (CONT'D)

Is that you?

He gives her a small, embarrassed nod, taking the bag.

INT. PARADISE OAKS - MANAGER'S OFFICE - LATER

Randy hands Len the manager a bunch of cash. Len notices he seems a little off.

LEN THE MANAGER
You alright?

RANDY
Yeah.

EXT. RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Len removes the padlock from Randy's trailer door.

LEN THE MANAGER
Welcome home.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - KITCHENETTE - SHORT TIME LATER

A messy, junk-filled trailer. Randy stands at the kitchen counter with the CVS bag.

He opens the bag and takes out FOUR PRESCRIPTION PILL BOTTLES. We catch a glimpse of the drug names on them: *PLAVIX. COREG. LIPITOR, LISINOPRIL.*

He gazes at the patient name on all of them...

RAMOVIC, ROBIN

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - BATHROOM - LATER

Randy is taking a shower. On his chest is a SURGERY BANDAGE. He soaps up, careful not to get the bandage wet.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - LATER

Randy collapses on the bed, exhausted.

CUT TO:

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - DAY

Randy lies on the bed, gazing off. Restless. Bored. Something catches his eye.

RANDY'S POV: On the floor, in front of the TV, is an old NINTENDO VIDEOGAME SYSTEM. The game cartridge in the console is *WRESTLEJAM '88*.

EXT. RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy sticks his head out of his trailer.

RANDY'S POV: In front of the opposite trailer, ADAM (8), one of the kids he was play-wrestling with, is idly throwing a tennis ball against a car.

RANDY
Yo, Adam!

Adam turns and looks toward Randy.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Wanna play Nintendo?

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy and Adam sit on the floor playing *WrestleJam '88*.

ON TV:

Cyber-Randy is wrestling The Ayatollah at a packed Madison Square Garden. The graphics are late-'80s crude.

Randy flies all over the ring, devastating his foe with a series of acrobatic leaps and kicks and flips.

RANDY AND ADAM:

Randy wears a look of intense concentration. Adam makes a scrunched-up face at the screen.

ADAM
What's that square?

RANDY
What square?

ADAM
That you're hitting me with.

RANDY
It's a folding chair.

ADAM
That's a *chair*?

RANDY
(pissy)
Yes, it's a chair.

Randy grunts, annoyed. They play for a stretch in silence.

ADAM
This is old.

RANDY
1988 ain't old.

ADAM
That was, like, 50 years before I
was born.

RANDY
Shut up and fight.

ADAM'S MOM (O.S.)
(outside trailer)
Ad-aam!

Adam looks toward the window. Randy hits PAUSE.

ADAM
Coming!

Adam turns back to the TV.

RANDY
Ready?

Adam nods yeah. Randy un-pauses. Play resumes.

ON TV:

Cyber-Randy drops The Ayatollah with a knee to the chest. And another. The Ayatollah GOES DOWN. Randy heads to a corner and CLIMBS TO THE TOP ROPE.

He raises his arms, sticking his elbows out, pressing his fists to the sides of his head to form a SET OF RAM'S HORNS.

Randy JUMPS. He flies high in the air, soaring over the mat and crashing down on The Ayatollah horns-first. He pins The Ayatollah as the ref counts to three for the victory. The crowd goes wild.

RANDY AND ADAM:

Randy does a little celebratory fist pump. He hits RESET.

RANDY
One more?

ADAM
I gotta go.

RANDY
Don't you wanna get even? I whipped
your butt.

ADAM
That's okay.

Adam gets up and scampers out of the trailer.

Randy, suddenly alone, looks at the TV. He gazes at the words
on the screen:

1 PLAYER <PLEASE SELECT> 2 PLAYER

He selects 1 PLAYER.

A new match begins. Randy plays without much enthusiasm.
After a few halfhearted kicks and punches, he TOSSES THE
CONTROLLER ASIDE.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy, standing in the middle of the trailer, does a JUMPING
JACK. He does another. A few more.

He feels himself getting winded. A little woozy. He sits
down. He sits still, trying to slow his heart.

He starts to CRY.

Angry, bitter, frightened tears roll down his cheeks.

INT. CHEETAH'S - NIGHT

Randy enters the club. It's crowded tonight. He looks around
for Cassidy. He spots her in a corner offering a CUSTOMER a
lapdance. The customer passes. She moves on.

Randy heads over. She gives him a friendly little cheek peck.

CASSIDY
Hey, sweetie. You're back soon.

RANDY
Ah, I was just in the neighborhood.

Cassidy nods oh.

RANDY (CONT'D)
("casual")
Hey, feel like maybe grabbing a
burger?

Cassidy finds the offer a little odd. This isn't how they
operate.

CASSIDY
I'm working.

RANDY
How 'bout later, then?

She looks at him, puzzled. He seems off.

CASSIDY
You okay?

RANDY
Can we talk for a sec?

CASSIDY
Sure. What's up?

RANDY
Someplace more quiet.

Randy glances toward the door. Cassidy, catching his drift,
looks at him, a little gravely.

CASSIDY
Randy, I can't leave with a
customer.

Pause.

RANDY
I had a heart attack.

CASSIDY
Shit. When?

RANDY
I needed to talk to somebody.

CASSIDY
You can't talk here?

RANDY
Just a couple minutes.

CASSIDY
Randy, I don't do that.

RANDY
Please.

Cassidy looks at him, torn. She sees the need, the fear in his eyes.

CASSIDY
Where are you parked?

RANDY
In back.

Another pause of hesitation from Cassidy. This is big.

CASSIDY
Go to your car. I'll meet you out there in 15 minutes.

EXT. CHEETAH'S - REAR PARKING LOT - 15 MINUTES LATER

Randy sits in the van, staring at the club's rear EMERGENCY EXIT. Cassidy emerges, a jacket covering her dress. Randy waves. Spotting him, she comes over, climbing in the passenger side.

RANDY
Thanks. I appreciate it.

CASSIDY
That's okay.

She looks at his vulnerable expression.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. That's fucked up, dude.

Randy nods.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
When was it?

RANDY
Last week.

CASSIDY
You okay?

RANDY
Yeah, yeah. Feelin' much better.

CASSIDY
Good, good. What happened?

RANDY
It was while I was wrestling. I collapsed in the ring.

CASSIDY
Oh, man. That's terrible.

RANDY
Yeah, it was pretty fucked up.

He chuckles, a little perversely.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Tell ya, though, it was a big hit with the fans.
(amused grin)
Promoter told me everybody was hanging around wondering if I was okay, they wound up buying up all of his T-shirts and shit. Whole merch table got cleaned out.

CASSIDY
That's funny.

Randy's grin fades. His expression turns melancholy, fearful.

RANDY
Doctor says I can't wrestle no more.

CASSIDY
Damn. What are you gonna do?

RANDY
I don't know. I don't know what to do. If I can't wrestle...

He loses himself in some bleak thought.

CASSIDY
It *just* happened. You don't have to figure everything out this second. Give yourself some time.

RANDY
Time's all I got. I just sit there all day...

He stares off bleakly again.

CASSIDY
You really shouldn't be alone right
now.

He turns to her, looking her in the eye.

RANDY
That's why I came to see you.

CASSIDY
(a little unnerved)
Randy...

She looks at him with sympathy.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
I feel bad what happened. But you
and me... I can't go there.

Randy gives her a sour, disappointed look.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
You should be with family now. You
have a daughter, right? Where is
she?

RANDY
We don't really get along too good.

CASSIDY
It doesn't matter. You need her.

RANDY
(bitter chuckle)
She don't need me.

CASSIDY
Everybody needs a father. Trust me.

Randy shrugs, not so sure. Cassidy glances at the dashboard clock.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I gotta get back in.

She puts a sympathetic hand on his knee.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
You take care of yourself.

She gives him a peck on the cheek. He lingers there for a second. A weird, tentative moment.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
You gonna be okay?

He nods, putting his brave face back on.

RANDY
I'm Randy The Ram. I've taken
bigger bumps than this.

CASSIDY
I'm sure.

RANDY
Maybe I'll give my daughter a call.

CASSIDY
You should.

RANDY
Why the fuck not? I'm her father. A
person only gets one father in this
life.

CASSIDY
Exactly.

RANDY
Unless you're adopted.

Cassidy laughs. She gives him a friendly pat on the shoulder.

CASSIDY
You're gonna be just fine.

RANDY
Definitely.

Cassidy climbs out of the van. Randy watches as she heads
back into the club.

His cheery expression fades. He is alone again.

CUT TO:

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - DAY

Randy sits on his bed, sifting through a messy, junk-filled
shoebox. He pulls out an OLD PHOTO.

RANDY'S POV: It's a mid-'80s photo of Randy and his infant
daughter Stephanie in front of the family Christmas tree.
Randy, wearing a Santa cap, is smiling and laughing,
Stephanie perched on his huge, steroid-pumped bicep.

He flips the photo over. On the back are a bunch of scribbled PHONE NUMBERS. They're all crossed-out except the last one. The numbers get progressively more faded from bottom to top, as if they've been written down over the course of years.

EXT. PARADISE OAKS - PAY PHONE - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy stands at a PAY PHONE with the photo, ringing phone cradled to his ear.

STEPHANIE'S VOICE

This is Stephanie, you know what to do.

(answering machine BEEP)

Randy listens to the silence. He hangs up.

INT. VAN - LATER

Randy sits in his van by the curb of a modest, lower-middle-class house. He looks at the house, working up the nerve to approach.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - LATER

Randy stands at the doorstep of the house. Steeling himself, he rings the bell. A WOMAN (22) appears at the door in a T-SHIRT and PANTIES.

RANDY

(a little thrown)

Hey... Is Stephanie home?

The woman looks at Randy a little coldly, sensing who he is.

THE WOMAN

Who can I say it is?

RANDY

Her father.

She disappears into the house.

A few moments later, Stephanie emerges with a BACKPACK slung over her shoulder. In her hands is a TEXTBOOK. She heads straight down the driveway, blowing past Randy.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Where you going?

He goes after her.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Stephanie!

He catches up. She stops.

STEPHANIE
What do you want?

RANDY
Can we talk?

STEPHANIE
Now's really not a good time.

She resumes walking, briskly.

RANDY
Wait!
(chasing after her)
Where ya going?

He looks at the textbook in her hands: *PRINCIPLES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT*.

RANDY (CONT'D)
You in school? That's great.

She turns DOWN THE SIDEWALK. He continues following.

RANDY (CONT'D)
What school?

No answer.

RANDY (CONT'D)
What school?

STEPHANIE
Middlesex County Community.

RANDY
Middlesex? That's kind of a hike.
Where's your car?
(no response)
You taking the bus? Lemme give you
a lift.

