

Finding Buck Willy

by
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INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

A busy college computer lab. Plenty of caffeine and eye candy. DEREK SUMMERS, a skinny twenty year-old with shaggy hair, types at a computer.

Derek laughs to himself.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
(African American voice)
This flock of magpies surround
Raz's three-legged dog, Skittles.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK - DAY

A three-legged mutt stands guard. Five magpies land around him.

SQUAK! SQUAK! The birds yelp.

GRRR RUFF! The mutt speaks back.

A ratty looking Vietnam vet, RAZ, sleeps on a bench.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
Raz is passed-out from his juice,
and his half eaten can of birthday
beans rests on the grass.

A bird shoves his beak into the can of beans.

The mutt swats at the bird with his front paw.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
Skittles ain't lettin' those birds
eat Raz's beans.

GRR! The mutt growls.

The bird jumps back from the can.

SQUAK! A bird attacks from above and pecks the mutt's head.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
Something possessed Skittles that
day. The Fortune Teller was right,
he's a magical dog!

The mutt, in an impossible feat, rolls over and swats the pecking bird away.

Another bird dives at the beans.

The mutt completes the roll back to his stomach.

The mutt lays his body over the can.

SQUAK! SQUAK!

One bird pecks at the mutt's back.

A second.

And a third.

The mutt's not budging from the can.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
So's I start yellin', Raz! Raz!
Them birds gonna eat yer beans!

The mutt whines.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
But Raz doesn't budge.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

Derek types his blog. He grins from ear to ear.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
So I limp over to the crime scene.

A very pretty girl across from Derek stands up. This is PAIGE GREENE. Dark, straight hair, golden skin and a tiny sundress. Derek notices.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
And I...

Derek watches her grab her backpack. They catch eyes.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
I...

Paige smiles at Derek.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
(slower than before)
I hadn't eaten in three days.

Paige walks away. Derek's eyes follow, but his fingers still type.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
 (much faster, frantic)
 Skittles was hurt. I couldn't eat
 Raz's beans, them's for his
 birthday.

Paige stops at the exit. Three students file in. She waits
 for them to pass.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
 So's I ate Skittles.

Paige exits.

Derek's fingers type as if independent from the rest of his
 body.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
 This is Buck Willy sayin', "Keep
 the light on for me".

Derek clicks "publish".

Derek logs off and grabs his bag.

He bolts for the exit.

DEREK
 Paige!

He's out into

THE HALLWAY

Students bump into Derek as they enter the computer lab.

DEREK
 Paige, wait.

Paige is down the hall but stops and turns his way.

Derek sprints to Paige.

PAIGE
 Me?

DEREK
 I'm Derek. Derek Summers.

They shake. Derek's winded.

PAIGE
 I'm Paige.

DEREK
Greene. PAIGE
Greene.

Paige looks worried.

DEREK
I sit behind you in modern lit.
Derek holds onto Paige's hand a little too long. Awkward.
Paige pulls her hand away.

PAIGE
That's right.
Paige twists away to leave.

DEREK
There's a neon party at Studio Six
Hundred tonight. I was wondering...

PAIGE
I'm not supposed to go out on
school nights.

DEREK
Oh, no problem. How about this
weekend?

Paige steps back.

PAIGE
I've got a church group thing.
Sorry.

Derek's bummed. Paige takes another step back.

DEREK
I'll call you.

PAIGE
Can't talk on school nights either.

DEREK
Well maybe some other time?

PAIGE
Oh for sure.

Paige is off before Derek can even blink.

DEREK

Can I get your number? An email?
How about a rope or a gun?

THUD! Derek lurches forward, shoved from behind.

CAMERON (O.S.)

D-Rock!

Derek turns.

It's CAMERON JONES, a studious looking big guy, early 20s.

DEREK

What's up?

CAMERON

Was that Paige Greene?

DEREK

It didn't go so well.

Cameron wraps his big arm around Derek.

CAMERON

That's 'cause you ain't got game.

They walk the opposite direction as Paige.

CAMERON

Girls like her go for models or
famous guys. Your only shot is
famous, and that ain't happenin'.

EXT. SUBURBS HOUSE FRONT - DAY

SANDY SUMMERS, a late 40s journalist with a glimpse of pretty
shining through an aged faced, holds a microphone. ETHAN
VANAWAY, a tall, skinny, ex-hippy shoulders a television
camera emblazoned with a Channel 13 logo.

ETHAN

In three, two, one.

A beat.

SANDY

So the next time Mary Withers'
water bill comes, you can be sure
she looks twice before writing that
check.

Sandy pulls the "reporter smile".

SANDY
I'm Sandy Summers for the
Investigation Station, channel
thirteen.

A beat.

ETHAN
And...we're off.

Sandy relaxes. Ethan takes his eye away from the camera.

ETHAN
I think we got it. I'll cut it and
get it to Kip.

SANDY
Did I look okay?

Ethan takes the camera off his shoulder.

ETHAN
Yeah.

SANDY
Did it sound okay?

ETHAN
Sure.

Ethan walks back to the van. Sandy doesn't.

SANDY
I need one more.

Ethan stops at the van and turns to face Sandy.

ETHAN
It was good.

SANDY
One more.

Sandy poses for one more take.

ETHAN
That one was fine.

Sandy's not budging.

SANDY

Fine?...

(mocking)

Did it sound okay? Sure.

ETHAN

Yeah, it'll work.

SANDY

'Sure' is something you say when you don't want to be the bearer of bad news.

ETHAN

Nobody watches it anyway.

SANDY

Your mom does.

ETHAN

No, she likes the slogan.

SANDY

Investigation station? It sounds like a PBS children's show.

ETHAN

She thinks it's catchy.

A beat.

ETHAN

Really, it was just fine, now let's go.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Sandy's got a lunch sack in one hand and shoves items in it with the other: a juice box, fruit snacks, sandwich, an apple. The apple falls.

Sandy picks it up, frantic, and shoves it in the sack.

JAXON (O.S.)

No apple.

JAXON, a ten year-old boy with short blonde hair, sits at the counter. He eats a bowl of cereal. An undercabinet TV is on 'Good Morning America', the sound is low.

SANDY

You need a fruit.

JAXON
I have fruit snacks.

SANDY
That's not fruit.

JAXON
Then why are they called fruit
snacks?

SANDY
How about an orange?

Sandy moves to the fridge.

JAXON
Okay Mom.

The fridge is open. Sandy riffles through the crisper drawer.

SANDY
We don't have an orange.

JAXON
A banana then.

Sandy closes the fridge.

SANDY
We don't have any of those either.

JAXON
Fruit snacks.

Derek walks in, he's got total bedhead, and he's texting on his iPhone.

SANDY
Can you pick-up your brother from
school today?

Derek opens the fridge and grabs a Pepsi. His phone vibrates.

SANDY
Not for breakfast.

KSSH! Derek cracks it open and takes a drink. His phone buzzes again.

SANDY
If you go over on texts again this
month --

DEREK

It's cool mom, these are emails.

Sandy sighs and shoves another pack of fruit snacks into the lunch sack...and the apple.

SANDY

(to Jaxon)

Trade the apple, I don't care, but you're at least taking it.

DEREK

I can't pick him up today.

Derek takes another swig and reads his phone at the same time.

JAXON

I want a pepsi.

SANDY

Jaxon no! Finish your cereal, we're late.

Sandy glares down Derek.

He finishes his swig.

DEREK

Ahh. It does the body good.

Derek looks to Jaxon and lifts his soda can. His phone vibrates again.

Derek leaves.

A beat. The TV is heard over the silence.

ROBIN ROBERTS (FROM TV)

A Salt Lake City homeless man has been blogging from public libraries for the last year.

That piques Sandy's attention.

SANDY

Turn that up a bit.

Jaxon does as Sandy pulls out a small notepad.

ROBIN ROBERTS

He's given tremendous insight into the life of a homeless person.

SANDY
 (excited)
 Derek! Salt Lake's on the news.

DEREK (O.S.)
 (disingenuous)
 Cool.

Sandy jots down a note.

JU JU CHANG (FROM TV)
 That's right Robin. He calls
 himself Buck Willy and his blog,
 Willy's Words, has been growing in
 readership steadily.

Sandy can hardly contain herself. She's glued to the tiny
 screen.

JU JU CHANG
 He's shared with us the homeless
 world: battles over shelters and
 food. Beggars versus bums and
 hobos.

JAXON
 I'm done, Mom.

Sandy shews Jaxon away.

SANDY
 Put your bowl in the sink. Grab
 your jacket.

Sandy doesn't break from the TV.

JU JU CHANG
 His blog entry yesterday has
 started a nationwide buzz.

Jaxon dumps his bowl in the sink and leaves the kitchen.

JU JU CHANG
 In it, he tells a story how he was
 forced to eat his best friend's
 three-legged dog.

Sandy gasps.

ROBIN ROBERTS
 A three-legged dog?

JU JU CHANG
That's right Robin. He hadn't eaten
in three days.

Jaxon's back.

JAXON
Kay mom, I'm ready.

ROBIN ROBERTS
How heartbreaking.

Sandy pulls away from the TV.

SANDY
Alright, get in the car.

She switches the TV off.

Jaxon exits.

SANDY
(yelling to Derek)
We're going. You really can't pick
up Jaxon today?

DEREK (O.S.)
Nope. Sorry.

Sandy grabs her purse.

SANDY
Love you!

She exits.

INT. KIP'S OFFICE - DAY

A news producer's office, cluttered and small. A white barren
wall stands out from the others. A greasy man with a comb-
over stares at his computer screen, frazzled. This is KIP VAN-
DYKE, 50s.

Sandy enters.

KIP
Late again.

SANDY
Sorry, I had to drop off Jaxon.

KIP
Mrs. Wither's water bill story?

SANDY

Yeah?

KIP

Not your best work.

SANDY

It's not my worst either.

Kip glances back to his computer screen.

KIP

We have one comment.

Kip looks back to Sandy.

KIP

It's from Ethan's mom.

Kip looks back to the monitor.

KIP

(reading from screen)
Very nice camera work.

Sandy makes a 'not so bad' face.

KIP

The woman's blind!

A beat.

Kip points to his barren wall.

KIP

What do you see?

SANDY

Nothing.

KIP

Exactly! I was fourth in my class.

Kip stares off, nostalgic.

KIP

Class of eighty-five,

Sandy mouths along with Kip.

KIP

Walter Cronkite School of
Journalism.

A beat.

KIP
I need a story that moves the dial.
I want awards!

Kip slams his fist on the desk.

KIP
Gepper's doing mail fraud. Channel
four's getting lights installed on
a little league ball field, and
we're doing stories about a
misspelled name on a water bill?

SANDY
I have a lead on --

Kip throws his hands up and stops Sandy.

KIP
I need you to investigate, I'll
come up with the ideas.

SANDY
But sir, maybe that's --

Hand up again, then he points to himself.

KIP
Walter Cronkite number four...

