BLACKLIGHT

by

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BLACKLIGHT

OVER BLACK:

SUPER IN:

“The following WILL NOT play up to current African-American film standards.”

DISSOLVE TO:

“Therefore, this film will not be presented with a hip-hop soundtrack.”

DISSOLVE TO:

“Sorry, it’s just not going to happen.”

DISSOLVE TO:

“Instead, the filmmakers have chosen to replace the aforementioned soundtrack with a classical music soundtrack for your listening pleasure.”

DISSOLVE TO:

“Enjoy.”

FADE IN:

CUE MUSIC: The OJays' - “For The Love of Money”

INT. MINDWORKS FILMS PRODUCTION OFFICE, 37TH FLOOR - NIGHT

LESTER’S OFFICE

LESTER JACKSON, 34, of African-American descent, is putting stacks of paper together neatly and trying to organize a portion of his messy desk.

There’s a knock at the door.

LESTER
It’s open.

BILL FINLEY, 64, a grey haired white guy enters the room. He’s power-suited up, wearing a tired smile on his face.

BILL
What’s going on Lester?

LESTER
Hey, what’s up, Bill? Just packing up, getting ready for the weekend.

BILL
That's good.
(beat)
Did you get that script from the Malloy Brothers?

LESTER
Umm....*Top o' The Morning Two: Ireland's Revenge*?

BILL
Yeah.

Lester looks through all of the scripts on his desk.

LESTER
Uh yeah, their agent sent it over today...it's somewhere here in all of this shit.

BILL
Oh well, looks like you're gonna be overseeing that production.

LESTER
Me... Really? Well it's not really my kinda project, Bill. You sure?

BILL
Oh yeah, I'm sure. As a matter of fact, you're gonna be taking on all of Mindworks' projects from here on out.

LESTER
(half smiling)
What?

BILL
Yep. Lester, ol' pal, it's time for me to hit the highway. You've just been promoted and I've just been kicked in the ass and told "not to let the door hit me on the way out."

LESTER
What..what..why? You're a legend here, Bill.

BILL
Apparently I'm an old dinosaur in this business.

LESTER
No you're not, Bill.

BILL
(denying)
Yeah, I know.
(MORE)

BILL (cont'd)
But the head of the parent thinks that I am. They were giving me signs that I was, and so I just said ta hell with it, I'm tired of putting out their crap anyways. I think I'll just move back to New York and retire.

LESTER
You're not going to fight this?

BILL
Nope, it's been too long of a fight and I'm just done. I was actually thinking about quitting last year, as a matter of fact.

Bill starts toward the door, Lester follows.

BILL
Listen, Lester promise me one thing.

LESTER
Yeah, anything Bill.

BILL
Please, don't let them sucker you into all the shit they want you to put out. Work on some great stuff. Boy, I remember when I started this company thirty years ago. I was so excited, but I sold my soul to the devil: the studio. And everything went down from there.

Lester nods his head.

LESTER
Well don't worry Bill, I've got a lot of great talent I'm looking out for and we're gonna change this industry.

BILL
Well you better, or else I'm coming back after the job.

Lester walks back over to his desk.

LESTER
(fake smiling)
Oh that won't be necessary.

Lester clears a stack of scripts off his desk and into the deskside wastebasket.

Bill laughs.

BILL
(exiting)
See ya, Lest.

LESTER
See ya, Bill. Oh and are we still on for golf Sunday?

BILL (O.S.)
You bet.

LESTER
Cool.

The door closes. Lester immediately pumps his fist in the air and silently cheer.

CUE MUSIC: Earth, Wind, and Fire - “Shining Star”

He jumps into his chair and cheerfully spins.

INT. MINDWORKS FILMS PRODUCTION OFFICE - LATER

Lester opens the door and breezes outside of his office.

Only three people are still left in the office. Lester walks past them.

LESTER
(to everyone)
‘Night everybody.

A mumble and grumble are heard from those who are left. JEFF WISELEY, 31, is at the wall sized window looking out at the city. He sees Lester leaving.

JEFF
Hey, Lest. Just heard that you're the new boss.

Lester stops and accompanies Jeff at the window.

LESTER
That’s right, sooooo get back to work.

They both chuckle.

JEFF
Yeah, so what are your plans?

LESTER
Just got the job, I don’t know yet.

JEFF
Well man, I know you’ve been itching to get some projects into development and change the company.
(MORE)

JEFF (cont'd)
Hey Lest, are our flagship films just gonna be rap and b-ball oriented now?

LESTER
What? No.

JEFF
Uh huh, yeah, or are you gonna keeping putting out those fucking sappy slave pictures? I mean boo-fucking-hoo.

Jeff snickers. It is apparent Lester's joy has left his face.

LESTER
Naww, man.

JEFF
Or ya gonna rename the company, you know, "Forty Ounces and a Mule Pictures?"

Jeff snickers again. Lester is not laughing at all, He just looks Jeff dead in the eye.

CUT TO:

TV SCREEN

EXT. MINDWORKS FILMS PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY

TRISHA YAMOTO is reporting live from the scene. Squad cars with flashing berries and police tape fill the background.

TRISHA
Vice President of Mindworks Films, Lester Jackson, was arrested last night after shoving fellow employee Jeff Wiseley to his death. As you can see, the major hole...

The camera points upward towards the broken glass.

TRISHA
...Jackson forced Wiseley out of.
(pointing)
Police are currently questioning eye witnesses---

The volume is lowered on the television screen, as the camera pulls back to reveal the viewer.

INT. MILTON'S ROOM - DAY

The TV's glow lights the entire room. MILTON FENDERSON, 25, lies in bed, stunned. He seems to be just waking up, with his eyes only half opened while watching the television.

MILTON
Aww, fuck. Fuck fuck fuck!

He's awake now.

SFX: A bloody rated R symbol stamps down on the scene.

MARTHA FENDERSON, 55, enters his room, dressed as a conservative black house mom.

MARTHA
Stop all that cursing, Milty.

Milton points at the screen.

MILTON
Look at this!

ON TV: A picture of Lester Jackson fills the screen.

TRISHA (O.S.)
...Jackson had no previous record of incidents and was ironically just promoted to the top position of the company...

MILTON
Beautiful. Oh sweet beautiful irony.

MARTHA
Isn't that the man who mentored you that summer?

MILTON
Yeah.
(underbreath)
Fuck.

MARTHA
Milton!

MILTON
Mom!

Martha pops him upside the head.

MILTON
Oww.

Milton gets up from bed and pulls down the window shades.

MILTON
See, you don't understand.

He rises, and clicks the TV off.

MILTON
We were this close, Mom...

Milton makes the “tiny” sign with his fingers.

MARTHA
I know sweetheart. It’ll come, though.

MILTON
Yeah, I hope so. Damn.

Milton checks his watch.

MILTON
Oh, Mom.

He kisses her on the cheek.

MILTON
I got this lecture thing to go to.

MARTHA
Oh. Who’s speaking?

MILTON
Devante Passe.

MARTHA
Oh how exciting. He’s a good director, right?

MILTON
Mom, he’s the best we have to offer. Besides,
(points to poster on wall)
Spike up there.

Milton picks up a shirt off the floor.

MARTHA
(leaving)
Okay, well have fun.
(halts)
Milty, I forgot to tell you that your father called.

MILTON
What’d Dow Jones daddy want this time?

MARTHA
Probably just checking up.

MILTON
I’m glad he can call every week and get on my ass but can’t come to one of my film festivals.

Milton begins to put his socks on.

MARTHA
Well you know your father, busy like a beaver.

MILTON
More like asshole like a beaver.

Martha gives that last comment a hard stare.

MILTON
It made sense in my head.

MARTHA
Well give him a call anyways.

Martha leaves the room.

Milton is left in the room staring at the adjacent phone.

He lets out a sigh. He picks up the phone and begins to dial.

His foot taps impatiently. Ring once.

He clicks the phone off.

MILTON
Mmeh, I tried.

He gets up.

INT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD NEWSSTAND - DAY

A late 80's white beemer rolls up to an empty parking space.

Out jumps Milton.

NEWSSTAND COUNTER

DUNABI P., 25, is a skinny four eyed Indian-American guy dressed in a valet suit who speaks with a minimal Indian accent. ZEEK, 25, the seated Asian Buddy Holly glass-eyed newsstand clerk, they are in the middle of a debate.

DUNABI
I'm telling you, man, Bollywood is the new wave. Bollywood.

ZEEK
Fuck Bollywood. It's all about my people's shit.

DUNABI
Your people, your people. As if your people could find any other subject matter besides high tech vendettas and samurai showdowns.

ZEEK
It’s better than some weak rip-off movie movement.

Milton steps in to the conversation.

MILTON
Boys, boys. Now what did I tell you about foreign movie debates...

He puts his arms over the two.

MILTON
(sarcastic)
They shouldn’t exist, because we live in America and as citizens of this great free country we shall sit through whatever shit the big eight send down the pike every week..
(beat)
Talking dogs and all.

Zeek continues to read his newspaper.

ZEEK
Awww, fuck Hollywood.

DUNABI
Bollywood.

ZEEK
Shut up.

MILTON
So, what’s new and exciting in the trades, boys?

LORENZO
Don’t read that shit.

LORENZO, 63, an elderly Hispanic man, sits in a folding chair a couple of feet away, reading the trades. He lets his voice be heard.

MILTON
Like you seem to be demonstrating?

LORENZO
I’m old. This shit won’t rot my dead creative side like you mijos.

MILTON
Aww well hang in there, ‘Renz.
(beat)
Anything worth mentioning, though?

LORENZO
(looking at paper)
Nope. It's all crap. Like look at this, for example.

Milton takes a look at the trade.

LORENZO
(reading)
Superstar rape-er.

MILTON
That's rapper.

LORENZO
Same shit.

Zeek and Dunabi snicker at the comment.

MILTON
Heyyyy, lay off the hip-hop. A watered down story line involving a rapper will probably bring me my first million.

LORENZO
Eh, hopefully it won't be as watered down as this, though--
(reading)
Superstar
(looks up)
Rap-per.

MILTON
Thank you.

LORENZO
(reading)
Max-a-milli-yawn will star in *Crib Crashin'*. The premise is Max is left alone in another rappers home where he will take on a team of professional robbers named "The Haters" who are trying to break in while also rescuing a bunch of homeless animals while also--

MILTON
Oh 'Renz, stop reading, stop reading.

LORENZO
Yeah it starts looking pretty bleak after that...

Lorenzo mumbles something in Spanish.

MILTON
Well at least my peeps have a diamond in the rough with Devante Passe.

ZEEK
You mean, *Ballin' Outta Control* Devante Passe? Dude, he sold out a long time ago. I don't remember the last time he actually worked with a credible actor.

MILTON
He works with plenty of credible actors.

INT. COLLEGE HALL - DAY

DEVANTE PASSE, 32, the kinda tall, baseball cap sporting speaker stands in front of a crowd of 300 in the Newton Lecture Hall.

DEVANTE
...to answer the rest of your question, "No." Marcus Atkins had no previous acting experience before filming *Ballin Outta Control*. In fact he was fined for missing a playoff game because we had to shoot some coverage of him one day.

Milton is in the crowd, slouching and bored.

DEVANTE
Actually, with Atkins and some of the recent actors I've worked with, it felt like a throwback to when I was doing my independent films and had no idea what a professional actor was.

Milton raises his hand.

DEVANTE
(points at Milton)
Yeah?

MILTON
First of all man I want to say that I'm your biggest fan and that its nice to see a fellow Dorsey High alum is doing big things.

DEVANTE
Ahh D-House in the house huh? What year?

MILTON
'98.

DEVANTE
Coo, coo. What's your question, bruh?

MILTON
Umm, you were much more personal and conscious in your earlier films, like my favorite, *D'Evils*, But it seems that recently you've been dumbing down your flicks, and I'm just wonderin--

Devante begins to smile.

DEVANTE
(rasing his arm)
Listen, man. You see this watch?

Devante showcases a diamond incrusted Rolex watch.

DEVANTE
I can't get to this level making *D'Evils* all my life. I mean, didn't you see *Ballin' Outta Control*?"

MILTON
(raising his voice)
I know, but I'm asking you, its getting to a point where blacks can't express ourselves without tight beats or a story line that consists of a dude bouncing a ball.

DEVANTE
And what the fuck do you want me to do about it?

The camera pans in on Milton.

DEVANTE
No one is in power at the studios to greenlight the type of films I used to do. Nobody wants to see that shit anymore. They only wanna see ball playin' and hear tight beats...
(beat)
...and I'm gonna deliver.

The camera is locked onto Milton's face.

DEVANTE (O.S.)
Next question.

MATCH SHOT: Milton's face.

INT.KITCHEN - NIGHT

Martha and Milton are at the dinner table, Milton has a depressed look on his face and isn't eating.

MARTHA
What's wrong, baby? You love my porkchops, How come you're not eating?

MILTON
Not hungry.

MARTHA
Not hungry? Well that's too damn bad, because I didn't spend all day over the stove to feed something to the dog. Eat.

Milton shakes his head "no." Martha picks up Milton's fork and stabs a piece. She guides it toward Milton's mouth while receiving resistance from her son.

MILTON
Stop, stop.

MARTHA
You are going to eat--

MILTON
Alright,
(takes a bite)
I'll eat it. Shit.

Martha smacks him upside the head.

MILTON
(rubs head)
Owww.
(beat)
Alright, well my spirit has been killed. I don't know if I am going to be able to write another film.

MARTHA
What are you talking about?

MILTON
I just know that the kind of shit--

Martha eyes him.

MILTON
...stuff, I wanna do, won't be accepted by the masses.

Milton continues rambling on. Martha finishes her last bite and throws her fork down, she looks her son straight in the eye.

MARTHA
Milton, I've been hearing this "no studio, no agent," mess for awhile now and I'm getting a little tired of it.
(beat)
Here, let me show you something.

