

LOREM IPSUM

Written by

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BLUE REVISIONS - 05/20/19
PINK REVISIONS - 05/30/19

OVER BLACK

The voices of two men.

OPENING CREDITS roll.

*

ARLO
(V.O.)
Come on, sit down man. Sit down.
Just listen.

A groan from across the room. The sound of feet shuffling.

ARLO (CONT'D)
(V.O.)
Look, look, sit. Come on. You'll
love this.

LOREM IPSUM
(V.O.)
I...

ARLO
(V.O.)
Look, I know it's been rough these
past few weeks but -- If you watch
this, I'll cover the costs of the
funeral.

*

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM
(V.O.)
You can do that?

ARLO
(V.O.)
Yeah, don't worry about it. I'll
call in some debts and cover the
cost. Just sit. Come on.

The sound of someone sitting down on a coach.

ARLO (CONT'D)
(V.O.)
Great. Ok. Listen.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

The OPENING CREDITS CONTINUE.

*

ARLO -- late 20s, long shaggy hair and wearing a BLUE SILK DRAGON ROBE -- stands in front of a large MULTI-COLORED POSTER of MAO ZEDONG. It fills up the frame. On either side of the poster are potted BAMBOO TREES.

THAT'S THE STORY OF MY LIFE by **THE VELVET UNDERGROUND** plays in the background.

Arlo looks directly into the camera and sings along with the song, moving with the music. He's high.

ARLO
 (singing along)
*"That's the story of my life
 That's the difference
 Between wrong and right
 But Billy said,
 Both those words are dead
 That's the story of my life."*

The song ends and Arlo turns off the record player. He takes the record and puts it back in its sleeve.

Arlo gathers himself, then looks beyond the camera, hopefully.

ARLO (CONT'D)
 So what'd you think?

Sitting on a WHITE SATIN COUCH, flanked by more potted BAMBOO TREES, sits LOREM IPSUM -- early 30s, short, well-kept hair, dead eyes. On the table in front of him are STACKS OF CASH. Lorem holds one in his hands.

He looks at Arlo, unsure of what to say, a mix of confusion and apprehension on his face.

Arlo smiles at him, expectantly, and Lorem searches for the words to say.

LOREM IPSUM
 Um, well, Arlo...

CUT TO BLACK

*

WHITE TEXT OVER A BLACK SCREEN:

*Lorem Ipsum
 Roughly defined as "pain itself"*

*

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. TAXI - DAY

Lorem sits in the back of a taxi, his legs pressed up against the partition, looking out the window at the street moving past him.

NIKO, the driver, an EASTERN EUROPEAN man in his mid 50s, inspects Lorem through the REARVIEW MIRROR. He coughs, trying to get Lorem's attention.

Lorem looks out the window, ignoring the noise. He shifts slightly in his seat, trying to convey his discomfort.

Niko doesn't notice. He coughs again, this time louder, more deliberately.

Lorem shifts, accidentally making eye contact with Niko through the mirror. He quickly looks back to the window.

Niko starts to get mad. He speaks in a THICK RUSSIAN ACCENT.

NIKO
Are you a mute? Huh?

Lorem doesn't respond.

NIKO (CONT'D)
What're you, deaf? Hello?

Lorem looks out the window with as much force as he can, trying to signal to Niko that he doesn't want to talk.

Niko checks a SMALL GPS on his dashboard.

NIKO (CONT'D)
So you live on 31st between
Broadway and 5th? Weird place to
live, huh? You a weird guy? You a
weirdo?

Niko chuckles to himself as Lorem shifts uncomfortably.

NIKO (CONT'D)
I'm just messin' with you, kid. The
names Niko.

He smiles through the mirror at Lorem, expecting a response.

Lorem continues staring out the window, watching people on the street talking, socializing.

NIKO (CONT'D)
So whatta you do? Hollywood? Wall
Street? Drug dealer? What?

A beat. Lorem leans against the window. Niko notices this and feels bad.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Just kidding about the drug dealer
part.

The car BRAKES suddenly and Niko turns in his seat.

NIKO (CONT'D)
This is you.

Lorem looks at Niko nervously. He has to respond now.

LOREM IPSUM
(quietly)
How much?

NIKO
What was that?

LOREM IPSUM
(louder)
H-how much?

NIKO
That'll be 13.75, tip not included.

Lorem takes out his WALLET and hands Niko 15 DOLLARS. He begins to put the wallet BACK in his pocket but, before he can, the car LURCHES forwards.

His wallet FALLS TO THE FLOOR. He doesn't notice.

Niko leans his head out the window and SHOUTS:

NIKO (CONT'D)
(at a car behind him)
What the hell do you think you're
doing!?

Lorem quickly gets out of the cab, his wallet still on the floor of the cab.

NIKO (CONT'D)
(to Lorem)
Have a good day pal.

Niko leans back into the car but, before he can drive away, the door opens and Lorem grabs his wallet. Niko watches.

NIKO (CONT'D)
What did you forget?

LOREM IPSUM

The, um, t-the... my wallet.

NIKO

Good catch. You a smart guy. Real smart guy. You know, I have a prop-

Lorem slams the cab door, interrupting his sentence.

NIKO (CONT'D)

(to Lorem, waving)

Ok! Have a nice day then!

Lorem walks away quickly and WAVES over his shoulder. Niko smiles.

EXT. 31ST BETWEEN BROADWAY AND 5TH - SAME

Lorem stands in front of a RUN DOWN FOUR STORY WALKUP stuck between two OFFICE TOWERS.

He walks up to the front door, takes his keys out of his wallet, and walks inside.

INT. BUILDING LOBBY - SAME

Lorem begins his long climb up the four stories to his apartment at the top. After going up only a few steps, a door flies open and the SUPER, an old man in his 60s, steps out.

SUPER

Uh, Lorem?

Lorem stops and slowly turns to face him, making it clear that he doesn't want to.

SUPER (CONT'D)

Hi Lorem, how are you?

LOREM IPSUM

I'm ok.

SUPER

Well isn't that great!

LOREM IPSUM

Mhm.

Lorem and the Super stand there for a moment.

SUPER

You're not going to ask how I am?

Lorem stands there silently, unsure of what to say.

SUPER (CONT'D)
You're a real asshole, huh?

LOREM IPSUM
(quietly)
How are you?

The Super doesn't respond.

SUPER
Now Lorem, I was wondering if you could go to the CVS and pick up my heart medication. You wouldn't mind, would you? You know, my doctor said I could die today if I didn't get it.

The Super laughs.

LOREM IPSUM
(quietly)
Why don't you get it?

SUPER
What?

Lorem doesn't respond. He just stands quietly. After a moment:

SUPER (CONT'D)
Great. Thank you so much Lorem.

The Super walks over to the stairs and hands him the PRESCRIPTION. Lorem takes it.

The Super stands in front of him for a moment, smiling. Lorem doesn't move.

SUPER (CONT'D)
What're you standing around for?

LOREM IPSUM
(quietly, looking down at his feet)
I can't get these.

SUPER
Why not?

LOREM IPSUM
Can't only the person who the medicine is for get the medicine?
(MORE)

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
(A beat) I don't want to get in
trouble.

The Super laughs.

SUPER
Go get the medicine Lorem.

Lorem stuffs it in his pocket and walks back out through the
front door, his eyes still trained on his feet.

The Super watches him go, smiling.

INT. CVS - LATER

Lorem stands behind a counter at the back of the CVS, the
pharmacy counter.

He's waiting for an employee to show up. He's been standing
there for a while.

He has the prescription in his hands and he's running his
fingers across it, breathing hard but trying to calm himself
down.

The BRIGHT FLUORESCENT LIGHTS shine down on him, making him
sweat ever so slightly.

He rubs the back of his neck and dabs his forehead with his
sleeve, wiping the sweat off.

An OLD LADY walks behind him, standing in line. She's leaning
on a cane and looks like she's about to topple over.

The PHARMACY WORKER appears behind the counter and gestures
for Lorem.

PHARMACY WORKER
Next customer please step up.

Lorem looks from the Worker to the Old Lady, who smiles at
him.

OLD LADY
Good morning.

He smiles back and thinks, not moving.

PHARMACY WORKER
Next customer please step up. Sir,
that's you.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh, uh.

Lorem steps to the side, gesturing for the Old Lady to go first.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

Um, you can, uh, you can go first.
Please.

OLD LADY

Oh thank you. Very generous.

The Old Lady hobbles up to the counter and Lorem gets back in line.

His palms get all sweaty as he rubs them against the prescription, getting the paper all wet.

Another CUSTOMER gets in line behind him and he turns to face them. He smiles and steps out of the way.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh, uh, I'm in no rush. You can,
um, go first.

CUSTOMER

Oh that's very kind but it's fine.

LOREM IPSUM

No, um, uh, p-please. Go ahead.

The Customer eyes him suspiciously and steps in front of him.

CUSTOMER

Thank you.

Lorem stands as a bead of sweat from his forehead FALLS onto the prescription. The ink BEGINS TO RUN.

Lorem begins panicking as more sweat falls, ruining the paper. It's practically unreadable now.

He looks left, right, unsure what to do.

He wipes his forehead again and decides what to do.

He turns from the line and runs out of the store.

INT. BUILDING LOBBY - LATER

Lorem walks through the door, his sleeve wet with sweat and the prescription stuffed into his hand.

He moves quietly past the Super's door and sprints up the stairs before he can be stopped.

INT. APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Lorem's APARTMENT -- a small, cramped space -- sits quietly. A few slivers of light sift through a DIRTY WINDOW. A HEAVY WOODEN DOOR creaks open and Lorem walks in.

He puts his WALLET on a small WOODEN CHEST sitting next to the door. On the chest, next to his wallet, is A PICTURE OF AN OLD WOMAN, presumably his mother.

Lorem pauses at the picture and stares, a deep longing in his eyes. *

Then, a faint HONK from outside breaks his concentration.

He flicks on the lights and walks over to the window. He looks down below him, sees the crowded street, and opens the window. HORNS and SHOUTS fill his apartment. He takes a deep breath, sighs, and sits down on a TORN-UP COUCH.

He looks across the room at a blank wall painted VOMIT-GREEN. At the top of the wall are BROWN WATER STAINS.

Lorem stares at the wall for a moment and thinks. His thinking is interrupted by a LOUD SCREECH in the hallway.

He jumps up and cautiously moves to the door. He puts his ear to the wood. PAWS SCUFFLE against the floor, behind his door. He cracks open the door and looks out into a dark hallway.

A CAT, orange and brown, sits in the hallway, looking directly at him.

Lorem stares back, unsure of what to do.

The two spend a suspended moment staring at each other. Then, the Cat walks down the hallway, leaving Lorem alone.

He stands in the doorway, looking down the hallway as the cat turns a corner.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

NEON LIGHT filters into Lorem's apartment through his dirty window. PURPLE, RED, and BLUE dance across the walls.

Lorem stands by the window, looking out at the street below. He watches a couple laugh and sighs. One can sense a deep sadness from him.

A SHRILL RINGING comes from the LAND-LINE in his bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - SAME

Lorem walks over to his BEDSIDE TABLE and picks up the phone. He doesn't speak.

BILLY
(O.S.)
Hello?

Lorem listens, trying to recognize the voice.

BILLY (CONT'D)
(O.S.)
Hello Lorem? Are you there?

Lorem taps his finger against the plastic phone.

BILLY (CONT'D)
(O.S.)
I can hear you breathing through
the phone asshole!

LOREM IPSUM
Hello?

BILLY
(O.S.)
Jesus Lorem, what took you so long?

LOREM IPSUM
I, um... who are you?

Lorem speaks in long beleaguered sentences, full of awkward brakes and pauses.

