

RECORDING IN PROGRESS

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FADE IN:

INT. CRANE RECORDING ARTISTS - EXECUTIVE FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Five excited young men, rockstars-in-waiting, shake hands with TWO EXECUTIVES.

EXECUTIVE #1

It's a pleasure to have you boys signed to Crane. Congratulations.

SUPER: Los Angeles, 1969

The other executive starts down the hallway. Everyone follows.

EXECUTIVE #2

There's someone I'd like you to meet.

Executive #2 KNOCKS, opens his office door, and a middle-aged man, PHIL WILSON, walks out.

EXECUTIVE #2 (CONT'D)

Phil Wilson, your new manager.

Phil, smiling, starts shaking hands with the boys.

PHIL

I've heard great things about you all. I'm told we have the next big thing on our hands.

EXECUTIVE #1

You heard right. They're all yours, Phil. We'll talk later.

Phil leads the boys in the opposite direction. The executives wait until the band is out of earshot to continue their conversation.

EXECUTIVE #2

They'll do for now. They have the look.

EXECUTIVE #1

They look starving.

EXECUTIVE #2

Phil's buying them lunch. They'll be putty in our hands.

(MORE)

EXECUTIVE #2 (CONT'D)

And when we do find the next big thing, we can drop these guys and sign them.

CUT TO:

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - NIGHT

"I Wouldn't Want to Be Like You" by Alan Parsons Project plays. We see a spacious photography studio with a high ceiling.

SUPER: New York City, 1977

Four attractive young men, ages 23-24, pose in front of a plain backdrop. They wear flashy, high fashion outfits. We know at first glance that they're rockstars. Ladies and gentlemen, the next big thing. They have what the other band didn't -- the untouchable aura, the confidence that comes with being a household name, the glow of mainstream success. This is PHOENYX -- the hottest band in the world.

A male PHOTOGRAPHER in his early 30s directs the band enthusiastically. Phil Wilson, their manager, now eight years older, watches off to the side. Next to Phil is MARGARET, the stylist, a woman in her early 30s.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Tommy, turn this way.

TOMMY HARRIS -- the lead guitarist, quintessential 70s rockstar -- turns his body, following the photographer's instructions.

SUPER MAIN: Recording in Progress

The band continues to pose for photos.

Phil and Margaret are mid-conversation. The Photographer can be heard giving directions while "I Wouldn't Want to Be Like You" continues. The camera CLICKS and FLASHES throughout. From an outsider's perspective, all of this might seem exciting, but for everyone involved, it's clearly routine.

PHIL

It's too glam for them.

We see the band while Phil continues offscreen. Various shots of the individual band members and some closeups of outfit details.

MARGARET (O.S.)

I disagree. We should be striving for excess. And this designer was hard to track down.

PHIL (O.S.)

Do I know him?

Phil checks his watch.

MARGARET

No, he's new to the fashion world. It was a chance encounter at Studio 54.

PHIL

You drop a Quaalude on the dance floor and he picked it up for you?

MARGARET

Ran into him coming out of the bathroom. He was an anti-war metalsmith, then an anti-war painter. Rumored to be an enemy of Nixon. And he's a big fan of the band. Want to meet him?

Phil scoffs.

PHIL

I have Crane executives on my ass every second of the Goddamn day. Everyone wants to hear the new single.

MARGARET

Do they have a single after two weeks?

PHIL

Of course not, and good luck forcing one out of them. Danny and Steven are of the opinion that having one standout track undermines the artistic integrity of the record as a whole.

He sighs.

PHIL (CONT'D)

They're already behind schedule, and it's all coming down on me when I have enough problems already.

(MORE)

PHIL (CONT'D)

Last week the boys threw hotel furniture into the pool from the top-floor balcony.

MARGARET

Well, you know how it goes. The crippling pressures of success.

PHIL

I'm starting to miss the days when their songs only charted moderately well. They're a corporate entity now.

Phil watches the band.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Anyway, at least we can always find a use for these photos. We could do a calendar or something.

MARGARET

When's the tour?

PHIL

They start in July.

He checks his watch again.

PHIL (CONT'D)

I'm meeting with David Reed in an hour to discuss it. He's expecting massive numbers.

Offscreen, the photographer turns the music off.

PHOTOGRAPHER

That's great, guys. I'm excited about these photos.

MARK HARPER -- the lead singer, an easygoing neurotic -- looks exhausted.

MARK

We're done?

PHOTOGRAPHER

(cracks a smile)

Yes, that's all for today.

Mark reaches to undo the clasp at the back of his outfit.

MARK

That was a marathon session.

The boys walk over to a clothing rack and start changing. Margaret stands by the rack to hang up the clothes from the photoshoot.

STEVEN SHERMAN -- the drummer, simultaneously an open book and a complete enigma -- struggles to get a complicated shirt off over his head.

STEVEN
(still struggling)
How is posing for photos always so tiring?

DANNY PRESTON -- the bass guitarist, a cynic's cynic -- notices Steven struggling and goes to help him with the shirt.

DANNY
Because it takes a lot for you to look good, Steven. The rest of us don't have to try.

TOMMY
I didn't know we were going glam for the new record.

PHIL (O.S.)
We're still undecided on your look.

Phil walks over to join them.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Although the guy who designed these outfits made it onto Nixon's enemy list.

DANNY
No way.

Danny takes his shoes off and hands them to Margaret.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Margaret, you've really outdone yourself.

PHIL
You have another photoshoot on Saturday and you have an interview at 1 tomorrow.

TOMMY
What magazine?

Tommy changes shirts.

PHIL

Creem.

MARK

Thank God it's not those *Rolling Stone* assholes again.

STEVEN

About the new record?

DANNY

What else would it be about? Your work with the blind?

Mark puts his regular shoes on.

MARK

What is there to say? We have no title, no single, no new look or sound.

PHIL

You boys always come up with something.

(beat)

Tell them you're recording in New York instead of LA and you're excited to be working with Roy. Definitely mention Roy. And Danny, don't turn the questions back on the interviewer again.

DANNY

They were stupid questions.

PHIL

Stupid questions don't require smart-ass answers. Tommy was telling Margaret about his blue guitar earlier, talk about that.

MARK

Tommy's blue guitar?

Tommy perks up.

TOMMY

The blue Telecaster. It's new, I haven't played it on a record yet.

MARK

Whatever. Phil, I miss LA. Remind me why we're in New York again.

PHIL
Roy's the best in the business.

DANNY
Why is it that everyone in the
business is supposedly the best in
the business? It's not possible.

Steven hands a pair of pants to Margaret.

STEVEN
I thought we had something going
with Bob. We made three records
with him.

Phil sighs.

PHIL
Last year you had a number one song
on a number one album. "Sweet Fire"
broke records. And they loved you
in Europe. You're huge, you need
the best producer.

MARK
If we're so huge then why couldn't
Roy come to LA? It's fucking winter
here.

PHIL
It's fall.

Mark looks at the rest of the band for confirmation.

MARK
Isn't December winter?

DANNY
It's the 8th, so I think it's
technically fall.

STEVEN
Danny's right, the winter solstice
is later in December, and that
marks the official start of winter
for the Northern Hemisphere.

MARK
Get the fuck out, you only know
that because of your fuckin'...

Mark tries to find the right words.

MARK (CONT'D)
Witchcraft...rituals...whatever the
fuck.

Danny reaches into his pocket for a CIGARETTE and lights it. The boys, now dressed in their everyday clothes, follow Phil out of the studio and down the hallway to the elevator.

INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

TOMMY
Phil, did you finish your book?

PHIL
Yeah, now I'm onto the next one I
packed. *The Brothers Karamazov*.

MARK
Some light reading.

PHIL
Are you reading anything now?

TOMMY
The Doors of Perception.

STEVEN
Last night I started Kant's
Critique of Pure Reason.

Danny turns to face Steven. They reach the elevator and Phil presses the button.

DANNY
You'll never get through it. It's
too dense. I tried reading it and
gave up. Katherine had to explain
it to me.

STEVEN
Maybe you didn't read the
essentials beforehand.

DANNY
Oh, like you've read Locke?

The elevator doors open with a DING and everyone steps inside. Phil presses the ground floor button.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

MARK

Danny, you could have any girl in the world. Any model, actress...

He pauses, thinking.

MARK (CONT'D)

Model. Why you're dating a Stanford philosophy undergrad is incomprehensible to me.

DANNY

She's a grad student, first of all. And second of all, she's one of the smartest people I know.

Mark rolls his eyes.

DANNY (CONT'D)

At least I go out with girls my own age. High schoolers don't have anything interesting to talk about.

MARK

Sandy and Cynthia aren't in high school. They dropped out.

The elevator doors open on the ground floor with another DING and everyone exits.

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Phil and the boys reach the entrance and get in PHIL'S CAR out front. A rental car, nice but not too flashy. Steven looks at the night sky.

STEVEN

Fuck, it's later than I thought.

PHIL

It's a quarter after eight. Roy and Raymond are already at the studio.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - OUTSIDE STUDIO C - CONTINUOUS

Two signs above a door - STUDIO C and RECORDING IN PROGRESS.
The RECORDING IN PROGRESS sign is on.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO C SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The floor is a mess of overlapping instrument cables. We follow one of these cables upward. It's plugged into a bass guitar that's currently in use.

A punk band rehearses -- BACKYARD CASTRATION. The group consists of a PUNK SINGER, PUNK GUITARIST, PUNK BASS GUITARIST, and PUNK DRUMMER, all men in their early 20s. They perform their new song "Dungeon Kicks."

The guitarist is on the left closest to the door, the bass guitarist is on the right, and the drummer and singer are in the back and front, respectively. We rest on the band, then continue tracking to show the setup of the studio. Three folding chairs lean against the wall by the booth. Two guitars are mounted on the wall furthest from the door. A PUNK PRODUCER and PUNK ENGINEER watch from the booth.

CUT TO:

EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - EMERGENCY EXIT - CONTINUOUS

C.U.

A hand wearing a black leather glove opens the emergency exit at the back of the building. The DOOR ALARM goes off. Two men step inside. They have a nearly identical height and build and wear black leather jackets, black jeans, black boots, and cheap kids' Halloween masks. One mask is a tiger and the other is a shark. They start down the hallway to Studios C and D. The door closes with a dull THUD and the alarm shuts off.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

It's silent except for their FOOTSTEPS.

INT. OUTSIDE STUDIO D - CONTINUOUS

They reach Studio D and notice the STUDIO D and RECORDING IN PROGRESS signs above the door. The RECORDING IN PROGRESS sign is turned off.

PAN

To the signs above the Studio C door. The masked men see the glowing RECORDING IN PROGRESS sign.

INT. STUDIO C SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Backyard Castration is still performing "Dungeon Kicks." We hear a door SLAM offscreen. The band stops playing immediately.

Shark pulls a KNIFE out of his pocket. The men move fast.

Shark STABS Punk Guitarist in the neck. The guitarist's body falls to the floor, knife still intact.

Shark grabs Punk Singer's hair and pulls his head back so far the singer grimaces. Shark grabs the singer's MICROPHONE and shoves it down the musician's open mouth until it completely cuts off his airflow.

Tiger approaches Punk Drummer. Punk Drummer stands up to run away...

...then trips over a pair of DRUM STICKS on the floor. Punk Drummer lies on the ground, his head inches away from a LARGE AMP. Tiger grabs Punk Drummer's and BASHES the drummer's head into the amp.

Punk Bass Guitarist THROWS his guitar to the ground and runs over to Shark to try to fight. The killer is faster.

Shark grabs a GUITAR CABLE off the ground and wraps it around the approaching bass guitarist's neck. Punk Bass Guitarist flails, knocking Shark's mask askew. Shark GOUGES the musician's eye out with the metallic tip of the cable. Shark takes a second to adjust his mask.

THWACK. Punk Engineer runs up behind Tiger and hits him in the back of the head with a FOLDING CHAIR. Tiger hits the wall, still on his feet. He looks over and sees the two GUITARS on the wall next to him. He grabs the closer guitar and BEATS Punk Engineer with it.