INT. MILTON'S ROOM

Martha and Milton stand in front of a Spike Lee poster.

MARTHA
Who's that?

MILTON
Shelton H. Lee.

MARTHA
Did Spike wait for an agent or anyone to buy his script?

MILTON
No.

MARTHA
That's right. He just went for it independently. And even when the studio was giving him problems he didn't let that stop him.

MILTON
(sarcastic)
Yeah, he just got his very wealthy friends to chip in on the bill.

MARTHA
But he still got the job done.

MILTON
Yeah he did...and that was a great movie.

MARTHA
And I know I don't get you all those Rolodex cards for Christmas for nothing. You know a lot of people, right?

MILTON
Yeah, you could say that.

MARTHA
Well then, there you go.

Milton has a moment of reflection.

He dashes out of the shot leaving Martha stranded looking over Spike.

Milton returns to kiss Martha on the cheek.

MILTON
Thank you.

MARTHA
Where are you going?

MILTON
To Hollywood.

MARTHA
What for? You're not a pimp.

MILTON
But that doesn't mean I can't do a little pimping.

Milton exits the room, leaving Martha befuddled.

Milton pops his head in the door quickly to clarify.

MILTON
Figurative pimping.

EXT. THE CLUB - NIGHT

CUE MUSIC: Kool & The Gang - Hollywood Swingin'

Milton's late 80's beemer cruises down the street past all the prospective clubgoers waiting to get inside.

EXT. BACK OF THE CLUB

Milton steps up to the metal door.

Milton knocks and whistles to the tune of the 'Sanford and Son' Theme. The metal panel pulls back and reveals the enlarged eyes of PORK, 35.

PORK
(through door)
Who is it?

MILTON
Milton.

PORK
I don't know a Milton.

MILTON
Nigga, open the door.

PORK
Uh-uhh, I know we ain't using no profanity out there, are we now?

MILTON
No, but I can see we are having trouble using proper grammar inside.

PORK
Well who the fuck is you, my third grade English teacher?

MILTON
Pork, open the door.

PORK
Aight, hold on.

Pork unclanks the locks and opens the door.

Pork greets Milton with a pound.

MILTON
Sup, baby?

PORK
Oh nothing. Just letting niggas in the back, you know, you know.

Milton walks inside and past Pork.

INT. BACKROOM

MILTON
Well get a Tic Tac and maybe they'll let you greet the people in the front.

Pork stares at Milton's back as he strolls toward the club area.

He slyly slides his hand down into his pockets, and quickly pops a breath mint and checks his breath.

INT. THE CLUB

Bright purple, pink, and light blue lights scatter through the scenery. Girls and guys dancing, the DJ is spinning and people mingle in the corners. The crowd is black, white, and Asian, for the most part.

COUCH AREA

Milton is seated with Zeek and Dunabi.

ZEEK
Why are we here, Milton?

DUNABI
Yeah I could have my mystic snake in a lady from a foreign land right now.

ZEEK
No you couldn't.

DUNABI
I could if I wanted to.
(beat)
Bitch.

MILTON
'ey shut up. I'm here to meet someone. My friend at this radio station tipped me off that Rayzor-Man is going to be here tonight.

ZEEK
So...
(sarcastic)
You gonna give him your demo?

Zeek and Dunabi both chuckle at the thought.

MILTON
No, you Asian assholes. I want him to help me finance one of my film projects.

DUNABI
Why do you think that will work?

MILTON
I don't actually, I'm just hoping he will go for my young black filmmaker routine.

Milton's eyes wander to the bar. He spots a beautiful, glowing mocha skinned woman seated alone.

MILTON
Boys, excuse me.

He pounces.

THE BAR

He stands behind her and begins his premeditated diatribe.

MILTON
You know, its the damndest thing that you should happen to be in the right city and I'm just basing that off your backside. If you turn around then--

NEEKA
(hysterically laughing)
--then I'll be forced-to-turn-you-into-a star.

The drop dead gorgeous from head-to-toe NEEKA, 24, swivels around in her seat to greet Milton with a scary, still laughing expression.

MILTON
Awww shit!!!

Milton is startled and jumps back. Neeka continues to laugh at his startled face.

NEEKA
(calming down)
I can't believe you still use that tired line. You used that line when we first met and you're a fucking writer. What's a matter? Can't.....come....up with new material?

MILTON
I can come up with something else like you can dye your hair every week, but I don't expect to hit on ex-girlfriends with a classic line like that.

NEEKA
Well I'll just add it onto your neverending list of shortcomings.

MILTON
Fuck you, Neeka.

NEEKA
I know you would love to, and don't get all hostile with me cuz you ain't doing something with your life.

MILTON
We broke up two years ago, you have no clue what I've been up to.

NEEKA
Sweetie, I glance at <u>Variety</u> every now and then and still haven't seen the name Fenderson anywhere.

MILTON
Aww that's probably because my main goal in life isn't to fuck celebrities, you busted Banger sista.

Neeka's eyes lock on to Milton and her lips form a stern diamond shape.

NEEKA
Uh, just because I have a taste for the finer things in life doesn't--

Before she finishes her sentence a light skinned, corn-rowed Adonis approaches Neeka and interrupts her with a kiss/lick on the cheek. Milton's eyeballs bulge with curiosity.

NEEKA
(seductive)
Oh baby, oh excuse me, how rude of me, Milton this is my man--
(beat)
R&B superstar, Feylon.

Lights suddenly flash towards FEYLON'S, 27, direction. Milton looks suspiciously at the ceiling. Feylon turns his attention to Milton and gives him a look up and down while holding Neeka close to him.

FEYLON
Sup?

MILTON
How ya doin'....Mr. R&B superstar.

Feylon smiles, then proceeds to softly kiss Neeka.

Milton rolls his head over to Dunabi & Zeek's direction as she watches the action unfold.

Zeek raises his glass to Milton.

MILTON
(to bartender)
Bartender!

Milton gives a signal for "two drinks."

INT. THE CLUB - LATER

COUCH AREA

Dunabi and Zeek stare at the defeated Milton. A sudden roar of clubgoers grows louder.

ZEEK
Looks like your boy is here.

MILTON
(raises from his seat)
Milton's got to get to work.

DUNABI
Hey, ask him if I could put my mystic snake in one of his vid-e-ho's.

Milton approaches the horde of people around RAYZOR-MAN, 28. Milton tries to squeeze by the excessive amount of admiring women and entourage members. Milton unknowingly passes by one key member of the entourage.

BODYGUARD
Hey, what the fuck do you think you doin'?

The bodyguard, a big black dude, holds Milton back.

MILTON
I gotta talk to Rayz.

BODYGUARD
Yeah and who the fuck do you think you are to talk to Rayz?

MILTON
Listen, I can tell that you are a very cerebral person and all, based on the repetition I just witnessed, but I have to talk to Rayz...I'm his cousin.

That remark sparks Rayzor's attention.

RAYZOR MAN
'ey, 'ey wait hold on
(to Milton)
What's your name?

MILTON
Milton.

RAYZOR MAN
Milton? Milton what?

MILTON
Uh, Jackson.

RAYZOR MAN
I ain't got no cousin, Milton Jackson.
(to Bodyguard)
Get this nigga out of here.

The bodyguard starts pushing.

Rayzor-Man suddenly develops an epiphany.

RAYZOR MAN
(to Milton)
Wait, hold up. Milton Tyrone Jackson?

MILTON
Uh..yeah.

RAYZOR MAN
Wrong. Sorry, homie.

The bodyguard pushes again.

MILTON
But wait, wait!

The bodyguard stops pushing for a moment.

MILTON
Rayzor, I got a proposition for you, man, I'm a young black filmmaker. Just trying to make it, man, and I just need a little financing, man.

The bodyguard pushes.

BODYGUARD
Alright, time to go.

MILTON
We'll talk later, aiiight?

CUT TO:

INT. THE CLUB - LATER

COUCH AREA

Milton sulks by, covering his head while sitting between Dunabi and Zeek.

DUNABI
Why did you say "young black filmmaker?" Doesn't he already know you're black?

Milton stares at Dunabi.

EXT. THE CLUB - LATER

Pork opens the door and ushers out Rayzor and his crew.

Pork looks back inside the club and gives a signal.

Out strolls Milton.

MILTON
(to Pork)
Thanks, man.

PORK
No prob.

Milton walks toward Rayzor.

MILTON
(to Rayzor)
Yo Ray.

Rayzor and his crew look back.

BODYGUARD
Aww, not again.

The bodyguard gallops toward Milton.

BODYGUARD
Didn't you learn your lesson?

Milton does some juke moves to try and dodge the bodyguard. One move is a success and he gets closer to Rayzor.

But the bodyguard tackles him before Milton can get any closer. The bodyguard wraps him into a handlock.

MILTON
Hey, hey!
(struggling and in some pain)
Listen Rayzor, I'm just trying to see, owww, if you would want to invest in, owww, a little film project. It's a script I wrote and it's, owww,
(to the bodyguard)
Can you please loosen up, I'm on the fucking ground, here.
(to Rayzor)
Listen man it's really good and you could have a part in it if you want.

Rayzor and his crew keep walking.

MILTON
Umm, umm, uh did you know Straight Edge, he donated some money?

Rayzor stops walking. He turns around and faces the grounded Milton.

RAYZOR MAN
(looking down at Milton)
What? My wack immitatin', pussy brother donated some cheese to you?

MILTON
Yeah, owww!

RAYZOR
How much that nigga give you?

MILTON
Uhh uhh
(thinking of a number)
Like a mil.

RAYZOR MAN
Word? I didn't know Edge was rollin' like that,
(to entourage)
Y'all know my baby brother was rollin' like that?

The crew looks confused too.

RAYZOR MAN
Yo, Numbers.

NUMBERS, from the entourage speaks up.

NUMBERS
Sup?

RAYZOR MAN
Give this nigga a check.

NUMBERS
How much?

Close up on Rayzor's lips.

RAYZOR MAN
Two million.

ENTOURAGE
(gasp)
Damn, yo.

NUMBERS
Yo Rayz, I don't think **YOU** rollin' like that.

RAYZOR MAN
Well sell this watch then foo'.

Rayzor hands him the watch off his left hand.

NUMBERS
Nigga I got that for you at the Swapmeet.

RAYZOR MAN
Damn...well sell this one, we gotta clock in the car.

Rayzor unhooks the watch on his right hand.

RAYZOR
Edge ain't gonna one up me?
(to Bodyguard)
Get him up man.

The bodyguard unlocks Milton and tries to help him up.

MILTON
(to bodyguard)
Thank you but that's okay, I've been helped enough.

Milton dust himself off.

RAYZOR MAN
(gives check to Milton)
Here you go homey.

Rayzor and the entourage walk away, leaving Milton starring at the check in hand.

Rayzor turns back and tells Milton....

RAYZOR MAN
Oh and I better get a producer credit.

MILTON
I'll do better. An associate producer credit.

RAYZOR MAN
Aight.

Milton bobs his head "yes" then looks into the camera as it smash pans in on him.

CUE MUSIC: The OJays' - "For The Love of Money"

INT. STAPLES CENTER - DAY

With rolled up sleeves and sporting a tie, Milton shoots 3 pointers with Los Angeles Clipper, ARMEN WILLIS, a.k.a. A-DUB, 25.

MILTON
Listen A-Dub, remember our sophomore through senior year at SC, before the endorsements and the groupies?

A-DUB
Yeah.

A-Dub takes a shot. Swish.

MILTON
Remember how you were always calling me to bust you out of jail because you were always drinking too much and getting into any kind of shit you could get into?

Milton takes a shot. A miss.

A-DUB
Yeah, I was fucking up.

A-Dub takes a shot.

MILTON
Yeah, well you remember who would always bail you out?

Milton takes another shot, swish.

INT. MILTON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Close on computer screen, the spreadsheet.

Under Armen Willis, "+$500,000".

INT. DERRICK JORDAN'S OFFICE

DERRICK JORDAN, 37, sits in his office, filled with movie/TV posters, Emmys, and Golden Globe awards filled office. He is at his desk conversing with another party on the phone while wearing a creepy smile on his face.

DERRICK
Yeah so what are you wearing?

His message-box beeps. It reads: "MILTON FENDERSON, LINE 3 "

DERRICK
Ahh, shit. Bryan hang on a second. Let me get rid of this kid before we start.

Derrick clicks over.

DERRICK
(to Milton)
Milton, what's up, man? Long time no--

MILTON
(on phone)
Derrick listen.
(MORE)

MILTON (cont'd)
Remember when I worked for you and you hired your cousin to be your assistant, and he went crazy that day and socked me, and popped my shoulder slightly out of place, and I didn't file a suit, complain about workers comp, or sock him back because you said it was a black family thing and I would understand....

DERRICK
Yeah?

CUT TO:

THE SPREADSHEET

Milton enters +$300,000 under Derrick Jordan. Then with his left hand he massages his right shoulder.

INT. WXYZ 102.9 RADIO STATION STUDIO

DJ JULIO, 28, is hosting his show. His guest for the evening is YOUNG-ONE, 24, a light skinned brother with crazy corn rows.

DJ JULIO
Yeah that's right, WXYZ 102.9 kickin' it live with the number one artist in the country, Young-One, talking about his new movie *One L1fe* in theaters now, check that out. Yeah, we gonna take--

YOUNG ONE
Wait wait-Julio can I just express how important and real this movie is, real quick?

DJ JULIO
Yeah.

YOUNG ONE
I mean, this is my life, cuz, and it's just so real and honest...

DJ Julio rolls his eyes.

YOUNG ONE
..and you know how real I am that I don't even think the director could even capture the realism that is, you know...Young-One. Naw'mean?

DJ JULIO
Right, right. How was the whole moviemakin' experience...