He points to her.

SANDY
Community college.

Sandy looks frustrated.

KIP
What do you know about this Buck
Naked guy?

SANDY
Buck Willy.

KIP
Whatever.

Sandy glances at her small notebook.

SANDY
Homeless. Forty or fifty. Keeps a
blog.

KIP
He's black right?

SANDY
African American.

KIP
(lost in thought)
Ooh, they like black.

SANDY
Who?

Kip snaps out of it.

KIP
The award people. They like stories
about third world countries, the
poor and black people.

SANDY
That's inappropriate sir.

KIP
This story has two of three, I want
it! You're getting the HD camera
for a week.

SANDY
But the big three are already on
it.

KIP
Not in HD. This is going to be
picked up by all the national
shows.

SANDY
They all use HD.

KIP
In the field?

SANDY
Yes.

A beat.

KIP
Just get me Buck Willy.

Sandy exits.

KIP
Sandy!

Sandy pokes her head back in.

KIP
One week! Then that camera is
covering the Easter egg hunt.

SANDY
Yes sir.

Sandy leaves again.

KIP
Sandy!

She's back and not happy.

SANDY
What?

KIP
You don't get this story and I
don't get some damn awards, then
your days are done.

SANDY
But --

Kip's hand shoots up!

KIP
Get it or you're finished.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

A large auditorium lecture hall. Students scatter throughout the seats. Derek sits behind Paige, his phone vibrates. He checks out the caller ID.

TOM TENLEY, 60s, a small professor type with a sweater vest and bow tie stands in the front of the class.

TOM
So make sure you read the first
four chapters of Steinbeck over the
weekend.

Derek's phone buzzes again. Paige glares back at him.

TOM
Derek Summers, can I have a word?

Paige stands. Derek stares.

PAIGE
Important phone call?

Derek snaps out of it. His phone buzzes again.

PAIGE
Professor wants to talk to you.

Tom looks directly at Derek.

TOM
Derek, can I have a word?

PAIGE
Busted.

Paige walks away.

Derek grabs his stuff and approaches the front.

DEREK
I'm sorry about my phone, my mom's
in the hospital...

TOM
I'm sorry to hear that. Is she
going to be okay?

DEREK
Yeah, it's not super serious.

TOM
Don't worry about the phone thing
while she's in there.

Tom pulls a test answer booklet from his briefcase.

TOM
Your last quiz, however...

Tom peels open the cover. Filling the white lined sheets is what appears to be a comic book: characters with thought bubbles.

TOM
You were supposed to write an
essay.

Tom glances at the booklet.

TOM
It's beautiful work. Creative. But
it's not an essay.

Derek's speechless.

TOM
These quizzes count for a third of
your grade, Derek. I can tell
you're reading.

Tom flips to another page.

TOM
I mean, you've got Thoreau and a
giant bean doing battle with worms,

INSERT COMIC: A MAN AND GIANT BEAN PUNCHING A GIANT WORM

TOM
And an angry pack of woodchucks.

INSERT COMIC: SAME MAN AND BEAN SURROUNDED BY GIANT FANGED
WOODCHUCKS

Tom laughs.

TOM
But I can't accept this.

DEREK
Can I make it up?

Tom stuffs the booklet back in his briefcase.

TOM
I've heard word about a blog.
Normally I view blogs as garbage
fluff pieces or spoiled whiners,
but apparently this one has some
unique insights, it's written by a
homeless man.

Derek's eyes shift, uncomfortable.

TOM

You want to make up this quiz?
Write a three page essay on the
modern day homeless experience in
America, using this guy's blog for
reference.

DEREK

What do you mean modern day
homeless experience?

TOM

Here's a guy forced to eat his best
friend's dog for survival, yet he
can walk into any public library
and access the internet to write a
blog, check his email, et cetera.

Derek swallows a gulp of nervousness.

TOM

Get me that essay by Monday and
I'll see what I can do about that
quiz.

DEREK

Okay.

TOM

His name is Buck Willy.

Derek nods.

TOM

An essay Derek. No comic books.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - COMMONS BUILDING - DAY

Derek types away on his phone. He sits alone at a table.

Cameron sneaks up and flicks Derek's ear.

DEREK

Ow!

Derek turns.

Cameron sits down on the opposite side and steals a handful
of fries.

Derek turns back.

CAMERON
Why aren't you outside enjoying the
skin show?

DEREK
It's too bright out there.

CAMERON
You've got problems.

Three young college girls strut past in tank tops and daisy
dukes. Cameron's head follows.

CAMERON
Favorite time of year.

DEREK
Does Ashley know this?

ASHLEY (O.S.)
Of course I do!

ASHLEY, a twenty year-old with a pretty face and still
holding on to a little baby fat, hugs Cameron from behind.

ASHLEY
He can look all he wants, as long
as he gets his sugar from me.

Ashley sits next to Cameron.

CAMERON
Ain't she the best?

ASHLEY
You guys hear the news?

CAMERON
Channel four's got a reward.

ASHLEY
A ride in their helicopter, just
like in the Bachelor. So romantic.

Derek's phone pulses again.

Ashley and Cameron start to kiss. Derek shakes his head and
glances to his phone.

The screen reads: "NEW EMAIL". Derek opens it.

KELSEY (V.O.)
Mr. Buck Willy.

Derek looks up and scans the room with his eyes. Cameron and Ashley are still kissing, and nobody else pays attention to him.

KELSEY (V.O.)

I hope you can access your email account in time. Which, by the way, is very interesting to me; here you are, a homeless man, but you can write a blog and email? The backwards world we live in.

Ashley and Cameron finish their kiss. She stands up.

KELSEY (V.O.)

But I digress --

ASHLEY

Derek, are you coming to class?

Derek waves in her direction, but his attention doesn't sway from his phone.

KELSEY (V.O.)

My name's Kelsey Cohen. I'm a producer with Paramount Pictures.

ASHLEY

I take that as a no.

Derek looks up, a big smile on his face.

DEREK

I'm sorry Ash, can I steal your notes again?

ASHLEY

You've got to stop doing this.

Derek glances back to the phone, then back to Ashley.

DEREK

But something just...I have to help Cameron with something.

Derek winks at Cameron, but Cameron doesn't get it.

CAMERON

What are you talking about?

Ashley shoots dagger eyes to Cameron.

DEREK

Yeah, remember that thing you asked for my help with?

Cameron's face crinkles up into confusion.

ASHLEY

What thing?

DEREK

You'll know soon enough.

Ashley groans and storms off.

CAMERON

Dude, I don't remember what I needed your help with.

DEREK

I'll tell you in a minute.

Derek looks back to his phone.

KELSEY (V.O.)

I've got a long layover in Salt Lake on Sunday. I'm meeting up with a friend for drinks and I'd really like to meet with you and discuss the possibilities of a movie deal for your blog.

Derek's jaw drops. He glances to Cameron who scratches his head.

CAMERON

Was it about your mom walking in on me last week?

Derek looks excited, like a kid waiting to open a Christmas present.

DEREK

No no no --

Derek shakes his head.

CAMERON

Because I don't want things to be weird between me and your mom.

DEREK

Cameron! Shut up and listen to me.

Cameron, caught a little off guard, pauses his speaking with his mouth agape.

DEREK

I have some big news to tell you...

CAMERON

Well, I'm listening.

DEREK

Not here.

A group of three girls approach, one of the girls is Paige. Cameron's large body blocks Derek's view.

CAMERON

Just tell me.

DEREK

It has to be somewhere less crowded...it's about that guy...

Paige and her friends walk by the table. Derek leans in to whisper.

DEREK

Buck Willy.

CAMERON

The homeless guy?!

Paige's face shows intrigue, she peeks over to see who just spoke.

Derek gestures with his hands for Cameron to quiet down.

PAIGE (O.S.)

Derek?

Derek is pleasantly surprised.

DEREK

Paige. What's up?

PAIGE

Were you talking about that homeless guy?

DEREK

A homeless guy, not the homeless guy. You know, not the one in the news.

She strains her face like she's trying to read more into that comment.

DEREK

I volunteer at the homeless shelter; read to kids and stuff.

PAIGE

Really?

DEREK

Oh yeah, I love the homeless.

PAIGE

So do you know Buck Willy?

Derek's phone buzzes.

DEREK

I don't think so.

The phone vibrates again.

Paige glances to the phone, then back to Derek.

PAIGE

That must be important.

Derek reads his phone.

PAIGE

I'll see you in class on Monday?

Derek nods while he types on his phone.

Paige glances to Cameron, and he shrugs.

Paige and her friends walk away.

Derek turns to Cameron.

DEREK

We need to talk, now!

Derek bolts up from his seat.

EXT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

Derek leads Cameron to a quiet part of campus.

CAMERON

That was Paige Greene.

DEREK

I know.

Cameron puts two fingers across Derek's jugular.

CAMERON

You have a pulse...

Derek shoves Cameron's hand away.

CAMERON

The hottest girl on campus was trying to flirt with you, are you sick?

DEREK

She wasn't flirting.

CAMERON

Okay, talking to you then, but girls like her don't talk to guys like you, not unless your famous.

DEREK

There's something really big I need to tell you.

CAMERON

Bigger than Paige Greene?

Derek closes his eyes and takes a breath. He opens them back up.

DEREK

(whispering)

I'm Buck Willy.

Cameron's confused.

Derek smiles and raises his eyebrows. Cameron bursts into laughter.

CAMERON

You're funny.

DEREK

I'm serious.

CAMERON

And I'm Spartacus.

Derek shakes his head.

CAMERON
Dude, there's no way. He's a black
guy.

DEREK
You ever see him?

Cameron shakes his head.

DEREK
How do you know he's black?

CAMERON
He sounds black.

DEREK
And what does black sound like?

Cameron's eyes drift around, searching for an answer.

CAMERON
Okay, the news said he was black.

DEREK
Cam, I made him up, but now there's
a problem.

CAMERON
Because you're not black?

DEREK
Yes, but I just got an email from a
movie producer; she wants to make
the blog into a movie.

Cameron lifts an eye brow.

DEREK
She'll be in town this weekend and
wants to meet me.

CAMERON
A movie producer wants to meet
you?!

DEREK
Well, technically, she wants to
meet Buck Willy.

CAMERON
The black guy?

Derek nods.

CAMERON
That is a problem.

DEREK
So what do I do?

CAMERON
How much they going to pay you?

DEREK
She didn't say.

Cameron brings his fingers up to his mouth, contemplative.

CAMERON
It could be six figures.

Derek's eyes bulge with shock.

DEREK
What?!

CAMERON
I heard Hollywood just bought a
dude's gardening blog for a quarter
mill.

DEREK
Gardening blog?

CAMERON
Maybe it was a lady's cooking blog.
Whatever it was, it was a lot of
money.

DEREK
I've got to meet this lady.

CAMERON
The cooking blog lady?

DEREK
No! The movie producer.

CAMERON
But you're not black.