STEPHANIE
That's okay.

RANDY
It's no problem.
(beat)
Really. I'm parked right by.

Stephanie picks up the pace, trying to lose him.

RANDY (CONT'D)
 You're walking pretty fast there.
 You running late?
 (no answer)
 I could help you with that.
 (no answer)
 Give you a ride.

She keeps right on walking.

RANDY (CONT'D)
 New Jersey Transit sucks!

And walking.

RANDY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 The buses smell like piss!

She fights off an amused smile. She slows a tiny bit.

INT. VAN - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy is driving Stephanie.

STEPHANIE
 Left at the second stop sign.

RANDY
 Yes, ma'am!

Randy drives. He slows at the second stop sign, which is at a bigger, FOUR-LANE STREET. He makes the left. They drive for a stretch in awkward silence. Randy seems a little nervous.

STEPHANIE
 You gonna talk?

A pause as Randy gathers his words.

RANDY
 There's something I wanted to tell
 you.

STEPHANIE
 Okay...

RANDY
 I had a heart attack.
 (beat)
 Last week.

He looks at her earnestly.

RANDY (CONT'D)
I wanna try to fix things.

Stephanie sits there in calm silence, processing all of this.

STEPHANIE
You are such an asshole.

RANDY
(taken aback)
Why?

STEPHANIE
Now you wanna fix things. Now that suddenly you're all scared and alone from your heart attack.

RANDY
What? No. It's not like—

STEPHANIE
This is so fuckin' you. You only come around when you need something from somebody, when they can do something for you. Selfish fuck. Good. *Be alone.*

She suddenly OPENS HER DOOR as the van is moving. She HOPS OUT. Randy hits the brakes, alarmed.

RANDY
What are you doing?

Stephanie stumbles and falls. She gets up. Walks off in the direction they came from.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Stephanie!

She's gone. He angrily punches the steering wheel.

CUT TO:

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Randy lies on his bed, gazing off depressedly. On his chest is a well-worn DAY PLANNER, open to a marked-up page.

ANGLE ON page. Scribbled in marker in one of the boxes is *RAHWAY AUTOGRAF SHOW.*

INT. RAHWAY RECREATION CENTER - GYMNASIUM - MORNING

Randy, standing at a folding table in a gym, unzips a duffel bag. He pulls out a stack of 8x10 GLOSSIES of himself. It's a high-flying, mid-air Ram Jam photo from the height of his '80s glory.

He puts them on the table. Looks around the gym.

RANDY'S POV: He's at an AUTOGRAPH SHOW that hasn't started yet. Around the perimeter of the gym, TEN FOLDING TABLES are set up. At each one, a BEAT-UP, WORN-OUT OLD WRESTLER is laying out his wares—8x10s, old match tapes, etc.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (O.S.)

Didn't think I'd see you here.

Randy looks up and sees Scott Brumberg, the promoter from the beginning. He's wearing the same "BRUMBERG - 44" Mets jersey.

RANDY

Why not?

SCOTT BRUMBERG

Heard you collapsed at the DiFusco show. Sounded pretty scary.

Randy smiles coyly.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (CONT'D)

What?

RANDY

Sold the shit outta that one.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

No way!

RANDY

I gotta give credit. DiFusco came up with the idea. We're setting up an angle for a grudge match.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

Wow... Dude, you are good.

Randy gives a proud "Hey, what can I say?" shrug.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (CONT'D)

I was sure I'd have to cancel the minivan.

RANDY

What minivan?

SCOTT BRUMBERG
The one I rented for Fanfest.

Randy looks at him, surprised.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (CONT'D)
Me and a whole gang's driving down.
Terry C., Caggiano, Fatback... I am
so fuckin' psyched.
(beat)
You see the flyer?

Randy looks at him blankly. Brumberg walks over to a nearby table, where there's a stack of BRIGHT-ORANGE FLYERS. (The same flyer can be seen scattered around the room on chairs, the floor, etc.) He grabs one and brings it back over.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (CONT'D)
Volpe gave me an assload to pass
out.

He hands it to Brumberg.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (CONT'D)
That is gonna be *epic*.

RANDY'S POV: The flyer.

NICK VOLPE PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
**** "LEGENDS OF THE RING" FANFEST ****
MAY 5-6, 2008

GREENVILLE CIVIC AUDITORIUM - GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

THE MAIN EVENT...
IN A 20TH ANNIVERSARY REMATCH OF THEIR LEGENDERY EPIC
MAY 6, 1988 WRESTLESLAM IV MATCH...

RANDY "THE RAM" ROBINSON VS. THE AYATOLLAH

ALSO SCHEDULED TO APPEAR:
EDDIE RUCKUS, THE MORTICIAN, DEAN "THE DREAM" GIGUNDA,
IVAN PETROV, THE SANDBAGGERS, BILLY BOB BANJO,
J.T. SEXXY, CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, CHRIS COLUMBO...
AND MANY MORE!

RANDY:

Randy nods vaguely at the flyer, his feelings hard to read.

RANDY
Looks great.

Brumberg looks around the room as the wrestlers set up shop.

SCOTT BRUMBERG
Should get a pretty good crowd
today.

Randy holds up his hand, wiggling his fingers for Brumberg.

RANDY
I'll start loosening up.

Brumberg walks off. Randy looks at the flyer again. A sour expression comes over his face.

INT. GYMNASIUM - SHORT TIME LATER

The signing is underway. FIVE OR SO FANS mill about the room, drifting from table to table getting autographs and taking photos with the motley assortment of washed-up aging wrestlers.

ON RANDY:

Randy is sitting behind his table, signing one of his 8x10s for a FAN. He hands it to the guy, who hands Randy a \$5 bill.

FAN
Thanks.

RANDY
You got it, broski.

The fan walks off. Randy tucks the fiver into the FANNY PACK he's wearing. There's not much in there, just a meager few ones and fives.

Randy zips up the fanny pack. He looks up, ready to sign more autographs—just as soon as somebody comes over.

INT. GYMNASIUM - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy sits at his table, bored. There are NO TAKERS. He looks around the room at the other wrestlers.

RANDY'S POV: One is asleep. Another looks borderline homeless. Across from him is a 40-SOMETHING WRESTLER in a WHEELCHAIR. Attached to his calf is a URINE BAG. A feeble stream of urine trickles into the bag.

Randy looks down at the stack of Randy The Ram 8x10s on the table. He gazes numbly at the high-flying image of himself from 20 years earlier.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (O.S.)
Sorry, man.

Randy looks up and sees Brumberg.

SCOTT BRUMBERG (CONT'D)
I was sure the turnout'd be bigger.

Randy shrugs resignedly.

INT. VAN - LATER

Randy pulls up to his trailer. He sits there with the engine idling, staring at his trailer, scared to go in alone. He pulls back out again.

CUT TO:

INT. CHEETAH'S - SHORT TIME LATER

MUSIC - LIL' KIM - "HOW MANY LICKS?"

Cassidy, roaming the room, approaches a CUSTOMER sitting near the stafe. She leans in to his ear, her hand on his arm.

CASSIDY
Would you like a lapdance, sweetie?

CUSTOMER
That's okay.

Cassidy moves along. She approaches a PAIR OF GUYS. She leans in to one of them.

CASSIDY
Would you like a lapdance?

GUY #1
Not right now.

She looks toward the other guy. Before she can even ask:

GUY #2
I'm good.

Cassidy heads off, rejected.

RANDY (O.S.)

Hey.

She turns and sees Randy. She's happy to see him after the string of no's.

CASSIDY

Hey. How ya feeling?

RANDY

Better. Good.

She leads him over to a table. They sit.

CASSIDY

How'd it go with your daughter?

RANDY

(unconvincing)

Good. Fine.

CASSIDY

Yeah?

Randy dodges her eye contact.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

You sure?

Pause.

RANDY

Not too good, actually. She tore me a new asshole.

CASSIDY

Shit. That sucks.

He nods dispiritedly.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

It's tough. You can't give up. You gotta keep trying.

Another half-hearted nod. A brief conversational lull.

RANDY

I was thinking about maybe getting her a present.

CASSIDY

That's a great idea!

(beat)

What's she into?

RANDY
I'm not sure.

CASSIDY
How old is she?

RANDY
22, 23?
(beat)
22.

CASSIDY
What kind of music does she like?

RANDY
I don't know.

CASSIDY
Is she into books? Cooking?

Randy just looks at her blankly.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
How could you not know? She's your daughter.

RANDY
I'm a shitty fuckin' father.

Cassidy, feeling bad, is hit with an urge to help.

CASSIDY
She's 22? Okay...
(riffing)
You should get her some clothes,
some kinda clothes... All girls
like that.

RANDY
That could work.

CASSIDY
I know the perfect place. This kick-
ass little vintage shop in
Westfield.

RANDY
Yeah?

CASSIDY
Saturday's the best time to go.
That's when they get the new stuff
in, all these boxes full of great
shit.

RANDY
Okay. Cool.

CASSIDY
I'll write it down.

Cassidy grabs a pen and a cocktail napkin off the bar.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
I'm pretty sure it's on 28.

She scribbles down *YESTERDAZE - WESTFIELD*. Hands it to him.

RANDY
Good tip. Thanks.

CASSIDY
You got it.

Cassidy starts dancing for him, as is their routine. Randy doesn't seem into it.

RANDY
I'm gonna grab a drink at the bar.

Randy gets up and heads off toward the bar. She watches him go, feeling rejected.

Cassidy gets up. CAMERA stays on her face as she does a lap around the club. She glances back toward the bar.

CASSIDY'S POV: Randy is sitting at bar.

She scans the room. A CUSTOMER is looking her way. She starts to approach. Then, she STOPS. She looks back toward Randy again. He's sitting at the bar alone. She heads over to him.

He looks up from his drink.

RANDY (CONT'D)
That was fast.

CASSIDY
Listen...

Cassidy pauses, hesitant. She takes the plunge:

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
How 'bout I meet you there
Saturday? Help you out.

RANDY
Yeah?

CASSIDY
("casual")
I'm actually gonna be running
around right in that area anyway,
so it's not really a pain.

RANDY
All right. Thanks.

CASSIDY
No problem. You got it.

She gives him a chummy arm tap and walks off.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOP-RITE - MORNING

Randy knocks on Wayne's door.

WAYNE (O.S.)
Yeah?

INT. WAYNE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Wayne looks up at Randy, mildly annoyed by the disruption. On his computer screen is an ONLINE POKER game.

RANDY
Hey, Wayne. Got a sec?

WAYNE
Not really. What?

RANDY
I was wondering if you had
something more steady. Full-time.

WAYNE
Only thing I got right now's got
weekends.