YOUNG ONE
Aww man it was dope. We kept it real gully and natural, you know. Kept it how I like it, in the hood and real.

DJ JULIO
That's great. That's great. Let's take some calls now. You know the digits, 717-WXYZ.

DJ Julio looks at the accompanying computer screen and bypasses a number of the names, skipping right to Milton.

DJ JULIO
Yeah Milton, from L.A., you're on with Young-One.

MILTON
(on phone)
Wassup, Julio? Young-One, what's up?

YOUNG ONE
Chillin', chillin'.

MILTON
Umm yeah I had a question.

YOUNG ONE
What's up, man?

MILTON
Well see look, we got these kids here in the city, and they're like aspiring filmmakers and all but they don't got any money for, like, equipment or anything.

YOUNG ONE
Right.

MILTON
So I was wondering if you would want to help out.

YOUNG ONE
Yeah, cool, I'll help out. How much to get y'all off the ground, homey?

MILTON
A million dollars.

YOUNG ONE
Aww hell naw homey. I can't help out like that.
(quivering laugh)
(MORE)

YOUNG ONE (cont'd)
I thought y'all needed a couple cameras or something, you know. Next caller, Julio.

Julio stares at him, confused.

MILTON
Man you know how it is in the hood man, this money could really put a lot of positivity into the community.

YOUNG ONE
Yeah I know but....that's a lot of positivity.

Young-One puts his arms up in a relaxing position. His sleeves fall to unveil two diamond bracelets and a diamond encrusted watch.

MILTON
Man here I thought you were real.
(shouting)
Listen up Los Angeles, Young-One is not real let it be known. Young-One is not real, Young-One--

YOUNG ONE
(to Julio)
Yo hang up on his ass.

DJ Julio acts like he trying to fix something with the phone line.

DJ JULIO
(playing dumb)
It's not changing, we can't change the call.

Young-One gets nervous.

MILTON
(shouting)
L.A. needs a real rapper, Young-One-is-not-the-one.

YOUNG ONE
Alright yo, stop, stop, alright damn!

Milton cease.

SPREADSHEET: Under "Punk", "+ $**1**,000,000".

INT. MILTON'S ROOM -DAY

The sunlight peers through the window. The bedside alarm clock strikes 5:37 a.m.

Milton sleeps alone. Peacefully.

Suddenly, the phone ignites with a banshee-like ring.

Rings once. Milton isn't phased.

Rings twice. Milton moans.

Rings three times. Milton covers his head with the pillow.

The answering machine picks up.

ANSWERING MACHINE
Yoooo, it's Milton, a message would be nice. Peaceeee. Beep!

A somewhat sexy voice beings to speak.

SEXY VOICE
Hiiiii Milton, its Candy from last night, I had a really great time last night and was wondering if--

Milton snatches the phone.

MILTON
(groggy)
Hellooooo.

The voice changes to an unquestionably serious angry elderly black man.

CHARLES
(over phone)
Milton!!!

Milton's eyes snap open.

MILTON
Awwwwww, damn, Dad. What is it?

CHARLES
Boy, don't you talk to me like that. You know who I am. And why are you still in bed? Didn't I teach you that the early bird gets the damn worm?

MILTON
Dad, it's fucking 5:39 here. People in L.A. don't wake up at 8:00 eastern standard time.

INT. CHARLES OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The New York skyline fills the window of CHARLES FENDERSON'S, 56, office. The well-groomed, evenly cut gray-haired, three piece suit wearing executive commands his fatigued offspring through a headset while playing a game of office golf.

CHARLES
Yeah they also don't know how to call the person who gave them a bed to sleep in and a roof over their head for 18 years...

Intercut the following conversation.

CHARLES
(on phone)
...and an expensive ass college education at--

MILTON
Oh my God, there's gotta be a point to this wake-up call.

CHARLES
What!?

MILTON
Nothing. Dad, what do you need?

CHARLES
I want to know when you are gonna get the hell out of your mother's house and if you got a real job yet.

MILTON
Until she throws me out, like you. And I have a real job. I'm a filmmaker...and actor, sometimes.

CHARLES
Yeah you and your mother keep telling me that bullshit. How many times do I have to tell you that YOU-CAN'T-MAKE-A-DECENT-LIVING-AS-A--!

Dial tone.

CHARLES
Hello?! Hello?!!!

MILTON'S ROOM

He quickly returns back to sleep.

INT. MILTON'S ROOM

Milton is at his computer working on the spreadsheet. The phone rings.

MILTON
Yeah?

A raspy, Bronx born voice responds.

STRAIGHT EDGE
(on phone)
Is this Milton Fenderson?

MILTON
Who's this?

STRAIGHT EDGE
This is Straight Edge. I heard my punk ass brother gave you two million dollars for some film project.

MILTON
Yeah.

STRAIGHT EDGE
Well tell that bitch ass nigga I'm uppin' the ante.

MILTON
(wide eyed)
Really?

STRAIGHT EDGE
(yelling)
Put down 3 million!

Milton starts typing.

STRAIGHT EDGE
No wait hold up.....put down 2 million and a half.
(yelling)
But you tell that bitch nigga I said 3 million!

Dial tone.

INT. CASTING ROOM

The camera pans over the sight of 10 asses. Some black, some white, one extremely hairy, but all belong to men. One of those rears ends belongs to Milton.

Posters line the room with advertisements for DVD's, sex toys, and other merchandise with one central black women on them.

Busty babe, CHERRRY, 29, stands in front of the men. Beside her stands CHAD, 35 who fills the room with his nasally whiny voice.

CHAD
Come on boys, this is ebony porn queen Cherrry. This is the Barbie of the African American X rated world, and we need to find our Ken.
(MORE)

CHAD (cont'd)
You fuck her you're fucking a whole empire of DVD's, erotic perfumes, kinky sex toys, and other shit that helps you get your jollies at night. She needs to see what you're working with here boys. You're telling me this is all you're packing? Come on. Okay, okay, how about I change this into a race war then, huh?

Most of the men touch themselves down there to increase their size. Milton stares at their flustered faces with a grin.

CHAD
Who's gonna get her, huh? Who's gonna get her? Will it be black on black, white on white, or... hairy ass on black.

Cherrry whispers into Chad's ear. Chad nods his head.

CHAD
Okay, she's decided.

Beat. All of the men wait with anticipation.

CHAD
Hairy ass, you're up.

MEN
Awwww. Dammit.

They all pick up their robes and leave, disappointed.

Milton in a robe, strolls over to Cherrry, and greets her with a kiss on the cheek.

MILTON
Hey!

CHERRRY
Hey, Milton, thanks for coming out.

MILTON
Oh no problem, no problem.

Cherrry looks down.

CHERRRY
Oh I know that's right.

MILTON
Hey, hey-eyes up here. Listen I gotta talk to you.

CHERRRY
Oh, okay. Let me okay it with Chad.
(to Chad)
(MORE)

CHERRRY (cont'd)
Chad, we're gonna be outside for a minute.

CHAD
Okay.
(to Milton)
But don't take her far Milty baby. She's gotta get fucked by a big orangutan looking motherfucker in 5 minutes.

NOTEBOOK

Milton writes "+1,700,000 (Cherrry)."

YOUNG MAN (O.S.)
...I mean if Spielberg and those other cats can do it....

INT. COLLEGE HALL

Milton adds up the current sum and from his expression is shocked.

A banner over the chalkboard reads **U.M.O.F.O** ("Urban Minorities Over Film Obstacles") conference" The room is overflowing with blacks, young and old, attentively listening to the questioner.

YOUNG MAN
Then why can't we?

Milton yields from scribbling in his notebook as his ears catch the last comment. He and the other attendees collectively turn their attention to the speaker at the podium.

SPEAKER
Well you know, artists have their own agenda and it's not as if anyone has ever approached me with the idea of starting a studio.

Milton raises his hand.

INT. MILTON'S ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark. The haunting glow of the computer screen masks Milton's face.

A word file entitled "Fenderson Films Mission Statement" stares back at Milton.

A window pops up on the screen.

"YOUR AD COULD BE HERE"

Milton is annoyed and quickly closes the window.

He continues typing on the spreadsheet, then stops. An idea seems to be formulating on his face.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD NEWSSTAND - DAY

Milton struts up to the usual Zeek, Dunabi, and Lorenzo, who is focused on a newspaper.

MILTON
Don't you guys work?

DUNABI
Man, fuck us, what about you?

MILTON
What about me?

Dunabi opens up a trade paper to a big, black background and white letters, two page ad.

"WANTED: RICH BLACK ASPIRING FILMMAKERS!" "Tired of not seeing our people represented right in movies? Want to seek revenge for all the times our people said the word "massa?" Or hell, just want to make the man pay for 400 years of embarrassment? Well this is your chance to be part of the new black Hollywood revolution, with donations to the Milton Fenderson Film Fund, for more information call 323.555.1079, Hurry only 300 odd years left. Peace!"

DUNABI
What the hell is this? Now you've gone all ethnic on us.

ZEEK
And where did you get the cash for a two page ad?

LORENZO
Probably from more rapers.

MILTON
Rappers.

LORENZO
You heard me.

MILTON
(to Zeek & Dunabi)
Don't worry about it, boys. Just understand that after I'm done with this, the industry will bow down to us.

Milton's cell phone rings.

MILTON
One second, guys,
(on phone)
(MORE)

MILTON (cont'd)
Hello? Yes, this is Milton Fenderson..

Milton trots off and continues his cell conversation.

DUNABI
I don’t know about this shit. We were supposed to look out for each other. Now he’s just B.E.T.’ing it.

ZEEK
(looking at the trade)
Yeah, I do like how he tried to keep some
(quotation fingers)
“street” cred by adding “peace” at the end of the ad.

Dunabi chuckles.

LORENZO
Leave him alone. Shame on you two. You should support papi, he’s trying to help all us minorities out in the end.

Milton catches Lorenzo’s statement.

MILTON
Thank you, ‘Renz.

ZEEK
What is this film project you're doing, anyways?

Milton glances at the front page of the L.A. Times.

MILTON
I’m starting a studio.

ZEEK
You mean a production company.

MILTON
No, Zeek. I think the words before I say them, I meant a studio.

ZEEK
You can’t start a studio. Only corporations and rich white guys start studios.

MILTON
Well that’s about to change now isn’t it?

ZEEK
So you're playing Robin Hood with the
(MORE)

ZEEK (cont'd)
(quotation fingers)
“rich black people” to make your films?

MILTON
Yeah and if they happen to have a good idea or two, we can talk.

DUNABI
Do you know what goes into a studio? You need a shit load of space.

MILTON
Yeah, I’m working on that as we...
(glances at newspaper again)
Wait hold up. Gentleman, I’ve found the new location for Fenderson Films.

Milton tosses the paper to Zeek.

MILTON
Continued on B2.

Zeek fingers to the page.

Page B2 displays a picture of CORTEZ HIGH. The article headline reads: DILAPIDATED CORTEZ HIGH SCHOOL OPEN FOR RENOVATIONS

The camera zooms in on the image.

MATCH SHOT: CORTEZ HIGH

EXT. CORTEZ HIGH - DAY

EXACTLY SIX MONTHS LATER

Milton wears a jacket, tie, jeans, and sunglasses. He leads a group of journalists and reporters through the campus where construction workers, painters, and carpenters work in the background.

Milton holds an umbrella on this sun-drenched day.

MILTON
Ladies and gentlemen of the press, welcome to the future base of Fenderson Film Company.

The journalists all write down what he is saying, the reporters tape recorders and cameras are all drawn as they walk throughout the tour.

MILTON
This is a momentous day: The inception of the first major black owned and operated film production and distribution company.

A loud roar of people interrupt Milton's speech.

What looks to be like protestors, all white, are gathered outside the gates.

PROTESTORS
Down with Fenderson Films! Down with Fenderson Films!

MILTON
(to reporters)
Excuse me for a moment.

Milton makes his way over to the gate to speak to the LEADER.

MILTON
Can I help you.

LEADER
Yeah you integration killer. We don't like your company, so we're protesting. How do you like that?

MILTON
Well personally I enjoy it. Any publicity is good publicity. I would join you if I wasn't doing this, but uh, just so I'm clear what are you protesting against?

LEADER
Your company is discriminatory.

MILTON
How so?

LEADER
You only employ blacks.

MILTON
No that's not true. We employ light skinned blacks, brown blacks, and sometimes we even let an interracial or two through the gates.

LEADER
Hardy, har, har, Mr. Fenderson, but we're still protesting until this place is shut down.

MILTON
Oh please Mr. White Man, don't shut us down.
(MORE)

MILTON (cont'd)
We haven't even moved in yet. And besides,
(yelling to a painter)
Hey Joe!

JOE, 52, stops painting an adjacent building and responds.

JOE THE PAINTER
Yeah?

MILTON
We still watching the Ducks/Kings game tonight?

JOE THE PAINTER
Yeah, sure.

MILTON
Cool. Hey, Joe! Last question, what race are you?

JOE THE PAINTER
I'm white than a motherfucker.

MILTON
And who pays your check?

JOE THE PAINTER
You do Bossman.

MILTON
(to Leader)
Well there you go, any more questions?

LEADER
(scolding Milton)
You haven't heard the last of us Fenderson. We'll....you know...find something else wrong with this crooked company.
(to Protestors)
Protestors, out!

And with that the protestors vanish.

Milton whips out a tape recorder.

MILTON
(to tape recorder)
Note to self, hire big black dudes for security.
(continuing tour with reporters)
This land you stand on now was once Cortez High School, a foundation that housed apathetic students enslaved to a pointless curriculum.
(MORE)

MILTON (cont'd)
However, in a couple of days the front gates will open to a base of creativity and endless talent. All of us here at Fenderson are fully committed to bringing smart, edgy and quality black films to the public with none of the stereotypes, so please stay tuned.

Milton walks up a short flight of steps to a cream-colored building. He opens the door, the press hanging on his every word.