DEREK
That won't matter. It's the same
blog, who cares if I'm not really
the guy, I wrote everything.

CAMERON

Oh, it matters. Remember that Fry guy and Oprah? She ate him for lunch.

DEREK

She eats a lot for lunch.

CAMERON

You know what I mean.

DEREK

But that was a memoir that turned out not to be a memoir.

CAMERON

Well, are you homeless?

Derek shakes his head.

CAMERON

Are you black?

Derek gives Cameron the "come on" look.

CAMERON

Did you eat a dog?

DEREK

You've been reading the blog?

CAMERON

Ashley got me into it. It's got some crazy stuff in there.

DEREK

I know, I wrote it.

CAMERON

Which is why you can't meet the movie producer. If Buck Willy turns out to be a suburbanite, white, college kid and not a homeless black man, then forget the movie deal.

DEREK

Damn.

CAMERON

You could always hire someone to act as Buck Willy.

DEREK

Yeah right. I put an add on
Craigslist for an actor to be play
a homeless black guy?

CAMERON

No way, actors can't keep secrets.

A HIPPIE guy walks by. He's got on a dirty poncho and a ratty
beanie; looks like the guy begging for change at a freeway
off ramp. Cameron spots him.

CAMERON

You need a guy like that, only
black. Someone already from the
streets.

DEREK

That would add credibility.

CAMERON

Hell's yeah! Just like Terminator
Two when they hired the kid from
juvey to a play a troubled youth.

Derek smiles from ear to ear. Derek's phone goes off again.

DEREK

I'm going to do it.

CAMERON

Damn right.

DEREK

Let's go.

Derek turns to leave.

CAMERON

Right now?

Derek turns back.

DEREK

The producer will be here on
Sunday.

CAMERON

I've got plans with Ashley tonight.

DEREK

Oh come on. We go to that soup kitchen I did service at and we find someone. We'll be two hours, tops.

Cameron narrows his gaze. Derek pulls out his phone.

CAMERON

Then I want a cut.

DEREK

Ten percent.

CAMERON

Forty.

DEREK

You're my sidekick. Fifteen.

CAMERON

I ain't no sidekick. Get me a role in the movie and I'll take twenty.

DEREK

Seventeen and your name in the credits.

CAMERON

Deal.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Sandy and Ethan stand next to the news van parked roadside. They scan over the medium-sized grassy square. Several people mill around enjoying the sunny weather.

A business man talks on his phone. A mother walks her child in a stroller.

ETHAN

What are we looking for again?

SANDY

Homeless people.

ETHAN

How do we know if they're homeless? Dirty and drunk?

SANDY

That's so stereotypical.

ETHAN

You're right, they probably have on nice clothes and a fresh haircut.

Ethan points to a middle-aged man jogging in brand new running gear.

ETHAN

Ooh, maybe that guy jogging.

Sandy looks.

SANDY

Funny.

ETHAN

Or him over there!

Ethan points to a man napping under a tree. He's dressed in business casual.

SANDY

Why wouldn't he be homeless?

ETHAN

If you're so sure he's homeless, then let's make a bet.

SANDY

I'm not sure that he's homeless, but I'm not sure that he's not.

ETHAN

What? That doesn't make any sense.

Sandy's eyes dart to the side.

SANDY

Excuse me sir?

Sandy turns to a man walking by. He's weathered and in his fifties. He's got a scraggly beard and an old camo jacket, embroidered with the name: RASMUSSEN.

SANDY

Could you give us just a minute?

Rasmussen stops.

SANDY

I'm Sandy Summers with a news channel. We're hoping you can help us find someone...

A blank stare. A mangy cat pokes his head out of Rasmussen's jacket pocket, it whines softly.

Sandy looks to Ethan. He shrugs.

SANDY

We're trying to locate a man named Buck Willy.

RASMUSSEN

(singing)

"Old Buck Tooth Willy lived by the sea, Old Buck Tooth Willy stole my lady."

Sandy lights up.

SANDY

So you know him?

RASMUSSEN

(singing)

"He stole my fish and ate my soup, so's I punched him square and knocked a tooth."

Rasmussen wails out a drunken laugh.

Sandy looks to Ethan again. Ethan shakes his head in disbelief.

Rasmussen walks off.

RASMUSSEN

(singing)

"Old Buck Tooth Willy lived by the sea, Old Buck Tooth Willy had a trick knee. He was my brother long ago, made a deal with the devil 'n lost his soul."

He trails off as he walks out of sight.

ETHAN

What was that?

Sandy is excited.

SANDY

That was probably Raz.

ETHAN

Who is Raz?

SANDY

He was the owner of the dog that
Buck Willy ate, and a Vietnam vet.

Her excitement builds.

SANDY

Did you see the name on his jacket?

ETHAN

No.

SANDY

Rasmussen. Raz. Rasmussen. It fits
right?

Sandy pulls out her note pad and jots something down.

SANDY

And he said Buck Willy stole his
lady. Maybe his dog?

ETHAN

Sandy, the guy was nuts.

SANDY

I think we're close.

ETHAN

And he had a cat in his jacket.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - DAY

Derek and Cameron burst in through the front door. This place
is a dive. Derek's phone sounds.

One lady sits and nibbles on a bread roll like a squirrel.
She wears an ill-fitting floral print dress that was probably
a wallpaper design in the seventies. This is JINX.

Jinx glances up from her roll and turns her back to the boys
and continues to nibble.

DEACON (O.S.)

Mr. Summers, to what do I owe this
visit?

DEACON JAMES a trim African American priest in his mid 40s
enters from the kitchen.

DEACON JAMES

Did you paint another mural on my
fence?

DEREK
Not this time. Cameron, this is --

DEACON JAMES
Deacon James.

Deacon extends his hand and Cameron shakes it. Derek glances at his phone.

DEACON JAMES
But call me Deke.

CAMERON
We've met.

Deacon tilts his head.

DEACON JAMES
Cameron Jones...Principal Klein's office. My son beat you up.

CAMERON
Yes...he did.

DEACON JAMES
Small world.

Deacon laughs. Cameron is nervous.

DEREK
Speaking of small world, have you seen the Story Man lately?

DEACON JAMES
Tucker?

DEREK
I don't know his name. Black guy, he'd come in and tell stories...

DEACON JAMES
I haven't seen him in a couple of months.

DEREK
Did something happen to him?

DEACON JAMES
I don't know.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Sandy and Ethan stand on a winding concrete path.

ETHAN
Why don't we go check the shelter?

SANDY
We will, but he's close, I have a feeling.

Ethan spots something in the distance.

ETHAN
What's that?

Ethan points to a BLACK MAN sitting on a bench. He has gray hair, ratty clothes and a laptop. A shopping cart full of junk sits next to the bench.

SANDY
Oh my gosh! That's him.

Sandy turns to Ethan, ecstatic.

SANDY
You know what this means?

Sandy grabs Ethan's shoulders and jumps up and down.

ETHAN
Calm down.

Sandy continues to jump up and down.

ETHAN
Are we going to talk to him?

Sandy stops jumping.

SANDY
Let's do a lead in.

Sandy stands straight and smooths over her clothes.

Sandy holds the mic up.

Ethan puts the camera on his shoulder and his eye to the viewfinder.

ETHAN
Uh...Sandy?

Sandy breaks form.

Ethan pulls his eye away from the viewfinder.

ETHAN
Is that Gepper?

Sandy turns.

Another news crew has arrived on the opposite end of the park.

SANDY
That dirtbag is going to steal my story.

ETHAN
I'm rolling.

Sandy catches eyes with the reporter across the way. It's BILL GEPPER, a balding reporter in his fifties.

Sandy and Gepper have a brief stare-down.

Sandy glances at the Black Man; he's oblivious to everything.

Gepper glances to the Black Man.

Both reporters look back to each other.

Sandy takes off towards the Black Man.

Gepper does the same.

Ethan keeps rolling tape while he follows Sandy.

SANDY
(while running)
He's mine!

Gepper is closer, but Sandy is quicker.

GEPPER
(running)
This is a major story, let the big boys handle it.

Ethan stops running to get a steady shot.

Sandy is on a full sprint, skirt and all. Gepper is red-faced and jiggly as he lumbers his way to the oblivious Black Man.

Sandy nears the Black Man, who talks out loud as he types.

Sandy slows.

BLACK MAN
 (preacher-like)
 Then come the fire, the brimstone,
 and...a...a toothbrush.

Sandy's there. She's winded. Gepper's about fifteen feet away.

BLACK MAN (CONT'D)
 I ain't got no toothbrush, but with
 the al --

SANDY
 Buck Willy, sir?

The Black Man looks in Sandy's direction. His eyes are milked over, blind as a bat.

BLACK MAN
 Ma?

SANDY
 I'm Sandy Summers, I'd like to talk
 to you about your blog.

GEPPER (O.S.)
 And I'm Gepper, Bill Gepper. I'd
 like to put you up in a hotel for
 several nights.

Sandy scowls back to Gepper.

BLACK MAN
 Oh, that's awful kind of ya'll.

Black Man reaches his hand out for a shake. Gepper snags it right before Sandy does, then he nudges her out of the way.

GEPPER
 Can I call you Buck, or do you
 prefer the full Buck Willy?

BLACK MAN
 What the hell's a full buck willy?

The Black Man stands.

BLACK MAN
 The name's Randall Jensen Theodore
 Williams, the third. And hell, I'll
 try anything once.

The laptop tips. Sandy glimpses the screen - it's cracked in a thousand pieces. Not to mention half the keys are missing. Definitely not functional.

GEPPER

No, Buck Willy, it's a name.

Sandy snickers. Ethan arrives, camera rolling. Gepper's camera man also arrives, he carries his camera, not rolling.

SANDY

(quietly to Ethan)

It's not him.

RANDALL/BLACK MAN

Who's this Buck Willy feller?

Ethan goes to put the camera down --

SANDY

No! You better film this.

Ethan puts the camera back up and rolls tape.

GEPPER

I'm sorry, I mistook you for someone else.

RANDALL

This is awful kind of you to put me up in a hotel for a few nights. God will bless you.

GEPPER

No, I'm sorry, I thought you were someone else.

Randall's face goes sad.

SANDY

Did you not offer to put this poor elderly man in a hotel for a few nights?

Sandy leans her mic to Gepper.

GEPPER

Yes, but that's when I thought --

Gepper realizes the camera is rolling.

Gepper stands proud and smiles back to Ethan's camera.

GEPPER
When I thought he just needed a
place to sleep.

Gepper turns to Randall.

GEPPER
Do you like buffets?

RANDALL
If you're buying, I much prefer
sushi.

Gepper looks into Ethan's camera and forces a courtesy laugh.

Sandy keeps the mic on Gepper.

GEPPER
He prefers sushi.

Gepper forces another laugh.

RANDALL
Sir, you are too kind.

Sandy turns to the camera for her final thought.

SANDY
And there you have it, exclusively
on channel thirteen; sushi is the
food of choice for this homeless
man. I'm Sandy Summers for the
investigation station.