Punk Producer runs for the door but Shark GRABS him by the shirt and SLAMS the producer into the booth window. The glass SHATTERS and the producer's face is covered with blood and broken pieces of glass. Tiger yanks a STRING from the now broken, bloodied guitar he used to kill the engineer. The producer is trembling.

Shark removes his knife from Punk Guitarist's neck and exits the studio.

Tiger STRANGLES Punk Producer with the guitar string.

Tiger turns and Shark is gone. The door slowly falls shut.
Tiger runs out of the studio.

INT. OUTSIDE STUDIO C/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tiger stops to look around, lost in the maze of hallways. We hear a FEMALE VOICE singing to herself. We don't know it yet, but this voice belongs to DIANA STANTON.

Tiger panics at the sound of the voice and looks for somewhere to hide. He runs toward a door at the end of the hallway, opens the door, and finds himself in another dark hallway. He spots another door -- the storage room -- and hides inside.

INT. OUTSIDE STUDIO C - CONTINUOUS

STUDIO C and RECORDING IN PROGRESS signs. The RECORDING IN PROGRESS sign is still on.

CUT TO:

INT. PHIL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Phil drives and Mark sits in the passenger seat. The other three are in the back. Steven and Danny sit next to each other.

STEVEN

What's first? Bass for
"Prometheus?"

TOMMY

Mark, did you finish those lyrics?

MARK

Yeah. 3 a.m. this morning. Do we really want to do another Greek mythology song?

DANNY

This is the only one on the new record so far.

MARK

Yeah but on *Bravado* we did one about Persephone and one about Osiris.

DANNY
Osiris is Egyptian.

TOMMY
Did you have something else in
mind?

MARK
I'm proud of our songs, don't get
me wrong, I just don't think we
should confine ourselves. Not every
song has to have a deep message. We
had several philosophical songs
make the Top 40 but only "Sweet
Fire" got to number 1. It's our
biggest song because it's got a
universal subject.

STEVEN
Sexual frustration?

Mark shoots Steven an annoyed look.

MARK
Passion. Although you would think
that, Steven.

DANNY
So you wrote the lyrics and now you
don't want to record? I think
"Prometheus" is shaping up to be
one of the best songs we've ever
done.

MARK
I'm not saying we give up on
"Prometheus." All I'm saying is
that I don't think it would kill us
to write some music that people can
actually relate to.

No one offers a response. Mark sighs, brushing it off.

MARK (CONT'D)
It's a thought.

EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The car pulls up in front of the building.

INT. PHIL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Phil turns to face the boys.

PHIL

Here we are. I have a late meeting
but I'll come back when I'm done.
Behave yourselves.

Mark looks annoyed.

PHIL (CONT'D)

You're Roy's Boys now. This
record's gonna be killer.

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The band stands on the sidewalk. Phil drives off.

MARK

Roy's Boys.

STEVEN

It's a catchy title for the album.

They walk up the front steps into the building.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tiger wanders the unnecessarily labyrinthine halls, once
again trying to find the exit.

INT. HALLWAY TO STUDIO A - CONTINUOUS

The boys make their way to Studio A.

DANNY

20 bucks says Phil falls asleep at
the office again and leaves us
stranded.

TOMMY

I still think we should go with
Phoenyx IV for the title.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tiger can't tell where the voices are coming from, but he
hears them. Tommy and Steven continue offscreen.

TIGER

Phoenix?

STEVEN (O.S.)

That's taken. And we didn't call
the others *Phoenix I-III*.

TOMMY (O.S.)

That's why it's funny.

INT. OUTSIDE STUDIO A - CONTINUOUS

STEVEN

We should call it *Phoenix VII* even
though it's only our fourth record.

The STUDIO A and RECORDING IN PROGRESS signs are visible as the boys enter the studio. The RECORDING IN PROGRESS sign isn't on yet.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Studio A is the largest of the four studios in the building. The boys take off their coats, making a pile on the ground.

In the booth are two middle-aged men. One of these is of course ROY ROYCE. Think Richard Nixon if he were a music producer. Next to Roy is RAYMOND CARSON, the engineer. Everyone exchanges casual greetings.

Mark slips out while the other band members get situated. Steven adjusts the drum set. Tommy and Danny plug their guitars into amps and tune. Tommy strums a chord on a beautiful BLUE TELECASTER. Danny finishes tuning and looks around.

DANNY

Where's Mark?

CUT TO:

INT. RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mark SNORTS COCAINE at the sink.

INT. OUTSIDE RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tiger is hidden from sight but we see what he sees. Mark walks out and heads back to Studio A.

Tiger laughs creepily. He heads for the emergency exit.

EXT. EMERGENCY EXIT - CONTINUOUS

Tiger exits the building. He begins walking toward a nearby apartment building, still laughing creepily.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

TOMMY
Probably getting a snack from the lounge or something.

Tommy looks at Roy in the booth.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Roy, do we want to start with those bass parts?

ROY (OVER MIC)
Sounds good to me.

INT. STUDIO A BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Roy looks at Raymond.

ROY
Ready?

RAYMOND
Ready.

Raymond presses the necessary buttons.

ROY (OVER MIC)
Okay, Danny, let's hear it.

INT. OUTSIDE STUDIO A - CONTINUOUS

STUDIO A and RECORDING IN PROGRESS signs. The RECORDING IN PROGRESS sign clicks on.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Danny plays the bass guitar part for "Prometheus." He's getting into it. Tommy and Steven watch Danny with approval.

The door closes with a THUD. Danny stops playing.

PAN

To Mark entering the studio.

MARK

Oh fuck, were you recording?

Mark glances at Roy in the booth.

ROY (OVER MIC)

It's okay, Mark, we just started.
Danny, go again.

Danny looks pissed but he starts playing.

CUT TO:

INT. VARIOUS HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Danny can't be heard outside of Studio A. The individual studios are completely soundproof.

SILENCE accompanies shots of hallways throughout the building. The garish orange carpeting and long, winding hallways make us uneasy. Even if a murder hadn't just occurred in one of the studios, something about this place would feel seriously wrong.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Danny finishes playing the bass part.

ROY (OVER MIC)

That's great. Mark, did you finish those lyrics?

MARK

Yeah, got 'em right here.

Mark pulls a FOLDED SHEET OF PAPER out of his pocket.

ROY (OVER MIC)

Perfect, I'll give you a few minutes and then we'll record the vocals.

MARK

Sounds good.

INT. STUDIO A BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

RAYMOND

If they didn't have such ambitious ideas for every song we'd be ahead of schedule.

ROY

They are ambitious, aren't they?

RAYMOND

But they don't have a single yet. Phil told me some of the higher-ups have been on his case about it.

ROY

Commercial isn't their strong suit. They need another "Sweet Fire" but they don't like repeating themselves.

RAYMOND

Who wrote that one?

ROY

The music was all Tommy, the lyrics were all Mark. Usually their songs are a group effort, but that one's different -- simpler.

RAYMOND

Maybe four songwriters is too many. It's like some four-headed mythical creature that can't finish a song.

ROY

Don't give them any ideas.

Roy watches the band with an intense gaze.

RAYMOND (O.S.)

Believe me, they have too many ideas already.

Raymond notices Roy's expression -- he's seen this look before.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

Are you scheming?

A suspicious smirk creeps over Roy's face.

ROY

I'm not sure yet.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

We see what Roy sees. Faint dialogue is heard as Tommy explains something to the band.

INT. STUDIO A BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

ROY

Did you read their *Rolling Stone* interview?

RAYMOND

Their cover story?

ROY

Yeah. That article spent more time talking about Tommy than the other three combined.

RAYMOND

Tommy's a star. He's the fan favorite, right? He has that rare brand of introverted charisma.

Roy pauses for a moment, deliberating.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

Simple marketing, I suppose. He doesn't have as strong of personality as the others so he's easier to mold, and he doesn't talk as much so it's easier to put words in his mouth.

ROY

I can use that.

RAYMOND

You are scheming.

ROY

They need a hit. And I have a reputation to uphold.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy stands next to Mark and points to the lyric sheet.

TOMMY

Yeah that's good. That fits perfectly with what I do there.

ROY (OVER MIC)
 Okay, vocals. Mark. Everyone else
 take fifteen.

Tommy, Danny, and Steven exit the studio. Mark looks at Roy.

Roy exits the booth and joins Mark on the sound stage.

ROY (CONT'D)
 Talk to me, Mark. What are your
 thoughts on this song?

MARK
 I like it. I worked hard on the
 lyrics and I think the guitar parts
 sound really cool.

ROY
 I like this song, too. But I'm
 thinking we don't need any more
 songs like this on the record.

MARK
 So we're not doing "Prometheus?"

ROY
 No, I still want it. But the other
 songs need to be more commercial to
 balance out the record. This is the
 strongest one so far, so we might
 have to scrap some of the others.
 What we need is another song like
 "Sweet Fire."

Mark's eyes light up.

MARK
 That's what I was just telling
 everyone on the way over here! I
 told them we should be more
 conventional and no one said
 anything. They just accused me of
 not wanting to do "Prometheus." For
 fuck's sake, I wrote the lyrics. I
 like the song, but he's chained to
 a rock, big deal. Sometimes I feel
 like I'm chained to a rock, having
 to listen to those guys.

Roy pounces.

ROY
 That's exactly right. You are
 chained to a rock.
 (MORE)

ROY (CONT'D)

They're holding you hostage in your own band by not listening to you. But you're Prometheus, the discoverer of fire. Sweet fire. That song was your doing. Those other three wouldn't be in the most popular rock band in the world right now if not for you.

MARK

You're right. They owe me big time. And they aren't even listening to my suggestions.

ROY

Don't let them push you around in your own recording session. You're the frontman. You're the face of Phoenix.

MARK

Everyone loves Tommy. Did you read that *Rolling Stone* article? They barely mentioned me at all.

ROY

Forget about Tommy. They called you a wordsmith in that same article. It's only a matter of time before everyone realizes you're actually the star of this band. Especially if you come up with more songs like "Sweet Fire." Remember, they're writing a song about Prometheus, but you are Prometheus.

Roy pats Mark on the shoulder encouragingly. He walks back to the booth.

MARK

(under his breath)
Great. Can't wait for a bird to peck out my liver.

ROY (OVER MIC)

Now, you're gonna knock out these vocals. Then Raymond will bring everyone back in and you'll tell them your ideas.

Mark snaps into the zone.

MARK

You got it.

INT. STUDIO A BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

ROY

That should do the trick.

CUT TO:

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

In the center of the large lounge is a living area. In the back right corner is a kitchen. There is a snack table along the back wall, and in the back left corner is a window. A phone hangs on the wall next to the fridge -- the only phone in the building.

The furniture is funky and vibrant, more like a 70s bachelor pad than your average lounge area. This is a great place to do coke.

Tommy sits on the armrest of a couch reading a MAGAZINE. Danny and Steven get WATER BOTTLES from the fridge. We see over Tommy's shoulder that he's reading an article about Phoenix. He smirks.

TOMMY

Guys, come here.

Danny and Steven come read over Tommy's shoulder.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

(reading aloud)

"Readers' most anticipated tours for the upcoming year."

He points to the article enthusiastically.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Phoenix. Number 1.

Steven YANKS the magazine out of Tommy's hands.

STEVEN

No fucking way.

Steven continues.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

"In their newsletter, Tommy Harris, Mark Harper, Danny Preston, and Steven Sherman of Phoenix recently announced a 1978 world tour following the release of their highly-anticipated fourth record."

Danny YANKS the magazine out of Steven's hands and takes a look.

DANNY

This is a good photo of you.
 "Steven Sherman and his rumored
 girlfr" -- hey, isn't this the girl
 from that Bond movie?

Steven grabs the magazine back from Danny. Tommy and Danny try to read the article over Steven's shoulder.

STEVEN

Which girl from which Bond movie?

TOMMY

Does it matter?

STEVEN

What magazine is this?

He flips to the cover.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Tiger Beat? We're in this?

Three musicians walk into the lounge -- EVELYN WINTERS and Diana Stanton, pretty, young disco singers, and JOE GIL, a late 20s version of everyone in Phoenix.