BILLY
(O.S.)
It's Billy. Remember?

Silence. Then:

LOREM IPSUM
No.

BILLY
(O.S.)
My god Lorem, it's your cousin.
(MORE)

BILLY (CONT'D)

Billy. We sat at the same table during the funeral, remember?

LOREM IPSUM

Oh, yeah. Hi.

BILLY

(O.S.)

So...

A beat.

BILLY (CONT'D)

(O.S.)

My mom said I should spend more time with you because you're lonely so I'm inviting you to a party.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh, ok.

A beat. Lorem clings to the phone.

BILLY

(O.S.)

So are you coming?

Lorem takes a deep breath, waiting for the rug to be pulled out from under him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

(O.S.)

Lorem?

LOREM IPSUM

Um, sure, yeah. I'll come.

BILLY

(O.S.)

Ok. I'll text you the address.

LOREM IPSUM

I don't have a cell phone.

BILLY

(O.S.)

No wonder you didn't pick up. Who's number did she give me?

Another beat.

BILLY (CONT'D)

(O.S.)

So do you want the address or what?

LOREM IPSUM

Ok.

BILLY

(O.S.)

Man you're a weird guy. Anyone ever tell you that Lorem?

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

Yeah.

INT. BUILDING LOBBY - LATER

Lorem walks down the stairs in a WHITE SUIT and SHINY BLACK DRESS SHOES. He quietly walks through the dark lobby, his eyes on the SUPER'S DOOR.

As he gets closer to it, he notices that it's open. He gets to the door and peers inside, curious as to why it was left open.

He stops moving. Lying a few feet in front of him is the Super, dead. Lorem stares at the dead body for a moment.

LOREM IPSUM

Are you okay?

No response, obviously.

He stares for a few moments more, then turns and walks away.

EXT. 31ST BETWEEN BROADWAY AND 5TH - NIGHT

The street is awash with NEON LIGHT, the sidewalk lit up from a mixture of rainwater and light.

Lorem stands trying to hail a cab. After a few moments of standing, and seeing none, he puts his hand down and starts walking. Before he gets too far, a CAB brakes hard and HONKS its horn.

NIKO

(O.S.)

Hey buddy!

Lorem turns his head to see Niko's cab sitting behind him.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Come on!

Lorem keeps walking forwards but Niko keeps honking.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Hey! Where're ya goin?

Lorem digs his hands into his pockets and tries to ignore him.

Niko pulls the car up next to Lorem, who stops in his tracks.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Why didn't you turn? You don't like me?

Lorem turns to Niko.

LOREM IPSUM
Oh, hi. No, um, I didn't see you before.

NIKO
Where're ya goin all dressed up like that? Ya look good.

Lorem looks down at his suit and smiles.

LOREM IPSUM
I'm going to a party.

NIKO
Oh look at Mr. Bigshot over here. I'll drive ya.

LOREM IPSUM
I'd, uh, I'd rather walk.

NIKO
No, no, no. A big guy like you can't show up to a party with dirty shoes. I'll drive ya.

Lorem stands, thinking.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Come on kid, get in.

INT. CAB - LATER

Niko barely pays any attention to the road, preferring to watch Lorem in the back seat.

NIKO

So ya goin' to a patty eh? Anyone famous?

Lorem looks out the window.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Why dontcha talk huh? It's not very nice.

LOREM IPSUM

It's my cousin's party.

NIKO

He famous?

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

He makes movies.

NIKO

I knew I had a good feeling about you. (looking up) What'd I say huh? A good kid.

Niko grabs a SCRIPT from his glove box and hands it to Lorem.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Give that to your cousin. He'll love it.

Lorem reads the title page: *LOVE AND DEATH*.

NIKO (CONT'D)

I swear he'll love it. So give it to him, huh?

LOREM IPSUM

I'm not too sure--

The car STOPS. Lorem is THROWN against the partition.

NIKO

Not too sure about what?

Lorem lifts himself off the partition and dusts his suit off. He sees a red spot on his shirt and notices his BLOODY NOSE.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Not too sure if he'll like it? Ya don't think I can write?

Lorem tears through his pockets, looking for a tissue.

LOREM IPSUM

I'm not sure if he... he's very busy. Do you hav--

NIKO

So you think I'm jus some piece of shit or somethin?

LOREM IPSUM

No, it's just... do you have any tissues?

NIKO

Do you know what it's like to drop everything and search for a new life? Do you?

Blood pours out of his nose onto his hands. More SPLOTCHES appear on his shirt. A drop of blood lands on the TITLE PAGE of the script.

NIKO (CONT'D)

I had to leave my family, my poor mother. She couldn't take it, her heart couldn't take it, or that's what the doctors told me at least.

HORNS from cars behind ring out.

DRIVER

(O.S.)

Move your ass!

Niko starts CRYING. Lorem starts panicking.

NIKO

I came here and found nothing. I couldn't send money back to my family--

More honks and more screams. One DRIVER gets out of his car and walks towards the cab. Lorem looks from the Driver to Niko.

NIKO (CONT'D)

My wife left me for Gregorio!

Niko starts BAWLING. The Driver gets closer to the cab.

LOREM IPSUM

I'll give him the script!

Niko stops.

NIKO

Really?

LOREM IPSUM

Yes.

NIKO

You're a good guy, a real pal, ya
know that?

Niko puts his foot on the gas and starts driving. Lorem
sighs, blood still pouring out of his nose.

NIKO (CONT'D)

(noticing his nose)

Oh shit!

Niko hands him a box of tissues.

NIKO (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about your nose.

LOREM IPSUM

It's ok.

NIKO

You're a real good guy.

Lorem pinches the bridge of his nose and leans back, tissues
filling his nostrils

NIKO (CONT'D)

The best guy. A king.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

A large, metal topped WAREHOUSE sits on a PIER next to the
Hudson River. On the piers adjacent to it are SHIPPING
CRATES, CRANES, and DOCKED BOATS.

In front of the two large BARN DOORS are three BOUNCERS and a
long line of people. The men are dressed in overly expensive
clothing, things like SUPREME or GUCCI, and the women are all
dressed in dresses that are too short. It's a real party.

EDM MUSIC radiates through the walls.

Niko's cab pulls up.

INT. CAB - SAME

Lorem looks out the window and straightens his suit, next to him a pile of BLOODY TISSUES.

NIKO
Wow, look at this place.

Niko turns around and looks at Lorem through the partition.

NIKO (CONT'D)
You look good my friend. Real good.

LOREM IPSUM
Thanks.

Lorem opens up the cab door.

NIKO
Don't forget the script!

Lorem grabs the blood-stained script from next to him.

LOREM IPSUM
Right.

NIKO
Remember, give it to your cousin
and make sure he reads it.

LOREM IPSUM
Ok.

NIKO
And afterwards you give me a call,
huh?

LOREM IPSUM
Ok.

Niko smiles.

NIKO
You look great man! Real handsome!
Now go!

Lorem gets out of the cab. As he gets out, his wallet SLIPS from his pocket and lands on the floor. He doesn't notice and neither does Niko.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Go get 'em tiger!

Lorem closes the door and walks towards the Warehouse. Niko picks up his phone and dials a number. He puts the phone to his mouth.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Gregorio, you'll never believe what just happened... No, you won't get a writing credit.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - SAME

Lorem, with the script under his arm, walks towards the entrance. The EDM music gets louder and so does the crowd. Lorem's smile fades as he realizes where he is. Maybe he shouldn't be there.

He stops in his tracks and looks behind him at Niko who, still on the phone, turns to him and smiles. Lorem takes a deep, shaky breath and walks towards the doors.

His eyes dart everywhere, looking for a way out. But no, he must go forwards.

He cuts the line and goes right for the Bouncers, wiping the sweat on his brow and trying to calm himself.

One of the bouncers steps in front of him.

BOUNCER

You blind?

LOREM IPSUM

What?

BOUNCER

Back of the line asshole.

Lorem takes a step back.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh yeah, of course. Sorry.

He walks to the back of the line.

BOUNCER

(O.S.)

Nice shirt.

He stands behind TWO TALL WOMEN in very short dresses. They turn to look at him and he looks up at them.

TALL GIRL
(Sarcastically)
That's a great shirt. Where'd you
get it?

LOREM IPSUM
Oh, thank you. Uh, I think my mom--

The girls laugh and turn back around.

Confused, he looks down at his shirt only to realize that
it's spotted with BLOOD. It looks like a white and red polka
dot shirt.

He groans.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

Lorem stands a few feet closer to the entrance, not moving
much. He looks down at his feet, ashamed that he even decided
to go out tonight.

LOREM IPSUM
(to himself)
You're so stupid, stupid, stupid.

He hears LOUD MUSIC and LAUGHTER from the street and looks
up.

A WHITE PARTY LIMO, the inside lit up by PURPLE LIGHTS and a
DRUNK WOMAN standing in the SUNROOF, pull up.

The doors open and a cloud of SMOKE flies out. From behind
the smoke stands BILLY - late 20s, blonde, strong, confident,
wearing a BLUE SUIT. An ENTOURAGE follows him out.

He flashes a BRIGHT SMILE at the driver and walks towards the
entrance. He walks right past Lorem, who watches him, and
stops. He takes a few steps back and stands in front of
Lorem.

BILLY
Fuck me! You showed up!

LOREM IPSUM
Oh, well--

BILLY
I can't believe it! God you look
great.

Billy hugs Lorem and lifts him up.

BILLY (CONT'D)
You look so good Lorem!

It's clear Billy's been drinking.

LOREM IPSUM
Thanks for--

BILLY
What's that?

Billy takes the script from under Lorem's arm and reads the title.

BILLY (CONT'D)
So you're a writer now?

LOREM IPSUM
Well, no, it's from--

BILLY
I hope it's not shit!

Billy hands the script to one of the ENTOURAGE MEMBERS. He slaps Lorem on the back.

BILLY (CONT'D)
That shirt looks great!

Billy looks to a different entourage member.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Get me one.

LOREM IPSUM
Well--

BILLY
There's this hip new club in Queens we're going to after this. You should come with.

Billy turns to one of his entourage members.

BILLY (CONT'D)
(to the Entourage)
Did you bring 'em? You di--

LOREM IPSUM
You're late.

Billy turns to Lorem.

BILLY

What?

LOREM IPSUM

I said you're, um... You said be here at 8 and it's 8:30.

Billy and his entourage laugh. Lorem stands uncomfortably and wipes some sweat from his brow.

BILLY

God, Lorem, you are so fucking weird! I love it.

Lorem sinks into himself.

One of the entourage members hands Billy a pillbox. He opens it and hands a pill to Lorem.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Lets get this party started baby!

LOREM IPSUM

Are these drugs?

BILLY

You gotta' problem with a little bit of drug action?

Billy laughs.

LOREM IPSUM

I don't do drugs. It's illegal.

BILLY

Oh who the fuck cares Lorem! Who cares about legal and illegal, wrong and right? Just have fucking fun man!

They walk towards the BARN DOORS. Billy places his arm on Lorem's shoulder. As they walk, Lorem looks down at the pill. He puts it in his pocket.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Do you drink?

LOREM IPSUM

Not r--

BILLY

Oh come on Lorem. Don't say no! Don't say no to me!

Lorem looks at him, unsure of what to say.

After a beat, Billy slaps him on the shoulder.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Oh lighten up Lorem, we're here to party. It's just a joke. You take everything so seriously.

LOREM IPSUM

Right.

The Bouncers look at Billy, smile, and SLIDE OPEN THE DOORS.

The EDM from inside FILLS THE AIR, overpowering everything. People DANCE and GRIND on each other, sweat flying everywhere. The PULSATING lights pierce the night sky.

