

Stay East, Young Man.

by
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A Californication Spec Script

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FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - DUSK

The sun is setting over Los Angeles draping the city in a golden blanket. The Santa Monica Pier Ferris wheel is a bright bulb set against the darkening ocean, while the Hollywood Hills slowly change from green and blue to a dark silhouette. The last of the sinking sun's rays cut through the city's smoggy atmosphere changing its colors to a vibrant red and orange. The buildings are aflame from the towers of Downtown to the high-rises of Century City. This town never shines brighter than it does at dusk.

HANK (V.O.)

It's a tragic fact that the most famous proclamation driving dreamers to this vast emotional desert has been widely mis-credited. Horace Greeley was not the one to pen "Go West Young Man," it was John Soule. Whose name even google can't find in the annals of history. Soule has forever lost credit for the quote to Greeley. LA is a magician's wet dream of misdirection. The sun has set on the talented too many times in this town to believe that any young men should head here. Stay where you are, young and old alike. And if you run into John Soule's great, great, grand-kid somewhere in your home-town tell him Hank Moody says he's sorry. All of LA says it's sorry.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S CONDO - DUSK

HANK and KAREN are fighting in the kitchen and it seems they picked up where they left off years ago. Hank's hiding behind the whisky in his hands. Karen's dressed to the nines, ready for a night out on the town with an extra special amount of cleavage on display.

HANK

... I know you aren't used to hearing, or saying, this word, but no.

KAREN

Gosh I love talking to you when you're drunk. Of course I have little to compare it to.

HANK

If I'm drunk it's off the intoxicating fervor that comes with finding out you would rather spend time with my arch-nemesis than me, Becca, and the Knicks.

KAREN

Arch-nemesis? He's my biggest client.

HANK

And the butcher of my life's work. Come on Karen, I've been waiting all week to see this game with you guys.

KAREN

Hank, the Knicks will always be there.

HANK

In the playoffs? Are you nuts?

KAREN

Look, I appreciate that your time with us is precious but,

HANK

... but your appreciation is only trumped by your convenience? "Sorry Hank, I have to prance my tits around Todd Carr's asshole friends tonight."

Karen adjusts her top slightly, it makes no difference, those puppies are out for the evening.

HANK (CONT'D)

That's not going to make a difference, those puppies are out for the evening.

KAREN

This is not just a dinner party, Hank, you know that. Todd is doing this to show off his house.

HANK

(sarcastically)

Oh, wow, then, sure. I didn't know this was important to Todd. Should I bend over so he can fuck me in the ass again?

KAREN

God, Hank, this is about my work on his house. This has nothing to do with you or your work, which no one is even going think about.

Hank is stunned and hurt. Karen immediately regrets what she said.

KAREN (CONT'D)

(apologetically)

Look, we have to be in Malibu by nine, if we don't leave now we're going to be late.

HANK

It's six! Malibu is like ten miles away.

KAREN

Come on, Hank, traffic.

HANK

Oh, of course. The great fuckin' LA equalizer. It doesn't matter who you are in this town you have to suck the dick of the great motor way.

KAREN

It's just like any other city, Hank.

HANK

Excuse me? Only fuckin' LAer's like your dick of a client would have the gall to call this place a city. Cities have transit systems and tall, tall buildings. This place is a bunch of glorified suburbs strung together by the nouveau riche.

KAREN

Let's see, if we average your ridiculous tirade about twice an hour since we moved here, carry the one, I think this is the one millionth time I heard that shit.

HANK

We should celebrate. Shall I fetch the popcorn?

KAREN

I have to go.

HANK

If we were in New York we could meet you there. We would jump on the train after the game.

KAREN

Fine, then maybe we should have stayed in New York and not come here at all.

HANK

Finally, you're making sense.

KAREN

You're an ass.

HANK

LA is the shit-hole of the universe, and I've been to New Jersey. Moving here is my life's biggest regret.

KAREN

That's your biggest regret? God, Hank, maybe if you stopped shitting in your home you could actually enjoy living there.

HANK

It's not my home.

KAREN

Well it's Becca's.

HANK

(angry)

Well I'll agree that if not for her we wouldn't be here.

Hank catches BECCA's teary eyes. She's been listening from the other room. What did he just say?

HANK (CONT'D)

(to Becca)

Honey, no, this isn't about you?

BECCA

Really? 'Cause it sure sounds like I'm the root of your life's biggest regret.

KAREN

No honey,

BECCA

I would like to go now, mother. Who cares about the Knicks? They're just a bunch of New York assholes anyway.

Becca quickly runs to the other room and grabs her bag, already packed. She heads out the door. Hank stumbles to stop her but she runs past him.