RANDY
That works.

WAYNE
Isn't that when you sit on other
dudes' faces?

RANDY
What is it?

WAYNE
Deli counter.

Randy seems a little hesitant.

RANDY
So, like, working with customers?

WAYNE
All day long, hot horny housewives
begging for your meat.
(beat)
And prepared salads.

Randy thinks it over.

RANDY
That's the only thing you got?

WAYNE
At the moment. You interested?

EXT. SUNRISE SHOPPING PLAZA - PARKING LOT - DAY

Randy stands alone in front of YESTERDAZE, a strip-mall vintage clothing store. He looks at his watch, almost thinking of leaving.

CASSIDY (O.S.)
Hey.

Randy looks up. He seems slightly thrown by what he sees.

RANDY
Hey.

RANDY'S POV: It's his first time seeing Cassidy in street clothes and in daylight. She's not wearing makeup, and her hair is pulled back in a ponytail. She's also a good three inches shorter out of her stripper heels.

They shake hands, a bit awkwardly.

RANDY (CONT'D)
I almost didn't recognize you. You look all... clean.

CASSIDY
"Clean"?

RANDY
Like classy.

CASSIDY

Gee, thanks.

RANDY

Nah, nah, I don't mean that bad. I like it.

(beat)

It's like in "Grease", where she turns into the hot rock 'n' roll chick at the end. Except backwards.

CASSIDY

Oh-kaay...

Randy looks at her sneakers, a far cry from the clear heels he's used to.

RANDY

So, uh... Should I call you Cassidy or Pam?

She gives the question genuine thought.

CASSIDY

Pam.

(playful finger wag)

But don't get used to it.

INT. YESTERDAZE - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy follows Cassidy toward the back of the store. He looks around, taking in the array of funky '50s/'60s/'70s clothes.

RANDY

This is awesome...

(rubs hands together,
psyched)

We are gonna find something great!

Cassidy is less loose and playful than Randy, much more in business mode. They come to the back where, against the wall, she finds what she's looking for: a bunch of CARDBOARD BOXES bursting with a wildly eclectic assortment of tops, skirts, pants, etc. She starts sifting through.

CASSIDY

Do you know her size?

RANDY

She's kinda skinny, a little shorter than you.

Cassidy spots a fun, multi-color MINI-SKIRT. She pulls it out.

CASSIDY
Could you see her in this?

RANDY
Maybe.
(beat)
Not really.
(beat)
I'm not sure.

Cassidy tosses it back in. She unearths a Flashdance-style SWEATSHIRT.

CASSIDY
What about this?

Randy makes a sour face. She tosses it back.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
So like, what is she? Goth? Punk?
Hippie?
(beat)
Preppy? Stoner?

Randy ponders the choices.

RANDY
Not really...

Cassidy lets out a good-natured groan of frustration. Randy watches as she continues searching.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Hey, Pam?

CASSIDY
Yeah?

RANDY
Thank you very much.

Cassidy looks at him. She can feel his sincere appreciation.

CASSIDY
You're welcome.

She returns to searching. Sift, sift, sift, sift...

RANDY
I think she might be a lesbian.

Cassidy stops sifting. She looks up at him.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Does that help?

Cassidy leads Randy by the arm over to the...

MEN'S AREA:

Cassidy heads to a RACK OF CLOTHES. She quickly zeroes in on a RETRO BOWLING SHIRT. She holds it up to Randy, who makes a scrunched-up face.

RANDY
Ah, maybe she's just a friend.

Cassidy puts the bowling shirt back. As she does, something catches Randy's eye.

RANDY (CONT'D)
What's that?
(pointing)
The green.

Cassidy holds up the item for Randy.

CASSIDY
(surprised)
This?

An excited look comes over Randy's face.

RANDY
It's perfect.

RANDY'S POV: A satin-green ROLLER-DISCO JACKET. Embroidered on the left breast is a big "S" in purple script. It's UGLY.

Cassidy looks at the jacket. She clearly finds it awful.

She looks at Randy, who's beaming with excitement and pride. She finds it very endearing.

CASSIDY
I agree.

EXT. SUNRISE SHOPPING PLAZA - PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

Yesterdaze bag in hand, Randy opens the door to his van. He and tosses the bag inside. He's on a post-shop high, mission accomplished.

RANDY
Thanks again.

CASSIDY
You found it.

RANDY
I never woulda known about this
place.

CASSIDY
Okay, I'll give you that.

A tentative pause. Cassidy looks at him, ready to part ways.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
Look, I...

RANDY
Man, I worked up a pretty good
thirst in there. What say we grab a
beer?

CASSIDY
I gotta get going.

RANDY
One beer! We gotta re-hydrate!

Cassidy seems torn.

CASSIDY
I really can't.
(beat)
I got a kid at home.

RANDY
You have a kid?

Cassidy nods. Yup.

RANDY (CONT'D)
I had no idea.

Cassidy shrugs casually.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Boy or girl?

CASSIDY
Boy. Daniel.

RANDY
How old?

CASSIDY

Nine.

RANDY

Wow... I had no friggin' idea.

CASSIDY

It's not something I usually tell customers. Not exactly a turn-on.

Randy looks off at something by his van. An idea hits him.

RANDY

Wait.

He unlocks the door. Leaning into the van, he TEARS THE RANDY THE RAM ACTION FIGURE OFF THE DASHBOARD. He proudly, excitedly holds it out to Cassidy.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Now both our kids got something.

She looks at the action figure, reluctant to take it.

RANDY (CONT'D)

You're gonna turn this down, too?
Man, you're rough!

Cassidy chuckles a little. She takes it.

CASSIDY

That's very nice of you. Thank you.

RANDY

Tell him to take good care of that.
\$300 bucks on eBay.

CASSIDY

Really?

RANDY

Nah.

Cassidy laughs a little. She can't help but be charmed by his sweetness and earnestness. After a pause...

CASSIDY

One beer.

INT. LOCAL BAR - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy and Cassidy are having beers at the bar. He's holding her CELLPHONE, looking at PICTURES of her son. He moves on to the next one.

RANDY
He's a good-lookin' kid.

CASSIDY
I think so.

RANDY
I see where he gets it from.

Cassidy smiles, flattered.

CASSIDY
He sure doesn't get it from his
douchebag father.

Randy skips to the next pic. It's a shot of an UNDER-
CONSTRUCTION CONDO BUILDING.

RANDY
What's that?

CASSIDY
Just this condo thing, down by
Trenton.

RANDY
You moving there?

CASSIDY
Working on it.
(beat)
It's a great area. Way cheaper. And
the schools are awesome.

RANDY
What about Cheetah's?

CASSIDY
I'm done. I'm quitting.

RANDY
(a little disappointed)
Oh.
(nods to self)
Okay...

MUSIC: DEF LEPPARD - "POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME"

Randy's ears perk up at the song on the jukebox.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Hell, yeah.

He stands up, reaching out for Cassidy's hand. She doesn't give it.

RANDY (CONT'D)
C'mon. Let's dance.

CASSIDY
Where?

RANDY
Right here.

CASSIDY
This isn't a dance place.

RANDY
Who cares? Fuckin' Def Lep!

CASSIDY
(chuckles)
I've danced to this plenty.

RANDY
Fine. Then I'm dancing for you.

Randy starts DANCING in front of Cassidy, who's sitting on a barstool. She smiles.

CASSIDY
Is this a lapdance I'm getting?

Randy goes into lapdance mode, "seductively" writhing for her, silly and self-aware.

RANDY
Just sit back and enjoy.

He turns around, wiggling his ass a little for her. He runs his hands up and down her sides. He drapes his long blond mane over her shoulders, running it over her face. She laughs, charmed and amused.

He gazes into her eyes intensely.

RANDY (CONT'D)
The lapdancer has become the lapdanced.

Cassidy laughs. He continues dancing, totally unembarrassed.

CASSIDY

I think we can get you a shift.

Randy bobs his head along to the kick-ass Def Leppard tune, really loving it.

The song builds to its chorus. Randy SINGS ALONG.

RANDY

*Take a bottle, shake it up/ Break
the bubble, break it u-up...*

(chorus)

*Pour some sugar on me! In the name
of love!*

Cassidy, unable to resist the call of the Lep, joins in.

CASSIDY AND RANDY

*Pour some sugar on me! C'mon fire
me up!*

(pointing at each other)

*Pour your sugar on me! I can't get
enough...*

(eye contact, sultry)

*I'm hot, sticky sweet/ From my head
to my feet yeah...*

From here, the song veers off into a GUITAR PART. Randy nods along, savoring the awesome hair-metal riffing.

RANDY

They don't make 'em like they used
to.

CASSIDY

Fuckin' eighties, man. Best shit
ever.

RANDY

Def Lep, Gunners...

CASSIDY

The Crüe...

RANDY

Then that Cobain pussy had to come
around and ruin it all.

CASSIDY

Like there's something wrong with
having a good time.

RANDY
 Fuckin' mopey douchebag.
 (beat)
 "Ooh, look at me! I wear flannel!
 I'm all depressed!"

CASSIDY
 "I'm from Seattle! I like rain!"

Randy shakes his head sourly.

RANDY
 Nineties fuckin' sucked.

CASSIDY
 No shit...

Their EYES MEET. A moment of CHEMISTRY. Mutual attraction.

Randy moves closer, his eyes locked on hers. He leans in for... a KISS.

They MAKE OUT for a few seconds. Cassidy PULLS BACK.

She gives Randy a playfully scolding FINGER WAG, masking her fear and discomfort with what just happened.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)
 No contact with the customers.

RANDY
 You're right. My bad.

He keeps right on dancing, totally unaware of the shift that just occurred in her.

CASSIDY
 Shit.

RANDY
 What's up?

CASSIDY
 (glancing at watch)
 I totally didn't realize the time.

RANDY
 We just got here.

CASSIDY
 I should get home.

She stands up. Randy is very disappointed.

RANDY
C'mon. You said one beer!

Randy points toward her ALMOST-FULL BEER on the bar. She picks it up and CHUGS the whole thing. She slaps the empty bottle on the bar.

CASSIDY
Good night.

She gives him an arm pat and walks out of the bar. Randy is impressed.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOP-RITE - EMPLOYEE ROOM - MORNING

It's Randy's first day of work. He slips into a DELI COAT. Tucks his hair into a hairnet. Pulls a Shop-Rite baseball cap over the hairnet.

He walks over to a mirror to see how he looks in his new uniform. He feels a little silly.

WAYNE (O.S.)
Here ya go.

He turns and sees Wayne, who hands him something. Randy looks at the item in his hand, vaguely bothered.

RANDY
I thought it was gonna say Randy.