EXT. SOUP KITCHEN - DAY

Derek and Cameron exit Deacon's place. A sign above the door
reads: "SOUP, YUM".

DEREK
Well, that was a total bust.

CAMERON
Leroy James. Fourth grade recess.
He called me a homeboy so I pushed
him. Then he punched me.

DEREK
That was like nine years ago, let --

Derek freezes. His eyes roll down to see Jinx sniffing
Cameron's shirt, all four foot-eleven of her.

Cameron doesn't notice.

CAMERON

What?

Derek makes a gesture for Cameron to glance downwards.

Cameron looks down and jumps back at the site of the tiny woman.

Jinx puts her hands in the pockets made of duct-tape on the front of her dress. Every movement she makes is silent.

JINX

Lavender and chamomile.

Cameron glances to Derek. Jinx talks quick with a mousy voice.

JINX

You said Story Man? He'll tell you
a tale, you'll see. All you have to
do is listen...

Her head cocks up and looks Derek straight in the eyes.

JINX

So listen up buster, 'cause I'll
only say this once.

Jinx whips her gaze to Cameron, then moves over to him.

JINX

You gotta lotta nerve comin' down
here and askin' for the Story Man.
He's gone, gone I say.

DEREK

He's gone?

Jinx shuffles back into Derek's personal space.

JINX

What are you, deaf? The Story Man
is hiding, but Uncle Ray...he
knows...oh, he knows --

Jinx's glance darts back to Cameron.

JINX

Everything!

She holds her palm up and bats her eyelashes at Derek.

DEREK

Uh...Cam, how much money you got?

CAMERON

Nothing. Come on, let's get out of here.

DEREK

Cam, how much?

JINX

A five or a one will do, but a ten would be nice. My information's good, you'll see.

Cameron opens his wallet and pulls out a dollar.

CAMERON

It's all I've got, I swear.

Jinx swipes the dollar from Cameron in a flash. She holds it up for inspection.

JINX

This better not be fake.

DEREK

So where's Uncle Ray?

JINX

At fourth head left. There's a small hole in the fence, you'll know the place when you see it.

Cameron looks totally confused and his wallet is still out.

DEREK

Thanks ma'am.

JINX

Call me Jinx!

Jinx marches up to Cameron and glances in his wallet.

She snatches a ten dollar bill and walks off.

CAMERON

Whoa, wait!

But she rounds the corner, out of site.

DEREK

It's okay.

CAMERON
You're paying me back!

SANDY (O.S.)
Derek!

Sandy approaches the boys from the park across the street.
Derek turns away from her.

DEREK
Dammit.

SANDY
Derek, what's going on?

Derek hesitates, but turns to face her as she arrives.

DEREK
Nothing.

SANDY
Why aren't you in class?

Derek's phone buzzes.

DEREK
It was cancelled.

SANDY
For what?

CAMERON
A bomb threat.

SANDY
What?!

Derek shoots a look at Cameron that tells him that was a mistake.

SANDY
Ethan, pack it up. Let's go get
this bomb threat story.

DEREK
Not a bomb threat mom, chill out.
It was a suspicious package.

SANDY
That's still a big deal.

Sandy takes a step to leave.

Derek grabs her arm.

DEREK

No mom. Class was cancelled, but the package turned out to be a box of plants, no big deal.

SANDY

Drug plants?

DEREK

Holy hell, no. Budget cuts and layoffs or something. The plants were from a professor's office.

Sandy motions for Ethan to get a move on it.

SANDY

A recession story. That's still bigger than Buck Willy.

Derek's eyes widen with shock.

DEREK

What did you say?

SANDY

Kip's got me chasing that guy from the news this morning.

DEREK

But he's not news.

SANDY

That's what I said.

ETHAN

A teacher gets fired? A homeless guy? Neither one is news.

Deacon James opens the soup kitchen door.

DEACON JAMES

Sandy.

SANDY

Deacon. Is Derek in trouble again?

DEACON JAMES

No, no. He just stopped by to say hi. I just had a batch of rolls come out. Come in and have one.

Sandy motions for Ethan to move inside.

SANDY

I do need to talk to you about a story I'm working on.

Sandy walks to the door. Ethan and Cameron follow.

Derek grabs the back of Cameron's shirt to stop him.

DEREK

Unfortunately, Cameron has some homework.

Cameron makes a pathetic pleading face at Derek.

DEACON JAMES

I'll send a couple home with your mom.

DEREK

Excellent.

Deacon James leads Sandy and Ethan inside.

Sandy looks back.

SANDY

Don't be late for dinner.

Sandy walks inside and the door closes behind her.

Derek's smile sags to a frown.

CAMERON

I think she bought it.

DEREK

A bomb threat?

CAMERON

It was the first thing that came to mind.

DEREK

Let's go find Uncle Ray.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Derek and Cameron walk along a chain link fence. A wall of bushes line the other side of the fence. A freeway bridge stretches overhead.

CAMERON
How much of that blog is true?

DEREK
What does it matter?

Cameron stops walking.

CAMERON
Who's the Story Man?

Derek spots a hole in the bottom of the fence.

DEREK
I think this is it.

Derek squats down to inspect the hole.

CAMERON
It's just that lady at the soup
kitchen acted a lot like Mouse from
Buck Willy's blog. Now a hole in a
fence?

Derek pokes his head into the hole and struggles through.

DEREK
I made all that up.

Derek squeezes to the other side of the fence.

CAMERON
If it's anything like the blog,
then I don't want to go over there.

DEREK
Some of characters were people I
saw at the kitchen.

CAMERON
What about Captain Jingles'
vagabond chickens?

DEREK
There is no Captain Jingles.

CAMERON
But the chickens pecked that girl's
finger off.

DEREK
Cameron, there are no chickens. How
would a homeless guy keep chickens?

Cameron thinks about that.

CAMERON
Well...so, he could...

DEREK
Just get over here so we can find
our guy.

CAMERON
And make millions from this movie.

Cameron squats down to the hole.

DEREK
You think millions?

Cameron shoves his head through the hole.

CAMERON
Easy. Napolean Dynamite made at
least that.

Cameron's chest is too big to fit through. He shoves off with
his feet.

The fence bends inwards and springs back into place, dragging
Cameron with it.

DEREK
I could finally move out.

CAMERON
A little help here.

Cameron gives it one more shove.

The fence bends inwards and springs back again.

DEREK
Just climb over.

Cameron reverses back out of the hole.

Cameron's shirt catches on the chain link and rips.

Cameron, covered with dust and his shirt ripped open, glances
up to the top of the fence.

CAMERON
You owe me a new shirt.

Cameron grabs the fence and climbs.

Each step up the fence Cameron goes, the top sags further away from the support bar.

One more step and Cameron will be at the top, but the fence has pulled away a good foot.

CAMERON

I guess fat guys don't go see Uncle Ray.

DEREK

Most are probably homeless.

Cameron readies himself for the last step.

CAMERON

They can still be fat.

Cameron steps up.

SNAP! Part of the fence breaks and the chain link sags away from the support bars.

Cameron loses his balance and topples over the top.

One leg catches on the top bar.

A belt loop snags the top wire of the fence.

RIP! The belt loop gives way, and Cameron's pants split open.

He lurches down, face first through a branch of one of the bushes and to the dirt below; he lands with a thud in a big heap.

DEREK

Graceful.

Cameron moans and rolls over to his back.

A chicken slips out from the bushes into the small clearing around Cameron. It pecks at the ground.

Cameron catches the bird with his eyes, terrified to move.

CAMERON

Derek!

DUTCH (O.S.)

You boys lost?

Derek turns to see a tall tattooed man in his 30s peering through the bushes at the boys. This is DUTCH.

The chicken pecks closer and closer to Cameron's head.

Panic shows through Cameron's face.

CAMERON

Th..th..they..have...ch...chickens.

DEREK

We came to see Uncle Ray.

The chicken hops up onto Cameron's chest. Cameron freezes from fear.

CAMERON

(whisper yell)

Derek!

DUTCH

Why didn't you guys use the gate?

The chicken stares down Cameron, and tilts its head.

DEREK

I didn't know there was a gate.

DUTCH

Well, follow me.

Derek glances back to Cameron.

The chicken stands atop Cameron like he just pinned him in a wrestling match.

Derek nudges the chicken off Cameron's chest.

Derek helps Cameron to his feet and they exit from the bushes into an open area under the freeway.

Tarps hang from strings forming tent shapes. Large boxes line a pathway that leads to a steel barrel that houses a small fire. Several piles of trash are scattered about with three chickens pecking through the largest pile.

Dutch stands in the path, picking his teeth with a large buck knife.

DUTCH

What you boys want Ray for?

Dutch inspects a food particle resting on the tip of his knife.

DEREK
We're looking for someone.

DUTCH
Well you found him.

Dutch licks the food particle off.

Cameron's face winces in disgust.

DEREK
You're Uncle Ray?

RAY (O.S.)
No. I am.

RAY (50s) steps out from behind a box. He's wearing a tattered tuxedo jacket, with tails, and a fedora. His pant pockets bulge and jingle with loose change.

RAY
What can I do for you?

A hippy girl (20) with dread locks stands up in the background and wanders over to the small group. This is TWINKLE.

DEREK
Somebody told me you know everyone.

Twinkle arrives and saunters around Derek and Cameron. She gives them a thorough look-over.

RAY
I know a few people.

DEREK
We're looking for the Story Man.

RAY
You want a story, do ya?

Ray glances over to Dutch and Twinkle. Dutch puts his knife in a homemade sheath that hangs from a rope tied around his waist.

RAY
Dutch, the minstrel. Twinkle, play the puppet.

Twinkle drops to the ground, immediately slouching into a limp sitting position.

Dutch starts into a skipping and marching dance. He hums and plays an air flute.

DUTCH

Roo toot a tootle dee doo.

RAY

So the minstrel entertained an enchanted kingdom.

Dutch continues his skipping around Derek and Cameron.

RAY

One day, the minstrel happened upon a puppet resting by the city wall.

Dutch stops his dance as he nears Twinkle.

Dutch picks up one of Twinkle's arms and lets it fall back to the ground. THUD! Limp as can be.

RAY

The puppet was ragged and dirty so the minstrel decided to leave it.

Dutch starts back into his skipping and the air flute.

DUTCH

Tootley toot a toot too...

Dutch turns his back to Twinkle and skips away.

RAY

But this wasn't an ordinary puppet.

Twinkle leaps to her feet and in a puppet-like manner, skips behind Dutch.

Dutch turns back to see Twinkle's puppet dance. At the site of it, Dutch grins.

RAY

So the minstrel brought the magical puppet back to the king.

Dutch continues his skipping and air-fluting around Derek and Cameron. Twinkle puppet dances right behind him.

DUTCH

Toot lee tootle deet deet.

RAY

What the minstrel didn't know was
that the puppet had been cursed by
Maggy the Witch.