HANK

You owe me a dollar. Two for involving the Knicks.

(to Karen)

Thanks for that.

KAREN

You're blaming me for this?

HANK

No, I'm blaming LA. At least blame fucking LA.

Karen walks out the door, she doesn't blame LA, she blames Hank. Hank downs the remaining whisky, he isn't drunk now, but he's gonna be. He picks up the phone and dials.

HANK (CONT'D)

Charlie, pick me up at the bar with your namesake in an hour. You'll recognize me 'cause I'll be the drunk hitting on the bartender waiting for the Knicks to blow it.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR (NAMED CHARLIE'S BAR) - LATER

Hank is up at the bar nursing a beer and shooting cheap whisky. He's flopped in front of a large screen showing the game. He threw on a jacket but isn't really dressed for a night out, more like a night in drinking. The bartender, CHRISTY, a beautiful young blond, is staring at him a couple of seconds too long.

HANK

Another.

CHRISTY

Sure.

She pours him a healthy shot.

CHRISTY (CONT'D)

Why the long face, stranger?

HANK

(chuckling)

I didn't know people still talked like that.

CHRISTY

People don't, I do. I'm bringing it back.

HANK

How's that working out?

CHRISTY

Tougher than I thought. I'm also trying to bring back "Homie don't play that!"

HANK

Classic.

CHRISTY

You know, like if you ask me to do something demeaning or insulting, or just plain humiliating, I would go "Homie don't play that!"

HANK

Yeah, yeah, no, I know how it goes.

CHRISTY

(seductively)

No, I mean you should try it. Try asking me to do something real humiliating.

Hank's slow, but he's catching on.

HANK

Oh, oh honey, you are just, well,

Christy with a come-hither look to beat all others.

CHRISTY

You would be surprised at how many things Homie would do.

HANK

In another life, honey, we would be revving up complicated machinery and signing release forms ala Darling Nikki, but,

CHRISTY

Listen, my shift doesn't end 'till two. Why don't you not finish that sentence until then. Whisky has a way of making people live out alternate lives, you know?

Pours Hank another one, on the house, and walks away. Hank turns, slams the shot, then quickly turns back to see where Christy went. There, sitting in the way, blocking his view, right next to him, reveal MARIA. Maria would make any man forget Christy in a second. Hank is no exception.

MARIA

(faking a southern accent)

Why, I do believe she was hitting on you sir.

HANK

Wow, it's like amateur night at the Apollo.

MARIA

(drops the accent)

Apollo reference, huh? You a real New Yorker or you just play one on TV?

HANK

A real New Yorker wouldn't have to answer that.

(beat)

But he would anyway.

MARIA

Wow, not only did that not make any sense at all, but you kinda thought it was deep. Which means you're a writer.

HANK

Hank Moody.

MARIA

Yeah, right.

Hank's flattered and insulted at the same time. Maria looks slightly beyond Hank to the man standing behind him. JOSH, A young 30 year old, scruffy faced, hipster whose dressed every bit the unpublished writer that he is.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Josh, who is this?

She points to Hank. Looking at Hank makes Josh almost choke.

JOSH

Holy shit, Hank fuckin' Moody.

MARIA

Crap, it really is you? Now who said this wasn't a small town?

HANK

Every writer who hasn't gotten his break yet. And, no offense Josh, by the looks of you and the fact that you recognize me, I imagine you fall into that category.

MARIA

Now how could that be offensive?

JOSH

It's alright, Maria. After all this is Hank Moody. The man redefined modern prose for an entire generation. It's his job to be observant.

MARIA

And an asshole?

HANK

Actually, yes.

MARIA

Well I'm afraid you are a bit off, Mr. Moody. Josh here isn't looking for his break, he's just given up on it.

HANK

Is that right?

MARIA

In a few hours he's getting on a jet plane,

HANK

... And you don't know when he'll be back again.

MARIA

And that's a fact.

HANK

Good job giving up Josh, not enough people in this town do that.

JOSH

Funny, I think too many people in this town do that.

HANK

Well, shit Josh, by the long face I'd almost say you were sad to leave.

JOSH

Long face? Who says that?

MARIA

He's bringing it back.

HANK

I'm bringing it back.

JOSH

Well Hank, to coin a phrase, shit, yeah I'm sad to go. Like most people in this town I came here to write something, not to fail.

MARIA

The problem is unlike most people in this town, Josh is actually talented.

HANK

Well, that and a 15 dollar Starbucks gift card will get you one cup of coffee. Here,

Hank signals to Christy for a round on him.

HANK (CONT'D)

Let me buy you a bon voyage shot before you go.

JOSH

Can't say no to a free drink.