ANGLE ON item, a Shop-Rite NAME TAG. The name on it is *ROBIN*.

WAYNE
Guess they got it off your W-4.

RANDY
Do I really even need to wear one?

WAYNE
(sarcastic)
Are you gonna be interacting with our valued Shop-Rite customers?

RANDY
Yeah, but I—

WAYNE
Then yes.

RANDY

Could they maybe re-do it?

WAYNE

Just wear the fucking thing.

Wayne walks off. Randy pins the name tag to his apron. He takes another look in the mirror, sighing unhappily.

Randy looks up at the employee-room clock. It's 8:59 AM.

He heads toward a RUBBER-STRIP CURTAIN leading to the deli counter. Standing before the curtain, he pauses a moment, gathering himself like before a wrestling match.

He steps through. Showtime.

INT. DELI COUNTER - DAY

About 10 CUSTOMERS hover in front of the deli counter with Take-A-Number tickets.

Randy, manning the counter, hands an OLD GUY in a WWII VETERAN baseball cap a packet of roast beef. The guy shuffles off. Randy looks up at the Take-A-Number sign.

RANDY

Seventeen.

A WOMAN (60s) steps forward holding a 17 and a SHOP-RITE CIRCULAR. She carefully surveys the TURKEY-BREAST SELECTION in the case.

WOMAN

The Hudson Acres, are they all on sale or just the regular?

Randy looks clueless.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

(holding up circular)

It's a little unclear.

She hands the circular to Randy to take a look.

RANDY'S POV: It says HUDSON ACRES TURKEY BREAST - \$5.99/LB.

He still has no idea.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I'd prefer the maple-glazed, but if it's full price...

Randy briefly catches eyes with another customer, a BIG-HAIRED, SEMI-HOT PARTY CHICK in her forties. The kind of woman Randy would hit on in a bar. He dodges her eye contact, embarrassed by the context.

RANDY
(to circular lady)
Hang on, let me...

Randy picks up a phone behind the counter.

RANDY (CONT'D)
(into phone, over
speakers)
Wayne, please come to the deli
counter.

He cringes a bit as his voice booms over the store speakers. He hangs up and returns to the customer.

RANDY (CONT'D)
It'll just be a minute.

The woman, nodding, looks into the deli case again.

WOMAN
Which in your opinion is the best
smoked ham?

RANDY
I guess it depends what you like.

WOMAN
I tried the Apple Valley Farms
once, and it was very salty. Do you
find that?

Randy steals a self-conscious glance at the party chick.

INT. DELI COUNTER - LATER

ANGLE ON Take-A-Number sign. It says *NOW SERVING: 46*.

RANDY
Forty-six.

A WOMAN (35) in workout clothes steps forward with a 46.

WORKOUT WOMAN
Could I get a half-pound of the
pesto pasta salad?

RANDY

Sure.

Randy grabs a plastic container.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Pesto change-o.

The woman smiles at Randy's little offhand pasta pun. This pleases him.

Randy scoops pesto pasta salad into the container. He puts the container onto the scale. It reads *.51 LB.*

RANDY (CONT'D)

Wow. I am good.

This gets Randy a small chuckle from the woman. Randy slaps a price tag on the container.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Can I get you anything else?

YOUNG WOMAN

Nope. That's it.

He hands her the container.

RANDY

You have yourself a nice day.

YOUNG WOMAN

(friendly smile)

I will. You, too.

The woman heads off. Randy's spirits are lifted by the exchange.

INT. DELI COUNTER - LATER

Randy looks up at the Take-A-Number sign: *NOW SERVING: 57.*

RANDY

O-57.

A HOUSEWIFE-TYPE steps forward with the number.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Bingo!

The housewife smiles.

HOUSEWIFE
What's my prize?

RANDY
Anything in the case, sweetheart.

HOUSEWIFE
A pound of chopped liver and a half
a pound of egg salad.

RANDY
I think that can be arranged...

He grabs a plastic container and throws it in the air,
catching it behind his back.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE - DAY

Stephanie emerges from the Middlesex County Community College
building. A look of surprise comes over her face.

STEPHANIE'S POV: Randy is standing there waiting for her by
his van. Under his arm is a LUMPILY WRAPPED PRESENT, no box.

STEPHANIE
What are you, stalking me?

RANDY
Do stalkers bring presents?

STEPHANIE
Sometimes.

RANDY
Well, I ain't a stalker. But...

He excitedly hands her the present. She looks at it warily.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Open it.

She opens it. Inside is the green satin jacket. She holds it
up, trying to process.

RANDY (CONT'D)
The "S" is for "Stephanie".

STEPHANIE
Oh. Okay.

She looks at the jacket. It's nothing she would ever wear.

RANDY
I got it just for you.

STEPHANIE
I see that. What's it for?

RANDY
No reason. Just because. Do you like it?

STEPHANIE
I do. It's... shiny.

She looks at Randy. He is excited and proud.

RANDY
I was looking in this store and saw it, and I just said, "That is *it*."

Stephanie nods, smiling politely.

RANDY (CONT'D)
So what are you doing now?

STEPHANIE
What am I doing?

RANDY
Got any time? I was thinking we could swing by our old favorite spot.

STEPHANIE
We have an old favorite spot?

RANDY
You'll remember when you see. Whaddaya say?

STEPHANIE
Now's not the best time. I've got some things to do.

RANDY
What kinda things?

STEPHANIE
Stuff.

RANDY
You ain't got stuff!
(beat)
C'mon, give an old man a break.

He giver her his biggest, most charming puppy-dog smile.

EXT. POINT PLEASANT BOARDWALK - LATER

Randy and Stephanie walk along the boardwalk. It's a charming little Jersey-shore boardwalk/beach lined with Skee-Ball games, ice-cream parlors, T-shirt shops etc. It's a bit cold and not very crowded, still out of season.

RANDY

You really don't remember?

STEPHANIE

No.

RANDY

Guess you were pretty young.

They walk for a stretch in silence. He points to a spot.

RANDY (CONT'D)

There used to be this funhouse.

(beat)

The Monster Motel...

Randy chuckles at the memory.

RANDY (CONT'D)

They had this cheesy-ass skeleton that popped out of a coffin. You'd get so scared, you'd cry. Then you'd beg to go in again.

STEPHANIE

(chuckles to self)

Always was a glutton for punishment.

RANDY

You'd hop on my foot and wrap your arms around my leg. I'd have to walk you the whole way through like that.

STEPHANIE

I totally don't remember.

RANDY

(looks at her sweetly)

I do.

EXT. BOARDWALK - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy and Stephanie sit on a bench facing the ocean eating mint-chocolate chip ice-cream cones. Randy is quiet and contemplative, not in his usual "on" mode. He takes a deep breath.

RANDY

I accept your apology.

She shoots him an irked look.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Not like that. I just mean... You made amends. I free you.

Her expression softens.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Anything you've ever done or said or thought, I forgive. You've done nothing wrong to me. And anything I've ever done...

(beat)

I'm sorry. Truly.

Stephanie is surprised by his emotion and sincerity.

STEPHANIE

Thank you.

RANDY

I was young. My career was booming. All those lights, the fans, the crazy shit on the road... I wasn't thinking about my kid. Or my wife.

Stephanie nods.

RANDY (CONT'D)

My priorities were all fucked up. I know that. But now... I wanna try to make things right. I wanna try to get to know you.

(lump in throat)

I just hope it's not too late.

Randy gazes off at the ocean, filled with fear and love and regret. A tear starts to gather in his eye. He wipes it away before it has a chance to form.

Stephanie looks at him, moved.

INT. BOARDWALK ARCADE - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy and Stephanie play Skee-Ball side-by-side, father and daughter.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy stands with Stephanie in front of her house, dropping her off.

RANDY
Hope that wasn't too painful.

STEPHANIE
It was okay.

RANDY
Well...

Randy, unsure what to do, extends his hand.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Bye.

They shake. He pulls her in for a brief, mechanical hug.

STEPHANIE
Bye.

Another pause.

RANDY
So... How about dinner sometime?

STEPHANIE
Dinner?

RANDY
Maybe Tuesday?

Stephanie thinks it over.

STEPHANIE
I'm sorry. I don't think so.

RANDY
(nodding, "casual")
Or not. That's cool, whatever...

STEPHANIE
Wednesday would work better.

Randy is surprised and happy.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - LATER

Randy sticks the old Christmas photo of Stephanie and himself on the fridge.

EXT. PARADISE OAKS - PAY PHONE - DAY

Randy stands at the pay phone, ringing phone to his ear. In his hands is his day planner, open to a page marked up with upcoming gigs.

RANDY

Yo, Miggy. Ram. How ya doin'?

(beat)

Good, good.

(beat)

Listen, you're gonna have to count me out for Utica.

(momentous pause)

I'm retiring.

EXT. PAY PHONE - MOMENTS LATER

Another call.

RANDY

Hey, how ya doin', Frank?

(beat)

Good, good. Listen...

EXT. PAY PHONE - MOMENTS LATER

Another call. Randy is holding the Fanfest flyer.

RANDY

Sorry, Volp. You know I'd kill to do it.

(beat)

I realize. I understand.

(beat)

No more. I'm done. I'm retired.

(beat)

Positive. It's time to move on.

INT. CHEETAH'S - NIGHT

MUSIC: WARRANT - "CHERRY PIE"

Cassidy is up on stage, doing her thing for a sizable crowd. She slinks up to a customer who's holding out a dollar bill for her. She pulls on her G-string band, snapping it shut on the bill.

She moves over to another customer holding out a dollar and does the same.

RANDY (O.S.)
Hey. Over here.

She looks toward the voice, coming from another side of the stage.

CASSIDY'S POV: Standing there is Randy, holding out a PURPLE ENVELOPE. He looks toward her G-string, like he wants to put it in like a dollar bill.

She takes it with her hand instead.

INT. CHEETAH'S - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy and Cassidy sit together at a table. Cassidy is holding the purple envelope, looking a little uncomfortable.

RANDY
Open it.

CASSIDY
I'll do it later when it's quiet.

RANDY
I wanna watch.

Reluctantly, Cassidy opens it. Inside is a GREETING CARD.

CASSIDY'S POV: On the card's front, a cartoon monkey is holding a big bunch of bananas. Across the top, it says *THANKS A BUNCH!*

Randy watches excitedly as she reads the inside. She puts the it down after reading it.

CASSIDY
That's very sweet. Thank you.

RANDY
Thank you. I couldn't've done it without you.

CASSIDY
I'm glad I could help.

RANDY
It was fun, right? We had a good
time.

She nods politely, reservedly, clearly trying to pull back.

RANDY (CONT'D)
(fishing)
Shopping...