Diana recognizes the band and walks up to them. Evelyn follows her as Joe grabs a WATER BOTTLE from the fridge. Tommy takes the magazine back from Steven, turns the page, and reads aloud dramatically.

TOMMY

"Is Danny Preston right for you?"

STEVEN

Pfft, no.

DIANA

Oh my God, Phoenix! I love your
 music! I'm Diana and this is
 Evelyn. We're Dream Station.

Steven and Danny immediately perk up. Tommy keeps reading.

DANNY

No way, you guys sing "Dance
 Ascension." I fucking love that
 song.

Diana laughs. Evelyn is not impressed.

EVELYN

Sure you do. But probably not as much as you loved knocking it off the top spot on the chart.

Diana ignores Evelyn.

DIANA

I didn't know rockstars liked disco.

Evelyn glances at Tommy as he reads.

EVELYN

Or read *Tiger Beat* magazine.

STEVEN

We're a new rockstar prototype that some of the top Crane executives are working on.

Steven PUNCHES Danny in the arm out of nowhere, still holding eye contact with Diana.

DANNY

What the fuck?

STEVEN

As you can see they're still working out some of the kinks.

Tommy hops off the armrest and joins the others as Joe also walks over.

TOMMY

Are you working on a new record?

EVELYN

Yes, we are. We're recording in Studio B. In fact we're kind of-

Tommy notices the approaching guitarist.

TOMMY

Holy shit. Joe Gil.

Joe laughs, flattered.

JOE

Tommy Harris. I was just reading an interview you did.

TOMMY

It's great to meet you, you've done some amazing session work. Consider me a huge fan.

Joe and Tommy smile and shake hands.

JOE

I really appreciate that. You guys are great. I've been listening to a lot of Phoenix lately. You're everywhere, man. You know, if you have any downtime while you're here, I'd love to jam.

TOMMY

For sure, man.

Tommy fishes around in his pocket and pulls out a HOTEL BUSINESS CARD.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

This is where we're staying. I'm in 317.

Joe studies the card.

JOE

317. Alright then. I'm glad we ran into each other.

A SESSION DRUMMER in his late 20s enters the lounge.

SESSION DRUMMER

Ladies, Joe, we're back.

Evelyn leaves without saying goodbye. Joe nods at the boys and exits.

DIANA

See you boys around.

Diana exits. The boys are silent until the other musicians leave the room. Steven SLAPS the back of Tommy's head.

TOMMY

What the hell did you do that for?

STEVEN

What the fuck, man? Did you see those girls? You totally hijacked that conversation and blew my shot.

TOMMY

You think you had a shot with them?

STEVEN

Yeah, I think I did.

TOMMY

Maybe you should try again after your next software update. Since they're still working out the kinks and all.

Raymond enters the lounge.

RAYMOND

Roy's ready for you.

INT. HALLWAY TO STUDIO B - CONTINUOUS

Joe and the Session Drummer walk ahead of Diana and Evelyn.

DIANA

Do you think I have a shot with Tommy?

EVELYN

You're probably too old.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy plays a guitar riff that will eventually be the main riff for "Studio Killer" by Phoenyx. We see Roy through the recording booth window.

ROY (OVER MIC)

Play that again, Tommy.

Tommy plays the riff again.

ROY (OVER MIC) (CONT'D)

That's killer. See what you can do with it.

STEVEN

Maybe this could be that Lovecraft song we talked about.

MARK

Fuck that. Veto.

Tommy laughs at Mark's sudden decisiveness. Little does Tommy know that this is the part where every VH1 rockumentary narrator would say, "But offstage, things were falling apart."

TOMMY

You're vetoing that with no explanation? I think that would make a great song. And it's something that other people wouldn't write about.

MARK

I told you earlier -- that's the problem. Our songs need to be more universal.

He turns to Steven.

MARK (CONT'D)

No offense, but I don't want to write lyrics for another cosmic voodoo thing you're interested in. We're gonna turn people off with that shit.

Mark turns to Tommy and Danny.

MARK (CONT'D)

And you two aren't much better. No one wants to hear songs about existentialism or transcendental idealism.

DANNY

We're trying to avoid conventionalism.

MARK

Because you fear being conventional. But we can use convention to our advantage.

Mark kicks it up a notch, realizing he's onto something.

MARK (CONT'D)

We're rockstars, Goddamn it. Everyone wants to be like us. We should be writing songs about ourselves -- our own personal feelings and experiences. That's what's going to sell. We should write what we know. Who cares if it's conventional?

The other three band members stare.

MARK (CONT'D)

This is the direction that music is headed in. Look at punk -- those songs only have a few chords. And disco -- those lyrics are about having a good time and dancing.

DANNY

I thought we decided that we wanted to challenge ourselves as artists. We agreed to write songs that are musically and lyrically complex. And most importantly, we said we didn't want to repeat ourselves.

MARK

But writing about one Greek myth and then another is still repetition because you're writing about the same broad subject. Or if you write a song about free will and another about the nature of space and time, then you're repeating yourself because they're both topics of metaphysics. And those nuances are completely lost on the average consumer. Therefore, we might as well write about commonplace topics like sex, parties, drugs, and other tales of debauchery. We could knock this album out in record time and have it loaded with hits.

STEVEN

But an album shouldn't be loaded with hits. It undermines the artistic integrity of the record as a whole.

Mark sarcastically mouths along as Steven says this last sentence. Danny rolls his eyes.

MARK

We've taken the esoteric thing as far as we can go. Why can't we just write songs about fucking girls or something?

DANNY

Because everyone writes songs about fucking girls.

TOMMY

Maybe we could write a song about
fucking a legal, adult woman. No
one's ever written about that
before.

DANNY

But Mark said he wants to write
what he knows.

Mark storms over to Danny.

MARK

We don't all have loser
girlfriends. My personal life is
actually interesting.

DANNY

Mark, you're insane.

MARK

It's an occupational hazard! We're
living everyone's fantasy. Where is
your incentive to evolve as
musicians?

DANNY

We're trying to evolve as
musicians. You're trying to evolve
from a misdemeanor to a felony.
You're a walking lawsuit and you'll
take the band down with you.

MARK

There wouldn't even be a band
without me. I'm a wordsmith. We
wouldn't be where we are now
without "Sweet Fire" and that was
mostly my doing.

DANNY

"Sweet Fire" was a fucking sellout!

MARK

The president of Crane Recording
Artists gave you a Ferrari for your
efforts!

TOMMY

Maybe if we just-

MARK

I'm trying to do my part for this band, but it's hard when *Rolling Stone* magazine convinces the world that our guitarist is the only one of us who matters.

DANNY

You're just jealous of anyone who gets more attention than you. You don't give a shit about artistry. You're in this industry so you can be famous. You'll do anything for publicity because being a celebrity gives you some semblance of life after death and that makes you feel important. You're not that interesting -- another rockstar gets in drunken fights, does a ton of drugs, and sleeps with underage girls. If you want to burn out and OD just so you can live forever in pop culture, then you're even fucking dumber than I thought.

MARK

(points finger at Danny)
You know what, fuck you, Danny. I'm sick of your constant cynicism.
(points finger at Steven)
Fuck you, Steven.

DANNY

He didn't say anyt-

MARK

(points finger at Tommy)
Fuck you, Tommy, for always playing devil's advocate but ultimately being on their side and giving them a window to launch a full-scale attack on my character. You're everyone's favorite and you don't even have to try so fuck you most of all.

Tommy looks hurt.

MARK (CONT'D)

Everyone in this band needs to stop being so fucking cerebral for a change. We're in New York City.

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

Call me crazy, but I think we should go out and experience things as opposed to just discussing them. Empiricism, if you will.

Danny scoffs at this last remark.

MARK (CONT'D)

Come find me when you're ready to enjoy yourselves.

Mark storms out. Tommy, Danny, and Steven all look at Roy in the booth.

ROY (OVER MIC)

It's alright, I'm sure he's just taking a walk. He'll be back. He won't get far in this weather without his coat.

PAN

To the boys' coats in a pile next to the door.

ROY (OVER MIC) (CONT'D)

Let's take 30. There's a pizza place a few doors down and Raymond can pick up some food and beers.

INT. STUDIO A BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

RAYMOND

Is this what you wanted?

ROY

I didn't think it would escalate so quickly.

Roy chuckles.

ROY (CONT'D)

"Full-scale attack on my character." He does have a way with words.

INT. HALLWAY TO FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Mark walks through the hallway on his way out the front door, fuming.

MARK

"Some semblance of life after death." I bet those aren't even his words. He can't say anything unless Schopenhauer said it first.

HARRY FULTON walks in the front entrance. He's pissed off, speed walking, and muttering to himself. He's the uptight, strait-laced manager of up-and-coming punk band, Backyard Castration.

HARRY

Steal my cab, make me walk all this way.

Mark and Harry are both looking down. They COLLIDE in the entranceway. Mark turns around and glares at Harry and keeps walking.

MARK

Fucking asshole. I know what goes on in this industry and I want to stay on top. If we don't write another hit we're dead.

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE/SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Mark walks out the door and down the street. We follow him for a few moments as he walks away from the studio. He stops suddenly.

MARK

Fuck me, I forgot my coat.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY TO STUDIO C - CONTINUOUS

Harry walks angrily through the hallways until he reaches Studio C. Already in a bad mood and not about to take anyone's shit, he walks right in.

INT. STUDIO C SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Harry enters Studio C and the gory aftermath of the night's murders is in full view. He stands frozen in place. Quick cuts of what Harry sees:

-Bloody amp

-Bloody guitar

-Various bodies

Harry can't take it anymore. He BOLTS out of the studio and runs into Studio D.

INT. STUDIO D SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The studio is completely empty, but Harry feels no sense of relief. He turns around and runs out.

INT. HALLWAY TO STUDIO B - CONTINUOUS

Harry runs through the hallways. He arrives outside Studio B and opens the door.

INT. STUDIO B SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Diana and Evelyn are in the vocal booth looking at a LYRIC SHEET. We notice a bright LAMP turned on in the booth.

Studio B looks similar to Studio A except for the polished wood baby grand PIANO in the back left corner.

Joe and the two session musicians are about to start playing again when Harry suddenly bursts into the studio.

The DISCO ENGINEER and DISCO PRODUCER jump to their feet in the booth.

Harry can barely speak.

HARRY

Dead. They're all dead. We're in danger.

Everyone in the studio is startled and confused. They stare at Harry for a moment. Diana comes out of the vocal booth and slowly approaches Harry, trying to comfort him.

DIANA

Here, sit down and you can tell us what happened.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A small, messy apartment with morbid music paraphernalia covering the walls -- posters of rockstars with red Xs drawn over their eyes and newspaper clippings announcing famous musicians' untimely deaths. Musical instruments can be seen in the corner of the room.

On the wall is a printed-out BILLBOARD HOT 100 CHART from the previous year.

C.U.

A black leather glove points to the top of the chart. At number 2 we see Dream Station with "Dance Ascension." At the coveted top spot -- you guessed it, Phoenix with "Sweet Fire."

TIGER (O.S.)

They're here.

SHARK

Phoenix?

Shark's voice sounds like someone tried to play an electric guitar with a straight razor.

TIGER

The band we hate most. I'm going back. They're dead.

SHARK

Patience. If Phoenix is here, then we can perform for them. We'll show them that we're the better musicians. And then we'll kill them.

Tiger is foaming at the mouth. He turns to leave but Shark grabs his arm and stops him.

SHARK (CONT'D)

There might be others there. We'll have to kill them first to get Phoenix alone. We have to think. Don't you want revenge? For Mike and Chris?

TIGER

I...want...Phoenix...now!

He runs out of the apartment.

EXT. EMERGENCY EXIT - CONTINUOUS

Tiger flings the door open and enters the building.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

He stalks through the halls, grumbling to himself.

TIGER

I can come up with a plan, too.
I'll make it last. I'll kill them
slowly, one at a time, where I
won't leave any witnesses.

INT. OUTSIDE RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

TIGER

In here.

He walks into the restroom.