HANK

Wow, the cliché drunk unpublished writer still exists. Who knew?

JOSH

I'm bringing it back.

Hank smiles. Christy is pouring the drinks.

CUT TO:

INT. KAREN'S CAR - NIGHT

Karen and Becca are stuck in standstill traffic on the PCH. New York Dolls are playing on the radio. Becca switches stations. It's Billy Joel. Now she's annoyed. She switches again. The Ramones. You have to be kidding her, she just can't win.

BECCA

We're late, traffic is horrible, and the radio is stuck on New York's greatest hits.

KAREN

A bit ironic, huh?

BECCA

Actually, mom, it's poetic justice, not irony.

KAREN

Yes, I think your father would be the first to point that out.

BECCA

Great, he wins again.

KAREN

If it matters, I don't think your dad feels like much of a winner right now.

BECCA

It helps. A little. Was New York really that great before you guys got sentenced here?

KAREN

(sighing)

New York was good. It was. Your dad and I were young, we were reckless.

BECCA

Like in the movies.

KAREN

Better, like in novels. The really good novels.

BECCA

Great, so you regret leaving too.

KAREN

No Honey. Now I'm not saying New York wasn't fun, but it was empty compared to life in LA.

BECCA

Why?

KAREN

(shocked)

Because of you.

BECCA

That's not what dad thinks.

KAREN

Oh, it is, it is. He just doesn't want to admit that LA was great for him.

A moment of silence. Becca's not buying it.

BECCA

I'm going to hate this party.

KAREN

Me too.

BECCA

So why are we going?

KAREN

Well, I didn't want to tell your father but, Todd offered me another job.

BECCA

Why would dad care?

KAREN

Well it's in New York.

BECCA

Great! We can all move back there. Dad would love that.

KAREN

Honey, do you want to move to New York?

BECCA

I don't know. Dad would be so happy though.

KAREN

Sometimes you have to think about your happiness first, though, don't you?

BECCA

I guess that would depend. I think I would be happiest if you and Dad were happy. Why can't we do something that would make all of us happy.

KAREN

I don't know if life's ever that easy.

Another moment of silence.

BECCA

I sure am going to hate this party.

The car slowly inches along the road towards its destination.

CUT TO:

INT. CHARLIE'S BAR - LATER

Hank, Josh, and Maria are where we left them. Only more so. There have been two rounds so far, as is evident by the six empty shot glasses on the bar. The three are toasting with filled shots. CHARLIE and MARCY enter the bar. They're drawn to the noise and commotion Hank and the other's are making.

CHARLIE

Your descriptive powers astound me.

HANK

There's my illustrious agent now.

Off the game on TV:

CHARLIE

How they doing?

HANK

Down by 34, I can't even watch it anymore. This is Josh and Maria.

MARCY

Great for Josh and Maria.

(Noticing all the shots)

Why are you reenacting Less Than Zero, Hank?

HANK

It's a bon voyage for Josh here. He's escaping to, to, where the fuck is home Josh?

JOSH

New York.

Hank chokes on his shot.

HANK

Get the fuck out of here. Say Texas, say Arkansas, say fucking Idaho, but don't tell me you're upset to be going back to the Mecca of freedom and self expression.

MARIA

Oh great. Another fuckin' New Yorker complaining about the quality of pizza in LA.

HANK

What I wouldn't give to be eating a slice on 33rd and 3rd right now.

JOSH

New Yorkers, the most marginalizing people on the planet. If New York was in Africa there would have already been a genocide waged on the Upper Eastside'rs by the Tribeca tribe.

MARCY

Yeah right, as if those pussies could organize an army.

MARIA

I bet you still hate it here as much as you did the day you moved.

CHARLIE

More, though it hardly seems possible.

HANK

I somehow managed. I don't get it, Josh. I would understand Joe Blow from bumble-fuck USA being impressed with the dim lights and medium city of LA. But you?

JOSH

(sarcastically)

A City Boy?

HANK

A city boy! You know what it's like to wake up in a place that has everything. Food, art, books, hell, the finest quality pussy in the universe.

(To Maria)

No offense.

MARIA

Again, how could that be offensive?

HANK

But it's true. They ship that shit into town. They bus ass from all around the universe to Manhattan just because they should. America's streets may be paved with gold but Manhattan's are paved with pussy.

CHARLIE

I'll give Hank this. You wouldn't be having this conversation with anyone out here. If you were from Burbank, Josh, we'd be talking about who we know in common on the Warner Bros. lot by now.

MARIA

Which is why he should stay, right? 'Cause we need more New Yorkers here.

MARCY

(to Josh)

What ever it is you're feeding this girl, she's liking it.