Another guarded nod.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Hey, you ever been to Mother
Kelly's?

CASSIDY
On 46?

RANDY
They got this kick-ass cover band
Tuesday nights. Play anything you
can think of. What do you say we—

CASSIDY
Randy.

RANDY
What?

CASSIDY
I can't do this.

RANDY
Do what?

CASSIDY
("you and me" gesture)
This.

Randy is confused and disappointed.

RANDY
I thought we had a little something
going here.

CASSIDY
I think you're awesome. You're a
great guy.

RANDY
But...

CASSIDY

You think I'm, like, this *stripper*, but I'm not. I'm a mom, with responsibilities. I don't think you wanna get with that.

RANDY

What if I do?

CASSIDY

I can't go there.

RANDY

What about the other day?

CASSIDY

That was a mistake.

RANDY

Why? How?

CASSIDY

The club and the real world, they can't mix.

RANDY

What if we'd met someplace else?

CASSIDY

We didn't.

RANDY

But what if we did?

CASSIDY

We didn't.

RANDY

What if we did?

CASSIDY

We *didn't*.

RANDY

You say I don't know you, but you won't let me get to know you.

CASSIDY

You're a *customer*. You're just a fucking customer. That's it. Okay? Got it?

A long, wounded pause from Randy.

RANDY

Yeah.

(beat)

I got it.

He takes a \$20 out of his pocket, holding it out to her.

CASSIDY

What's that for?

RANDY

A lapdance.

He slides it across the bar to her. She slides it back.

RANDY (CONT'D)

You're refusing a customer?

He slides the \$20 back to her.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Gimme a lapdance.

She slides it back again.

RANDY (CONT'D)

What? Am I a customer or not?

He waves the \$20 tauntingly in her face. She pushes it away.

CASSIDY

Stop it.

RANDY

What's the matter?

(no answer)

Not in the mood?

(no answer)

So fake it. I'm just a stupid customer.

He tauntingly dangles the \$20 in front of her again.

CASSIDY

Stop.

RANDY

It doesn't mean anything.

She looks away, trying to ignore him.

RANDY (CONT'D)

C'mon, give the customer a lapdance. Shake your tits. Smile.

CASSIDY

Fuck off.

RANDY

Pretend you like him.

CASSIDY

Fuck off.

RANDY

I want a lapdance.

She SWATS HIS HAND. The \$20 falls to the floor. He picks it up and SLAMS IT on the bar.

RANDY (CONT'D)

I WANT A LAPDANCE!

People turn and stare. Randy storms out of the club, humiliated.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOP-RITE - DELI COUNTER - DAY

About 10 CUSTOMERS hover in front of the DELI COUNTER clutching Take-A-Number tickets. Randy, manning the counter with a COWORKER, hands a WOMAN a packet of roast beef.

RANDY

Can I help who's next?

An OLD LADY steps forward.

OLD LADY

Pound of German potato salad,
please.

Randy grabs a container and starts scooping potato salad. He puts the container on the scale. It reads 1.06 LB.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

A little less.

Randy scoops out a little and weighs it again. The scale reads .96 LB.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

A little more.

Randy puts a little more in. The scale reads 1.03.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)
A little less.

Randy, trying to contain his aggravation, takes a tiny bit out. The scale reads 1.00. The lady nods in approval.

Randy slaps a price sticker on the container and hands it across the counter.

RANDY
Have a nice day.

She shuffles off with her potato salad.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Can I help who's next?

A BLUE-COLLAR GUY (40s) steps forward.

CUSTOMER
Yeah, could I get a...

The guy does a DOUBLE-TAKE, noticing Randy's face.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)
Do I know you from somewhere?

RANDY
I don't think so.

The guy studies Randy's face, trying hard to place it.

CUSTOMER
You look so damn familiar.
(racking his brain)
You Teamsters?

RANDY
Sorry, man. What can I getcha?

CUSTOMER
Half pound of Virginia ham and a
half pound of the Jarlsberg.

Randy reaches into the case and pulls out a ham. He brings it over to the slicer, his back turned away from the guy.

CUSTOMER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I know we've met someplace.

Slice, slice, slice, slice...

CUSTOMER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You play softball?

RANDY

Nah.

Slice, slice, slice, slice...

CUSTOMER (O.S.)

You're not one of Mikey Bosch's buddies, are you?

Randy, shaking his head no, brings the sliced ham over to the weigh scale. The guy SNAPS HIS FINGERS.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)

Wait a sec.

He looks at Randy, surprised and amazed.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)

Randy The Ram?

Randy stands there frozen.

RANDY

Huh?

CUSTOMER

The old wrestler. From the '80s.

Randy, shrugging blankly, wraps up the ham and slaps a price sticker on.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)

(forms Ram horns)

Ram Jam!

Randy grabs the Jarlsberg from the case and brings it over to the slicer. He starts slicing.

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

Wow, that's freaky. You look just like the dude. Except older.

ANGLE ON the block of cheese as Randy slices. There's only a SMALL CHUNK left. The chunk dwindles, getting smaller and smaller. The cheese separating Randy's fingers from the blade grows thin.

He almost seems tempted.

CUT TO:

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - LATE NIGHT

Randy, unable to sleep, sits shirtless on the couch, staring blankly at the TV.

ON TV:

An NBA HIGHLIGHT CLIP of a FEROCIOUS DUNK. The crowd goes wild. The player roars as he runs back up court, full of macho swagger.

RANDY:

Randy's eyes drift downward toward his chest. He gazes at the still-fresh scar. Touches it tenderly.

He takes a big swig of wine, polishing off a bottle. He pops a cassette into the BOOMBOX on the floor. GUNS 'N' ROSES - USE YOUR ILLUSION II.

Randy cranks up the volume and hits PLAY...

MUSIC: GUNS 'N' ROSES - "GET IN THE RING"

The song begins with the sound of a ROARING STADIUM CROWD. A chant begins:

CROWD (ON THE SONG)
*Guns! And! Roses!... Guns! And!
Roses!...*

Randy starts to prowl the floor like it's a wrestling ring before a match. He waves his arms, exhorting the crowd on the song as if their cheers are for him.

RANDY
(cups hand to ear)
What's that?

Randy works the crowd. He points at a fan in the back row. Flexes theatrically. Bangs his head on pretend chairs.

Randy grabs the top rope and gives it a hard shake. Loosening up with some neck rolls and trunk twists, he heads to the center of the ring.

RANDY (CONT'D)
(announcer-like)
Folks, we are ready to rumble...

The song, which starts with a slow, bluesy guitar intro, kicks in. FAST, RAGING HARD ROCK.

Randy stares down his invisible opponent. The opponent SUCKER PUNCHES him. Randy drops to the ground.

Randy lies on the floor getting kicked and punched. He knocks his opponent down with a LEG SWEEP and pops up.

Randy hits his opponent with a flurry of backhand chops.

RANDY (CONT'D)
I've never *seen* such determination!

Randy immobilizes his opponent in some sort of headlock.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Sleeper claw!

Randy flips his opponent upside down, his head between his knees. He drops him headfirst onto the bed/mat.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Piledriver!
(beat)
Just *listen* to this place!

Randy scoops up his opponent again and SLAMS HIM TO THE MAT with another fancy move.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Powerbomb!

The song reaches its frenzied, chant-like CHORUS:

GUNS 'N' ROSES
Get in the ring! Get in the ring!
Get in the ring! Get in the ring!

Randy joins in, pumping his fist.

RANDY
Get in the ring! Get in the ring!
Get in the ring! Get in the ring!

CUT TO:

INT. NINTH INNING COLLECTIBLES - DAY

A strip-mall sports-card/comic-book shop. Tacked to the wall by the entrance are FLYERS for various events—card shows, autograph signings, etc.

Behind the counter is promoter Scott Brumberg, scarfing down a sloppy Subway sub. The door opens. He looks up, smiling.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

Ram!

Randy heads over and gives him a warm hello handclasp.

RANDY

Yo, Brummy.

Brumberg pulls him in for a hug.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

How's tricks? Good to see ya, man.

RANDY

Yeah, good, good.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

So what brings ya by?

RANDY

Well... I was thinking about maybe doing a reffing gig.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

I thought you're retired.

RANDY

No wrestling, just reffing. Thought it might be fun. Shits 'n' giggles.

Brumberg, nodding, reaches down and grabs out a beat-up SPIRAL NOTEBOOK with old event flyers sticking out.

SCOTT BRUMBERG

See what we got...

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGEPORT NORTH HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - LATER

A high-school cafeteria. Randy is slipping into a REFEREE UNIFORM. Along the wall hangs a vinyl banner reading *CAPW - CONNECTICUT ALL-PRO WRESTLING*.

BOOKER D (O.S.)

Randy The Ref!

Randy looks up and sees BOOKER D (30s), a big, black wrestler in FULL PIMP REGALIA. Though not a pro like Randy, he's upper-tier indie circuit. Randy gives him a grin and handshake.

RANDY

'Sup, bro?

BOOKER D

Me and McPride was going over spots. We got this dope idea how to work you in.

RANDY

I really ain't lookin' to mix it up tonight.

BOOKER D

You're gonna love this. Check it out. So McPride—

RANDY

That's okay. You guys do your thing.

Booker D looks at him, surprised and puzzled.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGEPORT NORTH H.S. - GYMNASIUM - SHORT TIME LATER

Booker D lands on opponent SHAWN MCPRIDE with a BIG SUPLEX. He falls on top of McPride for the pin. Randy The Ref smacks the mat, counting.

RANDY

One!... Two!...

McPride kicks out. Booker D lifts up McPride. He hits him with a CHEST CHOP, sending him stumbling backwards into the ropes. Booker D goes after him.

CAMERA STAYS ON RANDY'S FACE as he watches them wrestle off-screen.

Randy's eyes are glued to the action... Punches. Kicks. Suplexes. Bodyslams. The crowd is going crazy.

He is tempted. Salivating almost.

More punches. More cheers. Bodies crash loudly against the mat. Randy's temptation grows with each shot. He can't resist any longer. He...

JUMPS IN.

Randy pushes Booker D out of the way. He's SMASHED IN THE FACE by a McPride—swung folding chair meant for Booker D.

Randy goes down. A TRACE OF A SMILE is visible on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. BOYS' LOCKER ROOM - SHOWER AREA - POST-MATCH

Randy, Booker D, and McPride are SHOWERING in the open shower area. They're on a post-match high.

BOOKER D
What a screwjob.

SHAWN MCPRIDE
Crowd was *pissed*.

McPride gives Randy a "We're not worthy" bow of respect.

SHAWN MCPRIDE (CONT'D)
The master.