MILTON
Now if you will excuse me, I have to get back to work, I will see you all at the launch party. Have a good afternoon.

Milton enters the door and slams it. A great deal of debris free falls to the floor from the roof.

REPORTERS
(gasp)
Ohh! Oh my.

Milton opens the door and glances at the rubble, then slyly turns to the reporters.

MILTON
That does not count as a stereotype. Good day.

He exits.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE

Milton opens the door and is immediately greeted by Martha, who attacks his face with a handkerchief.

MILTON
Mom. Mom, come on.

MARTHA
I saw you on TV and you had this piece of I don't know what on your face that I've been waiting to get at for the longest.

MILTON
(struggling)
Alright, thank you, but stop. Did anyone call?

Milton gets behind his desk.

MARTHA
Yes, Charles called.

MILTON
Charles, Charles, I haven't talked to any Charles recently.

MARTHA
Your father.

MILTON
(disappointed)
Oh. What the hell did he want? I got a desk job like he wanted.

MARTHA
(reading from notes)
He called to ask, "What the hell are you doing?"

MILTON
Shocking.

MARTHA
Then he called again while you were meeting with Human Resources. He asked again "What the hell are you doing?" Then at 1:15 he called and asked, "What the hell does the boy think he's doing? No seriously Martha what the hell does he think he's doing? He's gonna put the Fenderson name to shame---"

MILTON
Moms thanks. My self esteem called and said words need to stop coming from your mouth.

MARTHA
Okay. Oh, which reminds me, I organized all of your files and everything.

MILTON
Ahh you didn't need to do that.

Milton turns and looks at his files.

MILTON
What? Where is the Paul Thomas Anderson file?

MARTHA
He's white, right?

MILTON
Yes.

MARTHA
Oh, well check in the back of the cabinet.

MILTON
Why?

MARTHA
I color coded the files.

MILTON
Color coded the files? Why the f--
I mean why would you...
(looks in the back of the cabinet)
...color code them?
(reading through the files)
Mom! You didn't color code the files, you race coded them.

MARTHA
That way it's much easier.

MILTON
And discriminatory.

Martha comes to hug her son.

MARTHA
(hugging)
Oh well. You and I are going have so much fun working together.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE

A black business woman sits across from Milton.

MILTON
So what best qualifies you to be an assistant for Fenderson Films?

WOMAN
Assistant? Oh, I thought this was the foster care office. Damn!!
(yelling)
Come on, kids.

She storms out of the room, leading six awaiting children.

MILTON
(surprised)
Damn.

LATER

A young Asian business woman sits across from Milton.

MILTON
So what best qualifies you to be an assistant for Fenderson Films?

WOMAN 2
Ah well you know, I come straight from the street yo, and I be into that hip-hop shit you know, right, right?

Beat.

MILTON
Are you fucking serious?

WOMAN 2
No, I'm sorry. I just thought that I would have a better chance at the job if I could show you I was down.

MILTON
Well I'll take your word for it. Let's just skip that question and go on to the next one. And remember be yourself.

WOMAN 2
Okay.

MILTON
Alright. What's your favorite movie?

WOMAN 2
Phat Beach.

LATER

A rough in the face, casually dressed black woman sits across from Milton. She utilizes the arm rest, to their full power, sticking her chest straight out.

MILTON
So what best qualifies you to be an assistant for Fenderson Films?

WOMAN 2
Sweetie, I put the "ass", in assistant.

MILTON
Judging by your increased height in the seat, I can see, that. But seriously, what qualifies you to work for Fenderson Films.

Beat.

WOMAN 2
I want to fuck you.

Milton's expression says it all. He looks at her drop jawed

Milton jumps from his seat and heads to a cabinet under his desk. He pulls out a bottle shaped paper bag and takes a swig. He walks back towards her.

MILTON
Let's go.

LATER

EVETTE WILLOWS, 23, sits across from Milton. Milton looks over her nerdy exterior as she nudges her glasses up her nose.

MILTON
Alright, Evette Willows.

She smiles.

MILTON
So what best qualifies you to be an assistant for Fenderson Films.

EVETTE
Well personally, I think that the black community has been robbed of quality content in cinema and I think it is very sad, and I would like to aid you in anyway I can in helping rectify the situation.

MILTON
Alright, alright. Well what's your favorite movie?

EVETTE
Umm I would have to say, *Cooley High*.

MILTON
(excited)
Okay, okay!

Evette smiles again.

MILTON
Alright, last question. Name Fox's Thursday night lineup from 1994-1997.

EVETTE
Oh you mean when *Martin, Living Single,* and *New York Undercover* were on, that was a great night of--

Milton launches into a handshake from across the table.

MILTON
Welcome to Fenderson Films.

INT. EVETTE'S DESK

Evette is busy posting picture after picture of every black Hollywood hunk stored in her box. Pictures of Shamar Moore, Taye Diggs, Mekhi Pfeifer, Borris Kudjoe, Tyrese, and Morris Chestnut line her desk. Milton approaches Evette at her desk.

MILTON
Uhh, hey.

EVETTE
Hi.

Milton eyes the desk with suspicion.

MILTON
You got a whole theme going on here.

EVETTE
Yeah, these are my babies.

MILTON
I can dig it. Listen, did the video guys come yet?

EVETTE
Yeah, they're done. They left instructions for you on the remote.

INT. VIDEO ROOM

The room's main attraction is a 40 foot high, 150 screen video monitor fills the wall. Monitors are stacked upon monitor to form a pyramid. Milton enters to find two workers packing up the tools.

Milton presses POWER.

The wall lights up like a Christmas tree. Monitor after monitor shows live-videos of all the investors. Derrick Jordan, Ray-zor Man, Straight Edge, Cherrry, Young-One and other prominent faces.

MILTON
Wassup, everyone?

An echoed response.

ALL
What's up?

MILTON
Welcome to the first Fenderson Films investors meeting.

STRAIGHT EDGE
Wait wait hold up son. We need to have a talk about that name.

RAYZOR MAN
Yeah I mean first you con us into believing that we are giving our money for one of your student films or whatever, and now we've got a multimillion dollar company on our hands.

STRAIGHT EDGE
(to Rayzor)
'ey shut up, bitch.

RAYZOR MAN
Is that my punk ass little brother? Aww hell naw where's the pause button on this shit?

Straight Edge mad dogs Rayzor's video monitor as if they were in the same room.

MILTON
Gentlemen, gentlemen, both of you shut up before I mute you both. Now listen I know my actions were sort of deceitful, but each and everyone one of y'all's money will be going to future film projects. Instead of just one film it will go to multiple film projects that will hopefully elevate the world of black cinema, that is Fenderson Film's goal.

YOUNG ONE
Hey hey, hold up now.

MILTON
Young-One, you have a comment?

YOUNG ONE
This is our hard earned money, I think we should all have a say in the name of the motherfucker.

MILTON
Although I question your definition of "hard earned money," I do take into consideration the naming of this venture. Any suggestions for names?

A voice from inside the room is heard.

SILK (O.S.)
Our goal is to get our movies seen. No one will greenlight our movies, so we're just going to have to blacklight them.

Milton turns his head to SILK, 37, a crisp and clean suited guy who sports a bald head. Evette races in behind him.

STRAIGHT EDGE
(on screen)
Who the fuck is that?

MILTON
Good question.

EVETTE
Sorry, Milton. He just stormed in, I'll call security.

SILK
(sarcastically)
Oh I have to go already, I wanted to make a donation.

MILTON
Well you should schedule an appointment with my assistant Mr....?

SILK
Silk. Just call me Silk. And I'm afraid my time is too valuable to take an appointment.

RAYZOR MAN
Man fuck him. We need to get back to business.

STRAIGHT EDGE
Shut the hell up...

RAYZOR MAN
Man fuc--

Milton mutes the brothers.

MILTON
Listen, sir, we are in the middle of a meeting so if you could...

Silk rips of a check Silk,

SILK
Is five million dollars a nice even amount to start with?

Silk throws the check in his direction. Milton eyes the spiraling piece of paper as it hits the ground.

MILTON
Hey, 'Vette.

EVETTE
Yes?

MILTON
Give Mr. Silk the necessary paper work on his way out.

EVETTE
Yes, Sir.

SILK
(to Video Pyramid)
I'll see you all very soon.
(to Milton)
Oh, and Milton-
(points to top of pyramid)
I want that spot up there. Oh, and save me a table at the launch party.

Silk escorts himself out.

Milton stands alone. Beat.

Milton picks up the check and blows on it. A white dust jumps off the check.

YOUNG ONE
Man, I gave up the crack game five years ago.

EXT. GATES - DAY

Two workers begin to unravel the Blacklight banner over the Fenderson Films banner.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Milton and Evette overlook the banner change from the window.

MILTON
It's funny what money can do.

Evette bobs her head. Beat. Milton retires to his desk.

EVETTE
That reminds me. Are you ready for your initial position placement meeting?

MILTON
Yeah line them up.

Evette opens the door and reveals a short line of professionally dressed people.

EVETTE
(reading from notes)
Okay first up is Alex Eagen. He is applying for the head position in marketing, he graduated from Harvard with--

MILTON
Pass. I'm hiring a street team for marketing.

Evette shuffles a confused Alex out.

EVETTE
(reading from notes)
Okay thank you very much Alex, and we'll see you again. Next up is Lisa Ohmoto. She is applying for the head music position....she is a classically trained graduate of Juiliard who has performed at Carnegie Ha--

MILTON
I've got hundreds of starving musician friends who would kill to work for free.

EVETTE
(shuffling Lisa out)
Lisa we are so sorry it didn't work out, but we will keep your name in our files and hope to see you again.

LISA
You know you could have thought this process out better.

MILTON
I'm sure we could have. Have a nice day.

LISA (O.S.)
Fuck you!

MILTON
Not so classically trained now are we?

EARL HIGGINS, 53, a nerdy uptight black guy, steps in.

EVETTE
This is Earl Higgins. He is a graduate of Berkeley and is applying for the accounting position.

MILTON
You know what? There's something likeable about Earl, here. He's got potential. I'll tell you what...

Milton reaches in his cabinet under his desk and tosses Earl a Colt 45.

MILTON
You drink that before work everyday and you got the job.

Earl grabs it and starts to chug it on his way out.

EVETTE
Alright. This is Angus Howser and Steve McDermot.

ANGUS and STEVE two professional looking suave Caucasian individuals, step up.

EVETTE
They are both applying for Creative Executive positions.

MILTON
No, no, no. Come on, you guys aren't the right type of minds I want, I need visionaries. Ahh, I'll just fill the creative executive parts myself.

ANGUS
It's because we're white isn't it?

MILTON
(to Angus)
Who was the woman who would not give up her seat on the bus to stand against racism?

ANGUS
Malcolm --

STEVE
(slaps Angus upside head)
No!

MILTON
Good day, gentlemen.

Steve gives Angus another good whack on their way out, Evette closes the door.

MILTON
(to Evette)
Looks like I got some recruiting to do.

INT. EVETTE'S DESK - DAY

Quietly typing away at her computer, Evette takes a moment and looks around to see if anyone is around.

She looks at a nearby picture of Morris Chestnut. She looks into his eyes, he inanimately stares back.

She gives the picture a kiss.

She hears the door open and regains her docility in a haste.

In walk, PICO & MEL, both 23.

Pico's cap is backwards and he wears a heavy fleece jacket even though it's 88 degrees outside. Mel is the heavier of the two, sporting a bright orange Tampa Bay jersey.

EVETTE
Can I help you?

PICO
Yeah, we here to see Melton.

MEL
Milton, dumbass.

PICO
Yeah, like my nig said.

EVETTE
(rolls eyes)
Is he expecting you?

PICO
Yeah.

PICO & MEL
We the new executives.

Evette shoots them a peculiar glance.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE

Milton is chatting away on the phone.

MILTON
(into phone)
Yeah, well I'm the CEO of my fucking company too but you're not about to see me talking over my fucking movies--

Evette enters.

MILTON
Wait one sec..

EVETTE
Your 12:00 is here.

MILTON
Thanks ‘vette
(on phone)
Grandma, I’mma call you back.

Pico and Mel enter.

MILTON
‘eyyyy, y’all made it. Sup Pico?

Milton slaps them some skin.

PICO
Awwww, whats up?

MILTON
(to Mel)
Whats up, Mel baby? You getting big.

MEL
Haaaa, yeah.

MILTON
Have a seat, have a seat.

Mel and Pico sit on the cushy couch.

PICO
(looking around)
Damn Milton we didn’t know you were livin’ like this.

MEL
(looking around)
Yeah bruh. You come along way from the mailroom.

MILTON
Well, we all gotta grow up, and you know what? It’s time for y’all to do the same.
(excited)
You guys are my new creative executives.

Milton gives the two some dap.

MEL
Alright, alright.

MILTON
(excited)
You know what that means?

PICO & MEL
(forced excitement)
Hell naw.

MILTON
It just means that you gonna find shit for us to put out. Find good filmmakers that can work with us and good movies that we can release. People and shit that you think would rep the Blacklight name to the fullest.

PICO
Oh yeah we can do that.

MILTON
I know you can, and I believe in you two. Alright here is your first assignment. Don't fuck it up. We need some hot fresh talent, someone that our audience will want to see succeed.

PICO
Aight, aight.

MEL
So like niggas from the hood and shit?

MILTON
(beat)
Alright. Alright. For lack of a better word, niggas from the hood, yes.

Mel smiles.

MILTON
Go hit Dorsey first.

Mel and Pico get up.

MEL
Aight, cool.

PICO
Wait. What are we looking for again?

MEL
Dumbass..talent.

MILTON
Yeah, potential. You know, like a kid with a camera.

PICO
Got chu, got chu,
(beat)
Ayy Milton you know that white bitch outside was lickin' Morris Chestnut out there?