Billy looks at the sea of people and smiles. Lorem's eyes widen.

BILLY

(to himself)

Oh yeah baby.

Billy slips one of the pills into his mouth.

BILLY (CONT'D)

(to Lorem)

We're gonna have some fucking fun tonight.

Billy screams, slaps his face, and runs into the crowd, his entourage following close behind.

Lorem turns around and looks at the empty street behind him, Niko's cab gone. He takes a deep breath, turns, and walks into the sea of people.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

LOREM sits at a table with BILLY and two girls, JULIE and KIKI, both in their mid 20s. Kiki wears a LATEX MINI DRESS. Lorem sits silently next to Julie, watching as Billy and Kiki talk.

BILLY

So Kiki, what do you do?

KIKI

I'm a dominatrix.

Lorem's eyes shoot open. Julie looks utterly disinterested, staring at her phone.

BILLY
(very interested)
A dominatrix? So you dominate guys?

KIKI
Yes. Do you like to be dominated?

BILLY
Like is an understatement.

KIKI
Oh yeah? Let me give you my card.

Kiki takes out a small PAPER CARD with her number written on it. She hands it to Billy.

KIKI (CONT'D)
Call whenever you're feeling up to it.

Billy takes out his phone, dials a number, and calls. Kiki's phone rings. She laughs and Lorem watches uncomfortably.

KIKI (CONT'D)
Now?

BILLY
Right now.

They jump on each other, furiously MAKING OUT on the table, right in front of Julie and Lorem. Julie doesn't seem to notice.

LOREM IPSUM
Uh, Julie?

JULIE
(not looking up from her phone)
Yeah?

LOREM IPSUM
Would you, um, like a drink?

BILLY
(to Kiki)
You're gonna fall.

KIKI
I wanna fall.

JULIE
(to Lorem)
Vodka.

LOREM IPSUM
Vodka? Nothing else?

JULIE
Did I stutter?

A beat. Lorem doesn't know what to say.

LOREM IPSUM
Um, no. I'll be right back.

Lorem gets up from the table as Billy and Kiki fall to the floor, still going at it.

Lorem starts to make his way to the bar, battling his way through the crowd, getting pushed by drunk millennials. As he walks through, he will occasionally mutter "excuse me" or "sorry," but only after he's been bumped into.

There is barely any space to stand and Lorem makes himself as small as possible, squeezing between every crack and crevice in the crowd. He couldn't possibly say excuse me.

BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Lorem pushes his way through more crowd members and appears next to the bar - RED AND BLACK with BRIGHT LIGHTS illuminating bottles behind it.

Lorem dusts off his jacket and looks to the Bartender.

LOREM IPSUM
(to the Bartender)
Excuse me?

The BARTENDER, a man in his mid 30s, doesn't notice. He's busy talking to other customers.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
(louder, shakier)
Uh, excuse me?

The Bartender looks up and notices Lorem. He walks over.

BARTENDER
What can I getcha?

LOREM IPSUM
Um, can I have a, uh, vodka please?

BARTENDER

Straight?

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, yeah.

BARTENDER

Strong drink.

LOREM IPSUM

(avoiding the Bartender's
eyes)

Mhm.

BARTENDER

Any specific company? We have
Bacardi, Gray Goose-

LOREM IPSUM

Just a vodka please.

BARTENDER

Ok sure.

The Bartender starts filling up a glass.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Nice suit.

Lorem looks at him, then takes a deep breath.

LOREM IPSUM

Thanks.

BARTENDER

I like the spotted shirt.

He comes back to Lorem and hands him the GLASS.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Ten dollars.

Lorem nods and moves his hand to his pocket, where his wallet
should be. He sticks his hand in but can't find the wallet.
It isn't there.

He begins to panic, sweating profusely and breathing hard. He
tries not to let the Bartender know he lost his wallet.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

(noticing there's an
issue)

Take your time.

The Bartender walks away to another customer, leaving Lorem to panic alone. He pats down his suit, checking every pocket, but his wallet just isn't there. Where could it have gone?

He stands in front of the drink, unsure of what to do. He looks from the glass to the Bartender and back again. He takes a deep breath, grabs the glass, and walks quickly away from the bar.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
(to Lorem)
Hey, wait a minute!

Lorem disappears into the crowd, keeping a steady grip on the glass as the drunk clubgoers bounce against him. He's safe for now. Except that he doesn't know where his wallet is.

He gets back to the table and sees that Billy and Kiki are gone but Julie is still sitting there, staring at her phone.

Lorem places the glass in front of her and sits down, dabbing away the sweat from his forehead. At this point there are significant sweat stains on his suit.

Julie looks up from her phone.

JULIE
You're sweating.

LOREM IPSUM
Oh, uh, it's just really hot in here.

Julie takes a sip from the drink.

JULIE
You didn't spike this, did you?

Lorem again doesn't know how to respond. He stares at her blankly for a second, then she laughs.

JULIE (CONT'D)
I'm just fucking with you. I know what molly tastes like.

LOREM IPSUM
Right.

Lorem rubs his hands on his thighs, trying to calm down, standing awkwardly next to Julie.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
Hey, uh, do you know where Billy went?

JULIE

Bathroom.

LOREM IPSUM

Thanks.

He runs from the table.

CUT TO:

BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A HEAVY METAL DOOR, covered in graffiti, creaks open and Lorem steps into the BATHROOM, his face immediately cast with RED LIGHT.

Lorem walks through the bathroom quietly, past the graffiti covered mirror, overflowing urinals, and towards the stalls at the back.

The sounds of MOANING fill air as Lorem gets closer to the last stall, presumably where Billy and Kiki are.

As he walks along the BLACK BRICK covered walls, he stops. Maybe he shouldn't go on. No, he must.

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, Billy?

The moaning stops.

BILLY

(In the stall)

Go the fuck away please.

LOREM IPSUM

Um, uh...

BILLY

What the fuck do you want!

LOREM IPSUM

Can I borrow your phone?

Billy slides his phone under the stall to Lorem.

BILLY

Leave us the fuck alone please.

LOREM IPSUM

Ok. Thank you Billy.

The moaning starts again as Lorem walks away from the stall, towards the mirror.

He takes out a small POST-IT note with Niko's PHONE NUMBER written on it. He opens the phone, dials the number, and puts the phone to his ear.

NIKO

(Over the phone)

Hello? Who is this? Adrik? I told you to stop calling this number!

LOREM IPSUM

It's Lorem.

NIKO

(his voice changing)

LOREM! How are you! How is the party! Did you give him my script yet?

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, yeah.

NIKO

And did he read it? Did he like it?

A beat. Lorem thinks.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Lorem?

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, Niko, I think I left my wallet in your cab.

NIKO

You did?

LOREM IPSUM

I think I did.

NIKO

That's too bad man.

LOREM IPSUM

Do you think you could, um, bring it to me tonight?

A beat.

NIKO

Did you give Billy the script?

LOREM IPSUM

Yes.

NIKO

I don't believe you. Put him on.

LOREM IPSUM

He's a little busy right now.

NIKO

Put him on and you get the wallet.

LOREM IPSUM

I can give you his notes tomorrow
if you--

NIKO

Put him on right now or I burn your
wallet.

LOREM IPSUM

You'll burn my wallet?

NIKO

Put him on.

LOREM IPSUM

Um, ok.

Lorem puts his hand over the receiver and starts panicking
again. He looks at the stall where Billy is.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

Um, Billy?

BILLY

(through clenched teeth)
Shut the fuck up right now please.

Lorem looks away from the stall and back to the phone. He
comes to a decision.

LOREM IPSUM

(in a deeper voice)
Um, who is this?

He cringes as he speaks.

NIKO

Ohmygod.

LOREM IPSUM

(in his deeper voice)

I, uh, haven't gotten a chance to read your script yet but I will, um, get to it tomorrow.

NIKO

It's an honor to be speaking with you right now sir.

LOREM IPSUM

(in the same voice)

I have to go.

NIKO

Ok. Thank you so much sir.

Lorem lowers the phone from his mouth for a moment and bangs his hand against the receiver. He then puts it back up to his mouth and speaks in his regular voice again.

LOREM IPSUM

Hi.

NIKO

Oh Lorem this is amazing! He really loved the script!

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, yeah.

NIKO

Where are you?

LOREM IPSUM

The same place.

NIKO

I'll be there as soon as I can.

A beat.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Trust is important Lorem, I trust you. I hope you can trust me to get your wallet back.

LOREM IPSUM

Thank yo--

Niko hangs up. Lorem puts the phone on the sink next to him and looks into the mirror. His face is obscured by graffiti. He stares for a few moments. Then:

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Lorem stands in front of the warehouse, the music still blasting and the line out front still growing.

He paces back and forth, his hands deep in his pockets, thinking. He mutters some words, words we can't hear. He shakes his head, then stops. He looks down at his shoes, slightly stained by alcohol, then at his shirt, spotted with his own blood.

A TOYOTA MINIVAN - old, banged up, dusty, and grey (with sliding doors) - pulls up to the warehouse.

Lorem's head shoots up as the doors SLIDE OPEN.

He stares at the car for a moment, not moving. It couldn't possibly be Niko's car, it isn't a cab.

HOOOOOOONK

A grimace slides onto Lorem's face as the entire line (bouncers included) turn to watch him and the minivan.

He shakes his head as the window rolls down. Of course, it's Niko.

NIKO

Hey Lorem! Come on!

Lorem slowly walks towards the minivan, the collective stares of the line boring through his back.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Hurry it up!

Lorem gets in the car and it SHOOTS away.

INT/EXT. MINIVAN - NIGHT

EASTERN EUROPEAN FOLK MUSIC plays faintly from the radio as Niko and Lorem sit quietly in the car.

Niko swerves around cars, using the horn casually, every now and then cursing out a car in front of them.

Lorem clears his throat and Niko looks over.

NIKO

What.

LOREM IPSUM

Um, where are we going?

NIKO

To the depot. Where else would we be going?

LOREM IPSUM

What depot?

NIKO

The cab depot Lorem? Do you think I'm trying to kidnap you? (Niko chuckles) I wouldn't kidnap you.

LOREM IPSUM

Um... uh, why didn't you bring the cab?

NIKO

Because it's after hours Lorem. I'm off for the rest of the night. I can't just steal a cab, now can I?

LOREM IPSUM

I guess not.

Lorem stares forwards, watching as Niko swerves between trucks.

NIKO

I can't wait to get big.

LOREM IPSUM

What?

NIKO

When your cousin buys my script, I'll be big. Did you not hear me? Did the club mess up your head? I have a doctor friend you could talk to. Aurelio. He's a great guy.

No response.

Niko stares forward, then turns back to Lorem, not paying attention to the road.

NIKO (CONT'D)

I'm going to show Gregorio, the bastard, that I'm better than he is. I'll show all of them what I can do. When I become big. All thanks to you. And your cousin, but mostly you. A king.

Lorem shifts in his seat. The guilt starts burning through his body. Can Niko see it? Lorem takes a deep breath, then:

LOREM IPSUM

I, um, don't, don't get so excited because, uh, he was pretty dr-drunk and, um, well, I don't know how well he got to read it.

NIKO

He read it and he loved it. He told me so. He said it was the best thing he had ever read in his life. He called me Kaufman.

LOREM IPSUM

Kaufman?

NIKO

Yes. He called me the best in the business.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh right. Yeah.

NIKO

I'm going to be big one day Lorem. Very big. And don't think like I'll forget you when I'm on the red carpet. I won't.

Lorem looks at Niko, then through the windshield, watching cars swerve.

Lorem leans his head against the passenger window and watches as the car descends into the QUEENS-MIDTOWN TUNNEL, headed for Queens.