BOOKER D
(wags finger, grins)
Just reffing, my ass. I *knew* you'd
get in there.

Randy gives him a "Hey, what can I say?" shrug.

SHAWN MCPRIDE
Y'all feel like grabbing a drink?

McPride and Booker D both look toward Randy. He's the one they're interested in hanging with.

CUT TO:

INT. HOLIDAY INN BRIDGEPORT - HOTEL BAR - LATER

A hotel bar, lively and hopping with a weekend crowd. Randy sits at the bar, holding court with Booker D and McPride. They're all well on their way to being drunk.

RANDY
By the time Ruckus fixes the tire,
we've had so many Nyquil coladas we
don't even realize we missed the
damn gig!

Booker D and McPride CRACK UP.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Swear to God. Can't make stuff like
that up.

BOOKER D
Yo, tell McPride shit-pit!

SHAWN MCPRIDE
Shit pit?

RANDY
You never heard that one?

McPride looks at him blankly.

RANDY (CONT'D)
Oh, man, fuckin' classic.
(beat)
1990. Nashville Coliseum, Rage In
The Cage II. I'm in the locker room
shaving when behind me the stall
door opens. I turn and there's
Chris Columbo on the can taking a
dump. He goes, "This is for
Petrov", fuckin' *wipes his ass*,
takes the shit-covered toilet paper
and *rubs it in his armpit*. Five
minutes later, he's in the ring
with Petrov in a headlock, poor
Petrov stuck there in CC's pit
lookin' like he's gonna puke!

McPride and Booker D roar with delight.

BOOKER D
Fuckin' classic.

Randy beams proudly.

BOOKER D (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Uh-oh...

Booker D spots something intriguing by the bar entrance.
Randy and McPride follow his gaze there.

RANDY'S POV: TWO WOMEN—late 30s, frosted hair, tight denim
miniskirts—just walked in the bar. He catches the twosome
stealing a glance in their direction.

BOOKER D (CONT'D)
Ring rats, 12 o'clock.

Randy and McPride seem to agree with his assessment.

INT. HOTEL BAR - LATER

MUSIC: BLACK CROWES - "HARD TO HANDLE"

The wrestlers are dancing with the women, MELISSA and ALYSSA, on the bar's dance floor. Melissa is sandwiched between Booker D and McPride, shaking her ass for them like a 19-year-old spring breaker.

Alyssa is paired off with Randy, grinding her ass against him. She turns, facing him. Looks at him with a coy smile.

ALYSSA

I know who you are.

She slowly runs her hands up Randy's sides.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)

My brother used to have your poster on his door.

Randy smiles, pleased.

RANDY

Dude's got taste.

Alyssa notices something intriguing over Randy's shoulder. Randy turns to see what she's looking at.

RANDY'S POV: Standing by the bar is a MAN.

He turns back to Alyssa.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Who's that?

ALYSSA

A.J. My old coke dealer.

Randy nods oh. A slightly weird moment between them.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)

I don't do that anymore.

RANDY

Me neither.

They exchange a look.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

A single-person bathroom. Randy and Alyssa are doing BUMPS OF COKE.

INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy is FUCKING Alyssa from behind over the bathroom sink.
Alyssa MOANS LOUDLY.

ALYSSA
Oh, Gawddd...

There's a KNOCK at the door.

WOMAN (O.S.)
(through door)
Could you please fuck someplace
else? I gotta piss.

CUT TO:

BLACK SCREEN.

RANDY'S POV: His eyes slowly open. Staring down at him from a white stucco ceiling is a poster of a HUNKY, SHIRTLESS FIREMAN with a pair of suspenders stretched across his oiled-up six pack. Across the bottom it says *FIVE-ALARM FIRE*.

Randy looks around, disoriented. He is NAKED in a strange bed in a strange bedroom. His clothes lie on the floor next to a LARGE GLASS BONG.

INT. KITCHEN - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy, wearing only a pair of bikini briefs, staggers into the KITCHEN. A ROOMMATE (23) in a Tweety Bird nightshirt is pouring herself a bowl of Honey Nut Cheerios. She looks at Randy with a casual "wassup" head-nod.

ROOMMATE
Alyssa's in the shower.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy emerges from Alyssa's building in the previous night's clothes, squinting at the blinding sunlight.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy enters his trailer, chuckling amusedly. He tosses his keys on the table.

He heads over to the fridge and grabs a beer. As he closes the fridge, his expression changes. A look of DEEP DISMAY comes over his face.

RANDY'S POV: The old photo of him and Stephanie on the fridge door.

CUT TO:

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy rings the bell. Stephanie's "friend" answers the door.

RANDY

Hey.

She stares at him coldly and unnervingly.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Is Stephanie home?

She goes into the house, closing the door behind her. Randy stands there awkwardly, unsure what that meant.

He thinks about knocking but doesn't. He carefully turns the knob, leaning into the house. From somewhere inside, he hears the MUFFLED SOUND of Stephanie and The Friend talking.

INT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Stephanie and The Friend are arguing in the living room.

THE FRIEND

You don't have to go out there. You don't owe him shit.

STEPHANIE

I know that.

THE FRIEND

Then why would you even—
(looks up toward front door)
Who said you could come in?

THE FRIEND'S/STEPHANIE'S POV: Standing there is Randy, gazing guiltily at Stephanie.

STEPHANIE

Please leave my house.

RANDY

I'm so, so sorry. I completely, totally—

THE FRIEND
Get the fuck out of here!

STEPHANIE
(to The Friend)
I can handle this.

THE FRIEND
Obviously not.

STEPHANIE
(teeth gritted)
I can handle this, Jen.

The Friend, disgusted, grabs her coat and STORMS OFF out the front door.

Randy and Stephanie are alone. She glares at him for what feels like a long time.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
You're such a fucking asshole.

RANDY
I feel horrible.

STEPHANIE
I waited in that restaurant two hours. Two fucking hours. Just in case you showed up late. "*Maybe he got stuck in traffic. Maybe I got the time wrong*"...
(beat)
Nope.

RANDY
I know I fucked up. I fucked up bad.

STEPHANIE
You didn't fuck up. You are a fuck-up. A walking, living, breathing fuck-up.

RANDY
I'm trying to change. Really. I can't stand when I—

STEPHANIE
Just please shut the fuck up. Because I can't even stand the sound of your voice.
(seething)
(MORE)

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

I thought about having a drink for the first time in 11 months last night. *That's* what you do to me.

(beat)

You asshole!

She grabs a SMALL POTTED PLANT off the table and THROWS IT AT HIM. It NARROWLY MISSES HIS HEAD, exploding against the wall.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

Fucking piece-of-shit asshole!

She grabs a CAN OF SODA off the same table and THROWS IT. It NAILS HIM IN THE THIGH, exploding open on the floor. Soda sprays everywhere.

RANDY

Jesus! Stop!

She looks around, half-crazed, searching for something else to throw. He rushes toward her, wrapping her up in his arms.

STEPHANIE

Get off me!

RANDY

Calm down!

He SQUEEZES TIGHTER. She THRASHES AROUND, fighting it.

STEPHANIE

GET THE FUCK OFF ME!

RANDY

Calm down!

STEPHANIE

(thrashing violently)

I HATE YOU!

RANDY

You don't mean that!

STEPHANIE

FUCKING HATE YOU!

RANDY

YOU DON'T MEAN IT!

Suddenly, she STOPS RESISTING. A STRANGE AND UNEXPECTED CALM washes over her.

STEPHANIE

I don't mean it?

She is silent and still.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
You're right. I don't.

She shakes her head, placidly gazing off.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
I don't know why I got so
hysterical. There's no reason. I
don't hate you. I don't love you. I
don't like you. I was stupid to
think you could change.

RANDY
I can change.

STEPHANIE
I don't care.

RANDY
I know I can.

STEPHANIE
Doesn't matter. I don't care. I'm
done.
(beat)
No more fixing it. It's broke.
Permanently. I'm cool with it. It's
better that way.

She turns and looks him in the eye.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
I don't want to ever see you again.
I don't wanna see you, I don't want
to hear you...
(beat)
Done. You understand?

Randy doesn't.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Actually, I don't care if you
understand.

She walks toward the front door. Opens it wide.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)
Goodbye.

EXT. STEPHANIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Randy steps out the front door. Stephanie's cellphone rings. She looks at the caller ID and picks up.

STEPHANIE

You can come home.

(beat)

He's gone.

She closes the door on him, disappearing inside the house.

Randy stands there alone on his daughter's front step. Unsure what to do. He starts to CRY.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOP-RITE - DELI COUNTER - DAY

ANGLE ON Take-A-Number sign. It reads *NOW SERVING: 54*

A crowd of AGGRAVATED CUSTOMERS stand waiting at the counter. A FAT GUY in a motorized cart clutching a 71 throws a fellow customer a "Do you believe these morons?" eye roll.

Behind the counter are Randy and a COWORKER. Randy is putting a block of Havarti onto the slicer. He moves lackadaisically, distractedly.

Wayne, noticing as he roams past, heads over.

WAYNE

Let's pick it up. Rush hour.

Wayne gives him TWO QUICK CLAPS and walks off. Randy adjusts the machine's setting and begins to slice. He isn't moving much faster.

CUSTOMER #1 (O.S.)
While we're young...

CUSTOMER #2 (O.S.)
Any year now...

Randy keeps right on slicing at his unhurried pace. He gets in a nice, meditative groove.

Slice, slice, slice, slice, slice...

He watches as his thumb inches closer to the spinning blade. He stares at his thumb. At the blade. His thumb.

He JAMS HIS THUMB INTO THE BLADE.

Blood squirts everywhere. On his coat. On the deli meat.

Randy stares at the DEEP GASH, watching as blood pulses out in crimson surges. He smiles strangely at it.

A customer GASPS. A commotion quickly spreads.

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

Randy!

Randy turns and sees a shocked Wayne rushing toward him. Wayne takes Randy's arm and tries to lead him into the back, out of view.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

(conscious of customers
watching)

Let's get that patched up.

Randy roughly SHOVES him away. Wayne stumbles backwards.

Randy, turning toward the onlookers, raises his thumb to his face. He dramatically smears the BLOOD ACROSS HIS MOUTH.

Customers GASP. A woman SHRIEKS.

Randy drags the gash across his cheek. He SMEARS A LINE OF IT under each eye like WARPAINT.

RANDY

(striking wrestling pose)
Let's get it onnn!

WAYNE

Somebody call the cops!

Randy ROARS at Wayne. Wayne JUMPS BACK, frightened. Randy rumbles out of the deli area LAUGHING.