CUT TO:

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

The boys talk in the kitchen. Raymond walks into the lounge with PIZZA and a SIX PACK.

RAYMOND

Pizza's here!

Raymond sets the food and drinks on the coffee table. The boys follow the pizza and take a seat on the couches. Tommy sits on an armrest again.

STEVEN

Hey, maybe we can have Diana and
Evelyn sing on some of the tracks.

RAYMOND

Who?

TOMMY

The girls who sing "Dance
Ascension." They're recording in
Studio B right now. Steven's in
love.

DANNY

It's not a bad idea considering our
lead singer is missing.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

You should do one of your occult rituals to make him teleport back.

Danny taps an invisible watch.

DANNY (CONT'D)

We have a deadline.

Steven opens a beer.

STEVEN

Fuck Mark, he was way outta line. He totally attacked you and Tommy.

He takes a sip, completely relaxed.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

It's probably his we're-from-California-and-he's-not complex. It really is a sin to raise kids in the midwest. Look how they turn out.

He takes a bite of pizza.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

You know who's even worse? New Yorkers. They act like it's an accomplishment to live in the most populated city in the country. But it's the most populated city in the country! Who doesn't live there? And they're so condescending to visitors. If you go to California, people will hand you acid and a joint as soon as you get off the plane -- for free. You'll never find better hospitality.

DANNY

Steven, has it ever occurred to you that people only give you free stuff because you're famous?

Steven leans back and puts his feet on the coffee table.

STEVEN

I'm a man of the people. I give them music, and they give back to me.

Suddenly Harry and everyone from Studio B enter the lounge. Harry collapses onto one of the stools in the kitchen.

Diana is close behind trying to comfort him. Evelyn fetches water for Harry. Everyone else stands off to the side.

Tommy walks over to the group.

TOMMY

What happened?

Harry turns to look at Tommy. He takes a deep breath and composes himself.

HARRY

I'm Harry Fulton, I'm a manager.
The band I manage was recording
here only a few hours ago. I came
to see how they were coming along
and they're dead.

Harry becomes emotional again.

HARRY (CONT'D)

They're all dead. One of them had
his head bashed into an amp,
another one was beaten to death
with a guitar. His eye...

Harry trails off and Raymond immediately goes to the phone to call the police.

STEVEN

In the studio?

DANNY

I'll get Roy.

Danny runs out of the lounge.

TOMMY

It's okay. We'll call the police
and they'll figure it out.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO C SOUND STAGE - 20 MINUTES LATER

It's a circus. A dozen cops are taking notes, conferring with one another, and removing bodies from the crime scene.

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Everyone at the studio is being questioned. We see Joe, the session musicians, and the Disco Engineer talking to police in the background. Raymond and Harry talk to another officer. Various cops are in and out of the lounge doing appropriate actions. Tommy, Danny, Steven, Diana, Evelyn, Roy, and the Disco Producer are all talking to LIEUTENANT MILLER.

EVELYN

How long ago were they killed,
Lieutenant?

LT. MILLER

About an hour or two.

DANNY

So what, we're just supposed to
stay here? We answered your
questions. I want to go back to my
hotel and get the hell away from
this place.

LT. MILLER

We ask that you stay until we're
done checking the building. There
are over a dozen officers here,
this is the safest place you can be
right now.

TOMMY

Thank you, Lieutenant.

LT. MILLER

Now, who all has access to the
building?

ROY

One key per studio. I have one, Dan
has another-

The Disco Producer nods.

ROY (CONT'D)

And someone from Studio C should
have had one.

LT. MILLER

We've gotta seal this place up.
I'll need both of your keys.

Roy and the Disco Producer hand over their keys.

LT. MILLER (CONT'D)

Are there any others floating around?

ROY

There's a spare out front. It's in a crack in the sidewalk.

LT. MILLER

Who knows about it?

ROY

Everyone who's recorded here, in case they get locked out. The studios are soundproof so you can't hear anyone banging on the door. And the janitors know -- they don't have their own keys.

LT. MILLER

And why is that?

DISCO PRODUCER

Privacy. We have a lot of high-profile artists that come through here so we try to limit access to the building as much as possible.

Roy nods and Lieutenant Miller takes notes.

LT. MILLER

Can you two come along and walk me through the building?

Roy and the Disco Producer follow Lieutenant Miller.

STEVEN

I can't believe Mark is missing this.

DANNY

Yeah, what are the odds that he has a childish, cocaine-fueled meltdown and runs out of the studio just in time to miss getting beaten to death with a guitar?

TOMMY

We don't know that he was on coke.

Danny and Steven turn and glare at Tommy. Obviously Mark was on coke.

DIANA
Mark's gone?

STEVEN
Yeah, we got in a fight and he ran out.

DANNY
But his coat's in the studio if you want a souvenir.

DIANA
Do you guys need a new singer, then?

Evelyn rolls her eyes. Danny and Steven walk over to the snack table, where a SMART-ASS COP is eating a pastry.

SMART-ASS COP
Phoenix, huh? Where ya guys from?
(beat)
Tucson?

He cracks up at his own joke, his laughter lasting much longer than it should. Steven attempts to smile politely and Danny looks annoyed.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Two cops, WILLIAMS and JACKSON, mid-search. Williams drops down to check -- no feet under the door.

He opens the door to the first stall. Empty.

He opens the second stall. Empty.

Before he can open the third door, Tiger JUMPS OUT.

Tiger closes his hands around Williams' throat, STRANGLING him.

Jackson whips out his GUN and FIRES two shots into Tiger's side.

Tiger lets go of Williams and falls to the floor, blood spilling onto the tile.

Williams grimaces, breathing hard.

JACKSON
Are you alright?

Williams begins to catch his breath.

WILLIAMS
I think I'll be fine.

JACKSON
Stay here, I'll get the lieutenant.

He runs back to the lounge.

INT. LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Jackson bursts in.

JACKSON
Lieutenant, Williams and I found
the killer.

Lieutenant Miller and several other cops run out of the lounge after Jackson.

INT. RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

All of the cops crowd around Tiger's body.

LT. MILLER
The tiger sleeps tonight. Well
done, men.

Lieutenant Miller steps back, then looks at everyone.

LT. MILLER (CONT'D)
I want one more sweep of the
building for good measure, but I
think we've got our guy.

The cops exit. Lieutenant Miller crouches down and carefully removes Tiger's mask. We see the lieutenant's face -- deep in thought and hard to read.

CUT TO:

INT. LOUNGE - KITCHEN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Tommy, Danny, Steven, and Joe are gathered around the kitchen counter engaged in a heated debate.

JOE
Wrong. *Taxi Driver* is the ultimate
New York City movie.

DANNY

What are you talking about? It's gotta be *Dog Day Afternoon*.

TOMMY

Pacino's so good in that.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Lieutenant Miller and Roy talk in hushed tones.

ROY

Come on, we're on a tight deadline. An incident like this could derail the record completely if we're not careful. These boys need to stay focused on the task at hand.

LT. MILLER

No. This crime was targeted. 20 years on the force and I've never seen such brutal killings against a specific group with no apparent racial motivation. Or any of the other usual causes, for that matter.

ROY

So he doesn't like punk, so what? It's a divisive genre. You're neglecting the fact that musicians are a very temperamental people. The lead singer probably stole the killer's girlfriend so he wanted revenge but there were too many witnesses. Crime of passion, case closed. There were what, nineteen people here at the time? And he only killed six?

Lieutenant Miller sighs.

LT. MILLER

I can't keep the building open -- it's a crime scene. Take the night off, everyone deserves a break. I can assure you that our detectives are looking at every possible lead. We're checking on the janitors right now.

ROY

Let me tell you again since you're not understanding. We're on a deadline. I'm on a deadline. I don't want any higher-ups at Crane bitching to me about how long the record is taking. We're behind schedule, as is. And I don't miss deadlines. I'm not about to jeopardize my reputation over some freak incident. The killer is dead, we're good to keep recording.

LT. MILLER

Out of the question.

Roy takes a moment, then continues in a different tone.

ROY

Look, we're both professionals here. Let's wrap this up with a nice little bow so we can both get back to our other obligations.

He leans in closer.

ROY (CONT'D)

You and your men have been working hard tonight. If you wanted to take it easy after all of this, nobody would blame you. You'd be doing the label a service by keeping us on schedule, and if it helps, I can get the higher-ups to put you on the payroll for tonight. If you're worried about how it looks, then keep a few men here to watch the building. Whatever it takes. Consider it a big favor to some powerful people.

Lieutenant Miller considers.

ROY (CONT'D)

And of course anything Phoenix-related -- backstage passes, front row seats for their upcoming tour that's bound to sell out, unreleased merchandise, you name it -- that's yours, too.

INT. LOUNGE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The boys are still debating. Danny takes a CIGARETTE out of his pocket, lights it, and takes a drag. It's his last one. He TOSSES the empty pack into the trash can. He looks through the doorway and sees Lieutenant Miller hand Roy two keys. The Disco Engineer and Disco Producer walk over to Roy and start talking.

STEVEN (O.S.)

Midnight Cowboy. Definitive New York City movie. That's my final answer.

(beat)

What's that other one with Dustin Hoffman? With the dentist?

JOE (O.S.)

Marathon Man.

STEVEN (O.S.)

Marathon Man, that's right.

TOMMY (O.S.)

Did you ever see *Straw Dogs*?

Lieutenant Miller heads back into the lounge towards the kitchen.

JOE

Now's your chance to ask him.

STEVEN

Lieutenant, were you there for the real *Dog Day Afternoon*?

LT. MILLER

I was on vacation.

STEVEN

Damn, what are the odds...

The lieutenant laughs.

LT. MILLER

Everyone told me I missed out. That Al Pacino gave quite a performance.

(beat)

Anyway, we got the killer and we've been through the building several times. We're gonna get an ID on him back at the station.

(MORE)

LT. MILLER (CONT'D)

But since we found him, it's okay to keep recording. Just don't go in Studio C.

Offscreen, someone motions for Joe to come over. He walks away.

DANNY

Stay here? Are you out of your fucking mind?

LT. MILLER

I wouldn't let you stay if I didn't think it was safe. And just as an added precaution, I'm leaving two officers here, one out front and one out back. No need for you boys to have any more scares.

TOMMY

Thanks, Lieutenant.

LT. MILLER

Thanks for your cooperation. I know it's been a tough night.

(beat)

If it's not too much to ask, could I get your autographs? My son and daughter are huge fans.

The boys smile.

TOMMY

Of course. Although considering your men just saved our lives, these won't be worth as much.

Lieutenant Miller laughs and hands Steven a PEN and NOTEPAD. The band members take turns signing.

LT. MILLER

You boys crack me up.

The boys finish signing.

LT. MILLER (CONT'D)

Thank you, take care now.

The lieutenant waves goodbye and walks out of the lounge.

TOMMY

Too bad he didn't get Mark's signature.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHTCLUB - VIP BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

The prime spot to do a little dance, make a little love, and get down tonight -- Mark's agenda.

He sits in a booth in the VIP section. His arm is around the GIRL next to him. FOUR FANS sit at the booth having the time of their lives. Expensive bottles of alcohol, lots of empty glasses, and lines of cocaine sit on the table in front of them. Mark is in the middle of telling a story. "Love Rollercoaster" by Ohio Players plays in the background.

MARK

So Steven goes to hit Tommy, and it's all friendly. But Steven's too slow, and this other guy was getting kinda close. Now his back was towards me so I couldn't see who it was. But he bumps into Tommy at the wrong moment so Steven ends up hitting the other guy instead. So the other guy turns around.

Mark pauses for dramatic effect, eyeing everyone at the booth.

MARK (CONT'D)

James Caan.

The fans are astonished by this reveal.

MARK (CONT'D)

So James Caan throws a punch at Steven, which is fair, he was fighting back. He didn't know it was an accident. Tommy was gone in an instant. He hates conflict.

Mark pauses, remembering the band's earlier argument.

MARK (CONT'D)

And Danny, I don't know where the fuck Danny was. Probably quoting Nietzsche to some girl.

Everyone at the booth laughs.