Milton shoots them a peculiar glance.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - NIGHT

Blacklit searchlights shine over the sky of the studio entrance. Reporters are all around covering the event. Limo's drop off various stars and VIP's. People are all around to greet the attendees.

TAWANNA MILLER for BET begins her coverage.

TAWANNA
Hi I'm Tawanna Miller for BET, Black star power!
(throws up black power fist)
I am outside reporting live for the launch party of the much publicized first black owned studio, Blacklight Films. For Black Hollywood, this is the place to be tonight. Many celebrities such as Denzel, Vivica and Halle have already made it inside. Blacklight founder and president Milton Fenderson will announce the long awaited first project Blacklight will release next month.

Just inside the studio gates, Milton watches the guest pile in past security guard, Pork.

His eye catches a very conspicuously dressed (lime green dressed to be exact) Neeka in the crowd waiting to get through security. She is third in line.

Milton whips out his two-way pager and furiously types a message.

Pork's two-way vibrates and he reads the message.

"From: Milton - Don't let the sour Skittle b!%#h inside."

Pork bobs his head "yes".

Neeka approaches Pork.

PORK
Sorry, ma'am. You can't get in here.

NEEKA
What? What are you talking about? I'm on the list.

PORK
No you're not, ma'am. And I would appreciate it if you took your neon ass out of my view.

NEEKA
(huff)
You haven't heard the last of me,
(huff)
Dumb motherfuckers...

Neeka storms off in a fit.

She walks up to the nearest limo and just as someone exits the limo, she hops in.

LIMO DRIVER (O.S.)
Hey, you can't be in here!

NEEKA
Oh drive.

LIMO DRIVER (O.S.)
Get out!

Neeka chucks her weave in the drivers direction. The tires screech, the car races off.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - LATER

A fully decorated lavish party setting with attractive lights, a variety of fabulously dressed people and blaring music.

The Blacklight name stands proud on the main stage surrounded by the trademark blacklit searchlights.

Milton makes his way over to the main stage in front of the podium.

MILTON
(to guest)
Attention, everyone. Can I have your attention, please?

The music is turned down and the guests turn their heads toward his direction.

MILTON
Thank you. Hello my beautiful, beautiful ebony queens and my fellow Mandingo warriors!

The crowd cheers.

MILTON
Welcome to Blacklight Studios!

The crowd applauds.

MILTON
This is the beginning of a revolution in black cinema. Our mission is to raise the bar. Raise the bar to the type of quality we know we are culturally capable of.

Beat.

MILTON
You see, the big eight are suffering from a mid-life right now and have resorted to using our culture and talent as a reincarnated exploitation and we're not going to let our culture go to waste by those means, no sir. Basically, our mission is to show that we can be just as boring as white people.

The crowd laughs.

MILTON
And that our movies will sell more than just the accompanying soundtrack.

The crowd chuckles again.

MILTON
Which brings us to our first feature. Next month, Blacklight will release our first movie entitled *Reparations Ultimatum*.

The crowd cheers/applauds.

MILTON
This is a film I actually wrote and directed at U.S.C. and am very proud to see it being released to the public at large.

The lights dim and a projection screen lowers from the ceiling over Milton.

MILTON
Here is the trailer for *Reparations Ultimatum*. And remember its coming to a theater near you.

The crowd croons a collective chuckle.

Milton exits the stage and runs into a frantic GINA RICHMOORE, 29.

MILTON
Hey Gina.

GINA
Milton, that whole speech was great but we haven't even secured a means of distribution.

MILTON
My sweet Gina. Do you know why I snatched you up from one of the big eight to be my V.P.?

GINA
No.

MILTON
So you can handle all of that nitty gritty stuff, I have a studio to run baby.

With that, Milton dashes off toward the crowd. Gina responds to his escape by raising her cute middle finger.

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

A very enthusiastic black business man stands outside of the cafeteria with Milton a blueprint in hand.

BUSINESS MAN
Okay, just picture this.

Business man holds up his hands as if it is a canvas.

BUSINESS MAN
What better to have on a Black owned...

MILTON
Right.

BUSINESS MAN
Black operated.

MILTON
Yeah.

Milton's anticipation and enthusiasm grows.

BUSINESS MAN
Black employed studio then.....
(unrolls blueprint)
A Roscoe's Chicken and Waffles.

Milton, again, drops his jaw.

MILTON
Get the fuck off my lot.
Security!!!

BUSINESS MAN
Okay wait. Wait what's the
problem?

MILTON
Man I'm trying to run an accredited
studio here.

BUSINESS MAN
Oh, oh, you're one of those type of
brothers. Well how about this?

He writes something on the blueprint, Milton's eyes follow his pen movement.

SMASH CUT:

EXT. COMMISARY - DAY

A sign reads just by the entrance:

"Future spot of CHÉZ ROSCOE's"

INT. SCREENING ROOM

A small movie theater type. Milton, Gina, and Evette sit together with notes and pens in hand. In front of them stands STAN WILMORE, 44, a clean cut guy who is ready to present for the three.

MILTON
Alright, Stan. What do you have
for us?

STAN
Okay, well...

SILK (O.S.)
Well hold up, hold up, my Caucasoid
brother. Silk has not sat down
yet.

Everyone turns their heads to the back of the theater as Silk stands, waiting for recognition.

MILTON
Silk, what are you doing here?

Silk walks over to the seat next to Milton.

SILK
Well when you are the biggest
investor of a company, you kinda
want to be involved, youngster.

Silk takes a seat.

SILK
So what are we doing?

GINA
Well Mr. Wilson here is giving us suggestions for our logo.

SILK
Oh well, then shoot.

STAN
Okay, well...as you know, my company specializes in C.G.I., so here are our
(joking manner)
Computer generated
(quote fingers)
“ideas”.

Stan is all smiles while, no one is laughing.

SILK
Man, show the damn logo.

STAN
As you wish.
(into a walkie talkie)
Roll it.

The room darkens, and the screen fills with the Blacklight logo-but its colors are African red, green, and black.

All but Evette look over at a smiling and encouraging Stan.

MILTON
Is it ‘89 Stan? Next!

STAN
Okay, okay.

On the screen, the Blacklight logo is more cartoonish. The word is made up of a big neon light bulb. It flickers on once. Twice. On the third it flashes the brightest light imaginable.

They all let out a groan as the light flashes and the screen fades to black.

MILTON
What the hell are you doing, Stan?

STAN
Well, well it’s kinda bright, I know--

ALL
Kinda?!

MILTON
(massages eyes)
Ahh, ahh, just roll the next one.

STAN
(into walkie talkie)
Roll it.

A CGI movie theater filled with people appears on the screen. The camera closes in on a BLACK WOMAN, dressed in a velour sweatsuit in the movie theater.

BLACK WOMAN
(talking to the screen)
Get him, get him!

Some of her neighbors are annoyed. A phone rings. It is hers, the light of the phone is a blacklight. It rings and shines in the darkness of the theater. The moviegoers' collectively moan and groan.

MOVIEGOERS
Shut up, shut up. Get outttt!!!!

After taking in all of the remarks, she stands up, reaches her hand with cellphone intact up in the air and the light of the cellphone illuminates around her creating a half force field. Her pose is reminiscent of the Columbia Pictures lady. The light then transforms into the word: BLACKLIGHT

Screen fades to black.

The lights turn back on to reveal Milton, Silk, Evette, and Gina with their jaws appropriately dropped.

Stan again looks at them with a speculative smile.

Beat.

GINA
Oh-my-God.

EVETTE
I'm even offended.

MILTON
I don't even know what to say.

SILK
That was genius.

Everyone turns their heads to the bald man.

MILTON, GINA & EVETTE
What?

SILK
Pure genius.

MILTON
How could you say that?

SILK
(points the screen)
Did you see it?

MILTON
(tugs at his skin)
Did **you** see it?
(beat)
Silk, that was the most offensive racist piece of celluloid I have ever laid my eyes on, and I've seen the *Phantom Menance.*

SILK
Well I'll give you that it has its flaws, like, I'd rather it be live action, but we can talk about that later.

MILTON
(frustrated)
Are you serious, man?

SILK
Yes, it's different and unique. It's like a movie inside a movie. It's what's needed to make our company stand out.

MILTON
Yeah, but--

SILK
And as the major shareholder, I say it stays.

Silk rises up and treads toward the door. The camera stays on Milton.

MILTON
(covers face)
My company is finished.

We see Stan's hand console Milton by tapping his back. Milton eyes him between his fingers.

EXT. SOUTH LA BREA - DAY

A busted piece of shit rumbles down the street.

INT. PICO'S CAR - DAY

Mel is driving around as Pico takes in scenery from the passenger seat.

PICO
Alright, so what are we supposed to be doing?

MEL
Man you been looking around for an hour and you ask me that now?

PICO
I'm sorry. Shit, I forgot.

MEL
Well, we supposed to just look for...
(tries to retain his thought)
Ummm...damn, see, now you got me forgettin'.

PICO
I know, see this creative executive shit is hard, I don't know what we're supposed to do. We shoulda asked to be something like movie producers, that shit look easy.

MEL
Yeah...oh wait I remember. We supposed to look for like, talent and shit. What he say?
(snaps finger twice)
Like a kid with a camera.

PICO
Oh yeah.
(beat, looks out window, points)
Oh shit, there go one right now.

OUTSIDE

A KID, 16, is walking down the sidewalk with a camera strapped around his body hanging by his side.

CAR

PICO
Yo, stop the car, stop the car!

Mel pulls over to the side. The kid stops and watches. Pico and Mel get out quickly, the kid takes off running.

PICO
Aww, shit.
(to Mel)
Take the car!

Pico starts to chase him. Mel hops back in the car.

PICO
(running)
Yo stop kid, stop. We just wanna talk!

KID
Naww!

PICO
Come on man, hold up.

EXT. FARMDALE AVE.

The kid is running, and running, and....

Mel swerves the car up against the sidewalk, cutting the kid off. Pico comes from behind and tackles him against the backseat door.

PICO
I got him, Mel. Come on little homie, we just want to talk to you about some business.
(opens the door)
Now here, get in the backseat.

Pico kicks him into the backseat.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Milton is chewing out Mel and Pico. Next to Mel and Pico is the kid with masking tape taped to his mouth.

Outside of Milton's window, we see workers erect a statue of the Black Woman from the logo, phone in hand and all.

MILTON
Where--where did I say kidnap? When the fuck did I say kidnap a Dorsey student?

PICO
Well, the little nigga had a camera in his hand.

MEL
If that's not a sign, then we don't know what is.

MILTON
(rubbing his temples, sighs)
Guys, I really don't have time to deal with this.
(points to window)
I've got a fuckin' travesty of a logo being put up outside and a million other things to deal with.
(MORE)

MILTON (cont'd)
Please free him. I would hate it if this got out to the trades, “Black motion picture company enslaves children.” Get him out of here now.

As the trio leaves the office, in storms Gina and JEFF FISK, 29, who looks like a Wall Street creep complete with red hair.

GINA
(confident)
Milton, this is Jeff Fisk, our money man.

MILTON
(unfazed)
Alright.

GINA
That’s it, alright?

MILTON
Yeah.

GINA
No shit about a white guy with so much responsibility around here?

MILTON
‘vette is white and she basically runs the company. Plus, I’m not gonna trust any of these niggas around here with that much money. That’s how people die.

GINA
Alright, then great. Let’s go, Jeff.

JEFF
(to Milton)
Nice meeting you, Milton.

MILTON
That’s Mr. Fenderson, whitey.

Gina gives him the look.

MILTON
What? I’m just kidding. Man I’m gonna love having Jeff around.

INT. CHEZ ROSCOE’S -DAY

Milton gets his food from the commisary counter. As he turns around, he spots Neeka sitting alone at a table.

He immediately sits down next to her.

NEEKA
(ahem)
Excuse you.

MILTON
My studio-I can sit where I want.

NEEKA
Oh Mr. Big Studio Executive can sit here with us, the little people.

MILTON
No, I thought I'd try the gold diggers section today. How did you get on the lot anyways? Lemme guess, you seduced one of my weak minded security guards?

NEEKA
Promised to go out on a date with him.

MILTON
You gave him head, huh?

NEEKA
Who told you?

MILTON
(disgusted)
Uhh, I was just joking, ya freak. What are you doing here besides going down on my employees?

NEEKA
I don't know. This just seems to be the place people are.

MILTON
(bites his sandwich)
Well we are growing.

NEEKA
Yes you are. Which brings me to my question.

MILTON
Here it comes, uh, no pun intended.

NEEKA
Milton, I know we haven't gotten along much after I dumped you...

Milton rolls his eyes.

NEEKA
But please, you've gotta cast me in one of your movies, please?
(MORE)

NEEKA (cont'd)
You just have to, I need to jump-start my career because I've been dating these really loser guys and I need to step it up.

MILTON
Neeka, as much as I would
(exaggerates)
..love, to help you out with your career slash love life, I think I'm going to pass.

NEEKA
(shields face with hands)
Oh I knew that was pointless. You've always thought I was a horrible actress.

MILTON
Aww, see that's not true. Remember when you played the lead role in one of my student films.

NEEKA
Anatomy of a Bitch?

MILTON
Yeahhhh. You played the hell out of that role. It's like it was tailor made.

NEEKA
Well see, I can do more stuff like that. Come on just give me a chance.

Beat.

MILTON
Okay, fine. I'll give you a role. But you have to really commit and play the hell out of this role, too.

NEEKA
Oh yeah. Anything, Milton.

MILTON
Alright then. It's a small role but very crucial part.

NEEKA
Oh yeah, anything. Thank you. Thank you so much.

She kisses him on the cheek.

MILTON
No problem.

Milton casually wipes the kiss off of his cheek.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE

Makeup and hair people all surround Neeka for her big role.

She is decked out in a purple velour suit....with cell phone by her side.