SUPERMARKET AISLE:

Randy dashes down an aisle. He dodges a WOMAN PUSHING A SHOPPING CART, purposely "over-dodging" her so he CRASHES INTO THE SHELVES and sends stuff flying. He dodges ANOTHER SHOPPER, dramatically crashing into the shelves again.

FRONT REGISTER AREA:

Randy charges past the CASHIERS, out of the supermarket.

INT. VAN - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy sits in the van in the Shop-Rite parking lot. He gazes at himself in the rear-view mirror, dried blood caked on his face.

He likes it.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARADISE OAKS - PAY PHONE - LATER

Randy is on the pay phone.

RANDY

Nick. Randy The Ram...

(beat)

I wanna do it.

(beat)

Fanfest.

(beat)

I know, but I want back in.

(beat)

So call Bob, get the match back on.

(beat)

Pay me? Don't worry. Just cover my expenses. And pay Bob. Make sure he's there.

(beat)

I don't give a shit. I just wanna wrestle.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - DAY

Randy is digging through a pile of clothes in a closet. He pulls out his WRESTLING TIGHTS.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - BATHROOM - LATER

Randy, wearing rubber gloves and a towel around his neck, combs PEROXIDE through his hair.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - BATHROOM - LATER

Randy is SHAVING HIS CHEST. The hair has grown in since he last wrestled.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - LATER

Randy stands in the middle of the trailer in just a pair of bikini briefs. In his hands is a product called TAN IN A CAN. He gives the can a good shake and starts spraying his body.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy puts a snacks-and-soda-filled plastic bag in the front of the van. He is surprised to see Cassidy pull up in her car. She gets out.

CASSIDY

Hi.

RANDY

How'd you find me?

CASSIDY

Big Chris. Cheetah's bouncer.

Randy nods oh.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

Look, I'm sorry if I came off like a bitch. I didn't mean that stuff I said. You're not just a customer.

Randy nods. He heads toward his trailer. Cassidy follows.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

I'm sure it seems retarded, but I gotta keep that line. It's how I've been able to live with myself the last 12 years.

INT. RANDY'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Randy enters the trailer, Cassidy close behind.

CASSIDY

There's a place I'm trying to get to in my life. For me and my son.

Randy heads to his wheelie bag, open on the bed.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

I'm leaving that world behind. And I can't bring anybody with me who—

RANDY
(doesn't really care)
Good for you. Quitting's hard.

He zips up his bag. Walks outside toward his van. She follows.

CASSIDY
Where are you going?

EXT. RANDY'S TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

He gets in the van.

RANDY
Got a match.

He grabs the Fanfest flyer off the passenger seat and hands it to her.

RANDY (CONT'D)
See ya later.

He DRIVES OFF. She watches him go, the van kicking up dust in its wake.

She looks at flier. A look of concern comes over her face.

INT. VAN - EVENING

MUSIC: SKID ROW - "I REMEMBER YOU"

Randy is driving south on the New Jersey Turnpike.

INT. CASSIDY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Cassidy grabs her purse and car keys off the kitchen table.

CASSIDY
In bed by 11. Don't let him
bargain.

The BABYSITTER (15) nods at the instructions. Cassidy heads toward the...

LIVING ROOM:

CASSIDY
Bye, monkey...

She is struck by what she sees.

CASSIDY'S POV: DANIEL (9) is on the floor, playing with the Randy The Ram doll.

She watches as he makes the Randy doll climb up the couch's armrest. The doll takes a FLYING LEAP off the couch, onto a STAR WARS FIGURE laid out on the floor below. Daniel makes an EXPLOSION SOUND as Randy slams down on his foe.

Cassidy looks at the doll, worried.

INT. CHEETAH'S - LATER

MUSIC: WARRANT - "CHERRY PIE"

Cassidy is dancing onstage. She has a distracted, faraway look in her eye.

She abruptly WALKS OFF mid-song.

She heads toward the dressing room, disappearing through the curtain.

CLUB D.J. (O.S.)
Cassidy—where ya goin', baby?

INT. DRESSING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Cassidy unlocks her locker. She throws everything in it into a duffel bag. She grabs the MASTER LOCK off the locker door and throws it into the bag, too.

INT. CHEETAH'S - MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cassidy, wearing her coat, steps through the curtain with the bag.

CLUB D.J. (O.S.)
Pam.

She cuts across the empty stage, toward the exit.

EXT. CHEETAH'S - CONTINUOUS

Cassidy steps out of the club.

CASSIDY
(to self)
Pam.

EXT. I-95 - LATER

Randy stands at a ROADSIDE PAY PHONE, ringing phone cradled to his ear.

STEPHANIE'S VOICE

This is Stephanie, you know what to do.

(answering machine BEEP)

RANDY

It's me. I promise I won't call you ever again.

(beat)

I'm going back to the ring. You were right about me. Everything you said. Anyway... I just wanted you to know...

(beat)

Your daddy loves you.

(beat)

That's all.

He hangs up.

INT. CASSIDY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Cassidy is driving south on the New Jersey Turnpike. She's on her cellphone. On the passenger seat is the Fanfest flyer.

CASSIDY

There's waffles in the freezer and some burritos if he wants for lunch. He knows where.

(beat)

I'm not sure what time I'll be headed back yet. I'll keep you posted as I go.

EXT. I-95 - SIDE OF THE ROAD - MIDNIGHT

Randy's van is pulled over on the side of the interstate.

INT. BACK OF VAN - CONTINUOUS

Randy is catching a nap as 18-wheelers barrel past.

INT. VAN - NEXT MORNING

Randy pulls into the empty-ish parking lot of the GREENVILLE CIVIC AUDITORIUM.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SHORT TIME LATER

Randy enters the locker room with his wheelie bag.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Yeah, nah, business is rockin'.
Just opened a third dealership.

Randy looks down a row of lockers.

RANDY'S POV: A huge, dark-skinned man in khakis and a BOB ZAYID PONTIAC polo is talking to SOME OTHER WRESTLER. This is THE AYATOLLAH (52).

THE AYATOLLAH
That makes two in Columbus, one in
Dayton. Next 12 months, I'd say
Cincy's not out of the question.

OTHER WRESTLER
(not too interested)
Wow...

The Ayatollah looks up and sees Randy looking at him.

THE AYATOLLAH
Ram-A-Lam.

Randy heads over.

RANDY
(shakes Ayatollah's hand)
What's up, Bob?
(shakes other guy's hand)
Yo, Carl.

THE AYATOLLAH
Good to see ya, bro. Didn't think
we were gonna do this.

RANDY
Yeah, well, I'm here.

THE AYATOLLAH
Thursday night, I get a call, "It's
on! He's back in!" I'm like "What?"

The Ayatollah chortles.

RANDY

When you get settled in, we should go over things.

THE AYATOLLAH

What things?

RANDY

Y'know, the spots.

THE AYATOLLAH

Ah, we can just wing it.

RANDY

You don't wanna hash it out?

The Ayatollah gives him a dismissive, cavalier wave.

THE AYATOLLAH

It'll be fine.

RANDY

We should have at least a basic plan.

THE AYATOLLAH

How's this: I'm the heel, you're the face. Done.

The Ayatollah chuckles. Randy walks off, highly annoyed.

THE AYATOLLAH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(to other wrestler)

Anyway, if you're ever in Ohio, swing on by. I'll make you a nice deal on a G6.

INT. GAS STATION - SHORT TIME LATER

Cassidy pulls into a gas station. She rolls down the window.

CASSIDY

Excuse me.

A GAS STATION ATTENDANT looks her way.

CASSIDY (CONT'D)

Do you know where the Civic Auditorium is?

INT. GREENVILLE CIVIC AUDITORIUM - LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The card is underway. Through a wall, we hear the muffled sounds of a MATCH IN PROGRESS: cheers, boos, crashes, etc.

Randy, sitting alone on a bench in just his jock strap, tapes up his legs. His focus and intensity builds.

EXT. GREENVILLE CIVIC AUDITORIUM - PARKING LOT - SHORT TIME LATER

Cassidy pulls into the lot. There's a lot more cars than when Randy pulled in.

INT. GREENVILLE CIVIC AUDITORIUM - OUTER CONCOURSE - SHORT TIME LATER

The building's outer concourse. A handful of fans mill about at a CONCESSIONS STAND and a SOUVENIR TABLE.

Cassidy, handing a ticket to an USHER, enters the building. She looks around the concourse, not quite sure where to go.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Randy, suited up in his tights, paces the floor, gearing himself up for the match. The only other wrestler in the locker room at the moment is The Ayatollah, doing neck rolls nearby. Randy catches his eyes.

RANDY

Ready to do this?

Through the wall, ARABIC MUSIC starts to play.

THE AYATOLLAH

Believe so.

The Ayatollah grabs a large IRANIAN FLAG leaning against the lockers. He heads toward an ENTRANCE CURTAIN, Randy close behind.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

(through curtain)

From the Islamic Republic of Iran,
weighing in at 252 pounds... The
Tehran Terror, the Beast Of The
Middle East...

(beat)

The Ayaaa-tooo-laaaaah!

The Ayatollah steps through the curtain, Iranian flag raised high. He is promptly greeted with LUSTY BOOS.

INT. OUTER CONCOURSE - CONTINUOUS

Cassidy is walking around the concourse with a mounting sense of urgency. She spots a SECURITY GUY in a yellow windbreaker sitting by an UNMARKED DOOR. She heads toward him.

CASSIDY

Excuse me.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Randy is peering through the narrow gap in the curtain, watching The Ayatollah make his entrance.

THE AYATOLLAH (O.S.)

(faint, amidst the boos)

Death to America!

CASSIDY (O.S.)

Randy.

Randy, turning, is surprised to see Cassidy standing there. She looks tired and worried and scared.

RANDY

What are you doing here?

CASSIDY

Don't do this. This is dumb.

RANDY

This ain't the best time to talk.

RANDY (CONT'D)

What about your heart?

RANDY (CONT'D)

I'll be fine.

CASSIDY

I thought the doctor...

RANDY

They always say that. Whatever you got.

CASSIDY

You could really hurt yourself.

RANDY

I know what I'm doing in there.
 (turns vaguely sad)
 Out here's where I get hurt.

CASSIDY

Out here's what *counts*. The real world.

RANDY

Fuck the real world. Nobody gives a shit about me in the real world.

CASSIDY

I quit my job, drove 14 hours through the night to get here. What do you call that?

Randy looks away, unable to hold her gaze. Through the curtain, we hear the Arabic music DIE DOWN.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

(from auditorium)

And his opponent...

A new, familiar song rises on the auditorium speakers.

MUSIC: AC/DC - "IF YOU WANT BLOOD (YOU GOT IT)"

The crowd roars.