MARK (CONT'D)

So Steven throws a punch, but Steven can't fight, so I push Steven out of the way. I'm gonna let my friend get clobbered? No way. I had no choice but to fight him myself. You gotta remember that James Caan is one of my favorite actors and the last thing I want is bloodshed. But it was a loud bar and in the moment, how do you explain to someone that your friend accidentally punched them? So that's how we got in a fight.

FAN #1

Who won?

MARK

Well, someone pulled us apart before it went too far, but I landed some blows on him. I explained it to him and he was cool. We had a drink together afterwards.

The fans look at Mark in awe.

FAN #2

Have you met a lot of rockstars?

MARK

Yeah, I've met a lot of the musicians I admire. I've met the guys from Cream, the Stones. Both of those moments were huge for me since I'm such a big fan.

GIRL

Pink Floyd?

MARK

I've met them, that was another good memory. Steven has met three of the Beatles. He meets everyone.

FAN #3

Animals is one of my favorite records. I still don't understand how a record about a book I didn't read in English class could be so good. Too bad they didn't write it sooner -- my grades could have been way higher.

MARK

Don't sweat it, man, my grades sucked, too. But that's why I focused on music, since I was actually good at it. And look where I am now.

Mark realizes he's surrounded by impressionable fans.

MARK (CONT'D)

But knowledge is still important, of course. I always read a lot, just not what they made us read in school.

FAN #4

I read *East of Eden* because of your song. You talked about it in an article in *Rolling Stone*.

Mark smiles a genuine, shy smile.

MARK

Oh yeah?

FAN #4

You said it's your favorite book and you read it every year. I had to discover your influences for myself.

Mark smiles at the fans.

GIRL

Where's the rest of your band?

MARK

Recording. They're at the studio.

FAN #1

Which studio?

Mark smirks.

MARK

Now if I told you that, I'd have to kill you.

GIRL

Shouldn't you be with them?

Mark ignores the question. "Dance Ascension" by Dream Station starts playing. Mark recognizes the song.

MARK

Now these are some musicians I
would love to meet. Dream Station.
I love this song.

Mark looks at the girl next to him.

MARK (CONT'D)

We have to dance to this.

They both leave the booth and head to the dance floor.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - HALLWAY TO STUDIO A - CONTINUOUS

Tommy, Danny, and Steven walk from the lounge to Studio A.

DANNY

It's still hard to believe that
Backyard Castration got killed. A
humble punk band. Why couldn't the
murderer do the world a favor and
kill off some country singers?

STEVEN

Wait, Backyard Castration? That's
their name?

DANNY

They're punks, it's for shock
value.

STEVEN

I know, it's a fucking good name.
How did a band called Backyard
Castration get Harry as a manager?

TOMMY

How did we get Phil?

DANNY

Where is Phil?

TOMMY

Roy called the office but nobody
picked up so he sent Raymond to
check on him. I'm more worried
about Mark.

STEVEN

I'm sure Mark's at a bar right now
telling his James Caan story to
anyone who will listen.

CUT TO:

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Two cops are still in the lounge -- DANIELS and PATTERSON.
Roy dangles both keys in front of the cops' faces.

ROY

No one gets out. You only unlock
the door for Mark Harper and then
you lock it again. He's the dumbass
without a winter coat. And
remember, no one knows the band's
recording here. I'd like to keep it
that way. Think you can handle
that?

He hands the keys over.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The boys enter Studio A and head back to their places.

DANNY

Was it really James Caan?

TOMMY

I've heard James Caan, Clint
Eastwood, Gene Hackman...

STEVEN

Gene Hackman would never get into a
fight, I've met him.

Steven looks around the studio.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Where's Roy?

DANNY

Who knows? Mark's gone, Phil's
gone, Roy's gone, Raymond's gone.

TOMMY

Is Dream Station still here? I didn't get a chance to ask Diana what she's doing tomorrow.

Steven slow-claps.

STEVEN

Tommy Harris, picking up girls at a crime scene. I'll add that to my list of stories I can sell to the tabloids if I'm ever strapped for cash.

DANNY

It's pathetic what they're calling music journalism these days.

Roy enters Studio A.

ROY

I just finished speaking with the police, we should be in good hands.

TOMMY

Any sign of Mark?

ROY

Not yet. But we have work to do.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Shark stands on his apartment balcony. He has a clear view of the back of the recording studio. We see what he sees. It's SNOWING, but a street light shines on Daniels who stands guard at the back exit.

SHARK

The police?!

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Shark goes back inside to have a meltdown. He grabs a table lamp and THROWS it.

SHARK

You stupid bastard! The police got you! What about our performance?

He keeps yelling and breaking things in the apartment.

Shark finally stops.

SHARK (CONT'D)
I'll do it myself.

He walks over to the Billboard chart. Shark RIPS the chart off the wall, folds it up, and pockets it.

C.U.

The now empty spot on the wall where the chart hung. We hear Shark storm out and the door SLAMS.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Danny, Tommy, and Steven are in their usual places and Roy is in the booth.

ROY (OVER MIC)
You boys keep working, I'm gonna use the restroom.

EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Patterson reaches into his jacket pocket. He pulls out a PACK OF CIGARETTES, only to find that it's empty.

PATTERSON
Aw, shit.

He notices a convenience store across the street. He looks behind him at the building he's supposed to be watching, then back to the convenience store. He heads for the store.

EXT. EMERGENCY EXIT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Daniels stands guard. A BLACK CAT MEOWS offscreen. Daniels walks over to pet the cat.

While Daniels is distracted, Shark suddenly appears and SLITS his throat. Daniels makes CHOKING NOISES and falls in the snow, blood pouring onto the ground.

Shark tries to open the door -- locked.

He digs around in Daniels' pockets until he finds the KEY Roy gave him.

Shark spots a nearby bush. He DRAGS Daniels' body to the bush and hides it, leaving a trail of blood.

Snow has begun to pile up. The killer tries to cover the trail of blood with snow. When he's satisfied with his work, he unlocks the door. We hear the DOOR ALARM.

TILT DOWN

The black cat runs into the studio quietly as Shark enters and locks the door behind him.

C.U.

A spot of blood in the snow that Shark missed.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - HALLWAY TO STUDIO B - CONTINUOUS

Shark walks through the hallways, a man on a mission.

INT. OUTSIDE STUDIO B - CONTINUOUS

He reaches Studio B and notices that the RECORDING IN PROGRESS sign is on.

INT. STUDIO B SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Shark throws the door open with a SLAM. The musicians stop playing.

Shark immediately grabs Session Bass Guitarist by the neck and pushes him backwards towards the piano. Shark manhandles the shit out of the musician, forcing him to BITE the corner of the flat part of the piano next to the music rack.

C.U.

Session Bass Guitarist's face.

Shark STABS the bass guitarist in the back of the neck.

The Session Drummer takes the hi-hat off its stand and HURLS it at Shark's head...

...and the hi-hat misses, hitting the ground with a CRASH.

Shark heads toward the drummer. He spots a large pair of HAND CYMBALS on the ground and picks them up.

The drummer throws a DRUM STICK. One cymbal in each hand, Shark approaches the drummer and CRASHES the cymbals on both sides of the drummer's head, bursting his eardrums. Session Drummer cries out and Shark SLITS his throat.

Joe stands in front of the vocal booth. Evelyn and Diana are trembling inside.

He SWINGS his guitar at the killer's shins. Shark falls to his knees. Joe KICKS him in the face, denting his mask.

Shark pulls Joe's leg out from under him. The guitarist falls and Shark STABS him in the chest.

Shark heads for the two singers. They have nowhere to run.

He grabs Evelyn and presses her face against the lamp in the vocal booth. She cries out as we hear the flesh SIZZLE. Shark STABS her.

Diana watches in terror and backs into the corner.

Joe is barely hanging on. He starts crawling to the door. We hear Shark STAB Diana offscreen.

From Joe's perspective we see the door falling shut. He glances to the booth and we see that the Disco Engineer and Disco Producer have left.

C.U.

Joe's hand reaches out. STAB. His outstretched hand falls.

Shark adjusts his mask, then KICKS Joe's body out of the way and leaves.

Various shots of the aftermath.

INT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The Disco Producer and Disco Engineer run to the front door. It's locked. The producer reaches in his pocket for the key.

DISCO PRODUCER
Shit! Asshole never gave it back!

DISCO ENGINEER
The emergency exit!

They both start running the opposite direction.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As they turn a corner, Shark is waiting for them. He STABS the producer. The engineer starts to run, but Shark catches up. He pins the engineer's hands behind his back and pushes him against the wall.

DISCO ENGINEER
Why are you do-

Shark STABS him mid-sentence.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Through the glass door, we see Patterson at the cash register. The CASHIER gives Patterson his change and he grabs the NEW PACK OF CIGARETTES.

Patterson steps outside and immediately lights up. He looks across the street at the recording studio -- nothing unusual there.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

C.U.

Shark pulls the Billboard chart out of his pocket. With a RED MARKER, he draws a line through the number 2 spot, crossing out Dream Station.

He DRAGS Disco Engineer's body back to Studio B.

INT. OUTSIDE RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Roy walks out of the bathroom WHISTLING "Dance Ascension." He hears FOOTSTEPS and stops in his tracks.

ROY
Raymond? Is that you?

SILENCE. Roy keeps walking. He hears more FOOTSTEPS and stops again.

ROY (CONT'D)
Dan?

He turns a corner and sees the Disco Producer's body lying on the ground.

The FOOTSTEPS get closer and then they stop. Roy slowly turns around and sees Shark. Roy starts to back away.

ROY (CONT'D)
I'm not going to hurt you. Do you
want money?

The killer walks toward Roy.

ROY (CONT'D)
I have lots of money that you can
have. And I'm a record producer. I
can make you rich. And famous.

Shark gets closer and reaches his hands out. Roy can't talk
his way out of this one.

ROY (CONT'D)
I think we should go into business
together. I can tell you've got-

Shark STRANGLES Roy.

ROY (CONT'D)
(gasping for air)
A...star.....quality.

Roy's body crumples on the ground. Shark starts DRAGGING it
away.

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Mark sits at the bar and tells a story. Everyone is gathered
around him and even the BARTENDER is invested. "The Wild One"
by Suzi Quatro plays in the background.

MARK
So Steven goes to hit Tommy -- all
jokes, of course. But this other
guy's getting kinda close to us.
His back was to us so I didn't know
who it was at the time. But
Steven's too slow, so this guy
bumps into Tommy and Steven ends up
hitting the other guy by accident.
Totally didn't mean to, but the
other guy turns around and punches
Steven.

He pauses for dramatic effect.

MARK (CONT'D)
It's James Caan.

The bar patrons react with amazement.

MARK (CONT'D)

My bandmate punched a Corleone!

ROARING LAUGHTER from the bar patrons.

MARK (CONT'D)

So Tommy disappears, but Steven's still there. And Steven can't fight. I look at Steven and I look at James Caan and I'm thinking
(Marlon Brando impression)
"He'll massacre my boy."

Even more ROARING LAUGHTER.

MARK (CONT'D)

And you've gotta remember, James Caan is one of my favorite actors, the last thing I want is bloodshed. But before I know it, I'm raining blows on James Caan and someone comes to break it up. Luckily I explained to him that it was an accident and I didn't want my friend to get hurt. He was cool about it and invited me to have a drink.

Laughter and approving reactions from everyone at the bar. Mark looks at the bartender.

MARK (CONT'D)

Get everyone here whatever they want, my treat.

CUT TO:

INT. RAYMOND'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Raymond drives to the Crane office. "Sweet Fire" by Phoenyx comes on the radio.

RAYMOND

Roy couldn't let them be. He turned them against each other when a murderer just happened to be in the building. More problems for us to deal with.

As Raymond recognizes the song, a smile appears on his face. He turns up the volume on the radio and listens for a moment - - this is the first time we've heard the whole band perform together.

MARK (ON RADIO)
Sweet fire, ignite all my desire

RAYMOND
It would be nice if they could
write another song like this.

Raymond parks right in front of the building.