Twinkle strikes a defensive basketballer pose. She shakes her hands wildly and goes crazy-faced like a Polynesian warrior, screaming and flicking her tongue.

TWINKLE

La la la la la la...

RAY

But it was too late.

Twinkle rips the knife from Dutch's sheath.

She zips the knife past Cameron's head.

RAY

The puppet was only there to steal
food.

SCHLUNK! The knife buries deep into the breast of one of the vagabond chickens.

The chicken releases one final cluck, then keels over.

Twinkle breaks from her crazed puppet character and sinks into shock and fear.

RAY

Twinkle! Holy shit!

TWINKLE

No no no no noo.

Twinkle scurries over to the dead bird and lifts its head.

Twinkle releases it and the chicken's head thunks back to the ground.

Twinkle breaks into tears.

RAY

What have I told you about playing
the puppet?

Twinkle looks back to Ray, tears running down her cheeks.

TWINKLE

Don't throw the knife at --

RAY
-- at the chickens!

Derek glances over to Cameron who is feeling the side of his head and examining his hand after each pat, looking for blood.

CAMERON
My life literally just flashed
before me.

Dutch picks up the dead chicken and carries it to the fire barrel.

RAY
Who feels like chicken tonight?

Dutch plucks the feathers and discards them into the fire.

RAY
You two want to stay and eat?

DEREK
No thanks.

RAY
It tastes like chicken...

DEREK
We're both vegetarian.

Ray joins Dutch by the fire as Derek walks over to Twinkle.

DEREK
It's okay, it was just a chicken.

Twinkle goes deadpan. She gazes off to nothing.

TWINKLE
I don't know how to beg...

Derek squats down and puts a comforting arm around Twinkle.

TWINKLE
What am I going to do?

DEREK
It was just an accident.

TWINKLE
The Story Man was banished for
kicking one of Ray's chickens.

DEREK
The Story Man?

RAY (O.S.)
Twinkle, come over here and gut
this thing.

Twinkle zones back to her hundred mile stare.

TWINKLE
I have to go see Ms. Mags.

Twinkle stands up, Derek does too.

DEREK
Who is Ms. Mags?

Twinkle slowly walks towards the fire barrel, talking to
herself.

TWINKLE
She helped the Story Man, she can
help me. Yeah, Ms. Mags...

Derek runs up and grabs Twinkle's arm. She startles.

DEREK
Twinkle, who is Ms. Mags? How did
she help the Story Man?

TWINKLE
She's a palm reader.

Twinkle turns back. Dutch holds out the plucked chicken and
his big knife.

Twinkle takes both.

Derek takes a step towards her --

Ray cuts him off.

RAY
I don't think I'll be able to help
you boys today.

Ray stares Derek down.

RAY
Capeesh?!

Derek takes a frightened step back and nods.

Ray skips back to Twinkle, his bulging pockets jingling all the way.

RAY
(singing)
"The minstrel and the puppet
man..."

Derek grabs Cameron's arm.

DEREK
Let's get the hell out of here.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING - NIGHT

A dirty warehouse with large boxes stacked to the rafters. It's dark and dusty.

FORTUNE TELLER, a gypsy-like woman in her sixties, sits cross-legged on a concrete floor. She shakes smoking incense sticks in each hand. Her hair is gray and unkempt, and her eyes are closed.

FORTUNE TELLER
(chanting)
Oye como va.

The Fortune Teller drops the incense sticks, her eyes flare open.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
When the Fortune Teller conjures
Santana it's usually good.

The Fortune Teller leaps up, throwing her arms straight up into the air over and over while yelling.

FORTUNE TELLER
Hey now! Hey now!

The Fortune Teller drops flat to her belly.

FORTUNE TELLER
(a breathy wisper)
Put your lights on...

The Fortune Teller flares her teeth like an angry alley cat.

FORTUNE TELLER
Xeeeeee!

She hisses.

FORTUNE TELLER
(mystical)
'cause there's a monster, living
under my bed...

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMER'S LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

Sandy, Jaxon and Derek sit on couches eating pizza off paper plates and TV trays. Derek hasn't touched his food, he's typing on his phone.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
That didn't sound so good.

SANDY
Not during dinner please.

Derek glances up.

DEREK
I'm almost done.

SANDY
What's so important that you can't
enjoy dinner with your family?

DEREK
It's a homework assignment.

SANDY
Do your homework after dinner.

DEREK
It's a group assignment. Somebody's
waiting on this email so he can do
his part tonight. Thirty more
seconds.

Sandy glances to Jaxon. His plate is empty and he plays on a PSP.

Sandy groans.

SANDY
Thirty seconds.

Derek continues to type.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

A harshly lit street behind a downtown restaurant. A shadowy figure picks through the dumpster.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
Raz ain't talkin' to me no mo, says
I ain't his friend.

The shadowy figure looks up, it's Raz. He scowls, shakes his head and walks away.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
But like the Fortune Teller said,
"I still got a purpose to serve".

EXT. DIFFERENT ALLEY - LATER

A tiny, mangy kitten whines as it stands next to a large refrigerator box laying on its side. A dirty, scraggly bow sits on its head.

The box opens and Raz sticks his head out.

RAZ
Shut up!

Raz gasps.

RAZ
Oh my, who are you?

Raz picks up the little kitten. He smiles at it, the kitten meows.

Raz looks up the alley.

Nobody.

Raz pets the kitten's tiny head.

RAZ
I think we're going be good
friends. I'm gonna call you
Reese's.

MEOW!

Raz ducks back into his box with the kitten.

INT. SUMMER'S LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

Derek still types on his phone. Sandy gathers her boys' plates.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
I think if I right my wrongs. Stop
killing things...go vegetarian --

SANDY
Thirty seconds is up.

Derek hits publish and throws the phone down on the couch.

DEREK
Done!

Derek's phone vibrates again.

Sandy angrily grabs the phone.

DEREK
Mom, no!

Sandy looks at the phone's screen.

Derek closes his eyes in shame.

SANDY
Looks like somebody has been
lying...

Derek takes a deep breath.

DEREK
I can explain --

SANDY
Don't even bother.

DEREK
I was bored, it wasn't --

Sandy tosses the phone back to the couch.

SANDY
I don't want to hear it.

Sandy leaves the room.

Derek is dumbfounded and picks up his phone as Sandy storms back in.

SANDY

Just tell me one thing. What were you really doing downtown today?

Derek's frozen and speechless.

SANDY

You can't even be honest now? Derek, I know. The gig's up!

Sandy storms out of the room again.

Derek reads the message on his phone.

CAMERON (V.O.)

Dude, are we going to find that guy tomorrow? I'm thinking the same time as today.

Sandy bolts back into the room.

SANDY

I don't work this hard and pay that much for school so you can skip it and trounce around the streets looking for some homeless guy.

Derek looks up, perplexed.

SANDY

It's not safe. It's irresponsible.

DEREK

This is about today?

SANDY

I was born at night, but not last night. You skipped class with Cameron to find Buck Willy so you can win a ride on channel four's helicopter.

DEREK

Not exactly --

SANDY

Do you realize if I don't find him and get that interview first, Kip's going to fire me?!

Derek stands up and puts his arm around his mom.

DEREK

Whoa mom. Yes, we were trying to find Buck Willy, but not for the helicopter ride, I promise.

Sandy slinks into Derek's side.

SANDY

I've just worked so hard. I have some great ideas, but Kip won't let me...

DEREK

Mom, you're a great reporter. I promise, if Cameron and I find this guy tomorrow, I'll give you the interview.

Sandy pulls away.

SANDY

Oh no, you're not missing anymore classes.

DEREK

It's okay.

SANDY

No, college isn't like high school. You can't just skip --

DEREK

Mom, tomorrow's Saturday.

Sandy opens her mouth to speak, but stops herself.

A beat.

SANDY

Tomorrow's Saturday?

Sandy walks to the hallway.

SANDY

It's been a long day. I'm taking a bath.

EXT. CAMERON'S HOUSE - DAY

A middle class suburb. A car pulls curbside and honks, it's Derek.

The front door opens and Cameron exits, followed by Ashley. Cameron's wearing a worn-out suit, has a two-day beard and a scraggly wig on. Ashley has on a dirty, oversized T-shirt, a filthy denim skirt, mismatched socks, and holey shoes.

Cameron opens the front door and Ashley climbs in. Cameron is nearly unrecognizable in his disguise.

Cameron jumps in the backseat.

Derek glances back to Cameron.

CAMERON

What?

Derek, not so subtly, points to Ashley with his head and eyes.

CAMERON

I told her everything. She's cool.

Ashley has a big smile on her face.

ASHLEY

I want to help.

DEREK

Everything?

ASHLEY

I love your blog. I'm the one who got Cameron to read it.

Derek straightens out in his seat and takes a deep breath.

Derek glances to the rearview mirror and spots Cameron.

DEREK

You say actors can't keep secrets huh?

CAMERON

Dude, she's my girlfriend. I had to tell her.

Derek takes a big whiff of the air, his face goes sour.

DEREK

You guys reak!

CAMERON

I told Ashley what a hard time we had yesterday and she had this brilliant idea.

ASHLEY

We went to the thrift store, got these clothes and doctored them up.

CAMERON

To look the part.

DEREK

But that smell!

CAMERON

It wasn't enough to look it, they would still see through that.

DEREK

Who is they?

ASHLEY

The homeless.

Derek cranes back and looks at Cameron. Upon closer inspection, his beard looks like dirt, and it's greasy.

Cameron points to his chin.

CAMERON

Ground-up coffee beans and Vaseline. Looks real and adds to the smell.

Derek's face shows disgust.

CAMERON

And I peed on the clothes.

DEREK

Disgusting!

Ashley looks back to Cameron, lovingly.

CAMERON

Ash's idea.

Cameron gives Ashley a small kiss.

DEREK

Out of my car!

CAMERON

You need our help. We'll be
undercover.

DEREK

But you peed...and now you're
sitting on my --

ASHLEY

It's okay, we thought of that. He
just peed on the front.

Ashley giggles.

Derek rolls down the windows.

DEREK

You're washing the inside of my car
after this.

CAMERON

And you owe me ten bucks.

EXT. SOUP KITCHEN - DAY

Derek walks towards the front door. Cameron and Ashley linger
behind, walking much slower. Derek looks back.

DEREK

Hurry-up you guys.

CAMERON

You don't know us, remember.

Derek sighs and turns into the soup kitchen.

Cameron starts-up an exaggerated limp.

ASHLEY

That's a nice touch sweetie.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - FOOD PREP AREA - DAY

Deacon James mixes dough in a large bowl.

Derek walks in.

DEREK

Deke, I need your help again.

Deacon James looks up with a big smile.

DEACON JAMES

You keep showing up like this and I'm going to think you actually like it here.

DEREK

The place isn't bad, it was all that work you made me do.

Deacon James removes the dough from the bowl and grabs a rolling pin.