MARIA

I'm in love with the art not the artist. Too bad no one will read his shit.

HANK

Good, fuck 'em.

MARIA

Will you read it? Not to buy it. Not to option it. Not to pass it on to your agent here. Just to tell him he's good.

JOSH

Come on Maria, it's not the place.

MARIA

Well maybe if he said you were good you wouldn't go back to day trade with your buddy Bob.

HANK

There's always a Bob.

CHARLIE

I fuckin' hate Bob.

HANK

Are you kidding me? You are Bob.

MARIA

Will you read it?

HANK

To tell him it's good so he won't leave? On principle, I kinda can't.

JOSH

And so off to New York I go.

HANK

God, it's happened. I've lived here for too long.

JOSH

What happens when you've live here for too long?

HANK

You sellout.

JOSH

Wow, the cliché punk writer trying not to sell out still exists?

HANK

I'm bringing it back.

JOSH

Hank, you're a writer. You don't sell things, you describe things that are intrinsically true. People don't buy what you do, they realize it. Anyway, who gives a shit. I'm done with all that. I'm leaving tomorrow, tonight I only have one option.

Hank flashes an acknowledging smile at Josh.

HANK

Christy, one bourbon,

JOSH

One scotch,

They both look at the rest of the gang.

MARIA, MARCY, AND CHARLIE

(begrudgingly)

One beer.

Hank and Josh yelp with joy at their compliance to play along.

INT. TODD CARR'S HOUSE - LATER

Karen and Becca arrive at Todd's house for the party. Waiters are walking around with hors d'oeuvres and the bar is manned with a bartender. Guests are dressed up, it's a chic affair. They make their way through the guests looking for the host, failing to find him they wind up at the bar. To bartender:

KAREN

Can I have a cherry coke, two please.

BECCA

They have cherry coke?

KAREN

I think they just put cherries in the coke honey.

BECCA

Figures.

TODD (O.S.)

I think champagne would be more appropriate, don't you?

Karen turns around, slightly startled, to see TODD looking elated.

TODD (CONT'D)

Oh, what the hell, if that's what the kids are doing today, three cherry cokes.

Karen greets Todd with a warm hug and kiss.

KAREN

I am so sorry for being late. Traffic.

TODD

Well it is LA.

BECCA

Exactly.

TODD

Hank's kid.

BECCA

Becca.

KAREN
Becca, yes. Todd, thank you so much
for this. The house looks,

TODD
Wonderful. Because of you.

KAREN
Well when there's so much to work
with.

TODD
How someone so humble could be
married to Hank I never,

KAREN
No...

TODD
Oh, sorry, of course. Ex-wife. I
would also make it a point to
clarify.

KAREN
No, actually,

BECCA
They were never married.

KAREN
Yes, thank you Becca.

Awkward pause.

TODD
So where is Hank?

BECCA
He's watching the Knicks play. He
said he would rather watch a bunch
of talent-less hacks fail at what
their supposed to be good at than
drink with them.

Karen chuckles, then recovers.

KAREN
She's a hoot.

TODD
Yeah, they're great at that age.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S CAR - LATER

Hank, Maria, and Josh are driving down Sunset Blvd towards Hyde. Josh is in the front seat, Maria in the back, and Hank is driving.

JOSH

You sure it's OK for us to come with?

HANK

Sure, Charlie and Marcy don't care, and I wasn't going to let you go without one last time at a shit-hole like Hyde. It'll reinforce why you should get the fuck out of town.

MARIA

It'll take us an hour down Sunset at this time of night. Take Fountain instead, will you?

HANK

You see what you're doing right there? Trying to fill the lull in the conversation. Everywhere else on the planet you could have talked about the weather. But there is no weather in LA. No fucking seasons. All you got left to talk about is traffic.

MARIA

Well sure. Or I was trying to give you better directions to get where we're going.

HANK

Fair enough, Fountain it is.

EXT. HYDE - LATER

Hank, Maria, Josh, approach the trendy bar with a signature velvet rope keeping out the riffraff. Charlie is already there talking to a large bouncer, inconspicuously standing at the head of a long line of nameless wannabes. The threesome cut to the front of the line. Charlie points to the them and they walk in without hesitation. Hank's being obnoxious as he waves Maria and Josh in. He kisses the bouncer on the cheek. He's in rare form.

CUT TO:

INT. HYDE - CONTINUOUS

Hank and Josh make a beeline for the bar. This place stinks. All the never-weres and has-beens this town has to offer. Charlie, Marcy, and Maria are at the bar already.

HANK
(to bartender)
Christy, a couple of whiskeys
please.

JOSH
There's a chance that's not her
name.