The setting is a makeshift movie theater with extras playing the crowd.

Milton waits in the directors chair.

MILTON
Okay people, I want to get this in one take.

The lights dim.

MILTON
And action!

Neeka rises and raises her cellphone proudly.

It illuminates. Freeze frame.

The camera pulls out from that image to reveal the logo on a poster board.

MATCH SHOT: Poster board.

EXT. WESTWOOD THEATER - NIGHT

The purple carpet is out, as well as the media for the premiere event.

A sharply dressed Milton and Gina stroll down the red carpet with Pork tailing them from behind.

The two higher-ups stop and look as if they are attentively listening to the members of the press.

A loud voice echoes from the media plagued sidelines.

AKIEM
Mr. Fenderson, Mr. Fenderson! Yo Mr. Fenderson!

Milton turns his attention to the frantic young lad and proceeds over to him with Pork following.

MILTON
(slaps hand)
Wassup, man?

AKIEM RAASHAD, 22, a young eager type who's eyes bulge as he slaps the skin of Mr. Fenderson.

AKIEM
Aww damn, man. I can't believe I'm meeting you. I've read everything about you. Look, I just got out of film school and I got this script I want you to read. It's dope, I'm serious, and I know I don't have an agent but--

MILTON
Send it over.

AKIEM
What? Aww thanks man, I'll have it there first thing!

MILTON
(being pulled away)
Okay, great. I gotta go. My movie is about to start.
(stops for a second)
Hey whats your name?

AKIEM
Akiem. Akiem Raashad.

Camera stays on the happiest young auteur in the world.

INT. EVETTE'S DESK - DAY

Milton enters the room.

EVETTE
Hey, how was your lunch?

MILTON
Horrible, Denzel wanted me to pay. Any calls?

EVETTE
Just your father, he called and yelled some stuff.

MILTON
(sarcastic, walking into his office)
Surprising.

EVETTE
Oh wait.

Milton halts.

EVETTE
(holds up script)
An Akiem Raashad delivered this script to you.

MILTON
Oh yeah, put it on my desk.

EVETTE
Milton I read it this morning and it is one of the best scripts I have read, like, in my life. Even the mistakes are great.

MILTON
Really? You read it all this morning? Weren't the phones ringing and stuff?

EVETTE
Milton it's fifteen minutes to six. You took a five hour lunch.

MILTON
Oh yeah. It's good to be the boss. Did you show it to Gina?

EVETTE
Yeah, she read half of it before she took off for her meeting but she already loves it.

MILTON
Pico and Mel?

EVETTE
They only read up to page 20 and said
(slowing speech, imitating)
"It' sound aiight."
(grabs tape, hands it to Milton)
Here, he left his reel, too.

MILTON
Cool. What's the script about?

EVETTE
It's like a modern day Hamlet.

MILTON
Okay, cool, get him on the horn.

Milton enters his office. Evette tails him.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE

EVETTE
You're not going to read it?

MILTON
You know I'm feeling so great from the premiere last night, nothing can really bring me down. So I'm going to go on your judgement here.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE - LATER

ANGLE ON: The calendar displaying the month of July.

Milton is on the phone as we hear his conversation.

MILTON
Listen, we all read your script and all of us love it.

AKIEM
(shocked)
Oh really? Oh thanks, Mr. Fenderson.

MILTON
Call me Milton. Listen, we wanna buy it from you and we're gonna start production on it as soon as possible. I took a look at your reel and we think you're a solid director, and we want you to do it. You up for it?

AKIEM
Well that depends on the deal?

MILTON
What?

AKIEM
With all due respect, Mr. Fenderson, I am new to the game, but I know my talents.

MILTON
Well we can talk money later. Right now, we're just giving you a shot at a major motion picture.

AKIEM
And I thank you. But you see, my art is sacred. It's--

Milton rolls his eyes.

MILTON
Uh yeah kid, I used to talk like that too and all but now I'm a busy man, Legal will go over the nitty gritty shit with you, we'll talk later, peace.

He slams the handset down.

MILTON
(to self)
Snotty motherfucker.

In the background we see his alarm clock strike 7:00. Outside the window, the BLACK WOMAN statue's phone lights up.

Milton catches it out of the corner of his eye.

MILTON
Fuck me.

INT. INDOOR SWIMMING POOL

Milton relaxes in a floating chair on the pool with pen and pad at hand.

He is writing down dialogue for a character in what looks to be a screenplay.

His cellphone rings.

MILTON
Milton Fenderson.

GINA
(on phone)
The numbers for the weekend are coming in a minute. You want me to forward them to you on email?

MILTON
Yeah, thanks.

Milton claps the phone shut and continues writing.

His poolside laptop beeps. Milton pops the computer open and checks the email. His eye hopefully starts at the top and then inches down.

His expression says it all.

Milton then crosses out everything he had just written down on the pad.

INT. VIDEO ROOM

Most of the investors are present on their respective screens. Milton faces them all.

A-DUB
(on screen)
Ayy Milton man, what's going on with *Reparations Ultimatum*? You know I love the movie man but it came in at number eight.

STRAIGHT EDGE
(on screen)
Yeah, what's up with that?

MILTON
I blame marketing and lack of word of mouth, I mean, you all are from different aspects of the entertainment industry. Don't you talk to your audiences and friends in your life?

RAYZOR MAN
(on screen)
Awww wait now, don't try and put this upon us, my nig. This is all your fault. Plus you the one who started this in the first place.

STRAIGHT EDGE
(on screen)
Yeah, I know me and my bitch ass brother don't co-sign on a lot of things...

RAYZOR MAN
Fuck you.

STRAIGHT EDGE
But this is an exception. Yo, if we don't get some return on our investment, uhh excuse me I mean, our jack, then we gonna have to take things into our own hands. That's all I gotta say. Peace.

Straight Edge's screen disconnects. As does Rayzor's. A few others follow.

MILTON
Listen, everyone. Don't be as hostile as those guys. We have a new project going into production tomorrow. The script is fucking off the chain and we will see profit and then some, I promise.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE

Sets are up, cameras are in place, and the crew is putting the final touches on the scene. Actors sit in their chairs as Milton and Akiem shoot the shit.

ALEXANDER, 34, A dreadlocked brother with a pissed off demeanor squirms in his chair while reading the script. Milton senses the actor is uncomfortable.

MILTON
What's wrong, Alexander?

ALEXANDER
Mannnnnn. I got a problem with this script.

AKIEM
What?

Alexander stands up to make his point.

ALEXANDER
Well, it's just the structure of this story. I totally don't believe that the father would do something like this. I mean, who wrote this shit, anyways?

Akiem tries to speak but Milton interrupts him.

MILTON
Negro...it's Shakespeare.

ALEXANDER
Oh...well....fuck him.

MILTON
I'm sure he feels likewise.

Milton takes Akiem aside.

MILTON
Don't worry about him. Just, you know be professional and be the bigger man with these actors. You've got kind of an asshole thing going on also, so you'll fit right in.

AKIEM
Alright.

MILTON
Oh and remember have fun.

AKIEM
Okay.
(to everybody)
Okay, everybody! We're ready to begin.

Gina steps up to Milton both watch as Akiem take charge.

GINA
You think he'll be okay?

MILTON
Oh yeah. It's gonna be great. You gotta have faith, baby.

ALEXANDER (O.S.)
Fuck action!

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE

ANGLE ON: The calendar, it's October.

Milton hits speed dial on his phone.

EVETTE
(over speaker)
Yes?

MILTON
I gotta script for you.

EVETTE
Coming.

Evette comes through the doors armed with a tape.

MILTON
Whats that?

EVETTE
This is Akiem's final cut of *Papa*.

MILTON
Wow, he's done editing already.

EVETTE
Yep.

MILTON
Well setup a screening for you and myself and if I condone then schedule a press screening.

EVETTE
I'm on it.

MILTON
(to himself)
Damn, that went off without a hitch, and it was fast.

CUT TO:

TV SCREEN:

"Lights Camera Access Access." The Access Hollywood theme plays on TV.

NANCY O'DELL and PAT O'BRIAN are reporting from the news desk. The scrolling message on the electronic board reads: "The Golden Boy?"

PAT
Papa knows best. Good evening everybody, I'm Pat O'Brian.

NANCY
And I'm Nancy O'Dell.

The camera focuses on Nancy.

NANCY
This morning the Golden Globe nominees were announced and rookie filmmaker Akiem Raashad hit the trifecta by earning three nominations in key categories, Best Picture, Best Screenplay and Best Director for his debut *Papa*. The updated adaptation of the Shakespeare classic *Hamlet*. Access cameras were with Akiem earlier today as he....

The camera pans away from the TV screen.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE

Milton and Evette are watching it together.

EVETTE
I mean, can you believe this? You just picked this kid off the street.

MILTON
Yeah the little fucker stole my thunder. And it's unreal how the production was a breeze. No real actor flip outs. The editing went fine, no drama, no nothing, and now we got three Golden Globe nominations, it just seems unreal like something's gonna go wrong or something.

EVETTE
You watch too many movies.

Milton's face suggest he agrees.

TV SCREEN

NANCY
...as you can tell he was very happy with the news.

PAT
(quieter voice)
Well we wish him good luck.
Another first time nominee--

The channel changes.....to BET.

SUPER: The next day.

TAWANNA
Hi, this is Tawanna Miller for BET, black star power
(blows a kiss at the camera)
In a sad change of events, three time Golden Globe nominee Akiem Raashad was arrested this morning in his Los Angeles condominium after a tape surfaced to Los Angeles officials of Raashad engaging in sexual activity with a minor.

Footage rolls of Akiem entering the police headquarters.

TAWANNA
Authorities have told BET that the 16 now 17, year-old girl in the tape came to the police personally and handed the tape in. It was under her request that the tape not be, given to the media as it would be quote “too embarrassing” for her. But what the little golddigger doesn’t understand is that this is the age of the internet and that thing leaked an hour after she handed it in. If you haven’t seen it already, here is an exclusive excerpt of the tape.

INT. MILTON’S OFFICE

The TV continues to play in the background. Milton is pacing back and forth while fielding phone calls, left and right.

MILTON
(over phone)
Yes, Mom, I’ve been handling calls on this all day
long.....no...yes.....no listen
I’m going to see him right now, so I’ll talk to you later.

INT. LA COUNTY JAIL - DAY

VISITOR CONFERENCE AREA

Shielded between the glass partition, Milton speaks to Akiem over the phone.

MILTON
(holding phone)
So who is she?

AKIEM
(holding phone)
I barely have a clue. I think her name is Ashley or Angie, or something like that.

Milton rolls his eyes.

AKIEM
I met her at this party in my senior year and, you know, we hooked up. But I didn't know she was fucking 16 at the time. It was a college party and you know the girls nowadays they all look like my peers.

MILTON
Okay, that's explainable. But why the hell did you tape it, that's what I really wanna know?

AKIEM
I'm a director, man. Film is my life. I film everything. Sometimes I film myself taking a shit.

MILTON
Listen up R. Polanski, we're in some deep shit now. This is not good for the company, and your awards, your awards are probably fucked now.

AKIEM
That's all you're worried about? I gotta get out of jail and somebody gotta tell them I didn't know she was 16.

MILTON
Listen, I'll get legal on it. Just don't worry and wait until I send you some liquid soap before you wash your ass.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Milton paces in front of Gina, Pico, Mel, Jeff and Evette.

MILTON
(pacing)
We’re fucked, we’re fucked, we are fucked.

GINA
Okay well let’s calm down. We just need to focus on damage control.

MILTON
Okay, you're right.
(frustrated in the face)
Oh, our next movie is like *Papa*. We can’t market it the same way because people are gonna have Akiem’s situation in mind.

GINA
Well why don’t we 180 our approach and just put out a comedy?

MILTON
We don’t have any comedies in the works.

GINA
Well let’s get one out. I’m sure Pico and Mel can find something real quick.

PICO
‘ey hold up, hold up.

MEL
Yeah, we prefer romantic comedies ourselves.

MILTON
I don’t want to have a dumbass comedy come out. That’s gonna jeopardize the vision.

GINA
Well you didn’t honestly think we could just keep doing non-stop dramas?

MILTON
I know, I just wanted to establish ourselves first. Now we can’t.

GINA
Well why don’t we go for something that we know won’t fail?

EVETTE
Yeah, like a remake.

GINA
Yeah.

MILTON
A remake? Are you kidding? I don't do remakes.

GINA
Milton, we don't look like we have much of a choice.

Beat.

MILTON
(sigh)
I don't know. It would have to be the greatest remake ever, though.

EVETTE
Of course.

MILTON
Jeff, how are we doing financially?

JEFF
From the success of *Papa* we can do a remake. Just depends on which one.

MILTON
Alright, well then I'm gonna have to choose. I'll set up a meeting with the investors tomorrow.

INT. VIDEO ROOM

65% of the 150 monitors have the investors faces on them.

MILTON
Ladies and gentlemen, we are all happy that *Papa* has made this company so much money.

RAYZOR MAN
(on monitor)
Yeah I can finish that set of rims on my 300 SL.

MILTON
(sarcastic)
Yes, we are all happy about that, Rayzor-Man. Listen everybody, we are in a bit of jam right now. As most of you know, the director of our flagship property has been incarcerated. Now we must play catch up and rebound from this.

STRAIGHT EDGE
(on monitor)
Yeah we all saw that tape man, he was killing that shit.

Milton mutes Straight Edge's monitor.

MILTON
As I was saying, we need to rebound from this and my staff has suggested that a remake is just the thing to smooth things over for the company name.

DERRICK
(on monitor)
A remake. Of what?

CUT TO:

CUE MUSIC: *Good Times* Theme

TV SCREEN

On *Access Hollywood*, Pat O'Brian is standing in front of a monitor that shows clips and pictures of the cast of *Good Times*.