The bright fluorescent lights of the tunnel shine into the car showing Lorem, for a brief moment, as a GROTESQUE FIGURE, unable to live with himself.

He lies, trapped behind the seat belt, trying to wriggle his way out, like a BUG.

Then, the lights pass, and he is back to himself. Niko hasn't noticed and he stares out the window, paralyzed. All is well.

For now.

EXT. CAB DEPOT - NIGHT

Crammed between BLINKY'S DINER and a SHORT, BRICK BAR (LUCKY'S), sits a CAB DEPOT, a large brick building with few windows and many BIG METAL DOORS.

The street is lit by the few lights outside BLINKY's, the DEPOT, LUCKY's, and the rest of the depots that line the block. It isn't very well lit.

Niko's van pulls down the street and drives towards the depot, it's headlights illuminating the street.

Niko pulls up to the depot and parks the car in front of the large, CLOSED GARAGE DOOR.

NIKO
(O.S.)
Oh shit man.

He and Lorem get out of the car and stand in front of the closed door.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Stay here. I will be back.

Niko walks into the shadows of the street, leaving Lorem clinging to the faint light in front of the garage door.

He looks up and down the street, getting a sense of where he is. Short brick buildings, not many lights, a little creepy.

SMASH!

Lorem looks into the darkness, where the sound came from, and sees glass shards on the ground, light bouncing off.

He hears heavy footsteps moving towards him, getting closer and closer.

He starts to edge away, trying to stay in the light while exposing whatever it is that's coming towards him.

Suddenly, a HOMELESS MAN runs towards Lorem, jumping on him, screaming.

Lorem falls to the ground as the man thrashes, screaming something about God.

After a few moments of this, the garage doors SLIDE UP, revealing rows and rows and rows and rows of YELLOW NEW YORK CITY CABS.

Standing in front of the door, now staring at Lorem and the homeless man, is Niko.

He leaves Lorem on the ground and walks towards the FRONT OFFICE.

Lorem looks at the empty space where Niko used to be, then back up at the homeless man.

Then, Niko reappears, this time holding a BASEBALL BAT.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Get out of here.

The homeless man looks up, lets go of Lorem, and runs back into the darkness.

Lorem and Niko lock eyes for a moment, then Niko starts laughing.

NIKO (CONT'D)
He got you good didn't he?

LOREM IPSUM
You know him?

NIKO
That's the neighborhood bum. Don't get too close or he'll grab you.

Niko chuckles, then walks over to lift up Lorem.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Come inside, meet Leonid.

LOREM IPSUM
Who?

INT. CAB DEPOT - MOMENTS LATER

YELLOW AND GREEN CABS, in HUNDREDS OF ROWS, expand into the darkness of the depot. The huge ceiling is held up by PILLARS and the farther one gets from the door, the darker it gets.

It's the biggest cab depot you've ever seen.

Lorem and Niko walk towards the FRONT OFFICE, a small room up against the side of the depot.

FRONT OFFICE - SAME

BRIGHT FLUORESCENT LIGHTS shine down from the ceiling, illuminating the space in a painful, almost clinical light.

ONE WINDOW looks out across the depot, next to which is a DESK, and on the opposite side a CLOCK. It's a very bare, lifeless room.

Sitting at the desk is LEONID -- FAT, RUSSIAN, 50s, crumbs all over his shirt (currently eating a donut), balding -- staring out at the cars. On the desk is a GUN LOCK BOX, fingerprint accessible.

The door SWINGS OPEN and Niko and Lorem walk in. Leonid jumps out of his skin, apparently not having seen them as they entered.

IN RUSSIAN (Subtitled in English?):

LEONID

What are you doing here?

NIKO

He forgot something in the car.

LEONID

Friend of yours?

NIKO

Yeah.

Lorem watches, confused and with the feeling that they're talking about him.

Niko, IN ENGLISH.

NIKO (CONT'D)

(to Lorem)

This is Leonid.

LEONID

(trying his best)

Hello.

LOREM IPSUM

(awkwardly)

Hey.

IN RUSSIAN:

NIKO

(to Leonid)

His name's Lorem.

LEONID

What kind of name is Lorem?

NIKO

The name of the guy that sold my script.

LEONID

He sold your script?

NIKO

Yeah he sold my script!

LEONID

Oh my god!

Leonid jumps up and hugs Niko.

Lorem watches, only picking up when his name is mentioned.

Leonid lets go and sits back down, going to grab another donut.

LEONID (CONT'D)

Have you told Gregorio yet?

NIKO

That bastard wanted a writing credit.

LEONID

(shocked)

A writing credit?

NIKO

Exactly. He acts like he wrote the script with me. He read it once.

LEONID

Exactly.

Lorem taps on Niko's shoulder.

NIKO

(in English)

What.

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, do you think we could, um, go to the cab please? Just so I can get out of your way.

NIKO

Oh right, sorry. Come on. (To Leonid, in RUSSIAN) I'll be right back.

LEONID

(In RUSSIAN)
I'll be here.

Lorem and Niko walk out of the office, back into the MAIN ROOM.

CAB DEPOT - MOMENTS LATER

Lorem and Niko walk past row after row of cabs, making their way to the back left corner of the room. Every now and then, they walk past an empty spot.

As they walk, a CAB drives in, pulling up to an empty spot near them.

The car parks and the DRIVER -- an old, NIGERIAN MAN -- gets out, using a cane to walk.

As he walks towards the front office, the DRIVER trips, falling to the ground with a shout.

Lorem turns from Niko and watches. Niko keeps moving, then turns around, realizing Lorem isn't with him.

NIKO

Come on Lorem, we must move fast. I have to wake up early tomorrow.

Lorem stands still for a moment, looking at the old man on the ground. He rubs his fingers together, unsure of what to do, then walks towards him.

LOREM IPSUM

(ignoring Niko)
Are you ok?

Lorem crouches down next to the Driver, splayed out on the ground.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

Sir?

The Driver lays quietly, then begins to get up.

DRIVER

(slowly)
Do not worry about me.

Lorem helps him get up, handing him his cane once he's upright.

LOREM IPSUM

Do you need help getting to the office?

DRIVER

I'm ok.

LOREM IPSUM

Ok.

The Driver stands quietly next to Lorem for a moment, then looks at him and whispers into his ear.

DRIVER

I feel a storm coming.

Lorem stares at him, unsure of how to respond.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Good luck.

The Driver starts hobbling away and Lorem watches him go, unsure of what to do next.

NIKO

Come on Lorem.

He watches, then turns and walks back towards Niko.

NIKO (CONT'D)

You're a real prince Lorem, a real good guy. You know that? I don't know many guys that would do that.

Lorem walks next to him, not responding, his mind fixated on the driver's words.

NIKO'S CAB - MOMENTS LATER

Situated in the back left corner of the depot is Niko's cab, sitting quietly, surrounded by other, identical cabs. In the BACK SEAT OF THE CAB, on the ground, is LOREM'S WALLET, unharmed.

Niko takes out his keys and begins unlocking the door as Lorem stands behind him, his hands jammed deep in his pockets, anticipating his release from this hellish night.

Niko struggles with the key.

NIKO
(to himself, in RUSSIAN)
Is this the right key?

Lorem watches, tapping his foot faster and faster on the ground.

The lock doesn't click. Lorem taps, *Tap Tap Tap*.

NIKO (CONT'D)
(to Lorem)
One moment.

Niko fiddles with the key again and, suddenly:

Click.

The door swings open and Lorem dives in, grabbing his wallet as fast as he can.

He checks the wallet, making sure everything is there: keys, money, metrocard, business cards. It is.

He gets out of the cab and stands next to Niko, who locks the door behind him.

NIKO (CONT'D)
All good?

LOREM IPSUM
Yeah.

NIKO
Good.

They walk back towards the garage door. Lorem shoves his wallet deep into his pocket, then sticks his hand in the pocket above it, making sure not to forget it this time.

NIKO (CONT'D)
You hungry? Did you eat at the club?

LOREM IPSUM
I'm ok.

NIKO
Let's go to Blinky's, it's good.
I'm friends with the owner so we get free scrambled eggs.

Lorem doesn't know how to respond. He opens his mouth, then closes it. He wants to be polite but doesn't want to eat.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Come on.

INT. BLINKY'S - LATER

CRAMMED into a small booth by a window sits Niko and Lorem, both eating plates of SCRAMBLED EGGS.

Standing behind the blue-gray bar is the CHEF - mid 50s, fat, balding, wearing a dirty white apron - watching a rerun of SEINFELD on a small TV attached to the ceiling.

The rest of the place is empty.

Niko eats his food, stacking the EGGS, HOME-FRIES, and SAUSAGES onto pieces of toast, eating them like a sandwich. Occasionally, pieces fall off.

Lorem hasn't touched his food, preferring to stare out the window instead, watching the dimly lit street.

NIKO

Not hungry?

He doesn't respond.

NIKO (CONT'D)

You're missing out. The food's good.

A sausage falls off his toast, bouncing off the table.

NIKO (CONT'D)

Shit.

Lorem keeps watching the silent street, seeing nothing. No cars, no headlights, no people.

He sighs.

NIKO (CONT'D)

You got your wallet back. What's wrong?

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

Nothing. Thank you, for the wallet.

NIKO

You should eat. It'll make you feel better.

Then, HEADLIGHTS, illuminating the street. Lorem spins to look out of the window. Who could it be?

EDM MUSIC (something like **LE CASTLE VANIA**) starts to fill the empty streets, getting louder and louder as the headlights get brighter and brighter.

Niko looks up from his food, looking down the street.

Then, a WHITE PARTY LIMO, the music blasting out of its open windows, pulls up next to the diner.

Lorem's eyes go wide.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Who could that be?

The doors open and out steps BILLY, drunker and higher than before.

LOREM IPSUM
(to himself)
Oh shit.

NIKO
Do you know him?

LOREM IPSUM
We have to go.

Billy and his entourage walk towards the diner, talking and laughing.

NIKO
I'm not done with my food yet. Let me finish up and we can go.

LOREM IPSUM
Niko we have to leave right now.

NIKO
Not so quiet anymore, huh?

LOREM IPSUM
Niko--

RIIIIIIIIIINNNNNGGGGGG

They walk in.

BILLY
(O.S.)
Lorem?

Lorem folds into himself, his hands covering his face.

Niko turns around to see who it is.

Billy and his crew walk towards their table.

NIKO
(hushed)
Who is he?

Lorem slaps himself in the face and stands up to shake his hand. Of course this was going to happen.

LOREM IPSUM
Hi Billy.

BILLY
Shaking hands now?

NIKO
(to Lorem)
Billy?

*

Billy hugs Lorem.

BILLY
We missed you! Where'd you go?

NIKO
The Billy?

BILLY
(to Niko)
Who are you? How do you know my name? (to Lorem) How does he know my name?

Niko stands, dusts himself off, and extends his hand for Billy to shake.

NIKO
You read a script of mine.

BILLY
I did?

Lorem, eyes wide, begins to walk away from the group, making his way to the door, quietly.

Niko's hand drops slowly.

NIKO
Love and Death. You called me up and said you loved it.

BILLY

I did? I don't remember doing that.
(to his crew) Did I do that?

Niko's eyes go wide now.

NIKO

Well someone called me, right Lo--

He notices Lorem isn't standing next to Billy, but instead next to the door, almost out.

He and Lorem lock eyes for a second.

Everything clicks.

Rage fills Niko's eyes.

NIKO (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch.

RIIIIIIIINNNNNGGGGGG

The door slams shut as Lorem sprints down the street.

Niko breaks from the group, sprinting through the diner and into the street, chasing after him.

NIKO (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch!

Billy stands over their plates, looking down at Lorem's scrambled eggs.