EXT. HIGH-RISE - CONTINUOUS

Raymond steps out of the car and closes the door. The area is deserted.

TILT UP

An intimidating corporate tower. The Crane Recording Artists New York office is on the 26th floor.

Raymond walks up the steps and pulls on the large front doors, only to find them locked.

INT. HIGH-RISE - FRONT DESK - CONTINUOUS

A SECURITY GUARD sits at the front desk and walks toward the door. He UNLOCKS the door, only opening it enough to stick his head out.

SECURITY GUARD
May I help you, sir?

RAYMOND
Yes, I'm Raymond Carson. I'm a
recording engineer. I was wondering
if Phil Wilson is in the building?
He should be in the Crane office.

SECURITY GUARD
It's very late, sir. The only
people still in the building are
janitors.

RAYMOND
We've got quite a situation on our
hands. Do you mind if I come in for
a moment?

SECURITY GUARD

I'm afraid I can't let you into the building at this hour without prior authorization.

Raymond's expression changes.

RAYMOND

A band was killed tonight at the studio. Do you understand? I'm recording there with Phoenix now and their manager is missing. I'm here to see if he's alright. Could I please take a look inside?

SECURITY GUARD

I am not authorized to let you in, sir.

(beat)

Did you say Phoenix?

RAYMOND

Damn it, this is important. Six people are dead and I have a very famous band under my watch at the moment.

SECURITY GUARD

Sir, I'm going to have to ask you to leave. If you don't remove yourself from the premises I will be forced to call the police.

RAYMOND

Call them! I spoke to them myself an hour ago! They can verify everything I've said.

SECURITY GUARD

How do I know you're who you say you are? Do you know how many people come here trying to get into the Crane offices? Everybody wants to be a star.

Raymond sighs. The guard continues.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

And do you know how many of them come here just to see if they can meet the musicians? You aren't the first person to come around asking for those guys.

The Security Guard looks Raymond up and down.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
 Besides, real fans know that
 everyone from Phoenix lives in LA.
 Sir, I will not ask you again.

RAYMOND
 Fine. I'll leave. But if I find out
 that you had anything to do with
 this, I'll have you buried in the
 desert. In Arizona. Where no one
 will ever find you. And that's the
 closest you'll ever get to Phoenix.

Raymond heads back to his car and gets in, SLAMMING the door.

INT. RAYMOND'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Raymond sighs and starts the car.

RAYMOND
 (backing out)
 The hotel's close by, I'll check
 there.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The band looks bored. Tommy plays guitar aimlessly.

STEVEN
 What is taking Roy so long? I
 thought we were supposed to get
 back to work.

DANNY
 We should go look for Mark. We
 can't do much without him.

TOMMY
 Then shouldn't we also look for
 Roy?

STEVEN
 If he left, that's his choice.
 He'll come back or he won't. Same
 with Mark.

TOMMY

If only three of us are here, then
we're not a band. I'm gonna look
for Mark.

Tommy leaves the studio.

STEVEN

You forgot your coat.

THUD. The door closes.

INT. HALLWAY TO FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy makes his way to the front door. It's locked. He knocks
on the door. Patterson walks up the steps and unlocks it,
opening the door just a crack.

PATTERSON

Yes?

TOMMY

I'm looking for our singer. He's
missing.

PATTERSON

I'm watching this building and I
have orders to make sure you don't
leave.

TOMMY

I'm worried about my friend, that's
all.

PATTERSON

I know your kind. I'm sure he's
getting laid somewhere.

TOMMY

We haven't seen Roy, either.

PATTERSON

Roy?

TOMMY

Our producer.

PATTERSON

Oh, the tall guy? Looks like a
caterpillar that turned into a moth
instead of a butterfly?

TOMMY

That's him.

Patterson looks shifty -- he needs to cover his tracks. Maybe Roy did leave the building while he was getting cigarettes.

PATTERSON

Oh yeah, he left a little bit ago.

TOMMY

He left? Did he say why?

PATTERSON

He said he left something, or forgot something.

TOMMY

Where did he go?

PATTERSON

He just said he had to go get something and he'd come back. He left in too much of a hurry for me to stop him.

TOMMY

Huh. I thought he would have told us.

PATTERSON

Must have been important. But he'll be here. Why don't you just go back to your band.

Tommy turns around and Patterson locks the door.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Steven and Danny sit on the floor away from their instruments.

STEVEN

It comes down to the fundamental human drive for truth. Which of course doesn't actually exist. But we search for it in art the same way people before us searched for it in myth.

DANNY

Then let me ask you this, do you think that people who are mythically inspired are predisposed to experiencing the kinds of miracles that occur in myths?

Steven concentrates.

STEVEN

Hmmm. I think that I've experienced miracles. And I would consider myself to be a mythically inspired person.

Danny nods.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

But how do you define a miracle? And are there different degrees of miraculousness? You could argue that just being alive is a miracle, in which case-

Tommy enters the studio.

DANNY

What happened?

TOMMY

Cop won't let us leave. But he said Roy left awhile ago.

STEVEN

He left?

TOMMY

Apparently he forgot something.

Danny goes into the booth.

DANNY

His coat's still here.

STEVEN

Mark and Tommy both forgot theirs.

Danny paces, thinking.

DANNY

Something's wrong.

He continues to pace.

DANNY (CONT'D)

It's probably a conspiracy. I bet there are people at the highest level who want us dead.

STEVEN

Danny, as fun as it would be to entertain your delusions of grandeur, I feel like as your oldest friend I have to stop you. We're rockstars, not the Kennedys. Why would anyone want to kill us?

DANNY

Insurance.

STEVEN

They're not gonna kill us before the tour.

DANNY

This is fucked. This isn't normal protocol. The cops shouldn't have let us stay in the first place. We should've been back at our hotel an hour ago!

Danny gets up and heads for the door.

STEVEN

What are you doing?

DANNY

Leaving.

TOMMY

Hold on.

Danny stops.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

What about Mark? And Roy? And Raymond and Phil? And the armed police officers outside?

Danny sighs and sits back down. The boys think in silence for a moment.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Were we wrong to argue with Mark? We never fight like that, it's weighing on me.

DANNY

I don't like this. Roy talks to Mark, Mark picks a fight and storms out, then a murderer gets into the building? It sounds like Roy saved his life. And nobody else's.

Danny pauses, deep in thought again.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Has Mark been approached to go solo?

TOMMY

Mark wouldn't do that. Not while the band's still together.

DANNY

And what if this is a way to break up the band? Permanently?

Tommy and Steven are quiet, grappling with this possibility.

TOMMY

No. I don't believe that. I don't always trust Roy, but I don't think he would make himself an accessory to murder. He has a reputation for being unconventional, but I don't see how he benefits from killing us.

DANNY

That's where you're wrong. You said it yourself when we were signing autographs. We're worth more to Crane dead than alive. It costs money to make a record and put us up in New York. We have plenty of recorded material that didn't end up on previous records and if we die, don't think for one minute that Crane won't put together a posthumous collection of unreleased songs and make enough money off of it to finance a coup in a small country.

Tommy and Steven are frozen.

DANNY (CONT'D)

And that still won't be enough for them.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

They'll let one of us survive and use that person to continue to profit off of our tragic demise. The obvious choice is Mark. He'll rise from the ashes of the band like a phoenix -- that's the exact line they'll use -- and they'll paint him out to be the next Mozart or something.

Tommy and Steven sit in shocked silence for a few moments.

STEVEN

Okay, but Mark's not going to be the next Mozart. If anything, he'll be the next Beethoven because he can't listen for shit.

DANNY

You saw the studio, this guy's a pro. Maybe Crane hired him like in *Day of the Jackal*. We're a number on a balance sheet to them -- nothing more than hired entertainment for the power elite. And now we're sitting here waiting for Roy who probably masterminded the whole thing. I'm not gonna stay to watch the thrilling conclusion to *The Hour of the Crane*. The way I see it we have two options -- go back to the hotel or look for Mark.

(beat)

Besides, all these dark hallways are starting to give me the creeps. Do you guys have any grass or anything?

STEVEN

At the hotel.

DANNY

That solves it. Back to the hotel we go.

Danny heads for the door again.

TOMMY

The cops won't let us leave.

DANNY

They're supposed to keep us safe. What are they gonna do, shoot us?

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

We're famous and white, they won't do shit if we walk out.

Danny opens the door. He sees the black cat that ran inside earlier. The cat MEOWS. Danny immediately pales, shuts the door, and whips back around to face his bandmates.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Someone's in the building.

TOMMY

What are you talking about?

DANNY

There's a cat outside the door.

STEVEN

Maybe he heard there's an opening for a new singer.

DANNY

Over two dozen people were here earlier, don't you think someone would've mentioned a cat? If it's in here now that means someone let it in. Recently.

TOMMY

It's cold out, maybe it was one of the cops.

STEVEN

We're going anyway, let's ask.

INT. OUTSIDE STUDIO A - CONTINUOUS

The three boys walk out of the studio. The cat is still there. It stares at the boys, MEOWS, and walks away.

STEVEN

Shit, it's a black cat? Could be a bad omen.

DANNY

Six people were killed here a few hours ago, our bosses are missing, our lead singer ran off into the night, we might be the victims of a capitalist conspiracy, and you think a cat is a sign of bad things to come?

STEVEN

Don't forget we also don't have a single.

INT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The boys approach the front entrance. Steven tries to open the door but it's locked. Tommy knocks on the door to get Patterson's attention. Patterson unlocks the door and steps inside, then locks the door again.

TOMMY

Hi Officer, you didn't let a cat in the building by any chance, did you?

PATTERSON

You're looking for a cat? Isn't your singer missing?

Danny rolls his eyes.

DANNY

We don't have time for this. Did you see a cat or not?

PATTERSON

No, I did not see a cat.

The boys look at each other uneasily.

STEVEN

So someone else did open the door?

PATTERSON

Officer Daniels is out back. It was probably him.

TOMMY

Right, I think we're all just a little paranoid tonight.

DANNY

You know we really aren't getting any work done without our producer, engineer, or lead singer, so how about we call a cab and head back to the hotel?

PATTERSON

I'm not supposed to unlock the door for anyone besides Mark Harper.

Danny looks at Steven and Tommy.

DANNY

What the fuck is going on here?

Patterson sighs.

PATTERSON

Look, I'll make you a deal. If you promise not to escape, I'll take another look around the building. If no one's here, I'll call the station and see what the lieutenant wants to do.

TOMMY

That would be great, thank you, Officer.

Patterson pulls his PACK OF CIGARETTES out of his jacket. He lights up.

DANNY

Hey, you don't mind if I steal one of those, do you?

PATTERSON

What the hell.

Patterson hands the pack to Danny and he takes a cigarette.

DANNY

Thanks, I ran out earlier.

Patterson reaches over and lights Danny's cigarette.

PATTERSON

Me too. I just bought these across-

The boys stop in their tracks.

DANNY

You just bought these?

PATTERSON

Yeah, across the street.

DANNY

You left your post?

Patterson realizes his blunder.

PATTERSON

Yeah but only for a few minutes.

The boys glare at the police officer.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)

There's no need for us to be here
anyway since the killer's already
dead.

DANNY

You fucking idiot!

Steven and Tommy are startled by this remark.

Danny grabs the cigarette from Patterson's mouth, throws it
onto the ground, and puts it out.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Did you actually talk to Roy or
not?

PATTERSON

How about I go look around the
building to make it up for you?

DANNY

You already offered to do that.
That's your job.

Danny subtly pockets the pack of cigarettes while Patterson
talks.

PATTERSON

Don't tell me how to do my job.

DANNY

I'm not telling you how to do your
job -- I'm telling you to do it.

PATTERSON

Listen here, asshole, we don't all
dress like women and prance around
on stage like you. Some of us
actually work for a living. So how
about you just sit your spoiled,
scrawny asses back in the studio
and I'll take care of it.

(under his breath)

Zeppelin knockoffs.

The boys head back to Studio A. Danny turns around to glare
at Patterson and mutter some choice words.

INT. HALLWAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

PATTERSON

Fucking rockstars. They're afraid
of a cat? Grow up. And get a real
job.