HANK
You think?

MARIA
I just saw a guy wearing a shirt
that says "I'm the guy you have to
fuck to get a drink around here."

HANK
It's true. But we threw him a reach-
around and we're covered for the
night.

Bartender brings two whiskeys.

HANK (CONT'D)
I meant three.
(to Maria)
I meant three.

MARIA
Yours will do for now.

She shoots the whiskey. Charlie and Marcy walk up.

CHARLIE
So the Knicks lost. But I would
consider that the good news.

HANK
What the hell is the bad news?

MIA appears from the crowd behind them. The bad news. She's dressed to kill, showing off all her assets.

MIA
Well hello Hank. Fancy seeing you
here.

HANK

Fuck. How did you get in here? I thought you had to be 21.

Mia checks herself out.

MIA

You're kidding, right?

HANK

Unfortunately, yes.

JOSH

See Hank, LA holds its own in the incredibly hot women department.

MIA

Wow, I like your friend. He says pretty things to women.

HANK

In New York you can tell the jailbait apart from the rest.

MIA

Really?

HANK

Again, unfortunately no. Don't you have anywhere else I want you to be?

MIA

Wait, are you crapping about the quality of women out here? Why? You sure do fuck enough of them.

HANK

Fucked. Fucked enough of them. Enough to know that New York has cultured better. Here it's like every girl is tanned enough, flexible enough,

They all look over to see two beautiful women making out in the back.

HANK (CONT'D)

Bi-curious enough.

MIA

Exactly.

HANK

Let the grown-ups talk honey.

JOSH

I was actually going to say
"exactly."

HANK

Yeah well, give me a real New York woman any day of the week. I mean if you want to see a Barbie doll get fucked every night why not just stay home and download porn.

CHARLIE

Which is why I own stock in the porn downloading industry.

MARCY

It's true. The man spends so much time at pay-sites he gets buybacks.

HANK

When I was growing up porn wasn't something trivial it was a cherished relic passed on from generation to generation. It was a right of passage, whacking off to the same stag that your older brother did. And his friend's older brother before him.

JOSH

Porn was like energy, it could never be destroyed only transferred.

HANK

Exactly. And it used to last like 83 minutes long, and sustained some sort of plot line you had to fast forward through. Not these 30 second snippets of nipples and cum shots playing continuously on loop on your computer at every second of every fucking day.

JOSH

It's like they distorted sex into a purely masturbatory act.

HANK

When it should be as it always was, partially masturbatory.

MARIA

Wait, I'm confused, are you blaming LA for this?

MARCY

Oh God, you don't think he has a point do you?

MIA

Well, as fun as it is listening to old men talk about porn, I'm going to go get old men to buy me drinks.

Mia walks away winking at Josh.

MARCY

She's a lovely slut that one. I'm going to pee.

JOSH

I'll join you.

The two walk away.

CHARLIE

I'll use this time to ogle women without having to answer the question "does she have better tits than me?"

Charlie walks away to ogle

HANK

Well to be fair they rarely do have better tits.

Maria does another shot.

HANK (CONT'D)

Hey take it easy, would you? If you're going to drink like a frat boy get the appropriate swill.

MARIA

He's really leaving tonight.

HANK

Josh? Yeah, yeah it looks like he means it.

MARIA

So why do I care?

HANK

To disgustingly quote my defunct opus, "Crazy Lil' Thing Called Love."

MARIA

Doesn't that same aforementioned opus also say, "love is the last refuge of children and the delusional."

HANK

God, did I really write that?

MARIA

Well I am neither.

HANK

If only it was that simple.

MARIA

I should fuck someone tonight.

HANK

That'll teach 'em.

MARIA

I don't know, I feel if I'm getting fucked tonight either way, I might as well enjoy it.

HANK

That's logic I can't argue with.

CUT TO:

INT. TODD CARR'S HOUSE - LATER

Karen, Becca, and Todd are still up by the bar. The bartender brings them their cherry cokes.

KAREN

God, Todd, I'm so happy all our work paid off. It's a pleasure knowing it's for someone who appreciates it.

TODD

And I do, Karen, I do appreciate it. I'll always appreciate your work.

KAREN

Todd, I haven't decided on anything yet.

TODD

I don't know why. The job is meant for...

Todd gets interrupted by a couple of party-goers, BILL and TED. Very much Hollywood elite.

BILL

Todd, you bastard. Is this the secret weapon you've been hiding from us?

TODD

Well it was bound to get out. Karen, this is Bill Hanger and Ted Anderson.

KAREN

It's a pleasure. This is my daughter Becca.

BECCA

Hi.

TED

Yes, Karen Moody, right? Hank's wife.