He grabs a fork and starts eating.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

FOOTSTEPS echo through the street as Lorem sprints, with Niko close behind. He can't see how close Niko is. He's running blind.

Lorem runs past SHORT BRICK BUILDINGS, looking for someone, something to help him. His jacket flails behind him.

LOREM IPSUM

I'm sorry!

NIKO

You lied to me you lying son of a bitch!

Lorem turns a corner and runs underneath the yellow light of a street lamp, turning to catch a glimpse of NIKO RIGHT BEHIND HIM!

LOREM IPSUM

SHIT!

Lorem turns off the sidewalk, running across the street towards the CAB DEPOT, the garage door still open. He disappears into the garage.

Niko turns off the sidewalk as well, following Lorem through the garage door and into the depot.

INT. FRONT OFFICE

The door is thrown open and a hand REACHES FOR THE GUN SAFE!

CAB DEPOT - SAME

Lorem crouches behind a cab, hiding.

He hears nothing.

Then, a *click*, the sound of a gun loading.

His eyes jump open and he peaks his head over the cab, seeing nothing but a sea of yellow.

He crouches back down and begins moving, slowly, to the next cab, making his way to the exit.

NIKO

Oh Lorem!

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

Yeah?

NIKO

Come out and we can talk.

Lorem considers.

LOREM IPSUM

We can talk?

NIKO

We can talk.

LOREM IPSUM
You promise?

NIKO
I promise.

LOREM IPSUM
I'm really sor--

NIKO
Just come out.

Lorem peaks his head out from behind a cab and

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMMMMMMMM!!!!!!

The windshield shatters, a bullet ripping right through it.

NIKO (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shit.

Lorem drops to the ground. Glass rains down, making small cuts on his hands.

LOREM IPSUM
(quietly)
Ohmygodohmygodohmygod.

He begins crawling to the next cab as more bullets fly, shattered glass falling to the ground next to him.

Niko starts walking, slowly, towards Lorem, firing the gun freely, not really aiming for anything, just for fear.

NIKO
Lorem, I trusted you. You had changed my whole life and, like a fool, I had believed you. I thought you were my friend.

Lorem hears this and stops, accepting his fate now, accepting that he did a bad thing, that whatever he does from now on will be tainted.

LOREM IPSUM
I'm sorry.

Lorem begins to stand as Niko gets closer.

NIKO
Sorry's not good enough.

As Lorem stands, he comes face to face with a BARREL, Niko standing behind it.

NIKO (CONT'D)
Give me your wallet.

Lorem pauses.

LOREM IPSUM
What?

Niko jams his hand into Lorem's pocket and grabs the wallet, sticking it into his own pocket.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
Wh--

NIKO
Here's the deal Lorem. You go to your cousin, get him to read my script, and bring back a business card, a card with a time on it, a meeting. You give that to me and you get your wallet back. You don't get it to me, I'll blow your fucking head off.

Lorem stares at him.

LOREM IPSUM
What?

NIKO
And don't think you can fake it this time, I know what he sounds like.

Lorem continues to stare. Then:

LOREM IPSUM
Ok.

NIKO
Good.

Lorem stands there, unsure of where to go from here.

LOREM IPSUM
I'm sorry.

NIKO
Go.

Lorem sprints out of the cab depot, back into the street.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The saturated yellow light from a STREET LAMP shines down on Lorem as he sits beneath it, his knees up to his chest and his head in his hands.

His previously white suit is significantly dirtier, covered in dirt and little pieces of glass.

Lorem snuffles and wipes his nose; is he crying?

He picks his head up and looks down at his jacket, wiping off the glass and smearing a little brown, dried blood on the jacket.

He thinks to himself; what can he do?

He can't go home.

CUT TO:

DEAD SUPERINTENDANT BEING CARRIED ON A STRETCHER

CUT BACK TO:

LOREM,

Taking deep breaths in and out, trying to calm himself down.

He keeps thinking. Even if he did go home, he wouldn't have his keys. How would he even get home?

CUT TO:

LOREM'S WALLET IN NIKO'S HANDS

CUT BACK TO:

LOREM,

Getting shaky again, on the verge of tears.

Then, he stops and thinks.

He wipes away tears and looks up. He knows what he must do.

CUT TO:

INT. BLINKY'S - LATER

RIIIIIIIING

The Chef looks up as Lorem walks in, noting the blood and cuts.

CHEF
Rough night?

LOREM IPSUM
Yeah.

A pause.

CHEF
What do you want?

LOREM IPSUM
Where did that group of people go?

CHEF
I don't know.

LOREM IPSUM
Did they, um, did they mention going anywhere?

CHEF
They said something about some club, some place down on Borden, Sugar Daddy's something.

LOREM IPSUM
A strip club?

CHEF
I don't know, I don't go to those places.

A beat. Lorem looks at him, unsure.

CHEF (CONT'D)
I don't! What're you trying to say about me, pal?

A beat. They both look at each other.

LOREM IPSUM
Thanks.

Lorem turns and walks out.

EXT. BORDEN AVENUE - LATER

Lorem walks quickly down the empty street, his jacket flapping in the wind. In the distance, THUNDER, LIGHTNING crackling in the night sky.

He walks past squat warehouse after warehouse, with big TRUCKS parked outside and small SECURITY BOOTH's by the gates.

SHIPPING CRATES covered in graffiti sit behind a thin chain link fence, while thin, bare TREES stand above them.

Lorem walks in the shadow of these buildings, walking past wall after wall of graffiti, occasionally being lit up by a lamp on the side of a building.

A small breeze moves through the air, bringing with it RED AND YELLOW LEAVES, blowing against Lorem's shoes.

He comes to a SHORT, NONDESCRIPT RED BUILDING, with NO WINDOWS crammed in next to a shipping building. Above it the LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY looms. On the outside is a sign.

This is SUGAR DADDY'S.

Parked in front is BILLY's WHITE PARTY LIMO.

Lorem walks up a few steps to a WOODEN DOOR with GLASS SLITS and opens it.

INT. SUGAR DADDY'S - FRONT ROOM - SAME

Inside a SMALL ROOM with a FLORAL WALLPAPER sits a METAL DETECTOR, PLASTIC TABLE, and a SMALL WINDOW to a COAT CHECK.

Standing by the metal detector is a large BOUNCER, looking at his phone.

LOUD STRIP CLUB MUSIC plays from the MAIN ROOM, right behind a small wooden door in the corner.

Lorem steps in and the Bouncer looks up, inspecting him.

LOREM IPSUM

Hi.

BOUNCER

Got any metal on you?

Lorem pats himself down.

LOREM IPSUM

No.

BOUNCER

Walk through here then.

Lorem walks through the metal detector.

BOUNCER (CONT'D)

(pointing to the small
window)

Coat check's over there.

LOREM IPSUM

I'm ok, thanks.

BOUNCER

There's a two drink minimum
tonight, but it's two drink
Tuesday, so it shouldn't be very
hard.

LOREM IPSUM

Right.

Lorem walks towards the main room.

BOUNCER

And don't touch the girls or I'll
have to throw you out.

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

I won't.

BOUNCER

You look like you would.

Lorem stands, unsure of how to react to this. He rubs his
fingers together.

LOREM IPSUM

Right.

BOUNCER

You're a weird guy. Don't touch the
girls, weird guy.

LOREM IPSUM

Ok.

BOUNCER

Get a new shirt too.

LOREM IPSUM

Right.

Lorem walks through the small door and into the

MAIN ROOM - SAME

Bright lights shine down from the black and red ceiling, illuminating the WOMAN DANCING ON STAGE, scantily clad and spinning around a pole.

The place is mostly empty, with a few OLDER MEN caressing their drinks, sitting behind a red bar that surrounds the stage.

Lorem survey's the area and, seeing a lack of Billy, turns to leave, but comes face to face with the Bouncer, who shakes his head, gesturing for Lorem to stay; he has to buy his drinks.

His eyes widen as he slowly walks to the bar, past the empty booths and hopelessly upbeat walls (covered in paintings and fancy light fixtures).

Lorem leans against the bar and gestures for the bartender, trying to act confident.

LOREM IPSUM

(to Bartender)

Hi, um, can I have a drink?

BARTENDER

What drink?

LOREM IPSUM

I'm not, uh, very sure.

BARTENDER

How about a beer, you want a beer?

LOREM IPSUM

Sure.

Lorem reaches for his wallet, realizing he doesn't have it.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

(as he gets his beer)

I, uh, I think I forget my wallet at home.

Lorem chuckles and the Bartender looks at him, mad.

BARTENDER

You forgot your wallet?

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, yeah.

BARTENDER

But you ordered a drink anyway?

LOREM IPSUM

Well--

BARTENDER

I already gave you your drink. You can't take it back. It's been wasted.

LOREM IPSUM

Well, uh...

Lorem looks to his left, noticing two YOUNG MEN, NICKY and TONY, drinking heavily, clearly stressed.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

(to Tony)

Um, uh, hi.

Tony spins towards him.

TONY

What, what do you want?

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

Can I borrow some cash?

TONY

Some cash? As if I have cash to spare. I don't have any cash to spare. I owe it all, I owe all the cash I have, I can't spare it. To fucking Arlo, that hippie bastard.

NICKY

Calm down, calm down man. We'll get the cash, don't worry. We'll get it. Somehow.

TONY

We owe him everything we have Nicky, what are we gonna' do?

(MORE)

TONY (CONT'D)

Jesus I knew I shouldn't've left
Wisconsin. Mom told me not to leave
Nicky!

NICKY

Calm down man! Get a grip of
yourself for Christ's sake.

Tony wraps his head in his hands, trying to calm down. Nicky
rubs his shoulders.

A beat. Lorem looks at them, unsure of what to say. Then:

LOREM IPSUM

Uh... right.

Lorem turns back to the Bartender.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

Sorry.

BARTENDER

(muttering)

Son of a bitch.

Lorem walks away from the bar, wandering the club, unsure of
what to do.

He sticks his hand into his pocket as he walks, noticing the
dancer but trying not to look.

Then, he has an idea, and jogs back to the Bartender.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

What do you want now?

LOREM IPSUM

Have you, um, have you seen a big
group of people come in here?

A beat.

BARTENDER

You have to be more specific than
that. I work at a strip club.

LOREM IPSUM

It can't be that hard. I don't see
anyone her...

The Bartender gives him a death stare and Lorem shuts his
mouth, jams his hands back into his pockets, and turns
around.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

Thank you.

BARTENDER

Fuck you.

He goes back to wandering and leans against a wall, trying to figure out what to do next.

As he leans, a DANCER walks by him and smiles. They lock eyes.

DANCER

Hi hon.

LOREM IPSUM

Hi.

A beat.

DANCER

You got something on your shirt?

He looks down at the polka-dotted shirt.

LOREM IPSUM

It's, um, it's designed that way.

DANCER

Polka dots?

LOREM IPSUM

Yeah.

DANCER

You don't seem like a polka dot guy to me.

A beat.

DANCER (CONT'D)

It looks like blood.

LOREM IPSUM

Well, uh, it isn't.

She looks from the dried blood back to him.

DANCER

Have a nice night hon.

LOREM IPSUM

Yeah, thanks. You too.

She walks away and he cringes, looking back down at his shoes.

As Lorem walks, a DRUNK MAN walks past him, making eye contact.

Lorem smiles and the Drunk Man jumps on him, grabbing him by the shoulders. Lorem recoils.

DRUNK MAN

What do you want! What the fuck do you want! What are you looking at!

LOREM IPSUM

Nothing! I'm not doing anything!

DRUNK MAN

So why the fuck did you look at me!

LOREM IPSUM

I don't know!