He reaches into his empty jacket pocket.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)

Asshole took my cigarettes.

Patterson keeps walking. He notices a bloodstain on the
ground.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)

What the?

He kneels to get a better look. Shark stands directly behind
him. Shark STABS Patterson in the back of the neck. Patterson
cries out. He STRUGGLES just out of frame. When he stops
moving, Shark DRAGS his body down the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. FANCY HOTEL - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A hotel like The Plaza. Beautiful Christmas decorations are
up and there's a large Christmas tree near the revolving
doors. It's late but there are still a few guests having
quiet conversations. A PIANIST plays a jazzy, relaxing song.

Raymond enters the lobby. The clerk greets him with a warm
smile.

FRONT DESK CLERK

How may I help you, sir?

RAYMOND

What room is Phil Wilson staying
in? It's urgent.

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Everyone at the bar is loud and drunk, thanks to Mark's
generosity. The Bartender washes a glass. A small television
behind the bar shows the news.

Mark walks to his seat at the bar having just come from the restroom. He glances at the television. "Workin' for MCA" by Lynyrd Skynyrd plays in the background.

MARK

Can you turn that up?

The bartender turns up the volume on the TV.

A female NEWS REPORTER delivers a breaking news update.

NEWS REPORTER (ON TV)

Tragedy strikes at a downtown recording studio tonight where six deaths have been reported. Some of the victims appear to be members of the rock band, Backyard Castration.

As the News Reporter talks, we hear two bar patrons offscreen. One asks "Can you say that on TV?" And the other responds with "Whole country's goin' to shit." Another person loudly SHUSHES them.

NEWS REPORTER (ON TV) (CONT'D)

Police report that the suspect was killed at the scene, but officials are still trying to learn more about these bizarre killings.

The bar patrons quiet down. Mark is glued to the screen.

MARK

Can anyone drive? I have to get back to the studio right now.

A DRIVER stands up and offers.

DRIVER

I can, I'm good to drive.

Mark walks up to the bartender and pays his tab in a frenzy.

MARK

You play good music here, by the way.

Mark is already halfway to the door.

MARK (CONT'D)

Okay, let's go.

Mark runs out and the Driver tries to keep up.

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy and Steven sit on the floor and Danny paces.

STEVEN

He should be back by now.

DANNY

I'm sure he's gone. Probably didn't even check the building.

Danny reaches into his pocket, grabs one of Patterson's CIGARETTES, and lights it.

DANNY (CONT'D)

We should've bribed him.

Tommy stares at Danny.

TOMMY

Are those his cigarettes?

Danny takes a drag.

DANNY

Yeah.

STEVEN

There has to be a way out.

(beat)

The keys. Who has them?

TOMMY

Roy and that other producer handed them to the lieutenant.

Danny is deep in thought.

DANNY

I saw him give the keys back to Roy later. Then that other guy started talking to Roy...Whatshisname.

(beat)

The keys went back to the producers.

STEVEN

The cop has one -- Roy's?

DANNY

Unless he has the one from Studio C. And Roy's gone so that only leaves-

STEVEN
Whatshisname!

DANNY
If he's here. Let's go find out.

The boys run out of the studio.

CUT TO:

INT. DRIVER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

It's an ugly, worn-down car with a wooden stripe -- normally Mark wouldn't be caught dead in one of these. "Editions of You" by Roxy Music plays quietly on the radio.

MARK
Go faster, this is life and death,
man.

The Driver speeds up and drives recklessly.

MARK (CONT'D)
Fuck, this is bad.

The Driver almost hits a pedestrian but SWERVES out of the way in time.

MARK (CONT'D)
Jesus, watch out!

He turns to Mark, taking his eyes off the road.

DRIVER
I'm not a getaway driver, I'm not
used to this.

MARK
Watch the fucking road!

DRIVER
You said to drive faster.

MARK
Yeah, faster. Not worse!

Mark looks like he's about to throw up. The unfamiliar surroundings aren't doing anything to ease his nerves.

MARK (CONT'D)
Where are we? Brooklyn?

The Driver -- one of the condescending New Yorkers that Steven complained about earlier -- looks annoyed.

DRIVER
Manhattan. We're not that far.

He SWERVES again.

MARK
Can you stop that?

DRIVER
Don't yell at me, it doesn't help that this car's a piece of shit and there's a headlight out.

MARK
If you get me there safely I will buy you a new car.

EXT. INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

The Driver runs a red light and HITS a taxi at an intersection. We hear the loud COLLISION and some pedestrians stop to look at the accident.

Luckily Mark is unscathed. Seemingly oblivious to what just happened, he opens the door and gets out of the car in the middle of the intersection.

MARK
Fuck that.

People stare at Mark as he runs to the sidewalk and takes off down the block, frantic again.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - STUDIO B SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

The boys run into the studio. Tommy leads and Danny and Steven are close behind. Tommy trips over something. He realizes in horror that it's Roy.

TOMMY
I found everyone.

The three boys look around in shock. The musicians' bodies are where we left them. The other victims' bodies -- Roy, Disco Producer, and Disco Engineer -- are lined up by the door.

DANNY

When did this happen? The building
was guarded.

THUD. The boys turn to the door. The handle turns.

STEVEN

The booth!

They run into the booth, practically DIVING onto the floor
under the desk.

The door opens and Shark walks in, DRAGGING Patterson's body
and humming. He starts moving the bodies around and he looks
to be enjoying himself.

He repositions Joe so he sits up against a wall, his
unblinking eyes looking towards the center of the room. Shark
positions some of the other bodies similarly.

INT. STUDIO B BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Tommy, Steven, and Danny are hidden under the desk. They can
hear the killer moving things around, but they can't tell
what he's doing.

INT. STUDIO B SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Shark walks over to Evelyn and Diana in the vocal booth.

SHARK

I'll leave you two here. It'll be
nice to have pretty girls as my
backup singers.

He turns to Patterson.

SHARK (CONT'D)

And you, pig.

He DRAGS Patterson's body across the room.

INT. STUDIO B BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

DANNY

(mouthing)
His gun.

TOMMY

(mouthing)
What?

Danny makes a gun with his fingers.

DANNY
(mouthing)
The cop.

Tommy and Steven's eyes widen.

INT. STUDIO B SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Shark turns to Roy.

SHARK
And you. The producer who was
supposed to make me rich and
famous. Obviously you have to see
my special performance. I'll move
you into the booth so you can
record.

INT. STUDIO B BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

The boys exchange terrified looks.

INT. STUDIO B SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

SHARK
Actually, you can't watch before
I'm ready. I need the guitar from
the other studio.

INT. STUDIO B BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Shark leaves and the boys let out a sigh of relief when the door closes.

STEVEN
Oh my God.

DANNY
I have a plan. The cop should still
have his gun on him. I'll grab it
and then we'll run to the lounge.
We'll call the police and go out
the window.

TOMMY
Okay.

DANNY

On three. One...two...three.

The boys run get out from under the desk and run onto the sound stage.

INT. STUDIO B SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

Danny spots Patterson and runs over. Steven and Tommy look around the room at the set up for the "special performance."

TOMMY

Jesus.

DANNY (O.S.)

Yes!

Steven and Tommy look over. Danny grabs Patterson's GUN.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Let's go!

They run out of Studio B.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Mark is still running. He runs out from under a scaffolding and tries to make sense of his surroundings.

MARK

Fuck me, where the hell am I?

Mark notices TWO GIRLS walking towards him, a GIRL ON THE STREET and her friend.

MARK (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Hey, can you tell me how to get to the recording studio that's around here?

GIRL ON THE STREET

(yelling back)

It's on the next street over. About five or six blocks this way.

Mark takes off running again.

MARK
 (looks back, yells)
 Thank you!

The two girls exchange quizzical looks.

GIRL ON THE STREET
 Was that Mark Harper?

CUT TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The boys run through the hallways to the lounge.

DANNY
 You guys get the window open, I'll
 call the cops!

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy and Steven run to the window, struggling to open it.

Danny runs to the kitchen, sets the gun on the counter, and starts dialing.

STEVEN (O.S.)
 It's stuck!

DANNY
 (into phone)
 Hello?

No response. He looks at the cord and realizes it's been cut.

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Fuck.

He runs over to the window.

STEVEN
 I can't get it open.

DANNY
 The phone line's been cut.

TOMMY
 Shit.

Tommy runs to the kitchen and Danny tries to get the window open. Tommy starts opening cupboards.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

There has to be something.

The cupboards are empty except for one POT. Tommy takes it out and starts filling it with water from the sink.

STEVEN

What are you doing?

He sets the pot on the stove and turns on the burner.

TOMMY

Boiling water. I saw it in a movie.

Danny looks around the room for something to break the window.

DANNY

Damn it, there's nothing we can use.

TOMMY

What if we shoot the lock?

Danny considers.

DANNY

No. He'll hear it. And we might need every bullet to defend ourselves.

STEVEN

What if we throw something heavy like an amp? Two of us can carry it and the other can cover.

DANNY

Has anyone ever shot a gun?

No one says anything.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Me neither. Fuck it, let's go.

Danny grabs the gun off the counter and they run back to Studio A.

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Mark races up the front steps two at a time. He tries to open the door but it's locked.

MARK
Son of a bitch.

EXT. WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

He runs to the lounge window at the side of the building. He desperately tries to open the window but fails.

He stops for a moment, defeated, then he remembers -- the spare key! Mark runs back to the front entrance.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

STEVEN
This one!

Steven points to the biggest amp in the room. He and Tommy try to pick it up but can't.

TOMMY
It's too heavy.

DANNY
Try that one.

Tommy and Steven struggle to pick up a different amp.

TOMMY
We'd need all of us.

Steven runs over to another amp.

STEVEN
This one should work.

Tommy comes over to help lift. It's smaller than the others but still heavy.

DANNY
Can you carry it?

TOMMY
We'll manage.

They run out of the studio.

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Mark gets on his hands and knees. Pushing the snow out of the way, he feels around between the cracks of the sidewalk...

...and pulls out the SPARE KEY!

Mark unlocks the front door and bursts into the building.

INT. STUDIO A SOUND STAGE - CONTINUOUS

He runs into Studio A -- empty.

MARK

Shit.

He scans the studio, looking for anything to use as a weapon. He grabs a MUSIC STAND. He notices TOMMY'S BLUE GUITAR and picks it up in the other hand. Music stand and guitar in tow, Mark takes off down the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY TO LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Danny tries to look like he knows how to use a gun. Tommy and Steven struggle to run while carrying the amp.

DANNY

Almost there. We're getting out of here!

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

They run into the lounge and Shark is in the kitchen waiting for them. The pot of water boils next to him. The boys stop dead in their tracks. Danny lowers the gun.

Shark makes eye contact with each of the boys.

SHARK

Tommy Harris -- guitar. Danny Preston -- bass. Steven Sherman -- drums.

(beat)

Tsk tsk, it looks like one of you is missing.

DANNY

Who are you? What do you want with us?

SHARK

My plan was to put on a special performance for you.

STEVEN

For us?

SHARK

Yes. But my idiot brother got carried away and now I have to perform by myself.

The boys exchange nervous looks.

SHARK (CONT'D)

The two of us have a special relationship with Phoenix.

STEVEN

Well, if you're a fan I'm sure our manager can get you some backstage passes or something like that. Or a-

SHARK

QUIET!

The killer takes a few steps closer to the band. They slowly back away.

SHARK (CONT'D)

I wouldn't say I'm a fan.

TOMMY

You want to perform for us? We'd be happy to listen-

SHARK

How dare you speak to me after what you've done! You don't even deserve to be my audience!

The three boys look confused.

Danny points the gun at Shark, his eyes glued to the killer. Shark laughs and grabs the pot of boiling water. Tommy and Steven don't move a muscle.

Danny cocks the gun.

SHARK (CONT'D)

You've never killed anyone.

DANNY

Oh yeah?

SHARK

Yeah. The people I killed tonight are nothing compared to how many I killed in 'Nam. Killing don't mean anything to me.

Danny hesitates.

DANNY
You're a musician. Do we know you?