KAREN

Well...

TED

We met at the premier of Todd's film, Karen. What is old Hank up to?

TODD

About a fifth of whisky, I imagine.

BECCA

Um, I am right here, you know.

Todd pretends to be apologetic.

KAREN

He's been writing, working.

TED

I'd ask you to say hi but, well, I don't think he much cared for me.

BILL

I heard he doesn't care much for anything.

BECCA

(fake cough)

KAREN

(Jokingly)

I'll make sure not to send your regards.

TED

Well I think the more pertinent question is what are you up to? Now that you're done making this dump look amazing.

KAREN

Well,

TODD

She's off to make the East Coast shine again. Karen here is going to head my New York Home Design office.

KAREN

Well, not just...

TED

Off to New York, are you? God I hate that city. My wife's there now.

KAREN

Oh visiting?

TED

No, living. She's in PR out there. Got a dream job a few years ago she couldn't pass up.

KAREN

Oh, where do you guys live out there?

TED

She lives on the upper east.

Karen seems confused.

TED (CONT'D)

Oh, that's where I live too, when I go visit. We're not separated or anything. I never really cared much for the city, but I couldn't hold her back, you know?

KAREN

Of course. So you...?

TED

Stayed here. Started working with Todd on some things. Right around the time "Crazy Lil' Thing" came out.

KAREN

You didn't go with her?

TED

I couldn't.

Karen seems slightly puzzled.

TODD

Well I'm surprised Hank is still here. The way he'd jerk off about New York and all. Why didn't he ever move back?

BECCA

I'm still here!

Karen looks at Becca and realizes.

KAREN

I guess he couldn't.
(Suddenly)
What's the score of the game?

Her companions seem confused. Becca smiles

KAREN (CONT'D)

The Finals, who's winning?

Still nothing.

KAREN (CONT'D)

I have to go.

Karen grabs Becca's hand and starts towards the door. Becca slams as much cherry coke as she can, and gets pulled away.

TODD

Karen, Karen, you'll let me know soon, won't you?

(No answer, she's gone)

Like Moody. Good, but fucking crazy. Irish car bombs anyone?

The others agree. Karen is making her way through the party dialing on her cell. It rings, and then goes to voice mail.

KAREN

Hank. Hank, I'm about to say something very difficult. I'm sorry. Please call me. I'm heading back home. Call me.

CUT TO:

INT. HYDE - LATER

Hank and Maria are still up by the bar. Josh comes back and distracts Hank from noticing that his phone, on the bar, is ringing. It's too loud to hear it. It goes to voice mail.

JOSH

I had an idea in the bathroom, where we could go next.

(To Maria)

We have time for one more stop, don't you think?

MARIA

It's your dime.

Charlie and Marcy come back.

HANK

Josh wants to go somewhere else. I'm going to go with him.

CHARLIE

Why?

HANK

I don't know. I feel I should. You coming?

Marcy is checking out some hottie.

MARCY

Does she have better tits than me?

CHARLIE

Looks like we're going to be here
for a bit.

HANK

Well, have fun with the LA losers.

GREG, A large LA Scene type who's been standing next to the
gang the whole time, overhears Hank. He's had enough.

GREG

(loud)

The only thing wrong with this town
is that it attracts douche bags
like this guy.

HANK

Excuse me?

GREG

You heard me, pal. I've been
listening to you bitch like a
little bitch for an hour now. Why
don't you just go the fuck home?

HANK

Bitch like a bitch? You must be a
writer.

MARIA

You do kinda bitch.

HANK

Everyone's a comedian.

GREG

She must have a sense of humor to
be hanging out with you.

HANK

She's just filling in for your
mother while she's at the free
clinic. See now that's an insult.

JOSH

Wow, a "your mama" joke. You are
bringing shit back tonight.

Greg stand up, he's bigger than Hank thought. Big!

GREG

Let me show you how we treat
assholes in LA, buddy.

HANK

You mean you stick your cock in them? No thanks pal.

Greg moves in to kick Hank's ass. Hank ain't budging. Charlie steps between them.

CHARLIE

OK, OK. You both have very large penises.

GREG

(to Hank)

It doesn't look like you have a penis at all.

CHARLIE

I may have to let him kick your ass for saying something so stupid.

GREG

Get the fuck out of my face baldy.

Marcy puts her hand on Greg who slightly pushes her. Hank leaps over Marcy and punches the guy. The bouncer is quickly upon them. Charlie, denied of a punch himself, is riled up.

CHARLIE

Get him out. Get him the fuck out.

(to Hank)

It's not a night 'till someone gets punched, is it Hank?

MARCY

I liked it.