RANDY

(points to curtain)

Listen to them! *This* is where I'm great. *This* is where I belong.

Randy looks at the curtain. He looks at Cassidy.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

From Elizabeth, New Jersey, weighing in at 219 pounds...

RANDY

I gotta go.

CASSIDY

Randy. Please.

RANDY

I'll see you after the show.

CASSIDY

(grabs him)

No.

He pulls her off.

RANDY
Enjoy the show.

He turns away from her, toward the curtain.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
*A true wrestling immortal, one of
the greatest of all time...*
(beat)
Randy "The Ram" Robinnnnsonnnnn!

He steps through.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Randy bursts through the curtain to HUGE CHEERS. There's probably 700 people there in the 2,200-seat facility.

INT. COMMENTATORS' TABLE - CONTINUOUS

Seated at a ringside table are the match's COMMENTATORS, a pair of wannabe Marv Alberts in their 20s. A sign taped to the table reads *CAROLINA WRESTLING NETWORK*. Next to the table is a VIDEOCAMERA on a tripod.

COMMENTATOR #1
There he is, folks! Randy The Ram!

Randy raises a set of ram's horns high in the air. Fans do the same in tribute.

COMMENTATOR #2
History about to be made here at
the Greenville Civic Auditorium.

Randy takes a long lap around the ring, ramming chair after chair. His head gets a little bloody. The fans eat it up.

Randy climbs into the ring, where The Ayatollah awaits.

The cheers continue. Loving, appreciative, sustained cheers. Randy stands there soaking it in, basking in their love.

He grabs the microphone from the ring announcer. He looks around. A hush comes over the crowd.

RANDY
I just got one thing to say to you
people...

Randy looks toward Cassidy, standing over by the entrance curtain. He looks out at the larger crowd.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Thank you.

LOUD CHEERS. Randy takes a contemplative pause.

RANDY (CONT'D)

You take your lumps and bruises in this game. But you know what? It's all worth it. Because of you guys. Your cheers keep me young. They make me feel alive.

(beat)

In 1982, the year I wrestled my first professional match, I was six-foot-one. By 1993, I was five-foot-eleven. Three back surgeries in 11 years knocked two full inches off my height. I may be down to five-eleven, but performing in front of you people has always made me feel 10 feet tall. And that's the way it's always gonna be.

Randy looks toward Cassidy, who's standing over by the entrance curtain. Their eyes meet.

RANDY (CONT'D)

Forever.

Randy lowers the mike, finished. The fans CHEER WILDLY, the loudest cheers yet.

As Randy nods appreciatively at the crowd, The Ayatollah SNEAKS UP BEHIND HIM with a folding chair.

Fans shout, trying to warn Randy about the sneak attack, but he doesn't hear them.

The Ayatollah SMASHES HIM OVER THE HEAD. Randy goes down. The match is on.

The Ayatollah picks up Randy and throws him into the ropes. Randy bounces back toward The Ayatollah, who lazily puts up an elbow for Randy to run into. Randy practically has to lead his face to the elbow. Hitting the mat, Randy pops back up and grabs The Ayatollah.

The Ayatollah, phoning it in, throws Randy into the ropes again. This time, The Ayatollah has a raised knee waiting for Randy. Randy runs into it, doing his best to sell the shot.

RANDY (CONT'D)
(under breath)
You're workin' pretty light here.

Randy gets up and grabs The Ayatollah's arms. With a nifty move, he flips The Ayatollah over his shoulder, SLAMMING HIM HARD into the mat. Randy falls on top of him, pressing The Ayatollah's face into the canvas.

THE AYATOLLAH
Jesus. Relax.

Randy flips The Ayatollah over onto his back, pinning his shoulder blades. The REF swoops in.

REFEREE
One!... Two!...

The Ayatollah KICKS OUT. They both get up. The Ayatollah jogs toward the ropes. He bounces off. Randy braces for something good, but all he gets is a feeble CHEST SLAP. Randy grabs The Ayatollah and puts him in a headlock.

RANDY
Anytime you wanna join in.

Randy scoops up The Ayatollah and drops him over his knee with a BACKBREAKER. The Ayatollah grimaces in pain as he hits the mat. Before he has a chance to get up, Randy hits him with a FLYING ELBOW DROP.

The Ayatollah gets up, pissed at the rough treatment.

Randy goes for a dropkick, but The Ayatollah catches his ankles in midair. He JERKS UPWARD on Randy's legs, sending Randy CRASHING TO THE MAT on the back of his head. The Ayatollah falls on Randy's throat with his knee. He grinds Randy's face into the canvas as Randy did to him.

ENTRANCE CURTAIN:

Cassidy is cringing. It's hard for her to watch this.

THE RING:

THE AYATOLLAH
That better?

RANDY
Much.

The Ayatollah picks up Randy and throws him into the ropes. Randy bounces back, flinging himself sideways at The Ayatollah. The Ayatollah catches him in mid-air, cradling him in his arms. The Ayatollah drops Randy onto his bent knee. Randy falls to the canvas, clutching his side. The Ayatollah falls on top of him.

THE AYATOLLAH

Forgot how much fun this is.

The ref swoops in.

REFEREE

One!... Two!...

Randy KICKS OUT. As Randy "recovers", The Ayatollah jumps out of the ring and grabs a folding chair.

The Ayatollah, climbing back in, props up the chair in a corner. He picks Randy off the mat and flings him at the chair. Randy VAULTS OVER IT, sailing through the ropes and OUT OF THE RING. He hits the concrete floor, CRASHING against the metal barricade.

ENTRANCE CURTAIN:

Cassidy winces. She starts to tear up a little.

THE RING:

The Ayatollah hops out of the ring. He stands over Randy, kicking him repeatedly. He grabs his Iranian flag, waving it tauntingly at the crowd.

FAN #1 (O.S.)

Camelfucker!

FAN #2 (O.S.)

Fat piece of shit!

The Ayatollah looks down at Randy.

THE AYATOLLAH

Pathetic.

("spits" on Randy)

Pitiful godless infidel!

THE CROWD:

Boos rain down on The Ayatollah.

JUST OUTSIDE RING:

The Ayatollah takes the butt end of his flag pole and JABS IT into Randy's side. Randy grimaces in pain.

The Ayatollah unties the flag from its pole and WRAPS IT around Randy's neck. He JERKS UPWARD on the flag, lifting Randy off the mat by his neck. Randy THRASHES AROUND, fighting for breath.

The Ayatollah releases Randy from the choke. Randy crumples to the ground, gasping for air. The Ayatollah picks up Randy by his hair and flings him back in the ring.

THE RING:

The Ayatollah grabs the folding chair from the corner. He SMASHES RANDY OVER THE HEAD with it. Randy's forehead is BLEEDING. The Ayatollah hits him again, taking dead aim at the forehead cut. MORE BLOOD. Randy crumples to the mat.

ENTRANCE CURTAIN:

Cassidy, alarmed, instinctively goes halfway toward the ring.

CASSIDY

Randy!

THE RING:

The Ayatollah scoops up Randy and BODYSLAMS him. He falls on Randy knee-first and starts punching him repeatedly.

THE AYATOLLAH

(under breath)

Wanna take it home?

Randy's eyes drift in Cassidy's direction.

RANDY'S POV: Cassidy is CRYING.

CASSIDY

Stop it! Stop it, Randy!

Randy turns back to The Ayatollah.

RANDY

It's time.

THE AYATOLLAH

All you, bro. Lead the way.

Randy flips The Ayatollah over. Randy struggles to his feet. He picks up The Ayatollah and levels him with a dropkick.

COMMENTATOR #1 (O.S.)

Dropkick!
 (a second one)
 And another!
 (a third one)
 And another!

His heart is POUNDING. The fans sense it's near the end. A chant rises:

CROWD (O.S.)

Ram Jam! Ram Jam! Ram Jam!...

Randy falls on top of The Ayatollah, putting him in a rest-move headlock.

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

Ram Jam! Ram Jam! Ram Jam!...

COMMENTATOR #2 (O.S.)

Just listen to this crowd!

The Ayatollah can hear how labored Randy's breathing is.

THE AYATOLLAH

If you ain't up to it...

CROWD (O.S.)

Ram Jam! Ram Jam! Ram Jam!...

Randy looks around at the crowd, chanting, hungry for the Ram Jam. He looks The Ayatollah in the eye.

RANDY

Let's do this.

Randy gets up. He lifts The Ayatollah off the mat, locking up with him chest-to-chest. He arches his back and thrusts his hips. The Ayatollah's feet fly off the canvas as his legs whip into the air. His body does a COMPLETE FLIP as he slams onto his back. Randy stays with him, his body contorting in a tight BACK FLIP as he CRASHES DOWN on top of him.

COMMENTATOR #1 (O.S.)

Lateral drop!

Randy gets up. His HEART LURCHES.

He lowers himself back down to his knees. Puts his hand to his chest. Something just happened.

Randy looks out at the crowd. The whole place is on its feet.

CROWD (O.S.)
Ram Jam! Ram Jam! Ram Jam!...

Randy's heart LURCHES AGAIN.

THE AYATOLLAH
 Y'okay?

The Ayatollah sees he's clearly not.

THE AYATOLLAH (CONT'D)
 Just pin me.

Randy looks out at the crowd again. The fans are in a frenzy.

CROWD (O.S.)
RAM JAM! RAM JAM! RAM JAM!...

THE AYATOLLAH (O.S.)
 Finish it. Pin me.

Randy is torn. He...

GETS UP.

Randy STAGGERS to the corner. His heartbeat is UNNATURAL AND DEAFENING.

BA-BLOOM, BA-BLOOM, BA-BLOOM...

ON CASSIDY:

Cassidy can't take any more. She turns and WALKS.

ON RANDY:

Randy plants a foot on the bottom rope. He looks toward Cassidy.

RANDY'S POV: He catches a glimpse of Cassidy disappearing through the curtain into the locker room.

Randy looks out on the crowd. Chanting, cheering. He starts to climb. Standing on the top rope, he looks again at the curtain. She's gone.

HALLWAY:

Cassidy exits the arena sobbing.

THE RING:

The Ayatollah lies on the ground in pain.

ON RANDY:

Randy raises his arms and sticks his elbows out, pressing his fists to the sides of his head to form a set of RAM'S HORNS.

COMMENTATOR #2 (O.S.)
Uh-oh, the horns are out...

Randy takes a long look around the auditorium, lingering on the fans' faces, savoring their cheers.

He SMILES.

COMMENTATOR #1 (O.S.)
Here we go...

BA-BLOOM, BA-BLOOM, BA-BLOOM...

He LEAPS.

FREEZE on Randy in mid-air, glorious and immortal.

END.