PAT
That's right, Nancy. Audiences all around America will be hearing that oh so familiar catch phrase,
(imitating)
"Dyn-o-mite," when the big screen version of *Good Times* heads to theaters later this year. Blacklight Pictures today obtained the rights and began casting the popular seventies sitcom remake. This is good news for the studio after the recent court battle with director Akiem Raashad, whose film *Papa* was snubbed not once,
(puts up one finger)
Not twice,
(puts up two fingers)
But three times
(puts up the third)
By the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences with the announcement of the Oscars today. This news comes as a shock due to Raashad's Golden Globe win for Best Director.

The monitor shows footage of Milton accepting the Golden Globe.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE

As usual Milton is at his desk on the phone.

MILTON
(on phone)
'Vette get me my regional booker on the phone, I want to get *Good Times* on as many screens as possible.

EVETTE
Yes, sir. Your mother is here to see you.

MILTON
Cool. Let her in.

Martha opens the door.

Milton escapes his desk and greets his mom with a hug.

MILTON
Hey, Mom. How ya doing?

MARTHA
I came to have lunch with my only son.

MILTON
Oh man, you shoulda told me earlier. I can't, I gotta have lunch with these writers about our upcoming projects.

MARTHA
Oh that's nice. Well I was just checking in. I'm curious, which projects are you going to be talking about?

MILTON
They got this idea for a comedy about a pimp that becomes president of the country, or something like that...I dunno...My friends at other studios say its funny and I should buy it.

MARTHA
Do you think you should, though?

MILTON
I don't know. Right now I really just wanna keep the investors happy...trying to get out of this hole.

MARTHA
Well I remember someone telling me that they just wanted to put make good movies, instead of what everyone else is putting out.

MILTON
Yeah...you know, Mom, I actually don't have the time to talk to you about my ethics and stuff, I really gotta get to this meeting.

MARTHA
Okay, well-just think about it.

Milton starts walking his mother to the door.

MILTON
Okay. I will, Mom. Take care.

He sort of nudges her out of the door then slams it shut.

MILTON
Evette, the regional booker please. I'm late for my meeting!

MONTAGE

CUE MUSIC: US3 - Cantaloop (Flip Fantasia)

A chart labeled, "BLACKLIGHT'S INCOME FOR THE YEAR..."

A red line indicating income of the Blacklight company steadily and diagonally rises and rises.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MILTON'S ROOM

Milton watches TV in the dark. The title sequence to *Different Strokes* appears on the television.

MILTON
Hmmmm....

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Milton, Gina, Evette, Pico, Mel, Jeff, and various other white and black guys are sitting around the table. There is heavy cloud of smoke in the air from the marijuana joints that lay in the ash trays on the table.

GUY
So we'll have Willis and Arnold played by talking dogs.

Everybody but Gina, Evette and Jeff laugh. They give Milton who is laughing hysterically, a questionable glance.

INT. VIDEO STORE

The blaxploitation section. Milton passes by it. All of a sudden, he inches back and browses through the titles. He picks up a tape and examines it. His attention then drifts off into space.

EXT. WESTWOOD THEATER

Another premiere. Paparazzi is in full force. Everyone is dressed formally, some in soul powered or Afro- centric garments as they sashè down the shag zebra carpet.

A 1970's style Cadillac limo pulls up outside the theater and catches everyone's attention. The driver runs to open the door. Out steps Milton ridiculously dressed in what looks to be a rejected costume from *The Mack*, cane included.

INT. TALKSHOW STUDIO

The show host stands in front of the audience.

HOST
Please welcome Milton Fenderson.

The audience applauds. The band plays as Milton casually breezes over to meet the host. Milton gives him a brief hug and they both laugh their way over to the, seats.

CUT TO:

Savoy magazine with a smiling Milton jumps to an empty counter, the cover reads, "The Color of Money.". A *Premiere* magazine flops down right over the *Savoy*, with Milton features a profile on Milton. Its cover reads, "The New Hollywood". A Milton flavored issue of *Black Men* falls on the *Premiere*, this time Milton has his back to the camera and the acronym "H.N.I.C." (Head Nigga In Charge) layered on the back of his neck.

Finally, an *Entertainment Weekly* cover has Milton holding a man for hostage. The man sports a shirt with the word, "Hollywood" on it. "Somebody Get The Negotiator!" jokes the cover.

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY

The figure who set down the magazines is none other than Silk. He gives the reading material an evil chuckle.

INT. EVETTE'S DESK

Evette is quietly working as the beam of light from the door opening shines on her face. Milton appears at her desk.

MILTON
Hey ‘Vette, any calls?

Milton continues to his office.

EVETTE
(follows)
Chris Rock’s people called...

INT. MILTON’S OFFICE

MILTON
(sitting down at desk)
Uh huh?

EVETTE
They said he wants to pitch.

MILTON
For a movie?

EVETTE
Yes.

MILTON
(turning on the computer,
not looking at Evette)
Unplug the phones for the next 2 hours. What else?

EVETTE
Martin Lawrence is on hold and said-

MILTON
Tell him until he gets back into *House Party* I funny mode and salary mode, then we can talk.

EVETTE
He’s now an investor.

MILTON
What line?

EVETTE
Line two.

MILTON
(picks up phone)
Martin!!! Whatzzzuppp!!!

Evette leaves.

MILTON
(on phone)
Uh huh, uh huh. Yeah.

The other line rings.

MILTON
(on phone)
Yeah, uh huh.

Evette peeks in.

EVETTE
David Cronberg from Mindworks.

Milton's mouth is agape.

MILTON
(on phone)
Yeah, uh huh, hey Martin man, we gonna have to set up a meeting and talk about this you know face to face, cuz I know you got some crazy facial expressions to go with the idea. Alright?
(beat)
Okay, here's 'Vette.

Milton clicks over.

MILTON
(on phone)
Mr. Cronberg.

An elderly obviously white voice speaks over the phone.

CRONBERG
(on phone)
Milton Fenderson, the wunderkind.

MILTON
That's what they say, what can I do for you today.

CRONBERG
Milton I'm not even gonna sugarcoat it, no bullshit. We want Blacklight.

MILTON
To collaborate? What did you have in mind?

CRONBERG
No, Mindworks, parent wants to completely buy out your operation.

Milton is shocked.

MILTON
What?

CRONBERG
And we want you to become senior V.P. of Mindworks, working right under me.

Milton is shocked again.

MILTON
Wow, really?
(surprised)
I don't-know... what to say.

CRONBERG
We thought you would say that, because after all, you basically built Blacklight from the ground up. So we're going to give you some time to consider our offer. And let me leave you with this, if you decide to let us buy Blacklight, there will be a very very handsome reward for you personally. Think about it and give us a call tomorrow.

Click.

Milton is blown away, he sits back in his chair.

CUE MUSIC: Jean Knight - Mr. Big Stuff

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD - DAY

A brand new black seven series BMW tears down the road.

INT. MILTON'S BEAMER - DAY

Milton is aimlessly driving, when he looks ahead and turns the wheel to the right.

EXT. NEWSSTAND - CONTINUOUS

Dunabi and Zeek, in their usual positions, stare at the forthcoming beamer. Milton steps out.

MILTON
'Sup, guys?

DUNABI
Well look who it is.

ZEEK
What are you doing here?

MILTON
Came to pick up a trade and see some friends.

ZEEK
Oh really and where are they?

MILTON
Damn, what got up your ass?

ZEEK
Oh well, it's just that you can't come and see your old friends now that you're mainstream and shit.

MILTON
That's bullshit. I sent my assistant down here just a couple of weeks ago to pick up a *Savoy*, and I told her to say "hi" to you guys.

ZEEK
(sarcastic)
Oh was that the cute nerdy looking girl? Oh I'm sorry. Sometimes I confuse the greeting "Hi" with, "Mr. Fenderson said you guys would hook me up with a discount."

MILTON
Oh come on it hasn't been that long.
(looks around, smiling)
Hey, where is 'Renz?

DUNABI
Milton. 'Renz is in the hospital. He had a heart attack.

Milton's smile turns upside down.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Milton slowly opens the door to the sight of Lorenzo resting on the bed.

LORENZO'S P.O.V.

Darkness.

MILTON (O.S.)
Hey, old man.

LORENZO's P.O.V.

His eyes slowly awake and reveal Milton smiling over him.

LORENZO
Oy, dios mio.

MILTON
Man, you look like shit.

Lorenzo struggles to sit up.

LORENZO
Gracias, mijo.

MILTON
Careful there.

He's up.

Milton reaches for a folded trade out of his back pocket.

MILTON
(displaying the trade)
I got you today's *Variety*. I thought it would get your blood bubbling and help out the ol' heart.

LORENZO
Oh, gracias.

Lorenzo puts on his bedside glasses.

LORENZO
So how is Mr. CEO?

MILTON
I'm fine. Just kinda torn at the moment.

Milton takes a seat.

LORENZO
How so?

Lorenzo reads a headline.

LORENZO
(under breath)
Holy shit, this probably will give me another attack.

MILTON
This company wants me to sell Blacklight and join them.

LORENZO
(eyeing paper)
Oh yeah, which one?

MILTON
Mindworks.

Lorenzo's eyeballs target Milton, then the paper in his hands. He folds the paper up and attentively listens to Milton.

LORENZO
Oh well, that's horrible.

MILTON
Why do you say that?

LORENZO
Oh I just mean, you started Blacklight.

Milton steps over to the window.

MILTON
I know, I know. That's why I'm confused and don't know what to do.

LORENZO
Well Milton. You must stop thinking en la cabasa,
(points to head)
And start thinking with this
(pounds heart with fist)
Owww!!

MILTON
You okay?

LORENZO
Yes, but you understand my point right?

MILTON
Yeah, I get it.

Beat.

LORENZO
Mijo, be a sport and get me some pitillos, eh?

MILTON
What's that?

LORENZO
You know pitillos.....cigarettes.

INT. MILTON'S HOME

Ding dong.

Milton arrives at the door.

It's Neeka, looking sluttier than ever.

MILTON
No dogs allowed.

The door slams.

Ding dong.

Milton opens again.

MILTON
What do you want?

NEEKA
Can’t an old friend visit?

MILTON
Hi! Bye!

He gets ready to slam the door. However, Neeka intercepts the closure.

MILTON
What do you need?

NEEKA
I need to talk to you.

MILTON
What for? I already gave you the best part I could. You are forever emblazoned on film in your natural light.

NEEKA
Milton, I just want to talk.

MILTON
(sigh)
Come in.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Milton and Neeka make their way into the quaint bachelorish living room.

NEEKA
Wow, I am loving this house. You did quite well for yourself, I must say.

MILTON
Thank you.

They both plop down on the couch. Neeka ironically sits next to a framed *Variety* which reads “FENDERSON FENDERSON FENDERSON!” as the headline.

MILTON
What do you need to talk about?

NEEKA
Well you know. I’ve been doing a lot of thinking lately.

MILTON
Really, I bet it hurt.

Neeka over laughs.

NEEKA
(touching his leg)
Oh Milton, you could always make me laugh.

MILTON
It's a gift.

NEEKA
You know, you were always a gift to me.

MILTON
Oh really?

NEEKA
Yeah, I was just too blind to see it at the time. You know young and dumb.

MILTON
Oww, you weren't that young.

Neeka starts to act uncomfortable.

MILTON
You okay?

NEEKA
Yeah, it's just a little hot in here. I need to take off this sweater.

Neeka does and Milton's eyes unwillingly glance toward the quasi unwrapped present. Looking a little uncomfortable himself, he rolls his head towards the camera, exhales and rubs his eyes.

MILTON
You know, Neek-

NEEKA
Milton....shhhhhh
(finger touches his lip)
Let's let our lips do the talking.

Milton looks very confused.

Neeka begins to kiss him and Milton doesn't disagree. She moves in closer to him, and closer until....

MILTON
(forcefully pushes her away)
Wait, Holy shit! No, no this is not good.

NEEKA
What's wrong?

MILTON
No, you wanting to sleep with me, this is all wrong!

NEEKA
What's so wrong about it?

MILTON
I don't know...it's just...

Milton walks over to a mirror. He looks deeply into his eyes, his face.

MILTON
...Something's wrong.

Neeka steps into the mirror's POV.

NEEKA
What?

Annoyed, Milton pushes her out of the frame.

INT. MILTON'S ROOM

The desk lamp and computer screen solely light the room as Milton types away.

Silk bursts in the door, to Milton's surprise.

Milton's phone rings, he answers.

EVETTE
(speaker)
Silk is here to see you, I'm going home.

MILTON
Yes..thank you 'Vette.
(to Silk)
Mr. Silk, if that is your real name. How can I help you?

SILK
(serious tone, evil little chuckle)
Cut the shit, Fenderson. I heard about the Croneberg offer.

MILTON
News travels.

SILK
Yes, it does. So I've come here today to give you a little bit of an ultimatum. Either you give me all of the buy-out money, including your little kick back, or else.

MILTON
Fuck you.

SILK
(little chuckle)
You see that's what I like about you Fenderson, you got balls and aren't afraid to put them out there
(to outside)
Legs! Back!

In steps LEGS and BACK, two huge linebacker looking motherfuckers who both sport blazers and shades.

SILK
But be careful, cuz I got two bats for those balls.

Milton keeps a grim face.

SILK
I expect you to personally deliver to me the necessary paperwork tomorrow at my work address because frankly, I'm tired of driving all the way out here, ya dig? Have a good day.

And with that, Silk withdraws from the office, Legs and Back follow his lead.

Beat.

Milton writes "Restaff Security" on a post-it, before rolling back in his chair and releasing a stress-filled sigh.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STUDIO LOT - NIGHT

A sped up aerial view of the Blacklight Studio Lot.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

Still on the sped up aerial shot with cars beginning to race into their respective spots, people beginning to arrive and the sun shedding light on the lot.

INT. MILTON'S OFFICE - DAY

The room is dark, the window shades remained sealed.