The Drunk Man suddenly lets go and stumbles away. Lorem catches his breath and watches as the Man walks out, confused and slightly terrified.

He stands in the bar for a moment, thinking: what the fuck is going on?

Suddenly, he has to go to the bathroom. It's been a while since he's gone.

He spots a BATHROOM SIGN, with an arrow pointing down a hallway, and follows it.

BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lorem stands in front of a mirror, splashing water in his face and trying to rub the blood off his shirt. It isn't working. He only smears the blood more. Now it looks like a bear mauled him.

He stops trying and looks at himself in the mirror. He stares. The pounding of the music from the club filters into the bathroom.

LOREM IPSUM

(quietly)

Find Billy, get the wallet, go home, never leave.

He hears a ticking and looks above the mirror, spotting a clock.

It's 2 AM.

*

Lorem groans and walks over to a trash can, throwing out paper towels covered in dried blood.

The pounding gets LOUDER, even though the trash can is FARTHER from the main room.

Lorem, with a confused look on his face, follows the pounding to a HANDICAPPED STALL with YELLOW POLICE TAPE all over it.

He stares at it, then decides to climb under. He doesn't want the police on his tail.

He gets to the other side and stands up, kicking a piece of toilet paper off of his shoe.

He listens for the pounding.

It seems to be coming from BEHIND THE WHITE TILLED WALL.

He leans against the wall, the pounding getting louder and louder as he moves towards the corner.

He presses his head harder and harder against the wall, trying to figure out what this sound could be.

As he listens, the wall SWINGS BACK and he stumbles through, falling to the ground.

AURELIO'S - SAME

His eyes widen as he stands, staring at a WHOLE OTHER CLUB, FULL OF PEOPLE!

GREEN and PURPLE LIGHTS pulsate as Lorem, looking dazed and confused, wanders around the club, bumping into people. He seems to have totally lost it.

The pounding music slams into his ears, disorienting him. The club seems to morph into a green and purple hell scape.

As he stumbles through the sea of people, someone bumps into him.

BILLY

Lorem?

LOREM IPSUM

Huh?

Billy grabs Lorem, lifting him off his feet.

BILLY
How the fuck did you get in here?

LOREM IPSUM
I walked through a wall.

BILLY
Fucking crazy!

LOREM IPSUM
Yeah.

BILLY
What was that Russian guy's deal?

LOREM IPSUM
His deal?

BILLY
Yeah!

LOREM IPSUM
Well, uh, I lie--

BILLY
Come back to the table with me,
we're playing poker.

LOREM IPSUM
Poker?

BILLY
You need to get your hearing
checked Lorem. You can't hear
anything I'm saying.

Billy drags Lorem behind him as he pushes through the crowd,
making his way to a small booth in the back.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Do you play?

LOREM IPSUM
No.

BILLY
Do you want to?

LOREM IPSUM
Not really. Um, Billy, I have
something to ask.

BILLY
Oh yeah?

LOREM IPSUM

Well--

BILLY

Let me finish this game first.

Billy sits down at the booth, across the table from a LARGE BRAZILIAN MAN in his late 30s.

Between them are a deck of cards and a REVOLVER, shining purple and green.

Lorem's eyes widen.

BILLY (CONT'D)

(to the man)

You deal.

The man deals as Lorem stares at the gun, fixated.

They play.

Billy puts down an ACE, then a QUEEN.

The man puts down a JACK, then a 9 OF HEARTS.

Billy smiles.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I win.

Lorem looks at Billy, confused. That wasn't poker.

LOREM IPSUM

That wasn't poker.

BILLY

It's not?

LOREM IPSUM

No.

BILLY

Oh who gives a shit Lorem. Lighten up! You need to relax. I've been telling you this all night. (to the man) This is my cousin, Lorem.

The man sticks out his hand and Lorem shakes it, hesitantly.

BILLY (CONT'D)
(to the man)
He's been so uptight all night, I
just want him to relax. (To Lorem)
Just relax!

Lorem looks at Billy, unsure of what to say. He just smiles.

THE MAN
Are we playing again?

BILLY
My cousin wanted to play. Lorem,
you play poker, right?

LOREM IPSUM
Uh--

BILLY
You'll love it. It's very easy to
pick up.

Billy gets up from the table, gesturing for Lorem to sit.

LOREM IPSUM
You know, uh, Billy, I just wanted
to ask you for something.

BILLY
Oh come on Lorem. I'll be here when
the game's done. You play, then
we'll talk.

LOREM IPSUM
Billy, I really have to talk to y--

BILLY
(louder and darker)
Play the damn game Lorem!

LOREM IPSUM
Alright, ok.

Lorem sits down at the table, hesitantly.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
So, uh, who goes first?

BILLY
(gesturing towards the
Brazilian man)
Paulo here deals. Then you play.
Regular poker rules.

LOREM IPSUM

Right.

Paulo, the Brazilian man, deals the cards.

Lorem looks at his hand:

A 3 OF HEARTS and an ACE OF SPADES.

Billy looks over Lorem's shoulder and smiles.

Lorem looks up from the cards to Billy, confused about what to do next.

Billy gestures for Lorem to put his cards down on the table. Lorem nods slowly.

Paulo watches, suspicious. Are they cheating?

Lorem puts his cards down on the table.

Paulo watches as they land. His brow furrows as a grimace slides across his face.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

So. Did I, um, did I win?

Paulo looks from the cards to Lorem, then to Billy.

PAULO

You cheated.

BILLY

No we didn't. You're just drunk Paulo.

PAULO

You cheated me. Both of you cheated.

He begins to get mad. Lorem watches, horrified, as Billy tries to calm him down.

BILLY

No one cheated, we didn't cheat.

PAULO

Yes you did cheat. He cheated. I saw it in his eyes, in his soul.

Paulo REACHES FOR THE GUN!

BILLY

Oh shit.

He grabs it and points it at Lorem who ducks underneath the table.

The club doesn't notice.

PAULO
You bastards cheated me!

Billy talks to Paulo, softly.

BILLY
Can you put the gun down?

PAULO
No.

BILLY
Please?

PAULO
No!

BILLY
Pretty please? (A beat) With a
cherry on top?

Paulo considers, then puts the gun back down.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Thank you.

PAULO
(unhappily)
You're welcome.

A beat.

Lorem gets back up from underneath the table.

Billy and Paulo look at each other, then begin to laugh.

Lorem watches, confused.

They start laughing harder, louder. Lorem just sits, shifting in his seat.

Then:

BILLY
(to Lorem)
I'm sorry Lorem, I totally forgot.
You wanted to ask me something?

Paulo wipes tears from his eyes, a result of laughing so hard.

Lorem eyes him, confused and a little terrified.

BILLY (CONT'D)

What was it?

LOREM IPSUM

Well, uh, remember that Russian guy?

BILLY

The one whose script I read? Or whose script you read? I'm confused.

LOREM IPSUM

I read.

BILLY

Oh yeah, right. Wait, your story! Tell it. (to Paulo) Wanna hear a story?

PAULO

Yes.

BILLY

Tell it! Come on Lorem!

PAULO

I wanna' hear it.

LOREM IPSUM

Basically, he has my wallet and, uh, well, if you don't give him a time for a meeting to talk about his script, he'll, uh, basically he'll kill me.

A beat.

PAULO

Woah. Want me to kill him?

LOREM IPSUM

What? No.

BILLY

So you want me to give him a meeting?

LOREM IPSUM

Well, um, if you wouldn't mind.

Billy thinks, then smiles.

BILLY

You haven't earned it yet Lorem.

LOREM IPSUM

Haven't earned what?

BILLY

This. A favor. You haven't earned it.

Lorem stares at him.

LOREM IPSUM

So what do you want me to do?

BILLY

Take that pill.

LOREM IPSUM

What pill?

BILLY

The one I gave you, earlier. Take the pill and I'll do it.

Lorem thinks about it.

Billy and Paulo watch him, expectantly.

He grabs the pill from his pocket and sticks it in his mouth.

Billy and Paulo smile.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Did you take it?

Lorem nods. Billy doesn't believe him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Open up.

Lorem looks away.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Open your mouth or I won't do it.

Lorem sighs and, accepting his fate, swallows the pill. He opens his mouth and Billy checks inside.

It's empty.

Fear fills Lorem's eyes.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Perfect. That'll loosen you up. You should stay for a while.

LOREM IPSUM

He said he wanted it on a business card.

A beat.

BILLY

Who?

LOREM IPSUM

The Russian guy. He said he wanted you to sign a business card with a time.

BILLY

Oh right. Do you have a pen?

Paulo nods and hands him a GOLD BALLPOINT PEN.

Billy grabs a BUSINESS CARD from his pocket and scribbles a day and a time. He hands the card to Lorem.

BILLY (CONT'D)

There you go. There's your card. Take it and go.

Lorem looks at the card. A giant smile jumps onto his face.

LOREM IPSUM

Thanks.

BILLY

Yeah. I'll see you around Lorem.

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

Yeah.

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

When will the pill hit?

BILLY

What do you mean?

LOREM IPSUM

Like, uh, when will I, um, feel it.

BILLY

Oh. Like thirty minutes. An hour.

LOREM IPSUM

Right. (A beat) Goodbye.

BILLY

Have fun.

Lorem runs out of Aurelio's, pushing his way through the crowd, and back into the bathroom, his hand clutching the business card.

CUT TO:

BATHROOM STALL - MOMENTS LATER

Lorem kneels next to a toilet, his arms draped around the bowl, trying to vomit.

It's not working.

He comes up for air, his collar drenched in sweat.

He looks at his fingers, his face full of fear. He doesn't want to but he has to.

He sticks his fingers down his throat, trying to force himself to vomit.

It doesn't work. All it does is make him cough.

He looks at his fingers and drops them in failure.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh shit.

INT. CAB DEPOT - LATER

Footsteps echo through the large cement warehouse as Lorem SPRINTS in, sweating through his shirt, clinging on to the business card for dear life.

He slows down, noticing Niko isn't there.

He frowns and walks towards the front office.

FRONT OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Leonid sits at his desk, eating another donut and watching a RUSSIAN SOAP OPERA on an old laptop.

The GUN SAFE sits next to him, closed, the gun safely back inside.

The door opens and Leonid, once again, jumps into the air, flinging his donut across the room.

He CURSES IN RUSSIAN as Lorem walks in, standing quietly by the door, unsure of what to do, seeing as how Niko is gone.

IN RUSSIAN:

LEONID

Jesus Christ knock next time! You scared the shit out of me.

Lorem stands, unsure of what to say.

LEONID (CONT'D)

(still in RUSSIAN)

What do you want? Why are you here?

A beat. Then:

LOREM IPSUM

Uh, hi. Do you know where Niko went?

A beat.

IN RUSSIAN:

LEONID

What do you want?

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

Um, do you speak, uh, Eng...English by chance?

Leonid looks at Lorem and groans.

LEONID

(trying his best, IN ENGLISH)

I no speak English.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh.

Lorem looks down at his feet as tears begin to appear in his eyes.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

You don't?

LEONID

(IN RUSSIAN)

Get out of here, I'm trying to watch my show.

Leonid sits back down and presses play on the SHOW, RUSSIAN DIALOGUE filling the room.

Lorem shuffles out of the room, quietly. He closes the door softly behind him.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Lorem stands against the depot, staring down at the card as hard as he can, trying to boar holes into it.

The tears begin to fall as all the rage inside him shoots out. He's gone through hell: been shot at, been drugged, beaten up and dragged around, all for it to end here. The Russian guy can't speak English.

He lets out a SCREAM, a LONG, ANGUISHED SCREAM. He's broken.

LOREM IPSUM

FUCK! FUCK FUCK FUCK!