CHARLIE

You would. Hey, did that guy have a nicer dick than I do?

MARCY

We're going home to fuck, Rocky.

She grabs Charlie, helpless in her horny grip, and leaves.

HANK

Who's Rocky? Good luck buddy!

JOSH

You think it's safe to leave?

MARIA

I hope not, come on.

She makes her way out the door. Hank and Josh hesitate for a second, shoot what's left of their drink, grab their things off the bar, then follow Maria.

CUT TO:

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE SCENIC OVERLOOK - NIGHT

Hank, Josh, and Maria drive out onto a scenic overlook on Mulholland drive. They have to lift a chain in order to trespass after hours. Maria wanders off and is dangerously close to the cliff's edge. Hank and Josh share a whisky bottle.

HANK

This is the best you got? A nice view?

JOSH

You can see it all from here, Hank. The Hollywood sign looking out all the way to the coast. On a clear night you can even see the water. This is it, Hank. LA. From up here it looks so, so,

HANK

Empty?

JOSH

Promising. In New York you're inside a city. Always inside. Like a maze. You can't see the finish line 'til you're there. Or lost. Out here you're on top of everything. I don't know. It's a metaphor. You're on top of the world. Or something equally cheesy.

Hank notices that Josh isn't looking out at the majestic view. He's just staring at Maria. She's just a lost child on that edge.

HANK

It's her you're leaving, that much I know. I just don't know why.

Josh says nothing. His silence is enough.

JOSH

Alright man. Should we go back to Maria's place? We still have time.

HANK

For what?

JOSH

You know? One last bang.

HANK

What the fuck are you talking about?

JOSH

(Confused)

Aren't we going to fuck? I mean Maria said she's down for it.

HANK

Oh, hell no, man. What's wrong with you?

JOSH

Fair 'nuff. But you send out some fucked up signals Hank Moody.

Josh gets out of the car and heads towards Maria. Hank stumbles out after him.

HANK

You never asked me to read your story. I mean Maria did, repeatedly. I know she doesn't want you to go. But you never did.

JOSH

Would you have asked you? Back then, if you knew what you know. About this place. About what it does to your work. Would you have stayed?

HANK

No.

JOSH

(about Maria)

She read it. She liked it. That's all I needed. I beat this fucking city, Hank, and it's punishing me for it. I'm being exiled. Exiled from my own future.

HANK

Josh man, I am one obscure, cryptic motherfucker and even I don't have any idea what you're talking about.

JOSH

Where are you going after this? In
a lil' bit, when we're done?

Hank contemplates this for a second.

HANK

Home.

JOSH

Not me. I'm leaving it. And I need
to go say goodbye.

Josh walks off after Maria. Hank stumbles over to his car and falls in. He closes his eyes. He's thinking of Becca, of going home to Becca. He looks over, Josh and Maria are embraced. This is goodbye. Hank's eyes close against his will. This is goodbye.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE SCENIC OVERLOOK - EARLY MORNING

Hank wakes up in his car. It's mostly dark out but the earliest rays of light have started to shine. Josh and Maria are gone, so's his whisky. He looks at the time. 5:15 AM. He notices a manuscript in the passenger seat. He picks it up. He reads the note aloud:

HANK

We thought about stealing your
wallet or your car. But we left you
this as punishment instead.
Goodbye, asshole.

Hank chuckles as he reads the title.

HANK (CONT'D)

"Where I've Been," By Josh Nazz.

Hank proceeds to read the story to himself for a second. Suddenly he puts down the manuscript, looks at his watch. 5:25 AM.

HANK (CONT'D)

Fuck.

He peels off towards LAX. He has to catch Josh in time. He has to.

CUT TO:

EXT. 405 INTERSTATE - LATER

Hank is stuck in stand still traffic on the 405. He's banging on his steering wheel. Trapped in the LA he hates. Traffic as far as the eye can see.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAX INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - LATER

Hank pulls up to departure area. The clock reads 6:45 AM . Hank jumps out of his car to find Josh, somehow.

MARIA (O.S.)
You're too late.

Hank turns to see Maria leaning on her car.

MARIA (CONT'D)
The flight boarded on time.

HANK
Are you kidding me? When does that happen?

MARIA
What can I say? This city is the model of efficiency.

Hank joins her on the car.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Why are you here?

HANK
I'm not sure. To stop him. To make sure he goes. To get my Jameson back.

She hands him the whisky. He looks at it regretfully.

MARIA
I didn't think he would actually go.

HANK
I don't know if he had a choice.

MARIA
Well that's your problem, isn't it?

Maria gets into her car.

MARIA (CONT'D)

But you did. You both did. Goodbye
Hank Moody, I kinda hope I don't
ever see you again.