Milton hides his face with his hand. The man looks as if he either is in deep contemplation or partaking in a nap.

His alarm clock strikes 4:30 p.m., just as Gina rams her way into the office armed with files and paperclipped pages.

GINA
Milton, I need your approval on these reconciliations,
(looks up at him)
Oh-my-God, Evette told me you stayed here all last night.

MILTON
(waking up)
Huh?
(stretching, yawning)
Yeah, no, I did stay.

GINA
How come?

Gina tosses the papers and files into his inbox.

MILTON
I was thinking about some shit.

GINA
About how you've sold out?

MILTON
Yeah...wait...no! I haven't sold out. Have I?

Gina points to the posters that line the walls.

GINA
The Mack Deuce: Mack Attack? *The Jeffersons Go Hawaiian: The Legend of Waitiki Weezy*. Come on now. You've lost your way, you've become your own Wayans brothers movie. You used to have one agenda in mind but when you saw the green it all changed. It's like you used to be Robin Hood, now you're just robbin' the hood, my brotha.

Gina dramatically exits the room.

MILTON
Oh don't do that dramatic beat shit with me!
(mumbles to himself)
With her quiet ass, speaking up now.

Beat.

Milton reaches for the papers she left in his inbox. The title of the first page reads “Blacklight 2003 Reconciliation.” Milton skims through the entries when his eye picks up one familiar name under the figure ‘$5,500,000.00’.

The name is “Fenderson Co.”

Milton seems puzzled.

INT. CHARLES FENDERSONS OFFICE

Bing bong says the intercom. Charles’ chair is away from the camera hiding his face. He clicks the intercom.

CHARLES
Yes?

RECEPTIONIST
(intercom)
Your son on line 1.

Beat.

CHARLES
Pertaining?

RECEPTIONIST
I think he knows of your involvement.

CHARLES
Hang up on him.

RECEPTIONIST
He seems pretty persistent.

CHARLES
Hang up on him, let him see how it feels.

RECEPTIONIST
Yes sir.

MILTON’s OFFICE

RECEPTIONIST
(on phone)
He isn’t available.

MILTON
Lady, please. Tell him--

Dial tone.

Milton slams the phone down.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Milton's car glides down the highway heading straight for the downtown L.A. skyline.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The BMW pulls up to an empty spot.

INT. MILTON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Milton shifts the car into park. He then spots the car to the left of him.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE

Milton approaches the Mercedes S600 from the rear. He glances at the plate and snickers: "SLKYSMTH."

EXT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

Milton reverses his car right in the back of the Mercedes, blocking it in. Milton steps out of his parked car, and takes out a cell phone from his pocket.

MILTON
Why does shit always go down in a warehouse district?

The camera angles in on his finger, holding down the '9' button on the phone.

INT. WAREHOUSE

The smaller than average warehouse is stacked with piles and piles of wooden boxes. Legs and Back are heavy into a dice game on the wooden floor.

Classical music plays in the background.

Silk is reading a trade at his desk as the two rambunctiously carry on.

LEGS
Seven, nigga, seven.

BACK
Pleazzze.

SILK
Will y'all shut the fuck up?

MILTON (O.S.)
That’s no way to treat the help.

They all turn to his direction.

MILTON
Because we all know you're just going to cheat them out of their money.

Legs and Back rise from the floor and proceed towards Milton.

SILK
Boys.

Legs and Back halt.

SILK
Ahh Milton, you pussy ass nigga, come to give me my....cut.

MILTON
You know, Silk...

Milton walks toward a box.

MILTON
Ever since I got here I’ve been racking my brain just trying to understand how’s a man of your financial stature ends up in a shitty ass base of ops like this. You know it makes me believe that the white man is trying to keep you under wraps or some shit and you know the thought of that just got me so angry
(getting angry)
that I want...to...just....to just...punch something man, ahhhh!!!

Milton punches a box, allowing a stream of cocaine to flow out.

MILTON
Uh ohhhhhh. But then another thought popped into my frizzy little head...that you were trying to hide something.

SILK
Well bravo, motherfucker. You found out that I sell the coke-ah-ina.

MILTON
Well it was kinda obvious, I just like to punch shit.

SILK
Umm hmm whats your point little Fenderson?

MILTON
Why the hell are you doing business with my father?

Silk begins to bust up laughing, encouraging Back and Legs to join.

SILK
(coming off the laughter)
Well seeing that he's either going to leave here dead or pay me my money, I guess we can tell him, shit.
(wipes a tear from his eye)
I'm not doing any business with daddy dearest sweetheart, I'm cheating your pops out of all his money. You see your pops and I go way back. We both came out here trying to be the next big black actors but there was a problem, your pops sucked, okay. He just flat out sucked. That's why he gave up and went back to being business man Charles. I started a business too, not a legit business but a business nonetheless, and I continued acting and am still acting today. In fact, I have a recurring role, playing the big time investor in the first black owned studio, but there comes a point when you wanna stop playing and become the real thing, so that's where you come in with my money.

MILTON
Not gonna happen.

SILK
You know it's a shame.

BACK
What's a shame, Silk?

SILK
This little nigga and his pops always had a real rocky relationship. And then Charles started seeing his son doing big things-quite like himself at that age. And he believed in him, too. That's why he invested that big ass allowance in his son's little lemonade stand called Blacklight.
(MORE)

SILK (cont'd)
But you know, his son gotta have a little fucked up attitude now and think I might have to take him down from his little power trip.

MILTON
What power trip?

SILK
You know I kinda like the sound of CEO Silk, myself. Or what do you think Silk the CEO. Yeah I like that better.

MILTON
Whatever man. Listen, you're not getting your money, and I'm sure I'm gonna have to talk to the po-po's about--
(point at the boxes)
All this shit here. So I'll see you later, probably behind bars though.

Milton starts toward the door.

SILK
Legs, Back.

LEGS & BACK
Yeah?

SILK
Did I give him a chance?

LEGS & BACK
Yeah.

SILK
Did I give him a chance?

LEGS & BACK
Yeah.

SILK
Start shooting.

CUE MUSIC: Average White Band - "Pick Up The Pieces"

Legs and Back reach for their pistols. Milton runs behind the boxes. Pow! Pow!

Milton runs and ducks for cover.

Silk reaches for his gun in his desk and begins to run for Milton.

Legs and Back continue to fire. Back lets out a shot, and Milton still on the run, is hit in the leg.

MILTON
(in pain)
Ahhhhhhhh!!!!!!!!

SILK
(to Legs and Back)
He’s over there.

Silk, Legs, and Back all change their trajectory. Behind some boxes they find a bleeding, wounded Milton clutching his leg.

SILK
Looks like it’s time to fade out....bitch.

BACK
Awww Silk that was a terrible line.

SILK
Shut up! I ain’t never gonna be Stallone, or Ahnold, nigga. Let me have my shine.

A heard of police sirens are heard coming from outside.

LEGS
Silk, the cops.

SILK
Shit!

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Without looking, Silk, Legs, and Back run toward the Mercedes. Silk unlocks it with the remote key and they all scurry into the car.

Silk hits reverse. Bang! Silk checks the rearview.

BACK
Damn, it’s a fucking car!

LEGS
No shit!

A horde of squad cars surround the Mercedes. It’s over.

CUT TO:

TV - Trisha Yamoto is reporting from the warehouse.

TRISHA
The warehouse district. The terror capital of the world. Last night Blacklight founder and CEO Milton Fenderson was involved in...

The camera pulls away from the TV...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Milton lay in the bed adjacent to Lorenzo. They are both watching the newscast.

MILTON
I don't get it, 'Renz. Four years at Dorsey High School and I got a paper cut. Two years in the movie fuckin' biz and I got a five inch deep pistol wound and suspicion for money laundering.

LORENZO
That's good, mijo. But por favor, I'm trying to watch this.

MILTON
You know how it ends.

LORENZO
I know, but it's better than this shit.

He throws a trade at him.

LORENZO
It's got mas conflict.

NEWS REPORTER
(on television)
We'll return after these messages.

TV ANNOUNCER
(on television)
From Blacklight Studios. You remember Rog, Rerun and the gang? Well what has been happening in all this time. Blacklight Studio's presents a heart warming, touching story, about the human spirit...

RERUN
(on television)
I think I'm dying, y'all.

TV ANNOUNCER
(on television)
What's Been Happening: Rerunion, a Brandon Thompson film.

MILTON
Oh turn it off, 'Renz.

LORENZO
Oh come on, papi, it's your creation. You must look your caballo del regalo in la boca.

MILTON
Gift horse in the mouth?

LORENZO
Si.

Milton sighs.

INT. MILTON'S LIVING ROOM

Milton lays on the bed watching television. Martha comes to his side carrying a tray with a bowl of hot soup. She hands it to Milton.

MILTON
Thanks.

Martha then takes the spoon and tries to feed him.

MILTON
Twenty seven years old, Mom, Twenty seven years old.

Martha stops.

MILTON
Man, I don't know what to do, I really don't know what to do.

MARTHA
Well frankly, I don't understand why you are becoming so selfish now.

MILTON
What do you mean?

MARTHA
All this time you have been looking after what others want. How to better the culture, how you are going to be perceived by others. What is it you want?

MILTON
I don't know. Freedom, I guess. Not that that will do--

MARTHA
Shhh. No, I don't want to hear it, you do what you have to do to make yourself happy.

Milton thinks about that statement.

MILTON
Hand me the phone, please.

INT. MILTON' OFFICE - DAY

Evette, Gina, Jeff, Pico, Mel and other employees are all seated, waiting.

GINA
He did say he was coming in right Evette?

EVETTE
He said ten o'clock.

GINA
Where is he?

The door swings wide open.

GINA
Milton?

DETECTIVE BRAD BALEY, 36, enters.

BRAD
No, ma'am. I'm Detective Brad Baley here with some questions for Mr. Fenderson. I've checked his residence and he isn't there either.

GINA
Well take a number because we don't know where he is, either. I'm Gina Richmore the Vice President. What is this involving?

BRAD
We believe that Blacklight was funded with drug money.

EVETTE
Oh you fucking pigs always trying to bring down the poor black-owned operation all in the name of the establishment. It was his father's money, not the drugs. Can't you see that?

Everyone is shocked.

GINA
Evette?

Evette raises a firm black power fist.

BRAD
Ma'am with all due respect, we already know that. We just have some questions for him, due to his involvement.

GINA
Well, you have as good a guess as we--

The fax machine starts to print out a piece of paper.

GINA
Wait.

Gina rushes over to intercept the message.

GINA
It's a message from Milton.

Everyone races over to see it.

GINA
It says....

MILTON (V.O.)
Dear Everybody, what's up? If my assumptions are correct, you should all be huddled around this fax trying to read it.

PICO
Oh shit, he can see us.

MEL
Careful, y'all, he could be the Beltway Sniper and shit.

Everyone turns their heads to Pico and Mel.

MEL
I'm saying...

They continue with the letter.

MILTON (V.O.)
Anyway, I just wanted to thank you all for being apart of what I thought was a positive contribution to the black creative community. But as it turns out, I didn't do so well in the long run. So I've decided to leave it all. Leave all the bullshit alone. I won't be seeing any of you very soon, so it's a safe bet that you are all fired.

GROUP
Awww man. Damn.

MILTON (V.O.)
But cheer up. Hopefully I set the template for what someone with a dream and a rolodex can do.
(MORE)

MILTON (V.O.) (cont'd)
Anyways continue on, do what you do and all that, and I'll see ya when I see ya.

GINA
(reading)
"Peace out, Milton."
(beat)
Wow. So what do we do now?

EVETTE
I don't know? Who's gonna tell all the investors?

They all look at each other and pause. Then each scatters out of the office.

INT. CHARLES FENDERSONS OFFICE

Charles is busy at work, as usual. There is a knock at the door.

CHARLES
Yes?

In walks his receptionist.

RECEPTIONIST
Mr. Fenderson, there is a package from your son, I believe.

Charles takes the package.

CHARLES
Thank you.

He tears the top open.

Out falls a postcard, and a check.

The check is in the amount of $3 million dollars.

The post card reads: "Greetings from Puerta Vallarta!" Charles reads the back. "Thank You. P.S. - Mom's aight."

Charles chuckles.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Milton is watching BET news.

Tawanna Miller is reporting.

TAWANNA
(on television)
Hello and good evening from BET news, since no one is watching, coming up later in the show I will give you all a lesson in folding table napkins, just because I feel like it. But our top story for tonight is the riot at Los Angeles' Blacklight Studios.

Milton pays closer attention as the footage rolls.

TAWANNA (V.O.)
(on television)
We caught up with a couple of the rioters and asked them why they were rioting. The collective answer of those we interviewed was "we just saw other people doing it and so we joined them."

We catch a glimpse of Pico and Mel caught carrying computers. Milton shakes his head at the sight.

TAWANNA
(on television)
In other news--

MARTHA (O.S.)
Milton, come help us out.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Milton steps onto the massive backyard where it looks like a wedding was just performed.

MILTON
What are you two still doing out here? Shouldn't you be getting ready to go to the airport?

Martha is taking down decorations while still in a wedding dress. A tuxed up Lorenzo is accompanying her.

LORENZO
Oh we can fly out anytime we want. It's our jet.

MILTON
But my money, 'Renz. Don't make me have to give you another heart attack.

Milton pitches in with cleanup.

LORENZO
Oh, mijo, I save that for your mother tonight.

MILTON
Awww I don’t wanna hear that shit, ‘Renz.

MARTHA
Milton.

MILTON
Sorry.
(beat)
Hey you know I’m thinking about writing a sitcom about all of this stuff.

MARTHA
Oh you should really do that.

The camera begins to hover away from the scene.

MILTON
I’m thinking about using a pen name too, like...

The camera pans away to the moonlight, which then changes to blacklight.

FADE OUT:

THE END