DEACON JAMES

You want my help? Don't just stand there.

Derek grabs an apron hanging on a hook.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - EATING AREA - DAY

Cameron ladles chili into his mouth. Ashley nibbles on a biscuit.

Jinx silently slides into a seat next to Ashley.

Ashley startles.

JINX

Who are you?

Ashley's face shows worry.

CAMERON

(disguising his voice)
We're new in town.

Jinx sniffs Ashley's shirt.

JINX

Coffee and cat litter.

Jinx grabs Ashley's hand and examines it.

JINX

But clean as a whistle.

Jinx stares into Ashley's eyes.

JINX

I don't know about this one...

Cameron slides his chili over to Jinx.

CAMERON
We need some help.

Jinx accepts the chili and starts shoveling it in.

JINX
What kind of help?

CAMERON
Spiritual.

Derek walks out of the kitchen area. Jinx looks over and scowls at him.

Jinx turns her back to Derek, as Cameron motions for Derek to stay away.

JINX
I don't like him.

Jinx runs her fingers through Ashley's hair.

JINX
Pretty hair.

CAMERON
So can you help us?

Jinx's eyes dart around the room, then she leans across the table towards Cameron.

JINX
I'll take you to Ms. Mags.

Jinx grabs Cameron's hand and places it palm up on the table. Her long, dirty fingernails trace the lines.

JINX
What's your name?

CAMERON
Ca -- Casper.

JINX
She with you?

CAMERON
Yeah, I call her Ace.

JINX
Let's go.

Jinx stands up and moves to the door. Swift and silent.

CAMERON
Hold on, I need to pee.

JINX
I'll be out front.

Jinx slips out the front door.

Cameron walks over to Derek.

CAMERON
(normal voice)
She's taking us to the Fortune
Teller.

DEREK
Palm reader.

CAMERON
Whatever, but you can't come, she
doesn't like you.

DEREK
But I have to come.

CAMERON
Then follow us, but don't get
caught.

Cameron darts back to Ashley. She stands up and they move out the door, Cameron's limp still exaggerated.

Derek watches as they step out the door. He unties his apron.

Deacon James comes out of the kitchen.

DEREK
Deke, I've gotta run.

Derek drapes his apron over Deacon James' shoulder.

DEACON JAMES
You just got here. What are you up
to?

Derek walks to the front door and pauses.

DEREK
It's nothing.

DEACON JAMES

Derek. I don't want to know, but if whatever this is ends up hurting your mother, so help me god, I'll have you doing so much work around here your hands will bleed. Understand?

DEREK

Yes sir.

Derek leaves.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - DAY

Jinx slithers under a rusty chain link fence that surrounds a decrepid building. Nearly every window has been broken and a collage of graffiti decorates the outside walls.

JINX

You gotta be quick before the creepers come out.

ASHLEY

What are creepers?

JINX

The scary people that throw things at you and steal your clothes.

Ashley squeezes under the fence. A tight squeeze, but she's through.

Ashley brushes the dust from her front side as Cameron glances to the top of the fence: barbed wire.

CAMERON

Why don't you two go ahead, I'll stand guard out here.

Ashley leans in close to the fence.

ASHLEY

I'm not going in there alone.

JINX

Fifteen seconds before the creepers come, and I won't be here when they do. Suck it in fatty, let's move.

A short distance away, Derek peeks out from behind a dumpster. From here, he can see Jinx and Ashley on the warehouse side of the fence.

Cameron yanks on the bottom of the fence. The hole isn't getting bigger but Jinx is getting anxious.

DEREK

Coo! Coo!

Derek mimics a bird call to get Cameron's attention, but it doesn't work.

JINX

I've gotta go.

Jinx storms off towards the building.

CAMERON

Ash, you've got to follow her.

ASHLEY

She scares me.

Derek glances down and sees a couple empty glass bottles on the ground. He picks one up.

DEREK

Coo! Coo!

Ashley scans the road.

ASHLEY

Do you hear that?

Ashley spots nothing.

CAMERON

It's just a bird.

CRASH! A glass bottle shatters almost ten feet away from Cameron.

Ashley yelps out a scream.

Jinx flips around.

JINX

The creepers! Run!

Jinx sprints into the building.

CAMERON

Ash, go. Now!

Ashley bolts towards Jinx.

DEREK (O.S.)

Coo! Coo!

CAMERON

I don't think that's a bird.

Cameron scampers up the fence.

Derek holds another glass bottle in hand and watches Cameron drape his jacket over the barbed wire.

With his hobo jacket draped over the barbed wire, Cameron bellies over it.

His sleeve catches one of the barbs.

A pant leg catches another, but his weight shifts to the downside of the fence.

Gravity does its thing and Cameron topples downward.

RIP! His shirt sleeve and pant leg shred open.

Cameron hits the ground with a thud and a poof of dust.

DEREK

Cam!

Derek bolts out from the dumpster.

Cameron sits up, pain washed across his face.

CAMERON

Derek?

Derek arrives at the fence.

CAMERON

If she sees you --

DEREK

Is Ms. Mags in there?

Cameron gets to his feet.

CAMERON

I think so, but I don't know.

DEREK

Go find out.

CAMERON

That's what I was doing.

DEREK
If she's there, come get me.

JINX (O.S.)
(from inside)
Casper!

Cameron turns to run to the building.

DEREK
Cameron.

Cameron turns back.

CAMERON
Don't let her see you.

DEREK
Nice job with the fence.

CAMERON
I'm never climbing a fence again.

Cameron hobbles into the warehouse.

Derek pulls his phone out and types.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
Dear Kelsey. You said a movie deal?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET PLAZA - NIGHT

A cold evening. Two figures stand next to a reflection pond, their breath is visible as they talk. One figure is a black man in his fifties, STORY MAN. The other is Raz.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
I'm a simple man.

RAZ
Tuck, you crazy.

Story Man pulls his shirt off.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
I'm just a man that tells stories.

Story Man sits down and pulls off his shoes.

A dog limps up to Story Man and licks his hand. It's Skittles.

RAZ
Skittles, stop it.

Story Man stands up and pulls his pants down.

RAZ
You ain't gonna do it.

Story Man stands up on the edge of the pond. Skittles barks

Story Man reaches down and pulls Skittles up onto the edge of the pond.

RAZ
Tuck --

Skittles jumps into the reflection pond.

Story Man leaps up and does a cannonball into the water.

Water splashes all over Raz.

RAZ
Hey!

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - DAY

Derek stands outside the rusty fence typing on his phone.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)
Some people just see me as crazy.

Jinx slips out the warehouse door and walks towards Derek. She stares at her hand, tracing the lines and mumbling to herself.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET PLAZA - NIGHT

Story Man stands in the waist deep water, eyes closed. Skittles swims close by.

Skittles barks.

Raz, soaking wet and naked, stands on the edge of the pond.

STORY MAN
Marco...

RAZ

Polo!

Raz jumps up and cannonballs into the shallow pool.

Story Man blindly swings his arms in front of himself. His hand brushes against Skittles.

Story Man's eyes fly open. Raz bursts into laughter.

RAZ

Skittles, you're it!

Story Man and Raz laugh, Skittles howls up at the bright moon.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - DAY

Derek leans against the fence. Jinx approaches, still tracing her hand.

BUCK WILLY (V.O.)

I guess what I'm saying is yes,
I'll be there tomorrow.

Jinx looks up. The site of Derek stops her dead in her tracks. A small gasp escapes her mouth.

Derek turns around.

JINX

What are you doing here?

Derek looks like a kid caught sneaking a cookie.

Jinx turns and runs back towards the warehouse.

JINX

Mags! Stop!

Derek hits send on his phone and shoves it in his pocket.

He drops to the ground and scurries under the fence.

DEREK

Hey, Jinx!

JINX

Maggy!

Derek is through to the other side. He takes off in a dead sprint.

DEREK

I've got twenty bucks!

Jinx flies into the warehouse and out of sight.

Derek fast approaches the dilapidated doorway.

He bursts through the opening.

Jinx pops out of the shadows.

Derek jukes out of the way and into a stack of large boxes.

Jinx doesn't flinch. The boxes tumble down, empty.

Derek sprawls onto the dirty floor and rolls over one of the boxes.

JINX

Twenty bucks?

Jinx scurries up to Derek, her hand extended.

JINX

Make it thirty and I'll leave.

INT. SANDY'S NEWS CUBICLE - DAY

Sandy sits back in her chair, dejected. Ethan fiddles with an item on her desk: metal balls on a string.

CLICK! CLICK! The outside balls bounce in and out rhythmically. Ethan is mesmerized.

SANDY

I'm finished. We're not going to find him.

KIP (O.S.)

Sandy!

Sandy perks up in her chair.

Kip pokes his head into the cubicle.

KIP

Where's Buck Willy?

She bites her tongue.

KIP
Have you forgotten?

She stands up.

SANDY
No, I'll try the shelter one more
time.

Kip smiles and holds his hand up to stop her.

KIP
No need.

Sandy slumps into her chair.

SANDY
They found him?

KIP
No...I found him.

Sandy looks shocked.

KIP
An old friend of mine is a movie
producer. Well, she emailed the guy
and he's meeting us here tomorrow.

ETHAN
The guy?

KIP
The guy. Buck Willy will do an
exclusive interview with you.

Kip makes a gun gesture and points to Sandy.

KIP
Tomorrow. A live, homeless special.

Sandy smiles at Kip, who stands proud.

KIP
I know, Walter Cronkite...

SANDY
Should we get some 'B' roll?

KIP
No! I want 'A' roll. Only the best
on this.

Ethan looks confused.

ETHAN
What's 'A' roll?

KIP
Street stuff. A homeless guy
picking through the trash. People
sleeping under newspapers.

ETHAN
Extra footage?

KIP
Exactly!

SANDY
That's what I said, 'B' roll.

KIP
A community college may produce 'B'
roll, we at The Walter Cronkite
School produce 'A' roll.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - DAY

Derek counts thirty dollars into Jinx's outstretched hand.

DEREK
Twenty-nine. Thirty.

Jinx shoves the money in her duct tape pockets.

JINX
I would have taken twenty.

Jinx crawls under the fence.

A ringtone sounds. Derek pulls out his phone and answers it.

DEREK
Mom?

SANDY (V.O.)
(from phone)
Great news! We found him.

DEREK
Whoa, mom, settle down.

SANDY (V.O.)
I'm interviewing him tomorrow. Ah,
I'm so excited!

In the background, Story Man creeps into the warehouse through a broken window.

Derek spots him.

DEREK
Great. I've got to go!

Derek hangs up the phone.

DEREK
Hey, Story Man!

Story Man looks over at Derek, his face shows fear. He quickens his pace through the window.

Derek sprints through the doorway and into

THE WAREHOUSE

Story Man bolts around a corner of the hallway.

DEREK
Slow down!

Derek takes off after Story Man.

Derek rounds the corner.

STORY MAN
No! Leave me alone!