SHARK
No, but I know you. Everyone knows
Phoenix. I hear your sellout song
every time I turn on the radio.

Suddenly Mark runs into the lounge. He sees Danny pointing
the gun at the killer.

MARK
Danny!

Danny turns around.

DANNY
Mark?

Shark starts moving.

MARK
Look out!

Shark THROWS the boiling water in Danny's direction. He drops
the gun and ROLLS out of the way just in time.

STEVEN
Go!

Steven and Tommy start for the window.

SHARK
Now everyone's here!

Now on the floor, Danny spots the gun lying several feet
away.

DANNY
Shit.

Shark KICKS the gun. It slides across the floor even farther
out of reach, landing in front of the doorway.

Steven and Tommy reach the window and lift the amp.

They SHOVE the amp out the window with all their might.

EXT. WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

The glass SHATTERS as the amp sails through the window.

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Steven and Tommy turn and see the killer towering over Danny who lies on the ground. They run over.

MARK
Tommy, catch!

Mark THROWS the music stand to Tommy, who catches it and wields it like a baseball bat. Mark repositions Tommy's guitar in his hands, holding it by the neck the way you would hold the hilt of a sword. Mark SWINGS at Shark and misses. The weight of the guitar throws Mark off balance.

SHARK
Good luck going on tour now.

CRUNCH. He STEPS on Danny's wrist. Danny cries out in pain.

SHARK (CONT'D)
When I was your age, I was in a band, too. On the same label. They told us we were the next big thing.

His boot still on Danny's wrist, Shark applies more pressure and TWISTS, eliciting more painful reactions from Danny.

SHARK (CONT'D)
Until we got drafted.

Tommy SWINGS the music stand at Shark. He gets off Danny's wrist but dodges the attack.

SHARK (CONT'D)
Our manager, you know him -- Phil Wilson -- promised us we'd still have a contract when we got out.

Tommy keeps swinging the music stand and Mark is close behind.

MARK
Steven, get the gun!

Steven notices the gun and runs over to pick it up.

Steven points the gun, hands shaking. He doesn't have a clean shot.

MARK (CONT'D)
Shoot!

STEVEN
I can't!

MARK

Tommy, duck!

Mark and Tommy both crouch down so Steven can shoot. BANG. He misses completely and the bullet hits the wall to the side of the killer.

Shark laughs. He KICKS Tommy hard in the shoulder so he drops the music stand and falls. He pulls out his knife, bends over, and SLASHES Tommy's achilles. Tommy yells in pain.

STEVEN

Tommy!

MARK

Down here, Sharkface!

Mark, still on the ground, grabs onto Shark's ankle, trying to pull the killer to the floor.

Shark KICKS Mark in the face. Mark is down.

Shark heads toward Steven, now weaponless in front of the open door.

SHARK

You know I was a drummer like you.

He walks closer. Steven is trembling.

SHARK (CONT'D)

Then we learned our singer and bass player died out in the jungle. We were dropped.

Shark keeps walking. Steven glances over his shoulder. He has an idea.

SHARK (CONT'D)

Crane signed a hot new band and Phil became their manager.

Shark is a foot away.

SHARK (CONT'D)

Wanna guess what band that was?

In an instant, Steven pulls the door shut.

STEVEN

The Doors?

He sticks his foot out so fast that Shark TRIPS. Steven ducks out of the way and Shark's head SLAMS into the door.

Steven opens the door so Shark falls on the ground and lands on his face.

Shark rolls onto his back.

SHARK

You stole my recording contract!
Your career should have been mine!

Mark is up and running, and he looks fucking terrifying with a bloody face and Tommy's guitar in his hands.

MARK

Record this.

Mark holds the neck of the guitar with both hands and SLAMS the body of the guitar down into Shark's face. He does this several times until the killer is clearly dead. Shark's mask is badly damaged. Out of breath, Mark slowly backs up.

Mark, still breathing heavy, looks at the broken, bloody guitar. None of the many guitars destroyed by rockstars on stage have looked quite like this one.

MARK (CONT'D)

I never thought I would get to do
that as a singer.

He drops the guitar and falls to his knees.

Silence for a moment as the band tries to catch their breath.

Steven helps Danny up and Mark goes to attend to Tommy.

Steven walks over to Shark and un.masks the killer. He holds the mask up and examines it.

We see the killer's face.

Danny surveys the aftermath, eventually making his way to the window.

DANNY

Mark, how did you get in here?

MARK

The spare key outside.

EXT. WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Danny peers through the broken window.

DANNY
The spare key, huh?

CUT TO:

EXT. EMERGENCY EXIT - 30 MINUTES LATER

THREE DETECTIVES analyze the scene. DETECTIVE #1 points at some faint footprints in the ground.

DETECTIVE #1
They're almost covered up. See where they lead.

DETECTIVE #2
On it.

Detective #2 studies the footprints, making his way toward the nearby apartment building. He looks up at the building.

DETECTIVE #2 (CONT'D)
(yelling)
He came from over here!

Detective #1 notices something in the snow and kneels to get a better look. We see that it's blood. While this happens, the bushes RUSTLE offscreen.

DETECTIVE #3 (O.S.)
We've got another one, boss. One of ours.

INT. LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

The boys sit on the couches talking to Lieutenant Miller. Mark's face is cleaned up. Danny wears a wrist brace. A PARAMEDIC is working on Tommy's ankle and a pair of CRUTCHES leans against the couch next to him. Cops perform appropriate actions in the background. Raymond and Phil stand off to the side.

LT. MILLER
We got an ID on the two killers. Sam and Jack Morgan. Brothers, ex-military. Apparently they signed to Crane before they got drafted.

STEVEN
Ex-military, like Hendrix.

MARK
Yeah, except they sucked.

LT. MILLER

They lived in an apartment right next door -- their balcony has a perfect view of the studio. Who knows how long they had been watching this place.

Lieutenant Miller shows the boys the folded Billboard chart with Dream Station crossed out.

LT. MILLER (CONT'D)

We found this on the killer.

The boys take a look.

STEVEN

Backyard Castration isn't on here.

DANNY

Punk, it's a divisive genre.

Phil walks over to the group.

PHIL

They're signed to Crane, the killers must have found out somehow.

He turns to Lieutenant Miller.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Lieutenant, if you're done with questions I think it's time these boys went back to their hotel. Raymond and I can stay if you get an officer to drive them back.

LT. MILLER

That's alright with me.

He turns to the band.

LT. MILLER (CONT'D)

I'll have a car here shortly to drive you home.

INT. HALLWAY TO LOUNGE - TEN MINUTES LATER

DANNY

Phil, you haven't told us where you were all this time.

PHIL

I had a meeting with David Reed. After that I went to the hotel to read for a bit and I fell asleep. Until Raymond had hotel security kick down the door.

TOMMY

When did you leave the office?

PHIL

It was a dinner meeting. I never went to the office.

The boys let this sink in.

DANNY

I told you he'd fall asleep. That'll be 20 bucks, everyone.

MARK

If I recall, you said 20 bucks Phil falls asleep at the office, not in his hotel room.

DANNY

I didn't specify. I just said I bet Phil falls asleep and leaves us stranded.

STEVEN

You definitely said office. Busted on a technicality.

Steven and Mark FIST BUMP.

PHIL

You just had to break the window, didn't you? What is it with you four and property damage?

The boys smirk.

PHIL (CONT'D)

Anyway, leave now before the press gets here. Your day is empty, alright? Get some rest.

STEVEN

See ya, Phil.

The boys turn and walk through the hallways -- Tommy with crutches -- to the front entrance. Danny smokes a CIGARETTE. Lieutenant Miller approaches them, coming the opposite way.

LT. MILLER
Car's out front, boys. Oh, and Mark
-- I missed you earlier.

He pulls the AUTOGRAPHED PAPER out of his pocket and digs around for a PEN.

LT. MILLER (CONT'D)
How about an autograph? My kids are
big fans.

MARK
Of course.

Mark takes the pen and paper and signs.

MARK (CONT'D)
Although these signatures could
have been worth a lot more had you
just left us to die.

LT. MILLER
And then we would have lost some
talented musicians. But you sure
did a good job nailing the guy,
Mark.

Steven shoots his deadliest look at Lieutenant Miller.

STEVEN
Yeah. Mark did a good job.

This remark catches the lieutenant off-guard. Danny glares at him.

DANNY
Refusing to shut down the building
after six people were killed and
leaving thirteen more inside?
What's your body count tonight,
Lieutenant?

LT. MILLER
I know what you boys are think-

Mark walks up to the lieutenant and silences him with a pat on the shoulder.

MARK
Don't say anything. You know what?
No hard feelings at all. We're
always grateful to our fans. So
here's a gift for you to give your
kids. Hold this, Steven.

Mark hands Steven the autograph sheet and pulls the crumpled "Prometheus" LYRIC SHEET out of his pocket and hands it to Lieutenant Miller.

MARK (CONT'D)

The original hand-written lyrics to our song "Prometheus" from the new record.

Lieutenant Miller stares at the paper, touched.

LT. MILLER

Wow, this is incredible. Thank you, everyone. My kids will love it. But this is priceless, are you sure you want me to have it?

Mark grabs the paper from Lieutenant Miller and starts TEARING it up. He takes his time, enjoying the look on the lieutenant's face. The pieces of paper land right in front of Lieutenant Miller's feet.

MARK

No. Fuck you.

Danny drops his cigarette and puts it out on the carpet at Lieutenant Miller's feet while Steven TEARS up the autograph sheet. The boys turn and leave.

DANNY

Mark, I'm sorry we didn't listen to your ideas.

Mark shakes his head and laughs.

MARK

I'm sorry I ran out of the building. I was jealous. Roy pushed me and a lot of thoughts came out. God, what a fucking asshole.

TWO COPS walk by with a BODY BAG, presumably containing Roy's body. The band stares.

DANNY

At least you got a night on the town out of it. We were locked in here with Jaws.

MARK

Tommy, I'm sorry about your guitar, man. I know you wanted to play it on the record.

Tommy laughs.

TOMMY

Are you kidding? You saved our lives. I get new ones sent to me all the time.

(beat)

I guess Danny and I are out of commission for awhile. The tour will have to be pushed back.

MARK

I've been thinking -- we might have to scrap "Prometheus" now that Roy's dead, but I have an idea for another Greek mythology song we could do in its place. What if we did-

As Mark speaks, his eyes wander to Tommy's ankle for a split second. Tommy notices. He stops and stares at Mark. Mark stares back, looks down at Tommy's ankle again, then back at Tommy.

MARK (CONT'D)

Oh, come on. I wasn't going to say Achilles.

DANNY

What were you going to say?

MARK

Helen of Troy?

STEVEN

Nice try.

The boys keep walking.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Although now that we're the top news story in the world, maybe we can put anything we want on the record.

MARK

Yeah, we'll get press no matter what. Crane's actually gonna save a lot on marketing costs. Who needs another "Sweet Fire" when we'll get to be on *The Tonight Show*?

DANNY

(mock interview voice)

Well, Johnny, a murderer broke into the studio during one of our sessions and our lead singer killed him with a guitar, but despite this highly-publicized event, we still only got to number ten on the chart.

MARK

Fuckin' New York, man. Do we get our coats back? Or are those evidence now?

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

A COP stands outside and opens the front door for the boys. They walk down the steps and get into a police car, shivering without their winter coats. Tommy gets in the front seat with his crutches and the other three sit in back.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

A few moments of silence.

Tommy turns on the radio. "Dance Ascension" by Dream Station plays. Tommy turns the radio off.

MARK

I think the silver lining in all of this is that a thrilling subject has just been handed to us. One that isn't conventional.

STEVEN

And what is that?

MARK

A killer in the recording studio.

A wave of exhaustion hits all four members of Phoenix, as if the night's events are finally catching up to them. They don't know whether to laugh or get annoyed.

MARK (CONT'D)

It has shock value.

DANNY

Then let's write it.

Danny taps an invisible watch.

DANNY (CONT'D)
We have a deadline.

CUT TO BLACK.

"Studio Killer" by Phoenyx plays over the credits.