He flails around, throwing his arms into the air, having a complete meltdown.

He screams and shouts and runs towards the BRICK WALL of the depot and kicks it!

Kicks it HARD, hurting his foot.

He screams and collapses to the wall, leaning against it and holding his foot in pain.

It's bleeding.

He puts his foot on the ground lightly and looks at the card in his hand.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

(muttering)

Son of a bitch.

He throws the card on the GROUND!

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch!

The wind carries it away, slowly, down the street, away from Lorem.

He watches it go, anger bubbling behind his eyes. Then:

He snaps out of it.

He CHASES after the card as it flies down the street, moving faster and faster now.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)

No no no no no no no!

He lifts his arms -- the card is almost in reach.

Then, the breeze picks up and LIFTS the card into the air, swirling it around above Lorem's head.

He jumps for up, stretching his arms as far as they can go. His eyes widen. The card is almost in reach.

His finger tips graze it.

At that moment, THUNDER CRACKS in the sky and RAIN starts POURING DOWN, drenching him in a TORRENTIAL DOWNFALL.

The card shoots to the ground, immediately drenched in water. Lorem catches it in his hands and cradles it, his hair dripping water onto it.

The dried blood begins to RUN, streaming down his white shirt.

He stares down at the card.

The ink has begun to run but it's still readable!

He puts it LIGHTLY it into his pocket, taking as much care as possible, and raises his dirtied suit coat ABOVE HIS HEAD. He LIMPS towards the DINER, hoping the Chef is still there.

Dirty water splashes across his shoes as he limps, the sounds echoing through the empty street.

He gets to the front door and tries to open it. A metal lock clinks as Lorem realizes all of the lights are off. It's closed for the night.

He curses himself and looks down the block.

Through the rain he makes out a YELLOW LIGHT, LUCKY's, the bar. Parked next to it is a WHITE VAN that wasn't there before. No one is in the front seat.

He groans, not wanting to ever enter a bar again, and runs towards it, having no other option.

The rain beats down on his jacket, seeping through, soaking his back. Strands of hair fall in front of his face, stuck together by the water.

Sheets of rain fall, running into the STORM DRAINS, carrying dirt and garbage with it.

The NEON YELLOW SIGN of Lucky's flickers, casting a STROBE LIGHT OF YELLOW across Lorem as he enters.

In the background, Tony and Nicky walk towards the van. Lorem doesn't notice and they don't notice him.

INT. LUCKY'S - SAME

Lorem wipes his feet on a mat and shakes, trying to get as much water off as possible. He puts his suit coat back on and walks towards the bar, a HUGE WATER PATCH in the back.

The place is quiet, full of empty booths. A TV above the bar plays a KNICKS GAME, humming quietly over the sound of the rain.

Warm yellow light shines down from the ceiling, casting the bar in an unnaturally comforting light.

A QUIET JAZZ SONGS PLAYS somewhere in the bar, far away.

As strange as it may sound, the place is nice, warm, comforting.

Lorem sighs a sigh of relief. This is not what he was expecting.

He walks over to the bar and sits down on a stool.

He grabs a SMALL NAPKIN from off the bar and tries to dry off. The napkin rips instantly.

He stuffs it in his pocket and grabs another. It rips too, on account of the water.

Lorem groans.

PETER
(O.S.)
Want a towel?

Lorem looks up, stuffing that napkin in his pocket too.

Standing in front of him is PETER, -- mid 30s, handsome, relaxed, chipper -- the BARTENDER. He holds a rag in his hands.

LOREM IPSUM
Huh?

PETER
Did you go for a swim or something?

LOREM IPSUM
What?

PETER
Geez man, you're soaked!

Lorem doesn't get it.

PETER (CONT'D)
Just playing.

Peter sticks out his hand.

PETER (CONT'D)
I'm Peter. Want a drink?

Lorem looks at his hand, hesitantly. After a moment, he shakes it.

Peter smiles.

PETER (CONT'D)
I thought you were gonna' leave me hanging for a second!

Peter laughs.

Lorem chuckles politely.

PETER (CONT'D)
So, do you want a drink? Beer maybe? Looks like you've had a rough night.

Lorem thinks.

LOREM IPSUM
Water's fine. Thanks.

PETER

Water comin' right up!

Peter walks over to a faucet and fills up a glass of water. He hands it to Lorem.

PETER (CONT'D)

So about that towel.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh, I'm okay, thanks.

Peter looks at him.

They stand in silence for a moment.

PETER

So it's really coming down out there, huh?

LOREM IPSUM

Yeah.

PETER

Hmm.

Lorem takes a sip from the glass.

PETER (CONT'D)

So what're you doing out here this late at night? No one's out here, except for the homeless man. His name's Jacob, nice guy.

Lorem looks at him, unsure of what to say.

PETER (CONT'D)

Cat's got your tongue?

Lorem thinks, then decides he has to unload onto someone.

LOREM IPSUM

Well, uh, I had to get this card to some Russian guy at the cab depot but he left before I could find him and the only person there speaks Russian. And, well, uh, you know, this guy has my wallet and I really need it back to get home because of, well, it's a long story and you don't want to hear it.

PETER

Sure I do. Come on friend, tell me what's on your mind.

Lorem looks at him. He can't believe this guy. This much warmth, this much kindness -- he hasn't experienced it in a long time.

LOREM IPSUM

Well, uh,, my cousin, um, he invited me out and I figured, well, why not, right? It's been a while since I've been with people, except for this guy Arlo I know, and, uh, well (a beat) I'm lonely. You know? I'm alone and I figured why not. And, of course, it all fell apart. This taxi driver stole my wallet and is basically, like, holding it hostage. He shot at me with a gun! A gun! A bullet almost hit me in the head. And now I had to go get that card, that might not even be legible, and my cousin drugged me -- he forced me to do drugs. I tried to throw it up but I couldn't. And now I'm stuck and I don't know what to do.

(a beat)

I'm not good with people. All I wanted was some friends. Is that so bad?

*

Peter thinks.

Lorem takes deep shaky breaths, trying to calm himself down. He's never talked about himself for that long, never revealed himself like that.

*

*

After mulling it over for a few seconds, Peter speaks:

PETER

Quite the pickle you're in, huh?

Lorem looks up, slightly bewildered.

PETER (CONT'D)

Well, I speak a little Russian.

LOREM IPSUM

(not noticing the importance of the words)

Okay?

PETER
Don't believe me?

LOREM IPSUM
What?

PETER
I'll show you.

IN RUSSIAN:

PETER (CONT'D)
Hi I'm Peter. How are you? This is
Russian. I am speaking Russian.

IN ENGLISH:

PETER (CONT'D)
See? Russian! How crazy is that.

LOREM IPSUM
Very.

PETER
I just took some classes, read a
book, and bang. Russian.

LOREM IPSUM
Russian.

PETER
Exactly.

A beat. Lorem looks down at his drink and takes a sip. Peter
watches him, a smile plastered onto his face.

PETER (CONT'D)
I could help you out.

Lorem's eyes go wide and he looks at Peter.

PETER (CONT'D)
You seem excited.

LOREM IPSUM
You can help?

PETER
I don't see why not. No one's
gonna' walk in here. Just watch it
for me.

LOREM IPSUM
The bar?

PETER

What else? Just don't rob me, you know?

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

So you'll go to the depot and ask?

PETER

Well you have to tell me what to ask for, but yeah. Once you tell me, sure. You seem like you could use a hand.

Lorem smiles.

LOREM IPSUM

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

PETER

You haven't even told me what to ask yet!

LOREM IPSUM

Oh right! Ask for Niko's address.

PETER

What's his last name?

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

I don't know.

PETER

So just Niko?

LOREM IPSUM

Tell the guy Lorem wants to know.

PETER

Ok.

Peter gets up from the bar and grabs an umbrella.

PETER (CONT'D)

Watch the bar for me. I'll be right back.

Peter walks through the door and into the storm outside.

Lorem watches and smiles, hope running through his veins. He can get home!

EXT. LUCKY'S - SAME

Peter opens the umbrella and walks down the block towards the depot, walking past the white van.

As he passes the van, the DRIVER and PASSENGER DOORS OPEN!

INT. LUCKY'S - SAME

Lorem sits quietly, looking down at his glass of water.

He takes a sip and stands up, walking around the bar, looking around.

He comes to a wall LINED WITH PICTURES. He stares at them, at one in particular. It's a GROUP OF FRIENDS, all standing in front of the bar, smiling, arms wrapped around each other's shoulders.

Lorem looks at this picture, this faded picture, and sighs.

PLOP

He looks down on the ground and sees a bead of sweat, just fallen from his forehead.

His eyes go wide as he begins to clench his teeth. The drug is kicking in.

He stumbles back from the wall, towards the bar, and falls onto it. His glass shoots down, shattering against the floor.

He begins sweating profusely, dripping everywhere he goes. He starts panicking, breathing in and out, hard.

The world around him begins to change, ever so slightly. Walls stretch, lights brighten, everything starts moving, starts going wrong.

He's tripping right now, and he couldn't hate it more.

His eyes race, darting left and right, looking for an exit. He wants to stop.

LOREM IPSUM
(to himself)
Breathe, breathe, breathe,
breathe...

He puts his hands over his face as he begins to shake uncontrollably.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Stop, stop, stop, stop, stop...

As he trips...

THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN!

Lorem spins to face it as...

TWO MASKED MEN BARGE IN!

Over their hands are BROWN PAPER BAGS, hiding guns (maybe.)

Lorem screams as the men turn to him.

MAN #1
I thought you said no one would be
here!

MAN #2
I didn't see anyone before!

MAN #1
Jesus Christ!

MAN #1 takes off his mask, revealing himself to be TONY (from the club).

MAN #2
What the fuck are you doing! There
are cameras here you idiot!

TONY
Oh who gives a shit Nicky.

NICKY
Don't say my name!

Lorem stands, his hands in the air, watching the two men talk, equal parts confused and terrified.

NICKY (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ you really fucked this
up didn't you.

TONY
We wouldn't even be here if you
hadn't stolen those dru--

Lorem COUGHS and the two men turn to face him.

They stare at each other.

NICKY

Oh shit that's the guy from the club.

TONY

Huh?

NICKY

The guy, he asked us for money.

TONY

Oh yeah.

LOREM IPSUM

Wh-wha?

Lorem shakes, sweating more and more, trying not to breathe so hard but failing. He looks on the verge of a heart attack.

They stare for a moment, then:

TONY

The money.

NICKY

Right.

Nicky walks up to Lorem, sticking his paper bag out like a gun.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Where's the cash register motherfucker.

Lorem looks down, shaking.

TONY

Where's the money motherfucker!

Lorem, his hands shaking, points behind the bar.

Tony leaps over the counter and finds the register. He cheers and pops it open, taking his paper bag off, revealing no gun, and starts sticking money in it. There isn't much in the register but, whatever there was, is all gone now.

Lorem and Nicky stare at each other as Tony grabs the cash.

NICKY

(without breaking eye
contact with Lorem)

You got it?

TONY

Got it.

NICKY

Let's go.

Nicky and Tony turn to leave, but stop by the door. They turn back and Nicky walks up to Lorem, his paper bag right in Lorem's face.

NICKY (CONT'D)

You're coming with us motherfucker!

Lorem starts to shake harder, his breathing becoming more unstable.

LOREM IPSUM

Wh-why?

NICKY

No witnesses!

Tony GRABS LOREM and pushes him out of the bar, with Nicky following close behind.

INT/EXT. VAN - MOMENTS LATER

The BACK DOORS OPEN and Lorem is thrown in, falling to the cold metal surface with a *CLUNK*.

He lies motionless on the floor, listening to the rain beat down on the roof of the van.