Story Man knocks a stack of empty boxes down into Derek's path.

DEREK
I just want to talk to you for a second.

Derek negotiates around a box.

Then leaps over another.

But a third box trips him up. Derek stumbles down to all fours.

He pops back up, but Story Man lengthens the distance.

INT. WAREHOUSE BACK ROOM - DAY

MS. MAGS, a woman in her sixties with a long gray braid that stretches passed her waist and a linen dress, sits cross-legged on a small, worn-out Asian rug.

Ms. Mags' eyes are closed. She rubs and kneads one of Ashley's hands.

MS. MAGS

She can dance a Cajun rhythm, jump
like a Willy's in four wheel drive.

Ms. Mags opens her eyes and stares at Cameron who kneels beside Ashley.

MS. MAGS

She's a summer love for the Spring,
Fall and Winter. She can make
happy, any man alive. Sugar
Magnolia.

Outside the room a loud crashing sound echoes.

Ms. Mags lets go of Ashley's hand and fearfully glances to the doorway.

The Story Man bursts through, winded and scared.

STORY MAN

Mags, it's here.

Cameron glances to Ashley then back to the Story Man.

MS. MAGS

What?

STORY MAN

The monster.

Story Man kneels before Ms. Mags and thrusts his hand at her.

Ms. Mags takes his hand and closes her eyes.

Derek limps into the room.

DEREK

Story Man!

Derek pauses. He notices Cameron and Ashley.

STORY MAN

It's here. Hurry!

Ms. Mags takes a deep breath in.

Derek cautiously approaches Ms. Mags and the Story Man.

MS. MAGS
You better start swimming or you'll
sink like a stone. Oh, the times
they are a changin'.

Cameron and Ashley stand up and back away from Ms. Mags.

Derek leans in to whisper to Cameron.

DEREK
That's the Story Man.

CAMERON
We're going to get out of here.

Derek nods and kneels down next to the Story Man.

DEREK
Just hear me out, okay?

The Story Man glances over to Derek.

STORY MAN
Do I know you?

DEREK
I worked at Deke's for a while.

Ms. Mags lets go of the Story Man's hand and opens her eyes.

MS. MAGS
Lyin'. Cheatin'. Hurtin'. That's
all you seem to do.

Derek glances at Ms. Mags.

MS. MAGS
Always the same, playin' your game.

DEREK
Led Zeppelin.

STORY MAN
You shouldn't interrupt Maggie when
she's seeing something.

DEREK
She doesn't see anything. She
quotes classic rock songs.

Ms. Mags jumps to her feet. She points an arthritic finger at Derek.

MS. MAGS

Trouble's gonna come to you. One of these days, and it won't be long.

She moves her finger to point to the Story Man.

MS. MAGS

You'll look for me, but, baby, I'll be gone.

Story Man's face drops into shock.

DEREK

Don't listen to her. I have the opportunity of a lifetime for you.

Story Man looks over to Derek.

DEREK

I used to listen to the stories you would tell at Deke's and I sort of shared them with the world.

Story Man narrows his gaze.

MS. MAGS

Your time is gonna come.

DEREK

I put my own twist to it all, but nevertheless, some of them were your stories. Someone wants to turn them into a movie.

Ms. Mags paces back and forth. She shakes her head. Story Man holds up a hand to stop her.

STORY MAN

Go on.

MS. MAGS

You been bad to me, but it's all comin' back home to you.

DEREK

And pay me for it.

MS. MAGS

Your time is gonna come.

STORY MAN

You mean pay me for it?

DEREK
Well, technically, I wrote it.

STORY MAN
So why are you here?

DEREK
Because I need your help.

Ms. Mags sits down in front of Story Man and stares at him.

MS. MAGS
The devil went down to Georgia, he
was looking for a soul to steal.

DEREK
We'll split, fifty, fifty.

MS. MAGS
He was in a bind, 'cos he was way
behind. He was willing to make a
deal.

DEREK
You just pretend your name is Buck
Willy.

MS. MAGS
Please to meet you. Hope you guess
my name.

Ms. Mags leaps up to her feet and starts a tribal-looking
dance.

STORY MAN
That's not right?

MS. MAGS
Use all your well-learned
politesse, or I'll lay your soul to
waste.

Derek stands up.

DEREK
With the money, you can get off the
streets.

STORY MAN
The streets are my home.

MS. MAGS
Hope you guess my name!

DEREK

You can also help a single mother
keep her job.

MS. MAGS

What's puzzling you is the nature
of my game.

Story Man looks at Ms. Mags as she does her tribal dance.

Story Man looks at Derek who give him a pleading face.

DEREK

Let's go work this out.

Derek reaches out his hand to help the Story Man to his feet.

MS. MAGS

Woo woo! Woo woo!

The Story Man takes Derek's hand and stands up.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - NEXT DAY

Sandy rifles through 3x5 cards and mumbles to herself. She looks professional, but she paces back and forth on the floor by the news desk, nervous. Kip approaches.

KIP

Where is he?

SANDY

With makeup.

KIP

Don't screw this one up!

A pretty woman in her fifties approaches. This is KELSEY COHEN.

KELSEY

Kip!

Kip turns and lights up at the sight of Kelsey.

KIP

Kelsey Cohen?!

He runs up to her and gives her a huge hug.

KIP

I'm so glad you had this layover.

KELSEY

Well I couldn't miss the chance to meet Buck Willy.

Kip, with his arm around Kelsey, leads her over to Sandy.

KIP

Sandy, this is Kelsey Cohen, a big time movie producer. This is Sandy Summers, my ace reporter.

Sandy and Kelsey shake hands.

SANDY

Nice to meet you. How do you know Kip?

KELSEY

I went to school with him.

KIP

Walter Cronkite --

KELSEY

Class of eighty-five!

Kip and Kelsey share a small laugh.

SANDY

Oh. Journalism school got you into the movies?

KELSEY

Well, I didn't finish at the top of the class...

Kelsey glances over to Kip.

KELSEY

Third?

SANDY

Fourth!

Kip smiles, proud.

KELSEY

Did you go to Walter Cronkite?

KIP

No, she went to a local school.

SANDY
Community college.

KIP
But she finished near the top of
her class.

SANDY
Sixtieth percentile.

KELSEY
Oh.

An awkward beat.

KELSEY
So where is he?

Kelsey looks around.

SANDY
Makeup. I can take you back there.

KELSEY
I'd love it.

Sandy takes Kelsey by the arm and walks away.

KIP
Sandy.

Sandy turns back.

KIP
A quick word.

Sandy breaks away and steps back to Kip.

KIP
I sort of told her I was at a big-
time station, could you...

SANDY
Lie for you?

KIP
Don't lie, per se, maybe just
be...cryptic.

SANDY
Is that something they taught you
at Walter Cronkite?

KIP
I'm serious.

Sandy steps back to Kelsey.

SANDY
Don't worry Kip, I'll handle the
situation.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Story Man sits in a chair facing a brightly lit mirror. Derek
stands beside him.

STORY MAN
So I'm Buck Willy.

DEREK
And Uncle Ray is...?

STORY MAN
Jingles?

DEREK
Close.

STORY MAN
Uncle Jingles!

DEREK
Captain Jingles.

Story Man slaps his hand to his forehead.

STORY MAN
I can't do this. Why can't I just
meet the movie lady?

DEREK
I promised my mom this interview.

KNOCK! KNOCK!

STORY MAN
Who is it?

SANDY (O.S.)
I'm Sandy. I want to talk to you
for a second about the interview.

Derek panics.

DEREK
(whisper)
She can't know I'm here.

SANDY (O.S.)
Can I come in?

Derek dives into a rack of suits.

STORY MAN
Uh...just a second.

Story Man shrugs at Derek.

Derek pulls a suit off the rack and piles it on the ground in front of his feet.

SANDY (O.S.)
We only have a few seconds before I have to be on.

STORY MAN
Uh...okay, come in.

The door opens and Sandy and Kelsey enter.

SANDY
Mr. Buck Willy. I'm so excited to meet you.

Sandy shakes his hand.

KELSEY
Me too. I've been reading back through your blog and I love it even more and more.

Kelsey shakes his hand.

KELSEY
I'm Kelsey Cohen.

Story Man nods as his eyes dart back and forth between the two ladies.

SANDY
Are you okay?

STORY MAN
Oh yeah.

SANDY
I'm sure this is a lot for you.

KIP (O.S.)
Sandy, we're on in one minute.
Places!

SANDY
I guess I'll see you on stage.

Sandy smiles at him and steps out of the room.

KELSEY
I'll just talk to you after the
interview.

STORY MAN
Uh...okay, about...?

Derek pokes his head through the suit rack and makes a winding camera motion with his hands.

Kelsey laughs, awkward.

KELSEY
The movie deal.

STORY MAN
That's right, sorry. I'm just not
feeling myself today.

Story Man pulls out a handkerchief and pats his sweaty brow.

Kelsey steps to the door.

KELSEY
I guess I'll take my seat. I'll see
you afterwards.

Kelsey smiles and exits.

Derek steps out.

DEREK
That's the movie producer.

STORY MAN
This is too much. I can't remember
all the names.

DEREK
Listen. You'll be fine out there.

INT. NEWS INTERVIEW SET - DAY

Camera's are rolling. Sandy sits professionally in her chair and looks into one of the cameras.

SANDY

As you know, we've been looking for Buck Willy.

Kip stands behind the camera crew. He beams with joy.

SANDY

We have found this mysterious blogger and have brought him here today for an exclusive interview. So, let's not waste anymore time and bring him out.

She stands up and turns to the side of the stage.

SANDY

Buck Willy, everyone.

The Story Man steps out from a curtain to an uproar of cheering.

Story Man takes his seat next to Sandy.

SANDY

Mr. Buck Willy, it's so nice to have you here.

Story Man nods and shifts in his seat.

SANDY

So let's start with how you became a blogger.

STORY MAN

I've always told stories...

SANDY

How did you access the internet?

Derek watches the interview from the side of the stage. Kip approaches.

KIP

Excuse me young man.

STORY MAN (O.S.)

Public libraries.

Derek turns to face Kip.

KIP
This is a closed set.

DEREK
Kip, I'm Derek. Sandy's son.

KIP
Of course you are. Sandy didn't say
you were coming.

DEREK
She doesn't know I'm here.

KIP
You're a good son to support her
like this.

Story Man shifts uncomfortably in his seat again.

SANDY
So explain to me again why you were
banished by Captain Jingles?

STORY MAN
Uh...I accidentally kicked one of
his chickens.

A beat. Sandy looks down to her notes and back to Story Man.

SANDY
A chicken?

Sandy looks to a FLOOR DIRECTOR who shakes his head that he
doesn't know.

STORY MAN
Yeah, he eats the eggs, but I
accidentally killed one, so...

SANDY
I thought, in your blog, you
said...

Sandy references her notes.

SANDY
You wouldn't pay him any tributes
for playing the drums in his area.