Hank tries to say something but, surprisingly, he's
speechless. Maria pulls out. She wasn't listening anyway.
Hank notices he has voice mail on his cell. He checks it
while lighting up a smoke.

RANDOM LADY

Do you mind? You're in a public
area.

Hank laughs at her, still checking voice mail. A random man
joins the random lady, also annoyed at Hank.

RANDOM MAN

She's right, buddy. It's just rude.

Hank puts his phone down, makes his way to his car.

HANK

Do you know what I love about this
city? Hardly anything. Hardly.

He gets into his car and pulls away. Above him a jet takes
off. Heading east.

CUT TO:

EXT. KAREN'S HOUSE - LATER

Hank pulls up to Karen's house. Karen is there waiting. It's
very early and the sun has just risen. Magic hour. Hank pulls
up, lights up a smoke. He motions for her to join him in the
car. She hesitates, but is happy to.

KAREN

Are you drunk?

HANK

Unfortunately, no. I got your
message.

KAREN

Hank I, I'm sorry the Knicks lost.

HANK

There was this one afternoon that
we, the three of us, me you and
Becca, years ago, we all went to
the Pier.

(MORE)

HANK (CONT'D)

Becca wanted ice cream and instead of stopping at the place by our old apartment you just kept on driving. Do you remember?

KAREN

Hank, you don't have to,

HANK

Do you remember?

KAREN

We took Becca out for ice cream a million...

HANK

This one was special. At first I didn't want to spend the afternoon with you 'cause you were mad about, oh God, what was it? You were always mad at me for something back then.

KAREN

Back then?

HANK

Yeah. Well. We got the ice cream and Becca mentioned she never played Red Rover and, before you know it, you got a bunch of kids there to play with us. You weren't creepy about it at all. We played and we...

KAREN

(sarcastically)
... ate ice cream?

HANK

Yeah, Karen, we fuckin' ate ice cream. And it was enough. It was enough for me to realize that I was home. On that beach with you and Becca, LA became my home. Now I may complain. I may bitch like a bitch but...

KAREN

But you make this home for us.

HANK

Yeah.

KAREN

Yeah.

The two look understandingly at each other.

KAREN (CONT'D)

I know.

HANK

Good. And Becca?

Hank motions to Karen's doorway where Becca has appeared. Woken from her sleep she looks like she's still mad.

KAREN

She knows, Hank. It's a feeling she's familiar with. Home.

Karen kisses Hank and walks out of the car. She rubs Becca's head as she walks in. Becca walks towards the car.

BECCA

You look like shit.

HANK

That's the brightest thing you got?

BECCA

It's too early to be bright.

HANK

That's true. You still owe me a dollar.

Becca hands Hank a dollar she had ready already, then gets in the car.

HANK (CONT'D)

Do you know why people came out here? Movie people, I mean. Why all the people came out here to make movies.

Becca thinks about it, trying to solve the puzzle.

BECCA

Lots and lots of cheap land to build huge, hideous, studios?

HANK

Close, my little deducing genius, but not exactly. Magic.

BECCA

Oh, I thought we were going to have a serious conversation.

HANK

I am serious. They came out here following the sun. See in those days film needed natural sunlight to shoot properly. And Southern California in all its glory had lots and lots of free sunshine.

BECCA

So why magic?

HANK

Well because every sunny day has one hour right after sunrise, or before sunset, where the lighting is spectacular. It's the perfect time of the day to take a picture. They call it the "Magic Hour." People came out here for magic.

BECCA

Oh. I don't mean to be rude but, this relates to us how?

HANK

Well I never believed in magic. Still don't. So what I do is I bring my own wherever I go. You. You're what really makes me better than the rest of the idiots out here. You're my magic hour. The reason I came out here. Magic.

BECCA

So I make you better than the place you hate the most.

HANK

That you do.

BECCA

I don't buy it.

HANK

Honey, as the man says, I'm a writer. I don't sell things I describe things that are I intrinsically true.

BECCA
Who said that?

HANK
This guy I met last night.

BECCA
What's he do?

HANK
He describes things that are
intrinsically true too.

BECCA
He's a writer?

HANK
He is.

BECCA
What's he written?

Hank hold up Josh's manuscript.

HANK
This.

BECCA
Did you read it?

HANK
I did. This morning.

BECCA
What did you think?

Beat.

HANK
I think it's really fucking good.

Becca holds out her hand. Hank gives her dollar back.

HANK (CONT'D)
Worth every penny.

Appropriate song whisks us up, up, high over the car. Looking west. West, as the Magic hour illuminates the horizon. It's breathtaking.

FADE TO BLACK.