The front doors open and Tony and Nicky get in, their masks no longer on.

They turn the engine on and the car rumbles to a start. It begins to move.

NICKY

Shit man that was crazy! Fucking crazy!

TONY

We got our money back and that's what matters.

A beat. Lorem listens quietly, lying in a pool of sweat.

NICKY

(quietly)

But what are we gonna' do about him?

TONY

I guess we gotta' kill him.

Lorem's eyes go wide.

NICKY

Kill him? I can't kill him. I'm not made for that stuff.

TONY

Then I'll do it, or maybe Robbie. But we can't let him live.

NICKY

I don't know man, that sounds a little extreme to me.

TONY

20 years in jail sounds a little extreme.

NICKY

Yeah, I guess you're right.

They drive silently. Behind them, by Lorem, shoes slap the metal surface. Then, a *CLICK* and the sound of wind *RUSHING IN*.

Nicky turns around.

NICKY (CONT'D)

What the fu--

Lorem stands by the back door, leaning out of the *MOVING VAN*, ready to jump!

He looks from the concrete on the ground, moving fast, to Nicky. He makes a decision. He chooses concrete.

He jumps.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Holy shit!

EXT. STREET - SAME

Lorem crashes to the ground, everything ripping, cutting, as the van keeps going, moving faster now.

The water on the street splashes around him as the rain pounds down.

His body rolls a few feet and stops. He lies motionless in the street, the quietness enveloping him.

Everything is still, silent.

The warehouses around him stand quietly, watching, anticipating.

Then, out of the silence...

A BREATH.

Lorem sits up, breathing hard, his suit ripped to shreds and his arms all cut up. He's covered in blood, cuts everywhere.

The blood washes off him and into the street, running into a sewer drain.

He sits still in the middle of the street, catching his breath, trying to calibrate himself, to figure out where he is.

As he sits, shopping cart wheels SCRATCH the street behind him and he turns to face the sound.

It's the HOMELESS MAN from before, this time pushing his shopping cart, also soaking wet.

The man stops next to Lorem and looks at him. Lorem looks up at him.

HOMELESS MAN

Rough night?

Lorem, unsure of what to say, nods.

The Homeless Man laughs.

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D)

Get back up kid. There's still hope.

He laughs again.

Then, he shuffles off, pushing his cart back into the night.

Lorem sits there, trying to think of what the man could have possibly meant.

He can't come to an answer and looks down at his watch, the surface all scratched up.

The hands read 3:30.

*

Lorem groans.

He looks to his left and sees a YELLOW LIGHT, in the distance, flickering. It's far. *

He pushes himself off the street with a groan and begins walking towards the light, limping, dripping blood and water.

He looks like a zombie, back from the dead, bright white, covered in rags, and bleeding. *

EXT. LUCKY'S - LATER

Lorem stumbles to the front door of the bar and leans against the brick wall, catching his breath.

He looks down at himself, down at the rags, and chuckles. What a ridiculous night.

He moves to open up the door but it swings open from inside. Peter stands in the doorway, smiling.

PETER

Oh man, I thought you had robbed me or something!

Peter chuckles, then notices the blood.

PETER (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ what happened to you?

Lorem thinks.

LOREM IPSUM

Just getting some fresh air.

PETER

Right. Shoulda' brought an umbrella!

Peter laughs at his joke. Lorem looks at him blankly.

They stand in silence for a moment.

PETER (CONT'D)

I talked to Leonid! He's a real nice guy and, well, he told me where your friend is!

Lorem's ears perk up.

LOREM IPSUM

Oh yeah?

PETER

Yeah. He said, uh, 51 34th street.

Lorem looks at Peter.

LOREM IPSUM

Thanks.

PETER

Thank you. Thanks for watching the bar, for being a pal.

A beat.

LOREM IPSUM

No problem.

PETER

See you around.

LOREM IPSUM

Yeah.

Lorem turns and stumbles back into the night, struggling but moving.

Peter watches him go and laughs.

PETER

Weird guy.

He turns and walks back into the bar.

EXT. 34TH STREET - LATER

Puddles line the street, reflecting the few exterior lights of the houses lining the street, next to two short but long warehouses.

The rain has stopped and the night is overcast, cool with a slight breeze. It's nice out, in a fall sort of way. It's also dead silent, still. The few trees that line the street sway in the breeze.

Then, footsteps, drawn out and slow, break the silence.

At the end of the street, bathed in red from a stoplight, soon to be green, stands Lorem, his hand on his leg, looking down the street, looking for 51. He's stopped sweating, stopped tripping. He's exhausted.

He walks down the middle of the empty street, past the warehouse, past house number 57, 55, 53, and comes to a SMALL WHITE HOUSE, a classic QUEEN'S house, not wide but long, stacked up two stories tall.

Lorem smiles, then notices the lights are off. In the driveway is NIKO'S MINIVAN.

He walks up to the minivan and looks in. On the driver's seat is Lorem's WALLET.

He cheers quietly, walks up to the front door, and raises his fist, ready to knock. Before he does, he reaches into his pocket to grab the business card. *

He holds it in his hand and looks down. His smile fades. *

It's shredded. Illegible. The ink has run off the page and now Lorem's hands are STAINED WITH BLACK. *

He drops the card and backs down the steps slowly, shakily, his eyes on the front door of the house. *

He stands in the street, staring forward. What can he do? *

Nothing. *

He lowers himself to the sidewalk and sits, his back bathed in harsh white light from the driveway. *

He cradles his head in his hand and looks down at the street. *

LOREM IPSUM
(to himself)
You're so stupid, stupid, stupid.

On the ground, next to him, is a RED BRICK. Lorem stares at it for a moment and has an idea.

He reaches his hand out to the brick but shakes his head. He can't.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
(quietly, shaking his
head)
No, no, no, no, no. Don't. You
can't.

He looks over his shoulder at the minivan, then back to the brick. What's more important? *

His mind races, his hands shake, his eyes move left and right, up and down. He's coming to a decision.

Then, he stops.

He's made up his mind.

He grabs the brick, his face dead and his eyes low.

He pushes himself off the sidewalk and walks, slowly, brick in hand, towards the minivan.

He stops, thinks, and starts again. He has to. There's no other way.

He gets to the driver's door and stares through the window at his wallet.

He raises the brick and looks at the quiet house behind him.

LOREM IPSUM (CONT'D)
(quietly)
I'm sorry.

SMASH!

Glass flies everywhere as the brick lands in the driver's seat. The car alarm GOES OFF and a light FLICKS on in the house.

Lorem reaches in and grabs his wallet. He shoves it deep into his pocket and limps off, back down the street, the car alarm blaring.

Other lights turn on, other houses wake up.

Lorem limps as fast as he can, his ripped coat blowing in the wind, tears in his eyes.

The front door opens and Niko, in an undershirt and shorts, steps out, holding a baseball bat.

NIKO
Lorem?

Lorem doesn't stop. He keeps going, disappearing down the street.

As he limps, a cab drives past.

He sticks his hand out and the cab pulls over to the sidewalk.

Lorem dives in.

INT/EXT. CAB - SAME

LOREM IPSUM
31st between Broadway and 5th.

*

The cab moves and Lorem leans back in his seat, breathing hard. He wipes the tears from his eyes as the car drives through the quiet streets.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

EARLY MORNING LIGHT filters in through the dirty windows as the apartment sits still. Everything seems frozen.

Then, the door opens and Lorem stumbles in.

He shuts the door behind him and leans against it, looking at his apartment, still breathing hard.

He puts his wallet on a table, with the keys inside, and walks towards the open windows.

He looks through them and sees a few people, down on the street, rushing towards subway stations, work, life, etc.

He watches them for a few moments, then shuts the window and turns away.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Lorem lies, all cleaned up, with scratches all over his face, in his bed, looking up at a CEILING FAN, spinning slowly. He watches the center of it wobble as the wooden planks spin.

The phone rings next to him and he doesn't move. It rings, and rings, and rings, and rings.

Lorem doesn't move. He's done, shut off from the rest of the world. He doesn't want any part in it anymore.

The ringing stops.

He sits, still.

FADE TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The neon lights dance across his wall as Lorem watches from his couch, sitting quietly.

He seems conflicted, thinking about the events of the previous night. You can tell it's weighing on him heavily.

He rubs his fingers together, rubs his hands against his thigh.

The lights move across the wall, then STOP.

He's SHUT the blinds.

He sits back down on the couch and stares at his wall, now blank, empty.

He stares, emotionless.

FADE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Lorem lies motionless in his bed, wearing the same clothes as yesterday. Morning light filters in through the cracks in the blinds.

Everything is still, silent.

The fan ROCKS quietly above him.

Slivers of light fall across his face, revealing his eyes staring up at the ceiling fan. He's content to just lie in that bed for the rest of his life.

In the distance, out in the hallway, he hears PAWS SHUFFLE across the floor, scratching the tile.

He doesn't move.

The sound gets louder, closer to his door.

He doesn't move.

Then a SCREECH.

His eyes flick towards the door and he gets up, slowly.

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The door SWINGS OPEN and, behind it, is the same ORANGE CAT from before, sitting quietly, looking curiously up at Lorem.

He stares at it for a moment.

The cat stares back.

They lock eyes, each daring the other to move first. Neither does. They stand in that moment, suspended in time. Then:

Lorem breaks eye contact and looks down. He sighs.

What's the point?

He begins to close the door when a PAW reaches forwards, slowly.

Lorem stops. The door freezes.

He looks from the paw, outstretched towards him, to the cat.

The cat turns its head and seems to smile.

Lorem looks at the cat. It seems to beckon for him to come closer.

Lorem crouches down and scratches its head. The paw goes back on the ground as Lorem scratches.

The cat PURRS and rolls over.

Lorem rubs its belly and continues to look at the cat, faint glimmers of happiness bubbling up.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - LATER

Lorem, wearing a different outfit, a real outfit, walks down a flight of stairs towards the subway platform, the orange cat under his arm.

He rubs its head as he moves, making sure it's calm, happy.

The cat bobs up and down as they move, eyes wide, looking at the world around them.

Lorem gets to the bottom of the stairs and walks onto the EMPTY PLATFORM, empty except for a CHILD at the other end, standing in front of a microphone, silent.

Lorem stares at the child as he presses play on a SMALL SPEAKER next to him. A song starts playing. It's:

AFTER HOURS by THE VELVET UNDERGROUND.

The Child begins to sing.

CHILD

(singing along)

*"One, two, three
If you close the door
The night could last forever
Leave the sunshine out
And say hello to never*

*All the people are dancing
And they're having such fun
I wish it could happen to me*

*But if you close the door
I'd never have to see the day again
If you close the door
The night could last forever
Leave the wine-glass out
And drink a toast to never*

*Oh, someday I know
Someone will look into my eyes
And say hello
You're my very special one*

*But if you close the door
I'd never have to see the day again*

*Dark party bars, shiny Cadillac
cars
And the people on subways and
trains
Looking gray in the rain,
As they stand disarrayed
Oh, but people look well in the
dark*

*And if you close the door
The night could last forever
Leave the sunshine out
And say hello to never*

*All the people are dancing
And they're having such fun
I wish it could happen to me"*

The song ends and the child stops singing, standing behind the microphone silently.

Lorem looks at the child, unsure of what to say. The cat purrs.

As he stares...

A train RUMBLES into the station and the cat JUMPS, burrowing its head into Lorem's neck.

Lorem looks down and scratches its head, calming it, slightly bouncing like one would do while holding a baby.

The doors OPEN and Lorem steps in, the cat nestled underneath his neck.

The doors slam SHUT and train shoots off down the tunnel, out into the great wide world.

*

CUT TO BLACK

THE END