Story Man's eyes shift around.

STORY MAN

Uh...

Derek puts a hand over his face.

STORY MAN

Yeah, that's what I meant.

SANDY

It's okay, you don't need to be nervous.

Story Man nods.

SANDY

Why don't we take a quick commercial break and get you a drink of water.

STORY MAN

Okay.

SANDY

We'll be right back with Buck Willy.

The stage crew starts into a bustle.

A makeup lady steps out and pats Sandy's forehead with a powder disc.

SANDY

Just pretend it's only you and me here.

An assistant type brings Story Man a small glass of water. Story Man guzzles it down.

Story Man glances back over his shoulder to Derek.

Derek gives him a thumbs up.

FLOOR DIRECTOR

We'll be back in fifteen seconds.

SANDY

Are you ready?

Story Man shakes his head.

FLOOR DIRECTOR

Ten seconds.

STORY MAN

Actually...

Sandy looks over to him.

STORY MAN

I can't keep this up.

KIP

Five seconds.

Silence falls over the set.

The floor director holds up three fingers and counts down.

STORY MAN

I'm...

The floor director points to Sandy indicating they're back on.

STORY MAN

I'm not really Buck Willy.

Sandy's jaw drops.

Kelsey shoots a questioning look over to Kip who sits right beside her.

Derek closes his eyes and slouches down, shaking his head.

STORY MAN

I'm sorry.

Story Man stands up and exits the set area.

Sandy sits there in shock, speechless.

The Floor Director mouths to Sandy, but she doesn't see it.

He tries again. Nothing.

He tries once more, this time it's audible.

FLOOR DIRECTOR

We're still on.

Sandy sits, dumbfounded in her chair.

Derek hits his head with his fists and takes a step out onto the stage.

A camera picks him up. Sandy notices the movement and glances up.

SANDY
Derek, what are you doing?

Derek gingerly walks onto the interview set.

DEREK
We need to talk.

SANDY
Derek, what's going on?

Derek turns to the camera.

DEREK
Well, what started as a fun play
with my imagination has turned very
wrong.

Derek takes a deep breath.

DEREK
I'm Buck Willy.

The air is sucked out of the room. Silence falls.

Kelsey's jaw drops.

Kip laughs a nervous laugh, he can't believe it.

Sandy chokes up a bit.

SANDY
You?

DEREK
It was never supposed to get big.
It was just a innocent blog that
nobody read.

Derek shifts in his seat.

DEREK
I didn't mean for any of this to
happen.

KELSEY
Prove it!

Derek's squints through the bright lights.

KELSEY (O.S.)
How can we believe you?

Derek pulls out his phone and starts typing.

DEREK
I'll post another blog.

Derek finishes typing and puts his phone away.

The Floor Director turns to a tech-gal sitting at a computer.
She nods her head.

DEREK
Buck Willy is live on channel
thirteen.

Kelsey's phone buzzes. She pulls it out.

Insert screen: WILLY'S WORDS NEW BLOG POST

SANDY
Wow! Why didn't you say anything?

DEREK
I couldn't.

SANDY
I'm going to lose my job over this.

A beat.

Sandy stands up and walks away.

Derek sits alone under the bright lights. He leans over and
puts his head in his hands.

FLOOR DIRECTOR
Cut to commercial!

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. SUMMER'S KITCHEN - NEXT DAY

Jaxon eats cereal at the counter. The small TV is on Good
Morning America again, the sound is low.

Sandy packs another lunch.

JAXON
I don't want that.

Sandy stops, she's holding a banana.

SANDY
It's a banana.

JAXON
Don't want it.

Derek walks in.

DEREK
Morning mom.

She looks at him, but doesn't say a word.

He moves to the fridge and grabs a Pepsi.

JAXON
I want an apple.

She shoves the banana in the sack.

SANDY
We don't have anymore apples.

Derek opens his drink and takes a swig.

JAXON
Can I have a Pepsi?

SANDY
Fine.

She moves to the fridge and grabs a Pepsi. She returns to the counter and places it in the sack.

SANDY
Happy?

JAXON
Yes.

DEREK
Do you need me to pick up Jaxon today?

She looks at him with a glare in her eye.

SANDY
No, I'm sure I'll have plenty of time.

DEREK
I'm sorry.

A beat.

Sandy grabs the sack.

SANDY
Jaxon, finish up, we need to go.

Jaxon carries his bowl to the sink.

Sandy moves to the door.

SANDY
We have someone coming to dinner
tonight, so be home by six.

DEREK
Who's coming?

SANDY
Just be here.

She exits.

Jaxon runs after her with a backpack on.

INT. SANDY'S NEWS CUBICLE - DAY

The classified adds sit on the desk. A few adds have been circled. Sandy stares at the silver balls as they bounce back and forth.

CLICK! CLICK!

KIP (O.S.)
Sandy!

She closes her eyes.

SANDY
(to herself)
I can always be a telemarketer.

She stands up and walks to

KIP'S OFFICE

Kip sits at his desk.

KIP
Sandy, we need to talk. Have a seat.

She takes a seat.

KIP
You put a nice effort into the Buck Willy story.

SANDY
Just get it over with Kip.

A beat.

KIP
I'm leaving.

SANDY
What?

KIP
I've taken a job in Lincoln, Nebraska. Content director.

She's speechless.

KIP
Bigger market.

SANDY
Not really.

KIP
It's a move up. No offense, but this town is too small for me.

She nods.

KIP
Brass wants you to take my position.

SANDY
Me?

He stands up.

KIP
Congratulations community college.

He holds out his hand to shake.

She stands up and shakes his hand.

SANDY
Thank you Kip.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Tom stands in front of the room.

TOM
Overall, nice job on the quizzes.
You can pick them up when you
leave.

Students start standing up. Some put books in backpacks,
others file out of the room.

TOM
Mr. Summers, can I have a word
please.

Derek nods and looks to Paige as she stands up and turns to
face him.

PAIGE
I saw the interview.

DEREK
Me too.

PAIGE
I didn't know you cared so much for
the homeless.

She smiles and bats her eyes.

DEREK
I...I have to be honest. I don't
volunteer. I got in trouble and was
doing community service.

PAIGE
But you wrote beautifully about
their lifestyle.

DEREK
I made all of that up. I was sort
of mocking them.

Her smile fades.

PAIGE
Oh.

TOM

Derek. Can I speak with you please?

Derek grabs his stuff and walks down to the professor.

PAIGE

Wait.

Derek stops and turns around to her.

PAIGE

Tomorrow morning, my church group is volunteering at Soup, Yum, it's a soup kitchen. Would you like to come with me?

DEREK

Punishment for lying? Ha ha.

PAIGE

I was thinking more like a date.

DEREK

Oh. I would love to do that.

Derek smiles and nods.

Paige smiles back.

Paige pulls a piece of paper out of her pocket as she walks down the steps.

PAIGE

Why don't you call me tonight?

Paige hands it to Derek. It's her phone number.

Derek smiles.

DEREK

But it's a school night.

PAIGE

I can break the rules every once in a while, right?

She winks and walks away.

TOM

Derek.

DEREK

I have your report.

Derek hands over the report, but Tom waves it away.

TOM
I can't accept that. I saw the
interview yesterday.

DEREK
But I still based my report on --

TOM
Derek, you wrote the blog.

DEREK
You liked it though.

TOM
I do like it, but...

Tom reaches back and grabs his bag.

TOM
A report just won't do it justice.

Tom walks to the exit.

DEREK
Is there anything else I can do to
make up that quiz?

Tom turns around.

TOM
You wrote the blog. That's more
than enough to make up the quiz.

INT. SUMMER'S HOME - NIGHT

Sandy checks on something in the oven. Jaxon sets dishes on a dining room table.

Derek walks in from the garage.

SANDY
Cutting it close aren't we?

Derek notices the table.

DEREK
What's this?

SANDY
I told you this morning. We have
dinner guests tonight.

DEREK

Who?

DING DONG!

SANDY

They're here.

Jaxon runs to the front door.

JAXON (O.S.)

Hello sir.

The sound of a few people shuffle into the front door.

JAXON (O.S.)

I'm Jaxon.

STORY MAN (O.S.)

My name's Tucker, but you can call me Story Man.

JAXON (O.S.)

Nice to meet you Story Man.

Derek looks to Sandy. She smiles at him.

Cameron bounds into the kitchen.

CAMERON

Ms. Summers!

Cameron gives her a big hug.

CAMERON

Congratulations on the promotion.

SANDY

Thanks Cameron.

DEREK

Promotion? Why didn't you say anything?

Sandy looks to Ashley as she walks in the room.

ASHLEY

Congrats Ms. Summers.

Sandy gives her a hug while Cameron approaches Derek.

CAMERON
(quietly excited)
We did it!

DEREK
What?

Cameron raises his eyebrows.

CAMERON
When we left Ms. Mags, channel four
was out doing some interviews. They
loved Ashley and I.

The Story Man and Rasmussen follow Jaxon into the kitchen.

SANDY
It's nice to have you two over for
dinner. I hope you guys like beans.

Sandy reaches out and shakes their hands. Rasmussen looks to
the Story Man and grins from ear to ear.

SANDY
There's one more person coming.

DING DONG!

SANDY
That's her.

Sandy scampers out of the room to answer the door.

DEREK
Oh yeah?

CAMERON
We get to ride in their helicopter
tomorrow during rush hour!

Ashley steps to Cameron's side.

ASHLEY
We have to wear our costumes again,
but it'll be so romantic.

Ashley leans over and kisses Cameron.

LATER

Kelsey and everyone from earlier sit around the table, mostly
finished eating.

Story Man sits back and rubs his belly.

STORY MAN

That was delicious, thank you
Sandy.

SANDY

So now what?

KELSEY

Well, we've worked a deal out with
Tucker.

Kelsey looks to the Story Man.

KELSEY

I mean, the Story Man. Anyway, his
stories will be turned into a
movie, but he does have to blog
them first.

STORY MAN

So I started my own blog today.

SANDY

You did?

DEREK

That's fantastic.

STORY MAN

Nothing like what you did Derek,
but it's a start.

KELSEY

But he'll need some help with it
Derek, so the studio is willing to
pay you to help write the Story
Man's blog.

Derek smiles.

DEREK

Wow, I don't know what to say.

MEOW! Rasmussen's mangy cat pokes its head out from his
jacket.

RASMUSSEN

I'm sorry. Reese's is hungry.

Rasmussen holds a spoon of beans up to the cat's mouth. The
cat licks them.

RASMUSSEN
He loves beans!

Story Man reaches over and pets the cat.

Rasmussen pulls away.

STORY MAN
Raz, it's cool man.

Rasmussen gives Story Man the stink eye.

STORY MAN
I don't even like Reese's. I'm more
of a Skittles guy.

They all share a small laugh.

JAXON
Mom, I want Skittles!

DEREK
Story Man already ate Skittles,
bud.

Everyone laughs again.

FADE TO BLACK.